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"*The Story of our Lives from Year to Year.*"—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A Weekly Journal.

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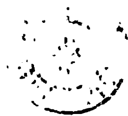

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

ABOARD an Emigrant Ship . 111
Aboard the Constellation . . 185
Agricultural Labourer, The . 31, 71, 471
Aluminum 560
American Sketches:
Kit Butler from Boonville . 45
Out of the House of Bondage 155
Aboard the Constellation . 185
Diary of a Confederate Boy . 224
Wrecked on Island Number Ten 250
Ohio Oil Well 426
Out in Oregon 544
American War, a French View of the 612
Amusements for the Soldier . 125
Anagrams and Acrostics . . 534
Ancient Authors 258
Arab Conjurors 136
Atlantic Telegraph . . . 11, 39
Australia, Transfer of Land in 38

BALLOON Mad 501
Banquets in the Old Times . 258
Bath, The Russian . . . 298
Bemoaned Past, The . . 257
Benchers 220
Bethnal-green, The Poor of . 302
Black Forest Clocks . . . 164
Black Republic 438
Black Rocks, Alone on the . 232
Bordeaux Wines 478
Borneo, The Island of . . 511
Brahma Marriage, A . . 81
Brighton Birdcatchers . . 79
Business in the Black Forest . 163
Buttons 378

CANADA, Story of the War in 594
Canadian Tamarack Swamp . 352
Canler, the French Policeman 515
Cartes de Visite 165
Casanova's Escape from the Inquisition 83
Cat Stories 308
Charlemagne and Ogiers . . 260
Charlotte Elizabeth of Bavaria 498
Chemicals, Sugar from . . 497
Cherries 401
Chicklebury Silver Cup . . 202
Cider of Normandy . . . 477
Circumlocution Office . . 419
Claret 479
Clubs in Russia 57
Cocking's Death from the Parachute 501
Colonial Law of Transfer . . 38
Columbia-square, Bethnal-green 301
Comic Writer's Tragic Case . 469
Committed to the Deep . . 178
Confederate Boy's Diary . . 224
Conjuror's Tricks . . . 131
Convents in Germany . . 246
Cosmetics 521
Cottages for Labourers . . 31
Country of Masaniello . . 564
Court-Martial Findings . . 394
Criminal Examinations . . 306
Crusoe of the Black Rocks, The 232

Crystal Palace 474
Curiosities of Parish Book-keeping 591
Curious Marriage Ceremony . 80

DAY'S Rabbit-Shooting . . 538
Dead (and Gone) Shots . . 212
Death in the Navy . . . 178
Decimal Coinage 211
Delhi Sketch Book . . . 463
Diary of a Confederate Boy . 224
Dog Show 493
Dogs, Refuge for . . . 495
Duel between Lords Townshend and Bellamont . . 214
Duelling in Ireland . . . 212
Dumollard, The French Murderer 280
Dwellings of the Poor . . 305

ELASTIC Trade 141
Emigrant Ship, An . . . 112
English and Irish Juries . . 421
Escape from Siberia . . . 448
Escape from the Inquisition . 83
Examine the Prisoner . . 306
Execution of Calas . . . 208
Execution of De la Barre . . 67
Execution of Dumollard . . 280
Exhibition, A Legend of the . 175
Exhibition, Ignoramus at the International . . . 345, 559
Exhibition, Machinery at 345, 585
Exile's Life in London . . 328

FACE Painting 519
Fanciful Insanity . . . 154
Farinelli the Singer . . . 21
Farm Labourer's Income . . 471
Farm Labourers . . . 31, 71
Female Life in Prison . . 487
Feudal Times 238
Flags, War Department . . 419
Floods in the Fens . . . 348
Flowers 414
Forests of Borneo . . . 511
France, A Judicial Error . . 569
France, An Execution for Sacrilege 673
France, Examination of Prisoners 306
France, Execution of Calas . 208
France, Execution of Dumollard 280
France, Pierre Gringoire . . 176
France, Thief-takers in . . 515
Frenchman in London . . 473
French Police 515
French View of Stars and Stripes, A 612
French Wolf, A 280
French Wines 476
From the Black Rocks on Friday 232

GARDENS 414
Gentle Spring 182
German Nunneries . . . 246
German Royal Marriages . . 366
Ghost and the Professor, The . 107
Ghost Stories 540
Gigantic Attraction . . . 149

Gone to Jail 487
Good Old Times, The . . 257
Gossip about Flowers . . 414
Government Punctuation . 419
Grape Sugar 497
Grapes for Wine 478
Gray's Inn 198
Great Indian Shoe Question . 381
Greek Church, A 138
Green's Balloon 501

HAIL Columbia—Square! . 301
Handel Festival 474
Hindu Jugglers 132
Home among the Tamaracks . 352
Horse Taming 63
Hours of the Night . . . 397
How Clubs Treat Ladies in Russia 56
How Professor Gaster Lectured a Ghost 107
Hunt, Mr. Leigh 116

IGNORAMUS at the International Exhibition . . 345, 559
India, Jealousies of the Services 465
India, Punch in 466
India, Song of the Flirt . . 467
India, The Great Shoe Question 381
India-rubber Works . . . 141
Indian Marriage 81
Infallibility at Toulouse . . 204
Inns of Court 198
Inquisition, An Escape from the 83
Insanity, Delusions of . . 154
International Exhibition 345, 559, 583, 607
Interrogation, Notes of . . 210
Inundations at Norfolk . . 348
Ireland, Thuggee in . . . 374
Irish Duelling 212
Irish Juries 424
Irish Murders 374
Italian Education 362
Italian Nightmares . . . 261
Italian Sailors 425
Italian Unity 264
Italian Wines 477
Italy, Count Arrivabene on . 564

JAPANESE at Home . . . 271
Judicial Error, A 569
Judicial Murder 208
Jugglers' Tricks and Natural Magic 130
Juries, English and Irish . . 421

KING John and Fulk Fitz-Warine 269
Kit Butler from Boonville . 45

LABOURERS' Amusements . 71
Labourers' Cottages . . . 31
Labourers' Incomes . . . 471
Larks on the Wing . . . 78
Law of Transfer in Australia . 38
Leech's, Mr., Gallery . . 390
Leigh Hunt's Autobiography . 116
Liberia 438
Light Wines 476

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PAGE
Lincoln's Inn 198
Literary Life, A 115
Lodging-Houses for the Poor . 304
Long Sea Telegraphs . . 9, 39
Lost Dog's Home, The . . 495

MACHINERY at the Exhibition 345, 585
Macintosh 143
Madame Maintenon . . . 499
Magic Tricks 131
Marriage Act, The Royal . . 366
Marriage in Turkey . . . 102
Marriage, The Brahma Ceremony of 80
Martha Jones's Sentiments . 472
Matrimonial Screw . . . 278
Mediums and Conjurors . . 130
Mediums under other Names . 130
Middle Level Drain . . . 348
Military Life 126
Milk, Experiments on . . 496
Millbank Prison . . . 488
Model Lodging-Houses . . 304
Monks of Old 258
Mother of the Regent Orleans 498
Mrs. Mohammed Bey At Home 102
Murder of the Sheas, The . 511
My Dungeons . . . 319, 354
My Nephew's Collection . . 445

NAPLES, Education in . . 262
Naples, The Political Prisoner in 319, 354
Navy—Health Returns . . 178
Negro Republic 438
New Zealand, On the Black Rocks off 232
NO NAME; a Story. By Wilkie Collins 1
25, 49, 73, 97. 121, 145, 169, 193, 217
241, 265, 289, 313, 337, 361, 385, 409
433, 457, 481, 505, 529, 553, 577, 601
Not a Hundred Years Ago . 66
Notes of Interrogation . . 210
Night, Lying Awake at . . 397
Norfolk Deluge, The . . . 348
Nunneries in Germany . . 246

OFFICIAL Flags 419
Ohio Oil Well 426
Old Lady, A Terrible . . 498
Our Greatness 583
Our Littleness 607
Ourang-Outang Story . . 518
Ouse, Inundations of the . . 348
Out in Oregon 544
Out of the House of Bondage . 155
Over the Ice 594

PAINT or No Paint . . . 519
Painting the Face . . . 519
Painting the Lily . . . 416
Parachute, Cocking's Death . 501
Paris Thieves 517
Parish Registers . . . 591
Perfumes 520
Perplexing Parisians . . 515
Perverted Ingenuity . . . 534
Photographic Portraits . . 167
Pierre Gringoire's Mirror . 176
Pinchback's Amusements . 71
Pinchback's Cottage . . . 31
Platinum 55
Play Writers 470
Playing Cards in Russia . . 295
Poison-Proof 209
Police in France . . . 515

PAGE
Polite World's Nunnery . . 246
Postage Stamp Mania . . 447
Priests in Russia . . . 295
Priests, Playing Cards . . 295
Prison, Females in . . . 487
Prisoners, Examination of . 306
Professor Gaster and the Ghost 107
Punch in India 462
Pursued by P. W. . . . 329
Putting on the Screw . . 278

QUACK Medicines . . . 211

RABBIT Shooting . . . 538
Race-horse, The 66
Railway Collisions Prevention 211
Real Property Act of Australia 38
Red-Cape; a Story . . . 521
Red Sea Telegraph . . 11, 39
Red Wines 477
Refugees' Life in London . 324
Rhine Wines 477
Rifle-Shooting Match . . 202
Robert-Houdin the Conjuror . 136
Rope Dancing 133
Roses 417
Royal Marriage Act . . . 366
Royal Navy, Death in the . . 178
Russia, Foreign Talent in . 277
Russian Offerings to a Saint . 140
Russian Sailor's Yarn . . 276
Russian Travel:
The Yeamscheek . . . 15
With the Huntsmen . . 17
How Clubs treat Ladies in Russia 56
Serfs of a Village in the Interior 137
A Look round the Church . 137
A Priest Playing his Cards . 295
Russian Bath, The . . . 298
The Horse that came in with the Dessert 299
Housekeeping in the Interior 403
A Cook of the Old Faith 406
Wolves 587
The Tragedy of the White Village 616

SAINT Nicholas 139
Sarawak 511
Screw Pressure in Life . . 278
Sea Telegraphs 9, 39
Sentiments of Martha Jones . 472
Sheep Washing 442
Siberia, An Escape from . . 446
Singing to Some Purpose . . 21
Slave Taint, A Story of . . 155
Small-Beer Chronicles, Our Greatness 583
Small-Beer Chronicles, Our Littleness 607
Small Hours, The . . . 397
Soldiers' Leisure Hours . . 125
Solid Reasons 570
South Kensington Legend . 175
Spinster, Song of the . . 467
Spirit-rapping Impostures . 608
Spring 182
St. John's Travels in Borneo . 511
Statute Book 58
Stories of Cats 306
Stories of Witches . . . 12
Story, Aboard the Constellation 185
Story, from the Black Rocks . 232
Story, Gigantic Attraction . 149

PAGE
Story, Kit Butler from Boonville 45
Story of a Neapolitan Prisoner 319, 354
Story of an Escape from Siberia 446
Story of Circumlocution . . 419
Story of the Ohio Oil Wells . 426
Story of the Red-Cape . . 521
Story, Out of the House of Bondage 155
Story, Over the Ice . . . 594
Story, Pursued by P. W. . . 329
Story, Under the Leads . . 83
Story, Wrecked on Island Number Ten 250
Strange and yet True . . 540
Straw-hat Trade, The . . 163
Submarine Telegraphs . . 9, 39
Sugar and Milk 497
Summer 342
Sunday at the Crystal Palace . 609

TAMARACK Poles 353
Telegraphs, The Submarine . 9, 39
Temple, The 198
Terrible Old Lady . . . 498
Thieves of Paris . . . 517
Three Refugees 324
Thuggee in Ireland . . . 374
Toulouse, Execution of Calas at 208
Toulouse, Massacre of Protestants at 204
Tragic Case of a Comic Writer 469
Training-Stable 63
Transfer of Colonial Land . 38
Turkish Harem, A . . . 103
Turkish Marriage, A . . . 102
Two Dog Shows 493

UNDER the Leads . . . 83
Up and down in the Great Sun Garden 511

VIDOCQ, of the French Police . 517

WAGES of Farm Labourers . 471
What Might Have Been . . 128
White Wines 477
Witch Stories 12
Women in Prison . . . 487
Wooden Clocks 164
Worse Witches than Macbeth's 12
Wrecked on Island Number Ten 250

YARN from a Russian Sailor . 276

POETRY.

APRIL 107
Ashwell-Thorpe, The Ballad of 132
Boating 514
Castle Clare 420
Dead Pope, The 34
Droppings 276
Friend and Friend . . . 323
From the Wilds 564
Heath and Mountain . . . 616
Imperishable 348
Man and Wife 323
Painful Catastrophe . . . 61
Reliques 301
Roman Tomb 230
Scandinavian Legend . . . 83
Side by Side 323
Song of the Flirt . . . 467
Violets 130

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

THE FIRST SCENE.

COMBE-RAVEN, SOMERSETSHIRE.

CHAPTER I.

THE hands on the hall-clock pointed to half-past six in the morning. The house was a country residence in West Somersetshire, called Combe-Raven. The day was the fourth of March; and the year was eighteen hundred and forty-six.

No sounds but the steady ticking of the clock, and the lumpish snoring of a large dog stretched on a mat outside the dining-room door, disturbed the mysterious morning stillness of hall and staircase. Who were the sleepers hidden in the upper regions? Let the house reveal its own secrets; and, one by one, as they descend the stairs from their beds, let the sleepers disclose themselves.

As the clock pointed to a quarter to seven, the dog woke and shook himself. After waiting in vain for the footman, who was accustomed to let him out, the animal wandered restlessly from one closed door to another on the ground floor; and, returning to his mat in great perplexity, appealed to the sleeping family, with a long and melancholy howl.

Before the last notes of the dog's remonstrance had died away, the oaken stairs in the higher regions of the house creaked under slowly-descending footsteps. In a minute more, the first of the female servants made her appearance, with a dingy woollen shawl over her shoulders—for the March morning was bleak; and rheumatism and the cook were old acquaintances.

Receiving the dog's first cordial advances with the worst possible grace, the cook slowly opened the hall door, and let the animal out. It was a wild morning. Over a spacious lawn, and behind a black plantation of firs, the rising sun rent its way upward through piles of ragged grey cloud; heavy drops of rain fell few and far between; the March wind shuddered round the corners of the house, and the wet trees swayed wearily.

Seven o'clock struck; and the signs of domestic life began to show themselves in more rapid succession.

The housemaid came down—tall and slim, with the state of the spring temperature written redly on her nose. The lady's-maid followed—young, smart, plump, and sleepy. The kitchen-maid came next—afflicted with the face-ache, and making no secret of her sufferings. Last of all, the footman appeared, yawning disconsolately; the living picture of a man who felt that he had been defrauded of his fair night's rest.

The conversation of the servants, when they assembled before the slowly-lighting kitchen fire, referred to a recent family event, and turned at starting on this question: Had Thomas, the footman, seen anything of the concert at Clifton at which his master and the two young ladies had been present on the previous night? Yes; Thomas had heard the concert; he had been paid for to go in at the back; it was a loud concert; it was a hot concert; it was described at the top of the bills as Grand; whether it was worth travelling sixteen miles to hear by railway, with the additional hardship of going back nineteen miles by road, at half-past one in the morning—was a question which he would leave his master and the young ladies to decide; his own opinion, in the mean time, being unhesitatingly, No. Further inquiries, on the part of all the female servants in succession, elicited no additional information of any sort. Thomas could hum none of the songs, and could describe none of the ladies' dresses. His audience accordingly gave him up in despair; and the kitchen small-talk flowed back into its ordinary channels, until the clock struck eight, and startled the assembled servants into separating for their morning's work.

A quarter-past eight, and nothing happened. Half-past—and more signs of life appeared from the bedroom regions. The next member of the family who came down stairs was Mr. Andrew Vanstone, the master of the house.

Tall, stout, and upright—with bright blue eyes, and healthy florid complexion—his brown plush shooting-jacket carelessly buttoned awry; his vixenish little Scotch terrier barking unrebuked at his heels; one hand thrust into his waistcoat pocket, and the other smacking the banisters cheerfully as he came down stairs humming a tune—Mr. Vanstone showed his character on the surface of him freely to all men. An easy, hearty, handsome, good-humoured gentleman, who walked on the sunny side of the way

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of life, and who asked nothing better than to meet all his fellow-passengers in this world on the sunny side, too. Estimating him by years, he had turned fifty. Judging him by lightness of heart, strength of constitution, and capacity for enjoyment, he was no older than most men who have only turned thirty.

"Thomas!" cried Mr. Vanstone, taking up his old felt hat and his thick walking-stick from the hall table. "Breakfast, this morning, at ten. The young ladies are not likely to be down earlier after the concert last night.—By-the-by, how did you like the concert, yourself, eh? You thought it was Grand? Quite right; so it was. Nothing but Crash-Bang, varied now and then by Bang-Crash; all the women dressed within an inch of their lives; smothering heat, blazing gas, and no room for anybody—yes, yes, Thomas: Grand's the word for it, and Comfortable isn't." With that expression of opinion, Mr. Vanstone whistled to his vixenish terrier; flourished his stick at the hall-door in cheerful defiance of the rain; and set off through wind and weather for his morning walk.

The hands, stealing their steady way round the dial of the clock, pointed to ten minutes to nine. Another member of the family appeared on the stairs—Miss Garth, the governess.

No observant eyes could have surveyed Miss Garth without seeing at once that she was a north-countrywoman. Her hard-featured face; her masculine readiness and decision of movement; her obstinate honesty of look and manner, all proclaimed her border birth and border training. Though little more than forty years of age, her hair was quite grey; and she wore over it the plain cap of an old woman. Neither hair nor head-dress was out of harmony with her face—it looked older than her years: the hard handwriting of trouble had scored it heavily at some past time. The self-possession of her progress down the stairs, and the air of habitual authority with which she looked about her, spoke well for her position in Mr. Vanstone's family. This was evidently not one of the forlorn, persecuted, pitiably dependent order of governesses. Here was a woman who lived on ascertained and honourable terms with her employers—a woman who looked capable of sending any parents in England to the right-about, if they failed to rate her at her proper value.

"Breakfast at ten?" repeated Miss Garth, when the footman had answered the bell, and had mentioned his master's orders. "Ha! I thought what would come of that concert last night. When people who live in the country patronise public amusements, public amusements return the compliment by upsetting the family afterwards for days together. *You're* upset, Thomas, I can see—your eyes are as red as a ferret's, and your cravat looks as if you had slept in it. Bring the kettle at a quarter to ten—and if you don't get better in the course of the day, come to me, and I'll give you a dose of physic. That's a well-meaning lad, if you only let him alone," continued Miss Garth, in soliloquy, when Thomas had retired; "but he's not strong enough for concerts twenty miles off. They wanted *me* to go with them, last night. Yes: catch me!"

Nine o'clock struck; and the minute hand stole on to twenty minutes past the hour, before any more footsteps were heard on the stairs. At the end of that time, two ladies appeared, descending to the breakfast-room together—Mrs. Vanstone and her eldest daughter.

If the personal attractions of Mrs. Vanstone, at an earlier period of life, had depended solely on her native English charms of complexion and freshness, she must have long since lost the last relics of her fairer self. But her beauty, as a young woman, had passed beyond the average national limits; and she still preserved the advantage of her more exceptional personal gifts. Although she was now in her forty-fourth year; although she had been tried, in bygone times, by the premature loss of more than one of her children, and by long attacks of illness which had followed those bereavements of former years—she still preserved the fair proportion and subtle delicacy of feature, once associated with the all-adorning brightness and freshness of beauty, which had left her never to return. Her eldest child, now descending the stairs by her side, was the mirror in which she could look back, and see again the reflexion of her own youth. There, folded thick on the daughter's head, lay the massive dark hair, which, on the mother's, was fast turning grey. There, in the daughter's cheek, glowed the lovely dusky red which had faded from the mother's, to bloom again no more. Miss Vanstone had already reached the first maturity of womanhood: she had completed her six-and-twentieth year. Inheriting the dark majestic character of her mother's beauty, she had yet hardly inherited all its charms. Though the shape of her face was the same, the features were scarcely so delicate, their proportion was scarcely so true. She was not so tall. She had the dark brown eyes of her mother—full and soft, with the steady lustre in them which Mrs. Vanstone's eyes had lost—and yet there was less interest, less refinement and depth of feeling in her expression: it was gentle and feminine, but clouded by a certain quiet reserve, from which her mother's face was free. If we dare to look closely enough, may we not observe, that the moral force of character and the higher intellectual capacities in parents, seem often to wear out mysteriously in the course of transmission to children? In these days of insidious nervous exhaustion and subtly-spreading nervous malady, is it not possible that the same rule may apply, less rarely than we are willing to admit, to the bodily gifts as well?

The mother and daughter slowly descended the stairs together—the first dressed in dark brown, with an Indian shawl thrown over her shoulders; the second more simply attired in black, with

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a plain collar and cuffs, and a dark orange coloured ribbon over the bosom of her dress. As they crossed the hall, and entered the breakfast-room, Miss Vanstone was full of the all-absorbing subject of the last night's concert.

"I am so sorry, mamma, you were not with us," she said. "You have been so strong and so well ever since last summer—you have felt so many years younger, as you said yourself—that I am sure the exertion would not have been too much for you."

"Perhaps not, my love—but it was as well to keep on the safe side."

"Quite as well," remarked Miss Garth, appearing at the breakfast-room door. "Look at Norah (good morning, my dear)—look, I say, at Norah. A perfect wreck; a living proof of your wisdom and mine in staying at home. The vile gas, the foul air, the late hours—what can you expect? She's not made of iron, and she suffers accordingly. No, my dear, you needn't deny it. I see you've got a headache."

Norah's dark, handsome face brightened into a smile—then lightly clouded again with its accustomed quiet reserve.

"A very little headache; not half enough to make me regret the concert," she said, and walked away by herself to the window.

On the far side of a garden and paddock, the view overlooked a stream, some farm-buildings which lay beyond, and the opening of a wooded rocky pass (called, in Somersetshire, a Combe), which here cleft its way through the hills that closed the prospect. A winding strip of road was visible, at no great distance, amid the undulations of the open ground; and along this strip the stalwart figure of Mr. Vanstone was now easily recognisable, returning to the house from his morning walk. He flourished his stick gaily, as he observed his eldest daughter at the window. She nodded and waved her hand in return, very gracefully and prettily—but with something of old-fashioned formality in her manner, which looked strangely in so young a woman, and which seemed out of harmony with a salutation addressed to her father.

The hall-clock struck the adjourned breakfast hour. When the minute-hand had recorded the lapse of five minutes more, a door banged in the bedroom regions—a clear young voice was heard singing blithely—light rapid footsteps pattered on the upper stairs, descended with a jump to the landing, and pattered again, faster than ever, down the lower flight. In another moment, the youngest of Mr. Vanstone's two daughters (and two only surviving children) dashed into view on the dingy old oaken stairs, with the suddenness of a flash of light; and clearing the last three steps into the hall at a jump, presented herself breathless in the breakfast-room, to make the family circle complete.

By one of those strange caprices of Nature, which science leaves still unexplained, the youngest of Mr. Vanstone's children presented no recognisable resemblance to either of her parents. How had she come by her hair? how had she come by her eyes? Even her father and mother had asked themselves those questions, as she grew up to girlhood, and had been sorely perplexed to answer them. Her hair was of that purely light brown hue—unmixed with flaxen, or yellow, or red—which is oftener seen on the plumage of a bird than on the head of a human being. It was soft and plentiful, and waved downward from her low forehead in regular folds—but, to some tastes, it was dull and dead, in its absolute want of glossiness, in its monotonous purity of plain light colour. Her eyebrows and eyelashes were just a shade darker than her hair, and seemed made expressly for those violet blue eyes, which assert their most irresistible charm when associated with a fair complexion. But it was here exactly that the promise of her face failed of performance in the most startling manner. The eyes, which should have been dark, were incomprehensibly and discordantly light: they were of that nearly colourless grey, which, though little attractive in itself, possesses the rare compensating merit of interpreting the finest gradations of thought, the gentlest changes of feeling, the deepest trouble of passion, with a subtle transparency of expression which no darker eyes can rival. Thus quaintly self-contradictory in the upper part of her face, she was hardly less at variance with established ideas of harmony in the lower. Her lips had the true feminine delicacy of form, her cheeks the lovely roundness and smoothness of youth—but the mouth was too large and firm, the chin too square and massive for her sex and age. Her complexion partook of the pure monotony of tint which characterised her hair—it was of the same soft warm creamy fairness all over, without a tinge of colour in the cheeks, except on occasions of unusual bodily exertion, or sudden mental disturbance. The whole countenance—so remarkable in its strongly-opposed characteristics—was rendered additionally striking by its extraordinary mobility. The large, electric, light-grey eyes were hardly ever in repose; all varieties of expression followed each other over the plastic, ever-changing face, with a giddy rapidity which left sober analysis far behind in the race. The girl's exuberant vitality asserted itself all over her, from head to foot. Her figure—taller than her sister's, taller than the average of woman's height; instinct with such a seductive, serpentine suppleness, so lightly and playfully graceful that its movements suggested, not unnaturally, the movements of a young cat—her figure was so perfectly developed already that no one who saw her could have supposed that she was only eighteen. She bloomed in the full physical maturity of twenty years or more—bloomed naturally and irresistibly, in right of her matchless health and strength. Here, in truth, lay the mainspring of this strangely-constituted organisation. Her headlong course down the house-stairs; the brisk activity of all her movements; the incessant sparkle of expres-

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sion in her face; the enticing gaiety which took the hearts of the quietest people by storm—even the reckless delight in bright colours, which showed itself in her brilliantly-striped morning dress, in her fluttering ribbons, in the large scarlet rosettes on her smart little shoes—all sprang alike from the same source; from the overflowing physical health which strengthened every muscle, braced every nerve, and set the warm young blood tingling through her veins, like the blood of a growing child.

On her entry into the breakfast-room, she was saluted with the customary remonstrance which her flighty disregard of all punctuality habitually provoked from the long-suffering household authorities. In Miss Garth's favourite phrase, "Magdalen was born with all the senses—except a sense of order."

Magdalen! It was a strange name to have given her? Strange, indeed; and yet, chosen under no extraordinary circumstances. The name had been borne by one of Mr. Vanstone's sisters, who had died in early youth; and, in affectionate remembrance of her, he had called his second daughter by it—just as he had called his eldest daughter Norah, for his wife's sake. Magdalen! Surely, the grand old Bible name—suggestive of a sad and sombre dignity; recalling, in its first association, mournful ideas of penitence and seclusion—had been here, as events had turned out, inappropriately bestowed? Surely, this self-contradictory girl had perversely accomplished one contradiction more, by developing into a character which was out of all harmony with her own christian name!

"Late again!" said Mrs. Vanstone, as Magdalen breathlessly kissed her.

"Late again!" chimed in Miss Garth, when Magdalen came her way next. "Well?" she went on, taking the girl's chin familiarly in her hand, with a half-satirical, half-fond attention which betrayed that the youngest daughter, with all her faults, was the governess's favourite—"Well? and what has the concert done for *you?* What form of suffering has dissipation inflicted on *your* system, this morning?"

"Suffering!" repeated Magdalen, recovering her breath, and the use of her tongue with it. "I don't know the meaning of the word: if there's anything the matter with me, I'm too well. Suffering! I'm ready for another concert to-night, and a ball to-morrow, and a play the day after. Oh," cried Magdalen, dropping into a chair and crossing her hands rapturously on the table, "how I do like pleasure!"

"Come! that's explicit, at any rate," said Miss Garth. "I think Pope must have had you in his mind, when he wrote his famous lines:

> Men some to business, some to pleasure take,
> But every woman is at heart a rake."

"The deuce she is!" cried Mr. Vanstone, entering the room while Miss Garth was making her quotation, with the dogs at his heels. "Well; live and learn. If you're all rakes, Miss Garth, the sexes are turned topsy-turvy with a vengeance; and the men will have nothing left for it, but to stop at home and darn the stockings.—Let's have some breakfast."

"How-d'ye-do, papa?" said Magdalen, taking Mr. Vanstone as boisterously round the neck, as if he belonged to some larger order of Newfoundland dog, and was made to be romped with at his daughter's convenience. "I'm the rake Miss Garth means; and I want to go to another concert—or a play, if you like—or a ball, if you prefer it—or, anything else in the way of amusement that puts me into a new dress, and plunges me into a crowd of people, and illuminates me with plenty of light, and sets me in a tingle of excitement all over, from head to foot. Anything will do, as long as it doesn't send us to bed at eleven o'clock."

Mr. Vanstone sat down composedly under his daughter's flow of language, like a man who was well used to verbal inundation from that quarter. "If I am to be allowed my choice of amusements next time," said the worthy gentleman, "I think a play will suit me better than a concert. The girls enjoyed themselves amazingly, my dear," he continued, addressing his wife. "More than I did, I must say. It was altogether above my mark. They played one piece of music which lasted forty minutes. It stopped three times by the way; and we all thought it was done each time, and clapped our hands, rejoiced to be rid of it. But on it went again, to our great surprise and mortification, till we gave it up in despair, and all wished ourselves at Jericho. Norah, my dear! when we had Crash-Bang for forty minutes, with three stoppages by the way, what did they call it?"

"A Symphony, papa," replied Norah.

"Yes, you darling old Goth, a Symphony by the great Beethoven!" added Magdalen. "How can you say you were not amused? Have you forgotten the yellow-looking foreign woman, with the unpronounceable name? Don't you remember the faces she made when she sang? and the way she curtseyed and curtseyed, till she cheated the foolish people into crying encore? Look here, mamma—look here, Miss Garth!"

She snatched up an empty plate from the table, to represent a sheet of music, held it before her in the established concert-room position, and produced an imitation of the unfortunate singer's grimaces and curtseyings, so accurately and quaintly true to the original, that her father roared with laughter; and even the footman (who came in at that moment, with the post-bag) rushed out of the room again, and committed the indecorum of echoing his master audibly on the other side of the door.

"Letters, papa. I want the key," said Magdalen, passing from the imitation at the breakfast-table to the post-bag on the sideboard, with the easy abruptness which characterised all her actions.

Mr. Vanstone searched his pockets and shook

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his head. Though his youngest daughter might resemble him in nothing else, it was easy to see where Magdalen's unmethodical habits came from.

"I dare say I have left it in the library, along with my other keys," said Mr. Vanstone. "Go and look for it, my dear."

"You really should check Magdalen," pleaded Mrs. Vanstone, addressing her husband, when her daughter had left the room. "Those habits of mimicry are growing on her; and she speaks to you with a levity which it is positively shocking to hear."

"Exactly what I have said myself, till I am tired of repeating it," remarked Miss Garth. "She treats Mr. Vanstone as if he was a kind of younger brother of hers."

"You are kind to us in everything else, papa; and you make kind allowance for Magdalen's high spirits—don't you?" said the quiet Norah, taking her father's part and her sister's, with so little show of resolution on the surface, that few observers would have been sharp enough to detect the genuine substance beneath it.

"Thank you, my dear," said good-natured Mr. Vanstone. "Thank you, for a very pretty speech. As for Magdalen," he continued, addressing his wife and Miss Garth, "she's an unbroken filly. Let her caper and kick in the paddock to her heart's content. Time enough to break her to harness, when she gets a little older."

The door opened, and Magdalen returned with the key. She unlocked the post-bag at the sideboard and poured out the letters in a heap. Sorting them gaily in less than a minute, she approached the breakfast-table with both hands full; and delivered the letters all round with the business-like rapidity of a London postman.

"Two for Norah," she announced, beginning with her sister. "Three for Miss Garth. None for mamma. One for me. And the other six all for papa. You lazy old darling, you hate answering letters, don't you?" pursued Magdalen, dropping the postman's character and assuming the daughter's. "How you will grumble and fidget in the study! and how you will wish there were no such things as letters in the world! and how red your nice old bald head will get at the top with the worry of writing the answers! and how many of the answers you will leave until to-morrow, after all! *The Bristol Theatre's open, papa,*" she whispered, slyly and suddenly in her father's ear; "I saw it in the newspaper when I went to the library to get the key. Let's go to-morrow night!"

While his daughter was chattering, Mr. Vanstone was mechanically sorting his letters. He turned over the first four, in succession, and looked carelessly at the addresses. When he came to the fifth, his attention, which had hitherto wandered towards Magdalen, suddenly became fixed on the post-mark of the letter.

Stooping over him, with her head on his shoulder, Magdalen could see the post-mark as plainly as her father saw it:—New Orleans.

"An American letter, papa!" she said. "Who do you know at New Orleans?"

Mrs. Vanstone started, and looked eagerly at her husband, the moment Magdalen spoke those words.

Mr. Vanstone said nothing. He quietly removed his daughter's arm from his neck, as if he wished to be free from all interruption. She returned accordingly to her place at the breakfast-table. Her father, with the letter in his hand, waited a little before he opened it; her mother looking at him, the while, with an eager expectant attention, which attracted Miss Garth's notice and Norah's, as well as Magdalen's.

After a minute or more of hesitation, Mr. Vanstone opened the letter.

His face changed colour the instant he read the first lines; his cheeks fading to a dull, yellow-brown hue, which would have been ashy paleness in a less florid man; and his expression becoming saddened and overclouded in a moment. Norah and Magdalen, watching anxiously, saw nothing but the change that passed over their father. Miss Garth alone observed the effect which that change produced on the attentive mistress of the house.

It was not the effect which she, or any one, could have anticipated. Mrs. Vanstone looked excited rather than alarmed. A faint flush rose on her cheeks—her eyes brightened—she stirred the tea round and round in her cup in a restless impatient manner which was not natural to her.

Magdalen, in her capacity of spoilt child, was, as usual, the first to break the silence.

"What *is* the matter, papa?" she asked.

"Nothing," said Mr. Vanstone, sharply, without looking up at her.

"I'm sure there must be something," persisted Magdalen. "I'm sure there is bad news, papa, in that American letter."

"There is nothing in the letter that concerns *you*," said Mr. Vanstone.

It was the first direct rebuff that Magdalen had ever received from her father. She looked at him with an incredulous surprise, which would have been irresistibly absurd under less serious circumstances.

Nothing more was said. For the first time, perhaps, in their lives, the family sat round the breakfast-table in painful silence. Mr. Vanstone's hearty morning appetite, like his hearty morning spirits, was gone. He absently broke off some morsels of dry toast from the rack near him, absently finished his first cup of tea—then asked for a second, which he left before him untouched.

"Norah," he said, after an interval, "you needn't wait for me. Magdalen, my dear, you can go when you like."

His daughters rose immediately; and Miss Garth considerately followed their example. When an easy-tempered man does assert himself in his family, the rarity of the demonstration invariably has its effect; and the will of that easy-tempered man is Law.

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"What can have happened?" whispered Norah, as they closed the breakfast-room door, and crossed the hall.

"What does papa mean by being cross with Me?" exclaimed Magdalen, chafing under a sense of her own injuries.

"May I ask what right you had to pry into your father's private affairs?" retorted Miss Garth.

"Right?" repeated Magdalen. "I have no secrets from papa—what business has papa to have secrets from me! I consider myself insulted."

"If you considered yourself properly reproved for not minding your own business," said the plain-spoken Miss Garth, "you would be a trifle nearer the truth. Ah! you're like all the rest of the girls in the present day. Not one in a hundred of you knows which end of her's uppermost."

The three ladies entered the morning-room; and Magdalen acknowledged Miss Garth's reproof by banging the door.

Half an hour passed, and neither Mr. Vanstone nor his wife left the breakfast-room. The servant, ignorant of what had happened, went in to clear the table—found his master and mistress seated close together in deep consultation—and immediately went out again. Another quarter of an hour elapsed before the breakfast-room door was opened, and the private conference of the husband and wife came to an end.

"I hear mamma in the hall," said Norah. "Perhaps she is coming to tell us something."

Mrs. Vanstone entered the morning-room as her daughter spoke. The colour was deeper on her cheeks, and the brightness of half-dried tears glistened in her eyes: her step was more hasty, all her movements were quicker than usual.

"I bring news, my dears, which will surprise you," she said, addressing her daughters. "Your father and I are going to London to-morrow."

Magdalen caught her mother by the arm in speechless astonishment; Miss Garth dropped her work on her lap; even the sedate Norah started to her feet, and amazedly repeated the words, "Going to London!"

"Without us!" added Magdalen.

"Your father and I are going alone," said Mrs. Vanstone. "Perhaps, for as long as three weeks—but not longer. We are going"—she hesitated—"we are going on important family business. Don't hold me, Magdalen. This is a sudden necessity—I have a great deal to do to-day—many things to set in order before to-morrow. There, there, my love, let me go."

She drew her arm away; hastily kissed her youngest daughter on the forehead; and at once left the room again. Even Magdalen saw that her mother was not to be coaxed into hearing or answering any more questions.

The morning wore on, and nothing was seen of Mr. Vanstone. With the reckless curiosity of her age and character, Magdalen, in defiance of Miss Garth's prohibition and her sister's remonstrances, determined to go to the study, and look for her father there. When she tried the door, it was locked on the inside. She said, "It's only me, papa;" and waited for the answer. "I'm busy now, my dear," was the answer. "Don't disturb me."

Mrs. Vanstone was, in another way, equally inaccessible. She remained in her own room, with the female servants about her, immersed in endless preparations for the approaching departure. The servants, little used in that family to sudden resolutions and unexpected orders, were awkward and confused in obeying directions. They ran from room to room unnecessarily, and lost time and patience in jostling each other on the stairs. If a stranger had entered the house, that day, he might have imagined that an unexpected disaster had happened in it, instead of an unexpected necessity for a journey to London. Nothing proceeded in its ordinary routine. Magdalen, who was accustomed to pass the morning at the piano, wandered restlessly about the staircases and passages, and in and out of doors when there were glimpses of fine weather. Norah, whose fondness for reading had passed into a family proverb, took up book after book from table and shelf, and laid them down again, in despair of fixing her attention. Even Miss Garth felt the all-pervading influence of the household disorganisation, and sat alone by the morning-room fire, with her head shaking ominously and her work laid aside.

"Family affairs?" thought Miss Garth, pondering over Mrs. Vanstone's vague explanatory words. "I have lived twelve years at Combe-Raven; and these are the first family affairs which have got between the parents and the children, in all my experience. What does it mean? Change? I suppose I'm getting old. I don't like change."

CHAPTER II.

At ten o'clock the next morning, Norah and Magdalen stood alone in the hall at Combe-Raven, watching the departure of the carriage which took their father and mother to the London train.

Up to the last moment, both the sisters had hoped for some explanation of that mysterious "family business" to which Mrs. Vanstone had so briefly alluded on the previous day. No such explanation had been offered. Even the agitation of the leave-taking, under circumstances entirely new in the home experience of the parents and children, had not shaken the resolute discretion of Mr. and Mrs. Vanstone. They had gone—with the warmest testimonies of affection, with farewell embraces fervently reiterated again and again—but without dropping one word, from first to last, of the nature of their errand.

As the grating sound of the carriage-wheels ceased suddenly at a turn in the road, the sisters looked one another in the face; each feeling, and each betraying in her own way, the dreary

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sense that she was openly excluded, for the first time, from the confidence of her parents. Norah's customary reserve strengthened into sullen silence—she sat down in one of the hall chairs, and looked out frowningly through the open house-door. Magdalen, as usual when her temper was ruffled, expressed her dissatisfaction in the plainest terms. "I don't care who knows it—I think we are both of us shamefully ill-used!" With those words, the young lady followed her sister's example, by seating herself on a hall chair, and looking aimlessly out through the open house-door.

Almost at the same moment, Miss Garth entered the hall, from the morning-room. Her quick observation showed her the necessity for interfering to some practical purpose; and her ready good sense at once pointed the way.

"Look up, both of you, if you please, and listen to me," said Miss Garth. "If we are all three to be comfortable and happy together, now we are alone, we must stick to our usual habits and go on in our regular way. There is the state of things in plain words. Accept the situation—as the French say. Here am I to set you the example. I have just ordered an excellent dinner at the customary hour. I am going to the medicine-chest, next, to physic the kitchen-maid; an unwholesome girl, whose face-ache is all stomach. In the mean time, Norah, my dear, you will find your work and your books, as usual, in the library. Magdalen, suppose you leave off tying your handkerchief into knots, and use your fingers on the keys of the piano instead? We'll lunch at one, and take the dogs out afterwards. Be as brisk and cheerful, both of you, as I am. Come! rouse up directly. If I see those gloomy faces any longer, as sure as my name's Garth, I'll give your mother written warning, and go back to my friends by the mixed train at twelve-forty."

Concluding her address of expostulation in those terms, Miss Garth led Norah to the library door, pushed Magdalen into the morning-room, and went on her own way sternly to the regions of the medicine-chest.

In this half-jesting, half-earnest manner, she was accustomed to maintain a sort of friendly authority over Mr. Vanstone's daughters, after her proper functions as governess had necessarily come to an end. Norah, it is needless to say, had long since ceased to be her pupil; and Magdalen had, by this time, completed her education. But Miss Garth had lived too long and too intimately under Mr. Vanstone's roof to be parted with, for any purely formal considerations; and the first hint at going away which she had thought it her duty to drop, was dismissed with such affectionate warmth of protest, that she never repeated it again, except in jest. The entire management of the household was, from that time forth, left in her hands; and to those duties she was free to add what companionable assistance she could render to Norah's reading, and what friendly superintendence she could still exercise over Magdalen's music. Such were the terms on which Miss Garth was now a resident in Mr. Vanstone's family.

Towards the afternoon the weather improved. At half-past one the sun was shining brightly; and the ladies left the house, accompanied by the dogs, to set forth on their walk.

They crossed the stream, and ascended by the little rocky pass to the hills beyond; then diverged to the left, and returned by a cross-road which led through the village of Combe-Raven.

As they came in sight of the first cottages, they passed a man, hanging about the road, who looked attentively, first at Magdalen, then at Norah. They merely observed that he was short, that he was dressed in black, and that he was a total stranger to them—and continued their homeward walk, without thinking more about the loitering foot-passenger whom they had met on their way back.

After they had left the village, and had entered the road which led straight to the house, Magdalen surprised Miss Garth by announcing that the stranger in black had turned, after they had passed him, and was now following them. "He keeps on Norah's side of the road," she added, mischievously. "I'm not the attraction—don't blame *me*."

Whether the man was really following them, or not, made little difference, for they were now close to the house. As they passed through the lodge-gates, Miss Garth looked round, and saw that the stranger was quickening his pace, apparently with the purpose of entering into conversation. Seeing this, she at once directed the young ladies to go on to the house with the dogs, while she herself waited for events at the gate.

There was just time to complete this discreet arrangement, before the stranger reached the lodge. He took off his hat to Miss Garth politely, as she turned round. What did he look like, on the face of him? He looked like a clergyman in difficulties.

Taking his portrait, from top to toe, the picture of him began with a tall hat, broadly encircled by a mourning band of crumpled crape. Below the hat was a lean, long, sallow face, deeply pitted with the small-pox, and characterised, very remarkably, by eyes of two different colours—one bilious green, one bilious brown, both sharply intelligent. His hair was iron-grey, carefully brushed round at the temples. His cheeks and chin were in the bluest bloom of smooth shaving; his nose was short Roman; his lips long, thin, and supple, curled up at the corners with a mildly-humorous smile. His white cravat was high, stiff, and dingy; the collar, higher, stiffer, and dingier, projected its rigid points on either side beyond his chin. Lower down, the lithe little figure of the man was arrayed throughout in sober-shabby black. His frock-coat was buttoned tight round the waist, and left to bulge open majestically at the chest. His hands were covered with black cotton gloves, neatly darned at the fingers; his um-

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brella, worn down at the ferule to the last quarter of an inch, was carefully preserved, nevertheless, in an oilskin case. The front view of him was the view in which he looked oldest; meeting him face to face, he might have been estimated at fifty or more. Walking behind him, his back and shoulders were almost young enough to have passed for five-and-thirty. His manners were distinguished by a grave serenity. When he opened his lips, he spoke in a rich bass voice, with an easy flow of language, and a strict attention to the elocutionary claims of words in more than one syllable. Persuasion distilled from his mildly-curling lips; and, shabby as he was, perennial flowers of courtesy bloomed all over him from head to foot.

"This is the residence of Mr. Vanstone, I believe?" he began, with a circular wave of his hand in the direction of the house. "Have I the honour of addressing a member of Mr. Vanstone's family?"

"Yes," said the plain-spoken Miss Garth. "You are addressing Mr. Vanstone's governess."

The persuasive man fell back a step—admired Mr. Vanstone's governess—advanced a step again—and continued the conversation.

"And the two young ladies," he went on, "the two young ladies who were walking with you, are doubtless Mr. Vanstone's daughters? I recognised the darker of the two, and the elder as I apprehend, by her likeness to her handsome mother. The younger lady——"

"You are acquainted with Mrs. Vanstone, I suppose?" said Miss Garth, interrupting the stranger's flow of language, which, all things considered, was beginning, in her opinion, to flow rather freely. The stranger acknowledged the interruption by one of his polite bows, and submerged Miss Garth in his next sentence as if nothing had happened.

"The younger lady," he proceeded, "takes after her father, I presume? I assure you, her face struck me. Looking at it with my friendly interest in the family, I thought it very remarkable. I said to myself — Charming, Characteristic, Memorable. Not like her sister, not like her mother. No doubt, the image of her father?"

Once more Miss Garth attempted to stem the man's flow of words. It was plain that he did not know Mr. Vanstone, even by sight—otherwise, he would never have committed the error of supposing that Magdalen took after her father. Did he know Mrs. Vanstone any better? He had left Miss Garth's question on that point unanswered. In the name of wonder, who was he? Powers of impudence! what did he want?

"You may be a friend of the family, though I don't remember your face," said Miss Garth. "What may your commands be, if you please? Did you come here to pay Mrs. Vanstone a visit?"

"I had anticipated the pleasure of communicating with Mrs. Vanstone," answered this inveterately evasive and inveterately civil man. "How is she?"

"Much as usual," said Miss Garth, feeling her resources of politeness fast failing her.

"Is she at home?"

"No."

"Out for long?"

"Gone to London with Mr. Vanstone."

The man's long face suddenly grew longer. His bilious brown eye looked disconcerted, and his bilious green eye followed its example. His manner became palpably anxious; and his choice of words was more carefully selected than ever.

"Is Mrs. Vanstone's absence likely to extend over any very lengthened period?" he inquired.

"It will extend over three weeks," replied Miss Garth. "I think you have now asked me questions enough," she went on, beginning to let her temper get the better of her at last. "Be so good, if you please, as to mention your business and your name. If you have any message to leave for Mrs. Vanstone, I shall be writing to her by to-night's post, and I can take charge of it."

"A thousand thanks! A most valuable suggestion. Permit me to take advantage of it immediately."

He was not in the least affected by the severity of Miss Garth's looks and language—he was simply relieved by her proposal, and he showed it with the most engaging sincerity. This time, his bilious green eye took the initiative, and set his bilious brown eye the example of recovered serenity. His curling lips took a new twist upwards; he tucked his umbrella briskly under his arm; and produced from the breast of his coat a large old-fashioned black pocket-book. From this he took a pencil and a card—hesitated and considered for a moment—wrote rapidly on the card—and placed it, with the politest alacrity, in Miss Garth's hand.

"I shall feel personally obliged, if you will honour me by enclosing that card in your letter," he said. "There is no necessity for my troubling you additionally with a message. My name will be quite sufficient to recal a little family matter to Mrs. Vanstone, which has no doubt escaped her memory. Accept my best thanks. This has been a day of agreeable surprises to me. I have found the country hereabouts remarkably pretty; I have seen Mrs. Vanstone's two charming daughters; I have become acquainted with an honoured preceptress in Mr. Vanstone's family. I congratulate myself—I apologise for occupying your valuable time—I beg my renewed acknowledgments—I wish you good morning."

He raised his tall hat. His brown eye twinkled, his green eye twinkled, his curly lips smiled sweetly. In a moment, he turned on his heel. His youthful back appeared to the best advantage; his active little legs took him away trippingly in the direction of the village. One, two, three—and he reached the turn in the road. Four, five, six—and he was gone.

Miss Garth looked down at the card in her hand, and looked up again in blank astonishment. The name and address of the clerical-

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looking stranger (both written in pencil) ran as follows:

Captain Wragge. Post-office, Bristol.

LONG-SEA TELEGRAPHS.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.

In the present condition of public opinion as to submarine cables, there is not the slightest chance of inducing either a company or the government to risk a million or even half a million of money on long-sea cables. Unreasoning confidence has been succeeded by unreasoning distrust; private enterprise and the public purse have both been so severely taxed by the failures of rash ignorance and unscrupulous jobbery, that submarine-cable communications have fallen into undeserved disrepute. Yet it will not be difficult to show that, with existing materials and existing experience, properly employed, the most distant civilised regions may be brought into telegraphic communication with this country.

It is self-evident that telegraphic communication with our colonists and customers in Asia, Africa, and America is one of the most pressing wants of the age—a want which follows naturally the perfection of railroads and steamboats. The value of speed increases, with more than geometrical proportion, with distance. A letter from London to Liverpool will often be delivered as soon as a telegram, especially if sent very late in the day, but a telegram to Marseilles outstrips the express train by many hours; and a telegram to Bombay would be in advance of the mail by many days. For this reason we ought not to be content until America, India, and China, are brought within the influence of a system of telegraphs.

The art of constructing and working land electric telegraphs has been almost brought to perfection. Let the money only be subscribed, and mechanics and manufacturers can be found thoroughly able to make and work a system of telegraphs over any distance and any country in which man can exist. Not only has all Europe—including the vast Russian empire, the principal islands of the Mediterranean, and Egypt—been united by a system of telegraphs, but British India and the colonies of Australia possess systems of "winged wires," which, passing through thousands of miles of deserts and forests, unite the principal towns and ports of those dependencies.

The formation of submarine telegraphs for use in deep seas is still in the stage of experiment. We have arrived at a point where the combination of various inventions already made, and the application of experience already gained, is required rather than any extraordinary inventive powers.

The problem of manufacturing, laying, and maintaining deep-sea telegraph cables over one thousand miles, is not—like the telescope, the safety-lamp, the steam-engine, or the locomotive railway—to be worked out by the efforts of any one man of genius vivifying the crude ideas of his predecessors. It is a problem that can only be worked out by a number of minute and often individually insignificant improvements in various processes connected with manufacturing cables, by increased care and skill in selecting sea routes, and in laying down cables when properly made.

On the question of deep-sea telegraphy we are much in the position of Horace's "brass-breasted hero" who first ventured on the ocean, or rather, perhaps, of the man—if there ever was such a man—who first thought of extending coasting to far-sea voyages, and of leaving familiar landmarks and ready shelter for an adventure of weeks on the trackless ocean. Ships, cables, sails, and stores for navigating the Mediterranean or the Red or the Indian seas were to be had, but it required a long accumulation of experience, and a long series of improvement, before what the French call the long-course voyage could be brought down to a reasonable average of safety and certainty.

The idea of electric telegraphs remained a philosopher's toy until railways found a clear place for their development. They were only first tried on a working scale in 1839; and almost insuperable difficulties appeared to attend their use for even twenty miles. Several years elapsed before it was found possible to work with certainty over a hundred miles. Unlike most inventions of a scientific character, the failures in submarine telegraphs may be distinctly traced to over-confidence, the result of early success. The first submarine cable laid between and across the Straits of Dover was a complete success—it was, in fact, a fortunate accident—and sanguine speculators, without either science or practical skill, have again and again obtained subscriptions for submarine cables constructed on the rule of thumb, and utterly unsuitable for any situation except the exact line on which the Dover and Calais cable happened to fall.

Professor Wheatstone, to whom the world is more indebted for the perfection to which land telegraphs have been brought than to any man living, suggested submarine telegraphs so early as 1837. On the 6th February, 1840, before a Select Committee of the House of Commons on Railways, he stated, in answer to a question, that he considered it would be perfectly practicable to communicate by electric telegraphs between Dover and Calais. In 1845, he made it part of an agreement with the company to whom he and Mr. Cook sold their patents, that he should have assistance in carrying out a submarine cable project. But differences arose between the professor and the company, and nothing was done.

The manufacture of a newly-discovered substance—gutta-percha—and the invention of wire-twisted ropes, were necessary before it was possible to make an effective submarine telegraphic cable. The first attempts at land electric telegraphs were subterranean, and it was not until various plans for insulating wires underground (such as covering them with cotton

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and tar, &c.) had failed, that the simple experiment of carrying an iron wire on poles in the air was adopted. Until very recently, the use of india-rubber as a covering for electric wires was altogether abandoned; gutta-percha was found, in spite of certain defects, more easy to apply, and more durable.

The first attempt at a submarine communication was not made until 1850, when a simple unprotected wire, covered with gutta-percha, was laid from Dover to Cape Grisnez, between Calais and Boulogne. This wire, although it failed the next day, proved the feasibility of the idea, and saved a concession granted by the French government. It was while this wire was being laid, that the plan of protecting the hemp covering of the gutta-percha by wire, was suggested by a passenger on board the ship that was laying it. In 1851, a cable, twenty-five and one-third miles in length, covered with iron wire, was laid from Dover to Calais, from the hulk of the man-of-war Blazer, towed by a tug. This cable fell short of the shore by half a mile, but as the half-mile was in shallow water, the job was successfully completed. This cable, although several times broken by ships' anchors, has been repaired, and has continued in working order ever since.

In the following year a cable was laid from Holyhead to Howth, which failed, as did an attempt to connect Port Patrick and Donaghadee. In 1853, a cable successfully laid between these ports placed England and Ireland in electric union. In the same year, four cables were laid between England and Holland (by Orfordness and Schevening); these have been repeatedly broken by ships' anchors, but have always been repaired and maintained in working order. The Dutch cables form important links in the history of submarine telegraphs, because they were the first cables lifted, spliced, and repaired, out at sea; and the success of the system then adopted for repairing these cables, and the experience gained by the engineer employed, Mr. F. C. Webb, has been the foundation of the art of repairing telegraph cables—an art on which, up to the present time, too little value has been laid.

In 1854, an English firm laid for the Mediterranean Company a cable over a length of one hundred and ten miles, between Spezzia, the naval port of Piedmont, and Corsica; and another, eleven miles long, from Corsica to the Island of Sardinia. These have remained in working order ever since. Between 1854 and 1855, two cables, of the same pattern as the Hague cables, were laid between Holyhead and Howth; one has been taken up, and the other, although repeatedly broken, has been repaired, and continues in use.

In 1850, England and Hanover were connected by a cable two hundred and eighty miles long, which continues in working order. In the same year, Liverpool and Holyhead — Weymouth, Alderney, Jersey, and Guernsey—St. Bee's Head and the Isle of Man—were severally connected by submarine cables. The Isle of Man failed the first week, was partially relaid, and has stood ever since. The expense of repairing the Channel Islands cables has so far exceeded all reasonable hopes of profit, that they have been for the present abandoned to the use of zoophytes and marine algæ.

In 1859, a cable was laid between Folkestone and Boulogne, which still remains in good working order. In the same year, Australia and Tasmania were united by a cable two hundred and forty miles in length, and, although one section of one-third, having been cut through on a rocky bed, had to be relaid in a more suitable channel, it continues to work satisfactorily.

In 1855, a wire, covered with gutta-percha, and unprotected, laid for the British government between Balaclava and Varna, continued to work until it was wilfully cut through: according to a camp story, by order of a French general worried to madness by the frequency of messages from Paris. A cable was also laid, about the same time, from Constantinople to Varna, for the Turkish government.

All these cables, except the one between Spezzia and Corsica, were laid in shallow seas. The instances in which cables have worked for any period in deep waters, are those of the Sardinian, one hundred and ten miles; the Newfoundland, to Cape Breton, eighty-five miles; the Dardanelles to Scio and Candia, four hundred and fifty knots; Athens to Syria, one hundred and fifty knots; Barcelona to Port Mahon, one hundred and eighty. On the other hand, the failures have been numerous, and in two of the greatest experiments, most disastrous in a financial point of view—so disastrous that, with them, further attempts at deep long-sea telegraphic communication were, for a long period, closed; neither the government nor private capitalists would listen to proposals, however well devised, for submarine cables.

The first attempt at laying the Atlantic cable was made in 1857. In 1858 three unsuccessful attempts were repeated, and on the 5th August, 1858, a cable was laid between Galway and Newfoundland. On the first attempt, a length of three hundred and eighty-five miles of cable was lost. The remaining quantity was then made up to three thousand miles, and eventually two thousand two hundred miles were laid, and about one hundred miles were brought home, the rest being lost in unsuccessful attempts. What this speculation really did, and why it was certain to fail, we shall presently explain.

When the Atlantic cable, after a brief loud sensation, at a vast expense, suddenly became dumb, capitalists, contrary to the expectations of the promoters, who had so rashly hurried the experiments, resolutely buttoned up their pockets, and declined to subscribe another shilling to long-sea telegraphs.

When, therefore, a telegraphic communication with India became an urgent political and commercial necessity, a dexterous company of speculators brought pressure to bear on a tottering government, and obtained an unconditional guarantee of four and a half per cent on eight hundred thousand pounds for fifty years for a

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cable from Suez to Kurrachee, on the simple condition that each of the three sections into which it was divided should work for one month. That, at least, was what the agreement was found to mean, although the victims at the Treasury and the parliamentary public were under the impression that the month guarantee extended over the whole line, and, in excusable ignorance, concluded that a cable that worked for a month might, like the Dover cable, work for nine years. The dinners, the balls, the private theatricals, the fireworks with which, at Kurrachee and Aden, the hospitable garrison welcomed the presumed constructors of the cable which was to put London within a few hours of Calcutta were scarcely over, when it was discovered that first one link and then another had failed. Finally, it appeared that the British tax-payer had to pay thirty-six thousand pounds per annum for a cable that had never sent one complete message from Suez to Kurrachee.

The Red Sea job had the same fatal effect on the government goose as the Atlantic on the Stock Exchange goose—no more golden eggs were to be expected from either until something that appeared more new and true in submarine cables could be presented.

Under these circumstances, keenly feeling every day the need of interchange of electric messages with India and America, the government took the wise step of appointing a committee to examine into the whole question of submarine cables—a subject up to that period involved, as far as the non-professional world was concerned, in hopeless mystery. This committee included, amongst others, the late Robert Stephenson, Professor Wheatstone, William Fairbairn, George P. Bidder, the two Clarks—Edwin and Latimer. Mr. Stephenson died before the inquiry actually commenced, after having sketched out the course of proceedings and suggested the experiments it would be advisable to make.

A folio Blue-book of three hundred and twenty pages, two hundred and sixteen questions and answers, eighteen appendices, and many diagrams, contains a report of the evidence of forty-two witnesses of every degree and shade of commercial, speculative, scientific, mechanical, chemical, and manufacturing skill—engineers, patentees, sailors, professors, and concessionnaires.

The statistics of submarine telegraphs in April, 1861, stood thus: There had been laid eleven thousand three hundred and sixty-four miles of cables, but little more than three thousand were working. The failures included the Atlantic, two thousand two hundred; the Red Sea and India, three thousand four hundred and ninety-nine; the Sardinia, Malta, and Corfu, seven hundred; the Singapore and Batavia, five hundred and fifty miles—all, except the last, being laid in deep seas.

Shallow-water cables are laid in depths down to about one hundred fathoms, and are liable to injury from anchors, dredges, and strong currents. Deep-sea cables are laid out of reach of all such dangers, at depths beyond a hundred fathoms, and extending to miles. We have heard and almost forgotten all the fine things that were said about the Atlantic cable during the brief period of its supposed success; a few figures tell the tale of its actual results. It cost, from first to last, four hundred and sixty-two thousand pounds, which includes seventy-five thousand pounds paid to the projectors, besides the use of the ships lent by the English and American governments. It was worked from the 1st September to the 10th August, 1858, between Valentia and Newfoundland, for twenty-one days, and during these twenty-one days one hundred and twenty-nine messages were sent, containing one thousand four hundred and seventy-four words and seven thousand two hundred and fifty-three letters. From Newfoundland to Valentia it was worked twenty-three days, and there were sent two hundred and seventy-one messages of two thousand eight hundred and eighty-five words and thirteen thousand nine hundred and sixty-eight letters. Besides the exchange of compliments between our Queen and the President of the United States, and divers sensation paragraphs, there were two important official messages sent to Canada countermanding the sending of two regiments to England in the following words:

I. "August 31st, 1858. The Military Secretary of the Commander-in-Chief, Horse Guards, London, to General Trolloppe, Halifax, Nova Scotia. The Sixty-seventh Regiment is not to return to England." II. "The Military Secretary, &c., to General commanding at Montreal, Canada. The Thirty-ninth Regiment is not to return to England." On the 1st September, Valentia telegraphed C. W. Field, New York: "Please inform American government we are now in a position to do best to forward——" There the message stopped, and no more words were ever received from Newfoundland. There the great experiment and speculation ended.

The Red Sea and Indian cable never even exchanged a compliment between Kurrachee and Suez. It was laid in two portions: the first between Suez and Aden, the second between Aden and Kurrachee, at the mouth of the Hindus. The portion between Suez and Aden was laid in three sections: from Suez to Cosseir, two hundred and fifty-five nautical miles; from Cosseir to Suakin, four hundred and seventy-four miles; from Suakin to Aden, six hundred and twenty-nine miles. This was completed in May, 1859. The sections on the Aden and Kurrachee line were: from Aden to Hallain, seven hundred and eighteen miles; from Hallain to Muscat, four hundred and eighty-six miles; from Muscat to Kurrachee, four hundred and eighty-one miles. A portion of about seventy miles was laid in depths of from one thousand nine hundred to two thousand fathoms. The first portion, between Aden and Suez, was finished on the 28th of May, 1859; the second portion was completed in February, 1860. About the same time, the Aden to Suakin section

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failed; then the Cosseir section, which had a fault from the first, failed. The Aden to Kurrachee remained a very short time in working order, two sections having numerous faults. Thus each of the separate sections worked for thirty days, and earned the contractor his money; but the whole cable never worked for thirty days.

The committee attributed the failure of the Atlantic enterprise to the cable being of a faulty design, manufactured without proper supervision, and handled without sufficient care. "It was defective from the first, and practical men ought to have known of the locality of the defects."

From the evidence, it appears that under the bargain with the four projectors who received seventy-five thousand pounds for their concession, one, as part of the bargain, made himself engineer chief, not having previously any experience in marine telegraphs; and another, a surgeon and amateur, with a theory, became the electrician of the company. The way in which the whole business was hurried is shown very characteristically by Mr. Whitehouse, one of the scientific witnesses. He said that he wanted to try some important experiments to test the capabilities of the cable, which would have occupied three months. When he had explained his views, Mr. Cyrus Field, one of the American commissioners, with his share of seventy-five thousand pounds in view, and "full of steam," cried, "Pooh! nonsense. Why, the whole scheme will be stopped; the scheme will be put back a twelvemonth; *cannot you say now that you know it will do?* We hope you are not going to stop the ship this way." And so on this principle the ships went to sea *with something that would do,* and did do enough to make Mr. Field and his fellow promoters great lions for a brief space.

In the same way the Red Sea cable never was perfect, and, if perfect, never fit for the climate. This was not extraordinary, for the gentleman who obtained the concession, and sold it to the company, had no experience in telegraphs, but became engineer to the company by virtue of his bargain, and as part of the purchase-money. The government having no competent engineering adviser, made a blind contract for an unconditional guarantee with the company, and the company, for want of competent engineering advice, virtually agreed that the contractors should make the rope and lay the rope as they pleased. It is not, therefore, surprising to find that the committee "consider that the India and Red Sea telegraph failed because the design of the cable was not suited to the climate or the bottom of the sea over which it had to be laid, and because the contractor was allowed to manufacture and lay it without proper supervision or control."

We do not dissect these wretched failures in order to give pain to any one, but to show that submarine cables in deep seas have not yet had fair play, and that, so far from there being any insuperable obstacle to laying them, there is every reason to believe that, with proper care, submarine cable and mainland communications may be eventually established with our most distant possessions. But to execute such a task, the peculiarities of climate, the depth and character of the sea, and its bottom, must be studied in designing the cable. The cable must be laid under the orders of men of skill and experience. Such men are, we are happy to state, engaged to reinstate the telegraph with India, by a new company which has arisen out of the ashes of the Red Sea Telegraph Company. Advantage must be taken of every means for shortening the sea route, or the deep-sea route, as the case may be; and where in deep waters great risks are inevitable, bargains should be made with contractors which will render it their interest that the cables shall work, not a week or a month, but for as long a period, and as pérfectly, as possible.

WORSE WITCHES THAN MACBETH'S.

Dr. Harsnet described thus the "true idea" of a Bewitching Woman: "An old weather-beaten crone, having her chin and knees meeting for age, walking like a bow leaning on a staff, hollow-eyed, untooth'd, furrow'd on her face, having her lips trembling with the palsy, going mumbling in the streets: one that hath forgotten her pater noster, and yet hath a shrewd tongue to call a drab a drab. If she hath learn'd of an old wife in a chimney end Pax, Max, Fax for a spell; or can say Sir John Grantham's curse for the miller's eels:

> All ye that have stolen the miller's eelis,
> Laudate Dominum de Cœlis;
> And all they that have consented thereto,
> Benidicamus Domino:

why, then, look about you, my neighbours."

A heartier or more thorough way of making superstition hateful could not have been found, than that along which we are led in the complete series of Witch Stories lately put forth by Mrs. E. Lynn Linton. Taking the superstition of Scotland and England each in turn, Mrs. Linton tells the public the whole story of this form of credulity in its most cruel and stupid issues, conquering its monotony, as, out of a liberal and earnest mind, she pleads the cause of common sense and wholesome scepticism—still needing defenders against the sick appetite for clumsy marvels. The witches of old, who claimed to be real riders of broomsticks, got as much sensible help out of the supernatural master with whom they declared their compact, as the impostors of our day who swim the air in dark drawing-rooms, and "run" spirits of Socrates, Shakespeare, and the late Mrs. Grundy, equally charged with all the secrets of the solemn unknown world. There is a change in the form of delusion and in the characters and persons of deluders and deluded; luckily also there is a change in the treatment of the superstitious fever: the cold-water cure being considered preferable to cautery. A pretty thing it would be if, after enjoying the séance of spi-

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ritualised broomstick at the Honourable Mrs. Idleness-the-Mother-of-Tomfoolery's, that clever and fascinating but too credulous friend were served up to us next week at breakfast among the roast women in the daily newspapers' Smithfield report. There is a certain stock of credulity, one would think, always abroad in the world, and the greater the quackery or the absurdity—the more emphatic the alleged experience, and the less tangible the evidence of its truth or trustworthiness.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there was, as Mrs. Linton tells us, an epidemic witch panic of superstition formularised by James the Sixth of Scotland into a distinct section of the articles of human faith. The first Scotch witches on record are those whom St. Patrick offended, when they and their master, the devil—outraged by his rigour against them—tore off a piece of rock as the saint crossed the sea and hurled it after him: which rock became the fortress of Dumbarton. Then in the year nine hundred and sixty-eight, there was King Duff pining by reason of a waxen image which a young woman under torture accused her mother and certain other old women of having made, and those women were burnt. Then there was in the thirteenth century Thomas of Ercildoune, the rhymer and prophet, to whom is ascribed an extant romance of Sir Tristrem. He was "ane man of gret admiration to the peple and schaw sundry thingis as they fell." When Thomas sat one day under the Eildoun-tree, there came towards him a most beautiful damsel riding upon a grey palfrey. He begged her love: which she refused, because it would undo her beauty and make him repent. He would not be denied; so when he had the lady in his arms, her bright eyes became dead, her fair locks dropped from the naked scalp, her rich attire was changed to rags, and with that odious hag for companion the poor Thomas was forced to bid adieu "to sun and moon, to grass and every green tree," and mounting behind the palfrey of the enchantress, rush through darkness and the roaring of waters, also through a fair garden in which was the fatal tree of knowledge, to the point whence the three roads diverged, to heaven, hell, and fairy-land. To a gay castle in fairy-land, Thomas was taken by his guide, who had resumed all her beauty as the Fairy Queen. There, he dwelt three years, when, the day before the arrival of a fiend who would take tithe of the inhabitants of fairy-land and would be sure to seize him as a stately and fair person, he was carried back to the Eildoun-tree with many fairy secrets trusted to his telling; the fate of the wars between England and Scotland being among the number. To this and other legendary stories Mrs. Linton only alludes, and then, coming into the light of written history, begins the series of indubitable Scotch witch stories with the fate of Lady Glammis. The wife of John Lyon, Lord Glammis, it was as "one of the Douglases" that her husband's near relative, William Lyon, whose suit of love when she became a young widow she slighted, brought Lady Glammis to the stake. As a Douglas she was beyond the pale of judicial sympathy.

We have Bessie Dunlop's own word (given under torture on a November day, in the year fifteen 'seventy-six) for the fact that when she was weak after a confinement and weeping bitterly for the death of a cow, Tom Reid—killed years before at the battle of Pinkye, but then dwelling in fairy-land—came and comforted her, and, having made her acquaintance, at last took her clean away from the presence of her husband and three tailors—they seeing nothing—to where eight gentlemen and four pretty women dressed in plaids were waiting for her, and persuaded her in vain to go to fairy land. The queen of the fairies also, a stout comely woman, had sat on her bed and reasoned with her; but she stuck to her home and her honesty, only holding odd fairy gossip with Tom, who told her useful secrets of roots, and herbs, and drinks: so that she cured John Jake's bairn, and her gudeman's sister's cow, and tried her best, and Tom's best, without any success on old Lady Kilbowye's leg. For all this, the poor old woman who had done what good she could with herbs and simples was "convict and brynt."

A sorcerer of fame was John Fian, alias Cuningham, master of the school at Saltpans, Lothian, who was arraigned on the day after Christmas-day, in the year fifteen 'ninety, and strangled and burnt on the Castle Hill at Edinburgh, a month afterwards. Satan, said the indictment on which he was tried and convicted, appeared to him in white as he lay on his bed, musing and thinking how he should be revenged on Thomas Trumbill, for not having whitewashed his room according to agreement. After promising homage he received his master's mark, where it was on trial found under his tongue, by means of two pins therein thrust up to their heads. This wonderful man, amongst other of his achievements, was once seen to chase a cat, and in the chase to be carried so high over a hedge that he could not touch her head. So it was proved against him that he flew through the air. When asked why he hunted the cat, he said that Satan had need of her, and that he wanted all the cats he could lay hands on, to cast into the sea, and cause storms and shipwrecks. He was further accused of endeavouring to bewitch a young maiden; but, thanks to a wile of her mother's, practised his enchantment on the hair of a heifer. The result was, that a luckless young cow went lowing after him, even into his schoolroom, rubbing herself against him, and observing him everywhere with languishing eyes like a love-sick young lady. To make good the twenty counts of indictment against John Fian, persuasion to confess was applied by torture, until he became speechless; and his tormentors, supposing it to be the devil's mark which kept him silent, searched for that mark, that by its discovery the spell might be broken. So they found it, as stated before, under his tongue, with two charmed pins stuck up to their heads therein; the sign of success

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being the cry extorted by that further pang. When able to speak, he procured relief by confessing as much as would satisfy his tormentors. The next day he recanted this confession. He was then somewhat restored to himself, and had mastered the weakness of his agony. Whereupon it was assumed that the devil had visited him in the night and had marked him afresh. They searched him, he was tortured afresh, and died denying all the fictions charged against him.. Fian was one of the first human sacrifices to the odious superstition of the odious King James.

Another was the half-witted servant-girl of a deputy baillie, who, seeing his maid busy to "helpe all such as were troubled or grieved with anie kinde of sicknes or infirmitie," considered this conduct suspicious, and, without witness, judge, or jury, put her to torture on his own account, first with the "pillie-winks," or thumbscrews, then by "thrawing," binding, and wrenching her head with a rope. As she confessed nothing, she was searched by pricking with a pin, and the devil's mark was discovered on her throat. The point of discovery was the prick made when her endurance gave way; and she not only confessed, but implicated by her confession three other women, one of them the daughter of Lord Cliftonhall, one of the senators of the College of Justice. While we dip into Mrs. Linton's work, selecting and condensing, we use, as far as we can, the clever lady's own words, for it is hardly desirable that what is well said should be said worse. One of the women thus accused, Agnes Sampson, was a sober clever woman, whose repute for wisdom brought her to the mind of her accuser. She was carried before the king himself at Holyrood, and, as she denied all that was charged against her, she was fastened to the witch's bridle: an iron machine pressed over the head with a piece of iron thrust into the mouth, having four prongs, directed one to the tongue, one to the palate, one to either cheek; was kept without sleep, had her head shaved, and thrawn with a rope; was searched and pricked, until she was goaded into edifying the royal inquisitor with such tales as he longed to hear. "She said," writes Mrs. Linton, "that she and two hundred other witches went to sea on All-Halloween, in riddles or sieves, making merry and drinking by the way: that they landed at North Berwick church, where, taking hands, they danced around, saying,

> Commer goe ye before! commer goe ye!
> Gif ye will not goe before, commer let me!

Here they met the devil, like a mickle black man, as John Fian had said, and he marked her on the right knee; and this was the time when he made them all so angry by calling Robert Grierson by his right name, instead of Rob the Rower, or Ro' the Comptroller. When they rifled the graves, as Fian had said, she got two joints, a winding-sheet, and an enchanted ring, for love-charms. She also said that Geillis Duncan, the informer, went before them playing on the jew's-harp, and the dance she played was Gyllatripes; which so delighted gracious majesty, greedy of infernal news, that he sent on the instant to Geillis, to play the same tune before him; which she did 'to his great pleasure and amazement.' Furthermore, Agnes Sampson confessed that, on asking Satan why he hated King James, and so greatly wished to destroy him, the foul fiend answered: 'Because he is the greatest enemy I have;' adding, that he was 'un homme de Dieu,' and that Satan had no power against him. A pretty piece of flattery, but availing the poor wise wife nothing as time went on."

We pass over some years in Mrs. Linton's chronological series, and, in the middle of the seventeenth century, find many wretched women seized, tortured, and roasted on the accusation of a poor maniac. This wretched creature was a certain Hob Grieve, whose wife had been burnt for a witch twenty years before, and who was himself now doomed as a wizard. Even before torture, when he had filled a prison with his victims, one woman who had been accused by him, came, stung with wrath, to contradict and curse him, and at last in frenzy turned upon herself. Another poor woman, whom the magistrates really laboured to save, sought death as the desperate remedy for all the wretchedness that a mere accusation brought with it. "She had been fyled as a witch, she said, and as a witch she would die. And had not the devil once, when she was a young lassie, kissed her, and given her a new name? Reason enough why she should die, if even nothing worse lay behind. At last the day of her execution came, and she was taken out to be burnt with the rest. On her way to the scaffold she made this lamentable speech: 'Now all you that see me this day, know that I am now to die a witch by my own confession; and I free all men, especially the ministers and magistrates, of the guilt of my blood. I take it wholly on myself. My blood be upon my own head; and as I must make answer to the God of heaven presently, I declare I am as free of witchcraft as any child; but being delated by a malicious woman, and put in prison under the name of a witch, disowned by my husband and friends, and seeing no ground of hope of my coming out of prison or ever coming in credit again, through a temptation of the devil I made up that confession on purpose to destroy my own life, being weary of it, and choosing rather to die than to live.'"

England, even when represented by much of its best wit, was not before Scotland in these matters. As Mr. Crossley has said with only too much truth in the introduction to an old volume on the Discovery of Witches, edited by him: "We find the illustrious author of the Novum Organum sacrificing to courtly suppleness his philosophic truth, and gravely prescribing the ingredients for a witch's ointment; Selden maintaining that crimes of the imagination may be punished with death; the detector of Vulgar Errors, and the most humane of physicians giving the casting vote to the vacillating

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bigotry of Sir Matthew Hale; Hobbes, ever sceptical, penetrating, and sagacious, yet here paralysed and shrinking from the subject, as if afraid to touch it; the adventurous explorer, who sounded the depths and channels of the 'Intellectual System' along all the 'wide-watered' shores of antiquity, running after witches to hear them recite the Common Prayer and the Creed, as a rational test of guilt or innocence; the gentle spirit of Dr. Henry More, girding on the armour of persecution, and rousing itself from a Platonic reverie of the Divine Life to assume the hood and cloak of a familiar of the Inquisition; and the patient and inquiring Boyle, putting aside for a while his searches for the grand Magisterium, and listening, as if spell-bound, with gratified attention to stories of witches at Oxford and devils at Mascon."

We have all heard of the wonderful discovery of witches in the county of Lancashire. The first of the "coven" tried was Mother Demdike: an old woman of eighty, living in Pendle Forest, a wild tract of land on the borders of Yorkshire, who had been a witch for fifty years, and had brought up children and grandchildren to the business, being "a generall agent for the deuill in all those partes." Twenty Pendle witches were accused, and twelve were hanged: the rest escaped, but most of them for a few years only. Twenty-one years later, in sixteen 'thirty-three, there was a second curse of Pendle proclaimed by the deposition of a boy of eleven years old. Painfully frequent in these histories is the judicial murder of poor women for witchcraft, on the faith of the wild inventions of young children. But in this case, the wise King James being no longer leader of the hunt, the accusations were narrowly sifted, and the boy at last confessed that his first batch of lies was invented, at his father's suggestion, to screen himself when he had been robbing an orchard of plums. As the first witch-stories had been so profitable as to bring his father two cows, he gave reins to his fancy, and went on to attack anybody within reach. Indeed, it was not only to Matthew Hopkins that witch-finding and inventing was a source of profit, though he, of all men, who in the course of business sent hundreds to the gallows, made a handsome living out of it. Hopkins's great business year was sixteen 'forty-five. In that year thirty-six were arraigned at one time, before one judge, and fourteen of them hanged. Even Hopkins, living among his crude stories of imps, like mice and moles, that brought fortune to the women who cherished and obeyed them, set a limit to the very mean wages given by the devil to his servants. "Six shillings," he said, in the examination of Joan Ruccalver, of Powstead, Suffolk, "six shillings was the largest amount he had ever known given by an imp to his dame."

The last witch-fire kindled in Scotland was in seventeen 'twenty-seven, when a poor old woman accused of transforming her daughter into a horse to carry her to witches' meetings, and causing her to be shod by the devil, so that she was lamed in hands and feet, being found guilty, "was put into a tar-barrel and burned at Dornoch in the bright month of June. 'And it is said that after being brought out to execution, the weather proving very severe, she sat composedly warming herself by the fire prepared to consume her, while the other instruments of death were getting ready.' The daughter escaped: afterwards she married and had a son who was as lame as herself; and lame in the same manner too; though it does not appear that he was ever shod by the devil and witch-ridden. 'And this son,' says Sir Walter Scott, in 1830, 'was living so lately as to receive the charity of the present Marchioness of Stafford, Countess of Sutherland in her own right.' This is the last execution for witchcraft in Scotland; and in June, 1736, the Acts Anentis Witchcraft were formally repealed."

The date of the last judicial execution for witchcraft in England, is seventeen 'twelve. Though, adds Mrs. Linton, to whose very curious and interesting volume we refer the reader for further information, "there is a report current in most witch books of a case at a later period—but I can find no *authentic* account of it—that, in 1716, of a Mrs. Hicks and her little daughter of nine, hanged at Huntingdon for selling their souls to the devil, bewitching their neighbours to death and their crops to ruin, and as a climax to all, taking off their stockings to raise a storm."

No one who is interested in this curious subject, should be without Mrs. Linton's admirable book.

RUSSIAN TRAVEL.

THE YEAMSCHEEK: ACROSS COUNTRY.

The yeamscheek is a great Russian institution. He is not to be confounded, as is sometimes done by strangers, with the extortionate ruffian drosky, lanska, and britska drivers, in the streets of towns and cities, nor with the coachmen of the gentry and aristocracy. He is a distinct animal; the interior swarms with him; he "works" every macadamised and unmacadamised road in Russia, from the shores of the White to the shores of the Black Sea; and all roads are alike to him. Whether I make a bargain with one to take me to Siberia, or to the next town, it is all the same to him. He goes off to his gang, puts me into a hat, and I am drawn for. The fortunate drawer gets me for his job, and is responsible to the rest for his performance of the duty. I am quite safe with him; he will carry out his part of the bargain, if he can. The traveller, entirely at his mercy, over endless tracks and plains, through dismal forests, frost and snow, among wolves and bears, never distrusts the poor yeamscheek. He is neither a ruffian nor a robber, but simply a peasant, who commenced driving troikas at six years of age, and who will drive them till he dies. He has one failing, the need of vodki: give it him the traveller must, but let the traveller give it sparingly; and if you hit the right mean between parsimony and indiscretion as to this point, he will do anything for his charge

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short of keeping awake when he is sleepy, merely because he drives. Considering the immensity of the country, the number length and character of the roads, and that the yeamscheek is the only reliable land-carrier for passengers and goods (excepting the few railways), the number of these men must be immense. They played no unimportant part in the Napoleon invasion, and in the transport of troops and material of war to the Crimea, and to write anything about interior travelling in Russia, without giving a few lines to the yeamscheeks, would be leaving Hamlet out of his own play.

Let no man imagine that he has tried Russian travel if he have merely visited Moscow and Petersburg, and run a few hundred versts on any of the few main well-kept roads. Wide of these, lies on both sides the interior life of this immense country, and to see it we must penetrate through forests seventy miles long, jolt over wave-like undulations of endless barren or poorly-cultivated land, and bid farewell to every vestige of macadam. In my case the deviation from the main road took place at no indicated point. No finger-post pointed the way, no road led to it.

"I want to go to Evanofsky."

"Well," said the yeamscheek, "that is the road."

"Where? I see no road."

"Ah, yes! but I'll find one." And with that he turned the horses' heads at right angles to the straight broad road we were on, lashed, screamed, and succeeded in plunging us across a deep wide ditch, into what appeared to me to be an endless pathless expanse of stubbled and unstubbled ground; tree, shrub, fence, post-house, or hut, there was none, to mark the route as far as the eye could reach. The frost tinged the expanse with white, and the wintry sun, as it shone with a cool light over the long sweeping undulations of the ground, made the surface of the land glisten like water. Some of us, indeed, could scarcely be persuaded that we were not about to plunge into some trackless pool, without compass, pilot, or chart. The inexperienced will always bid a regretful farewell to the beaten road, as to an old friend, and will face the trackless ground with uncomfortable notions about grizzly bears, wolves, ditches, precipices, and snow-storms. I confess that I lost sight of the black-and-white striped mile-post with some regret. Hitherto we had travelled with these posts and the telegraphic wires, constantly on our right and left, as mute friends and companions. We could read the number of versts on each post when we had nothing else to do, and we could think of human messages going and coming on the wires; but now they are gone on far to the south, keeping company with travellers on the one good broad road that leads to Odessa. As for us, we were over the ditch, and off through the fields.

The change was sudden and complete; but all changes are sudden and complete in Russia. Summer goes in a day, and winter comes. One may cross a river in a boat at night, and walk back on the ice in the morning. Doors and windows stand wide open in summer for a breath of cool air, but in winter the cool air is barred out with double windows, triple doors, and heated stoves. So in regard to clothing; thin linen summer habiliments are thrown aside in a day, and the reign of furs begins. Wheels are upon all carriages of every sort one day, snow comes during the night, and the wheels all vanish; in the morning, nothing is seen but sledges. The transitions from class to class are of the same character. One class is of gentlemen and barons; the next step is to mouscheeks, peasant-serfs who live on black bread and salt, seasoned with sour cabbage and garlic, and who are covered with a dirty sheepskin instead of being clothed in ermine, sables, and fine linen. Cronstadt is reached from Petersburg by steamers in one week; in the next, the traveller runs over the same water with three horses before him. The people will leave a hot bath and plunge into a hole made in the ice; they will leave a room, heated to seventy or eighty degrees, and follow a funeral for six miles, with no covering on their heads, in a frost twenty-five degrees below zero; they will fast seven weeks on cabbage and garlic, and then guzzle themselves in a few hours into the hospital, take cholera, and die. Diseases are generally swift and fatal—to-day well, to-morrow dead. More than two-thirds of the cholera cases die. Women are interesting, plump, and marriageable, at fourteen; they are shrivelled at thirty. Despotic power works in extreme without control, religion without morality, commerce without honesty. There is land illimitable, without cultivation. There are splendid laws, and poverty of justice. Some of these contrasts are now being softened down by the wise progressive policy of Alexander the Second.

Off the beaten track it was that I first learned what yeamscheeks and horseflesh could accomplish. If our courage and confidence sank a degree, and we held on with bated breath as the tarantasses jolted over the deep ruts, ran on one wheel along the edge of a steep slope at an angle of forty-five, or plunged into a chasm with a crash, to be pulled out by the most desperate application of the whip, no such charge can be brought against the drivers; they seemed to rejoice in having quitted the monotonous road, and their spirits appeared to spring into new life with every obstacle. They had now got something to drive over—something worth being a yeamscheek for: "Go, my angels!" "Step out, my dear pigeons!" "Climb up, my sweetheart!" And at every ejaculation down came the knout with terrible force and effect.

At one o'clock in the afternoon of the second day after leaving the main road, we came in sight of the end of our wanderings, on the slope of a long hill. We were obliged to pack up. The descent was steep, and looked extremely dangerous; the yeamscheeks, for the first time, paused before taking it. I got out to reconnoitre. On each side of us lay a dense and

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gloomy forest of oaks, birch, and pines; the track down which we had come a certain length, had been evidently cut through the hill for nearly a mile and a half. Far below in the valley, lay a considerable number of what my servant Harry took to be peat-hills. Those were huts. I could see also the cupola of a church, the chimney of a mill, or works, and, on an adjoining eminence, a residence of some pretension. How to get down was a puzzle; the ground was slippery from ice, the descent long and precipitous, and the cattle were nearly exhausted: the last team having come twenty miles. If our men chose to go down with the usual clatter and dash (we had no drags) the result might be disastrous. The yeamscheeks, however, soon made up their minds to try the old way, and I could see no better way. They crossed themselves (their infallible resource), and were gathering up the ropes for a start, when a voice called out from the wood on the left, "Hold, hold! Do you want your necks broken, you fools?" I knew in a moment, from the manner in which the Russian was spoken, that this was the voice of an Englishman, and as he came struggling through the bushes and low underwood that lined the edge of the wood, his appearance did not belie his speech. He was short, fat, and florid; dressed in a fur coat, long boots, and fur cap; he carried a double-barrelled gun, and was followed by a man much in the same garb, but younger taller and stronger than himself. Two great shaggy cream-coloured wolf-dogs followed the second man, who carried a double-barrelled rifle, and had a large sheathed knife in his belt. While the one was collecting breath, after abusing the yeamscheeks for intending to gallop down the hill, the other came up to me, and after surveying us very deliberately, said, in the pure Doric of canny Scotland:

"I'm just thinkin', but maybe I'm wrang, that ye're no unlike kintramen of ours—that is, Englishmen, I mean?"

I acknowledged the proud relationship, and said,

"I seek a village called Evanofsky, and a man called Count Pomerin; can you help a countryman to find them?"

"Surely; the village is yonder in the glen, and the man is not far off. May I ask if ye are the party he wull be expecting from St. Petersburg. If sae, he wull be right glad to see you, but at the present moment it is impossible to get speech of him. We've a bit hunting on hand, you see, and Pomerin is at his post, as we were when you cam' betwixt us and our line of fire."

"God bless me!" I said, rather quickly; "are we betwixt the game and the rifles?"

"That's just precesely the position we have all the honour o' occupying at this present moment, and in half an hour after this it might not be unco' pleasant, but for that time, I think, we're safe, unless for a stray beastie or sae. Now, if you like to join the hunt, you and the other gent-le-man, I would advise you to send on the conveyances and contents to wait you at Pomerin's; they will get a rayal welcome, and I shall send an escort with them." This being agreed on, he said to his friend, "Pins, whistle on that Dugal crature o' yours."

Mr. Pins put a whistle to his mouth and gave a shrill call, when presently a figure emerged from the wood, no inapt representative of the famous Dugal creature in Rob Roy. He had bandy legs, a great mass of tangled red hair on his head and face, red ferret eyes, and he dressed in a felt coat which reached only to the knees, a wolf-skin cape, and large boots, a world too wide for him; and a short-handed axe stuck in his belt. Mr. Saunderson had made some sign which I did not observe, that brought his henchman, a man of like sort, also to the spot. These having received their orders, proceeded to drag the wheels. In a few minutes two young trees were cut down, and, having been chopped into the right length, were thrust between the spokes and across the hind-wheels of the carriages. Having thus effectually put on a safety-drag, the two 'Dugal creatures,' large and small, mounted beside the drivers, but Harry and I remained behind with the ammunition, guns, and pistols, and then the vehicles began sliding down the hill without us, in a very comfortable manner.

WITH THE HUNTSMEN.

I had often heard of a hunt in the interior, and was glad, although fatigued, to join one. The plan is something akin to the ancient practice of deer-hunting in the Scottish Highlands. In the present case, however, the game was different: not deer, but wolves, bears, foxes, and other vermin, which had been found very destructive and troublesome for some time past. The greater number of the men of several villages, including every man who could handle a gun, had turned out. I attached myself to Mr. Saunderson, Harry joined Mr. Pins, and we followed our new acquaintances into the wood from which they had come upon us. On entering, I could see that preparations had been made on a large scale. Just inside the wood, and extending a long way—perhaps to near the bottom of the hill to the left, and for a less distance to the right—men armed with guns, rifles, pistols, knives, old scythes, and other such weapons, were stationed thirty yards or less apart from one another, while, behind each, a horse was picketed to a tree. Many of the principal rifle and armed men, like my friends Pins and Saunderson, had 'Dugal creatures,' or peasant-serfs attached to them, having in charge dogs, horses, and other accessories. The whole party formed two lines, probably a mile and a half long; the first line armed; behind it, the unarmed and the horses. On the opposite side of the road, and on the trees in front, was a strong net, ten or twelve feet high, extending up and down hill, as far as I could see, parallel with the road, leaving the road itself convenient for the work of slaughter, while the men might fire into the net at pleasure from the cover, advance into the open, or mount and run in case of danger. How the net was secured, or what resistance it might make

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against a large infuriated animal, I had no means of knowing; but I imagined that though it might hinder or entangle, it could not stop, or offer any effectual bar to a bear, or even a strong maddened wolf.

My companion enlightened me on sundry points: How, I asked, did they get the game into the net?

That was easily managed. Six hundred men had been sent early that morning into the opposite wood, at a point four or five miles from our present position; these men had spread themselves in a line across the wood, the two flanks gradually advancing faster than the centre, so as to form a curve by the time they reached the road where the net was placed, the flanks touching the ends of the net; then the centre advancing, drove all the game which was in front of them, right into the toils to be shot down. These men carried poles and other instruments for making all kinds of hideous noises, and the number of them being large, the whole wood became a perfect Babel of dreadful sounds, which frightened and daunted the doomed animals.

"This is an inglorious system of hunting, only worthy of barbarians."

"Oo' I; but ye ken the Russians can only operate in the mass way—that is, when they have plenty to keep them company. Besides, there is sometimes a bit hand to hand struggle, to vary the thing."

"Where is Count Pomerin?"

The count was down the hill, on the left flank, and commanded that side, while he (Saunderson) held the like position on the right up the hill. Pomerin's post was reckoned the more dangerous, as the chief haunts of the vermin were well known to be down the hill. Pomerin, he continued, was a dead shot, and always on those occasions took the post of danger. He was a gentleman every inch of him; "a wee thing ower fast, ye ken; but he's young; and then his grandfather died last year, and left the laddie three millions of roubles, besides this immense estate, with the ten thousand bodies on it, two sugar manufactories, our vodki works, and the cotton-mill. When Mr. Saunderson cam' here, some years ago, the auld man was hale and weel, and this young man—whose faither got a trip to Siberia and never cam' back—was the grandfather's pet. The young lad's mother was a serf, a bonny winsome thing, it is said; she's no ugly yet; she and her family were freed, and she was highly educated at Moscow, before and after her marriage; still this marriage was a cause of trouble. The proud aristocrats shut their doors on the pair of them. He fell into a revengeful spirit, and began writing papers on political economy, meaning to publish them abroad. Spies were in his house. Every line he wrote, and every word he said, they reported to the police, and so the end was that he vanished one night, and noo' they just say he is dead. No expense has been spared on the son's education; he can gabble in French, German, Italian, and all other modern languages; he has travelled in France, England, and Italy. He has a stud of horses, and keeps a table like a prince: but oh! man, I've been told that he was spinnin the auld man's bawbees last winter in Petersburg in fine style! If ye're a friend of his, gie him a canny advice to haud a better grup o' the siller. At this present time he is negotiatin' wi' a widow-woman, a 'generalshee,' to buy her bit estate. Her steward is a big rascal, an' Pomerin will pay grandly if he does not mind his hand. I ken what I ken, aboot that place, and he might do waur than tak' my coonsel aboot it."

"Who is your friend Pins?" I asked.

"Pins," he said; "a poor cotton-spinning, ignorant, upsetting couff, but as sly and sleekit as a fox. He has managed to get Pomerin to quit four years of arrears of rent and his workers obrak; and he is tryin' to persuade his landlord to build a great cotton-mill, and send him to England to buy the machinery. The commission he'll get on that, is worth ten years of his present wee place."

"But," I said, "that might be a good investment for the count."

"Na, na, it's ower far to bring the cotton, and to send the yarn to market; there's no railways here, to every town, like England; and there's no outlet for it in other countries, the demand is limited, and pretty well supplied now. If the count is wisely advised, or would tak' a practical man's advice, like mysel', he will invest his money in a safer channel. Let him cultivate his ground; our auld mother earth is a generous and fruitful lass, if she is well nourished. If he *will* manufacture, let him use the material his land produces. There's flax and hemp, at the door; there's beetroot for sugar, and rye for bread, and vodki. He'll want machinery, nae doot, for these—corn-mills, saw-mills, and agricultural implements; but he can sell the ropes and yarn, the vodki and the sugar, without trouble or expense. These large cotton-mills about Moscow, and Petersburg, are doing well at present—not so long after the war. But just suppose cotton was to grow scarce, or there was war with America, or amangst the Yankees themselves—not unlikely—or suppose the government was to take the duty off the imported manufactured goods, there is not one of these manufactories would be worth auld iron. It's not a good doctrine of political economy, and it will bring its recompense some day, to rob the poor moushick bodies, who are the chief consumers of the cotton cloth, to enrich a few foreign machine-makers, capitalists, and agents. The extra wages given to the workpeople is no equivalent for the enormous prices taken from them; besides, they don't get the benefit of the extra wages. It only goes into the pockets of the greedy barons whose slaves they are, while the estates are lying uncultivated, and the serfs are as poor and miserable as ever."

"But still," I said, "these manufactories are good civilisers. They require intelligence and skill in the workpeople, and this is much wanted in Russia."

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"Civilisation in Russian cotton-mills! Hot-beds of vice, and corruption! Whair hae ye been to speak that gate? I could tell ye something aboot that. But,—hear to that!"

Sounds from the six hundred men in the wood had long since been heard, increasing in volume but now they had become deafening, and indicated the very near approach of the sport. Halloaing, shouting, yelling, whistling, blowing of horns, and a din of as heavy blows on iron kettles, formed a discordant chorus, and so loud that I could hardly hear the latter part of Mr. Saunderson's lecture on Political Economy. But his "hear to that," referred to a rifle-shot, immediately followed by a clattering of shots all down the line. I looked across the road, and could see the net vibrating, bulging, and in some places coming down, entangling heavy bodies in its meshes. Two large wolves, strong, and apparently fat, followed by a third, made their way cautiously at first from below the net, and then jumped into the road. Three or four shots went off at the same moment, but only one wolf dropped, the other two made as if for the wood on our side, but seemed to scent danger in that direction, for they turned round and tore up the hill at rattling speed. "Don't fire," shouted Saunderson; "let off the dogs!" And immediately four noble dogs sprang into the road, right in front of our position. One wolf was caught in a moment by the first two dogs, but the other ran into the wood, hotly followed by the other couple. Pins was reloading, when the three animals dashed amongst his legs, and upset him as they passed. I can only relate what I myself saw. A deer, or elk, with magnificent broad horns, cleared the net at a bound, right in front of us. "Now," said the Scotchman, "that's my quarry." The animal had scarcely touched the ground when a bullet struck him in the brain, and down he went. This was the first shot he had fired, and he hastily reloaded, for, he said, he fully expected bears. At this time a horseman on a splendid English hunter dashed up the open steep, and the firing abated. "That's Pomerin, what's he after? He'll get shot," said Saunderson. As he approached our position, he shouted in English, "Two large bears are heading up the wood inside the net, and the men are falling back; they will escape if we don't mind. Mount and follow who will." Saunderson was on his horse in a moment, and after the young man up the hill. Turning to look for Pins, and Harry, I saw Pins, the picture of fear, behind a tree. As I came up he was imploring Harry to help him on his horse, that he might quit the field; his own man had not returned. "Blow me if I do," said Harry. "But I'll take the loan of it. And here, old cock, take my blunderbuss, and I'll just try your rifle on a Rooshian bear." Whereupon he coolly took Pins's rifle out of his awkward hands, untied the horse, jumped on his back, and was after Saunderson before I could have stopped him, which I certainly did not intend to do. Had I been as well mounted and armed I should have followed: as it was, I was condemned to inactivity, and the society of Mr. Pins.

The shots were still rattling off down the hill, several horsemen had passed in pursuit of the bears immediately after Harry left, and in a short time the rest of the huntsmen advanced into the open road to get to closer quarters with the game in and behind the net. I also left the cover, saw them fire several volleys ingloriously at the prostrate and entangled animals, and was about to examine the effects of their firing by going close up to the net, when a low growl, then a loud savage howl, issued from behind, and immediately a bear burst through an opening into the road among the men; as if disdaining to touch them, he turned again and faced the wood whence he had come, and where he knew his pursuers to be. The rifles on our side were all unloaded, so that he deliberately sat for a short time in the middle of the road untouched. I was just on the point of trying the effect of revolver shot, and had made a few steps to get a proper and sure aim, when Saunderson rode from the wood, and drew up not twenty feet from the poor surrounded beast. He raised his rifle and fired, and the bear fell. The men, who had been all scampering off, returned to finish him with their knives, but Saunderson cried out, "Keep back, he's not dead; he will comb some of your hair if you don't mind!" He spoke too late. One man, more daring than the others, had stooped down to run his knife into the bear's throat, when, with astonishing swiftness, bruin raised himself to a sitting position, and darting his great paw, armed with those formidable talons, at the man's head, tore down cap, hair, skin, and flesh to the elbow. The man fell forward on the bear—in fact, into his arms—and was about to experience one of those deadly hugs, or embraces, which would have put him out of all pain, but a bullet from the same hand that first struck him put an end to the bear's power of mischief. The wounded man sprang up, and with a piercing shriek ran down the hill. He was ultimately carried home, and survived, but was for life frightfully disfigured.

The six hundred men who had been making the noises, and driving the game into the net, began to assemble in the road, and gather together the spoil. The dogs came wagging their tails, some with their fangs dripping and bloody, and their sides and heads showing rather severe wounds.

"Ah, Barbose, Burlak, my lads, you've done your part nae doot. But, God help us! where's Pomerin, and that body Pins, and that great big Englishman of yours?"

"As for Pins," I said, "I left him in the wood, but I must inquire of you where the other two are."

"Me! I ken whaur I left them, but it's no easy saying whaur they may be now. Come on and search; ye see, the bears divided as we headed them. I and two other men kept close on this one as he skirted the edge of the wood; twice he turned to offer battle, but took the

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rue. The other two men fired at him, and missed; at the last fire he bolted into the road, then I got a clear shot, and had my nag not moved, that shot would have finished him. Pomerin and your man Harry have followed the other bear. I hope they are all safe."

He had left his horse, and we penetrated a good way into the forest, accompanied by a few men, Saunderson leading. So we came to a glade almost bare of trees. In the centre of this, he said, there was a large deep dell half a mile across, the sides sloping into the centre, and dense with trees all over. "Here it is; and as I live here's the horses tied to a tree. Living or dead they are here."

Although the foliage had fallen, the place looked dark and dismal, and just as we reached it two shots were heard in the hollow, the one a moment or two after the other. Down we rushed, sliding among the damp old leaves, and holding on by tree-trunks and branches. At length, in answer to our shouts, we heard a halloa repeated. This led us to the very bottom of the immense pit, and there stood Harry, fast in the embrace of the young Russian. Their guns were on the ground, and the bear lying dead beside them. As soon as Pomerin saw me, he sprang forward, embraced, and kissed me with emotion. He was much excited, and in answer to our questions, told us that, not thinking what he was about, he followed the bear down into this awful hole:

"I had fired twice at him, and hit him once, but not fatally. The villain seemed to know that both barrels were empty, for he turned at bay on this spot, a fine place for a game at hide-and-seek with a bear. I dodged him round and round the trees a good while, and having no time to load, threw my gun down. At last he got me in a corner, from which I could not move but in one direction, and that was into his arms. You see this tree; behind it is, you perceive, sheer cliff, on both sides a gulley. Well, I got behind the tree; the bear advanced, sure of his prey, no doubt. I stared him steadily in the face as he came on, but on he came; he was within five yards of me. I drew my knife; I had no hope of success; for, see, he is an enormous grizzly. Ah, the horror of that moment! I was just waiting his next step, and my eyes were dancing with fire-sparks, when I heard a voice from the cliff behind me, 'Lie down on yer belly, flat—quick; and I'll give the buffer somethink to eat harder nor gentlemen's flesh.' Ah! God bless my grandfather for teaching me the English language! These words were the sweetest I ever heard in my life. Down I went, flat on the ground; the bear had taken a step or two forward, and was looking up to the cliff, for I kept my eyes on him. I could now almost feel his breath on my face, when, in a moment, ping, whirr, then in another moment, ping, whirr, went the bullets, ripping over me, right into the bear's head. Over he went, rolling down the steep. Down jumped my preserver to my side, and I've been hugging him like a bear ever since."

He turned to repeat the dose, but Harry set off with a "No more o' that ere."

When we returned to the scene of the main slaughter, we found the road filled with peasants—those who had been beating up the game, those who had been shooting it, the dog and horse attendants, and a crowd of idlers from the village. The game—consisting of the two bears, four cubs, two deer or elks, five large and two small wolves, hares, rabbits, and other small animals in abundance—was given over to the peasants, except only the two bears, which were ordered to be taken to the count's residence. I should have expected that the peasants would have made some demonstration of joy at the deliverance of their young master, which was known to them all by this time, but nothing of the kind took place. A few of them, indeed, came forward and kissed his hand, and said, "Thank God, he was safe," but these, I could perceive, were his domestic retainers and attendants. They were better dressed and cleaner than the generality of the peasants, and looked like the pampered and favoured menials that they were. Amongst the others, I in vain looked for any expressions of interest. Here was the raw material, and in the right spot for studying it. The excitement of the sport, in which every one might be expected to share to some degree, did not seem to have ignited in these people one spark of emotion. There was nothing to remind me of the peasantry of my own happy land, even in their worst times. I saw no smiling happy faces, no sparkling glad eyes, no manly blunt fellow officiously pressing forward to to be taken notice of, no division of class into farmers and farmers' men, traders, and ploughmen, no evidence at all of degrees in the social scale, no appearance whatever of a thriving happy or contented ignorance, even among the serfs, no pride of clanship in the daring courage and appearance of their chief. Yet he appeared to me to have—in fact, I know he possessed—all that was requisite to call it forth had it been there. No. They showed themselves, as we moved forward and amongst them, stolid, apathetic and listless. Caps came off, certainly, and way was made for us with alacrity. But if they had any feelings at all they managed very cunningly to hide them. Their faces were in general good in contour, and their individual features regular, some of them handsome. The out-door workers were brown or swarthy, and those who attended the in-door manufactories, pale and sallow. As to height, bone and muscle, they seemed very fairly developed. The Russian peasant men are, indeed, the finest in the country, many of them models of manly shape and beauty. One thing struck me as very remarkable, the brilliant whiteness and regularity of their teeth. They were, as a rule, white as the purest ivory, and perfect in form. This is ascribed, I find, to the eating of black bread. Yet, notwithstanding all these favourable points, the ex-

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pression on their faces was stupid, dull, and unmeaning; what expression there was, I could connect only with cunning and distrust.

SINGING TO SOME PURPOSE.

THE caprice which has caused so many of the Italian painters to forego their paternal names, and live renowned under accidental ones, was notably instanced in the case of Carlo Broschi, the celebrated Neapolitan singer, who is generally known to the world as the famous Farinelli. More than one reason has been assigned for this harmonious substitution; the most probable being that Carlo Broschi adopted the name of Farinelli out of gratitude for the protection he received from the family of Farina, musical amateurs almost as locally celebrated as he—their possible descendant—who lived at Cologne, "gegenüber dem Jülichs-Platz," amidst a host of unworthy pretenders.

This wonderful soprano was born at Naples on the 24th of January, 1705, and though he received his first lessons in singing from his father, the great composer Porpora was his real instructor. Porpora's system of teaching, like that of Bernachi of Bologna, and of all the Italian masters during the first half of the eighteenth century, consisted in the mechanism of the vocalisation, all the difficulties of which had to be surmounted before the pupil was permitted to think of the meaning of the words or the expression of the musical phrase. In that heroic age of the art of singing and the birth of scientific melody, the virtuosi admired before all other things the material purity of the sound, the flexibility of the organ, and that long-drawn breath which allowed the singer to disport like a bird with his voice; and never was soprano endowed with these brilliant qualities in the same degree as Farinelli. In proof of this we have the contemporaneous statement which Dr. Burney has recorded in the following terms:

"No vocal performer of the present century has been more unanimously allowed by professional critics, as well as general celebrity, to have been gifted with a voice of such uncommon power, sweetness, extent, and agility, as Carlo Broschi, detto Farinelli. Nicolini, Senesino, and Carestini, gratified the eye as much by the dignity, grace, and propriety of their action and deportment, as the ear by the judicious use of a few notes within the limits of a small compass of voice; but Farinelli, without the assistance of significant gestures or graceful attitudes, enchanted and astonished his hearers by the force, extent, and mellifluous tones of the mere organ, when he had nothing to execute, articulate, or express. But though during the time of his singing he was as motionless as a statue, his voice was so active, that no intervals were too close, too wide, or too rapid for his execution. It seems as if the composers of these times were unable to invent passages sufficiently difficult to display his powers, or the orchestra to accompany him in many of those which had been composed for his peculiar talent. And yet, so great were his forbearance and delicacy, that he was never known, when he was in England, to exclaim or manifest discontent at the inability of the band or mistakes of individuals by whom he was accompanied. He was so judicious in proportioning the force of his voice to the space through which it was to pass to the ears of his audience, that in a small theatre at Venice, though it was the most powerful, one of the managers complained that he did not sufficiently exert himself. 'Let me, then,' says Farinelli, 'have a larger theatre, or I shall lose my reputation, without your being a gainer by it.' On his arrival here, at the first private rehearsal at Cuzzoni's apartments, Lord Cooper, then the principal manager of the Opera under Porpora, observing that the band did not follow him, but were all gaping with wonder, as if thunderstruck, desired them to be attentive; when they all confessed that they were unable to keep pace with him: having not only been disabled by astonishment, but overpowered by his talents. . . . . There was none of all Farinelli's excellences by which he so far surpassed all other singers, and astonished the public, as his messa di voce, or swell; which, by the natural formation of his lungs, and artificial economy of breath, he was able to protract to such a length as to excite incredulity even in those who heard him, who, though unable to detect the artifice, imagined him to have the latent help of some instrument by which the tone was continued, while he renewed his powers by respiration."

At seventeen years of age, Farinelli was already called "un ragazzo divino" (a divine youth), and Naples witnessed his departure with the deepest regret, when, in 1722, he accompanied his master, Porpora, to Rome, where the composer had undertaken to write an opera for the Aliberti Theatre. There was at this time in Rome a performer on the trumpet, a German, whose prodigious skill excited the public to enthusiasm; and in order, if possible, to increase that enthusiasm, and still further excite the general curiosity, the manager of the theatre proposed to Porpora that he should write an air with a trumpet accompaniment, in which the young Neapolitan soprano should contend with the far-reaching instrument. Acceding to the wish of the impresario, Porpora wrote the required aria. It began with a ritornello, in which was introduced a lingering note, to be commenced by the trumpet and taken up afterwards by the singer; then came the principal motive, which each of the rivals was to repeat in his turn. The trumpet opened the note in question with extreme sweetness, gradually increased its volume, and held it suspended beyond the chord, keeping it there for an infinite time, to the astonishment of the listening public. Farinelli, without being in the slightest degree disconcerted, seized—so to speak—the ball at the hop, played with the privileged note, and gently endowing it with force, warmth, and life, suspended it yet longer in space, dazzling the ear and the imagination of the audience. Frantic

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applause followed, and Farinelli was obliged to wait for some moments before he could go on; he then sang the first part of the air, with a luxury of trills and fancies so extraordinary that the firmness of the German artist was almost shaken. The instrumentalist, however, replied to the singer with a talent which balanced the success of his young and seductive rival; but when Farinelli had to repeat the second part of the air, he caused it to undergo so many transformations, and enriched it with so many marvellous beauties, that the entire voice of the theatre proclaimed him the victor in this remarkable melodious duel, and so excited were his listeners that on his leaving the house they followed him with acclamations home.

This success at Rome completely established Farinelli's vocal reputation. In 1724 he was heard with equal delight at Vienna; in the following year at Venice, and in his native city; and after successively enchanting the Milanese and the Romans once more, went, in 1727, to Bologna, where he encountered the great soprano, Bernachi—a meeting which wrought a most beneficial effect on Farinelli's artistical career. Bernachi, whom his contemporaries called "The King of Singers," was a pupil of Pistochi, the founder of a celebrated school at Bologna, and assiduously cultivated the teaching of his master. Farinelli made his début at Bologna in an opera, in which he had to sing a duo with Bernachi, whose voice was neither brilliant nor of great compass. Porpora's wonderful pupil, who had only to show his graceful figure and pleasing face to prepossess the audience in his favour, began by a display of all the fioriture and ingenious exercises of fancy which had proved so successful at Rome, enrapturing all who heard him; but when the tumult subsided which he had created, Bernachi took up the air, and sang it with so much taste and absence of artifice, imprinting on it the stamp of so much simplicity and sentiment, that his young rival was moved by it to tears, and joining in the public applause, confessed himself vanquished. So completely did he acknowledge his defeat, that during the whole time he remained in Bologna he constantly sought the advice of Bernachi. After this épreuve, Rome, Naples, Parma, and Venice were severally the scenes of his triumphs, though he had there to measure himself with rivals no less formidable than the sopranists Gizzi, La Cuzzoni, and La Faustina, with whom he afterwards contended in London. In 1731, Farinelli again visited Vienna, and was warmly welcomed by the Emperor Charles the Sixth, the father of Maria Theresa, who, whatever his abilities in other respects, was a distinguished musical connoisseur, and capable of giving very good professional advice. This prince was himself no mean performer on the clavecin—the pianoforte of that day—and one day, when he was accompanying Farinelli, astonished at his prodigious powers of ornamentation, he said: "You are much too prodigal of your great gifts; it would be far more worthy of your great talent if you refrained from that excess of embellishment which disfigures the thought of the master and only surprises the senses, and confined yourself to the task of producing emotion by simpler means." This reproof was not lost upon Farinelli, but contributed, with the lesson which he had received from Bernachi, to render him the pathetic and touching singer so admired in London and at the court of Spain.

It was in 1734 that Farinelli, already famous and rich, came to England, to increase his fame and add to his riches. Two Italian theatres at that time disputed the favour of the London public—one of them conducted by the great composer, Handel, the other by his inveterate foes, who had enlisted Porpora against him. To render the struggle more equal, Porpora procured an engagement for Farinelli, who made his first appearance in an opera by Hasse, called Artaxerxes, in which was introduced an air composed for him by his brother, Richard Broschi. This air began by an effort of that sustained note of Farinelli's which had made him triumphant over the German instrumentalist at Rome, and if the pit did not actually "rise at him," the whole house was in a transport of delight throughout the representation, and Farinelli became the idol of the town. Summoned to court, he was accompanied on the clavecin by one of the royal princesses, and, amongst the presents heaped upon him, the newspapers of the day relate that "his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was pleased to make a present of a fine wrought gold snuff-box, richly set with diamonds and rubies, in which was enclosed a pair of brilliant diamond knee-buckles, as also a purse of one hundred guineas, to the famous Signor Farinelli, who had constantly attended all his Royal Highness's concerts since he came from Italy." The lucky singer gained, in the course of his three years' visit to England, no less than five thousand pounds—a prodigious sum a hundred and thirty years ago, but a mere trifle now.

Paris was Farinelli's next halting-place, where Louis the Fifteenth gave him his royal portrait set in diamonds, and five hundred louis to boot; but highly as he was appreciated in France, a higher and more brilliant position awaited him in Spain.

It was upon no invitation to Madrid, but simply because he wished to see that capital, that Farinelli went to the country, where he remained for five-and-twenty years, loaded with honours by two successive monarchs, and enjoying the power of a favourite, if not the authority of a minister. The year 1737 had opened badly for the court of Spain, to say nothing of the kingdom. Philip the Fifth, the feeble, bigoted descendant of the "Grand Monarque," and transmitter of feebleness and bigotry to all of his race, the second branch of the Bourbons, had fallen into a sort of lethargy—as Falstaff calls it, "a kind of sleeping of the blood"—from which nothing could rouse him. He passed whole days in his apartments, in sadness and silence, entirely neglecting his person, and utterly indifferent to public affairs. To distract

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his sombre thoughts—or rather to make him think, if it were in him to do so—his wife, Elizabeth Farnese, bethought her of the marvellous gifts of Farinelli. How they were applied, Dr. Burney thus describes:

"It has often been related, and generally believed, that Philip the Fifth, King of Spain, being seized with a total dejection of spirits, which made him refuse to be shaved, and rendered him incapable of attending council or transacting affairs of state, the queen, who had in vain tried every common expedient that was likely to contribute to his recovery, determined that an experiment should be made of the effects of music upon the king, her husband, who was extremely sensible to its charms. Upon the arrival of Farinelli, of whose extraordinary performance an account had been transmitted to Madrid from several parts of Europe, but particularly from Paris, her majesty contrived that there should be a concert in a room adjoining the king's appartment, in which this singer performed one of his most captivating songs. Philip appeared at first surprised, then moved, and at the end of the second air made the virtuoso enter the royal apartment, loading him with compliments and caresses, asked him how he could sufficiently reward such talents, assuring him that he could refuse him nothing. Farinelli, previously instructed, only begged that his majesty would permit his attendants to shave and dress him, and that he would endeavour to appear in council as usual. From this time the king's disease gave way to medicine, and the singer had the honour of the cure. By singing to his majesty every evening, his favour increased to such a degree that he was regarded as first minister; but, what is still more extraordinary, instead of being intoxicated or giddy with his elevation, Farinelli, never forgetting that he was a musician, behaved to the Spanish nobles about the court with such humility and propriety, that instead of envying his favour, they honoured him with their esteem and confidence."

Elizabeth Farnese was too clever a woman, and too deeply interested in directing the will of her husband, not to see the advantage she might derive from the admirable talent of Farinelli. She accordingly proposed to him to fix his residence at Madrid, assuring him an income of two thousand pounds sterling, on condition of his never singing anywhere but at court and before the king. Farinelli agreed to this proposal, and during the remaining ten years of Philip's life he sang four pieces to him every night. Under Ferdinand the Sixth, the son and successor of Philip the Fifth, who inherited the melancholy and indolence of his father, the fortune and credit of Farinelli received a still greater increase, for, repeating the vocal charm which had already operated so miraculously in the first instance, the gratified monarch at once invested the lucky singer with the Order of Calatrava, and loaded him besides with signal marks of favour, appointing him, amongst other things, to the post of intendant of musical and dramatic representations to the court; and approaching the king's person as he now constantly did, Farinelli became a sort of quasi-political personage whom ambassadors and ministers found it their interest to take into consideration. As we have already seen, from Dr. Burney's statement, Farinelli used his extraordinary power with great moderation, and exercised kindness whenever he had an opportunity. A striking instance of his goodness of heart is shown in the following well-attested anecdote: "One day in going to the king's closet, to which he had at all times access, he heard an officer of the guard curse him, and say to another that was waiting, 'honours can be heaped on such scoundrels as these, while a poor soldier, like myself, after thirty years' service, is unnoticed.' Farinelli, without seeming to hear this reproach, complained to the king that he had neglected an old servant, and procured a regiment for the person who had spoken so harshly of him in the antechamber; and on quitting his majesty he gave the commission to the officer, telling him that he had heard him complain of having served thirty years, but added, 'you did wrong to accuse the king of neglecting to reward your zeal.'"

Of Farinelli's singular good nature and generosity, Dr. Burney also relates the following story: "This singer being ordered a superb suit of clothes for a gala at court, when the tailor brought it home, he asked him for his bill. 'I have made no bill, sir,' says the tailor, 'nor ever shall make one. Instead of money,' continues he, 'I have a favour to beg. I know that what I want is inestimable, and only fit for monarchs; but since I have had the honour to work for a person of whom every one speaks with rapture, all the payment I shall ever require will be a song.' Farinelli tried in vain to prevail on the tailor to take his money. At length, after a long debate, giving way to the humble entreaties of the trembling tradesman, and flattered, perhaps, more by the singularity of the adventure than by all the applause he had hitherto received, he took him into his music-room, and sang to him some of his most brilliant airs, taking pleasure in the astonishment of his ravished hearer; and the more he seemed surprised and affected, the more Farinelli exerted himself in every species of excellence. When he had done, the tailor, overcome with ecstasy, thanked him in the most rapturous and grateful manner, and prepared to retire. 'No,' says Farinelli, 'I am a little proud; and it is perhaps from that circumstance that I have acquired some small degree of superiority over other singers; I have given way to your weakness, it is but fair that, in your turn, you should indulge me in mine.' And taking out his purse, he insisted on his receiving a sum amounting to nearly double the worth of the suit of clothes."

Unshaken in credit and unaltered by prosperity, Farinelli continued for five-and-twenty years to devote himself to his successive royal patrons, but on the death of Ferdinand the Sixth he was abruptly dismissed by that king's brother,

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who succeeded to the Spanish throne by the title of Charles the Third. His dismissal is ascribed to a change of policy, the new king having signed the family compact, a measure Farinelli had always opposed—a proof that the soprano had been in the habit of influencing important affairs of state. But although dismissed he was not disgraced, Charles the Third—the best of the Bourbóns who ever governed Spain—allowing Farinelli to retain all his pensions, with the observation that he had never abused the kindness of the king's predecessors.

It was in 1761 that Farinelli left Spain and returned to Italy, having been absent from his native country seven-and-twenty years. He was now in his fifty-sixth year, and had he been permitted would have settled at Naples, but political reasons interdicted his residence there, and he fixed his abode near Bologna, about a league from which city he built a sumptuous palace, where he passed the rest of his days, absenting himself only once, when he went to Rome. At Bologna, the large fortune he had made enabled him to live "en grand seigneur," indulging in the tastes and habits of one who had frequented the best society, and devoting himself to the Art by which he had achieved his position. His richly-furnished apartments were filled with the rarest musical instruments, to each of which he gave the name of some celebrated Italian painter. One of these, a gift from the Queen of Spain, he called his Correggio; others bore the names of Titian and Guido; and on his favourite, which he bought at Florence at the beginning of his career, he bestowed the appellation of Raffaele d'Urbino. His fondness for painting was yet more distinctly shown in a large saloon filled with pictures by the first masters of Madrid and Seville, amongst which were included portraits of the kings, his protectors, and that of Pope Benedict the Fourteenth. Rare books were also gathered in his palace, which he hospitably opened to all who sought his acquaintance. Dr. Burney paid him a visit there in 1771, and in his work, "The Present State of Music in France and Italy," has recorded a conversation which he had with the famous soprano. Farinelli expressed great regret that the happy days which he spent in Spain were for ever gone, but acknowledged that the first ten years, during which he always sang the same songs to his melancholy patron, had been very hard to bear. Dr. Burney says: "I found Farinelli looking younger than I had expected. He is tall, thin, and in excellent preservation. He had the kindness to conduct me to the house of Father Martini, in whose library I passed a part of my time, and when I observed that my great desire had been to know two persons so celebrated as Farinelli and Martini, the great singer replied, with a sigh, 'Oh, what Father Martini has done will endure, while the little talent which I possessed is already forgotten!'" Many other travellers of that time also spoke in the highest terms of the lucky singer—amongst them, the German Keyssler, who, after praising the admirable qualities of his voice, which had a range of twenty-three notes, and was, in his opinion, incomparable, added that the general belief was that he had been particularly favoured by the Virgin Mary, for whom Farinelli's mother had a most particular devotion. Great people, too, were amongst Farinelli's visitors. In 1772, there came to see, and also to hear him, the Electress of Saxony, to whom he gave a grand breakfast, and then sat down to the piano, to sing an air of his own composition. Casanova, who relates the anecdote, says, "I was present on the occasion, and to my excessive surprise I saw the Electress suddenly leave her seat and throw herself into Farinelli's arms, exclaiming, 'I can now die content, since I have had the happiness of hearing you!'" Casanova tells another story, which reveals the only known act of Farinelli's life that was not creditable to him. Farinelli had adopted the son of his brother, Richard Broschi, the composer, and had given the young man and his wife, a very beautiful woman of good family, a suite of apartments in his palace. This was at first an act of pure friendship; but another feeling arose afterwards to diminish its value, for, strangely enough, the soprano fell in love with his niece, but the lady remained perfectly impassive to his pleadings, and, furious at her disdain, Farinelli sent his nephew on his travels, while he shut up his faithful spouse in her apartments, that he might at least have her constantly near him. On the 15th of July, 1782, the lucky singer died in his magnificent palace, at seventy-seven years of age, "a victim to delicate love."

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER III.

When she returned to the house, Miss Garth made no attempt to conceal her unfavourable opinion of the stranger in black. His object was, no doubt, to obtain pecuniary assistance from Mrs. Vanstone. What the nature of his claim on her might be, seemed less intelligible—unless it was the claim of a poor relation. Had Mrs. Vanstone ever mentioned, in the presence of her daughters, the name of Captain Wragge? Neither of them recollected to have heard it before. Had Mrs. Vanstone ever referred to any poor relations who were dependent on her? On the contrary, she had mentioned of late years that she doubted having any relations at all who were still living. And yet, Captain Wragge had plainly declared that the name on his card would recal "a family matter" to Mrs. Vanstone's memory. What did it mean? A false statement, on the stranger's part, without any intelligible reason for making it? Or a second mystery, following close on the heels of the mysterious journey to London?

All the probabilities seemed to point to some hidden connexion between the "family affairs" which had taken Mr. and Mrs. Vanstone so suddenly from home, and the "family matter" associated with the name of Captain Wragge. Miss Garth's doubts of the day before thronged back on her mind, as she sealed her letter to Mrs. Vanstone, with the captain's card added by way of enclosure.

By return of post the answer arrived.

Always the earliest riser among the ladies of the house, Miss Garth was alone in the breakfast-room when the letter was brought in. Her first glance at its contents convinced her of the necessity of reading it carefully through in retirement, before any embarrassing questions could be put to her. Leaving a message with the servant requesting Norah to make the tea that morning, she went up-stairs at once to the solitude and security of her own room.

Mrs. Vanstone's letter extended to some length. The first part of it referred to Captain Wragge, and entered unreservedly into all necessary explanations relating to the man himself, and to the motive which had brought him to Combe-Raven.

It appeared from Mrs. Vanstone's statement that her mother had been twice married. Her mother's first husband had been a certain Doctor Wragge—a widower with young children; and one of those children was now the unmilitary-looking captain, whose address was "Post-office, Bristol." Mrs. Wragge had left no family by her first husband; and had afterwards married Mrs. Vanstone's father. Of that second marriage Mrs. Vanstone herself was the only issue. She had lost both her parents while she was still a young woman; and, in course of years, her mother's family connexions (who were then her nearest surviving relatives) had been one after another removed by death. She was left, at the present writing, without a relation in the world—excepting, perhaps, certain cousins whom she had never seen, and of whose existence even, at the present moment, she possessed no positive knowledge.

Under these circumstances, what family claim had Captain Wragge on Mrs. Vanstone?

None whatever. As the son of her mother's first husband, by that husband's first wife, not even the widest stretch of courtesy could have included him at any time in the list of Mrs. Vanstone's most distant relations. Well knowing this (the letter proceeded to say), he had nevertheless persisted in forcing himself upon her as a species of family connexion; and she had weakly sanctioned the intrusion, solely from the dread that he would otherwise introduce himself to Mr. Vanstone's notice, and take unblushing advantage of Mr. Vanstone's generosity. Shrinking, naturally, from allowing her husband to be annoyed, and probably cheated as well, by any person who claimed, however preposterously, a family connexion with herself, it had been her practice, for many years past, to assist the captain from her own purse, on the condition that he should never come near the house, and that he should not presume to make any application whatever to Mr. Vanstone.

Readily admitting the imprudence of this course, Mrs. Vanstone further explained that she had perhaps been the more inclined to adopt it, through having been always accustomed, in her early days, to see the captain living now upon one member, and now upon another, of her mother's family. Possessed of abilities which might have raised him to distinction, in almost any career that he could have chosen, he had nevertheless, from his youth upwards, been a

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disgrace to all his relatives. He had been expelled the militia regiment in which he once held a commission. He had tried one employment after another, and had discreditably failed in all. He had lived on his wits in the lowest and basest meaning of the phrase. He had married a poor ignorant woman, who had served as a waitress at some low eating-house, who had unexpectedly come into a little money, and whose small inheritance he had mercilessly squandered to the last farthing. In plain terms, he was an incorrigible scoundrel; and he had now added one more to the list of his many misdemeanours, by impudently breaking the conditions on which Mrs. Vanstone had hitherto assisted him. She had written at once to the address indicated on his card, in such terms and to such purpose as would prevent him, she hoped and believed, from ever venturing near the house again. Such were the terms in which Mrs. Vanstone concluded that first part of her letter which referred exclusively to Captain Wragge.

Although the statement thus presented implied a weakness in Mrs. Vanstone's character which Miss Garth, after many years of intimate experience, had never detected, she accepted the explanation as a matter of course; receiving it all the more readily, inasmuch as it might, without impropriety, be communicated in substance to appease the irritated curiosity of the two young ladies. For this reason especially, she perused the first half of the letter with an agreeable sense of relief. Far different was the impression produced on her, when she advanced to the second half, and when she had read it to the end.

The second part of the letter was devoted to the subject of the journey to London.

Mrs. Vanstone began by referring to the long and intimate friendship which had existed between Miss Garth and herself. She now felt it due to that friendship to explain confidentially the motive which had induced her to leave home with her husband. Miss Garth had delicately refrained from showing it, but she must naturally have felt, and must still be feeling, great surprise at the mystery in which their departure had been involved; and she must doubtless have asked herself why Mrs. Vanstone should have been associated with family affairs which (in her independent position as to relatives) must necessarily concern Mr. Vanstone alone.

Without touching on those affairs, which it was neither desirable nor necessary to do, Mrs. Vanstone then proceeded to say that she would at once set all Miss Garth's doubts at rest, so far as they related to herself, by one plain acknowledgment. Her object in accompanying her husband to London was to see a certain celebrated physician, and to consult him privately on a very delicate and anxious matter connected with the state of her health. In plainer terms still, this anxious matter meant nothing less than the possibility that she might again become a mother.

When the doubt had first suggested itself, she had treated it as a mere delusion. The long interval that had elapsed since the birth of her last child; the serious illness which had afflicted her after the death of that child in infancy; the time of life at which she had now arrived—all inclined her to dismiss the idea as soon as it arose in her mind. It had returned again and again in spite of her. She had felt the necessity of consulting the highest medical authority; and had shrunk, at the same time, from alarming her daughters by summoning a London physician to the house. The medical opinion, sought under the circumstances already mentioned, had now been obtained. Her doubt was confirmed as a certainty; and the result, which might be expected to take place towards the end of the summer, was, at her age and with her constitutional peculiarities, a subject for serious future anxiety, to say the least of it. The physician had done his best to encourage her; but she had understood the drift of his questions more clearly than he supposed, and she knew that he looked to the future with more than ordinary doubt.

Having disclosed these particulars, Mrs. Vanstone requested that they might be kept a secret between her correspondent and herself. She had felt unwilling to mention her suspicions to Miss Garth, until those suspicions had been confirmed—and she now recoiled, with even greater reluctance, from allowing her daughters to be in any way alarmed about her. It would be best to dismiss the subject for the present, and to wait hopefully till the summer came. In the mean time they would all, she trusted, be happily reunited on the twenty-third of the month, which Mr. Vanstone had fixed on as the day for their return. With this intimation, and with the customary messages, the letter abruptly, and confusedly, came to an end.

For the first few minutes, a natural sympathy for Mrs. Vanstone was the only feeling of which Miss Garth was conscious after she had laid the letter down. Ere long, however, there rose obscurely on her mind a doubt which perplexed and distressed her. Was the explanation which she had just read, really as satisfactory and as complete as it professed to be? Testing it plainly by facts, surely not.

On the morning of her departure, Mrs. Vanstone had unquestionably left the house in good spirits. At her age, and in her state of health, were good spirits compatible with such an errand to a physician as the errand on which she was bent? Then, again, had that letter from New Orleans, which had necessitated Mr. Vanstone's departure, no share in occasioning his wife's departure as well? Why, otherwise, had she looked up so eagerly the moment her daughter mentioned the post-mark? Granting the avowed motive for her journey—did not her manner, on the morning when the letter was opened, and again on the morning of departure, suggest the existence of some other motive which her letter kept concealed?

If it was so, the conclusion that followed was

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a very distressing one. Mrs. Vanstone, feeling what was due to her long friendship with Miss Garth, had apparently placed the fullest confidence in her, on one subject, by way of unsuspiciously maintaining the strictest reserve towards her on another. Naturally frank and straightforward in all her own dealings, Miss Garth shrank from plainly pursuing her doubts to this result: a want of loyalty towards her tried and valued friend seemed implied in the mere dawning of it on her mind.

She locked up the letter in her desk; roused herself resolutely to attend to the passing interests of the day; and went down stairs again to the breakfast-room. Amid many uncertainties, this at least was clear: Mr. and Mrs. Vanstone were coming back on the twenty-third of the month. Who could say what new revelations might not come back with them?

CHAPTER IV.

No new revelations came back with them: no anticipations associated with their return were realised. On the one forbidden subject of their errand in London, there was no moving either the master or the mistress of the house. Whatever their object might have been, they had to all appearance successfully accomplished it—for they both returned in perfect possession of their every-day looks and manners. Mrs. Vanstone's spirits had subsided to their natural quiet level; Mr. Vanstone's imperturbable cheerfulness sat as easily and indolently on him as usual. This was the one noticeable result of their journey—this, and no more. Had the household revolution run its course already? Was the secret, thus far hidden impenetrably, hidden for ever?

Nothing in this world is hidden for ever. The gold which has lain for centuries unsuspected in the ground, reveals itself one day on the surface. Sand turns traitor, and betrays the footstep that has passed over it; water gives back to the tell-tale surface the body that has been drowned. Fire itself leaves the confession, in ashes, of the substance consumed in it. Hate breaks its prison-secrecy in the thoughts, through the doorway of the eyes; and Love finds the Judas who betrays it by a kiss. Look where we will, the inevitable law of revelation is one of the laws of nature: the lasting preservation of a secret is a miracle which the world has never yet seen.

How was the secret now hidden in the household at Combe-Raven, doomed to disclose itself? Through what coming event in the daily lives of the father, the mother, and the daughters, was the law of revelation destined to break the fatal way to discovery? The way opened (unseen by the parents, and unsuspected by the children) through the first event that happened after Mr. and Mrs. Vanstone's return—an event which presented, on the surface of it, no interest of greater importance than the trivial social ceremony of a morning call.

Three days after the master and mistress of Combe-Raven had come back, the female members of the family happened to be assembled together in the morning-room. The view from the windows looked over the flower-garden and shrubbery; this last being protected at its outward extremity by a fence, and approached from the lane beyond by a wicket-gate. During an interval in the conversation, the attention of the ladies was suddenly attracted to this gate by the sharp sound of the iron latch falling in its socket. Some one had entered the shrubbery from the lane; and Magdalen at once placed herself at the window to catch the first sight of the visitor through the trees.

After a few minutes, the figure of a gentleman became visible, at the point where the shrubbery path joined the winding garden-walk which led to the house. Magdalen looked at him attentively, without appearing, at first, to know who he was. As he came nearer, however, she started in astonishment; and turning quickly to her mother and sister, proclaimed the gentleman in the garden to be no other than "Mr. Francis Clare."

The visitor thus announced, was the son of Mr. Vanstone's oldest associate and nearest neighbour.

Mr. Clare the elder inhabited an unpretending little cottage situated just outside the shrubbery fence which marked the limit of the Combe-Raven grounds. Belonging to the younger branch of a family of great antiquity, the one inheritance of importance that he had derived from his ancestors, was the possession of a magnificent library, which not only filled all the rooms in his modest little dwelling, but lined the staircases and passages as well. Mr. Clare's books represented the one important interest of Mr. Clare's life. He had been a widower for many years past, and made no secret of his philosophical resignation to the loss of his wife. As a father, he regarded his family of three sons in the light of a necessary domestic evil, which perpetually threatened the sanctity of his study and the safety of his books. When the boys went to school, Mr. Clare said "Good-by" to them—and "Thank God" to himself. As for his small income, and his still smaller domestic establishment, he looked at them both from the same satirically indifferent point of view. He called himself a pauper with a pedigree. He abandoned the entire direction of his household to the slatternly old woman who was his only servant, on the condition that she was never to venture near his books, with a duster in her hand, from one year's end to the other. His favourite poets were Horace and Pope; his chosen philosophers, Hobbs and Voltaire. He took his exercise and his fresh air under protest; and always walked the same distance to a yard, on the ugliest high road in the neighbourhood. He was crooked of back, and quick of temper. He could digest radishes, and sleep after green tea. His views of human nature were the views of Diogenes, tempered by Rochefoucault; his personal habits were slovenly in the last degree; and his favourite boast was, that he had outlived all human prejudices.

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Such was this singular man, in his more superficial aspects. What nobler qualities he might possess below the surface, no one had ever discovered. Mr. Vanstone, it is true, stoutly asserted that "Mr. Clare's worst side was his outside"—but, in this expression of opinion, he stood alone among his neighbours. The association between these two widely-dissimilar men had lasted for many years, and was almost close enough to be called a friendship. They had acquired a habit of meeting to smoke together on certain evenings in the week, in the cynic-philosopher's study, and of there disputing on every imaginable subject—Mr. Vanstone flourishing the stout cudgels of assertion, and Mr. Clare meeting him with the keen edged-tools of sophistry. They generally quarrelled at night, and met on the neutral ground of the shrubbery to be reconciled together the next morning. The bond of intercourse thus curiously established between them, was strengthened on Mr. Vanstone's side by a hearty interest in his neighbour's three sons—an interest by which those sons benefited all the more importantly, seeing that one of the prejudices which their father had outlived, was a prejudice in favour of his own children.

"I look at those boys," the philosopher was accustomed to say, "with a perfectly impartial eye; I dismiss the unimportant accident of their birth from all consideration; and I find them below the average in every respect. The only excuse which a poor gentleman has for presuming to exist in the nineteenth century, is the excuse of extraordinary ability. My boys have been addle-headed from infancy. If I had any capital to give them, I should make Frank a butcher, Cecil a baker, and Arthur a grocer—those being the only human vocations I know of which are certain to be always in request. As it is, I have no money to help them with; and they have no brains to help themselves. They appear to me to be three human superfluities in dirty jackets and noisy boots; and, unless they clear themselves off the community by running away, I don't myself profess to see what is to be done with them."

Fortunately for the boys, Mr. Vanstone's views were still fast imprisoned in the ordinary prejudices. At his intercession, and through his influence, Frank, Cecil, and Arthur were received on the foundation of a well-reputed grammar-school. In holiday-time they were mercifully allowed the run of Mr. Vanstone's paddock; and were humanised and refined by association, in-doors, with Mrs. Vanstone and her daughters. On these occasions, Mr. Clare used sometimes to walk across from his cottage (in his dressing-gown and slippers), and look at the boys disparagingly, through the window or over the fence, as if they were three wild animals whom his neighbour was attempting to tame. "You and your wife are excellent people," he used to say to Mr. Vanstone. "I respect your honest prejudices in favour of these boys of mine with all my heart. But you are *so* wrong about them—you are indeed! I wish to give no offence; I speak quite impartially—but mark my words, Vanstone: they'll all three turn out ill, in spite of everything you can do for them."

In later years, when Frank had reached the age of seventeen, the same curious shifting of the relative positions of parent and friend between the two neighbours, was exemplified more absurdly than ever. A civil engineer in the north of England, who owed certain obligations to Mr. Vanstone, expressed his willingness to take Frank under superintendence, on terms of the most favourable kind. When this proposal was received, Mr. Clare, as usual, first shifted his own character as Frank's father on Mr. Vanstone's shoulders—and then moderated his neighbour's parental enthusiasm from the point of view of an impartial spectator.

"It's the finest chance for Frank that could possibly have happened," cried Mr. Vanstone, in a glow of fatherly enthusiasm.

"My good fellow, he won't take it," retorted Mr. Clare, with the icy composure of a disinterested friend.

"But he *shall* take it," persisted Mr. Vanstone.

"Say he shall have a mathematical head," rejoined Mr. Clare; "say he shall possess industry, ambition, and firmness of purpose. Pooh! pooh! you don't look at him with my impartial eyes. I say, No mathematics, no industry, no ambition, no firmness of purpose. Frank is a compound of negatives—and there they are."

"Hang your negatives!" shouted Mr. Vanstone. "I don't care a rush for negatives, or affirmatives either. Frank shall have this splendid chance; and I'll lay you any wager you like he makes the best of it."

"I am not rich enough to lay wagers usually," replied Mr. Clare; "but I think I have got a guinea about the house somewhere; and I'll lay you that guinea Frank comes back on our hands like a bad shilling."

"Done!" said Mr. Vanstone. "No: stop a minute! I won't do the lad's character the injustice of backing it at even money. I'll lay you five to one Frank turns up trumps in this business! You ought to be ashamed of yourself for talking of him as you do. What sort of hocus-pocus you bring it about by, I don't pretend to know; but you always end in making me take his part, as if I was his father instead of you. Ah, yes! give you time, and you'll defend yourself. I won't give you time; I won't have any of your special-pleading. Black's white, according to you. I don't care: it's black, for all that. You may talk nineteen to the dozen—I shall write to my friend and say Yes, in Frank's interests, by to-day's post."

Such were the circumstances under which Mr. Francis Clare departed for the north of England, at the age of seventeen, to start in life as a civil engineer.

From time to time, Mr. Vanstone's friend communicated with him on the subject of the new pupil. Frank was praised, as a quiet,

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gentlemanlike, interesting lad—but he was also reported to be rather slow at acquiring the rudiments of engineering science. Other letters, later in date, described him as a little too ready to despond about himself; as having been sent away, on that account, to some new railway works, to see if change of scene would rouse him; and as having benefited in every respect by the experiment—except, perhaps, in regard to his professional studies, which still advanced but slowly. Subsequent communications announced his departure, under care of a trustworthy foreman, for some public works in Belgium; touched on the general benefit he appeared to derive from this new change; praised his excellent manners and address, which were of great assistance in facilitating business communications with the foreigners—and passed over in ominous silence the main question of his actual progress in the acquirement of knowledge. These reports, and many others which resembled them, were all conscientiously presented by Frank's friend to the attention of Frank's father. On each occasion, Mr. Clare exulted over Mr. Vanstone; and Mr. Vanstone quarrelled with Mr. Clare. "One of these days, you'll wish you hadn't laid that wager," said the cynic philosopher. "One of these days, I shall have the blessed satisfaction of pocketing your guinea," cried the sanguine friend. Two years had then passed since Frank's departure. In one year more, results asserted themselves, and settled the question.

Two days after Mr. Vanstone's return from London, he was called away from the breakfast-table before he had found time enough to look over his letters, delivered by the morning's post. Thrusting them into one of the pockets of his shooting-jacket, he took the letters out again, at one grasp, to read them when occasion served, later in the day. The grasp included the whole correspondence, with one exception—that exception being a final report from the civil engineer, which notified the termination of the connexion between his pupil and himself, and the immediate return of Frank to his father's house.

While this important announcement lay unsuspected in Mr. Vanstone's pocket, the object of it was travelling home, as fast as railways could take him. At half-past ten at night, while Mr. Clare was sitting in studious solitude over his books and his green tea, with his favourite black cat to keep him company, he heard footsteps in the passage—the door opened—and Frank stood before him.

Ordinary men would have been astonished. But the philosopher's composure was not to be shaken by any such trifle as the unexpected return of his eldest son. He could not have looked up more calmly from his learned volume, if Frank had been absent for three minutes instead of three years.

"Exactly what I predicted," said Mr. Clare. "Don't interrupt me by making explanations; and don't frighten the cat. If there is anything to eat in the kitchen, get it and go to bed. You can walk over to Combe-Raven to-morrow, and give this message from me to Mr. Vanstone:—'Father's compliments, sir, and I have come back on your hands like a bad shilling, as he always said I should. He keeps his own guinea, and takes your five; and he hopes you'll mind what he says to you another time.' That is the message. Shut the door after you. Good night."

Under these unfavourable auspices, Mr. Francis Clare made his appearance the next morning in the grounds at Combe-Raven; and, something doubtful of the reception that might await him, slowly approached the precincts of the house.

It was not wonderful that Magdalen should have failed to recognise him when he first appeared in view. He had gone away a backward lad of seventeen; he returned a young man of twenty. His slim figure had now acquired strength and grace, and had increased in stature to the medium height. The small regular features, which he was supposed to have inherited from his mother, were rounded and filled out, without having lost their remarkable delicacy of form. His beard was still in its infancy; and nascent lines of whisker traced their modest way sparely down his cheeks. His gentle wandering brown eyes would have looked to better advantage in a woman's face—they wanted spirit and firmness to fit them for the face of a man. His hands had the same wandering habit as his eyes; they were constantly changing from one position to another, constantly twisting and turning any little stray thing they could pick up. He was undeniably handsome, graceful, well-bred—but no close observer could look at him, without suspecting that the stout old family stock had begun to wear out in the later generations, and that Mr. Francis Clare had more in him of the shadow of his ancestors than of the substance.

When the astonishment caused by his appearance had partially subsided, a search was instituted for the missing report. It was found in the remotest recesses of Mr. Vanstone's capacious pocket, and was read by that gentleman on the spot.

The plain facts, as stated by the engineer, were briefly these. Frank was not possessed of the necessary abilities to fit him for his new calling; and it was useless to waste time, by keeping him any longer in an employment for which he had no vocation. This, after three years' trial, being the conviction on both sides, the master had thought it the most straightforward course for the pupil to go home, and candidly place results before his father and his friends. In some other pursuit, for which he was more fit, and in which he could feel an interest, he would no doubt display the industry and perseverance which he had been too much discouraged to practise in the profession that he had now abandoned. Personally, he was liked by all who knew him; and his future prosperity was heartily desired by the many friends whom he had made in the north. Such was the substance of the report, and so it came to an end.

Many men would have thought the engineer's

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statement rather too carefully worded; and, suspecting him of trying to make the best of a bad case, would have entertained serious doubts on the subject of Frank's future. Mr. Vanstone was too easy-tempered and sanguine—and too anxious as well, not to yield his old antagonist an inch more ground than he could help—to look at the letter from any such unfavourable point of view. Was it Frank's fault if he had not got the stuff in him that engineers were made of? Did no other young men ever begin life with a false start? Plenty began in that way, and got over it, and did wonders afterwards. With these commentaries on the letter, the kind-hearted gentleman patted Frank on the shoulder. "Cheer up, my lad!" said Mr. Vanstone. "We will be even with your father one of these days, though he *has* won the wager this time!"

The example thus set by the master of the house, was followed at once by the family—with the solitary exception of Norah, whose incurable formality and reserve expressed themselves, not too graciously, in her distant manner towards the visitor. The rest, led by Magdalen (who had been Frank's favourite playfellow in past times), glided back into their old easy habits with him, without an effort. He was "Frank" with all of them but Norah, who persisted in addressing him as "Mr. Clare." Even the account he was now encouraged to give of the reception accorded to him by his father on the previous night, failed to disturb Norah's gravity. She sat with her dark handsome face steadily averted, her eyes cast down, and the rich colour in her cheeks warmer and deeper than usual. All the rest, Miss Garth included, found old Mr. Clare's speech of welcome to his son, quite irresistible. The noise and merriment were at their height, when the servant came in, and struck the whole party dumb by the announcement of visitors in the drawing-room. "Mr. Marrable, Mrs. Marrable, and Miss Marrable; Evergreen Lodge, Clifton."

Norah rose as readily as if the new arrivals had been a relief to her mind. Mrs. Vanstone was the next to leave her chair. These two went away first, to receive the visitors. Magdalen, who preferred the society of her father and Frank, pleaded hard to be left behind; but Miss Garth, after granting five minutes' grace, took her into custody, and marched her out of the room. Frank rose to take his leave.

"No, no," said Mr. Vanstone, detaining him. "Don't go. These people won't stop long. Mr. Marrable's a merchant at Bristol. I've met him once or twice, when the girls forced me to take them to parties at Clifton. Mere acquaintances, nothing more. Come and smoke a cigar in the greenhouse. Hang all visitors—they worry one's life out. I'll appear at the last moment with an apology; and you shall follow me at a safe distance, and be a proof that I was really engaged."

Proposing this ingenious stratagem in a confidential whisper, Mr. Vanstone took Frank's arm, and led him round the house by the back way. The first ten minutes of seclusion in the conservatory, passed without events of any kind. At the end of that time, a flying figure in bright garments flashed upon the two gentlemen through the glass—the door was flung open—flower-pots fell in homage to passing petticoats—and Mr. Vanstone's youngest daughter ran up to him at headlong speed, with every external appearance of having suddenly taken leave of her senses.

"Papa! the dream of my whole life is realised," she said, as soon as she could speak. "I shall fly through the roof of the greenhouse, if somebody doesn't hold me down. The Marrables have come here with an invitation. Guess, you darling—guess what they're going to give at Evergreen Lodge!"

"A ball," said Mr. Vanstone, without a moment's hesitation.

"Private Theatricals!!!" cried Magdalen, her clear young voice ringing through the conservatory like a bell; her loose sleeves falling back, and showing her round white arms to the dimpled elbows, as she clapped her hands ecstatically in the air. "The Rivals is the play, papa—the Rivals by the famous what's-his-name—and they want ME to act! The one thing in the whole universe that I long to do most. It all depends on you. Mamma shakes her head; and Miss Garth looks daggers; and Norah's as sulky as usual—but if you say Yes, they must all three give way, and let me do as I like. Say yes," she pleaded, nestling softly up to her father, and pressing her lips with a fond gentleness to his ear, as she whispered the next words. "Say Yes—and I'll be a good girl for the rest of my life."

"A good girl?" repeated Mr. Vanstone—"a mad girl, I think you must mean. Hang these people, and their theatricals! I shall have to go in-doors, and see about this matter. You needn't throw away your cigar, Frank. You're well out of the business, and you can stop here."

"No he can't," said Magdalen. "He's in the business too."

Mr. Francis Clare had hitherto remained modestly in the background. He now came forward, with a face expressive of speechless amazement.

"Yes," continued Magdalen, answering his blank look of inquiry with perfect composure. "You are to act. Miss Marrable and I have a turn for business, and we settled it all in five minutes. There are two parts in the play left to be filled. One is Lucy, the waiting-maid; which is the character I have undertaken—with papa's permission," she added, slyly pinching her father's arm; "and he won't say No, will he? First, because he's a darling; secondly, because I love him and he loves me; thirdly, because there is never any difference of opinion between us (is there?); fourthly, because I give him a kiss, which naturally stops his mouth and settles the whole question. Dear me, I'm wandering. Where was I, just now? Oh yes! explaining myself to Frank——"

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"I beg your pardon," began Frank, attempting, at this point, to enter his protest.

"The second character in the play," pursued Magdalen, without taking the smallest notice of the protest, "is Falkland—a jealous lover, with a fine flow of language. Miss Marrable and I discussed Falkland privately on the window-seat while the rest were talking. She is a delightful girl—so impulsive, so sensible, so entirely unaffected. She confided in me. She said, 'One of our miseries is that we can't find a gentleman who will grapple with the hideous difficulties of Falkland.' Of course I soothed her. Of course I said, 'I've got the gentleman, and he shall grapple immediately.'—'Oh, Heavens! who is he?'—'Mr. Francis Clare.'—And where is he?'—'In the house at this moment.'—'Will you be so very charming, Miss Vanstone, as to fetch him?'—'I'll fetch him, Miss Marrable, with the greatest pleasure.' I left the window-seat—I rushed into the morning-room—I smelt cigars—I followed the smell—and here I am."

"It's a compliment, I know, to be asked to act," said Frank, in great embarrassment. "But I hope you and Miss Marrable will excuse me——"

"Certainly not. Miss Marrable and I are both remarkable for the firmness of our characters. When we say Mr. So-and-So is positively to act the part of Falkland, we positively mean it. Come in, and be introduced."

"But I never tried to act. I don't know how."

"Not of the slightest consequence. If you don't know how, come to me, and I'll teach you."

"You!" exclaimed Mr. Vanstone. "What do you know about it?"

"Pray, papa, be serious! I have the strongest internal conviction that I could act every character in the play—Falkland included. Don't let me have to speak a second time, Frank. Come and be introduced."

She took her father's arm, and moved with him to the door of the greenhouse. At the steps, she turned and looked round to see if Frank was following her. It was only the action of a moment; but in that moment her natural firmness of will rallied all its resources—strengthened itself with the influence of her beauty—commanded—and conquered. She looked lovely: the flush was tenderly bright in her cheeks; the radiant pleasure shone and sparkled in her eyes; the position of her figure, turned suddenly from the waist upwards, disclosed its delicate strength, its supple firmness, its seductive serpentine grace. "Come!" she said, with a coquettish beckoning action of her head. "Come, Frank!"

Few men of forty would have resisted her, at that moment. Frank was twenty, last birthday. In other words, he threw aside his cigar, and followed her out of the greenhouse.

As he turned and closed the door—in the instant when he lost sight of her—his disin clination to be associated with the private theatricals revived. At the foot of the house-steps he stopped again; plucked a twig from a plant near him; broke it in his hand; and looked about him uneasily, on this side and on that. The path to the left led back to his father's cottage—the way of escape lay open. Why not take it?

While he still hesitated, Mr. Vanstone and his daughter reached the top of the steps. Once more, Magdalen looked round; looked with her resistless beauty, with her all-conquering smile. She beckoned again; and again he followed her—up the steps, and over the threshold. The door closed on them.

So, with a trifling gesture of invitation on one side, with a trifling act of compliance on the other: so—with no knowledge in his mind, with no thought in hers, of the secret still hidden under the journey to London—they took the way which led to that secret's discovery, through many a darker winding that was yet to come.

PINCHBACK'S COTTAGE.

The stage English cottage and the real English cottage are two very different things.

The canvas fabric—over-dressed with painted roses, at whose door the rustics who are perpetually striking work in order to come forward and sit down, and sing gaily about Annette at a little flimsy three-legged green table—bears very little resemblance to poor Pinchback's cottage in Downshire. There are no flowers near it, but a good deal too much of dung-heap; it is not a bower of roses; it is a nest of rheumatism and a den of ague and low fever.

But then the stage world, it may be said, is not meant to represent English life exactly; and it must be confessed that Sally Pinchback, who wears old top-boots of the squire's, and her father's great-coat, and goes out from seven A.M. to five P.M. stone-picking in the fields, does not bear much resemblance to that maypole dancing ballet-girl Annette, who comes on the stage in an exceedingly short gown, and carries a crook with bunches of blue ribbon tied to it—which is in everybody's way—and a little flower-basket on her left arm—which is of no use. It would be needless to describe, therefore, the economy of the stage labourer's cottage, as a preparation to describing that of the real Downshire labourer's; so we proceed at once to discuss the merits and defects of the latter, and the duties of landlords to increase the advantages of such residences, and to diminish the number of their evils.

The country clergyman, and all who know the poor well and love that patient long-suffering race, feel deeply how much the present miserable condition of the labourer's cottage not only diminishes his happiness, but lowers his morality. No one will deny that poor Pinchback, leads a hard life. No Opera in it, Lady Mouser—no hunting, Lord Rasper—no gay theatre, young Mr. Pitt—no club, your Grace—no books, dear authors—no grand tours, excellent travellers! No; Pinchback rises at dark and goes

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to work; and he comes home after dark, eats his supper, and goes to bed. So passes his life away.

Could he plead his own cause, as great men have pleaded well that of the Russian serf and the American slave, he would give you a homely but touching narrative of much suffering and much toil. Long stormy February nights spent in watching the sheep at the lambing time; long painful days devoted to thrashing, when his back has been racked with rheumatism; long days of damp ploughing; long seasons of sickness, when it has been hard to keep body and soul together, with a wife and four children to feed and clothe in times of no work; a life dull and uneventful, yet not without its heroic moments, its passionate sorrows, its communings with God, its strong resolves, its bright hopes and simple joys.

Pinchback's is a life, surely, that needs some domestic solaces to soothe its monotony, to charm away its vexations, and to diminish its temptations. The wife and children may do much to render this hard life bearable; but, above all, his home, the house itself, ought to be habitable and comfortable; it ought to be large enough, it ought to be dry and warm enough, it ought to be well drained, it ought to be healthy, and it ought to spare the much-worked man, by being near his work.

Luckily for Pinchback, he lives in a stone county—a county where stone is cheap, because it is abundant and accessible. He lives, so far, like a nobleman in comparison with mechanics possessing twice his income, who are penned-up near London in rows of flimsy brick houses, without air, drainage, warmth, dryness, or comfort. It is a sturdy cottage, built of stout blocks of grey stone, and standing square and steadfast, braving all the winds, blow they ever so madly. It is a grave self-respecting grey mottled house; it would be a yeoman's house in a brick or flint county, like Surrey or Kent; but here it is merely the house of a poor farm labourer, earning his poor eight shillings a week, the ordinary wages in Downshire. Pinchback pays but one shilling a week for this stone castle; and difficult enough sometimes, he finds it to pick up that same shilling, poor fellow!

It is a little Tudor cottage—no box of stucco—a building, simple though it is, of a marked period and style. It has a good sheltering porch; it has four stone-shafted windows, the mullions firm and massy, and the diamond panes leaded in the old-fashioned way. True, the mullions bar out a little of the light, but then there is quite enough of it without, and the door is, moreover, left open on all fine days. There is reason, too, even in the lattice panes, for they take very little glass, can be easily mended with any spare scraps, and do not often need the village glazier.

The roof is thatched—dangerous for fire, but otherwise picturesque and cheap, warm, dry, and lasting. A handful of straw repairs it when it needs repair; and, what is better, Pinchback himself can mend it in a spare hour.

That the little square of garden for which our man pays sixpence a week additional rent is not pleasanter to the eye and more useful, is Pinchback's own fault. It certainly boasts a pale China rose or two in the autumn, a bunch of cockaded hollyhocks in the summer, and a tuft of snowdrops in the spring. But its chief staple is a clump of lank green cabbage-stalks, as much cut and notched and crossed about, as if Pinchback used them for almanacks, as Robinson Crusoe did his post. Perhaps it is difficult to cultivate a very fine sense of the beautiful, on eight shillings a week.

Let us enter at the unpainted door, lifting up the loose trigger-latch with a click. The well-smoked roof is too low for sound ventilation; it gives us warmth, but we want air; that is the first thing that strikes us. The furniture is simple enough*—a stool, two or three rude wooden chairs—not so sound as they might be about the legs—two or three shelves for plates and mugs, a dresser, a cracked table, and a small looking-glass with half the quicksilver gone, is all we see. A bench fastened round the wall would be an excellent thing where room is scanty and furniture is too dear to buy; it would do for the children, and at cleaning times it would be useful for jugs and pans.

But we forgot the fine arts, the genuine old masters that adorn Pinchback's house. There is a portrait, highly coloured, of that worthy monarch King George the Fourth, who was certainly not so black as he is here painted. There is a picture of the Prodigal Son driving a curricle, and also a fancy sketch of Turpin's flight over a turnpike gate after he has shot Tom King. Above the mantelpiece, very brown with smoke, is a curious early religious picture—subject unknown, probably never known—supposed to be by one of those very early Italian painters whose works the National Gallery is becoming so "rich in." On nails over the fireplace there repose an old ship musket and a boxwood flute—played to very melancholy tunes thirty years ago, when Pinchback went "a courting," and was in rather a depressed state of mind concerning Sally Wilton, who afterwards jilted him and married a baker. In a corner of the room rest an earthy spade, a hoe, and a pickaxe, all shiny about the metal tips. These implements constitute what may be called, perhaps, Mr. Pinchback's family plate.

The fireplace is old-fashioned—a cave, in fact, built in with projecting walls, and forming a sort of heat-trap, or half-open oven in itself. The fire is on the hearth, and on a level with the walls of the room; and, on each side of it, there is ample and snug room for two or three cold or wet people, seeking warmth and comfort. It has not only the enormous advantage of affording two shut-in nooks, free from all draughts, but it gives you three sides of a fire

* Cheap strong furniture ought to be made in larger quantities for the poor. The writer has known a widow and her children, for sheer want of any other place, dine off the coffin of the dead father—a horrible and revolting sight.

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instead of one—three warmths instead of one; the best of the heat not going up the chimney, and leaving behind only a poor residue of outer blaze to scorch you.

Now, if this fireplace question were a mere question of extra comfort, we would not lay so great a stress upon it, though want of warmth often drives a poor man to the public-house fire; but there are other arguments against the impoverished modern fireplace. Downshire is a sheep county, and therefore a county of shepherds. Watching sheep in a down-country, and on cold spring nights, is no joke, when the wind blows like thunder, and the rain drives in one's face. Three drenchings in twelve hours is no bad preparation for an old age of rheumatism—particularly when your dress is chiefly a worn and patched pair of trousers, and a washed-out brown linen smock-frock. At daybreak the shepherd off duty drags home to his cottage to get a change of clothes, to warm his half-frozen limbs, and to "get a bite" at a warm breakfast. In the old snug chimney-corner, with half the fire to himself, he soon dries his smock, warms himself through, and is ready for breakfast; but at the modern poor half-starved grate, with the cooking going on in competition, what chance has the poor drenched soul of either heat or comfort?

To our mind, nothing is so cold and dismal as your modern model labourers' cottages. They are square boxes, monotonous and intolerable, with no snug nooks, no little convenient bins, no odd corners, cozy and handy. They are as dreary as mathematical problems. They are comfortless. They do very well in books and lithographs, but they are not fit for humanity; they are fit only for the demure smug dream-figure, who has no human wants, no human passions, no human failings, and who is so plastic in the hands of some philanthropic theorists. They are places invented for another kind of humanity: not for the kind of humanity to which the reader and the writer belong.

Yet while we praise the old stone cottage of the Downshire Pinchbacks for many things, we cannot but lament many of its internal arrangements. It has but two bedrooms; and there are four children—two girls, a boy, and a grown-up son.

Every new cottage should contain three bedrooms at least: one for the man and his wife, one for the boys, and another for the girls. In cases of illness, too, or infectious disease, the want of such division has led to thousands of deaths. The wretched drainage of the labourer's house is too well known to need any additional condemnation. Few cottages in Downshire have sewers or cesspools. The chronic rheumatism of the old labourer, the frequent low fevers and contagious diseases of their children, are referable, in great part, to this radical defect. Illness with the poor man means bitter poverty, scant wages, cruel dunning, and perhaps the dreaded workhouse or starvation. It means to the country increased poor-rates, more vicious pauper children, and more hereditary beggars.

We know cottages—and belonging to rich men, too—in Downshire, where, at certain seasons, we have seen the woman of the house dip down and fill her kettle from water welling up close to the very fireplace; we have seen, in a neighbouring house, a girl, dangerously ill with rheumatic fever, lying on chairs, the legs of which were half hidden in water. Of the dunghills and filthy ash-heaps that too frequently defile and pollute the front of cottages, we say little, because their removal depends generally on the tidiness, energy, and self-respect of the labourer; but the bad drainage, that fruitful source of disease, is beyond his power to remedy. Pinchback cannot afford to buy drain-pipes, nor could he spare time to put them down were he even to buy them. It is the rich landlord's bounden duty to promote the health and well-being of his tenants. It is all but murder to get money by letting houses that breed inevitable disease and death. Even selfishness can suggest no reason for not building healthier and better cottages for the labourer. It has been proved, by the severest statisticians, that to build labourers' cottages is to invest money well, and to obtain a good interest for it. Here, in Downshire, two good stone cottages can be built for two hundred and seventy pounds: though, of course, it is easy to spend as much as three hundred pounds upon one.

The aim of many English squires now, is, to reduce to the minimum the number of cottages on an estate, for fear of that increase of poor's-rate which only the criminal neglect of our well-deserving aged poor in past times can have produced. To let the cottages fall and decay, or to pull them down, is now the squire's ignoble ambition. During their period of decay, the poor pine in them, rather than move far from their work. We have known poor men, who, being unable to get a house in their native village, have had to walk every day three or four miles to work—a cruel addition to a hard day's labour.

One of the chief causes, we believe, of the present neglected state of the labourer's cottage is the following: The labourer does not generally rent his house direct from the landlord, but through the farmer. Now, the two indigenous plants of the English soil are the landlord and the labourer. The farmer, too often, has little or no affection for the children of the soil. He has not always learnt their ways or their feelings. We do not hold that all rich squires are too considerate of the poor man's hardships; but still they have often a respect for old and honest servants, and a wish to retain them, and they are for many reasons more likely than farmers to listen to their just complaints.

The labourer's lot grows harder every year. The cottages grow older and more unhealthy. The commons—their former playgrounds and pasture-grounds—get daily taken from them and enclosed. The smallest and meanest plots are now barred up by penalties; rabbits, though they swarm by thousands, the labourer may not touch; forest-wood he must no longer burn and use.

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He knows that he is destined after a hard life to die in a workhouse, and he bears his destiny, cart-horse like, with becoming obedience. How can a man living on eight shillings a week lay by anything for old age? He has his rent to pay, and perhaps four children and a wife to keep. True, his master, Farmer Spikes, lets him have wheat at prime cost, and he gets a little wood and some other perquisites; but it is the most he can do to make both ends meet, even if no rainy weather come, in the shape of illness—and yet it must come, to him or to his.

We want to see no ideal labourer—no smooth-faced inanity, with short sleek hair, hypocritical demeanour, and lip-profession of all the cardinal virtues and more—we like your red-faced, sturdy, somewhat obstinate, heavy-moving farm-servant, who works hard, likes his master, and fears God. We like him for his possibilities, and even for what he now is. We see in the fattest-faced young Downshire rustic, the raw material of all the Nelsons, Wellingtons, Watts, Stephensons, Burnses, and Shakespeares that ever were. We see in him the divine soul, the human heart, the capability of all joy and all sorrow. We know that these poor men, if our England were in danger, would still perform deeds of heroism and devotion before which the deeds of even old Greece and Rome would pale. We know that those hardy shepherds on our downs would, to defend those very miserable cottages, devote themselves by thousands to the fire and to the sword, rather than let one yard of dear English land be polluted by the foot of an invader. Could their landlords shed their blood one whit more readily?

THE DEAD POPE.

The whole day long had been wild and warm,
With a heavy forewarning of what was to come.
There had been, indeed, no such horrible storm
For many a year, men say, in Rome.
I remember, it burst just after the close
Of the day when the dead Pope was laid in the Dome
Of Peter, taking his last repose
To the grief of all good Christèndom.

I suppose that here, on account of the story,
It is fit I should mention that, when he died,
He was of a good old age,—grown hoary
In wearing the purple much to men's pride.
Of a truth, he had sate so long in Rome,
Sate so long in Peter's chair,
Ruling the world, that he was come
To keep his power apart from care.
His eyes were wan with the steam,
And his hair was scatter'd and white
With the hoar, of many years;
And decrepitude's misty fume,
Like the watery blunt starlight,
And thin snow, of an old March night
As its wearied face appears
Bathed cold in a clammy grey,
Before the sluggish season clears
Its winter rubbish away.
Yet winter's wine-cup cheers
The dull heart of its discontent:
And he was a jolly Pope, and a gay,
A man much given to merriment.
So, leaving the wolf to look after the sheep,
Whilst ever the stormy nobles raved,
And the wickedness ran over in Rome,
And sinners, grown stout, refused to be saved,
Save, now and then, by a martyrdom,
He smiled, and, warming his heart with wine,
Daily, gaily, quaff'd the cup.
Meanwhile, there were some who seem'd to opine,
By their sour faces and doggerel verses,
That the cup so quaff'd was cramm'd with curses;
And one jack-knave (for his pains hanged up),
In a pasquinade profane, each line
Of which it is certain, word for word,
The Devil, whose scribe he was, dictated
(A wretched spinner of rhymes!), averr'd
That the dreadful Vintager, as stated
By the pens of prophets still, no doubt, trod
The wine-press red with the wrath of God,
And, to claim the blood of His bruisèd vine,
Unseen, for the final signal waited
In the Pope's own palace? Who does not know
The Devil is apt to quote Scripture so?
But the poet once hang'd, the scandal abated.
And so, while those two ever-famous keys
Of the double world's due-accredited porter
From the good man's girdle hung at their ease,
And the days grew chillier, darker, shorter,
The cellar key in the cellar door,
Doing service for those same rusty twins,
Daily, gaily, all the more,
Made music among the vaults and bins.

And oh, what a Paradise was there,
Set open by that little key!
The soul of every grape fed full
From teeming Tuscan slopes, or where
In amber eves, along the lull
Of lucid lengths of ardent air
Drunken roams the droning bee
Down many a mellow Umbrian dell:
The juice of all the jollity
Of that Oscad family
Of vine-clusters stout that dwell
Round sunburnt hills that stop the swell
Of the dear, the dreamy sea,
Whose soul doth pour from a purple floor
Into hot curves of a yellow shore
Sound of summer evermore,
Bathing blue Parthenope
So warmly and so well!
All the thousand sparklets, too,
Lit with laughter thro' and thro'
In Asti's grape, the ever new:
Or from scatter'd vineyards set
Where the innumerous violet
In Castel d'Aso blooms and springs
Purpling the tombs of Tuscan kings:
Montepulciano, the master-vine;
Chiante, that comforts the Florentine:
With many a merry-hearted wine
Broach'd from bowers to Sylvan dear,
Where, in the golden fall of the year,
From each misty mountain thrashing-floor
Floats the song, as falls the flail,
Thro' happy hill-side hamlets, o'er
Dante's own delicious vale,
Whose sweetness hangs in odours frail
Of woods and flowers round many a tale
Of tears, along the lordly line
Of the scornful Ghibeline—
Dante's vale, and Love's, and mine,
The pleasant vale of the Carentine!
Nor lack'd there many and many a train
Of kingly gifts, the choicest gain

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Of terraced cities over the sea,
Or gardens where, with his daughters three,
King Hesperus, could he come again,
Might choose to abide, nor sigh in vain
For a joy as great as his Golden Tree:
The fiery essence of fierce Spain,
The soul of sunburnt Sicily,
The French, the Rhenish vintage, all
The purple pride of Portugal—
Whole troop of Powers celestial,
The slayers of sullen Pain!
Oh, what spirits strong and subtle!
Whether to quicken the pulses' play
And dance the world like a weaver's shuttle
To and fro in the dazzling loom
Where Fancy wears her wardrobe gay,
Or soften to faintness, faint as the fume
From silver censors swung alway
To music, making a mellow gloom
The too intrusive light of the day!
Some that bathe the wearied brain
And untie the knotted hair
On the pucker'd brows of Care,
Soothe from heavy eyes the stain
Of tears too long suppress'd, make fair,
With their divinest influence,
Fate's frown, or feed with nectar-food
The lips of Longing, and dispense
To the tired soul despair'd-of good,
Others that stir in the startled blood
Like tingling trumpet notes intense,
To waken the martial mood.
By the mere faint thought of it, well, I wis,
Such a heaven on earth were hardly amiss,
And I hold it no crime to set it in rhyme
That I think a man might pass his time
In company worse than this.

But, however we pass Time, he passes still,
At the same set pace, whatever the pastime,
And, whether we use him well or ill,
Some day he gives us the slip for the last time;
So even a Pope must finish his fill,
And follow his time, be it feast time or fast time,
As it happen'd with this same Pope, no doubt.
When he would not wake after that last bout,
The case was clear. So they laid him out.
"He is gone," they said, "where there's no returning.
Of the College who is the next to come?"
Then they set the bells tolling, the tapers burning,
And bore him up into Peter's dome.

After the organ's drowning note
Grew hoarse, then hush'd, in his golden throat,
And the latest loiterer, slacking his walk,
Cast one last glance at the catafalk,
And, passing the door, renew'd his talk,
Suspended by the late solemnity,
As to that last raid of Prince Colonna,
"What villages burn'd? and what hope of indemnity?"
The last new beauty fresh from Verona,
With the nimbus of red gold hair, God bless her!
And who should be the late Pope's successor?
I say, that, as soon as the crowd was gone,
And never a face remain'd in sight,
As the tapers began to be burning dim,
Just about the time of the coming on
And settling down of the ghostly light,
The sudden silence so startled him,
That the dead Pope at once rose up.

And first, he fumbled and stretch'd the hand,
Feeling for the accustom'd cup
(For the taste of the wine was yet in his mouth);
And, finding it not, and next with drouth,
Somewhat feebly he call'd out
Then, louder, longer, lustier, and
Fiercelier, east, west, north, and south.
But, no one coming to his command,
He rubb'd his eyes, and look'd about,
And saw, thro' a swimming mist each face
Of his predecessors, gone to Grace
Many a century ago,
Sternly staring at him so
(From their marble seats, a mournful row),
As who should say: "Be cheerful, pray!
Make the best of it as you may.
We are all of us here in the same sad case.
Each in his turn, we must, one by one, die,
Even the best of us—
God help the rest of us!
Your turn, friend, now. Make no grimace.
Consider, *sic transit gloria mundi!*"
He began to grow aware of the place.
A chilly strangeness, more and more,
Crept over him, never felt before,
As he stept down to the marble floor.
He look'd up and down, above him and under,
Fill'd with uncomfortable wonder.
What should persuade him that he was dead
A horrible humming in the head,
A giddy lightness about the feet,
Last night's wine and this night's heat!
He could sniff, by the incense afloat on the air,
Some service, not yet so long o'er
But what he might have slept unaware,
Nor yet quite waked. What alone made him fear
Was that draperied, lighted, black thing there
Not quite like a couch, and much like a bier.
At any rate, "Wherefore linger here?"
He thought; and hurriedly pushing by
The curtain heavy with broidery,
He pass'd out thro' the great church door.

So, forth, on the vacant terrace there,
Overlooking the mighty slope
Of never-ending marble stair,
'Twixt the great church and the great square,
Stood the dead Pope.
On either side, glade heap'd on glade
Of colossal colonnade,
Lost at last in vague and vast
Recesses of repeated shade
By the stupendous columns cast,
In midst of which, as they sang and play'd,
Fire and sound the fountains made,
Under the low faint starlight laid
Not far above their splendours bright,
Fresh interchange of laughters light,
Mix'd with the murmur of the might
Of royal Rome, which far in sight,
Revelling under the redness wide
Of lamps now winking from hollow and height
With a voice of pride on every side
Made ready to receive the night.
So all at once, and all around,
The silence changed itself to sound,
More terrible than mere silence is—
The sound of a life no longer his!
Fresh terror seized him where he stood;
Or the fear that follow'd him, shifting ground,
Fresh onslaught made; and he rested, afraid
To call or stir, like a sick owl, stray'd
From a witches' cave back again to the wood
Wherein, meanwhile, the noisy brood
Of little birds, with lusty voice,

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Made free of his absence, begin to rejoice,
And he halts in alarm lest perchance, if he cries out,
Those creatures, fit only to furnish him food,
Already by liberty render'd loquacious,
Picking up heart and becoming audacious,
Should forthwith fall to picking his eyes out.
Indeed, one might fairly surmise
By the noise in the streets, the shouts and cries,
That all the men and women in Rome,
From the People's Gate to St. Peter's dome,
Tho' clad in mourning each and all,
Were making the most of some festival.
Walking, driving, talking, striving,
Pushing, rushing,
Crowding, crushing,
Crying, outvying
In selling and buying,
Each with the rest,
To do his best,
To add to the tumult, each contriving
To make, in pursuit of his special joys,
Somewhat more than the usual noise.
Since it is not every day in the week
That one Pope dies, and another's to seek;
Such an event is a thing to treasure.
For a general mourning's a general meeting,
A sort of general grief-competing,
Which leads, of course, to a general greeting
(Not to mention general drinking and eating)
That is quite a general pleasure.
The universal animation,
In a word, you could hardly underrate.
So much to talk of, so much to wonder at!
The Ambassadors, first, of every nation,
Representing the whole world's tribulation,
Each of them grander than the other
In due gradation for admiration;
How they looked, how they spoke, what sort of speeches?
What sort of mantles, coats, collars, and breeches?
Then the Cardinals all in a sumptuous smother
Of piety warm'd by the expectation
That glow'd in the breast of each Eminent Brother,
Of assuming a yet more eminent station,
Much, he hoped, to each well-beloved brother's vexation.
And then, the Archbishops, and Bishops, and Priors,
And Abbots, and Orders of various Friars,
Treading like men that are treading on briars,
Doubtful whom in the new race now for the state run
They should hasten to claim as their hopeful patron.
The Nobles too, and their Noble Families,
Prouder each than the very devil,
Yet turn'd all at once appallingly civil,
And masking their noble animosities,
For the sake of combining further atrocities;
And, after each of the Noble Families,
Each Noble Family's faithful Following,
Who, picking their way while the crowd kept holloaing,
Stuck close to their chiefs, and proudly eyed them,
Much the same as each well-provender'd camel eyes,
In the drouthy desert, when groaning under
Their pleasing weight of public plunder,
The dainty despot boys who ride them.
A host, too, of Saints with their special religions
And patrons, of rival rank and station,
Deck'd out in all manners
Of ribbons and banners,
Painted papers
And burning tapers
Enough to set in a conflagration
The world; you would think by the fume and flare of them
And the smoky faces of those that took care of them,
Marching along with a mighty noise
Of barking dogs, and shouts and cheers,
Brass music and bands of singing-boys
Doing their best to split men's ears,
And starting up the very pigeons
On the roof-tops all in a consternation.

The excitement was surely justifiable.
The more so if, having fairly computed
The importance, necessity, and function
Of a Pope, as divinely instituted,
You consider the fact, which is undeniable,
That, when deprived of its special pastor,
The whole of earth's flock, without compunction,
Must consider itself consigned to disaster.
For if the world, say,
Could go on as it should,
Doing its duty, fair and good,
Missing no crumb of its heavenly food,
For even a week or a day,
In the absence of Heaven's representative—
Might it not be assumed from any such tentative
Process, if this each time succeeded,
That a Pope on the whole was hardly needed?
And that, if it could ever befal
That Heaven should be pleased, after due delay,
Its Viceroy on Earth to recal,
And abolish the past—just as good and as gay
The world would go on in the usual way
Without a Pope at all?

One thing, however, was justly provoking:
Amidst the millions jostling, joking,
As merry as so many prodigal sons
Having kill'd and roasted their fatted calf
And enjoying the chance to quaff and laugh—
There was not one of the millions
Who seem'd aware of the dead Pope there,
Or even very much to care
What meanwhile had become of His Holiness,
How he must feel now, or how he might fare,
Who all the while, was nevertheless
Sole cause of the general joyousness!
It was certainly hard to bear.
But why bear it longer?
His heart beat stronger:
If he raised his hand, would any man stand?
If he called would any man come
Of the million men and women in Rome
So lately at his command?
His hand he raised. No man look'd to it.
His finger. Not a knee was crook'd to it.
He raised his voice. No man heeded it.
He gave his blessing. No man needed it.
'Twas the merest waste of benevolence
(Since the holiday went on with or without him);
He might have been, to all intents,
The golden Saint stuck up on the steeple,
Who is always blessing a thankless people,
Nobody caring a button about him.
A Pope's blessing: and nobody bless'd by it!
A Pope's menace: and no man impress'd by it!
A Pope's curse: and no one distress'd by it!
Had the world been suddenly deafen'd and blinded?
The dead Pope menaced: nobody minded.
The dead Pope call'd: not a creature hasten'd.
The dead Pope cursed: no sinner seem'd chasten'd.
He might bless or curse, neither better nor worse,
For a single word that he said.
On its wonted way a world perverse
Went onward, nobody bowing the head

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Either for hope, nor yet for bread.
Then the dead Pope *knew* that he was dead.

He walked onward—nobody stopping him,
Ever onward—no lip dropping him
A *salve reverentia*,
Till the streets behind him, one by one,
Fell off, and left him standing alone
In the mighty waste of Rome's decay.
Meanwhile, the night was coming on
Over the wide Campagna:
Hot, fierce, a blackness without form,
And in her breast she bore the storm.
I never shall forget that night:
You might tell by the stifling stillness there,
And the horrible wild-beast scent on the air,
That all things were not right.

On Monte Cavi the dark was nurst,
And the Black Monks' belfry towers above;
Then vast the sea of vapour burst
Where forlorn Territian Jove
Hears only the owlet's note accurst
'Mid his fallen fanes no more divine;
And, from the sea to the Apennine,
And swift across the rocky line
Where the blighted moon dropp'd first
Behind Soracte, black and broad
Up the old Triumphal Road,
From Palestrino post on Rome,
Nearer, nearer you felt It come
The presence of the darkening Thing;
As when, dare I say, with outspread wing,
By some lean Prophet summon'd fast
To preach the guilt of a stiff-neck'd king,
Over the desert black in the blast
On Babylon or Egypt red
The Angel of Destruction sped.
Earth breathed not, feigning to be dead,
While the whole of heaven overhead
Was overtaken unaware,
First here, then there, then everywhere!
Into the belly of blackness sackt
Sank the dwindling droves of buffaloes
That spotted the extreme crimson glare;
Then the mighty darkness stronger rose,
Washing all the width of air,
And cross'd the broken viaduct
Flung forth in dim disorder there
Like the huge spine bone
Of the skeleton
Of some dead Python pleased to obstruct
The formless Night-hag's filmy path;
Thence on, mid the glimmering creeks and nooks,
Putting out quite
The palèd light
Of the yellow flowers by the sulphur brooks
That make a misty brimstone bath
For the Nightmare's noiseless hoof:
And, leaving the quench'd-out east aloof
The plague from Tophet vomited
Struck at the west, and rushing came
Right against the last red flame
Where in cinders now the day
Self-condemn'd to darkness lay,
With all his sins upon his head
Burning on a fiery bed,
Shapeless, helpless, overthrown!

Now to all the world it is well known
How the Devil rides the wind by night,
Doing all the harm he can,
In the absence of heaven's light,
To the world's well-order'd plan,
And with murrain, mildew, blight
Marring the thrift of the honest man,
Which most doth move his spite.
Certainly he was out that night
Before the fearful storm began,
For, lo, on a sudden, left and right
The heaven was gash'd from sky to sky,
Seam'd across, and sunder'd quite
By a swift, snaky, three-forkt flash
Of brightness intolerably bright,
As, ever, the angry Cherub, vow'd
To vengeance, fast thro' plunging cloud,
Wielding wide his withering lash,
That wild horseman now pursued;
Who lurk'd, his vengeance to illude,
In deep unprobèd darkness still.
Forthwith, the wounded night 'gan spill
Great drops; then fierce—crash crusht on crash—
As it grieved beneath each burning gash,
The darkness bellow'd; and outsprang
Wild on the plain, whilst yet it rang
With thunder, the infernal steed,
And dash'd onward at full speed
Blind with pain, with streaming mane
And snorting nostril on the strain,
Where, dasht from off his flanks the rain
Thro' all the desolate abyss
Of darkness now began to hiss.

Alas! for any poor ghost of a Pope
In such a night to be doom'd to grope
Blind beneath the hideous cope
Of those black skies without a star
For the way to where the Blessèd are!
And if the Evil One himself
Was his conductor thro' the dark,
Or, if dislodged from its sky-shelf
Some cloud was made his midnight bark,
Or if the branding bolt that rent
The skies asunder hewed for him
Thro' that disfeatured firmament
Beyond the utmost echoing rim
Of thunder-brewage, and the black
Enormous night, some shining track
Up to the Sapphire Throne where throng
The Voices crying, "Lord, how long?"
While the great years are onward roll'd
With moans and groanings manifold,
I know not, for it was not told.

The story here (as you may conceive it)
Becomes in every way perplexing.
As from others it happen'd to me to receive it,
Nothing novel thereto annexing,
Neither diminishing, nor augmenting,
Nor inserting out of my own inventing,
I would wish to relate it; but, each way I state it,
There remains sufficient cause to doubt.
I cannot convince myself about it,
So many different versions
From so many different persons.

It would seem, however, that all agree
(And this should suffice us, at any rate)
In assuming for certain that, early or late,
The dead Pope got to the golden Gate
Where the mitred Apostle sits with the key
— Peter, whose heir on earth was he.

And further than this to speculate
We surely should not be justified.
Tho' a fact there is, I am bound to state:
A renegade Monk avers he descried
In a vision that very night,

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While the storm was spending its fiercest hate
(And what he saw, so much the sight
Impress'd him, he wrote as soon as he woke
— Was it a dream or a wicked joke?),
What pass'd before that Gate.

And, since after the fashion most in vogue,
He wrote it in form of a dialogue,
Not averring, as he did, the tale to be true,
In all else, as he wrote it, I write it for you.

VOICE OUTSIDE THE GATE.

Peter, Peter, open the Gate!

VOICE WITHIN THE GATE.

I know thee not. Thou knockest late.

FIRST VOICE.

Late! yet Peter, look and see
Who calleth.

SECOND VOICE.

Nay, I know not thee.
What art thou?

FIRST VOICE.

Peter, Peter, ope
The Gate!

SECOND VOICE.

What art thou?

FIRST VOICE.

I? The Pope.

SECOND VOICE.

The Pope, what is it?

FIRST VOICE.

In men's eye
Thy successor once was I,
What was there was given to me.

SECOND VOICE.

Martyrdom and misery?

FIRST VOICE.

Nay, yet power to bind and loose.
In thy name have I burn'd Jews
And heretics, and all the brood
Of unbelief——

VOICES FAR WITHIN.

Avenge our blood,
Lord!

FIRST VOICE.

And in thy name have blest
Kings and Emperors, confest
Earth's spiritual head, whilst there
I sat ruling in thy chair.

VOICES FAR WITHIN.

Woe, because the Kings of Death
Were with her in her wicked mirth!

FIRST VOICE.

In thy name, and for thy cause,
I made peace and war, set laws
To lawgivers——

VOICES FAR WITHIN.

And all nations
Drunk with the abominations!
Of her witchcraft.

FIRST VOICE.

In thy name,
And for thy cause, to sword and flame
I gave sinners, and to those
Who fear'd the friends and fought the foes
Of him from all manhood selected
To keep thy name and cause respected,
Riches and rewards I gave,
And the joy beyond the grave.

VOICES FAR WITHIN.

Souls of men, too, chafering lies,
Did she make her merchandise.

FIRST VOICE.

By all means have I upheld
Thy patrimony—nay, 'tis swell'd.

VOICES FAR WITHIN.

For herself she glorified
In the riches of her pride.

FIRST VOICE.

Wherefore, Peter, ope the gate,
If my knocking now be late.
Little time, in truth, had I
—I, the Pope, who stand and cry
For other cares than those that came
Upon me, in thy cause and name
Holding up the heavy keys
Of Heaven and Hell.

SECOND VOICE.

If so, if these
Thou hast in keeping, wherefore me
Callest thou? Thou hast the key.
Truly thou hast waited late,
Open then thyself the gate.

And here the Monk breaks off to state,
With befitting reflections by the way,
With what great joy the Pope, no doubt,
Soon as he heard the stern voice say
Those words, began to search about
Among his garments for the key
Which, strange to say, 'twould seem that he
Had not bethought him of before.
And now that joy from more to more
Wax'd most (the historian of his dream
Observes as he resumes the theme)
When after search grown desperate
A key he found, just at his need,
Seem'd at the worst—a key indeed!
But, ah, vain hope! for, however the Pope
Tried the key in the fasten'd gate,
Turning it ever with might and main
This way, that way, every way at last,
Forwards, backwards, round again
Till his joy is turn'd to sheer dismay at last,
And his failing force will no longer cope
With the stubborn gate it declines to ope.
A key, indeed! but not, alas,
The Key! Who shall say what key it was?
The Monk who here, I must believe,
Is laughing at us in his sleeve
(Like any vulgar story-teller,
Fabling forms to vent his spleen),
Surmises that it must have been
The key of the Pope's own cellar.

TRANSFER OF COLONIAL LAND.

Adelaide, South Australia, Nov. 26, 1861.

SIR,—About two years back there appeared in All the Year Round an article headed "Economy in Sheepskins," descriptive of the method of conveyancing by registration of title in operation in this colony. Your article was doubtless written with a view to disseminate information upon a question of great importance, yet it may

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be gratifying to you to learn that your favourable notice has also operated as an encouragement to us in this remote part of the empire, struggling against the very powerful and very unscrupulous hostility of the legal profession.

By the present mail I forward to you a copy of the Report of a Commission, comprising amongst its members our late chief justice, Sir C. Cooper; our present chief justice, Mr. R. D. Hanson; and two leading members of the legislative council, appointed by government to investigate the working of that system which has had the support of your powerful advocacy, and their report affords conclusive evidence of the success of that system.

The inexorable logic of facts set forth in the return given in the Appendix of that report, affords the best reply to our opponents, showing that, during little more than three years, in the face of misrepresentations and intimidations by the conveyancers, land exceeding one million and a half in value has been brought under the new system upon the voluntary application of two thousand six hundred and fifty-two proprietors; that nearly half a million sterling has been secured by mortgage upon that land; and that, in all, five thousand four hundred and seventy-one transactions have been completed under the system without any of the disastrous results so confidently predicted by its opponents.

The report itself contains an outline of the procedure that has led to results so satisfactory. The instructions to officers of the department and the circular letters for the information of land brokers and proprietors dealing under the act, exhibit the working in minute details. It must, however, be acknowledged that the hostility of the conveyancers has worked beneficially for the cause.

The combination to conduct, free of cost, all cases adverse to the validity of the Real Property Act has operated on the officials employed as a stimulant to caution and vigilance, and has occasioned a very searching inquisition into the structure and language of the act which they administer. The refusal of the conveyancers to conduct business under that act has induced the educated to transact their own business, and occasioned the licensing of brokers to act for the uneducated, and for all who prefer paying a moderate fee to the trouble of transacting their own affairs.

Those brokers are sworn; they give heavy security; their charges amount to about one-eighth per cent on the value in ordinary dealings, and the result is, that the public have learned that there is no more occasion for the services of the conveyancer in selling, mortgaging, or leasing land under the provisions of the Real Property Act of South Australia, than there is in filling up a banker's cheque, a bill of exchange, or a transfer of scrip.

The neighbouring colonies are now profiting by our example. Queensland has already adopted our measure. In Tasmania it has passed the second reading in the legislative assembly by acclamation. I have also prepared a bill for Victoria at the request of the government of that colony, and am in communication with members of the legislature of New South Wales upon the same subject.

In the two last-named colonies, however, it is to be feared that the powerful opposition of the legal profession will operate to retard the adoption of the measure.

The only difficulty experienced in working the system in this colony, arises from the vague and frequently erroneous descriptions of boundaries and parcels given in grants and conveyances of land, and from the absence of permanent landmarks on the ground. Our system, you will perceive, is capable of indefinite expansion, without any risk of confusion, or of its becoming cumbrous or unwieldy, and although, as is remarked in the report, the machinery for bringing land under the provisions of the act in the first instance would require some modification in order to adapt it for dealing with English titles, complicated as they are by trusts and settlements, I am yet satisfied that the facilities for determining boundaries which exist in the old country would more than counterbalance the comparative difficulties arising from complication of titles, and that its application to the lands of England would not be attended with any greater risks or difficulties than those which have been successfully encountered in this colony.

I have the honour to be, Sir, your most humble servant,

ROBT. TORRENS,
Registrar-General, South Australia.

LONG-SEA TELEGRAPHS.

CHAPTER THE SECOND AND LAST.

THE manufacture of a submarine, is a much more complicated affair than that of a land, telegraph. A stout iron wire, passed through porcelain or other non-conducting rings, wherever it has to be attached to a pole or a tree, will afford almost instantaneous communication at either end, and require none of the protection essential where wires are carried either under the earth or under the sea. The difficulties of manufacture arise not only from the necessity of providing a cable strong enough to resist the wear and tear of tides and the hauls and pulls of dredges and ships' anchors; but also, because it is necessary to obtain, under considerable difficulties, the best "insulation" and the utmost "conductivity." These two terms, insulation and conductivity, must be so often used in describing electric, and especially submarine, cables, that it will be well to begin this chapter by explaining them.

A telegraph wire may for our purposes be compared to a pipe, which, according to its diameter, has a capacity for conveying water. Conductivity is the capacity of a wire to convey electric power. High conductivity is capacity to convey, from an electrical generator of a cer-

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tain power, a great quantity of electricity in a given time. Insulation is the method which guards the wire against what (to compare the wire with a pipe) may be called leakage. On land and in the air a thick wire is no disadvantage, and may be useful, and it is sufficient that the wires be insulated by glass, porcelain, or other non-conductors, wherever they touch a support connected with the ground. But wires laid in earth or water, without insulation, would leak, like a pipe full of holes, and the earth or water would absorb the electric current.

A submarine cable must be composed of some insulated conductor, strengthened by other surrounding materials, to protect it from injury while it is being paid-out of a ship and after it has been laid at the bottom of the sea. The Blue-book committee report that, in the fifty cables laid, the same general principles prevail—viz.: 1 The central conductor is a copper wire, or strand of wires. 2. The insulating covering is gutta-percha. 3. The external covering when used, consists of hemp or other fibrous material, impregnated with pitch or some other resinous substances, and, over that, in nearly all cases is iron or steel wire. The whole is, in form, an ordinary twisted rope. 4. The cables so prepared have been paid-out over the stern of an ordinary vessel, generally a steam-boat, with a friction-brake to regulate the delivery, according to the speed of the vessel. This speed has averaged from four to six knots an hour.

The conducting wire of submarine cables has in all cases been copper, because it has more conducting power than any other metal, and is very durable. It was originally used for land telegraphs, but it stretched too much, and, besides, offered an irresistible temptation to the purveyors for marine store shops, where there is a permanent demand for any quantity of copper wire. A Prussian commissioner gravely reported that mice eat not only gutta-percha, but copper wire. The conducting power of copper to iron is as one to eight, so that a copper wire one-tenth of an inch diameter is equivalent, as an electric conductor, to an iron wire nearly one-third of an inch in diameter. But on land the extra size of wire is an advantage. It is scarcely possible to obtain perfectly pure copper, and there is no substance which, added to pure copper, increases its conducting power. The difference between the conductivity of various qualities of copper is very great. Thus experiments made for the information of the committee showed that, taking pure copper at one hundred, Spanish Rio Tinto was, leaving out decimals, only fourteen; Russian, sixty; "tough" copper, seventy-one; Burra Burra, eighty-six and three-quarters; a specimen cut from a piece one and a half ton weight, nearly ninety-nine. It is of the utmost importance that the best and purest copper should be tested for submarine cables. Hitherto no proper guarantee for the purity of the copper wire has been exacted from cable contractors.

The first cables were made of a single copper wire, and, if this could be obtained of unlimited length and uniform quality, it would perhaps be the best plan; but, practically, a single wire was found to be weak at the solderings of the joints, and still more at places in the wire where it was not well annealed. There, it was brittle, and frequently broke off before it left the manufacturer's yard or the hold of the ship. But the ends of the wire, covered with gutta-percha, would frequently remain in contact, and answer any electrical tests applied, until in paying-out a strain came on the cable, then the two ends separated and broke the continuity of the conductor, although externally it appeared perfect. As an improvement on the single wire, bundles of wire, in the form of a strand, were used, and a number of very ingenious plans have been devised by different persons for increasing the strength and protecting these wires from injury by the percolation of water through the covering.

The insulating covering first used for electric wires was india-rubber; but it was soon found that, although it possessed insulating properties of the highest order, although it is tough, highly elastic, of less specific gravity than water, extremely durable under water, and nearly impervious to moisture, it had, besides minor defects, the fatal one of rotting, or rather burning and consuming, when exposed to light, and it was also extremely difficult to work into joints or joinings. After several trials, india-rubber was superseded by gutta-percha. Gutta-percha, when perfectly pure, and under moderate temperatures, is a remarkably good insulator, capable of being kneaded and drawn solidly through dies, and although the joints required care, the difficulty of making them was not so great as with india-rubber. But gutta-percha in a raw state is far from pure, and is consequently a very imperfect insulator. Jacobi, the celebrated Russo-German professor, in a paper read before the Academy of Sciences of St. Petersburg, relates that, being commanded, in 1844, to carry the telegraph invented by Baron Schilling across a gulf, he set to work to use the first parcel of gutta-percha imported into Russia, "furiously," for the stupid officials employed to report on the plan had rejected with ridicule the idea of carrying the telegraph along poles in the air. But the raw gutta-percha, although laid on with extravagant thickness, failed utterly. Submarine cables could not be satisfactorily worked until machinery had been invented for purifying and reducing it to an homogeneous mass. Even at the present day, according to Jacobi, it is only in England, where the manufacture is carried on on a great scale, that gutta-percha of a reliable quality can be obtained, and it has often happened that a single fissure, not larger in the commencement than a pin's point, by admitting the sea water to the wire, has destroyed the whole value of a submerged cable. Amongst the most recent improvements referred to by the Blue-book committee is that of using fine ribands of thin gutta-percha to wind round the wire, instead of kneading over each joint with a thick sheet of the same material.

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Until very recently gutta-percha was the only material used to insulate submarine cables, although experience had shown that even when most carefully manufactured it could not resist the heat of tropical climates. At a temperature of a little over two hundred and twenty degrees Fahrenheit gutta-percha is entirely spoiled. While the committee were sitting, improvements in the manufacture of gutta-percha were completed, by which it can be rendered a perfect insulator, and delivered in commercial quantities. Important improvements have also been made in the manufacture of india-rubber, by which all, or almost all, the defects of manipulation, which obstructed its previous use, have been removed. Under Silver's process the raw india-rubber is masticated, that is, torn into small fragments by steel teeth, and re-kneaded into a solid mass from which eventually thin adhesive ribands of almost unlimited length can be obtained. As india-rubber bears a very high degree of temperature without loss of insulating power, and is of extreme if not unlimited durability when protected by water from the action of the air, it may be expected that this new manufacture will come into use for those hot climates where gutta-percha fails, and where submarine telegraphic communication is most urgently required.

There is also a patent material, partly composed of gutta-percha, called "Wray's compound," of the insulating properties of which the committee, after careful experiments, speak highly. All the other substances to which their attention was directed by divers patentees were inferior in insulating qualities to gutta-percha.

In order to strengthen the cable against the strain which inevitably occurs in paying-out over a ship's stern, and on many other occasions, various expedients are adopted. In the first cable laid successfully between Dover and Calais, the core was first surrounded with a considerable thickness of hemp steeped in Stockholm tar and tallow, and then with a covering of iron wire laid on spirally. The weight of the cable was made so great that it was effectually protected from injury from the anchors of coasting vessels. This arrangement was admirably suited to the circumstances in which that cable was placed; it has consequently been very durable, and been the type of other cables laid in very different situations. All experience has since shown that in shallow waters a large heavy cable is the most economical arrangement. But in dealing with long distances and deep seas it is impossible to use cables of proportionate weight unless ships of enormous capacity were specially constructed for the purpose. The Atlantic cable, which was very slim as compared with the Dover cable, considering the work it had to do, required two vessels of three thousand two hundred tons to carry each half.

Wire, however small, will break with its own weight at a length of about three miles. An iron rod, however thick, will break at the same length. Therefore, in dealing with deep sea cables, the strain can only be relieved by an alteration of the proportion between the absolute weight of the rope in water and the absolute strength of the cable, and this is not always obtained by a simple decrease of the specific gravity of the rope, as many imagine. Thus, to take an instance from the evidence of one of the witnesses, "suppose a wire-covered cable be served round with hemp, giving the spiral of the hemp a very short lay, the hemp will not take its strain with the iron, and can consequently add nothing to the strength of the cable. Hemp is, however, heavier than water, the cable will not, therefore, support so great a length of itself as it did before the hemp was added, as it has no greater strength, and yet has a greater weight per yard run. The specific gravity of the whole rope is, however, less than it was before the addition of the hemp; for, as the specific gravity of the hemp is less than that of the iron-covered cable, the mean specific gravity of the two taken together must be less than the iron-covered cable taken alone. Here, then, the modulus of tension is actually decreased by a decrease of specific gravity." On the other hand, steel, with about the same specific gravity as iron, has greater strength, and gutta-percha wire, being of but little greater specific gravity than water, might be out any length with any increase of strain. A cable of the specific gravity of a gutta-percha wire, and strong enough to resist the rubbings and strains to which a submarine cable must be subject in deep waters, would be perfect. But all attempts have as yet failed to produce a covering strong enough to resist strains, durable enough to resist decay, and of less specific gravity than iron or steel. There are, however, before the telegraphic public a crowd of patentees, each certain that his combination and arrangement of iron or steel and copper wire, with its coverings, is the one thing needed for a perfect cable, for the greatest distances, and the deepest seas, whose earnest statements must be received with the greatest caution.

Supposing a suitable cable decided on, the bottom of the sea where it is about to be laid should be surveyed and analysed. Hitherto, the course of a cable has been too much left to hap-hazard; in future, it is to be hoped that a careful investigation of the route will be the first step. The failures in laying submarine cables have generally been due to unsuitable ships and defects in the paying-out apparatus. "The ship," say the committee, "should be of large capacity, to admit of the cable being easily coiled without injury; care should be taken to isolate the hold from the engine-room, as the heat would injuriously affect a gutta-percha covering. The hold should be of a form to allow the cable to be paid-out without materially altering the trim of the ship, which should have sufficient power to maintain a speed of from four to six knots per hour, in the direction in which it is proceeding, in any weather, and it should be very steady in a rough sea." Therefore, to do the work of laying submarine cables in the best manner, ships must be built for the special purpose, and

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"it is believed that such ships, when not engaged in laying cables, would be found useful for the ordinary purposes of commerce."

Supposing the ship ready, the cable is coiled in the hold with as much regularity as possible, each layer kept in its place under the old arrangements, by lashings of hemp, and sometimes by palings of wood. Relays of hands must be ready, while the ship is going at full speed, to hand out the coils with great rapidity, and yet with great regularity, to prevent their being thrown into the brake more speedily than required, while the lashings and palings must not be removed before the cable is wanted. But an arrangement, patented by Messrs. Newall, renders this part of the work much more simple and easy. It consists of a cone in the centre of a circular hold, round which the cable is coiled. Rings suspended round this cone guide the leading part of the rope up to the deck, from whence it finds its way to the brake over the stern. Under this arrangement few hands are required in the hold, and the rope sweeps regularly and smoothly round, so that all danger of fouling is removed. It next passes through the brake, and requires most delicate handling to ensure the proper strain. If sufficient pressure be not put on the brake, the cable runs out, from its own weight, with greater speed than the ship, and there is not only a waste of slack cable, but it is liable to get into "kinks." Personal skill on the part of the crew and engineer is of the utmost importance in doing this part of the work—of more importance than any mechanical arrangements, however theoretically perfect. Of course the greatest difficulties occur in deep waters. During this time it is to be hoped that not only has a correct calculation been made of the length of rope required, allowing for the inevitable slack in great depths, but that a straight course has been steered, and that can only be maintained by very exact precautions.

The earliest cables were laid under the directions of engineers who had had some experience in nautical matters, and who therefore adopted the precautions for securing a straight course that would occur to a seaman, whilst, at a more recent date, cables were laid with about as much care as a schoolboy employs to fly a kite.

In the first cable between England and Holland, though the operation was performed during a gale of wind and in a rapid tideway, only three and a half per cent. of length beyond that required for the direct measured distance was laid. The actual distance across was 114½ miles; the length of the cable laid was 119 miles. The tide being transverse to the course, first on one side and then on the other, the following was the plan adopted: Two tugs were employed always ahead of the vessel containing the cable. A straight course was made by these tugs alternately. As it was in shallow seas, buoys were placed, to make for alternately during the day; at night, Bengal lights were exhibited from the tugs. Thus, the whole distance was, as it were, "ranged" beforehand. The smallness of the per-centage of waste must be attributed to these precautions. "A vessel to show the way is essential, because the compasses of the conveying vessel must be affected by the varying quantity of iron cable as it is veered over the stern."

But, should the wire be unbroken when it reaches the ship's hold—should it not "kink" or twist preparatory to snapping—should it, in short, be duly laid, other unobserved defects may destroy its use weeks or months after it has been set to work. Among the most fatal things that can happen to a submarine cable are "faults" by which a "conducting communicator" are established between the copper wire and the surrounding water. An almost imperceptible fissure is sufficient to effect this. It may arise from air holes in the process of manufacturing gutta-percha, or from the wire not being in the centre of the insulating material, and thus a slight abrasion may cause it to protrude. A wire properly centred may be displaced in consequence of the softening of the insulating material when exposed to high temperature. The presence of any of the foreign bodies which are found in unpurified gutta-percha and india-rubber is a certain cause of defective insulation. Nevertheless, the Blue-book committee report that very efficient tests have been devised to ascertain the existence of faults in a covered wire during or after the process of manufacture, "and we do not doubt that a cable may be delivered by a manufacturer entirely exempt from faults."

But, although the perfect cable has been laid at the bottom of the sea, it has still to undergo the dangers of the deep. It may be cut through by ships' anchors or dredges; it may be cut by the friction of a current across sharp rocks; it may be corroded by some mysterious action; in a word, from some cause or other it may be spoiled or broken.

It then becomes necessary to lift it and repair it if it lies within liftable distance. To this operation we must again turn to the evidence of the one witness who combined nautical training with electrical engineering experience, ranging over not one great submarine but a series of cables, from the earliest to the latest. The repair of the Cagliari and Malta cable in 1859 is a good example of what has been done, and can be done, in this department of submarine engineering.

Mr. Webb (we quote from the Blue-book) made his electrical tests at Malta, calculated that the fault was a hundred and eighty-eight nautical miles from that island, and wrote to the directors of the Company to that effect. He then went out in the Elba steamer, grappled up the cable off the coast of Sicily, cut it, and buoyed the end leading to Malta, and then began picking up towards the fault. When twenty miles of cable were got in, it parted at the bottom, there being evidently some heavy weight there. This was in a hundred and sixty fathoms of water. After two more partings of cable and three weeks' work, the cable was spliced and completely repaired, and the fault was

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found to be one hundred and seventy-five miles from Malta. Thus the calculations founded on electric tests had been only thirteen miles out in a distance of one hundred and seventy-five miles. These tests were only taken from one end; had it been possible to test from Cagliari also, a more accurate result would have been obtained. The same witness stated that he had grappled and lifted cables at one hundred and sixty fathoms, but he did not consider that there would be any difficulty in destroying a cable at five hundred or six hundred fathoms.

Some curious submarine discoveries are made in the course of these cable liftings. Cables have been found completely protected by an outer casing of marine animals. In the case of the Cagliari and Bona cable, "off Cape Spartivento, it was covered with young coral. It could not have laid on the ground, but must have been suspended over some gulf, for the young clean coral grew from it equally all round, radiating outwards so completely that not a particle of the cable was to be seen, and for forty or fifty fathoms it came out of the water like a huge coral necklace."

Encouraged by the early successes we have described, cables were manufactured and laid with a degree of carelessness that would be comic if it were not for the serious discouragement which has thus been inflicted on really sound schemes for submarine telegraphs. For instance: "One of the directors of the Mediterranean Telegraph Company—not an engineer—undertook to manage the whole engineering; and after making use of a competent engineer to lay down the first section from Spezzia to Corsica, tried his own hand at laying down the cable from the island of Sardinia to Algeria. He took no engineer even to assist him, and after two starts in 1855, when he never got farther than thirty miles from land, he failed, and brought back eighty miles of cable. It has since been stated that the second of these starts must positively have been made with less cable on board than the actual distance to the opposite coast. He was then allowed to throw on one side the eighty miles of cable, and have another longer lighter cable manufactured. With this, again, two fresh starts were made in 1856, with equal want of success—the only difference, that this time no cable was brought back. In 1858, competent contractors recovered the whole of the first cable and a large portion of the second. Finally, the company let the laying of a third cable by contract; but, as no engineer was employed to specify the work, the cable was designed with such a thin covering of gutta-percha as to render perfect insulation impossible, while the contract only specified that it should work for a week."

"Contractors are always willing to contract to lay down a cable that shall work for a week between any two points, provided they design it themselves and have no competition!"

For an excellent illustration of what may be called the "happy-go-lucky" style of laying cables, we have only to turn to the self-complacent evidence of an energetic speculator, a projector, or, to use one of the last words borrowed from imperial France, a concessionnaire, who has a talent for buying monopolies from governments and selling them to companies. In this capacity he was on board a steamer with a cable for connecting Algeria with Cagliari, in Sardinia. It was the first attempt to lay in very deep seas—over sixteen hundred fathoms. "We passed the greatest depths with perfect safety in the night. From some cause or other we drifted out of course to the west. At daylight I saw the French vessel which accompanied us decorated with flags—the officers were drinking champagne to celebrate their triumph. Our captain, who had never been out of the British Channel before, had given us warning in the night that we were drifting very much out of our course. I communicated this to the officer appointed by the French government to accompany us. He replied, 'We know what we are doing,' and offered to guarantee that we should arrive at Galita with ten miles of cable to spare.

"In the morning the captain said, 'Certainly, sir, we have been out of our course in the night; ask the French captain to give us the latitude and longitude.' Accordingly, by the aid of a black board they exchanged their figures. The French officers, after examining our black board, on which the figures were chalked two feet long, seemed in great consternation. They retired to their cabin, and on returning, signalled that we were right and they were wrong; with only eleven English miles of cable left, they were eleven nautical miles from the coast of Algeria." The witness did not explain why he was not provided with buoys, by which the cable might have been safely anchored, but he proceeds:

"We sent a message through the cable to Messrs. Glass and Elliott, to put in hand immediately from thirty to fifty miles of cable. That message was received. We held on for five days and nights in a very heavy sea. Most of the young clerks, who were Italians, were sick. On the fifth morning I was alone on deck watching the instruments, when I saw a message coming. I got up one of the clerks, as it came in Italian. It was a message from Messrs. Glass and Elliott, saying that several miles of cable were in progress. Within a few minutes the vessel gave a sudden plunge, and the cable broke."

Mr. Cromwell Varley, one of the Blue-book committee, gives us some idea of the rate at which communications may be transmitted through long distances, by relating an experiment he made in the International Telegraph Office. A slip written in London was sent round from Odessa, through Moscow, St. Petersburg, Riga, Königsberg, Berlin, Hanover, and Amsterdam, to London. The highest speed attained between London and Odessa was six words per minute. English land lines are seldom worked at a higher rate than twenty-two words per minute. An entire hour's work will seldom show a higher speed than twelve or fifteen words per minute. The average length of words is four and a half

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to five letters; but the public when telegraphing often suppress the a's, the of's, the the's, the in's, &c., and thus telegraphic words average a greater length, especially when such words as Dampfschifffarbgesellschaft occur, which, according to telegraph law, is one word all over Europe.

A little experiment by the same witness brings into curious relief the speed power of the telegraph. In November, 1860, a conversation was established between London and Odessa. London first called Berlin, and inquired about the weather. Berlin answered it is very cold. Have you any frost in London? We said, No. Then we asked for St. Petersburg, and put the same question to him. He replied it was very cold, and the snow was so deep they were using sledges. We asked for direct communication to Odessa. He put us through. The clerk at Odessa told us that with them flowers were in full bloom and no frost had appeared. Thus we had spoken, in one uninterrupted chain, through Berlin, St. Petersburg, to Odessa.

The effects of the reaction that followed the miserable failures of the Atlantic and Red Sea cables, and discouraged all deep-sea and long-sea submarine projects, are beginning to pass away, and there are now before the public several well-considered projects for uniting the old and new world. A substantial company is engaged in trying to repair the Red Sea telegraph, and even if that attempt should fail, there are sound engineering arguments in favour of making the connexion on the plan suggested by a witness already quoted—viz. by carrying the cables in short lengths "of, say, fifty miles in forty or fifty fathoms of water, along the shores of the Red Sea, and bringing the ends on shore"—"a small payment to the Arab chiefs for protection forming part of the cost of maintenance." Such a cable would be easily and quickly repaired, and the longest length of deep water would be from Muscat to Kurrachee, the rest being in comparatively shallow water. As our government always keeps several war steamers in the Red Sea, it would be easy to have an engineering staff on board one of them to execute submarine cable repairs. By this arrangement the cost of maintaining a steam-boat in those seas for the special purpose would be saved—no small item where coal costs eighty shillings a ton.

In July, 1860, Mr. F. C. Webb proposed to government a line of telegraph from Malta to Alexandria, on a novel plan. All former projects had consisted of lines direct between Malta and Alexandria, thus passing through eight hundred miles of deep water—in some places two thousand fathoms. He proposed that two stout cables should be laid from Malta to Tripoli, which, following a course shown on his plans, would not exceed more than two hundred miles in length, and lie in depths of less than eighty fathoms, with the exception of a few miles near Malta, where the depth would be about two hundred fathoms. From Tripoli to Alexandria, the line was to be carried along the coast on poles, the protection of it being ensured by small subsidies to the Arab sheiks. If at any part of the route this arrangement proved impracticable, then the line was to be carried along the coast, in the sea, by means of short duplicate lengths of very stout submarine cables, touching on the coast every fifty miles, thus making repair and maintenance of the line easy. The project, having been referred by the Treasury to the Board of Trade, was approved by several experienced engineers. Eventually, the government ordered the cable intended for Rangoon and Singapore to be laid between Tripoli and Malta. Unfortunately, although the general route was adopted, and the cable laid on the exact line shown on the plans furnished to the Board of Trade, one of the most important features of the plan has been ignored in a very characteristic manner. Instead of attempting to carry any part of the line by land wires along the coast, or at any rate by short sections of stout submarine cables in duplicate, as detailed in the original proposition, a cable of inferior strength has been laid in two long stretches along the coast, from Tripoli to Alexandria, thus following the proposed route, but without the precautions indicated for its maintenance and repair. Thus the author has had the mortification of seeing government appropriate and mutilate his printed and detailed plans, in order to use up a certain length of cable which the government had in hand, and did not apparently know how to expend—the latest illustration of the art of cutting blocks with a razor.

Another project of an English engineer for making the transatlantic communications by short lengths, commencing at Gibraltar, and following the coast of Africa, neglected here, is now being carried out by the Spanish government. They propose to carry a cable from Cadiz to the Canaries, from thence to Cape de Verde, from thence to the Island of St. Paul, in the Southern Atlantic Ocean. Thence the longest stretch would be eight hundred miles, to the Island of San Fernando de Noronha, and thence to the Brazilian coast, which is a comparatively short distance. From the Brazilian coast the lines will pass along the shores of British and French Guiana to Trinidad, thence by the West India Islands to the Spanish possessions of Porto Rico and Cuba. From Cuba a line may be carried to Florida, and form a junction with all the lines of the late United States, and a branch may also diverge to Panama; while south from Brazil the system may be conducted to Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Ayres. Thus, by a circuitous course, with a number of comparatively short-sea branches, and with considerable local traffic, the Americas and Europe may be united. If this be done, there can be no doubt that the investment will pay good interest. At present, the government and Malta and Alexandria deep-sea line earns an income of six hundred pounds a week. That there are no insuperable difficulties in the way of long land lines through savage countries is proved by the fact that New York has been connected with

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San Francisco by a line of land telegraphs through the deserts and by the Salt Lake City, and that the Indian system extends over the whole British territory. In a word, we have the materials, the machines, the manufactures, the engineers, the experience, the capital, for encircling the world with land and sea telegraphs. For success, nothing is needed but an honest intelligent use of existing materials and machinery, and a rigid exclusion of the jobbing concessionnaire from any government deep-sea experiments.

KIT BUTLER FROM BOONVILLE.

Some ten years ago, when travellers in Oregon suffered very severely from attacks of Indians, I was one of a party passing through that wild and unknown state, in my way to California. After a month's ride from the Willamette Valley, we diverged westward from the great emigrant trail, and found ourselves camped one evening on the trail to Crescent City, at its intersection by Deer Creek, an offshoot of the Illinois River. Our party consisted, besides myself, of two lethargic Germans, a feeble-minded young artist lately from London, and a stark taciturn hunter from Missouri. During our long journey I had tried to be companionable with each of my fellow-travellers in turn, and at last had fallen back on Kit Butler, the Missourian, with whom I gradually established terms of a smoking, not a speaking intimacy. On the evening of our encampment on Deer Creek, supper having been eaten and the horses picketed before setting the guard, each of us betook himself to his own private relaxation. This was for the German, sleep; for the artist, self-examination by help of a small glass on a comb-handle; for Kit and me, the resolving of ourselves into a vigorous smoking committee. When we had been smoking for some little time, Kit suddenly addressed me: "Mate," he said, "this hoss don't kinder fancy this har camp, he don't."

To my eyes, a better camping-ground could not have been selected. It was pitched on a flat prairie, where "wood, water, and grass" were each at hand, while, at the same time, there was no cover for lurking Indians nearer than the creek—a long rifle-shot distant. But Kit, I observed, had his eye, miles and miles away, on a thin spiral column of smoke.

"An Indian camp fire!" I exclaimed.

"And Rogue River too near," Kit growled.

I understood him. We were camped not far from the Rogue River, and it was likely enough the fire had been lit by an outlying party of The Rogue Tribe, who had earned their sobriquet from being notoriously the most rascally Indians in all Oregon. The night, however, passed without an alarm. In the morning, the Germans' cattle, already half foundered, were found to be so badly galled by careless saddling, that it was agreed we should halt for four-and-twenty hours, to give the poor brutes a chance of recruiting.

Kit, who never descended to argument, made a wry face at this plan, and, catching up his rifle, prepared, as was his custom, for a hunt. I went with him, and after some hours, we got within range of a herd, and shot for supper a small elk, or wapiti deer. On nearing camp again, we saw that our party had been joined by a young Indian lad. Equipped in a suit of dressed deerskin, with a good deal of Indian finery about him, he stood in an easy attitude by the camp fire, while our artist sketched him, and the Germans were looking on lazily. This admission of the Indian into camp was against all prairie laws, as it has been found that such visitors are invariably spies, and "trouble" is pretty sure to come of their visits. Kit, therefore, throwing down the venison, burst angrily into the group:

"I found him by the creek: I only wanted to draw him," explained the startled artist, dropping his sketching block and brush.

"Draw him!" Kit shouted, "I'll draw a bead on the young spy's carcase if he don't make tracks in less than no time. Mate!" said the ireful hunter to me, as the frightened red-skin darted across the plain, "jest fix your shooting-irons right, for we'll have 'trouble' afore long. This coon knows nought of Injuns, *he* don't."

Impatient to get away from our present camp, I was not sorry when the day drew to a close, and we began to prepare supper. While I chopped some wood for the fire, Kit cut up the carcase of the elk we had shot in the morning, and kneaded the flour for bread in the "prospecting" tin. When I had made up the fire, there was no water for the coffee. As usual, our companions had been loafing about, aiding little or nothing in the indispensable camp duties. Somewhat annoyed, I bade one of the loafers take our tin saucepan down to the creek to fill it. Of course there was a discussion of the lazy as to who should be at the trouble of performing this slight service. In the end, one of the Germans took the saucepan up, and, with an ungracious expletive, departed on his errand. My fire blazed away brightly. Kit's cake, propped up before it with a stone, was baking in the usual primitive prairie fashion, and the venison steaks, cut up into little chunks, threaded on to a peeled wand, were twirling over the embers. Still the German had not returned with the water. As, in spite of our hails, he did not emerge from the hollow of the creek, which had a steep bank considerably higher than a man, his fellow-countryman was despatched to see what he was doing. When he in his turn had disappeared down the bank, I noticed that Kit, who sat on the ground twirling the spit, let it fall into the fire, and seemed to listen anxiously to a sound that reached only an ear quick as his. But shortly an awful shout arose. It was a heartrending appeal for help, and I should have certainly responded to it by rushing down to the creek, but that the powerful grasp of Kit, who had now risen from the ground, withheld me. Again, and this time fearfully prolonged, the cry of a man in his extremity arose,

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and we saw the second German struggling desperately from the creek. Even from the distance at which we stood, we could perceive that during the few moments of his absence, he had passed through a terrible ordeal, for his clothes, where not torn completely away, hung in strips about his person, and exposed the naked flesh, crimson with many slashes, telling that the cruel and silent knife had been at work on him. For a moment, this ghastly figure extended its arms piteously towards us, and uttered another cry, but fainter than before. It was his last effort. Apparently seized from behind by an unseen hand, the unfortunate man tottered for a moment, then threw up his arms, sank back, and disappeared down the creek. Kit was the first of the witnesses of this shocking tragedy to break silence. "Injuns!" he cried; but his explanation was superfluous, for as he uttered it a crowd of red-skins jumped forth from the creek, and charged down upon us with pealing whoops.

"Look to the cattle, or we'll all be rubbed out, by thunder!" shouted Kit, as we caught up our rifles. His warning was just in time. No white man's horse can brook the Indian whoop, and all those of ours that had hitherto been grazing quietly about, with their lareats dragging, galloped wildly over the prairie in full stampede, and were irrecoverably lost. Only three horses remained to us. They had luckily a short time before been hitched up to a tree near at hand. Before these terrified brutes could break away we had sprung to their heads, and effectually secured them by doubling their lassos. At first, panic-struck by the appalling sight I had just witnessed, and the critical position in which we were placed, I entertained the idea of flinging myself on to the back of one of the horses, and flying for my life, but the hunter restrained me. "Do as I do, mate," he said, with an admirable coolness that completely reassured me; and in obedience to his example, I took cover behind the horses, and levelled my rifle across their backs, point-blank at the approaching rout of red-skins. These, who were armed chiefly with bows and arrows, observing our demonstrations, and knowing that we were not to be taken by surprise, or without a certain loss to themselves—conditions utterly opposed to all Indian ideas of warfare—gradually faltered in their pace till they came to a standstill, and then broke and fled back to the cover of the creek in great confusion.

There being now breathing-time, I remembered the artist. Strange to say, he was nowhere to be seen, but Kit, who seemed to divine the reason of my puzzled looks, pointed up the tree beneath which we stood. I looked aloft, and dimly amid the foliage of the cedar I descried a dangling pair of bluchers that seemed familiar to me. They were the artist's. "Come down!" I shouted; "the Indians are gone." But my request met with no response, unless an irritable movement of the dangling boots was meant for a negative. Again I hailed them, when, as if to put an end to all further argument, they ascended higher among the branches, and were lost to sight. "Guess the scared critter's best up the cedar," said Kit, adding suddenly, as he glanced over the prairie, "Hurrah! Now, mate, saddle up right smart." And while I rapidly equipped the horses, to my astonishment he busied himself in casting upon the fire all the property lying about the camp, with the sole exception of our own rifles and revolvers. "If you varmint git us, they'll only git mean plunder," he said, grimly contemplating his work of destruction.

"The Indians in the creek, you mean?" I asked.

The hunter shook his head, and pointed southwards.

Following the direction of his arm, I made out through the fast fading twilight a band of horsemen galloping right down upon us. They were mounted Indians. As, doubtless, they were acting in concert with those on foot in the creek, it was plain that our position was no longer tenable. I perceived that Kit was of this opinion, for he was now hastily examining our three remaining horses. They were young American cattle that I had bought on the Columbia, as a speculation for the Californian market. Two of them were light, weedy-looking fillies; but the third, a powerfully-made chesnut stallion, with white feet, was by far the best of the lot.

"You will take the chesnut, he is the only horse at all up to your weight," I said to Kit, who was a seventeen stoner at least.

"Thankee, mate," he replied; "'tis kind of ye—yes, 'tis, to give up the best hoss; but I wish 'twar my ole spotted mustang. Don't kinder consate them white feet, and that eye ain't clar grit, it ain't!"

A few minutes were now wasted in endeavouring to persuade the artist to descend the tree and take the third horse; but, either on account of intense fear, or a conviction of the security of his "cache," he still made no sign. As the horsemen were now fast closing in upon us, and the footmen in the creek began to show themselves, as if with a design of cutting off our retreat, we were compelled unwillingly to leave this impracticable votary of "high art" to his fate. So, mounting our horses, and driving the third one before us, we put out on the back trail.

"Hold hard, friend!" said my comrade, as the fresh young filly I rode stretched out in a slashing gallop. "If 'twur only twenty mile of good pariera from this to Van Noy Ferry thut we've got to make to save our skins, we'd throw out yon varmints right smart; but reck'lect this pariera gives out in six mile more, and we've as many mile over bad mountain range afore we git down to the open agin, that'll give these fine breeders goss!"

With horses well in hand, we had ridden some little distance, when a loud whoop in our rear proclaimed that the Indians had reached our camp, but whether the demonstration proceeded from disappointment at the destruction of their

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anticipated prize, or rejoicing at the capture of our companion, the failing light did not permit us to judge. Soon we heard them again in pursuit. Darkness now set rapidly in, but riding as usual in Indian file, our horses accustomed for several weeks to follow the trail, picked it out with the greatest ease. As we came to the end of the prairie, I was delighted to see a full moon rising over the mountains, so that we should now have light to guide us in our flight—a great chance in our favour. Kit had relapsed into his accustomed taciturnity, and beyond paying great attention to the sounds in the rear, by which he seemed to regulate our pace, he betrayed no interest in anything. Knowing that all depended on our horses holding out, as we clattered up the first long mountain slope I ranged alongside of him, and examined their conditions. My own filly, though pretty heavily weighted, was as yet perfectly fresh, her stride was easy and elastic, and I felt she was warming well to her work. But an unpleasant sensation came over me, as I noticed that Kit's chesnut was already bathed in a profuse sweat.

Now that we were fairly in the mountains, our real troubles began. Three days since we had crossed this range, and having shortly before made the passage of the great Cañon Creek, a terrific pass, the trail had not appeared more dangerous than usual. But then we had leisure and daylight to aid us; now, the white metallic light of the moon, which brought out in startling distinctness each crag and rocky point it fell upon, left many dangerous bits of our path in deep obscurity, yet we were compelled to pass over them in full career, for our pursuers now began to push us to their utmost. At intervals, above the clatter of our horses' iron-shod hoofs, the mountains behind us echoed with their whoops, and were replied to from the heights around by the peculiar cry of the white owl, proceeding, as we were aware, from red sentinels, who were able to observe each turn of the chase, and thus urged their comrades still to follow. Urged by their wild riders to the top of their speed, the hardy unshod little mustangs of our enemies scrambled after us over the dangerous trail with a cat-like facility of foothold not possessed by our own cattle. To add to our embarrassments, our third horse now began to show a desire to stray from the trail, and forced us often to lose ground by swerving to head him back again. In fact, it was all we could do to hold our own, and, desperately as our desperate need required it, we pushed on. The steep mountain-side, the other day painfully ascended, was now dashed furiously down; the edge of the precipice, usually traversed so gingerly, was spurred fiercely over, unheeding the appeals of our terrified horses, who quivered and snorted in very fear. Without drawing bridle, we spattered through the mountain-torrent that ran down the deep gulches, and took flying the smaller streams. When the last weary mountain-crest was topped, and we descended again to the wooded plain beneath, I should have felt myself comparatively safe had it not been for the deplorable condition of our horses. As Kit had foreseen, the mountain-range had fearfully tried them. Though my mare, with the instinct of good blood, still answered when I made a call on her, I felt she was getting fast used up; but the chesnut was in a still worse plight: his drooping crest and labouring stride told the extremity of his distress. We had just arrived at the ford of State Creek, a small arm of Rogue River, when Kit's chesnut suddenly staggered, and then plunged headlong to the ground. "Four white legs and a white nose, cut his throat and throw him to the crows!" exclaimed his rider, bitterly repeating the old saw as he vainly endeavoured to raise him. Meanwhile, I had ridden forward and caught the loose horse. Kit mounted him in silence, and together we entered the ford, but just before we reached the opposite bank he dismounted, and standing knee-deep in the water, put his rein into my hand.

"Mate," he said, "we're bound to part comp'ny, if we don't want to go under; take both animals and make tracks for Van Noy: this coon 'll look out for hisself, somehow. Good-by t'ye!" And he set off wading down the creek.

I brought my horses to his side in a moment.

"No, no, Kit," I said, deeply touched by his generous proposition; "fight or fly, whichever it is, we'll keep together."

"Don't rile me, young fellar," he replied, in a voice that he vainly endeavoured to render harsh, and abandoned for a tone of earnest entreaty. "I tell 'ee we must part now—it can't be fixed noways different. That thur light animal 'ud burst up under my weight long afore we made Rogue River, and yourn ain't got two mile run left in him; he ain't. Now, look h'yar, if yew want to save our skins, take both them animals, it'll throw the Injuns off my trail, and ride hard for Van Noy. Rouse up the boys thar, and tell 'em Kit Butler from Boonville 's cached in the timber by State Crick, and the red-skins are out. Guess they'll be round with their shooting-irons, and bring me in right away. Hurrah now, boy!"

A moment's reflection convinced me that Kit's plan was the only one that could possibly save us, but it was with a bitterness of heart such as I had never felt before, that I shook his loyal hand—I could not speak—in token that I bade him farewell. If I acted wrongly in abandoning him, God knows that my own reflections as I put out on my lonely trail, were almost punishment enough.

But, in reality, Kit's chances of escape were not far from being as good as my own. The plain, especially by the creek, was well wooded, so that our separation took place entirely without the knowledge of the Indians, who, though they would certainly find the foundered chesnut, would naturally conclude that its rider was away on the fresh horse. Neither would they gain any information from the hunter's tracks, for, of course, he had taken the precaution to wade some distance down the creek before he

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cached in the timber, and water leaves no trail. But I could not reason on all this then. I could only remember that I had left the last and best of all my comrades behind me, and that if evil came to him, I should be held accountable. Deeply plunged in such maddening reflections, I had not ridden far, when the report of a rifle in my rear almost caused my heart to stand still.

The Indians, then, had discovered Kit's cache. I pulled up my horses and turned round with the desperate determination of rejoining him at any hazard, when all at once I remembered, in impotent despair, that, with the exception of my bowie-knife, I was unarmed. On parting, Kit had taken possession of my rifle and revolver, remarking that, while they might be of use to him, I should ride lighter without them. All a pretext! I saw it now, when too late. The noble-minded fellow had guessed that if I heard him engaged with the Indians, I should return, and had thus taken measures effectually to prevent me. Utterly distraught on making this discovery, I remember little more of my ride to Van Noy Ferry. Though I rode like a madman, I must yet have acted with the soundest discretion. My horse was afterwards found dead about two miles up Applegate Creek, by which the trail ran after leaving State Creek. At that point I must have mounted the second horse, and swam the creek, instead of following it up to Rogue River. Then I crossed the country in a north-easterly direction, and thus, by cutting off an angle, considerably shortened the distance. But of all this, I only distinctly remember pricking along my failing horse with my bowie-knife, as the lights of the ferry came into view, till he also gave in and fell, throwing me over his head and inflicting on me no trifling injuries; and that wet, bruised, and bleeding, but still with the one fixed, irrevocable idea pervading my weakened senses, that Kit was in deadly peril for my sake, and that he must be saved, I burst into the midst of the ferry men as they sat round their fire in their log hut.

"Kit Butler, from Boonsville!" shouted one of the rough backwoodsmen, the captain of the ferry, in reply to my wild appeal for help. "By thunder! he's jest my fust cousin; how kim yew to quit, mister, when he war in sich a tarnation fix, eh?"

"Talking won't get him out of it, man," I replied, impatiently; "either come along with me at once to help him, or give me a rifle and fresh horses and let me do what I can myself."

"We'll go—don't you fear, mister," he said, more graciously; "yon darned red-skins ain't goin' to wipe out the smartest mountain boy in all Oregon. And no 'muss' round! Hy'ar yew—Pete—Dave—Zack—lay hold of your shootin'-irons, boys, and git the animals out of the corral."

"Ay, ay, Cap!" was the ready response; and with astonishing quickness we were all armed and mounted on sturdy mustangs, riding hard to the rescue.

As we splashed through Applegate Creek Ford, we heard a shot to the front, followed shortly by another. "Hurrah, boys!" shouted our leader; "thar goes old Kit! He ain't wiped out jest yet, nohow. Guess it'll take a caution o' red-skins to whip him. He'll make 'em see snakes and black ones at that."

In a few minutes more we debouched on to the north bank of State Creek, but not an Indian was visible. The noise of our approach had effectually scared them; they had not cared to stand the brunt of a charge of half a dozen white men. As we swept up the creek, dear old Kit stepped out of his cover, his hands and face black with powder, and his forehead bleeding, but only from the splinter of a bad cap.

"You're welkim, boy," he said, as we shook hands; "twar getting hot, though I peppered one or two of the varmints. They got on my trail right smart when yew quit; but they ain't got me this time, I reckon."

Prudence forbade our small party from attempting the mountain-passes that night to learn the fate of our comrades, but early the next day we reached Deer Creek.

As we had anticipated, we found the two Germans dead in the creek, where the fatal ambush had been laid for them. Of the artist we could find no traces, but on our return to the ferry we found him there. Though unhurt, his plight was ludicrously doleful. The Indians had discovered him in the cedar, and it would have fared ill with him but that the sketch of the young Indian was found on his person, drawn so accurately that all his captors recognised it. Believing from this circumstance that he was a great "medicine" man whom it would be dangerous to injure, they stripped and released him.

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER V.

MR. VANSTONE'S inquiries into the proposed theatrical entertainment at Evergreen Lodge were answered by a narrative of dramatic disasters; of which Miss Marrable impersonated the innocent cause, and in which her father and mother played the parts of chief victims.

Miss Marrable was that hardest of all born tyrants—an only child. She had never granted a constitutional privilege to her oppressed father and mother, since the time when she cut her first tooth. Her seventeenth birthday was now near at hand; she had decided on celebrating it by acting a play; had issued her orders accordingly; and had been obeyed by her docile parents as implicitly as usual. Mrs. Marrable gave up the drawing-room to be laid waste for a stage and a theatre. Mr. Marrable secured the services of a respectable professional person to drill the young ladies and gentlemen, and to accept all the other responsibilities, incidental to creating a dramatic world out of a domestic chaos. Having further accustomed themselves to the breaking of furniture and the staining of walls—to thumping, tumbling, hammering, and screaming; to doors always banging, and to footsteps perpetually running up and down stairs—the nominal master and mistress of the house fondly believed that their chief troubles were over. Innocent and fatal delusion! It is one thing, in private society, to set up the stage and choose the play—it is another thing altogether, to find the actors. Hitherto, only the small preliminary annoyances proper to the occasion, had shown themselves at Evergreen Lodge. The sound and serious troubles were all to come.

"The Rivals" having been chosen as the play, Miss Marrable, as a matter of course, appropriated to herself the part of "Lydia Languish." One of her favoured swains next secured "Captain Absolute," and another laid violent hands on "Sir Lucius O'Trigger." These two were followed by an accommodating spinster-relative, who accepted the heavy dramatic responsibility of "Mrs. Malaprop"—and there, the theatrical proceedings came to a pause. Nine more speaking characters were left to be fitted with representatives; and with that unavoidable necessity the serious troubles began.

All the friends of the family suddenly became unreliable people, for the first time in their lives. After encouraging the idea of the play, they declined the personal sacrifice of acting in it—or, they accepted characters, and then broke down in the effort to study them—or they volunteered to take the parts which they knew were already engaged, and declined the parts which were waiting to be acted—or they were afflicted with weak constitutions, and mischievously fell ill when they were wanted at rehearsal—or they had Puritan relatives in the background, and, after slipping into their parts cheerfully at the week's beginning, oozed out of them penitently, under serious family pressure, at the week's end. Meanwhile, the carpenters hammered and the scenes rose. Miss Marrable, whose temperament was sensitive, became hysterical under the strain of perpetual anxiety; the family doctor declined to answer for the nervous consequences if something was not done. Renewed efforts were made in every direction. Actors and actresses were sought, with a desperate disregard of all considerations of personal fitness. Necessity which knows no law, either in the drama or out of it, accepted a lad of eighteen as the representative of "Sir Antony Absolute;" the stage-manager undertaking to supply the necessary wrinkles from the illimitable resources of theatrical art. A lady whose age was unknown, and whose personal appearance was stout—but whose heart was in the right place—volunteered to act the part of the sentimental "Julia," and brought with her the dramatic qualification of habitually wearing a wig in private life. Thanks to these vigorous measures, the play was at last supplied with representatives—always excepting the two unmanageable characters of "Lucy" the waiting-maid, and "Falkland," Julia's jealous lover. Gentlemen came; saw Julia at rehearsal; observed her stoutness and her wig; omitted to notice that her heart was in the right place; quailed at the prospect, apologised, and retired. Ladies read the part of "Lucy;" remarked that she appeared to great advantage in the first half of the play, and faded out of it altogether in the latter half; objected to pass from the notice of the audience in that manner, when all the rest had a chance of distinguishing themselves to the end; shut up the book, apologised, and retired.

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In eight days more the night of performance would arrive; a phalanx of social martyrs two hundred strong, had been convened to witness it; three full rehearsals were absolutely necessary; and two characters in the play were not filled yet. With this lamentable story, and with the humblest apologies for presuming on a slight acquaintance, the Marrables appeared at Combe-Raven, to appeal to the young ladies for a "Lucy," and to the universe for a "Falkland," with the mendicant pertinacity of a family in despair.

This statement of circumstances—addressed to an audience which included a father of Mr. Vanstone's disposition, and a daughter of Magdalen's temperament—produced the result which might have been anticipated from the first.

Either misinterpreting, or disregarding, the ominous silence preserved by his wife and Miss Garth, Mr. Vanstone not only gave Magdalen permission to assist the forlorn dramatic company, but accepted an invitation to witness the performance for Norah and himself. Mrs. Vanstone declined accompanying them on account of her health: and Miss Garth only engaged to make one among the audience, conditionally on not being wanted at home. The "parts" of "Lucy" and "Falkland" (which the distressed family carried about with them everywhere, like incidental maladies) were handed to their representatives on the spot. Frank's faint remonstrances were rejected without a hearing; the days and hours of rehearsal were carefully noted down on the covers of the parts; and the Marrables took their leave, with a perfect explosion of thanks—father, mother, and daughter sowing their expressions of gratitude broadcast, from the drawing-room door to the garden-gates.

As soon as the carriage had driven away, Magdalen presented herself to the general observation under an entirely new aspect.

"If any more visitors call to-day," she said, with the profoundest gravity of look and manner, "I am not at home. This is a far more serious matter than any of you suppose. Go somewhere by yourself, Frank, and read over your part, and don't let your attention wander if you can possibly help it. I shall not be accessible before the evening. If you will come here—with papa's permission—after tea, my views on the subject of Falkland will be at your disposal. Thomas! whatever else the gardener does, he is not to make any floricultural noises under my window. For the rest of the afternoon, I shall be immersed in study—and the quieter the house is, the more obliged I shall feel to everybody."

Before Miss Garth's battery of reproof could open fire, before the first outburst of Mr. Vanstone's hearty laughter could escape his lips, she bowed to them with imperturbable gravity; ascended the house-steps for the first time in her life, at a walk instead of a run; and retired then and there to the bedroom regions. Frank's helpless astonishment at her disappearance, added a new element of absurdity to the scene. He stood first on one leg and then on the other; rolling and unrolling his part, and looking piteously in the faces of the friends about him. "I know I can't do it," he said. "May I come in after tea, and hear Magdalen's views? Thank you—I'll look in about eight. Don't tell my father about this acting, please: I should never hear the last of it." Those were the only words he had spirit enough to utter. He drifted away aimlessly in the direction of the shrubbery, with the part hanging open in his hand—the most incapable of Falklands, and the most helpless of mankind.

Frank's departure left the family by themselves, and was the signal accordingly for an attack on Mr. Vanstone's inveterate carelessness in the exercise of his paternal authority.

"What could you possibly be thinking of, Andrew, when you gave your consent?" said Mrs. Vanstone. "Surely my silence was a sufficient warning to you to say No?"

"A mistake, Mr. Vanstone," chimed in Miss Garth. "Made with the best intentions—but a mistake for all that."

"It may be a mistake," said Norah, taking her father's part, as usual. "But I really don't see how papa, or any one else, could have declined, under the circumstances."

"Quite right, my dear," observed Mr. Vanstone. "The circumstances, as you say, were dead against me. Here were these unfortunate people in a scrape on one side; and Magdalen, on the other, mad to act. I couldn't say I had methodistical objections—I've nothing methodistical about me. What other excuse could I make? The Marrables are respectable people, and keep the best company in Clifton. What harm can she get in their house? If you come to prudence and that sort of thing—why shouldn't Magdalen do what Miss Marrable does? There! there! let the poor things act, and amuse themselves. We were their age once—and it's no use making a fuss—and that's all I've got to say about it."

With that characteristic defence of his own conduct, Mr. Vanstone sauntered back to the greenhouse to smoke another cigar.

"I didn't say so to papa," said Norah, taking her mother's arm on the way back to the house, "but the bad result of the acting, in my opinion, will be the familiarity it is sure to encourage between Magdalen and Francis Clare."

"You are prejudiced against Frank, my love," said Mrs. Vanstone.

Norah's soft, secret, hazel eyes sank to the ground: she said no more. Her opinions were unchangeable—but she never disputed with anybody. She had the great failing of a reserved nature—the failing of obstinacy; and the great merit—the merit of silence. "What is your head running on now," thought Miss Garth, casting a sharp look at Norah's dark, downcast face. "You're one of the impenetrable sort. Give me Magdalen, with all her perversities; I can see daylight through her. You're as dark as night."

The hours of the afternoon passed away, and

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still Magdalen remained shut up in her own room. No restless footsteps pattered on the stairs; no nimble tongue was heard chattering here, there, and everywhere, from the garret to the kitchen—the house seemed hardly like itself, with the one ever-disturbing element in the family serenity suddenly withdrawn from it. Anxious to witness, with her own eyes, the reality of a transformation in which past experience still inclined her to disbelieve, Miss Garth ascended to Magdalen's room, knocked twice at the door, received no answer, opened it, and looked in.

There sat Magdalen, in an arm-chair before the long looking-glass, with all her hair let down over her shoulders; absorbed in the study of her part; and comfortably arrayed in her morning wrapper, until it was time to dress for dinner. And there behind her sat the lady's-maid, slowly combing out the long heavy locks of her young mistress's hair, with the sleepy resignation of a woman who had been engaged in that employment for some hours past. The sun was shining; and the green shutters outside the window were closed. The dim light fell tenderly on the two quiet seated figures; on the little white bed, with the knots of rose-coloured ribbon which looped up its curtains, and the bright dress for dinner laid ready across it; on the gaily painted bath, with its pure lining of white enamel; on the toilet-table with its sparkling trinkets, its crystal bottles, its silver bell with Cupid for a handle, its litter of little luxuries that adorn the shrine of a woman's bedchamber. The luxurious tranquillity of the scene; the cool fragrance of flowers and perfumes in the atmosphere; the rapt attitude of Magdalen, absorbed over her reading; the monotonous regularity of movement in the maid's hand and arm, as she drew the comb smoothly through and through her mistress's hair—all conveyed the same soothing impression of drowsy delicious quiet. On one side of the door were the broad daylight, and the familiar realities of life. On the other, was the dreamland of Elysian serenity—the sanctuary of unruffled repose.

Miss Garth paused on the threshold, and looked into the room in silence.

Magdalen's curious fancy for having her hair combed at all times and seasons, was among the peculiarities of her character which were notorious to everybody in the house. It was one of her father's favourite jokes, that she reminded him, on such occasions, of a cat having her back stroked, and that he always expected, if the combing were only continued long enough, to hear her *purr*. Extravagant as it may seem, the comparison was not altogether inappropriate. The girl's fervid temperament intensified the essentially feminine pleasure that most women feel in the passage of the comb through their hair, to a luxury of sensation which absorbed her in enjoyment, so serenely self-demonstrative, so drowsily deep, that it did irresistibly suggest a pet cat's enjoyment under a caressing hand. Intimately as Miss Garth was acquainted with this peculiarity in her pupil, she now saw it asserting itself, for the first time, in association with mental exertion of any kind on Magdalen's part. Feeling, therefore, some curiosity to know how long the combing and the studying had gone on together, she ventured on putting the question, first, to the mistress; and (receiving no answer in that quarter) secondly, to the maid.

"All the afternoon, Miss, off and on," was the weary answer. "Miss Magdalen says it soothes her feelings and clears her mind."

Knowing by experience that interference would be hopeless, under these circumstances, Miss Garth turned sharply and left the room. She smiled when she was outside on the landing. The female mind does occasionally—though not often—project itself into the future. Miss Garth was prophetically pitying Magdalen's unfortunate husband.

Dinner-time presented the fair student to the family eye in the same mentally absorbed aspect. On all ordinary occasions, Magdalen's appetite would have terrified those feeble sentimentalists who affect to ignore the all-important influence which female feeding exerts in the production of female beauty. On this occasion, she refused one dish after another with a resolution which implied the rarest of all modern martyrdoms—gastric martyrdom. "I have conceived the part of Lucy," she observed, with the demurest gravity. "The next difficulty is to make Frank conceive the part of Falkland. I see nothing to laugh at—you would all be serious enough if you had my responsibilities. No, papa—no wine to-day, thank you. I must keep my intelligence clear. Water, Thomas—and a little more jelly, I think, before you take it away."

When Frank presented himself in the evening, ignorant of the first elements of his part, she took him in hand, as a middle-aged schoolmistress might have taken in hand a backward little boy. The few attempts he made to vary the sternly practical nature of the evening's occupation by slipping in compliments sidelong, she put away from her with the contemptuous self-possession of a woman of twice her age. She literally forced him into his part. Her father fell asleep in his chair. Mrs. Vanstone and Miss Garth lost their interest in the proceedings, retired to the farther end of the room, and spoke together in whispers. It grew later and later; and still Magdalen never flinched from her task—still, with equal perseverance, Norah, who had been on the watch all through the evening, kept on the watch to the end. The distrust darkened and darkened on her face as she looked at her sister and Frank; as she saw how close they sat together, devoted to the same interest and working to the same end. The clock on the mantel-piece pointed to half-past eleven, before Lucy the resolute, permitted Falkland the helpless to shut up his task-book for the night. "She's wonderfully clever, isn't she?" said Frank, taking leave of Mr. Vanstone at the hall-door. "I'm to come to-morrow, and hear more of her views—if you have no objection. I shall never do it; don't tell her I said so. As fast as she teaches me one

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speech, the other goes out of my head. Discouraging, isn't it? Good night."

The next day but one was the day of the first full rehearsal. On the previous evening Mrs. Vanstone's spirits had been sadly depressed. At a private interview with Miss Garth, she had referred again, of her own accord, to the subject of her letter from London—had spoken self-reproachfully of her weakness in admitting Captain Wragge's impudent claim to a family connexion with her—and had then reverted to the state of her health, and to the doubtful prospect that awaited her in the coming summer, in a tone of despondency which it was very distressing to hear. Anxious to cheer her spirits, Miss Garth had changed the conversation as soon as possible—had referred to the approaching theatrical performance—and had relieved Mrs. Vanstone's mind of all anxiety in that direction, by announcing her intention of accompanying Magdalen to each rehearsal, and of not losing sight of her until she was safely back again in her father's house. Accordingly, when Frank presented himself at Combe-Raven on the eventful morning, there stood Miss Garth, prepared—in the interpolated character of Argus—to accompany Lucy and Falkland to the scene of trial. The railway conveyed the three, in excellent time, to Evergreen Lodge; and at one o'clock the rehearsal began.

CHAPTER VI.

"I hope Miss Vanstone knows her part?" whispered Mrs. Marrable, anxiously addressing herself to Miss Garth, in a corner of the theatre.

"If airs and graces make an actress, ma'am, Magdalen's performance will astonish us all." With that reply, Miss Garth took out her work, and seated herself, on guard, in the centre of the pit.

The manager perched himself, book in hand, on a stool close in front of the stage. He was an active little man, of a sweet and cheerful temper; and he gave the signal to begin, with as patient an interest in the proceedings as if they had caused him no trouble in the past, and promised him no difficulty in the future. The two characters which open the comedy of The Rivals, "Fag" and the "Coachman," appeared on the scene—looked many sizes too tall for their canvas background, which represented a "Street in Bath"—exhibited the customary inability to manage their own arms, legs, and voices—went out severally at the wrong exits—and expressed their perfect approval of results, so far, by laughing heartily behind the scenes. "Silence, gentlemen, if you please," remonstrated the cheerful manager. "As loud as you like *on* the stage, but the audience mustn't hear you *off* it. Miss Marrable ready? Miss Vanstone ready? Easy there with the 'Street in Bath;' it's going up crooked! Face this way, Miss Marrable; full face, if you please. Miss Vanstone——" He checked himself suddenly. "Curious," he said, under his breath—"she fronts the audience of her own accord!" Lucy opened the scene in these words: "Indeed, ma'am, I traversed half the town in search of it: I don't believe there's a circulating library in Bath I haven't been at." The manager started in his chair. "My heart alive! she speaks out without telling!" The dialogue went on. Lucy produced the novels for Miss Lydia Languish's private reading from under her cloak. The manager rose excitably to his feet. Marvellous! No hurry with the books; no dropping them. She looked at the titles before she announced them to her mistress; she set down "Humphry Clinker" on "The Tears of Sensibility" with a smart little smack which pointed the antithesis. One moment—and she announced Julia's visit; another—and she dropped the brisk waiting-maid's curtsey; a third—and she was off the stage instantly, on the side set down for her in the book. The manager wheeled round in his chair, and looked hard at Miss Garth. "I beg your pardon, ma'am," he said. "Miss Marrable told me, before we began, that this was the young lady's first attempt. It can't be, surely?"

"It is," replied Miss Garth, reflecting the manager's look of amazement on her own face. Was it possible that Magdalen's unintelligible industry in the study of her part, really sprang from a serious interest in her occupation—an interest which implied a natural fitness for it?

The rehearsal went on. The stout lady with the wig (and the excellent heart) personated the sentimental Julia from an inveterately tragic point of view, and used her handkerchief distractedly in the first scene. The spinster-relative felt Mrs. Malaprop's mistakes in language so seriously, and took such extraordinary pains with her blunders, that they sounded more like exercises in elocution than anything else. The unhappy lad who led the forlorn hope of the company, in the person of "Sir Antony Absolute," expressed the age and irascibility of his character by tottering incessantly at the knees, and thumping the stage perpetually with his stick. Slowly and clumsily, with constant interruptions, and interminable mistakes, the first act dragged on, until Lucy appeared again to end it in soliloquy, with the confession of her assumed simplicity and the praise of her own cunning.

Here, the stage artifice of the situation presented difficulties which Magdalen had not encountered in the first scene—and here, her total want of experience led her into more than one palpable mistake. The stage-manager, with an eagerness which he had not shown in the case of any other member of the company, interfered immediately, and set her right. At one point, she was to pause, and take a turn on the stage—she did it. At another, she was to stop, toss her head, and look pertly at the audience—she did it. When she took out the paper to read the list of the presents she had received, could she give it a tap with her finger (Yes)? And lead off with a little laugh (Yes—after twice trying)? Could she read the different items with a sly look at the end of each sentence, straight at the pit (Yes, straight at the pit, and as sly as you please)? The manager's cheerful face beamed

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with approval. He tucked the play under his arm, and clapped his hands gaily; the gentlemen, clustered together behind the scenes, followed his example; the ladies looked at each other with dawning doubts whether they had not better have left the new recruit in the retirement of private life. Too deeply absorbed in the business of the stage to heed any of them, Magdalen asked leave to repeat the soliloquy, and make quite sure of her own improvement. She went all through it again, without a mistake, this time, from beginning to end; the manager celebrating her attention to his directions by an outburst of professional approbation, which escaped him in spite of himself. "She can take a hint!" cried the little man, with a hearty smack of his hand on the prompt-book. "She's a born actress, if ever there was one yet!"

"I hope not," said Miss Garth to herself, taking up the work which had dropped into her lap, and looking down at it in some perplexity. Her worst apprehension of results in connexion with the theatrical enterprise, had foreboded levity of conduct with some of the gentlemen—she had not bargained for this. Magdalen, in the capacity of a thoughtless girl, was comparatively easy to deal with. Magdalen, in the character of a born actress, threatened serious future difficulties.

The rehearsal proceeded. Lucy returned to the stage for her scenes in the second act (the last in which she appears) with Sir Lucius and Fag. Here, again, Magdalen's inexperience betrayed itself—and here once more her resolution in attacking and conquering her own mistakes astonished everybody. "Bravo!" cried the gentlemen behind the scenes, as she steadily trampled down one blunder after another. "Ridiculous!" said the ladies, "with such a small part as hers." "Heaven forgive me!" thought Miss Garth, coming round unwillingly to the general opinion. "I almost wish we were Papists, and had a convent to put her in tomorrow." One of Mr. Marrable's servants entered the theatre as that desperate aspiration escaped the governess. She instantly sent the man behind the scenes with a message:—"Miss Vanstone has done her part in the rehearsal: request her to come here, and sit by me." The servant returned with a polite apology:—"Miss Vanstone's kind love, and she begs to be excused—she's prompting Mr. Clare." She prompted him to such purpose that he actually got through his part. The performances of the other gentlemen were obtrusively imbecile. Frank was just one degree better—he was modestly incapable; and he gained by comparison. "Thanks to Miss Vanstone," observed the manager, who had heard the prompting. "She pulled him through. We shall be flat enough, at night, when the drop falls on the second act, and the audience have seen the last of her. It's a thousand pities she hasn't got a better part!"

"It's a thousand mercies she's no more to do than she has," muttered Miss Garth, overhearing him. "As things are, the people can't well turn her head with applause. She's out of the play in the second act—that's one comfort!"

No well-regulated mind ever draws its inferences in a hurry; Miss Garth's mind was well regulated; therefore, logically speaking, Miss Garth ought to have been superior to the weakness of rushing at conclusions. She had committed that error, nevertheless, under present circumstances. In plainer terms, the consoling reflection which had just occurred to her, assumed that the play had by this time survived all its disasters, and entered on its long-deferred career of success. The play had done nothing of the sort. Misfortune and the Marrable family had not parted company yet.

When the rehearsal was over, nobody observed that the stout lady with the wig privately withdrew herself from the company; and when she was afterwards missed from the table of refreshments, which Mr. Marrable's hospitality kept ready spread in a room near the theatre, nobody imagined that there was any serious reason for her absence. It was not till the ladies and gentlemen assembled for the next rehearsal, that the true state of the case was impressed on the minds of the company. At the appointed hour, no Julia appeared. In her stead, Mrs. Marrable portentously approached the stage, with an open letter in her hand. She was naturally a lady of the mildest good breeding: she was mistress of every bland conventionality in the English language—but disasters and dramatic influences combined, threw even this harmless matron off her balance at last. For the first time in her life Mrs. Marrable indulged in vehement gesture, and used strong language. She handed the letter sternly, at arm's length, to her daughter. "My dear," she said, with an aspect of awful composure, "we are under a Curse." Before the amazed dramatic company could petition for an explanation, she turned, and left the room. The manager's professional eye followed her out respectfully—he looked as if he approved of the exit, from a theatrical point of view.

What new misfortune had befallen the play? The last and worst of all misfortunes had assailed it. The stout lady had resigned her part.

Not maliciously. Her heart, which had been in the right place throughout, remained inflexibly in the right place still. Her explanation of the circumstances proved this, if nothing else did. The letter began with a statement:—She had overheard, at the last rehearsal (quite unintentionally), personal remarks of which she was the subject. They might, or might not, have had reference to her—Hair; and her—Figure. She would not distress Mrs. Marrable by repeating them. Neither would she mention names, because it was foreign to her nature to make bad worse. The only course at all consistent with her own self-respect, was to resign her part. She enclosed it accordingly to Mrs. Marrable, with many apologies for her presumption in undertaking a youthful character, at—what a gentleman was pleased to term—her Age; and with what two ladies were rude enough to characterise

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as her disadvantages of—Hair, and—Figure. A younger and more attractive representative of Julia, would no doubt be easily found. In the mean time, all persons concerned had her full forgiveness; to which she would only beg leave to add her best and kindest wishes for the success of the play.

In four nights more the play was to be performed. If ever any human enterprise stood in need of good wishes to help it, that enterprise was unquestionably the theatrical entertainment at Evergreen Lodge!

One arm-chair was allowed on the stage; and, into that arm-chair, Miss Marrable sank, preparatory to a fit of hysterics. Magdalen stepped forward at the first convulsion; snatched the letter from Miss Marrable's hand; and stopped the threatened catastrophe.

"She's an ugly, bald-headed, malicious, middle-aged wretch," said Magdalen, tearing the letter into fragments, and tossing them over the heads of the company. "But I can tell her one thing—she shan't spoil the play. I'll act Julia."

"Bravo!" cried the chorus of gentlemen—the anonymous gentleman who had helped to do the mischief (otherwise Mr. Francis Clare) loudest of all.

"If you want the truth, I don't shrink from owning it," continued Magdalen. "I'm one of the ladies she means. I said she had a head like a mop, and a waist like a bolster. So she has."

"I am the other lady," added the spinster-relative. "But *I* only said she was too stout for the part."

"I am the gentleman," chimed in Frank, stimulated by the force of example. "I said nothing—I only agreed with the ladies."

Here Miss Garth seized her opportunity, and addressed the stage loudly from the pit.

"Stop! stop!" she said. "You can't settle the difficulty in that way. If Magdalen plays Julia who is to play Lucy?"

Miss Marrable sank back in the arm-chair, and gave way to the second convulsion.

"Stuff and nonsense!" cried Magdalen; "the thing's simple enough. I'll act Julia and Lucy both together."

The manager was consulted on the spot. Suppressing Lucy's first entrance, and turning the short dialogue about the novels into a soliloquy for Lydia Languish, appeared to be the only changes of importance necessary to the accomplishment of Magdalen's project. Lucy's two telling scenes at the end of the first and second acts, were sufficiently removed from the scenes in which Julia appeared, to give time for the necessary transformations in dress. Even Miss Garth, though she tried hard to find them, could put no fresh obstacles in the way. The question was settled in five minutes, and the rehearsal went on; Magdalen learning Julia's stage situations with the book in her hand, and announcing afterwards, on the journey home, that she proposed sitting up all night to study the new part. Frank thereupon expressed his fears that she would have no time left to help him through his theatrical difficulties. She tapped him on the shoulder coquettishly with her part. "You foolish fellow, how am I to do without you? You're Julia's jealous lover; you're always making Julia cry. Come to-night, and make me cry at tea-time. You haven't got a venomous old woman in a wig to act with now. It's *my* heart you're to break—and of course I shall teach you how to do it."

The four days' interval passed busily in perpetual rehearsals, public and private. The night of performance arrived; the guests assembled; the great dramatic experiment stood on its trial. Magdalen had made the most of her opportunities: she had learnt all that the manager could teach her in the time. Miss Garth left her when the overture began, sitting apart in a corner behind the scenes, serious and silent, with her smelling-bottle in one hand, and her book in the other, resolutely training herself for the coming ordeal, to the very last.

The play began, with all the proper accompaniments of a theatrical performance in private life; with a crowded audience, an African temperature, a bursting of heated lamp-glasses, and a difficulty in drawing up the curtain. "Fag" and "the Coachman," who opened the scene, took leave of their memories as soon as they stepped on the stage; left half their dialogue unspoken; came to a dead pause; were audibly entreated by the invisible manager to "come off;" and went off accordingly, in every respect sadder and wiser men than when they went on. The next scene disclosed Miss Marrable as "Lydia Languish," gracefully seated, very pretty, beautifully dressed, accurately mistress of the smallest words in her part; possessed, in short, of every personal resource—except her voice. The ladies admired, the gentlemen applauded. Nobody heard anything, but the words "Speak up, Miss," whispered by the same voice which had already entreated Fag and the Coachman to "come off." A responsive titter rose among the younger spectators; checked immediately by magnanimous applause. The temperature of the audience was rising to Blood Heat—but the national sense of fair play was not boiled out of them yet.

In the midst of the demonstration, Magdalen quietly made her first entrance, as "Julia." She was dressed very plainly in dark colours, and wore her own hair; all stage adjuncts and alterations (excepting the slightest possible touch of rouge on her cheeks) having been kept in reserve, to disguise her the more effectually in her second part. The grace and simplicity of her costume, the steady self-possession with which she looked out over the eager rows of faces before her, raised a low hum of approval and expectation. She spoke—after suppressing a momentary tremor—with a quiet distinctness of utterance which reached all ears, and which at once confirmed the favourable impression that her appearance had produced. The one member of the audience who looked at her

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and listened to her coldly, was her elder sister. Before the actress of the evening had been five minutes on the stage, Norah detected, to her own indescribable astonishment, that Magdalen had audaciously individualised the feeble amiability of "Julia's" character, by seizing no less a person than herself as the model to act it by. She saw all her own little formal peculiarities of manner and movement, unblushingly reproduced—and even the very tone of her voice so accurately mimicked from time to time, that the accents startled her as if she was speaking herself, with an echo on the stage. The effect of this cool appropriation of Norah's identity to theatrical purposes, on the audience—who only saw results—asserted itself in a storm of applause on Magdalen's exit. She had won two incontestable triumphs in her first scene. By a dexterous piece of mimicry, she had made a living reality of one of the most insipid characters in the English drama; and she had roused to enthusiasm an audience of two hundred exiles from the blessings of ventilation, all simmering together in their own animal heat. Under the circumstances, where is the actress by profession who could have done much more?

But the event of the evening was still to come. Magdalen's disguised reappearance at the end of the act, in the character of "Lucy"—with false hair and false eyebrows, with a bright-red complexion and patches on her cheeks, with the gayest colours flaunting in her dress, and the shrillest vivacity of voice and manner—fairly staggered the audience. They looked down at their programmes, in which the representative of Lucy figured under an assumed name; looked up again at the stage; penetrated the disguise; and vented their astonishment in another round of applause, louder and heartier even than the last. Norah herself could not deny this time, that the tribute of approbation had been well deserved. There, forcing its way steadily through all the faults of inexperience—there, plainly visible to the dullest of the spectators, was the rare faculty of dramatic impersonation, expressing itself, in every look and action of this girl of eighteen, who now stood on a stage for the first time in her life. Failing in many minor requisites of the double task which she had undertaken, she succeeded in the one important necessity of keeping the main distinctions of the two characters thoroughly apart. Everybody felt that the difficulty lay here—everybody saw the difficulty conquered—everybody echoed the manager's enthusiasm at rehearsal, which had hailed her as a born actress.

When the drop-scene descended for the first time, Magdalen had concentrated in herself the whole interest and attraction of the play. The audience politely applauded Miss Marrable, as became the guests assembled in her father's house: and good humouredly encouraged the remainder of the company, to help them through a task for which they were all, more or less, palpably unfit. But, as the play proceeded, nothing roused them to any genuine expression of interest when Magdalen was absent from the scene. There was no disguising it: Miss Marrable and her bosom friends had been all hopelessly cast in the shade, by the new recruit whom they had summoned to assist them, in the capacity of forlorn hope. And this on Miss Marrable's own birthday! and this in her father's house! and this after the unutterable sacrifices of six weeks past! Of all the domestic disasters which the thankless theatrical enterprise had inflicted on the Marrable family, the crowning misfortune was now consummated by Magdalen's success.

Leaving Mr. Vanstone and Norah, on the conclusion of the play, among the guests in the supper-room, Miss Garth went behind the scenes; ostensibly anxious to see if she could be of any use; really bent on ascertaining whether Magdalen's head had been turned by the triumphs of the evening. It would not have surprised Miss Garth if she had discovered her pupil in the act of making terms with the manager for her forthcoming appearance in a public theatre. As events really turned out, she found Magdalen on the stage, receiving, with gracious smiles, a card which the manager presented to her with a professional bow. Noticing Miss Garth's mute look of inquiry, the civil little man hastened to explain that the card was his own, and that he was merely asking the favour of Miss Vanstone's recommendation at any future opportunity.

"This is not the last time the young lady will be concerned in private theatricals, I'll answer for it," said the manager. "And if a superintendent is wanted on the next occasion, she has kindly promised to say a good word for me. I am always to be heard of, Miss, at that address." Saying those words, he bowed again, and discreetly disappeared.

Vague suspicions beset the mind of Miss Garth, and urged her to insist on looking at the card. No more harmless morsel of pasteboard was ever passed from one hand to another. The card contained nothing but the manager's name, and, under it, the name and address of a theatrical agent in London.

"It is not worth the trouble of keeping," said Miss Garth.

Magdalen caught her hand, before she could throw the card away—possessed herself of it the next instant—and put it in her pocket.

"I promised to recommend him," she said—"and that's one reason for keeping his card. If it does nothing else, it will remind me of the happiest evening of my life—and that's another. Come!" she cried, throwing her arms round Miss Garth with a feverish gaiety—"congratulate me on my success!"

"I will congratulate you when you have got over it," said Miss Garth.

In half an hour more, Magdalen had changed her dress; had joined the guests; and had soared into an atmosphere of congratulation, high above the reach of any controlling influence that Miss Garth could exercise. Frank, dilatory in all his proceedings, was the last of the dramatic com-

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pany who left the precincts of the stage. He made no attempt to join Magdalen in the supper-room—but he was ready in the hall, with her cloak, when the carriages were called and the party broke up.

"Oh, Frank!" she said, looking round at him, as he put the cloak on her shoulders, "I am so sorry it's all over! Come, to-morrow morning, and let's talk about it by ourselves."

"In the shrubbery at ten?" asked Frank, in a whisper.

She drew up the hood of her cloak, and nodded to him gaily. Miss Garth, standing near, noticed the looks that passed between them, though the disturbance made by the parting guests prevented her from hearing the words. There was a soft, underlying tenderness in Magdalen's assumed gaiety of manner—there was a sudden thoughtfulness in her face, a confidential readiness in her hand, as she took Frank's arm and went out to the carriage. What did it mean? Had her passing interest in him, as her stage-pupil, treacherously sown the seeds of any deeper interest in him, as a man? Had the idle theatrical scheme, now that it was all over, graver results to answer for than a mischievous waste of time?

The lines on Miss Garth's face deepened and hardened: she stood lost among the fluttering crowd around her. Norah's warning words, addressed to Mrs. Vanstone in the garden, recurred to her memory—and now, for the first time, the idea dawned on her that Norah had seen consequences in their true light.

HOW CLUBS TREAT LADIES IN RUSSIA.

For some reason or other—perhaps not very difficult to find out, if this were the time and place to look for it—clubs are coming into fashion very much, just now, in Russia. In the Russian town where the writer lives, though a provincial city, there are four, all in thriving circumstances. Two of the four have been formed within the last few months, and more are talked of. Indeed, hotel-keepers and speculators find them a very profitable enterprise. Party spirit unfortunately runs rather too high in these clubs, and public opinion, long and sternly repressed during the late reign, having grown feverish and restless in its reaction, finds rather too ready a vent there. Clubs also, being comparatively a recent adoption as popular institutions for the middle classes in Russia, are not conducted on quite the right principle. They are made a vehicle for venting political animosity and private grudges. Black-balling has degenerated into a science, and is looked upon as good sport among us. No matter who may be proposed, we black-ball him for our amusement. Consequence is, of course, a row. Aggrieved party, who has been waiting outside the door, to rush in immediately after his election, jumps into his *wheelbarrow* (Russian droschky), and goes bumping away, to shout out his wrongs all over the town, and find out who is his enemy. Enemy being found out, is waylaid and talked to in a very shrill voice, within one inch of his beard, until he surrenders at discretion. All parties then embrace. The candidate is put up again and elected, there being usually no cause whatever why he should not have been elected at first, except a desire on the part of our community that his perplexity and astonishment at his rejection should afford pleasurable excitement. But we are really a kind and good-humoured race. We never seriously mean to injure anybody, but we must have our talk about everybody. This is our peculiarity. We consider it our right and privilege as enlightened citizens, and we could not think of foregoing it on any account whatever. It is not practically a very vicious sentiment; for where other people would come to blows in such discussions, we come to kisses; and so many bottles of champagne are drunk in the making up of our quarrels, that I sometimes suspect they must be fomented by energetic emissaries of wine-merchants. An original-minded man in that line of business could hardly have devised a scheme at once more shrewd and more benevolent for furthering his own interests and furnishing the general public with a never-failing enjoyment. The only wonder to me, a simple man, is where the money comes from to buy the champagne. But persons who affect to know this country well, assert that the state of society among us is very much like what it was in England at the time of Tom Jones.

A gallant youth, with a slim figure and jingling spurs, is likely enough to have other resources besides his pay as a lieutenant in a cavalry regiment. Some of those smart young merchants who are so impressively civil to that haughty official, might explain to you, if they would, how it is that with a salary of nothing a year he contrives to live so jollily. And then we all breathe in such a delightful atmosphere of debts and borrowing! Everybody is in debt to everybody, and nobody pays anybody. We are ingenuous laughing debtors—not solemn gloomy debtors, as in Britain. We consider debts a capital joke. We make merry over them. We are Counts Fathom and Captains Borrowell. For instance, one of us was in debt to a tavern-keeper. Tavern-keeper did not look upon the debt in the same cheerful manner as debtor. There was a difference of opinion between them on the subject, until the debtor undertook to enlighten tavern-keeper as to the manner in which we deal with such things. Fact was, Creditor, taking a melancholy view of debts in general and of this debt in particular, determined to have his money, and became quite unbearable and absurd. Debtor was an aide-de-camp on the staff of a very great man indeed. Creditor resolved to call on the very great man indeed, and angrily told Debtor he would do so. Debtor smilingly expressed a hope that he would keep his word, and determined to be in attendance at the time. Creditor indignantly

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orders out his wheelbarrow, and flames away to tell his wrongs and grievance to very great man indeed. Finds his debtor in the ante-room with the brightest of spurs and longest of aigulets; scowls at him in unrelenting manner, and demands to see his master. Debtor, in the most good-humoured way in the world, goes jingling off to announce Creditor, and returns with a radiant smile to say that very great man indeed will receive him at once. Creditor's heart begins to soften—his victim is so polite; but then he is so impudent, that good nature and justice have a struggle in his breast as to whether he shall not forgive the gay young fellow after all. The gay young fellow saves him all trouble in deciding this question, by laying his hand with delightful and winning cordiality on mine host's shoulder, and conducting him at once, half-repenting of his design, into the great man's presence.

"This man, your excellency," says the gallant youngster, turning round with a beaming face and protecting smile to his abashed creditor: "this man is a tavern-keeper, and has come, as I mentioned to your excellency yesterday that he said he would, to implore in the humblest and most respectful manner that your excellency and staff will do him the infinite honour of taking a breakfast at his house, which he has prepared with great care and expense in order that your patronage, if you grant his prayer, may give vogue and fashion by your gracious visit to his establishment. He has entreated me to intercede for him, and, though awe and respect have hitherto withheld me, I now do so with all my heart, and beg your excellency to make him rich and happy by your favour and countenance."

Very great man rises; he is so tall that he never seems to have done rising. No man on earth is so dignified as a very great man in Russia, and, of all Russian great men this very great man indeed is the most dignified. With a slight wave of the hand, and a sweet rare smile, he utters a word of acceptance, and is immediately lost among his papers again. Debtor hustles his gasping and astonished Creditor out of the room, and the scene closes: Creditor secretly rejoicing to have got out of the scrape so well. This perhaps explains how we come to drink so much champagne in making up our quarrels. We don't pay for it; but then the merchant does not suffer. Suppose he is bankrupt every now and then? A well-managed bankruptcy is not such a bad affair in Russia. We don't turn our backs upon the bankrupt, and, if he should ever be really poor, can't he borrow as we do? All the charity and kindliness of our nature will wake up for him then. There is no such thing as unpitied distress or hard-heartedness in Russia.

Our clubs, although made up of such amusing elements, have hitherto been rather dull. Ladies, unaccustomed to the discipline, have complained a good deal of being left at home alone during the long evenings; and we men being allowed more liberty than is good for us, have given our minds a great deal too much to gambling. It is distressing to think of the new bonnets and dresses we have lost at cards, while left to our own silly devices. We have therefore hit upon an improvement; our wives and daughters, sisters, and especially maiden aunts, thereto consenting, we have arranged to take those ladies to our clubs with us. Notably every Wednesday, or some other day in the week set apart for the purpose, our clubs call in fiddlers and fifes, the violoncello and the big bassoon, and we have a dance. Here, however, at first there was a slight difficulty. How would it appear to Mrs. Grundy if those who were known to have an income of nothing a year, brought their wives in lace and jewels to the club? This might have consequences which would be troublesome. The spirit of inquiry in high quarters, willing enough to shut its eyes as long as possible, might have them reluctantly forced open. We therefore agreed to come in our usual household dresses, both dames and cavaliers, and to be content with merely amusing ourselves as they do at those charming Ducasses in the north of France. We consider the club as our own house kept up by general subscription, and determine to be at ease in it.

These club balls have become quite the rage in Russia. Our highest aristocracy, who have much of the spirit that distinguished the gay nobles who flocked to the Œil de Bœuf at the courts of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Louises of France, come to them in crowds, and patronise them, as they do all things democratic, with rather too eager and ostentatious a patronage. Their highnesses and their excellencies jig it bravely with the shopboy and the huckster; and the coronet and the working cap sit down together at supper. Instead of the sleepy waiters we used to see dozing about and nursing their stomachs in the entrance-hall, we have a company of brisk pages with quicksilver in their shoes; at night, as the quiet man turns drowsily in his bed between his first and second sleep during the small hours, clear and loud come the songs and laughter of our club roysterers sledging homeward. Such a gay city as we have made of this city of ours never was seen before. All the world seems pleasure mad; for pleasure for the first time has been placed within the reach of all.

Supposing a few enterprising committees were to try and make some of our London clubs rather more popular among the ladies, in this way, might it not be a pleasant feature in the London season? Why should not our womankind take part in our pleasures and luxuries, as well as in the humdrum and worry of our lives? Some of our club drawing-rooms would be marvellously improved by the gay sweet voices and pleasant faces of our daughters, and our social life would be all the better for a more frequent and habitual mingling of young men and women. Many a good young fellow drifts into bad habits, cigars, grog, billiards, and worse, for the want of female society of his own rank. Many a fair girl fades away into old maidenhood, because she is obliged by the res

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angusta domi to blush unseen. There are few respectable public places of assembly in London, and private party giving is such an expensive affair, that prudent people, even among the higher of the middle classes, seldom venture to indulge in it. Now, club balls need cost nothing but the light and music, which, divided among many members, would amount to scarcely five shillings a year additional on the subscriptions of each member. Full-dress must be rigidly prohibited. I venture to predict that in a very short time a marked improvement would be visible in the morals, manners, and habits of our young men, with no small advantage to the happiness of many a house now too dull and cheerless.

THE STATUTE-BOOK.

The forty quarto volumes of dry and solid law which compose what is popularly called The Statute-book, present at a first glance few points of attraction to the general reader. However, should we not be deterred by superficial impediments, and should we be induced to dive beneath a very unpromising surface, we shall, especially among the earlier statutes, meet with many valuable illustrations of history, and many choice little pictures of the social life of our ancestors.

If we have been accustomed to derive our ideas of the times of Henry the Fourth, from Shakespeare's delineation, we may study as a commentary on that well-known text a description from a contemporary statute, which informs us that many of the king's liege subjects were then daily beaten, wounded, imprisoned, and maimed, and then had their tongues cut out, or their eyes put out, in order that by this barbarous means difficulties might be put in the way of convicting the perpetrators of the offence of felony. Again, if we want a Clerk of Oxenford of the fourteenth century, we shall do well not to rely implicitly on the pleasing sketch of Chaucer, but to refer to the rough-and-ready picture drawn some few years later by a statute of Henry the Fifth. This act tells us that "several scholars and clerks of the University of Oxenford, unknown, armed and arrayed to make war, have often ousted and disseized persons of their lands and tenements in the counties of Oxford, Berks, and Bucks, and also have chased with dogs and greyhounds in divers warrens, parks, and forests, and taken deer, hares, and rabbits, menacing at the same time those who are the keepers of the same of their lives; and also, by the strong hand, have taken clerks convicted of felony by due process of law out of the custody of the ordinary, and suffered them to go at large." These views of society might be coloured to a very high tone by extracts relative to the oppression of the feudal era, the exactions and peculations of officials, especially of the king's purveyors, and the frauds and arbitrary dealings of the nobles.

Some curious little tricks are recorded in relation to the passing of some of these early statutes. Amongst these may be mentioned King Edward the Third's unkingly and inglorious "Dissimulavimus." In the fifteenth year of this reign, statutes were passed whose effect seems to have been to increase the power of parliament, and to abridge that of the king. The king's consent having been obtained by the influence of the ruling faction, against his secret wishes, a few months afterwards he thought it not beneath his dignity to repeal the former enactments in these words. Dissimulavimus: "We dissimuled in the premises by protestation of revocation of the said statute, if indeed it should proceed, to eschew the danger which by the denying of the same we feared to come, forasmuch as the said parliament otherwise had been without despatching anything in discord dissolved (which God forbid), and the said pretended ordinance we permitted then to be sealed." In plain English: "I dissembled, endeavoured to save my conscience by a protest, made promises to avoid unpleasant consequences, obtained my ends, and now laugh at the credulity of those who imagined a king's word was inviolable." King Edward, in the preamble of this statute, expressed great jealousy of the prerogatives of his crown—he surely was very careless of one of its highest.

The system of proceeding in parliament by petition, the ancient representative of the modern bill, left open the door for much chicanery in the enactment of the statute laws. When the commons were anxious to get a grievance redressed, they presented a petition to the king, setting forth their wants. This petition was entered on the parliament-roll, together with the king's answer: which, by the way, was not given in plain English, but in a rigmarole of Norman-French. If he assented to the prayer of the petition, he said, the king wills it; if he refused it, he said he would consider about it. After the entry of the act on the parliament-roll, another process had to be gone through. It was then handed to the judges, to put into the form of a law and enter on the statute-roll; but as the commons were not present when this last process was effected, we can readily see how by a few strokes of the pen the effect of the original petition might be greatly changed, so that the promoters of the measure would be quite astonished when they beheld their metamorphosed offspring finally issue to the world as a perfect law. The instances in which this hocus-pocus was practised are said to have been very numerous, the most salient one being the case of the statute of the 36th of Edward the Third, when the commons obtained a great triumph, as they thought, over the pedants and interested parties of the day, by getting it enacted that all the pleadings in the law courts should be practised in English instead of in Norman-French, which the majority of the suitors did not understand. This good intention was defeated in great measure, by the interpolation, by the judges, of the words, "and that they be entered and inrolled in Latin." It was not until the second year of Henry the Fifth that the commons, upon a very strong

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remonstrance, obtained an acknowledgment of their right to superintend the enrolment, and so guard against this kind of fraud. It was given in these words: "The kyng of his grace especial, graunteth yat fro hensforth nothing be enacted to the peticions of his commune yat be contrarie of hir askyng."

Besides this power of altering the petition on entering it on the statute-roll, and of course the right of refusing it in toto in parliament, the king had—or at least assumed—the right to respite or postpone the operation of an ordinance after he had assented to it. This he did by entering his *respectuatur* on the parliament-roll; and there happens to be an act of the eleventh year of Henry the Fourth, entered on the parliament-roll, but which appears never to have been placed on the statute-roll, which bears in the margin the words "respectuatur per dominum principem et consilium suum," which is said to have been one of Prince Hal's frolics. If so, what is the meaning of "consilium suum?" Could any of those "old lords of the council," that Falstaff speaks of, have connived at the joke; or were Falstaff, Bardolph, and Poins the "consilium," the advisers of this "great presumption," as Lord Coke styles it? Be it as it may, the matter caused grave discussion at that great tournament of lawyers the trial of the Earl of Macclesfield, which may be read in the sixteenth volume of Howell's State Trials, and where it was very wisely ruled that neither the presence of a "respectuatur," nor the absence of an entry on the statute-roll, could invalidate an act which had been solemnly assented to by the king.

King James the First, designated in the act relating to the Gunpowder Plot as "the most great, learned, and religious king" that ever reigned in England, in one of his orations to the parliament talks of "crop and cuffing" statutes. And Lord Bacon spoke of "sleeping statutes." For lack of a better subdivision of the subject, let us make one founded on these metaphors.

And, first, of cuffing statutes. The way in which many of the earlier ordinances battle with and cuff each other (though in a slightly different sense to that intended by the English Solomon) is instructive and entertaining. Prominent among this pugnacious class of acts, are those which were passed at the instance of a dominant faction in the state, with a view to the annihilation of an opposite party. They frequently take the extreme form of acts of attainder and confiscation; they are all remarkable for the violence with which they denounce their adversaries, and the eloquence with which they chant the praises of their own party; and when we remember that from the reign of Richard the Second until the accession of the present dynasty, there were not more than two or three reigns following each other in which the succession to the crown was undisturbed; and when we add the conspiracies of nobles, the schemes of faction, and even the honest efforts of men to shake off the oppression of tyrannous rulers; we shall see an innumerable array of hostile and conflicting elements, which would be sure to evoke the spirit of angry and partisan legislation. When one faction had obtained a victory over another, the first thing they did was to invoke the aid of parliament to confirm their power by attainting and denouncing their antagonists: generally forgetting that another turn in the wheel of fortune might bring their enemies uppermost, and that then the words of a statute would be but a poor barrier against the will of the stronger. In the twelfth year of Edward the Second, an act was passed banishing those respectable characters, the Spencers—père et fils—from "the realm of England, never to return;" but very shortly afterwards, when the Spencers had again acquired an ascendancy, another statute was passed which delivered a very unceremonious cuff to the first, by repealing it and declaring that it would never have been passed had not the Earl of Hereford, with his armed bands, overawed the parliament and the king. A little while longer, and we see the nobles again in the ascendant, the Spencers again banished, and the act revoking their exile itself repealed. A repetition of this cuffing process took place in the reign of Richard the Second, and his successor. By the twentieth of the twenty-first of Richard, it was enacted by the party who probably foresaw their own impending ruin, that whoever should pursue to repeal, any of the statutes then passed, should be adjudged a traitor; but by an act passed in the first year of the *traitor* Henry the Fourth, the whole of the proceedings of this parliament were expressly repealed.

In much later periods of our history we find the same man a traitor in one reign, and a patriot in the next, although in the mean while he may have lost his head. Difficulties sometimes occurred in these matters; it was easy work to attaint a man, confiscate his property, behead him and quarter him; but when it became a question as to the reversal of the attainder, a restitution of the status quo was not so easy; there was no surgeon in the pay of the ruling powers who could put the head on again which had been taken off by an unjust sentence; and although acts of parliament are extraordinarily powerful, there is not one that ever went so far as to enact that a man who had suffered judicial murder should, under pains and penalties, come to life again. Also, in some instances when the legal attainder was removed, a moral attainder might still remain which no legislative act could remove. On the other hand, when the question was the attainder of a man after his death, a foolish and imbecile attempt was sometimes made by his enemies to wreak their vengeance on his lifeless remains. Thus, after the attainder of Cromwell by the act of Charles the Second, the body of that great Englishman was torn from its resting-place in the sepulchre of the English kings, and publicly exposed on the gallows at Tyburn.

The statutes on the subject of religion are, perhaps, more remarkable than any for their

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conflicting character; for in them we can trace constantly the influence of two opposing spirits: one fighting for freedom from the authority of Rome: the other battling as fiercely to maintain the Catholic faith. The thirty-fifth year of Edward the First presents us with the first cuff that our statutes dealt in hostility to Rome; and in the twenty-fifth year of Edward the Third a more vehement blow was delivered in the passing of the celebrated Statute of Provisors. This was followed, two years later, by another; again by a fourth, at the beginning of Richard the Second's reign. The object of all these statutes was, to restrain the influence and authority of foreign ecclesiastics and courts, in England. So far, so good; but acts of a different character soon appear. About the year 1390, Wickliffe and his followers, sensible of the radical defects in the existing system, were preaching about the country for a complete reform in the Church; the nation not being yet ripe for reformation, the legislature took up the matter, ordering the preachers of the new doctrines to be arrested and thrown into prison "until they were willing to justify themselves according to *reason* and the law of Holy Church." It is noticeable that in this statute the Pope is called "our holy father the Pope," while in the Statute of Provisors he is simply "the Bishop of Rome." On the settlement of the crown under Henry the Fourth, we come again upon provisions similar to those of the Statutes of Provisors; but by their side stands another act, the Statute de hæretico comburendo, which loudly asserted the orthodoxy of the Church of England.

After the subsidence of the Lollard movement, things went on pretty calmly in the matter of religious statutes for a hundred years, when the conflict with Rome was revived with tenfold fury. We may naturally expect much cuffing and contention among the statutes of Henry the Eighth's reign. The various acts relating to the succession, and to Henry's conjugal relations, present us with one important series, but those affecting the religious question are perhaps of more general interest. In these latter we still observe the oscillation already remarked upon, between hostility to Rome as a temporal power, and submission to her rule of faith. The ebb and flow of national feeling on the subject of the Reformation may afterwards be traced in the sweeping anti-Romish statutes of Edward the Sixth, and the equally sweeping pro-Romish statutes of Mary, with finally the counter-cuffs of Elizabeth, settling things somewhat in their modern form, and relieving the Statute-book of this fruitful element of discord.

The language of all these partisan acts is uniformly violent and exaggerated, and intended to deal decisive blows at the unfortunate "opposition." Long strings of denunciatory epithets follow each other, and the resources of the vocabularies of the respective periods are sorely tasked to supply the necessary strength of condemnation. There was a good reason for this, no doubt, in old times, when the statutes were promulgated by proclamation, and not by print and paper as at the present day. When the herald appeared in his coat of many colours, at the market cross, and flourished his trumpet, it would have produced a strange anti-climax if his words had been confined to a mere recital of the dry law. He was therefore armed with a long rhetorical preamble to represent the excellence of the new measure, or its makers, and to hold up to execration the individual or object against which it was aimed.

Jack Cade, in an act touching his attainder, is denounced as "the most cruel, abominable tyrant, horrible, odious and arrant false traitor, John Cade . . . whose name, fame, acts and deeds ought to be removed out of the language and memory of every faithful Christian man perpetually." The instigators of the Gunpowder Plot are "malignant and devilish papists." The execution of Charles the First is spoken of in the act attainting Cromwell, as "the horrid and execrable murther of our late most glorious sovereign, Charles the First, of ever blessed and glorious memory, hath been committed by a party of wretched men, desperately wicked and hardened in impiety," &c.

Sometimes our statutes could rush to the other extreme, and exhaust the power of language in servile adulation of the reigning powers. If we would see how far base inordinate flattery can go, we should read from beginning to end the act (the very first in the reign) of James the First, for declaring and recognising his right to the throne. The following abridgment but faintly shadows forth the spirit of the original; but it may give some idea of its ludicrous effect.

It states that the acknowledgment of the king's title and the love of his subjects had been shown by several means, "yet, as we cannot do it too often or enough, so can there be no means or way so fit, both to sacrifice our unfeigned and hearty thanks to Almighty God, for blessing us with a sovereign adorned with the rarest gifts of mind and body in such admirable peace and quietness, and upon the knees of our hearts to agnise our most constant faith, obedience, and loyalty to your majesty and your royal progeny, as in this high court of parliament," &c., it is therefore declared by the authority of parliament that "they do recognise and acknowledge, and thereby express their unspeakable joys" that the crown descended by right of birth to his majesty, to whom "they most humbly and faithfully do submit and oblige themselves, their heirs, and posterities, for ever, until the last drop of their bloods be spent. Which, if your majesty shall be pleased (as an argument of your gracious acceptation) to adorn with your majesty's royal assent . . . . according to our most humble desire (as a memorial of your princely and tender affection towards us), we shall add this also to the rest of your majesty's unspeakable and inestimable benefits."

What mental agonies must this composition have cost its framers! With what shamelessness have they sacrificed sense, grammar, and decorum at the feet of their ungainly idol; with

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what laborious assiduity stuck in their eulogistic parentheses; with what recklessness tossed their metaphors abroad! Doubtless, they had their reward when, after executing the painful operation of going down on the knees of their hearts, and the mysterious process of agnising their faith and loyalty, they were blessed with the smiles and approbation of a monarch so brilliant as James the First.

A PANEFUL CATASTROPHE.

A TALE OF NORTH DEVON.

I.

Our Gallic neighbours, modern "shoots of Arês,"
And, like their predecessors, famed in story,
Who fought in days of yore on Trojan prairies,
Somewhat too vain of homicidal glory;
Sneer at John Bull, whose only thought, they swear, is
To heap up riches, and in trade grow hoary;
"Une nation boutiquière," they call us,
And think by such a sobriquet to gall us.

II.

Well, so we are! We own the soft impeachment.
We have no abstract love for cutting throats;
We don't think human bones to stop a breach meant,
Nor human flesh to rot in hostile moats.
Such exploits form grand subjects for a speechment;
But *we* prefer whole skins within our coats;
We care not for "la gloire," nor do we see a
Virtue in "making war for an idea."

III.

A Nice idea, by the way, it proved,
For which their Emperor made war in Italy.
To see the Austrians bodily removed,
He pledged his word; which word, than glass more brittle, he
Broke without shame; yet Cavour it behoved
To pay him quid pro quo; declaring wittily,
The dogma by which France to fall or stand meant,
The Nicene Creed, and not the Tenth Commandment!

IV.

And yet old honest John has had his fights,
And stout ones, too, when duty seemed to call him
To vindicate an injured nation's rights,
Or chastise foes, who threatened to enthral him.
When Nap the First sent forth his swarms of blights
To ravage Europe, who stood up to maul him?
Who freely shed his blood, and spent his cash,
To pound the Usurper to "immortal smash?"

V.

Who, but John Bull? Who, quitting shops and farms,
And trade and merchandise, and home and altar,
Forsook the joys of peace for war's alarms,
To rescue Europe from that tyrant's halter;
For twenty years stood bravely to his arms,
And in his resolution scorned to falter,
Till, from his height, he hurled Gaul's idol down,
And stripped him of his empire and his crown.

VI.

Surely this sneer comes with indifferent grace
From men who've proved John's prowess in the field;
Who know that, with a foeman face to face,
Steel sword, no less than steel-yard, he can wield;
Whose fathers, too, the champions of their race,
John's stubborn valour oft has forced to yield,
Before and since the days of brave Queen Bessy,
From Waterloo to Agincourt and Cressy.

VII.

Shopkeeper as he is, John has his whims,
And often takes to fighting, as I've read it,
In other's quarrels, where he risks his limbs,
And for his pains gets nothing but the credit—
Debt, I should say! For debt's the cloud that dims
War's splendour, and makes thoughtful people dread it;
Then, as to making war for an idea,
What think you of the war in the Crimea?

VIII.

The mention of this last suggests a tale,
Which, though it had a ludicrous conclusion,
Shows how John's warlike instincts still prevail
(As venturous foes may find to their confusion)
Above his love of trade and Bills of Sale;
How, spite of this same shopkeeping delusion,
Though other folks may blow their trumpets louder,
John loves the clang of arms and smell of powder.

IX.

There stands a borough in a western county—
I shan't say where, but give you leave to guess;
A borough chartered oft by Royal bounty,
Though in this land you'll nowhere find a less.
His hobby should some antiquary mount, he
Would ascertain (*I* doubt it, I confess!)
Among its musty records, after long quest,
That it was founded years before the Conquest!

X.

But be that as it may, the borough stands—
And plumes itself upon its ancient standing,
More than upon its revenues and lands;
Which, sooth to say, have ceased to be commanding.
For oft, when slander's tongue its meanness brands,
It boasts—its common chest with pride expanding—
"While Exeter was yet a furzy down,
Our ancient borough was a corporate town!"

XI.

A Mayor and Corporation, too, it shows,
Though sorely pinched at times to fill its quorum;
Sergeants-at-mace, and jurymen in rows,
Rare boys at sessions' feasts to drain a jorum.
A Guildhall and a Jail its bounds enclose,
Where Justice reigns, as in the Roman Forum;
With Quarter Sessions, held in formal order,
A Town-clerk eke, and (*memini!*) Recorder!

XII.

How it escaped Municipal Reform,
Which doomed much larger boroughs to perdition,
And raised throughout the land a general storm
Against the authors of that inquisition,
Heaven only knows! One reason, 'mid the swarm,
Which might be rendered for this strange omission,
Is that, however willing to withdraw it,
It was so small—they really never saw it!

XIII.

Well, not long after the Crimean war,
When one of John Bull's martial transports seized him,
And every country town was clamouring for
Some trophy of the foe, who long had teased him;
The gallant Mayor of (I must beg once more
To name no names!) resolved, the idea pleased him,
To signalise his mayoralty by something,
Which, in a man of peace, you'll deem a rum thing:

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XIV.

Fired with the warlike spirit of the hour,
And jealous for his native borough's glory,
He penned a letter to the men in power
To beg them, whether they were Whig or Tory,
To send him down from Woolwich or the Tower,
Whereby his mayoralty might live in story,
One of the cannon taken at Sebastopol,
Whose capture cost the Allies so long and vast a pull.

XV.

Having "a friend at court" (for, I should state,
The manor's lord is styled the Duke of Cornwall),
He gained his object without much debate
(A flat refusal he would scarce have borne well!);
And, in due course, his worship to elate
With such a prize, as should exalt his horn well,
By way of something like "a real astounder,"
They sent him down a six-and-thirty pounder!

XVI.

A huge great gun it was, some nine feet long,
And firmly mounted on a handsome carriage,
Inscribed with iron letters, stout and strong,
Stating that it was captured from his Czarage,
Before Sebastopol, now famed in song,
And to our loyal borough given in marriage,
To have and hold, that is, in bonds cannon-ical,
Till one or both were blotted from Time's chronicle.

XVII.

Well, down it came by train, and down to meet it,
In formal state, went Mayor and Corporation;
While at their heels, in headlong haste to greet it,
Rushed the whole borough's eager population;
And crowding round, as if they meant to eat it,
They hugged and kissed it (!!) when it reached the station;
Then, giving three loud cheers for Prince and Crown,
They "buckled to," and dragged it up to town.

XVIII.

A general holiday proclaimed its coming,
And joyous peals rang from the old church-steeple,
So great a noise of fifing and of drumming
Sure ne'er was heard among that sober people.
The shouts with which they rent the air were stunning
(Police at such a time the peace could keep ill),
In short, both old and young with joy were frantic;
You might have heard them half across the Atlantic.

XIX.

Arrived at length in front of the Guildhall,
His worship slowly halted the procession;
Then, turning round, addressed them one and all
In glowing periods, on their proud possession
Of such a trophy, to record the fall
Of Russia's mightiest stronghold of oppression;
And hoped it long might stand to tell the story
Of England's might, and France's sister-glory.

XX.

Loud cheering followed on the Mayor's address,
And never in this world did man feel prouder,
To think his townsmen valued his success
About the gun; but still the cheers rang louder,
When, raising his spare form above the press,
He cried, if any one would fetch some powder,
He'd pay the shot, no matter at how high rate,
If any venturous spirit liked to fire it.

XXI.

A fitting climax to the day's festivity,
'Twas voted by the general acclamation;
But, ready as his worship was to give it, he
Observed among the crowd some hesitation.
In fact, *this* thought had damped their first activity:—
That though, belonging to a sporting nation,
Fearing nor guns nor pistols; yet, confound her!
They rather funked a six-and-thirty pounder.

XXII.

At length, an aged pensioner was found
Who, in his younger days, had tackled Boney,
Who volunteered to let them hear her sound
Her iron war-notes, "con espressione!"
So, ramming home of powder many a pound,
He seized a red-hot poker from some crony,
And, while the crowd stood mute with fear and wonder,
Bang! went the monster, with a noise like thunder.

XXIII.

Then rose from earth to sky one hideous yell,
"Then shrieked the timid, and stood still the brave!"
And chimney-pots came clattering down pell-mell,
Enough to wake the dead within each grave.
Then female lips were heard, in accents fell,
Screaming, as the sound reached them wave on wave,
"Ah, drat our mazed ould Mayor! Just hark, them winders!
He's smashed them all to fifty thousand flinders!"

XXIV.

And true enough it was! A flash! a crash!
A universal earthquake shook the town!
And casements right and left, with headlong dash,
Upon the pavement fast came rattling down.
Down from the walls came pictures with a clash,
And chimney-ornaments, worth many a crown;
While, as it smashed their crockery to bits,
It frightened seven old women into fits.

XXV.

One scene of desolation met the sight
When the smoke lifted, and the roar had died;
Whole shop-fronts, blown to atoms by the might
Of that explosion, yawned on every side.
Their main street's sorely ruinated plight
The burgesses with rueful visage eyed!
Sebastopol itself, though twelve months battered,
Could scarce have been more miserably shattered.

XXVI.

Conceive our martial magistrate's dismay,
To scan the ruin which his gun had wrought!
The shattered fragments all around that lay,
As if some mighty battle had been fought!
The broken slates and glass that strewed the way:
When down in triumph first that gun he brought,
He little dreamt, in summing up his gains,
He'd have to pay the glazier—for his panes.

XXVII.

His costs for damages were something frightful;
Because, for every cracked old glass in town,
The owners, deeming such a chance delightful,
Upon his worship for repairs came down.
And many a pound he paid more than was rightful,
To satisfy their claims, or clamours drown;
Protesting, as he gazed upon each bill awry,
He never more would meddle with artillery!

XXVIII.

Five hundred squares! No wonder that the Guild
Of Glaziers voted him a right good fellow;
And prayed that, when the office next he filled,
He'd make that monster gun once more to bellow.
Our pensioner, in long campaigning skilled,
Declared, with drink when waxing rather mellow,
That our great Duke, of whom he then most prattles,
Ne'er broke so many squares in all his battles!

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XXIX.

That soul of wit and humour, the Recorder,
Who ne'er lets slip a chance to crack his jest,
No sooner heard his borough's sad disorder,
Than gravely thus his judgment he expressed:
"Since Mr. Mayor has launched within our border
This avalanche of glaziers, I suggest,
His venerable name we henceforth class
In borough records as our *Mayor de glass!*"*

MORAL.

Ye men of peace, who rule our country boroughs,
Dispensing homespun justice to the lieges,
Take warning by the Mayor of ——'s sorrows
(It wasn't Axminster, nor yet Lyme Regis),
Lest on your brows you grave untimely furrows;
But leaving playthings only fit for sieges
To the brave captains of our Piques and Shannons,
Stick to the laws—and let alone the cannons!

* Mer de glace!

THE TRAINING-STABLE.

A LONG ten miles at last from the bustle of the Line, let us stay for a moment on the brow of this next hill to enjoy in quiet the glorious view that breaks before us. Ridged in on one of the highest ranges of England, what an undulating sweep of soft green sward now meets the eye! There may be some further boundary, but it is all illimitable in the horizon, and the sweet springy down-land flows on in an ocean of unbroken plain. Little care would the husbandman seem to have hereabouts, although, in that hollow to the left, you note the comfortable well-to-do homestead of Thistley Grove. Yet farther away to the right, buried in the clump of trees from which it takes its title, is Elm Down—the high home of the gaze-hound—famous for the Ladies Sylvia, Aurora, and Diana, who manage their prancing palfreys so gracefully, and talk so learnedly to the admiring crowd of "turn," "twist," and "go-by." Let your glance rest under that narrow belt of firs just rising from another dip of the wavy open, and tell us what you see there. Nothing but some sheep? Then the lambs can scarcely keep themselves warm this nipping March morning; for, look again, and there are some half a dozen of them off, as hard as they can go! A capital pace, too, for now that orderly methodical line is lost. And the lambs, as they draw towards us, while—somewhat scared—we stand aside to make way for them, gradually develop into a string of long-striding, carefully-clothed horses, snorting in all the glow of speed and health as they rush past, and coping in their strength with the tiny lads who sit them so close and hold them so hard. They are stopping, however, as they reach the rest of the flock again, and the shepherd might, perhaps, be kind enough to let us have a more composed look at them.

Mr. Shepherd, who, in his well-cut jacket and rifleman leggings, might be a sporting farmer or fox-hunter in mufti, will be "only too happy" to show us and tell us all he can. There would really seem to be no secret about it; and were the laird himself down—the owner of these thirty or forty thorough-breds—he would only join our Mentor in calling them over to us. Let us begin with that company of five—the little lot, by-the-by, being worth at the very least some twenty thousand pounds. Mark that lazy careless self-satisfied looking "old horse," as they fondly call him, which leads the string—see how the boy has actually to kick him along in his lolloping walk, or even to strike at him sharply through the heavy clothing with his ashen plant. But the chesnut, as he honours you with just one sagacious glance through that plaided cowl, says, as plainly as can be, that he knows this is all child's play, and that he can go away when he is really wanted to go. He speaks but the simple truth, for Barnoldby is the champion of his order, the best horse in the world at this moment, who has done more, and has done it better, and has worn longer than anything else we should see were our pilgrimage on the Thistle Down to reach on to its utmost limit. The Derby, the Royal Cup, the Great Two-year-old—even Mr. Shepherd can scarcely trust his memory to tell of all that low lengthy animal has achieved. So we come on to the next in order to him. "A three-year-old colt, sir, that we call Aristophanes," is the simple introduction, given with an air of indifference, which we attempt so indifferently to echo as to bring up an involuntary smile on the countenance of our guide. And this is Aristophanes! This resolute powerful bay, who follows on with something in his air and manner of indolent hauteur, is the great favourite for the great race of the year. This is the horse that the papers write about, the clubs talk about, and the sporting world perpetually thinks about. Should he be heard to cough, it might make a difference of thousands. Were he to spring a sinew, or throw a curb, or even to turn up that haughty nostril of his over the next feed of corn, the knowledge of such a calamity would convulse the market. There are great men who would give much for the opportunity to see what we shall now, as Mr. Shepherd sends the illustrious five down to the other end of the plantation, with orders to "come along at a pretty good pace."

Now keep your eyes open, as old Barnoldby leads off, almost mechanically, with the lad hustling and threatening to force him out. But he has done his duty ably enough already, and our gaze centres, some few lengths off, on his successor. Mr. Shepherd can bear it. "The crack" is going sweetly, and the more he extends himself, the more determinedly he pulls at his rider, the more you like him. There is the long even stealthy almost slow-seeming stride, like the steady stroke of the accomplished swimmer, and yet with what liberty he strikes out, how well his hind-legs come under him, and with what courage he faces the hill, as old Barnoldby, having made a pace at last, appears wickedly inclined to find out what the young one can do. Their Two Thousand nag is behind him, a strong favourite for the Spring Handicap is fourth, and a lop-eared colonist of high charac-

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ter last. They are all good, but we linger over Aristophanes as he walks back, only all the better for his breathing, and we close at once with the invitation to see him in his box.

That bevy of bays and greys yonder are the lambkins we first met with; and the handsome aged horse, even with so much substance about him, is still good enough to win Royal Plates, though the laird does talk of riding him in the Park.

But Mr. Shepherd thinks we had better stroll on to the house, that Thistley Grove which looked so comfortable in the distance, and where a biscuit and a glass of the Barnoldby sherry await us. The rook's in the long elm avenues are busy in their preparations for a welcome to the little strangers. The famous dowagers of high descent, and worth at least a thousand pounds each, are looking to maternal cares of their own, as they group themselves under the grand old trunks, or walk off, in some disdain that their dishevelled beauties should be made a mark for the sight-seeing stranger. There are yearlings, already of fabulous prices; an interesting invalid, Sweet Blossom, with a refined melancholy about her that is quite catching; and the prettiest horse in England, who has had the terrible misfortune to "hit his leg," and is in physic as a consequence. That massive door-Belle is a daughter of the rare old Grantley hound, and this short-horn heifer has a pedigree as long as that of Aristophanes himself, whose toilet by this time must surely be completed. He has been brushed and whisped until his brownish hard-coloured coat shines again; his large flat legs are duly washed and bandaged; his nostrils spunged out; his long thin mane neatly combed and arranged. He is just set fair, with the hood finally thrown over his quarter-piece, when (to his manifest disgust) we are ushered into his box.

No one likes to be interfered with at dinner-time, and "Harry" strikes out rather angrily with his near fore-leg when his valet proceeds once more to strip him. That eye is full of character as he turns it upon you, but the long lean head is not so handsome as it is expressive; how finely it is set on to his thin somewhat straight neck, and how beautifully that again, fits into his magnificent sloping shoulders! There is breadth and freedom of play, supported by long powerful arms, and short wiry legs, heavier in the bone than any hairy-heeled John Jolly that ever drew a drayman. Come a little more forward, and glance over that strong muscular back, those drooping quarters, and big clean hocks; and then say if the thorough-bred horse, in high condition, be not a very hero of strength and swiftness! He would gallop the far-famed Arabian of the desert, to death, and you would be but as an infant with him. He would rush off with you in his first canter, docile and sluggish as he was at exercise; with one lash out of that handsome haunch, he would send you far over his head, or "order" you out of his box in an instant. Somewhat grim is the humour of Aristophanes, and, as we hear as plainly as he does, the rattle of his dinner-service, suppose we wish him good morning, and assure Mr. Shepherd confidentially when once more in the open air, that he is the very finest Derby horse we ever saw, and that we shall seriously think about backing him for "a stoater," "a monkey," "a hyæna," or—a two-shilling piece.

There are nearly forty others to strip and talk over, many of established repute, more of coming promise, and all, save the handsome Park horse that is to be, of the highest and purest lineage. And now that we have seen them, and when we begin to tire of studying so perfect a picture, let us pause for a minute to reflect over its peculiar tone and treatment, and to ask, were you ever over any manufactory, did you ever inspect any gigantic "establishment," where the good genius of rule and order had a better home than at Thistley? Have you found a stirrup-leather out of place? Have you noticed the tiniest of those little lads ever flurried or awkward over his work? Have you heard an oath, or so much as an angry word, since we have been here? "Don't speak so sharply to your mare, boy!" was Mr. Shepherd's mild reproof to the boy who cried out at the white-legged filly when she twisted round suddenly on her way home. And again: "I say, young gentleman, wouldn't you look all the better if you had your hair cut?" to the other boy, much rejoicing in his golden locks. But we will have a word ourselves with a third—this natty youth coming across the yard, with his horse's muzzle packed, as some travellers packed their sponge-bags, with all kinds of toilet traps. Jack Horner is his name; he was born in London, but came down to Mr. Shepherd as apprentice, some three years since. He looks about twelve years of age, but rather indignantly says he is past fifteen, and that he does not weigh four stone. *There* is a combination of fortune's and nature's favours, rarely to be met with in this world! Can any one by any possibility imagine anything more acutely wide-awake than a boy born in London, and educated in a racing stable! Who is unnaturally small for his years, who can sit close, hold his tongue, and hold the hardest puller in the stable. Go on and prosper, little Jack Horner! And when the days of thy serving time are over, you shall jump into a living, worth double that of the parson of the parish, and end by having a heavier income-tax than the most famous Q.C., who ever worried a witness or bullied a judge. The nobles of the land shall send in their special retainers, humbly asking that you will appear for them when you can. The anxious telegram shall seek you out. The best of champagne, and the oldest of Havannahs shall court your taste; and when you go a courting yourself, you shall woo the dark-eyed daughter of The Blue Dragon, with armlets of emeralds, and pearls of price! "All very fine, sir," says little Jack Horner—though not without a notion that it may be all very true, with time and luck to help him. At present, Jack gets ten pounds a year and a suit of clothes, with three good meals a day, and, despite his weight, a fair share of beef and beer.

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His one great mission is to look after his horse, for he is rarely called upon to do more. In the summer he is with him by daybreak, if he do not sleep at his heels, in a couch that looks like a corn-bin, but which, with no "double debt to pay," unrols into a bed and nothing more. The attendant sprite of Aristophanes sleeps over him; for that great horse might contrive to cast himself in his box, or the bad fairy might try to come in through the keyhole, or something or other might occur that would need the ready assistance of his body-guard. Dressing his horse lightly over, and feeding him, are amongst the first of Jack Horner's duties, to be followed immediately by the morning exercise—the walk on to the Down, the gentle canter, the smart gallop, or the long four miler that has now generally superseded "the sweat." Horses are no longer loaded with cloths and fagged and scraped, but they get the same amount of work without the unnecessary severity once general and fatal. Common sense has of late years driven out much of the conventional practice of the training-stable, and a horse is now treated in accordance with his peculiar temper and constitution. Some horses are so nervous that they begin to fidget at the mere sight of the muzzle with which a horse was, as a rule, "set" the night before he ran; and now, not one horse in fifty is ever "set." Other horses know as readily, the intention with which their manes are plaited into thick heavy tresses—a part of the etiquette costume of the course now by no means so carefully observed as of yore—and some begin to "funk," as the schoolboys say, so soon as the stranger Vulcan comes to shift their light shoes for the still lighter "plates." Some horses will almost train themselves, without needing any clothing whatever, while grosser animals require continual work. The late Lord Eglinton's famous Van Tromp was a very indolent horse, and took an immense "preparation," two or three good racers being solely employed to lead him in his gallops; and his temper was so bad, that for the last year he was ridden in a muzzle, to prevent his flying at the other horses out. His yet more renowned half-brother, The Flying Dutchman, went, on the contrary, so freely, and pulled so much, that he never had half the work of the other, and usually galloped by himself. But he was of a most excitable temperament, both in and out of the stable.

This great business of galloping over, Jack Horner brings his horse back in his own proper place in the string, to the stable, where he is dressed again far more elaborately, and when "set fair," is fed. A horse in work will eat in a day his six "quarterns" of corn (of sixteen quarterns to the bushel), often mixed with a few old beans, and occasionally, as at Thistley Grove, with some sliced carrots; while he has hay "at discretion," regulated either by his own delicate appetite, or meted out to his too eager voracity. Then, with the horse left in quiet to his meal, the boy begins to think of his own, which in the summer is breakfast, and in the winter dinner. We may be satisfied that unless Jack is to have a mount in the next Handicap, there is no use for the muzzle here either; and Mrs. Shepherd has a boy all the way from the North Riding, whose prowess over suet pudding is something marvellous to witness. Almost all the lads are from a distance, for the cottager's wife cannot reconcile it to herself to see her dear Billy crying to come home again; and so surely as he begins to cry, so surely does he go home. Mrs. Shepherd, however, is a good mother to those who stay with her. They go to the village church regularly every Sunday, and there is a chapel-room at the Grove, which is a schoolroom every evening in the week, and a place of worship on the Sabbath.

On the other side of the Thistle Down, four of Mr. Dominie the public trainer's lads wear surplices as singers in the church of one of the strictest clergymen in Downshire. They attend an evening school, where the trainer's son is a teacher, and Dominie himself is churchwarden. Had Holcroft lived in these days, he would never have longed for Life in London; and *That's your sort!* would have been an echo rather of the green sward than of the green room. Mr. Dominie makes it a condition when hiring a lad that he shall regularly attend a place of worship, and some trainers walk in procession to church with their boys, precisely as if the establishment were an academy where the neighbouring youth were "genteely boarded." The economy of a public stable is very similar to that of Mr. Shepherd's. The lads get about the same wages, but seldom with the addition of the suit of clothes; and some, but not so many as their employers could wish, are bound apprentice for four or five years on first entering. A really clever child, when so articled, may be turned to considerable profit, for there is a continual demand for such light weights, and of course the master can generally make his own terms as to how they shall share the fees received for riding races for other people. To "hold his tongue," and "keep his hands down," are the two golden rules of a jockey boy's life, and the height of his ambition to ride in public: should he be very successful at first, he is apt to lose his head; and here the indentures do him good service, by keeping him in proper control until he has completed his education. Should he then have outgrown the stable in size and weight, he is still qualified to make the best of grooms. To tend on the high-bred horse that is, and not to look after a horse and chaise, clean knives and shoes, dig in the garden, wait at table, and help Mary Anne in her airings with the double-bodied perambulator.

Jack Horner's early career has scarcely fitted him for "a place" like this; but if you really have need of a groom, the training-stable is as the University for turning out a first-class man. Of late years, private establishments have been coming more and more into fashion, and, for a gentleman with anything like a stud of his own, there can be no other so satisfactory or

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legitimate a means of engaging in the sport. Thistley Grove is at this time about the most successful of any stable in the kingdom, either public or private; and a brother of our Mr. Shepherd is now in receipt of the highest salary ever paid to a private trainer. He has six hundred pounds a year, with a capital house to live in, and, even beyond this, "farms" the horses and boys for his employer at so much a head. This scale, however, is considerably beyond the average. As a rule, a trainer is now a well-conducted, comparatively well-educated man, with, of course, the occasional exception we find in every other rank and calling. But the ignorant cunning sot, once too true a type of his order, is dying out with the old-fashioned huntsman, who got drunk as a duty when he had killed his fox.

Let us suppose that the laird of the Thistle Down, in the pride of his heart, has presented you with one of those famous mares we disturbed but now under the elms—more fatal gift, may be, than that Trojan Horse whereof Virgil has sung. The Dowager Duchess is your own, and straightway your ambition is fired to win the Derby. With good fortune, the year's keep of the mare and other preliminary expenses, your foal has cost you some seventy pounds up to the day he is born. Subsequently, when weaned, there will be a year and a half of the idleness of infancy, what time he is being fed with corn, fondled and handled and half broken; and this will call for a full eighty pounds more. Then, in the September previous to entering on his second year, he goes up to school, where he gets board, lodging, attendance, and teaching, for somewhere about fifty shillings a week. The customary charge in a high-class public stable, is two guineas a week, including the lad: while to this must be added the smith, saddler, physic, and other incidental charges, to bring up the total. A year and a half spent thus with Mr. Dominie will add another item to the account of one hundred and ninety pounds; and as you keep him specially to win the Derby, his expenses to and at Epsom will be but some eight pounds more. The stake is one of fifty pounds each, the jockey's fee for a "chance" mount is three pounds—he will expect five hundred if he should win—and so, by the time that lilac body and red sleeves is "coloured" on the card; by the time that those three-and-thirty thorough-bred colts have dipped down from the paddock to the post, there is not one among them who faces the flag but has cost some four hundred pounds to get there. During the year 1861, between eighteen and nineteen hundred horses actually ran in England and Ireland, while there were many others which, from a variety of circumstances, never appeared, although in training. Beyond these, even, we must include the steeple-chasers, whose names rarely appear in the strictly legitimate records of Wetherby. Then we may guess at the amount of money expended on horse-flesh, living at the rate of from two pounds five shillings to two pounds ten shillings a week each horse. The large breeding establishments, the outrageously heavy travelling expenses, when a horse pays a guinea a night for his box, and other items of outlay, we must not stay to consider but, "keeping" them to their work when at home, they have, of course, the very best of oats and hay, all bought in at the best prices: while a trainer will often pay a farmer more for the privilege to exercise on a down, than the tenant gives for it as a sheep-walk. So far from this being a detriment to the land, "the bite" is nowhere so sweet as where the horses gallop; and the flock will continue to follow the string, as they change from one side of the hill to the other.

Let us leave the high-mettled racer, where we first found him in such good companionship, with the little lambs mocking his long stride, as they run matches against each other to the tinkling of the starting-bell with which the wandering ewe will clear the way. How different in its sober, monotonous echo, to that quick, thrilling alarum which proclaims "*they're off!*" When, in the noise and turmoil of the crowded course, we are challenged on every side by the hoarse husky Ishmaelite who will "lay agen" everything and everybody; when, amidst the din of discord and the wild revelry of such a holiday, we catch a glimpse of the yellow jacket of Aristophanes as he sweeps by in his canter, or struggles home to a chorus of shouts and yells, of cracking of whips and working of arms; hero, then, though he may be, high though that number *nine* be exalted, we see little of the beauty and poetry of the thorough-bred horse's life. We must seek this, rather in the sweet solitude of the downs and by-ways, where the shepherd's hut is the ending-post, and the farmer, thrice happy in his ignorance, will lean carelessly on his stick as they march by to ask "What's the name of that 'un?"

NOT A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

It is not the least striking part of the following shameful story, that the facts it narrates are not yet one hundred years old.

Abbeville, a manufacturing and commercial town in the province of Picardy, and now a chef-lieu d'arrondissement in the department of the Somme, had of old been accustomed to witness absurd and barbarous punishments. About 1272, a murderer whom the Mayor had put in prison, was taken out by his orders at the moment when the murdered person breathed his last, and swore over relics, in the presence of the citizens assembled by ringing the bell, that he would depart from the town within a fortnight, and cross the seas never to return. In 1286, by judgment of the town and by counsel of the Mayor and Sheriffs (échevins) of Amiens, one Jean d'Omatre, found guilty of counterfeiting the stamp applied to the Abbeville cloths, was branded on the face with the real stamp, and banished for life. In 1291, an individual, suspected of larceny, was banished, after slitting his ear, with the threat that, if he came back again, they would hang him by the neck. In

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the same year, an inhabitant of Cahon was also banished for theft; if he returned to the town or its suburbs, one of his members was to be cut off, *whichever the Sheriffs pleased to select*. In 1296, a woman, found guilty of coining, was buried alive, in the presence of the justices of the town. Other women, found guilty of thefts, suffered the same punishment.

In 1346, an individual was stabbed in a drunken brawl. The municipal authorities held an inquest, discovered who were the guilty parties, and rang their three bells to summon them to appear and answer the charge; but they neither came nor showed themselves. Whereupon, the public were ordered to proceed to demolish the houses of the murderers, in virtue of certain articles in the corporation charter. But, on their arrival, the wives of the accused parties required the mayor and the sheriffs to maintain their rights, summoning immediately witnesses to prove that their jointure gave them a life interest in the houses intended to be pulled down. The mayor at once caused the work to be stopped, and the demolition did not take place until after the decease of the respective women.

It will hardly be believed that animals then were formally accused and put upon their trial according to the rules of criminal jurisprudence; nevertheless, proofs of the fact are furnished by the archives of the Mairie of Abbeville: "It happened that on Saturday the xvth day of December, in the year MCCCCXIIII, Belot, daughter of Jéhan Guillain, she being laid in her cradle and asleep, was strangled and her face devoured by a little pig, belonging to the said Guillain; for which matter and by deliberation of the council, he, the pig, was dragged and hung by the hind-legs, on Christmas Eve, the XXIVth day of the aforesaid year, and by judgment of the mayor and sheriffs, Matthew Barbafust being mayor."

Another pig, guilty of the same crime, was arrested by the sénéchal's sergeants, and by them made over to the jurisdiction of the municipal officers, at whose hands it also suffered death by hanging by the hind-legs. A third pig, again, for murdering a babe in its cradle, was hung in like manner from a gallows, in virtue of the sentence pronounced by the mayor, on the leads of the Shrievalty, to the tolling of bells. A like instance occurred in 1479. The condemned animal was driven to the place of execution in a cart; the mace-bearers escorted it as far as the gallows, and the executioner received sixty sous for his trouble.

To pass on to an epoch nearer to the date of our present history, in 1724 three soldiers were hung on the same gallows, in the Place St. Pierre, for stealing forty-seven pounds of candles, valued at eighteen livres sixteen sous. In the following year, the wife of a porter, surnamed La Commandante, was taken up for beggary and conducted to the steeple of the Hôtel de Ville, where was a wooden cage for confining mad people. The wretched woman was put into this cage, and almost instantly afterwards hung herself there with her apron. The municipal officers proceeded to the prison to ascertain the fact of her death, the cause which had occasioned it, and to institute proceedings against the body. They discovered that she had already been in the hands of justice, being branded on the shoulder. They caused the body to be taken to a dungeon of the Cour Ponthieu, where they left it completely stripped. When their inquest was over, the executioner dressed the body in a chemise, put it in a sort of wicker box which did not conceal it from view, and in which the head was not enclosed, fastened it to a horse's tail, and dragged it, with the face to the ground, as far as the market, where it was hung on a gallows by the feet; then, dragged away in the same fashion, in the midst of an immense concourse of people, it was finally buried in a wheel-rut. Wheel-ruts existed then, deep enough to serve as graves.

In 1730, a young man of Abbeville, who ventured during the night to throw a stick at a little group of images representing the Resurrection, which was suspended in the middle of one of the streets in honour of the fête of Saint Sepulchre, was shot dead by a gunsmith named Leduc. The authorities made inquiries, but took no further proceedings, heedless of the solicitations of the mother of the young man whom Leduc had murdered. Tired of appealing in vain to the law, the wretched parent contrived to obtain, through one of her relations who was a servant at court, an order requiring the Abbeville magistrates to go on with the trial. The offender was condemned to death. But at every consecration of a Bishop of Orleans, the new prelate had the privilege of pardoning a criminal; and in this way Leduc escaped the scaffold.

At every step, you came upon crosses, images of saints, Madonnas, and Ecce Homos. They were to be found in every churchyard, in every street, in the squares, on the ramparts, on the bridges, at the portal of every church, against the walls of every convent.

The hero of our tragic tale, the Chevalier de la Barre, was the grandson of a lieutenant-general who wrote several works on Guiana, of which he was named governor in 1663. Born in the neighbourhood of Coutances, in Normandy, young De la Barre spent the earlier part of his life with a country curé, and afterwards resided with a farmer. He was clever and good natured; but, being left an orphan in his childhood, his education was very much neglected; which did not prevent his entertaining, nor his discussing with imprudent levity, the free philosophical opinions then current among the French nobility. In short, De la Barre and his knot of young friends drew upon themselves the ill-will of the clergy. It was rumoured that he one day got within the walls of a convent under the disguise of female attire; and he and his companions really passed within five-and-twenty paces of a procession of Capuchin monks bearing the Host, without kneeling or taking off their hats. The excuse was, that

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they were hastening to dinner, and that it rained—no excuse whatever, at that time and place.

De la Barre enjoyed the patronage of one of his relations, Madame Feydeau de Brou, Abbess of Willancourt, whose nephew he was according to the custom of Brittany.* This lady adopted him, in a manner, in 1764; she gave him masters, and procured him a lieutenant's commission. She lodged him in the external buildings of the convent, and invited him to meet the select society by whom she was visited, and who moulded his manners to the ways of the world. Voltaire says of her that she was amiable, strictly moral in her conduct, gentle-tempered and cheerful, benevolent and prudent without superstition. She often asked him to supper, together with several of his young friends (amongst them, one named Moisnel and another D'Etalonde de Morival), whose spirits were high, but whose faith was of the weakest. Reports were current that these young people, in their secret parties of pleasure, were irreligious as well as dissolute, and that the chevalier partook of their follies. Witnesses (mostly of the lowest class, who had waited on the young men at their merry meetings) were subsequently brought to prove that they recited Piron's notorious verses, sang libertine songs, spoke against the doctrine of the Eucharist, and profaned by mimicry the ceremonies of the Church. The state of the times, the profligacy of the court, the looming of a political tempest on the horizon, the antagonism of the philosophers and the Catholic clergy, must all be remembered while pronouncing judgment on the conduct of these thoughtless youths.

Had the matter been confined to private orgies even worse than these, the names of De la Barre and his associates would probably never have reached our days; but during the night of the 8-9th of August, 1765, a wooden crucifix, standing on the Pont-Neuf, was mutilated with a cutting instrument. In the same night, another crucifix, planted in the cemetery of Saint Catherine, was covered with filth. These events excited a general disturbance throughout the town. The procureur du roi (king's attorney), a mystical enthusiast, caused the severest inquiry to be made. The Bishop of Amiens (De la Motte d'Orléans), a naturally good-natured prelate, but excited by bigoted coteries and enfeebled by age, published a "Monitoire," inviting the public to denounce the offenders, with the threat of censures and excommunication. On the 8th of October he himself came to Abbeville, accompanied by twelve missionaries, and with them went in procession, barefoot, with ropes round their necks, to the insulted crosses, prostrated himself before them, and without foreseeing the consequences of his fatal step, hastily pronounced his opinion of the culprits, declaring that they deserved the extremest punishment. This expiatory ceremonial, at which all the civil and judicial authorities were present, made a profound impression on the populace. More than a hundred witnesses, summoned to depose to facts relating to the mutilation, spoke of impious talk uttered in the heat of thoughtless carousals by young people of the town, but which afforded no clue whatever to the affair of the crucifixes. With this were mingled rumours of hosts (consecrated wafers), stolen from churches, being stabbed with knives, and miraculously bleeding from the wounds received.

In most instances of popular excitement ending in outbursts of popular frenzy, some secret instigator has been at work, fanning the flame unperceived. In the present case the underhand agitator, whoever he was, took great pains to fix suspicion on the Chevalier de la Barre. Popular rumour and probability (although doubts as to the facts have been raised) assign this villanous manœuvre to the lieutenant-particulier and criminal assessor, Pierre Duval de Soicourt, who had a private grudge against the Abbess of Willancourt, and who, unable to injure the lady herself, might seek revenge on her adopted child. If we may believe Voltaire, Duval, although sixty years of age, annoyed Madame de Willancourt with importunities which only excited her utmost aversion, so far even as to exclude him from her society. Duval, in revenge, did all he could to beset her with legal and pecuniary difficulties. De la Barre took his aunt's part with imprudent earnestness, and spoke to the old assessor with provoking harshness.

Moreover, in the Abbess of Willancourt's convent there resided a charming girl belonging to a very wealthy family, who was Duval's ward, and whom he desired to marry to his son, a young man of coarse and brutal manners. The abbess, yielding to her pupil's entreaties, who loathed the idea of such a union, opposed the marriage and succeeded in getting another guardian appointed in the place of Duval de Soicourt. Either of these affronts sufficed to make the criminal assessor vow eternal hatred to the abbess.

Duval, therefore, in his official capacity, brought a formal accusation against De la Barre and four other young men belonging to the first families of the neighbourhood. It is a damning circumstance for Duval's memory that, with four out of five of the families of which the parties accused were members, he had had serious misunderstandings. "I mean to frighten Madame de Willancourt," he said, "and show her that I am not a man to be despised." Mixing up the affair of the procession with the reports of irreligious talk, he coupled the whole with the offence of mutilating the crucifixes; so that the result should be to punish as mutilators of the holy symbol those who should be merely convicted of impious discourse.

The arrest of the culprits was decreed. Three

* Suppose two cousins-german to be married, the son of one of these cousins will address the other as "Ma tante"—"Aunt." He is her neveu à la mode de Bretagne.

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of them immediately took to flight, amongst whom was D'Etalonde, who contrived to put himself under the protection of the Abbot of Lieu-Dieu. This generous prelate, whose conduct forms a noble contrast with the intolerance of the other priests, concealed the fugitive in the depths of his convent, and provided him with means of escape through the assistance of the Abbot of Tréport, his excellent and worthy friend. De la Barre, relying too confidently on the influence and credit of his relations, the D'Ormessons, who occupied distinguished positions in the parliament and the council, refused to leave France. He was arrested on the first of October in the Abbey of Longvilliers, near Montreuil, and brought the very same day to Abbeville. Moisnel was seized the day following. De la Barre was nineteen years of age; Moisnel only fourteen.

Not a single creature in the whole town had witnessed the commission of the mutilation. De la Barre was only strongly suspected of having taken part in it. The legislation of every country maintains the principle that, before it can be punished, a crime must be proved to have been committed. But even if it had been proved that the Chevalier de la Barre had injured and defiled crucifixes, no law then existed in France punishing with death either the breaking of images or other similar blasphemous conduct. The edict of 1666 merely ordains that blasphemers, after repeating their offence a certain number of times, shall have their tongue cut out, leaving to theologians the task of defining what amount of sacrilege is deserving of death. A decision of the Sorbonne was requisite to pronounce judgment on the theological points. In default of law, it appears that they disinterred an "Edict of Pacification," given by the Chancellor de l'Hôpital under Charles the Ninth, and revoked soon afterwards.

However that may be, De la Barre and D'Etalonde were condemned to a terrible death. The latter, a refugee in Prussia, was out of the reach of the tormentors; but the poor unhappy boy, Moisnel, transferred from dungeon to dungeon, following the Chevalier wherever he was dragged, narrowly escaped from sharing his fate. Whilst Madame de Willancourt hastened to Versailles in search of succour and support, the wretched lads were deprived of every means of defence. The younger one, terror-struck, and throwing himself in tears at his accusers' feet, confessed to whatever they chose to put into his mouth. De la Barre, gifted with greater strength of mind, admitting trifling peccadilloes, vehemently protested his innocence of the graver charges. It may even be added that the noble fellow well knew who was the real culprit, but would not name him. An honourable magistrate, the oldest and the most intimate friend of one of the two co-accused, has stated that the veritable perpetrator of the mutilation was a hare-brained lad, ——, who was frequently with De la Barre and his other companions. But the dastardly wretch, instead of leaving France and then avowing his culpability in the face of Europe, took good care not to reveal his secret; whilst his heroic friend, firmly determined to betray no clue, was devoting, by his silence, his own head to the executioner. On the 28th of February, 1766, a horrible sentence was pronounced whose memory will ever weigh as a great crime, both on the tribunal which decreed it and the town where the victim was sacrificed.

And who were the judges? In the first place, Duval de Soicourt, whom we already know. Secondly, one Broustelles, whose principal profession was to deal in pigs and cattle, and who was utterly unfit for the office; seeing that he had sentences recorded against him, that he had been declared incapable of holding any municipal office in the kingdom, and that the advocates of Abbeville, by a formal deed, had refused to admit him into their body. The third judge, intimidated, it is said, by the other two, had the weakness to sign the sentence, and was afterwards tormented by poignant though ineffectual remorse. His act is the more inexcusable, from his having one day said, during the trial, "We ought not to torment the poor innocents in this way."

The Court of Abbeville was subordinate of the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Paris. Thither, consequently, De la Barre was transferred, and confined in the Montgomery tower. Eight of the most celebrated advocates in Paris signed a consultation, in which they demonstrated the illegality of the proceedings and the absurd barbarity of the three Abbeville judges, "who deserved," said Voltaire, "to be skinned alive on their fleur-de-lys-covered benches, and to have their skins used as a covering for the flowers." The attorney-general in vain gave his opinion that their execrable sentence should be quashed. It was confirmed on the 5th of June, 1766, by a majority of two votes. The real fact is, that De la Barre, whose cause was espoused by the "philosophers," was sacrificed as a sop thrown out to stop the mouths of the Jesuits, who, though suffering from a defeat, had still sufficient influence to excite wretched quarrels, and to make themselves dreaded as dangerous enemies.

It is related that the Bishop of Amiens, tormented by severe remorse, and bitterly deploring the consequences of his imprudent zeal, solicited the aid of clergy in order to obtain letters of grace. It is even added, that the parliament delayed the signing of the decree for six days, in the hope that Louis the Fifteenth would prove not inflexible. But the sultan of the Parc-aux-Cerfs sanctioned the infamy of the condemnation.

De la Barre was brought to Abbeville by way of Rouen, a circuitous route, as if his persecutors feared a rescue. He entered the town by the Hocquet Gate, in a post-chaise, between two police officers, and escorted by archers disguised as couriers. At six in the morning of the first of August he was put to the rack in the presence of a justly respected medical man, M. Gatte, who saved him from a great part of the horrors of torture by telling the executioners

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that further suffering would result in death. It is asserted that, during this cruel ordeal, the chevalier avowed himself guilty of the offence committed in Saint Catherine's cemetery. Immediately afterwards, he was visited in prison by a Dominican, Father Bosquier, whom he had several times met at his aunt's, the Abbess of Willancourt. He invited him to share his last repast; but the worthy friar could not eat.

"Why will you not dine?" De la Barre inquired. "You will require something to sustain you during the spectacle I am about to offer. Let us have some coffee," he added, after a quiet meal; "it will not prevent my sleeping."

A little before five in the afternoon, he was made to get into a tumbril, in his shirt, with a rope round his neck, uncovered and barefoot, with boards before and behind, inscribed IMPIOUS, BLASPHEMER, EXECRABLY AND ABOMINABLY SACRILEGIOUS. Father Bosquier held a crucifix before him. An executioner, in the same vehicle, held a lighted taper. Several mounted bailiffs and ten brigades of archers, some of whom had come seventeen leagues, surrounded the victim. A prodigious crowd, thronging in from the surrounding country, in spite of the rain, blocked up the streets, filled the windows, and scaled the roofs. "What has given me the greatest pain to-day," said the chevalier, during this terrible passage, "is to see at the windows so many people whom I believed my friends." But his emotion was still greater on observing a young woman whom he did not expect to meet on such an occasion. "She here!" he indignantly exclaimed, sorrowfully fixing his gaze upon her.

It has been recorded that De la Barre refused to make the amende honorable in front of the porch of Saint Vulfrau's church; but an anonymous chronicler who noted down all the details of the execution, and who witnessed the horrible tragedy, states that the chevalier knelt on the first step of the portal, and pronounced the required words in a firm tone of voice. The executioners did not cut his tongue; they merely went through with the pantomime of doing so. Arrived at the market-place, De la Barre, after the reading of his sentence, mounted a vast scaffold without aid or effort, whilst the executioner hung on a gallows, planted a few paces off, a picture in which D'Etalonde, laden with chains and with his wrist amputated, was burning in effigy.

"Ah! poor fellow!" exclaimed the chevalier, as he glanced at the odious painting. Turning in another direction, he perceived an enormous heap of billet-wood intermingled with fagots and straw. "That, then, is my burial-place," he added, with heroic calmness. Addressing the executioners, he asked, "Which of you has to cut off my head?"

"I," said the Paris executioner.

"Are your weapons good? Let me see them."

"Monsieur, we never show them."

"Was it you who beheaded the Comte de Lally?"

"Yes, monsieur."

"You made him suffer long."

"It was his own fault; he was constantly in motion. Place yourself well, and I will not miss you."

"Never fear, I shall not be a child."

His confessor, who had never left him, exhorted him to repentance, and promised heaven. A slight smile then hovered on his lips. The priest presented a crucifix to kiss, and gave absolution. De la Barre, after kissing the Christ several times, knelt with his face to the butchery. The executioner took off the rope he wore round his neck as well as the shirt which had been put over his coat, cut off a part of his hair, tied his hands behind him, and bandaged his eyes. When ready to strike, he slightly raised the chin with his hand, poised his weapon several times, and at a single blow severed the head, which rebounded a foot from the scaffold. The trunk fell heavily back on the boards, and a fountain of blood poured from the veins. The instant the cutlass struck the victim, the crowd clapped their hands. "Not one of those who came to see the execution was touched, *for he showed too much hardihood*," is the record of the anonymous chronicler. They applauded again when the executioner seized the bloody head. He removed the bandage which covered the eyes, showed it to the people, and replaced it beside the body. A few minutes afterwards he stirred it with his foot, to make sure that life was completely extinct, whilst one of his assistants ascertained that the pulse had ceased to beat. They then let down with ropes the remains of the victim who had been sacrificed to such miserable passions, and placed them on the pile with the "Philosophical Dictionary" and several other works. They covered the books and the body with straw, and then set fire to the whole. During the night the executioners broke up the bones, and next day the ashes were carried away in a tumbril. The unconsumed wood and all the scaffolding, abandoned to the populace by the monks whose perquisite they were, were sold by auction. The money realised was spent "in drinking to the health of the defunct."

An advocate, who afterwards attained celebrity, M. Linguet, defended Moisnel, who was still in prison, and gloriously gained his cause, as well as that of two of the fugitives. Voltaire obtained for D'Etalonde, promotion in the Prussian army until his sentence was finally reversed. On the 25th Brumaire, year II., the Convention rehabilitated (i. e. reinstated to its rank in society) the memory of De la Barre. Long time after Duval de Soicourt's death, amongst his other papers, the documents relating to the chevalier's trial were found, and burnt, by a man of business, who boasted of his vandalism. But the facts were not to be so suppressed. They occurred, let it be again considered, not quite a hundred years ago. Civilisation has surely made some progress during

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the interval. For can we conceive it possible that they should be repeated anywhere in Europe at the present day?

PINCHBACK'S AMUSEMENTS.

ENGLAND is scarcely "Merry England" now, or is it even asserted to be so, except in those pseudo-patriotic songs in which "The Oak," "Roast-beef," The Church," and "The Flag that's braved a thousand years," are the primary ingredients.

The work of Pinchback, the English labourer, is pretty well known: it consists of sheep-minding, sheep-washing, ploughing, hedging, sowing, thrashing, cart-driving, harrowing, planting, wood-cutting, and so forth. From dark to dark he lifts heavy weights, toils with all his might, groans between the plough tilts, wields the heavy axe; digs, hews, and hoes, through the long hours, and when night comes, what is his amusement? It might be almost any sort of amusement that whiles away the cares of the gentlefolks at the Hall. All his senses are clear and sound, and he has a good memory. He has the same craving for occasional diversion as the squire has: let us see what pleasurable occupation he finds for his hard-earned leisure hours.

The English labourer has only one place of amusement, and that is the beer-shop; the beer-shop is his club, his reading-room, his theatre, his music-hall, his evening party; it is his shelter from care in the summer, and his basking-place in winter.

Now, I do not praise his choice of the public-house, though I cannot altogether wonder at it. It may lead him into drinking, or at least into spending more money than he ought to spend. He sometimes meets bad characters there, and often hears what he had better not hear. His amusement there is selfish, for he must leave his wife and children pining at home. It also leads him into late hours, and into expense. But if the public-house were even a perfect school of virtue, it would not afford the right sort of healthy amusement for the English labourer. The landlord's only motive is to sell his liquor: chess, dominoes, anything that interferes with drinking, he detests and discountenances. If he has a bagatelle-table, it is only to bring men to the house, and to make them thirsty at petty gambling.

Those of our educated people who have not the right sympathy with the poor, simply because they do not understand them, lay too much stress on reading as an all-sufficing amusement for the virtuous labourer. They forget how little pleasure there is in stammering and spelling for half an hour over a single page of a book; they forget how sluggish and unelastic the brain becomes when the body that owns it has been twelve hours at hard labour. They forget that most amusing books are too high-flown for the labourer; and that their authors shoot over his head: also, that one cannot spend a whole life in reading over and over again, The Pilgrim's Progress and Robinson Crusoe. As for the poets, even Shakespeare, they are all too grand for Pinchback. He does not "know where to have them." Grand poets do not understand his feelings or his wants. Moreover, and after all, even if our labourer could read easily, it is chiefly for winter amusement that he would resort to books.

Dramatic performances, even of the humblest kind, Pinchback has none, either to raise his admiration for virtue, or to increase his horror of guilt, except once a year at fair-time, when The Orphan of Samarcand and The Bleeding Nun delight and terrify him. As for music, he has only the two fiddles in church on Sunday, and the coarse songs that he hears whistled or shouted at the "Blue Dog" or the "Flying Sun" on week days. Without exaggeration, Giles Pinchback's life is a dull and melancholy one.

But as he is a poor doctor who only points out to you your disease and does not offer you a remedy, I will first show how much gayer and merrier the countryman's life was two hundred and even one hundred years ago, and then suggest some means of alleviating its present hopeless dreariness, its stupidity, and its lethargic monotony. I must premise, that I am not going to praise past times at the expense of the present. I am no lover of mediævalism, with its monkery, its cruelty, its feudality, and its grossness. I despise the doctrine of divine right, and I believe in the perfect equality of souls; but yet, there is no age in which I cannot find something to admire; no age which I do not discover to have been, in some respects wiser, though in some more foolish, than our own.

With all its faults, the Elizabethan age was a great and a happy one. There were fewer social jealousies then than now. Men's ranks were known at once by their dress and by their speech. There were more independent yeomen then than now; trade was less painfully competitive and feverishly intermittent; the love of money was not yet a national passion. Religion was less pretentious, more fervid and simple-hearted. But let me pass on to the subject of country happiness in the Elizabethan age.

In the first place, holidays were more numerous. The church-ale, the fair, the quarterly festival, all brought times of recreation for hope to look forward to as to green spots in a dusty barren life. Now, all these have been pared down, until a day at Whitsuntide is all that is left to the farmer's servant. Formerly old Pinchback had his romps on Plough-Monday, his football at Shrove-tide, his jovial harvest-home, his May-day dances, and his Christmas mummings. Education has done away with these sports, and the farmer has replaced these honest and hearty amusements with no others. No poor man in the world has fewer holidays than the English labourer of our times.

The unenclosed country, then gave a poor man an opportunity of occasionally improving his fare by a stray rabbit; not so, now. The poor man had then large commons—long since stolen away by the giant Riches—where he

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could rear his maypole, play at quarter-staff, wrestle, run, or disport himself as he would. Nearly every village had its free playgrounds, where the old people sat, and the young made love, and where the youth who now poach or drink, passed happy hours at athletic games, that rendered them not only stronger, but more intelligent. Now, there is no opportunity for our villagers to meet together, to strengthen mutual friendship and remove foolish prejudices.

But lest I should be thought to be repainting a mere conventional picture from Goldsmith's Deserted Village, let me go on to prove that public amusements were common among the Elizabethan villagers.

That good old man, Roger Ascham, the tutor of Lady Jane Grey, tells us that village sports were much in practice in his time, to banish idleness and to harden the body for war. It is true that the increase of enclosures was already bringing archery gradually into desuetude, but it still continued a constant recreation amongst the poor. The growing use of the musket was also entrenching on the credit of the bow as a weapon, but it was still much used even in war. Henry the Eighth had passed a law requiring villagers to devote certain stated days to the use of the bow. The bow was cheap for the poor man, and he could make his own bow and his own arrows. These archery meetings were both useful and interesting. There, the wisest men of the village exercised a wholesome influence, both by example and by word of mouth. There, poor men sharpened their wits by competition, and learnt to cultivate their powers of observation. No man could have left the ground without being in some degree more fitted to take his part as a useful and intelligent workman. To a man with few subjects for thought, it was no bad mental exercise to have to consider whether his bow should be of Brazil-wood, elm, hazel, or ash; whether his string should be of hemp, silk, or flax; whether he would feather his arrows from the goose or the gander, the gosling or the fen-born bird; whether his arrows should have blunt, sharp, or silver-spoon heads. These meetings must have often brought landlord and men together, and have taught each his own position and his several duties. But countrymen scarcely ever meet now, except at the beer-shop, or coming home from work.

And now let us take a chronological leap to the Queen Anne times, of which the Spectator gives us so vivid a picture. And what do we find there? Social village gatherings, perhaps a little coarser than those just described, but still hearty, merry, and unfettered. There was wrestling on the green, boisterous cudgel play, running in sacks, and grinning through horse-collars;—not the most refined fun, I dare say, but still good-hearted and jovial, and a thousand times better than tavern-drinking, low gambling, and thievish poaching: which only make wife and children ragged and miserable, and eventually drive the man into jail and the family into the workhouse.

But the remedy? The remedy is to a certain degree simple. Where there is no common, let a village have its free field, bought by subscription, and bought inalienably. In many large places, the poor and middle classes would soon collect money enough for such purposes by subscriptions. In other places, landlords with thirty and forty thousand a year would give the people a field, where cricket, single-stick, and football, could go on all the year round. Richer places might creep on until they built zinc sheds for tennis or bowls; and so the thing would progress.

For my own part, I could heartily wish to see the rifle movement progress among the agricultural poor; I should like to see whole regiments of mechanics in plain blouses and belts. But there are serious objections to this. In the first place, the average labourer of England is far too poor to be able to buy a five-pound rifle; and, in the second place, the great landed proprietor would too often do all he could to stop such a movement: believing that every agricultural rifleman must necessarily turn rebel-poacher and trespass on his preserves. I venture to contend, on behalf of Pinchback, that this is a mischievous delusion, and that the more he is trusted and encouraged, the less he will poach. Further, the use of the rifle would soon transform the English labourer into a far brighter fellow. He would grow keen, far-sighted, observant, light of foot, obedient, quick, and smart.

I fear that some of the clergy, with all good intentions, have done much harm in setting their faces against country fairs and social meetings. They have abolished them, when they ought only to have reformed them. Indifferent themselves to athletic pursuits, they have shut their eyes to the fact that such sports invigorate, harden, and develop the country labourer.

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER VII.

EARLY the next morning Miss Garth and Norah met in the garden, and spoke together privately. The only noticeable result of the interview, when they presented themselves at the breakfast-table, appeared in the marked silence which they both maintained on the topic of the theatrical performance. Mrs. Vanstone was entirely indebted to her husband and to her youngest daughter for all that she heard of the evening's entertainment. The governess and the elder daughter had evidently determined on letting the subject drop.

After breakfast was over, Magdalen proved to be missing, when the ladies assembled as usual in the morning-room. Her habits were so little regular that Mrs. Vanstone felt neither surprise nor uneasiness at her absence. Miss Garth and Norah looked at one another significantly, and waited in silence. Two hours passed—and there were no signs of Magdalen. Norah rose, as the clock struck twelve; and quietly left the room to look for her.

She was not up-stairs, dusting her jewellery and disarranging her dresses. She was not in the conservatory, not in the flower-garden; not in the kitchen, teasing the cook; not in the yard, playing with the dogs. Had she, by any chance, gone out with her father? Mr. Vanstone had announced his intention, at the breakfast-table, of paying a morning visit to his old ally, Mr. Clare, and of rousing the philosopher's sarcastic indignation by an account of the dramatic performance. None of the other ladies at Combe-Raven ever ventured themselves inside the cottage. But Magdalen was reckless enough for anything—and Magdalen might have gone there. As the idea occurred to her, Norah entered the shrubbery.

At the second turning, where the path among the trees wound away out of sight of the house, she came suddenly face to face with Magdalen and Frank: they were sauntering towards her, arm-in-arm; their heads close together, their conversation apparently proceeding in whispers. They looked suspiciously handsome and happy. At the sight of Norah, both started, and both stopped. Frank confusedly raised his hat, and turned back in the direction of his father's cottage. Magdalen advanced to meet her sister, carelessly swinging her closed parasol from side to side, carelessly humming an air from the overture which had preceded the rising of the curtain on the previous night.

"Luncheon time already!" she said, looking at her watch. "Surely not?"

"Have you and Mr. Francis Clare been alone in the shrubbery since ten o'clock?" asked Norah.

"*Mr.* Francis Clare! How ridiculously formal you are. Why don't you call him Frank?"

"I asked you a question, Magdalen."

"Dear me, how black you look this morning! I'm in disgrace, I suppose. Haven't you forgiven me yet for my acting last night? I couldn't help it, love; I should have made nothing of Julia, if I hadn't taken you for my model. It's quite a question of Art. In your place, I should have felt flattered by the selection."

"In *your* place, Magdalen, I should have thought twice before I mimicked my sister to an audience of strangers."

"That's exactly why I did it—an audience of strangers. How were they to know? Come! come! don't be angry. You are eight years older than I am—you ought to set me an example of good humour."

"I will set you an example of plain-speaking. I am more sorry than I can say, Magdalen, to meet you, as I met you here just now!"

"What next, I wonder? You meet me in the shrubbery at home, talking over the private theatricals with my old playfellow, whom I knew when I was no taller than this parasol. And that is a glaring impropriety, is it? Honi soit qui mal y pense. You wanted an answer a minute ago—there it is for you, my dear, in the choicest Norman-French."

"I am in earnest about this, Magdalen——"

"Not a doubt of it. Nobody can accuse you of ever making jokes."

"I am seriously sorry——"

"Oh dear!"

"It is quite useless to interrupt me. I have it on my conscience to tell you—and I *will* tell you—that I am sorry to see how this intimacy is growing. I am sorry to see a secret understanding established already between you and Mr. Francis Clare."

"Poor Frank! How you do hate him to be

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sure. What on earth has he done to offend you?"

Norah's self-control began to show signs of failing her. Her dark cheeks glowed, her delicate lips trembled, before she spoke again. Magdalen paid more attention to her parasol than to her sister. She tossed it high in the air, and caught it. "Once!" she said—and tossed it up again. "Twice!"—and she tossed it higher. "Thrice——!" Before she could catch it for the third time, Norah seized her passionately by the arm, and the parasol dropped to the ground between them.

"You are treating me heartlessly," she said. "For shame, Magdalen—for shame!"

The irrepressible outburst of a reserved nature, forced into open self-assertion in its own despite, is of all moral forces the hardest to resist. Magdalen was startled into silence. For a moment, the two sisters—so strangely dissimilar in person and character—faced one another, without a word passing between them. For a moment, the deep brown eyes of the elder, and the light grey eyes of the younger, looked into each other with steady unyielding scrutiny on either side. Norah's face was the first to change; Norah's head was the first to turn away. She dropped her sister's arm, in silence. Magdalen stooped, and picked up her parasol.

"I try to keep my temper," she said, "and you call me heartless for doing it. You always were hard on me, and you always will be."

Norah clasped her trembling hands fast in each other. "Hard on you!" she said, in low, mournful tones—and sighed bitterly.

Magdalen drew back a little, and mechanically dusted the parasol with the end of her garden cloak.

"Yes!" she resumed, doggedly. "Hard on me, and hard on Frank."

"Frank!" repeated Norah, advancing on her sister, and turning pale as suddenly as she had turned red. "Do you talk of yourself and Frank as if your interests were One already? Magdalen! if I hurt *you*, do I hurt *him?* Is he so near and so dear to you as that?"

Magdalen drew farther and farther back. A twig from a tree near caught her cloak; she turned petulantly, broke it off, and threw it on the ground. "What right have you to question me?" she broke out on a sudden. "Whether I like Frank, or whether I don't, what interest is it of yours?" As she said the words, she abruptly stepped forward to pass her sister, and return to the house.

Norah, turning paler and paler, barred the way to her. "If I hold you by main force," she said, "you shall stop and hear me. I have watched this Francis Clare; I know him better than you do. He is unworthy of a moment's serious feeling on your part; he is unworthy of our dear, good, kind-hearted father's interest in him. A man with any principle, any honour, any gratitude, would not have come back as he has come back, disgraced—yes! disgraced by his spiritless neglect of his own duty. I watched his face while the friend who has been better than a father to him, was comforting and forgiving him with a kindness he had not deserved: I watched his face, and I saw no shame, and no distress in it—I saw nothing but a look of thankless, heartless relief. He is selfish, he is ungrateful, he is ungenerous—he is only twenty, and he has the worst failings of a mean old age already. And this is the man I find you meeting in secret—the man who has taken such a place in your favour that you are deaf to the truth about him, even from *my* lips! Magdalen! this will end ill. For God's sake, think of what I have said to you, and control yourself before it is too late!" She stopped, vehement and breathless, and caught her sister anxiously by the hand.

Magdalen looked at her in unconcealed astonishment.

"You are so violent," she said, "and so unlike yourself, that I hardly know you. The more patient I am, the more hard words I get for my pains. You have taken a perverse hatred to Frank; and you are unreasonably angry with me, because I won't hate him too. Don't, Norah! you hurt my hand."

Norah pushed the hand from her, contemptuously. "I shall never hurt your heart," she said—and suddenly turned her back on Magdalen as she spoke the words.

There was a momentary pause. Norah kept her position. Magdalen looked at her perplexedly—hesitated—then walked away by herself towards the house.

At the turn in the shrubbery path, she stopped, and looked back uneasily. "Oh dear, dear!" she thought to herself, "why didn't Frank go when I told him?" She hesitated, and went back a few steps. "There's Norah standing on her dignity, as obstinate as ever." She stopped again. "What had I better do? I hate quarrelling: I think I'll make it up." She ventured close to her sister, and touched her on the shoulder. Norah never moved. "It's not often she flies into a passion," thought Magdalen, touching her again; "but when she does, what a time it lasts her!—Come!" she said, "give me a kiss, Norah, and make it up. Won't you let me get at any part of you, my dear, but the back of your neck? Well, it's a very nice neck—it's better worth kissing than mine—and there the kiss is, in spite of you!"

She caught fast hold of Norah from behind, and suited the action to the word, with a total disregard of all that had just passed, which her sister was far from emulating. Hardly a minute since, the warm outpouring of Norah's heart had burst through all obstacles. Had the icy reserve frozen her up again already? It was hard to say. She never spoke; she never changed her position—she only searched hurriedly for her handkerchief. As she drew it out, there was a sound of approaching footsteps in the inner recesses of

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the shrubbery. A Scotch terrier scampered into view; and a cheerful voice sang the first lines of the glee in As You Like It. "It's papa!" cried Magdalen. "Come, Norah—come and meet him."

Instead of following her sister, Norah pulled down the veil of her garden-hat; turned in the opposite direction; and hurried back to the house.

She ran up to her own room, and locked herself in. She was crying bitterly.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN Magdalen and her father met in the shrubbery, Mr. Vanstone's face showed plainly that something had happened to please him, since he had left home in the morning. He answered the question which his daughter's curiosity at once addressed to him, by informing her that he had just come from Mr. Clare's cottage; and that he had picked up, in that unpromising locality, a startling piece of news for the family at Combe-Raven.

On entering the philosopher's study that morning, Mr. Vanstone had found him still dawdling over his late breakfast, with an open letter by his side, in place of the book which, on other occasions, lay ready to his hand at meal-times. He held up the letter, the moment his visitor came into the room; and abruptly opened the conversation by asking Mr. Vanstone if his nerves were in good order, and if he felt himself strong enough for the shock of an overwhelming surprise.

"Nerves?" repeated Mr. Vanstone. "Thank God, I know nothing about my nerves. If you have got anything to tell me, shock or no shock, out with it on the spot."

Mr. Clare held the letter a little higher, and frowned at his visitor across the breakfast-table. "What have I always told you?" he asked, with his sourest solemnity of look and manner.

"A great deal more than I could ever keep in my head," answered Mr. Vanstone.

"In your presence and out of it," continued Mr. Clare, "I have always maintained that the one important phenomenon presented by modern society is—the enormous prosperity of Fools. Show me an individual Fool, and I will show you an aggregate Society which gives that highly-favoured personage nine chances out of ten—and grudges the tenth to the wisest man in existence. Look where you will, in every high place there sits an Ass, settled beyond the reach of all the greatest intellects in this world to pull him down. Over our whole social system, complacent Imbecility rules supreme—snuffs out the searching light of Intelligence, with total impunity—and hoots, owl-like, in answer to every form of protest, See how well we all do in the dark! One of these days that audacious assertion will be practically contradicted; and the whole rotten system of modern society will come down with a crash."

"God forbid!" cried Mr. Vanstone, looking about him as if the crash was coming already.

"With a crash!" repeated Mr. Clare. "There is my theory, in few words. Now for the remarkable application of it, which this letter suggests. Here is my lout of a boy——"

"You don't mean that Frank has got another chance!" exclaimed Mr. Vanstone.

"Here is this perfectly hopeless booby, Frank," pursued the philosopher. "He has never done anything in his life to help himself, and, as a necessary consequence, Society is in a conspiracy to carry him to the top of the tree. He has hardly had time to throw away that chance you gave him, before this letter comes, and puts the ball at his foot for the second time. My rich cousin (who is intellectually fit to be at the tail of the family, and who is therefore, as a matter of course, at the head of it) has been good enough to remember my existence; and has offered his influence to serve my eldest boy. Read his letter, and then observe the sequence of events. My rich cousin is a booby who thrives on landed property; he has done something for another booby who thrives on Politics, who knows a third booby, who thrives on Commerce, who can do something for a fourth booby, thriving at present on nothing, whose name is Frank. So the mill goes. So the cream of all human rewards is sipped in endless succession by the Fools. I shall pack Frank off to-morrow. In course of time, he'll come back again on our hands like a bad shilling: more chances will fall in his way as a necessary consequence of his meritorious imbecility. Years will go on—I may not live to see it, no more may you—it doesn't matter; Frank's future is equally certain either way—put him into the army, the church, politics, what you please, and let him drift: he'll end in being a general, a bishop, or a minister of state, by dint of the great modern qualification of doing nothing whatever to deserve his place." With this summary of his son's worldly prospects, Mr. Clare tossed the letter contemptuously across the table, and poured himself out another cup of tea.

Mr. Vanstone read the letter with eager interest and pleasure. It was written in a tone of somewhat elaborate cordiality; but the practical advantages which it placed at Frank's disposal were beyond all doubt. The writer had the means of using a friend's interest—interest of no ordinary kind—with a great Mercantile Firm in the City; and he had at once exerted this influence in favour of Mr. Clare's eldest boy. Frank would be received in the office on a very different footing from the footing of an ordinary clerk; he would be "pushed on" at every available opportunity; and the first "good thing" the House had to offer either at home or abroad, would be placed at his disposal. If he possessed fair abilities and showed common diligence in exercising them, his fortune was made; and the sooner he was sent to London to begin, the better for his own interests it would be.

"Wonderful news!" cried Mr. Vanstone, re-

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turning the letter. "I'm delighted—I must go back and tell them at home. This is fifty times the chance that mine was. What the deuce do you mean by abusing Society? Society has behaved uncommonly well, in my opinion. Where's Frank?"

"Lurking," said Mr. Clare. "It is one of the intolerable peculiarities of louts that they always lurk. I haven't seen *my* lout this morning. If you meet with him anywhere, give him a kick, and say I want him."

Mr. Clare's opinion of his son's habits might have been expressed more politely, as to form; but, as to substance, it happened, on that particular morning, to be perfectly correct. After leaving Magdalen, Frank had waited in the shrubbery, at a safe distance, on the chance that she might detach herself from her sister's company, and join him again. Mr. Vanstone's appearance immediately on Norah's departure, instead of encouraging him to show himself, had determined him on returning to the cottage. He walked back discontentedly; and so fell into his father's clutches, totally unprepared for the pending announcement, in that formidable quarter, of his departure for London.

In the mean time, Mr. Vanstone had communicated his news—in the first place, to Magdalen, and afterwards, on getting back to the house, to his wife and Miss Garth. He was too unobservant a man to notice that Magdalen looked unaccountably startled, and Miss Garth unaccountably relieved, by his announcement of Frank's good fortune. He talked on about it quite unsuspiciously, until the luncheon-bell rang—and then, for the first time, he noticed Norah's absence. She sent a message down stairs, after they had assembled at the table, to say that a headache was keeping her in her own room. When Miss Garth went up shortly afterwards to communicate the news about Frank, Norah appeared, strangely enough, to feel very little relieved by hearing it. Mr. Francis Clare had gone away on a former occasion (she remarked) and had come back. He might come back again, and sooner than they any of them thought for. She said no more on the subject than this: no reference escaped her as to what had taken place in the shrubbery. Her unconquerable reserve seemed to have strengthened its hold on her since the outburst of the morning. She met Magdalen later in the day, as if nothing had happened: no formal reconciliation took place between them. It was one of Norah's peculiarities to shrink from all reconciliations that were openly ratified, and to take her shy refuge in reconciliations that were silently implied. Magdalen saw plainly, in her look and manner, that she had made her first and last protest. Whether the motive was pride, or sullenness, or distrust of herself, or despair of doing good, the result was not to be mistaken—Norah had resolved on remaining passive for the future.

Later in the afternoon, Mr. Vanstone suggested a drive to his eldest daughter, as the best remedy for her headache. She readily consented to accompany her father; who, thereupon, proposed, as usual, that Magdalen should join them. Magdalen was nowhere to be found. For the second time that day, she had wandered into the grounds by herself. On this occasion, Miss Garth—who, after adopting Norah's opinions, had passed from the one extreme of overlooking Frank altogether, to the other extreme of believing him capable of planning an elopement, at five minutes' notice—volunteered to set forth immediately, and do her best to find the missing young lady. After a prolonged absence she returned unsuccessful—with the strongest persuasion in her own mind that Magdalen and Frank had secretly met one another somewhere, but without having discovered the smallest fragment of evidence to confirm her suspicions. By this time, the carriage was at the door, and Mr. Vanstone was unwilling to wait any longer. He and Norah drove away together; and Mrs. Vanstone and Miss Garth sat at home over their work.

In half an hour more, Magdalen composedly walked into the room. She was pale and depressed. She received Miss Garth's remonstrances with a weary inattention; explained carelessly that she had been wandering in the wood; took up some books, and put them down again; sighed impatiently; and went away upstairs to her own room.

"I think Magdalen is feeling the reaction, after yesterday," said Mrs. Vanstone, quietly. "It is just as we thought. Now the theatrical amusements are all over, she is fretting for more."

Here was an opportunity of letting in the light of truth on Mrs. Vanstone's mind, which was too favourable to be missed. Miss Garth questioned her conscience, saw her chance, and took it on the spot.

"You forget," she rejoined, "that a certain neighbour of ours is going away to-morrow. Shall I tell you the truth? Magdalen is fretting over the departure of Francis Clare."

Mrs. Vanstone looked up from her work, with a gentle smiling surprise.

"Surely not?" she said. "It is natural enough that Frank should be attracted by Magdalen—but I can't think that Magdalen returns the feeling. Frank is so very unlike her; so quiet and undemonstrative; so dull and helpless, poor fellow, in some things. He is handsome, I know; but he is so singularly unlike Magdalen, that I can't think it possible—I can't indeed."

"My dear good lady!" cried Miss Garth, in great amazement; "do you really suppose that people fall in love with each other on account of similarities in their characters? In the vast majority of cases, they do just the reverse. Men marry the very last women, and women the very last men, whom their friends would think it possible they could care about. Is there any phrase

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that is oftener on all our lips than 'What can have made Mr. So-and-So marry that woman?'—or 'How could Mrs. So-and-So throw herself away on that man?' Has all your experience of the world never yet shown you that girls take perverse fancies for men who are totally unworthy of them?"

"Very true," said Mrs. Vanstone, composedly. "I forgot that. Still it seems unaccountable, doesn't it?"

"Unaccountable, because it happens every day!" retorted Miss Garth, good humouredly. "I know a great many excellent people who reason against plain experience in the same way—who read the newspapers in the morning, and deny in the evening that there is any romance for writers or painters to work upon in modern life. Seriously, Mrs. Vanstone, you may take my word for it—thanks to those wretched theatricals—Magdalen is going the way with Frank that a great many young ladies have gone before her. He is quite unworthy of her; he is, in almost every respect, her exact opposite—and, without knowing it herself, she has fallen in love with him on that very account. She is resolute and impetuous, clever and domineering; she is not one of those model women who want a man to look up to, and to protect them—her beau-ideal (though she may not think it herself) is a man she can henpeck. Well! one comfort is, there are far better men, even of that sort, to be had than Frank. It's a mercy he is going away, before we have more trouble with them, and before any serious mischief is done."

"Poor Frank!" said Mrs. Vanstone, smiling compassionately. "We have known him since he was in jackets and Magdalen in short frocks. Don't let us give him up yet. He may do better, this second time."

Miss Garth looked up in astonishment.

"And suppose he does better?" she asked. "What then?"

Mrs. Vanstone cut off a loose thread in her work, and laughed outright.

"My good friend," she said, "there is an old farm-yard proverb which warns us not to count our chickens before they are hatched. Let us wait a little before we count ours."

It was not easy to silence Miss Garth, when she was speaking under the influence of a strong conviction; but this reply closed her lips. She resumed her work; and looked, and thought, unutterable things.

Mrs. Vanstone's behaviour was certainly remarkable under the circumstances. Here, on one side, was a girl—with great personal attractions, with rare pecuniary prospects, with a social position which might have justified the best gentleman in the neighbourhood in making her an offer of marriage—perversely casting herself away on a penniless idle young fellow, who had failed at his first start in life, and who, even if he succeeded in his second attempt, must be for years to come in no position to marry a young lady of fortune on equal terms. And there, on the other side, was that girl's mother, by no means dismayed at the prospect of a connexion which was, to say the least of it, far from desirable; by no means certain, judging her by her own words and looks, that a marriage between Mr. Vanstone's daughter and Mr. Clare's son might not prove to be as satisfactory a result of the intimacy between the two young people, as the parents on both sides could possibly wish for! It was perplexing in the extreme. It was almost as unintelligible as that past mystery—that forgotten mystery now—of the journey to London.

In the evening, Frank made his appearance, and announced that his father had mercilessly sentenced him to leave Combe-Raven by the Parliamentary train the next morning. He mentioned this circumstance with an air of sentimental resignation; and listened to Mr. Vanstone's boisterous rejoicings over his new prospects, with a mild and mute surprise. His gentle melancholy of look and manner greatly assisted his personal advantages. In his own effeminate way, he was more handsome than ever, that evening. His soft brown eyes wandered about the room with a melting tenderness; his hair was beautifully brushed; his delicate hands hung over the arms of his chair with a languid grace. He looked like a convalescent Apollo. Never, on any previous occasion, had he practised more successfully the social art which he habitually cultivated—the art of casting himself on society in the character of a well-bred Incubus, and conferring an obligation on his fellow-creatures by allowing them to sit under him. It was undeniably a dull evening. All the talking fell to the share of Mr. Vanstone and Miss Garth. Mrs. Vanstone was habitually silent; Norah kept herself obstinately in the background; Magdalen was quiet and undemonstrative beyond all former precedent. From first to last, she kept rigidly on her guard. The few meaning looks that she cast on Frank, flashed at him like lightning, and were gone before any one else could see them. Even when she brought him his tea; and, when in doing so, her self-control gave way under the temptation which no woman can resist—the temptation of touching the man she loves—even then, she held the saucer so dexterously that it screened her hand. Frank's self-possession was far less steadily disciplined: it only lasted as long as he remained passive. When he rose to go; when he felt the warm clinging pressure of Magdalen's fingers round his hand, and the lock of her hair, which she slipped into it at the same moment, he became awkward and confused. He might have betrayed Magdalen and betrayed himself, but for Mr. Vanstone, who innocently covered his retreat by following him out, and patting him on the shoulder all the way. "God bless you, Frank!" cried the friendly voice that never had a harsh note in

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it for anybody. "Your fortune's waiting for you. Go in, my boy—go in and win."

"Yes," said Frank. "Thank you. It will be rather difficult to go in and win, at first. Of course, as you have always told me, a man's business is to conquer his difficulties, and not to talk about them. At the same time, I wish I didn't feel quite so loose as I do in my figures. It's discouraging to feel loose in one's figures.—Oh, yes; I'll write and tell you how I get on. I'm very much obliged by your kindness, and very sorry I couldn't succeed with the engineering. I think I should have liked engineering better than trade. It can't be helped now, can it? Thank you, again. Good-by."

So he drifted away into the misty commercial future—as aimless, as helpless, as gentlemanlike as ever.

LARKS ON THE WING.

During the last thirty years, a lark of a kind doubly remarkable for having an appearance of horns on its head, and for making its nest on the shores of the sea, has been rarely, but with a diminishing rarity, found upon the coasts of the British Islands. More than thirty years ago, the first specimen of it of which I can find any record, was seen upon the beach at Sherringham, in Norfolk. This was received with the hospitality always bestowed in these islands upon foreigners clad in feathers: in other words, duly shot, stuffed, sold, and exhibited. After being exhibited for several years, a bird-wise man pronounced it to be a specimen of the Alauda alpestris of Linnæus. Twenty-two years afterwards, a second specimen was seen upon the beach near Yarmouth. This beautiful stranger had come from afar, to diminish the noxious insects upon our coasts and charm the solitary inhabitants of our surf-lashed rocks or stunted downs with its melodious songs; but it was, of course, watched, waylaid, shot, stuffed, sold, and exhibited. There is not a scene, however lovely, on the whole line of the shores surrounding the gems set in the sounding sea, and called the British Islands, to which these larks would not add additional and entrancing charms of beauty and music if they were allowed to establish themselves peaceably as permanent features of British sea-side scenery. Bird-lore is gathered from books, museums, aviaries, and nature: the latter being the fountain supplying the others. The secrets of bird-life may be obtained by studying living birds, but they never can be gathered from measurements however accurate, nor descriptions however minute, of stuffed specimens. It is almost in vain that much ingenuity is expended in trying to make these specimens look alive, for they are dead, and life alone can tell the story of life. But all the earliest arrivals of these beautiful songsters were shot. They fell victims of the custom prevalent all round the civilised world, according to which, the moment a rare bird is seen, the hue and cry is raised and everybody runs out with his gun. A shore-lark was killed near Redcar, in Lincolnshire; a pair were subsequently shot near Gravesend; and last year, no less than five were shot near Sheerness, in Kent. Nest-harrying is even worse than bird-killing, and ten years ago the nest of a shore-lark was discovered and harried near the sea in the neighbourhood of Exmouth. In the middle of November last, three horned larks were caught by a bird-catcher with a clap-net upon the downs, near the sea, beyond Rottingdean, and about four miles east of Brighton, in Sussex. Two of these larks are still alive and well, in an aviary: where the writer has repeatedly seen them.

The county of Sussex, unsurpassed for the various kinds of birds found in it, is peculiarly celebrated for its larks. Nowhere is the lark—which is called the skylark because it chooses the sky as its choir, and called the fieldlark because it builds its nest in the fields—heard more frequently. Larks, if rarely seen upon the Sussex downs in summer, congregate upon the coast in vast flocks during the hard frosts of winter. When the winters are mild, the price of larks in Brighton is from eighteen-pence to a couple of shillings the dozen, whilst during a severe frost a dozen of them may be bought for sixpence. The food question contains the explanation of the flights of these flocks. When the frost makes the fields as hard as iron, and covers the earth and forest with snow, and the rivers with ice, the birds find that the whole of the inland tracts of country, whether of continents or of islands, have become suddenly foodless. The corn-stacks of the farm-yard refuse to yield them even a few grains, except where gins and traps are set to catch them. There is not such a thing as a worm or a slug to be had for any amount of scraping or picking. Every lad about a farm is out with his fowling-piece, and even the reflected light from the dazzling white expanse drives the birds away, being painful and hurtful to their eyes. Hence the vast flocks which astonish the dwellers upon the southern coasts and islands. The weather is never so severe on the coasts as inland. Within the margin between high and low-water mark there is always food to be found—weeds, insects, crustaceans, and mollusks—the very storms of winter strewing the shores with abundant supplies of food for the frozen-out birds at the precise season when the land refuses to furnish it. During the severe Christmas of 1860, the land birds appeared on the southern and western coasts in unwonted numbers, and there was an abundance of food for them on the smaller islands. Upon Lundy Island, on the Devonshire coast, larks were so numerous that a shot fired at a snipe or a starling was pretty sure to kill unintentionally three or four larks.

Larks are caught in the neighbourhood of Brighton by the lark-glass, by trailing-nets, and clap-nets. The lark-glass may be fashioned according to the whim or caprice of the maker. A glass of a form which has been very successful may be made by planing a piece of wood about

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a foot and a half long, four inches deep, and three wide, into a resemblance to the roof of the well-known toy called a Noah's ark, but more than twice the usual length of the toy. In the sloping sides of the piece of wood, several bits of looking-glass are set. An iron spindle passes freely through the centre, on which the piece of wood studded with mirrors turns, or rather spins, rapidly, when the string attached to it is pulled. The sharp end of the iron spindle is fixed into the ground, and the man who pulls the string generally stands some fifteen or twenty yards away from the decoy. The reflexion of the sun's rays has a wonderful and surprising attraction for the larks. When flying at a considerable elevation in the sky, they espy the rays of reflected light, and arrest their flight: hovering over the spot, and suffering themselves to be shot at repeatedly, without attempting to leave the field or to continue their course.

The season for these fascinations of the mirrors is during the lark migration, from the twentieth of September until the end of October, when most warblers migrate from west to east; but the course of the larks is like the course of the empire, westward. When the day is sunny and the breeze easterly, the fascinators of the larks see the auguries of "good sport." High up or afar off, a cluster of black specks is seen in the blue. Looking in the direction to which all eyes are turned and upraised, the spectator who is a stranger to the scene, perceives a flock of larks. The mirrors, which are generally fixed in a hollow or furrow, are revolving rapidly. Every musket is loaded and ready. It is a sight which must be seen to be believed: how the larks descend towards the lure, how they hover over it, how the reports of musketry and the slaughter of their mates fail to warn them away, until the battue amounts to a massacre.

La châsse au miroir is far more common in France than in England, and its action is explained in this way:—It is supposed that the larks at first and from afar mistake the glass for water, and that, when they approach nearer, the reflected light dazzles and blinds them. Of all things, the most dangerous for the eyes is reflected light: a fact of which there are thousands of proofs in the thousands of eyes which have been struck suddenly blind by the light reflected from snow. When dazzled and blinded by the reflected rays, the noise, the reports, and slaughter, only add to the confusion of the larks, and the apparent fascination and infatuation are seen to be phenomena of astonishment and terror, producing temporary paralysis.

The trail-netting season is from October to March. This is always night-work, and the darker the night, the better the catch. Experience teaches the regular lark-catchers where the birds are to be found in different states of weather—fine, wet, or stormy. During fine weather, the larks are not to be found in the grassy meadows, but in the stubble fields. When the weather is very wet, the larks will be found lying close together in thick rank meadows, or along the brows of grassy fields. Strangely enough, when storm and rain prevail, the larks are not to be found on the low grounds, nor on the sheltered sides of the hills, but on their exposed sides, where the wind is beating and the rain lashing. The lark is caught in the net because he flies straight up. The sparrow, the linnet, and the bunting, often escape by flying straight forward; but the lark flies upward, until his wing touches the net, and it is thrown down upon him.

Everybody who has taken a drive from Brighton along the East Cliff, and beyond Rottingdean, has seen the bird-catchers with their clap-nets spread upon the grass. The net is surrounded with little cages containing decoy-birds. When the wild birds in the air hear the carolling of the tame birds in the cages, they descend and approach the cages in the space; then the rope is pulled, and the two parts of the net close over them, and clap down upon them. It was with a clap-net that the shore-larks now alive in an aviary in Brighton were caught.

The Brighton lark-catchers, besides giving rare larks to the savans, supply cheap larks to the cooks of the town which might be called London-on-Sea. The value of the common kinds is estimated by the dozen in pence, and the value of the rare species — short-toed, crested, or horned—singly, and in sovereigns. The short-toed larks are characteristic of Sicily, Greece, Spain, and Central and Southern France; the crested lark ranges from Scandinavia to Egypt, and haunts the villages of France; the horned lark has a geographical range over the northern shores of Asia, Europe, and America. Horned larks have been seen as far south as Virginia and Carolina, and they have been found on the table-land of Mexico. It was on the coast of Labrador that Audubon first saw the nest and heard the song, of the shore-lark. He had there the pleasure of seeing their plumage in perfection, and of studying their habits. The shore-lark breeds on the high and desolate tracts of Labrador, in the vicinity of the sea. The face of the country is an expanse of undulated granite, covered with mosses and lichens disposed in large patches or tufts, varying in size and colour: some many-coloured, some green, and some snow white. It is among the white lichens and mosses that this lark makes her nest, their hues resembling her own so closely, that, secure of escaping observation, the female does not budge until she is almost trodden upon. When, however, she is approached too nearly, she flutters away, feigning lameness so cunningly, that inexperienced bird-nesters are sure to be tempted to run after her. The male bird also joins the female in feigning lameness, uttering a note so plaintive, that it is difficult for a mere amateur ornithologist to find the heart to rob the parents of their eggs or young. Audubon states this fact characteristically. "The male," he says, "immediately joins her in

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mimic wretchedness, uttering a note so soft and plaintive, that it requires a strong stimulus to force the naturalist to rob the poor birds of their treasure." The nest is made of fine grasses, lined round with grousé feathers, the walls being about two inches thick, and embedded to the edges in the moss. The eggs are laid in the beginning of July. They are four or five in number, large, greyish, with many pale blue and brown spots. The young leave the nest before they are able to fly. For about a week they follow their parents over the moss, being fed, and running nimbly, but squatting closely at the first approach of danger. They communicate with each other, or with their parents, by emitting a soft "peep." If pursued, they open their wings and separate, making off very quickly. A single pursuer can rarely hunt down more than one of them. While the young are being hunted, the old birds hover overhead, lamenting the danger of their offspring. "In several instances," says Audubon, "the old bird followed us almost to our boat, alighting occasionally on a projecting crag before us, and entreating us, as it were, to restore its offspring." The young broods are fledged by the first of August, and then the different broods are to be seen collecting in forties or fifties, and gradually moving towards the islands of the coast, whence they wing their flight in the beginning of September. When the day of departure arrives, they start with the dawn, flying southward, at a small elevation above the water, and in straggling parties, scarcely numerous enough to be called flocks.

We always calumniate those whom we injure. Nest harriers say the birds feign lameness to lure their enemies from their nests, but it never yet has been proved that the lameness *is* feigned. May not the nerves which move the wings and legs be partially and temporarily paralysed by fear? On finding their nests discovered, may not the parents be struck and stunned? It is all very well to say that the birds are feigning; but the distress and misery are only too real, and are manifested at the risk of life.

In June the horned larks return to the shores and islands of Labrador. This is their love season. The males are flirting, courting, and fighting. It is the time for jealous rivalry and duelling. Whenever a fight for a female begins between two cocks, other cocks are sure to join, until the duel becomes a battle. Closing with each other, they flout, bite, and tumble over each other like sparrows. Shooting naturalists at this time can bring down three or four of them at a shot.

The horned appearance of the shore-lark is given it by a few black feathers which stretch above each of the eyebrows, and can be erected at pleasure. Wilson, the ornithologist, suggested that the lark should be called the Alauda cornuta. "It is worthy of notice," says the late Mr. Yarrell, in the preface to the last edition of his work on British Birds, "that of the more recent additions to our British birds, half of them are found in North America; the greater portion of them being species that resort to high northern latitudes in their breeding season, and have been obtained here about or soon after the time of their autumnal migration to the southward. The route pursued by birds from North America to this country is an interesting problem of difficult solution." This is not the place for solving the problem, but I may, appropriately enough, hazard a couple of remarks. The birds do come here somehow and some way, and surely the balloon and the telegraph will one day enable men or news to do what birds can do.

Horned larks, no doubt, owe their vast range to their instinct of seeking their food and making their nests along the sea-shore. They have spread themselves in this way from Labrador to Exmouth, and if allowed to establish themselves unmolested, they would add new charms to our sea-side scenery without costing the Acclimatisation Society a single penny. Larks have no crops, and seem unfit for the amazing flights of falcons and pigeons. They are distinguished from thrushes and linnets by never hopping or leaping, their long straight claws spreading their weight over a wide surface, adapting them, like those of the lark-buntings, pipits, and wagtails, for running nimbly among grass, rushes, and reeds, and upon the mud of marshes. Their fluttering flying upward while singing, is characteristic. Their flight is rapid and rather undulated. When a mother is forced to rise from her nest, she flies low with a tremulous flight, and uttering a churm which generally calls up the male. Larks are kind and attentive to their young, even in the cage. A captive male lark has been known to feed several broods of young birds of his own and other species. Mac Gillivray says the hole in which the nest is set, is so regularly rounded that it must be scraped out by the birds themselves.

Of the horned larks which have been kept in an aviary in Brighton since last November, I have observed nothing very interesting. The comradeship between the shore-larks and the snow and Lapland buntings shows itself, perhaps, even more remarkably in captivity than in liberty; for even in the shortest flights taken in the aviary the lark almost always accompanies the bunting. When the bunting is at rest, the lark perches itself upon the topmost piece of rock-work, fluttering its wings with a constant mimicry of upward flight.

A CURIOUS MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

We have received with the last mail from Calcutta a small Bengali pamphlet, containing an account of a marriage conducted in accordance with the religion of the Brahmas, who form a religious sect in Bengal, resembling the "Theophilanthropists" of France. The founder of the sect was the late Rajah Rammohun

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Roy, whose visit to England in 1831 is still remembered by many in this country. In theory, the Brahmas have repudiated the Hindoo idolatry; but they have as yet done little towards the reformation of social institutions. The recent marriage, to which we have just alluded, is the first attempt in that direction.

Among the Hindoos, marriages are celebrated with various idle ceremonies. The idols are worshipped; gifts are made to Brahmas, while the processions, fireworks, and beating of tom-toms, give to the Hindoo nuptials a character of barbarism. Of late years, a fashion has grown up of employing European bands of music on these occasions; but as this Western music is combined with the bagpipes and tom-toms of the East, the effect is certainly not improved. None of these barbarous accompaniments marked the recent Brahma marriage celebrated at Calcutta. It was performed quietly, and with solemnity, in the presence of a number of Hindoo gentlemen, who had received the benefit of education at the English schools and colleges of our Eastern metropolis.

The Brahma marriage, however, retained much of its Hindoo character; we think, wisely, because if it were made too European, there would be no possibility of rendering the improvement popular, and a powerful opposition would be aroused among the gentle sex.

The following free translation of the pamphlet describing the social innovation in question, will, we hope, prove interesting:

"On Friday, the 12th of Sraban last (26th July), the marriage of Hemendro Nath Mookerjee with the daughter of Babu Devendro Nath Tagore* was solemnised with great éclat. This is the first occasion on which a marriage in Bengal has been conducted according to the religion of the Brahmas. It gives us pleasure to state that nearly two hundred Brahmas met for the due performance of the ceremony.

"The friends of the bride, the bridegroom, and his companions, having assembled in the hall appointed for the ceremony, Babu Devendro Nath Tagore came in after ten P.M., and took his seat, the bridegroom being seated in front of him. He thus began the preliminary invocation.

"'Om!† As the auspicious presentation of a virgin is to be made, say ye, that the day is good!'

"[The priests answered,] 'Om! The day is good! Om! The day is good! Om! The day is good.'

"'Om! On this proper and auspicious ceremony of the presentation of a virgin, say ye, Increase!'

"'Om! Increase!' (Thrice repeated.)

"'Om! On this proper and auspicious ceremony of the presentation of a virgin, say ye, Success!'

"'Om! Success!' (Thrice.)

"Then the father of the bride, having taken 'arghya,'* or a present of flowers sprinkled with particles of sandal-wood, said:

"'Om! Arghyam (thrice) accept.'

"[The bridegroom.] 'Om! Arghyam, I accept.'

"'Om! Madhuparka† (or a present of honey and curds) (thrice) accept.'

"'Om! Madhuparka I accept.'

"'Om! This ring (thrice) I accept.'

"'Om! This ring I accept.'‡

"Then followed a presentation of clothes and ornaments.

"The 'reception' of the bridegroom having been thus performed, he was conducted to the inner apartment of the house, in order to be present at certain ceremonies then performed by female friends and relatives. He afterwards returned, and sat on the carpet appointed for him. The bride also was brought and seated in front of him. The priests took their seats on a high stool in front of the father of the bride; and divine service began by the chanting of a hymn. All became silent. The noise of men was hushed. The sound of the good name of God only was heard.

"'Om! THAT§ is truth!

"'Om! Repeated reverence to Him, the Being Divine, who is in fire, who is in water, who is in plants and trees, and who pervadeth all the world.

"'Om! God is true, wise, and infinite. He is the blissful, the immortal, the manifest, all-good, all-peace, and without a second.

"'Om! God is omnipresent, pure, bodiless, exempt from all disease, nerveless, immaculate, impervious to unholiness, all-seeing, mind-regulating, above all, and self-existent. He it is that ever dispenseth their respective requisites to His creatures. By Him were created life, mind, all the senses, sky, air, light, water, and the all-containing earth. It is through awe of Him that fire flameth; it is through awe of Him that the sun shineth; it is through awe of Him that clouds, winds, and, fifthly, death have their course.

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* D. N. Tagore is now the acknowledged leader of the Brahmas, and is the eldest son of the late Dwarka Nath Tagore, who was called "the Oriental Crœsus," and was well known in England.

† Om (pron. ōm) is the mystical Sanskrit word signifying the Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer of the Universe.

* It is an ancient custom among the Hindoos to make such presents to the guests, as a mark of respect.

† Among the ancient Hindoos, whenever an extraordinary guest arrived in a house, the first duty of the host was to give him water to wash his feet; then arghya and madhuparka were given. The last of these was probably a kind of lunch. Up to the present day this is the order in which worship is offered to the idols.

‡ This and some other parts of the pamphlet are in Sanskrit. The language used in Hindoo religious services and rites must be "the language divine." The Brahmas follow the custom.

§ Meaning God.

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"'Om! Salutation be to Thee, who art the Being true, and the cause of the world! Salutation be to Thee, the all-intelligent, and the support of all worlds! Salutation be to Thee, who art without a second, and the bestower of salvation! Salutation be to the supreme, the all-pervading, and the everlasting! Thou only art the protector, Thou only art the adorable, Thou only art the supporter of the world, and the self-manifested! Thou only art the creator, the preserver, and the destroyer of the universe! Thou only art the excellent, the immutable of purpose! Thou art He whom fearful objects fear, whom dreadful objects dread, the asylum of beings, and the purifier of purifiers! Thou alone art the governor of all exalted dignities in the earth, the most excellent of excellent objects, and the preserver of preservers! We contemplate Thee; we adore Thee; we salute Thee, who beholdest the world! We take refuge with Thee, who art the true, the one, the dwelling-place of all, the self-dependent, the governor, and the ark of the ocean of the world.

"'Om! Those who speak of God, say: From whom creatures receive being, through whom, after receiving being, they subsist, and whom they at last depart unto and enter, desire to know Him: He is God. From Him, the blissful, do these creatures receive being; through Him, the blissful, they, after receiving being, subsist; and Him, who is blissful, they at last depart unto and enter. Knowing the blissful nature of God, whom speech and thought fail to apprehend, no one feareth anything. He is the cause of happiness. Obtaining Him, who is the cause of happiness, one becometh happy. Who would have lived, who would have moved, if in all space, He the blissful, were not? It is He that maketh happy. When in this invisible, incorporeal, undefinable, and abodeless Being, a person attaineth a place, with fearlessness, he becometh devoid of fear. Knowing Him, the blissful, whom speech and thought fail to apprehend, no one ever feareth. This Being is the best destination of creatures; this their best prosperity; this their best world to live in; this their best happiness. Of the happiness of this Being, other beings but scanty portions enjoy.

"'Om! peace, peace be to all!

"'Blessed be God! Om!'*

"'O Holy Spirit! The stream of thy mercy is ever flowing over us, and Thou hast devised various means to lead us to the path of righteousness. Thou art the giver of all good and salvation. Thou art our happiness and peace. Thou art the Life of our lives, and our everlasting friend. Turn our whole love towards Thyself, and encourage us to do that which is pleasing and acceptable to Thee, that we may in all conditions and at all times magnify Thy glories. Let this truth be ever present in our minds that Thou art the aim of our lives; and enable us to perform all our worldly duties, while constantly fixing our eye on Thy essential Truth. O Lord! vouchsafe unto us such power and mind that we may present to Thee our lives, our hearts, and our all, and that we may employ our whole energies to perform works which are acceptable to Thee.'

"Immediately after the above service, the father of the bride, holding the right hands of the bridegroom and bride, said to the former:

"'This bride I give to thee.'

"The bridegroom said, 'I accept her.'

"Then the father of the bride said, 'Om! THAT is Truth. To-day, being the month of Sraban, the sun having entered the sign of Cancer, the fifth lunar day of the dark fortnight, I, Devendra Nath Sarma, of the race of Sandilya, in order that it may be acceptable to God, GIVE this modest virgin, Sukumari Devi, adorned with clothes and ornaments, and enjoying health, the daughter of Devendra Nath, of the race of Sandilya, and of the line of Sandilya, Asita, and Devala, the granddaughter of Dwarka Nath, of the race of, &c., the great-granddaughter of Ramloehun, of the race of, &c., to THEE, Hemendra Nath, of the race of Bharadwaj, of the line of Bharadwaj, Angiras, and Barkuspatya, the son of Rajaram, of the race of, &c., the grandson of Kasinath, of the race of, &c., the great-grandson of Ramsundar, of the race of,' &c.

"The bridegroom said, 'Amen!'

"The father of the bride said, 'Om! THAT is Truth! To-day, being the month, &c. (as before), in order to complete this auspicious presentation of a virgin, I, Devendra Nath, give thee, Hemendra Nath, this gold coin as a parting gift.'

"The son-in-law said, 'Amen!'

"Then the bridegroom and the bride looked on each other. The father seated his daughter on the right side of the bridegroom, and having tied the usual connubial knot with the corners of their garments, placed her on her husband's left side.

"The minister then addressed the pair thus:

"'To-day, by the grace of God, who is good, you are bound by the chain of marriage. Hitherto you have each singly walked in the way of life, having self-improvement in view! now, this relationship places in your hands a very important charge. To-day, you are taking the first step in the world of social life. Advance with care. The ways of the world are difficult; the temptations many; its risks and dangers are waiting for you. Beware! Do not forget the Giver of all happiness, when you enjoy prosperity. Wholly depending upon Truth, seek to improve and gladden each other. Consider all the duties of the household as duties we owe to God, and constantly bear in mind the great lesson which the Brahma religion teaches, viz.: "A householder should be pious and devoted to the

* The above are extracted from the Vedas, the sacred writings of the Hindoos, and constitute the usual formulæ of worship in the Brahmic congregations.

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pursuit of divine knowledge; whatever work he doeth, he should do it unto God." Whatever you have, resign to Him, and He will save you from sickness, sorrow, fears, dangers, sins, and pain.

"'Hemendra nath! Your constant endeavour should be to do good to your wife. To-day, God has given you a very responsible charge. Restrain your passions, and be of good behaviour. In all conditions of life, be of a calm spirit. You will try to preserve and improve the soul of your wife as much as your own. Strive to keep her in the path of righteousness by precepts and example, that she may follow you in the way of improvement and felicity.

"'Sukumari Devi! Always try to do that which is good for your husband. Depend with all your heart on him, and whatever injunction he gives for your good, obey him. Behave yourself well. Be not extravagant and quarrelsome. Try always to keep your mind, words, and actions pure. Cheerfully and well perform the household duties. Let God be your aim in everything. Try always to help your husband, and to elevate your own soul.

"'May the gracious God prosper you both, and make you the possessors of that inheritance, where there is joy everlasting!

"'Om! He, the one and formless, knowing the necessities of His creatures, dispenseth, through His manifold power, many an object they desire. He it is that pervadeth the world from the beginning to the end. Let Him engage us in salutary thoughts.

"'Om! One only without a second!'

"The married pair bowed in reverence to God with fervent spirit; and the guests present were honoured with flower-garlands, sprinkled with particles of sandal-wood."

A SCANDINAVIAN LEGEND.

I.

A LITTLE Water-Spirit all day long
Sat singing by the stream. The fisher heard
And smiled to hear that sweet voice, as it stirred
The reeds and rushes, with its hopeful song.
"I hope, oh, I hope," that burden ever grew,
"That the Redeemer of Mankind will save *me* too!"

II.

A stern hard Priest who rode along that way,
Wrapped in a mantle of self-righteous zeal,
Felt his wrath kindle at the soft appeal
That formed the burden of that trustful lay.
"I hope, oh, I hope," burst from those lips anew,
"That the Redeemer of Mankind will save *me* too!"

III.

There sat the little Spirit on the wave,
As the Priest, turning in his saddle, cried,
"Cease, cease that clamour; the Redeemer died,
The souls of men, not such as thee, to save.
As soon shall blossoms this bare twig unfold,
As thou salvation, impious Sprite, behold!"

IV.

With that same twig his lazy mule he smote,
And the poor Spirit's cry of sharp despair
At those fell words rang on the silent air,
As he sank down, too helpless now to float.
But, lo! the Priest's mule scarce ten paces bore him,
'Ere the dry twig burst out in bloom before him!

V.

Struck with remorse and shame, the salt tears ran
Down the hard face of that repentant man;
And turning back, his humbled head he bowed
Before God's throne of grace: then cried aloud,
"See, sinful man, the twig *has* bloomed, to prove
That God's love worketh in no narrow groove!
Thy soul, thou little Spirit, saved shall be—
Pray thou that Christ like mercy show on me!"

VI.

And all that night, where trembling moonlight wakes
The shadowy water with its silver strings,
The fishers hear the little voice that sings
Louder than ever, till its burden breaks:
"I hope, yea, I hope—my hope I now renew,
That the Redeemer of Mankind will save *me* too!"

UNDER THE LEADS.

THE writer of the following account of one of the most extraordinary escapes on record, was Jacopo Casanova, who was born at Venice in 1725, and wrote his Memoirs in 1797. In the thirty-first year of his age he was secretly denounced at Venice on the charge of practising magic; was suddenly arrested; and thrown into the terrible dungeons of the Inquisition, where he remained a close prisoner for sixteen months (sotto i piombi) "under the leads."

A certain Abbé Chiari had written a satirical novel, in which Casanova was so severely handled that he threatened to be avenged on the author, and openly proclaimed his intention of giving him "the bastinado" whenever he should chance to meet him. Before, however, this purpose could be accomplished, Casanova received an anonymous letter, in which he was advised rather to take care of himself than to think of punishing the Abbé Chiari, for that an imminent danger threatened himself. Casanova despised this communication, because it was anonymous; but about the same time, a spy of the Inquisition, named Manuzzi, contrived to make his acquaintance, by offering to sell him some diamonds on credit. This person went, ostensibly for that purpose, to Casanova's house, and, turning over his books, observed some that treated of magic. A few days after, Manuzzi paid Casanova another visit, telling him that he knew a person, whom he was not at liberty to name, who was willing to give a thousand sequins for the books, five in number, if he were allowed first to look over them and judge of their authenticity. As Manuzzi promised to return the volumes in four-and-twenty hours, Casanova allowed him to take them away, and at the end of the stipulated time Manuzzi returned with them, saying that the intended purchaser did not think them genuine. It appeared by the sequel, though Casanova was not aware of the fact for some years, that the books had been shown to the Secretary of the Inquisitors of State, who thus became confirmed in

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the idea that their owner was a magician. During the same month with the two preceding occurrences, another sinister event befel. An old lady, named Memmo, the mother of three young men with whom Casanova was intimate, took it into her head that he was perverting them by atheistic doctrines, and made a complaint against him, which came secretly before the Red Inquisitor of State, Antonio Condulmer, a friend of the Abbé Chiari, who, listening to the accusation, treasured it for future use. At last the blow fell. In the month of July, 1755, the tribunal gave orders to Messer Grande (the officer who executed its decrees) to secure Casanova, according to the usual formula, "dead or alive."

There was a friend of Casanova—a lady with whom his relations were most intimate—and a few days before the festival of St. James, his patron saint, she made him a present of several yards of silver lace to ornament a new taffeta coat which he was to wear on the vigil of the festival. He accordingly went to see her in his gay costume, promising, when he took leave, to return next day, as he was greatly in want of money, and wished to borrow five hundred sequins. Feeling sure of obtaining this money, he passed the intervening night at the gaming-table, where he lost on parole the exact sum he meant to have borrowed. He then withdrew to his own house, and, supposing that the servants were still in bed, took out his key to let himself in; but, to his great surprise, he found the street door open, and the lock broken. Entering hastily to see what was the matter, he found everybody up, and the landlady uttering loud lamentations. Messer Grande, she said, accompanied by a band of sbirri, had, a short time before, made a forcible entry, and turned everything topsy-turvy, saying that they were in search of a trunk full of salt, an article that was strictly contraband. On the 26th of July, 1755, Casanova was arrested at his lodgings.

My desk was open, he writes, and all my papers were lying on the table. I told Messer Grande to take them. They were numerous enough to fill a bag, which he gave to a sbirro, and then told me to deliver up the manuscripts which were bound in volumes. This opened my eyes to the fact of my having been betrayed by Manuzzi. I pointed out the books, and Messer Grande took possession of them, as well as of some volumes of Petrarch, Ariosto, Horace, and others. While he was looking over the books I mechanically went through my toilette, and put on a laced shirt and my best coat without saying a word, my captor keeping his eyes upon me all the time, and not seeming to think it at all extraordinary that I should dress myself as if I had been going to a wedding. In the antechamber I found no fewer than forty archers, who escorted me to the canal, where Messer Grande made me enter a gondola, in which he seated himself together with four of his men. I was conducted to his house, coffee was offered me which I refused, and I was then removed to an upper room, where I slept for four hours, at the end of which time an archer entered and informed me that he had orders to take me "Under the Leads." Without a word I followed him. We descended to the gondola and took our course towards the quay of the Prisons. Landing, we entered the building opposite, ascended several flights of stairs, and then crossed the closed bridge which communicates from the prisons to the ducal palace above the canal called Rio di Palazzo. Beyond this bridge we passed through a gallery and two chambers, in the last of which the archer presented me to a personage wearing a patrician's robe, who, after measuring me from head to foot, exclaimed, "E quello, mettetelo in deposito." (It is he; put him in his cell.) This man was the secretary of the Inquisitors, Dominico Cavalli. I was then given in charge of the Keeper of the Leads, who stood by, with an enormous bunch of keys hanging to his girdle, and who, followed by two archers, took me up two narrow staircases opening on a gallery, along which we proceeded, then through a second gallery separated from the first by a door, which he unlocked, and finally through a third, at the farther extremity of which he opened another door that gave admission to a dirty attic, eighteen feet long and six wide, and badly lighted by a small window in the roof. I supposed that this attic was my prison, but I was mistaken, for, selecting a ponderous key from the bunch, the jailer opened a thick iron-bound door, three feet and a half high, and having in the middle a round hole, cross-barred, some eight inches in diameter. He signed to me to enter the cell, which I could only do by stooping; he then turned the key upon me, and asked me through the hole in the door what I should like to have to eat?

"I have not thought about it," I replied, and I heard him leave the attic, locking the door after him. Overwhelmed and stupified by my misfortune, I rested with my elbows on the sill of the grated window of my dungeon. It was two feet square, and crossed by six bars of iron, each an inch thick, thus forming sixteen square holes for the admission of light, which, however, was prevented from entering freely from the attic window by a large heavy quadrangular beam that supported the ceiling, and intercepted the rays. After a while, I groped round my cell, which was only five and a half feet high and six feet square, one side being a sort of alcove, capable of holding a bed; but neither bed, table, chair, nor any kind of furniture was there, only a tub for slops, and a sort of shelf about four feet from the floor. Upon this ledge I placed my silk cloak, my fine coat, and my new hat, bordered with Spanish point-lace, and decorated with a flowing white feather. The heat was extreme, and mechanically I turned to my grating, the only place for me to rest, leaning on my elbows. I could not see the attic window, but by the dim light I perceived rats of enormous size running about in all directions; these creatures, the sight of which I always detested, coming fearlessly beneath my grating. At this disgusting sight I turned hastily away, and

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closed the trap which covered the hole in the door, lest they should enter my cell that way, and then returned to my old position, where, with folded arms, I remained silent and motionless for eight mortal hours. The clock, at last, sounding twenty-one,* roused me from my painful reverie, and I began to feel uneasy that no one brought me a bed or anything to eat. I thought, however, that by the close of day, some one would appear; but, when twenty-four struck, and I was still unvisited, I became furious, and howled and stamped with rage. After more than an hour of this frantic exercise, there not being the slightest indication that any one heard my cries, and the place being utterly dark, I closed my grating to keep out the rats, and threw myself at full length on the floor of my cell. To be abandoned in this manner seemed to me perfectly unnatural, and I came to the conclusion that the inquisitors had resolved on my death. I called to mind all I had done, to see if anything could justify such treatment, but I found no act of my bad life sufficiently criminal. I had been a libertine, a gambler, free of speech, and caring only for personal gratification, but in all this I could discover no crime against the State. At length, exhausted by vain conjectures, nature claimed her rights, and I fell asleep. The clock striking midnight awoke me. Prone on my left side, without moving, and hardly knowing where I was, I stretched out my right hand to reach my handkerchief, and feeling about, to my horror I grasped another hand cold as ice. The touch electrified me from head to foot, and every hair on my head stood on end. In the whole course of my life I had never experienced so much fear, and I did not think I was susceptible of it. For three or four minutes I remained in a kind of stupor, not only immovable, but incapable of thinking. At length, slightly recovering, I tried to persuade myself that the hand I thought I had touched was only the effect of a disturbed imagination, and in this hope I felt again, but with the same terrible result. Shuddering with dread, I uttered a piercing cry, and recoiled from the fearful contact. As soon as I was once more capable of reflection, I came to the conclusion that a corpse had been placed beside me while I slept, for I was sure it was not there when I lay down. "It is," I said, "the body of some miserable prisoner whom they have strangled and placed here to prepare me for the fate that awaits me."

Exasperated at this thought, my fear gave way to rage, and, extending my hand a third time, I seized the dead one, to be convinced of the atrocious fact, when, trying to raise myself on my left elbow, I found it was my own hand I had got hold of. My weight, and the hard couch on which I rested, had deprived it altogether of sense and motion. The incident was comic, but did not enliven me, so bitter was my despair at being a prisoner. My emotion after this would not suffer me to go to sleep again, and I remained in a sitting posture till day began to break, revolving schemes of vengeance against the government and the authors of my imprisonment. At length I became calm; and, just as the sun rose, I heard the noise of bolts withdrawn and steps approaching my cell.

"Have you had time enough to consider what you wish to eat?" said the hoarse voice of my jailer through the wicket.

Taking no notice of his insolent manner, I answered in a tone of indifference: "I should like some rice soup and bouilli, roast meat, bread, wine, and water."

He was surprised that I made no complaints, and went away; but in about a quarter of an hour he came back, and asked me why I had not ordered a bed and other furniture, adding:

"If you think you are only here for a night, you are greatly mistaken!"

"Bring me everything," I replied, "that you think necessary."

"Where must I go for it? Here are pencil and paper. Write down what you want."

I accordingly named in writing the place he was to send to, to get me shirts, stockings, clothing of all kinds, a bed, a table, a chair, the books that Messer Grande had taken from me, paper, pens, &c.

"Give me the money to buy your dinner," he said.

I had three sequins in my purse, and giving him one, he went away. About mid-day he returned, accompanied by five archers, whose duty it was to wait on the prisoners of state. He brought the furniture I had asked for, and my dinner. My bed was placed in the alcove, and my food on a small table, together with an ivory spoon which he had bought with my money, knives, forks, and all sharp instruments, as well as pen, ink, and paper, being prohibited.

"Order what you want to eat for to-morrow," he said; "I only come here once a day, at sunrise. The illustrious secretary has commanded me to tell you that he will send you some proper books; those you asked for, are forbidden."

After his departure, I placed my table near the hole in the door to obtain a little light, and sat down to dinner, but I was too ill to swallow more than a spoonful or two of soup. I passed the whole day in my chair, endeavouring to accommodate myself to my position. Night came, but I could not sleep on account of the horrible noise made by the rats, and by the great bell of St. Mark's, which seemed close to my ears. This double torment was not, however, the worst I had to support, for all night long I was the victim of thousands of creeping insects that fed on my blood and almost drove me to distraction. At last, at daybreak, Lorenzo—that was the name of my jailer—came to make my bed and sweep out my cell, while some of the sbirri brought me some water, but I was not allowed to go into the ante-chamber. Lorenzo had brought with him two large books which he left behind, together with my food. As soon as he was gone I fell to on my soup, to have it as

* Roman time, which is reckoned from half an hour after sunset.

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hot as I could; I then got close to the grating with one of the books, and found with pleasure that there was light enough to read.

At the end of nine or ten days my money was all expended, and when Lorenzo asked me for some, I said it was all gone. He then wanted to know where he was to apply for more, and I told him nowhere—a laconic answer which greatly displeased him, as did my general silence and indifference. On the next morning he told me that the tribunal had assigned me an allowance of fifty sous a day, which he was to lay out, and that he would account for what he spent every month, and apply my savings to any purpose I desired. I requested that he would buy me the Gazette of Leyden twice a week, but that, he said, was not permitted.

Casanova here relates how, owing to the extreme heat of his prison, and the inanition caused by bad nourishment, his health began to suffer. It was the hottest time of the year, and the sun's rays darting perpendicularly on the leads, made his dungeon like a stove. After a fortnight of horrible agony, unable to touch a morsel of food, he was seized with fever, and the doctor of the prison was sent for. We pass over the details of his malady, which was cruelly painful; but, at the end of a few days he became convalescent, and, through the medical man's intercession, his books were changed, and he obtained a copy of De Consolatione Philosophiæ, of Boethius—a good classical education having been one of Casanova's endowments. After this illness some slight relaxation of his close confinement was allowed, his jailer informing him that he was permitted to walk in the antechamber while his cell was being cleaned out. On the same day his monthly reckoning was made, and he found that there remained thirty livres to the good; but as Casanova had no means of spending the money, he desired Lorenzo to lay it out in masses, well knowing that the masses would be said at the wine-shop.

I consoled myself, says Casanova, by thinking that the money would do good to somebody, and ever afterwards I so disposed of it. Thus I lived on from day to day, flattering myself every night that the next morning would bring me my liberty; but though always deceived in my expectations, I took it into my head that I should infallibly be released on the first of October, the day on which the reign of the new Inquisition began. The last night of September I did not lie down to rest, my impatience for the coming day was so great, so certain did I feel that with the dawn I should be released; but the day appeared, and Lorenzo came as usual, without bringing me any news. For the next five or six days I yielded to a fit of rage and despair, and persuaded myself that they had resolved to keep me in prison for the rest of my days. This frightful notion excited in me a kind of savage glee, for I felt that my fate was now in my own hands: I should either succeed in escaping or be killed, and one way or other I was free.

The project of escape, once entertained, began seriously to engage my attention, and at length it became my only thought. I resolved a hundred expedients in my brain, each bolder than the former, always giving the preference to the last; and whilst thus occupied on the first of November—a date of some importance—a singular circumstance happened which revealed the sad state of mind into which I had fallen. I was standing upright in the antechamber, looking towards the window, when suddenly I saw the great beam which traversed the ceiling, not tremble merely, but actually turn on its side, and then, by a contrary movement, slowly replace itself in its original position. Losing my own footing at the same time I at once recognised the shock of an earthquake, and Lorenzo and the sbirri rushed out of my cell declaring that they had also felt it. My feeling at the instant was one of such indescribable joy, that I was unable to utter a word. Four or five seconds afterwards the shock was repeated, and then I could not refrain from crying out, "Un' altra, un' altra, gran Dio! ma più forte!" (Another, another, great God! but stronger!) The archers, terrified at my seeming impiety, fled in horror. After their departure, I found on reflection that I had been calculating on the possible event of the destruction of the ducal palace, and the recovery of my freedom: the immense edifice crumbling around me, I might, I thought, be cast out safe and sound on the great square of St. Mark, or at the worst be crushed to death beneath the ponderous ruins. In the situation in which I then was, we look upon liberty as all, and life as nothing. This shock of earthquake was that which, at the axis of its violence, destroyed Lisbon.*

The cell where I was confined was distinguished by the name of "the beam" (trave), because of the huge joist which obscures the light. The floor of this cell is exactly over the hall of the Inquisition, where, generally, they only assemble at night, after the daily sittings of the Council of Ten, of which body all three are members. Knowing perfectly both the locality and the uniform custom of the Inquisitors, I felt assured that my only chance of evasion consisted in being able to penetrate the floor of my prison; but to do so it was necessary that I should possess instruments—difficult things to obtain in a place where all external intercourse was forbidden, and where no visits or letters were permitted. To corrupt an archer, money was needful, and I had none.

At this juncture a young man, named Maggiori, whose crime had been that of making love to a noble Venetian's daughter while in his service, was brought in "under the leads," to be Casanova's fellow-prisoner.

This incident, so far as it affected Casanova, was chiefly remarkable for an opportunity which it afforded him of preparing for his great design. Maggiori's prison allowance being only fifteen

* November 1, 1755.

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sons, Casanova said he would share his dinner with the new comer, and the jailer might keep the extra money for masses, as before. This pleased Lorenzo so much, that he gave Casanova and Maggiori permission to walk in the ante-chamber for half an hour every day. At one end of this place was a heap of rubbish of all kinds, which Casanova furtively examined, observing amongst other things a bolt as thick as his thumb, and twenty inches in length. He trusted nothing, however, in the first instance, for his plans were not yet ripe; but after the removal of Maggiori, which shortly took place—the poor wretch being removed to another prison, where he passed five years, and was then banished to Cerigo—the privilege of walking in the ante-chamber being continued, he saw and took possession of a small piece of black polished marble, which he conveyed into his cell and hid beneath his linen, though without exactly knowing what use he could put it to. Within a week after Maggiori's departure, Casanova's solitude was shared by another prisoner: a wretched, dirty creature, who was sent to the Leads for a usurious transaction with a Venetian nobleman favoured by the Inquisition; but his confinement was not of long duration, as he procured his liberation by the payment of the money in dispute. Notwithstanding all Casanova's expectations, the year 1755 closed, and found him still "under the leads," but with a slight improvement in his position.

On the 1st of January, 1756, he was permitted some new year's gifts from a staunch friend of his, Signor Bragadin, among them a dressing-gown lined with fox-skin, a wadded silk counterpane, and a bearskin bag for his feet: the cold of winter being as hard to bear as the great heat of summer "under the leads." Money was also sent, with which he was allowed to buy books; but these comforts did not reconcile him to his prison.

My old desire returned, he continues; and one morning, while taking my usual walk in the ante-chamber, I again saw the bolt in the heap of rubbish. This time I did not neglect what I thought might prove either a weapon of offence or defence; and having concealed it under my gown, I carried it into my cell. As soon as I was alone, I took out the piece of marble, and found, to my great joy, that it would serve admirably for grinding the bolt to a point, if I had patience enough for the labour. It was, indeed, a work of difficulty, for I could only rub the bolt in the dark, resting it on the sill of the grating, with nothing but my left hand to keep the marble in position, and not a drop of oil to soften the iron. Instead of oil I used my spittle, and at the end of eight days of the most painful work I ever attempted, I succeeded in filing the bolt down to eight pyramidal facets, terminating in a sharp point, each facet being an inch and a half in length. My bolt thus formed an octangular stiletto or spontoon, as well proportioned as if it had been made by a regular workman; but I cannot tell the trouble it gave me to make it, nor the pain I endured. My right arm became so stiffened, that it was with difficulty I could move it; and the palm of my left hand was one large wound, from the blisters caused by the hardness of the material and my incessant labour. Having fashioned this weapon, my next care was to keep it in a place of safety; and, after long consideration, I decided on concealing it in my arm-chair. I then reflected upon the use I could apply it to, and the simplest thing appeared to me to make a hole in the floor under my bed. I felt certain that the chamber under my cell was that in which I had seen Signor Cavalli. I knew that it was opened every morning, and I doubted not that, as soon as the hole was made, I should be able to descend thither with ease, by converting my sheets into cords, and fastening them to the foot of the bed. Once below, I would hide myself under the great table of the tribunal, and in the morning, when the doors were opened, I could get away before my flight was known. It was possible, I admitted, that there might be an archer on guard, but my spontoon would soon remove that impediment. On the other hand, the planking might be double or threefold, and how was I to prevent the archers from sweeping the floor during my possible two months' work? If I told them not to do so, I might awaken their suspicions, particularly as, to get rid of the tormenting fleas, I had insisted on their sweeping every day. To remedy this inconvenience, I began by desiring them not to sweep, without saying why. Lorenzo asked the reason for this order, to which I replied by saying that the dust made me cough. He then said he would sprinkle water on the floor, but I rejoined that it would make matters worse, for the damp might have a worse effect on my lungs. This answer procured me a week's respite; but at the end of that time the fellow directed the archers to sweep the floor again, and that it might be effectually done, he had the bed removed into the ante-chamber and held a light, which proved to me that he entertained some suspicion. I did not appear to notice, but became more fixed in my resolve than ever; and on the following morning, having scratched my finger, I let it bleed all over my handkerchief, and waited for Lorenzo's arrival in bed. As soon as he came, I said my cough had been so violent that I had broken a blood-vessel, which was the reason of what he saw, and I begged that the doctor might be sent for. To him, when he arrived, I complained that Lorenzo was the cause of my malady, by persisting in having the cell swept, and he, agreeing that nothing was more dangerous under the circumstances, ordered the jailer to desist. The doctor then caused me to be bled, ordered me a prescription, and left me.

The bloodletting did Casanova good, for it restored his sleep, which had latterly been much disturbed, and cured him of certain spasmodic contractions which had begun to cause him some anxiety. He also recovered his strength and appetite, but the moment for setting to work had not yet arrived; the cold

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was so great that his hands were too stiff to hold his weapon, and he was obliged to wait for milder weather. One thing at this season greatly afflicted him, the intolerable length of the winter nights, and even in the daytime but little light entered his prison, owing to the mists that float at that time of the year over the waters of Venice. To get a lamp, then, was his great desire, but the process by which he achieved this object is too long for detail.

By the aid of his lamp, Casanova was enabled to wait with some degree of patience until the period arrived which he had chosen for attempting his escape. As he thought it likely that the prisons would be filled during the disorders of the Carnival, and that he might have another companion, he resolved to wait until that festive time was over, and not commence operations on the floor, till the first Monday in Lent. The result justified his anticipations, for on Quinquagesima Sunday his cell-door was again opened to admit a fellow-prisoner in the person of a Jew, who, for certain peccadilloes in the exercise of his profession as a money-lender, had fallen under the displeasure of the Inquisitors of State. This man proved a very disagreeable companion, and the more so because his detention was longer than Casanova expected, his removal not taking place till a fortnight after Easter, when he was condemned to two years' imprisonment in "I Quattri." While enduring the enforced society of this Israelite, Casanova received two other visits. The first was from the Secretary of the Inquisition, with whom his interview was a scene of complete silence; and the second from a Jesuit who came to confess him, and who left him with the strange prophecy—uttered, no doubt, at random—that Casanova would leave his prison on the day of his patron saint. Fortified by this hope, though he could not divine what day this might be (the festival of St. James, whose name he bore, being that on which he was arrested), Casanova now set to work in earnest.

As soon as I found myself alone, he says, I resumed my project with activity. It was necessary I should make haste lest some new guest might arrive. I began by moving my bed, and after lighting my lamp I lay down on the floor with my spontoon in my hand and a towel near me for collecting the fragments I chipped off. I had to destroy the plank entirely with the point of my instrument, and the bits of wood which I first detached were not bigger than a grain of wheat, but gradually they increased in size. The floor was made of deal planking, six inches wide. I began my work at the junction of two pieces, and there were neither nails nor iron of any kind to obstruct it. After six hours' toil I knotted up my towel and put it aside, to empty it next morning behind the rubbish heap in the ante-chamber. The fragments I thus gathered were five or six times larger than the hole they left behind, the diameter of which might be nearly ten inches. I then restored my bed to its place, and next morning disposed of the chips in such a way that they could not be observed. When I resumed work, having broken through the first plank which was two inches thick, I was stopped by a second, which I judged to be of the same thickness. Urged by the fear of fresh visitors, I redoubled my efforts, and in three weeks' time I succeeded in piercing the three planks of which the floor was composed; but this accomplished, I gave myself up for lost, for I now discovered a layer of small pieces of marble, known in Venice by the name of terrazzo marmorin. It is the common pavement of all the Venetian houses except the poorest, even the nobility preferring the terrazzo to the finest boarding. I was in perfect consternation at finding that my weapon did not penetrate this composition. After pausing for a while in a state of complete discouragement, I called to mind that Hannibal, according to Livy, had forced a passage through the Alps by softening them with vinegar, and I trusted that vinegar would do as much for me. I had some of very strong quality by me, and whether it proved effectual, or was owing to my increased exertions after a night's rest, I know not, but I succeeded in overcoming this new obstacle, pulverising with the point of my instrument the cement that united the bits of marble, and as the only difficulty was at the surface, in four days I destroyed the whole of the mosaic without in the slightest degree damaging my spontoon. Beneath the pavement I found another plank, but I was prepared for it. I judged, however, that this was the last. I had considerable trouble in beginning upon it, for my hole being ten inches deep I could not freely use my spontoon, but I recommended myself to God and toiled on, fortified by the confidence with which my sense of His mercy inspired me. I was thus engaged, lying flat on my belly, stripped to my skin and sweating from every pore, on the afternoon of the 25th of June, when, with my lamp burning at my side to throw light into the hole, I heard with mortal shuddering the noise of the creaking bolts in the first corridor. In an instant I blew out my lamp, left my spontoon in the hole, pitched into it, also, my towel full of chips, put my bed in order as well as I could, and threw myself on it just at the moment that the door of my cell opened and Lorenzo entered.

This unexpected visit was occasioned by the arrival of another companion, a certain Count Fenarolo, whose imprisonment only lasted a week, and Casanova was again alone.

Having resumed my labours, he goes on, I completed them on the 23rd of August. The great length of time I had been at work arose from a very natural accident. Having hollowed out the last plank, which I did with great care, to make it very thin, I pierced a small hole by means of which I was enabled to see the chamber of the Inquisitors; but I saw, at the same time, that I was close to a perpendicular surface, about eight inches deep. This, as I had all along feared might be the case, was one of the beams which supported the ceiling. This discovery obliged me to enlarge my intended opening on

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the opposite side, for the beam would have rendered the passage too narrow for me to pass through. I increased it, therefore, a full quarter, agitated between hope and fear, lest there might not, after all, be room enough between this beam and another; but by means of a second small orifice, I ascertained that my work had prospered. I then carefully stopped up both peep-holes, in order that nothing might fall through, or suffer the rays from my lamp to be seen from below, and fixed the period for my escape on the eve of St. Augustine, because I knew that on the occasion of that festival, the grand council assembled, and no one, consequently, would be in La Bussola, which was contiguous to the chamber I must necessarily cross in escaping. The 27th of August, was, therefore, to be the night of my attempt, but on the 25th a misfortune befel me, at the recollection of which I still shudder, though many years have since gone by. Precisely at mid-day, I was sitting in my cell, when I heard the noise of the bolts, and was straightway seized with such a violent beating of the heart, that I thought my last moment was come. I fell back helplessly in my arm-chair, and waited in a state of fearful expectation. As he crossed the antechamber, Lorenzo put his face close to the grating, and shouted, in a joyful tone,

"I wish you joy, sir, at the good news I bring you."

Thinking that I was to be set at liberty, I trembled, for I felt assured that the discovery of the hole I had made would cause the revocation of my pardon. Lorenzo presently opened the door and desired me to follow him.

"Wait," I said, "until I am dressed."

"What does that matter?" he replied, "you are only going to pass from this villanous hole to a clean new cell, with two windows in it, at which you may stand upright and see half over Venice."

I thought I should have sunk to the ground. "Give me some vinegar," I said, "and go and tell the secretary I thank the tribunal for their kindness, but I beg they will let me remain where I am."

"You make me laugh, sir," he returned. "Are you mad? They offer to take you out of this hell and put you in paradise, and you refuse to go? Come, come, you must obey. Get up! Take my arm. I will send your clothes and books after you."

Seeing that resistance was useless, I rose, and it was with a great sense of relief I heard him order the archer-servant to carry my arm-chair, for my spontoon would then follow me, and hope with it. How I wished I could have carried off the hole I had made in the floor, the object of all my trouble and sacrificed desires! I may truly say that, on leaving this horrible abode of grief, my whole soul remained behind. Leaning on Lorenzo, who with his heavy jokes endeavoured to restore my gaiety, I passed through two narrow corridors, and, after descending three steps, entered into a well-lighted hall, at the further extremity of which, turning to the left, he led me by a small door into another corridor only two feet wide and about twelve feet long, in a corner of which was my new prison. It contained a grated window, facing two other windows, also barred, which gave light to the corridor, and through them the view extended across the grand canal as far as the Lido; but I had no heart to rejoice in the scene, nor did I gaze on it. I threw myself into my chair, and waited for the denoûment of the drama, of which Lorenzo, who left me to fetch my bed and clothing, was the Fate. Immovable as a statue, there I sat, expecting the storm to burst, but fearing it not a jot. What caused my stupor was the overwhelming idea that I had taken so much pains for nothing; yet I experienced neither regret nor repentance, and I compelled myself not to think of the future, as my only consolation. I was in this state of mind when two sbirri came with my bed. They went out for the rest of my things, and more than two hours elapsed before I saw any one again, though the door of my new cell was left open. This delay, which was not natural, awakened in me a crowd of thoughts, but I could fix none of them. I only knew that I had everything to fear, and this certainty made me employ every effort to tranquillise myself sufficiently to resist the evils with which I was threatened.

Besides the Piombi and the Quattri, the Inquisitors of State have at their command nineteen other frightful dungeons underground in the same ducal palace, destined for those unhappy beings whom they do not condemn to death, though their crimes may perhaps have deserved that punishment. These subterranean prisons perfectly resemble tombs; but they are called "The Wells" (I Pozzi), because there are always two feet of water in them, the sea penetrating through the grating—only a foot square!—which gives them light. Unless the miserable wretch who tenants this vile den chooses to take a salt-water bath, he is obliged to remain all day seated on a trestle, on which his mattress is spread, which serves him also for a cupboard. In the morning he receives a pitcher of water, a little bad soup, and a piece of ammunition bread, which he is obliged to eat at once lest it should become the prey of the horrible creatures that infest these wells. Generally those who are confined in these places end their days here, and some have been known to attain a great age.

After two mortal hours' suspense Lorenzo made his appearance, his features disfigured by anger, foaming with rage, and blaspheming Heaven and all the saints. He began by ordering me to give up the hatchet and tools with which I had destroyed the flooring, and to tell him which of the sbirri had supplied me with them. I answered, without stirring, and as coolly as I could, that I did not know what he was talking about. On this reply, he ordered me to be searched; but rising with a resolute air, I threatened the rascal, and taking off my only garment, I told them to ex-

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amine it, but not to touch me at their peril. They inspected my mattress, emptied my paliasse, felt the cushions of my arm-chair, but found nothing. "You will not tell me, then," cried Lorenzo, "where the instruments are with which you made the opening? But we shall find the means of making you."

"If it is true," I answered, "that I have made a hole anywhere, I shall say, when I am interrogated, that it was you who procured the instruments for me, and that I gave them back to you."

At this threat, which made the archers smile, he stamped and tore his hair, and rushed out like one possessed. His people then brought me all my effects, except the piece of marble and my lamp, and before quitting the corridor, Lorenzo shut me in, and closed the windows which admitted the breeze to that part of the building, leaving me without a breath of air. This, however, was a slight punishment, and I thanked my stars at having got off so well. Notwithstanding his jail-taught experience, it had never entered into my keeper's head to examine the under part of my arm-chair, and still the possessor of my spontoon, I returned fervent thanks to Providence, believing that it was yet permitted me to consider it the fortunate means by which, sooner or later, I should achieve my deliverance.

I passed the night without a wink of sleep, owing to the excessive heat and the singular change in my situation. At daybreak Lorenzo brought me some wine, and water impossible to drink. Everything else corresponded — a withered salad, tainted meat, and bread as hard as an English biscuit. He would clean up nothing; and, when I begged him to open the windows, he affected not to hear me, while the archer who attended with a bar of iron in his hand, sounded the walls and floor of the cell, striking particularly under the bed; but I observed that he did not touch the ceiling. "I must get out that way," I said to myself. But to do so, external assistance was necessary, for I could touch nothing that was exposed to view. The cell being a new one, the slightest scratch would have been visible. That day was a cruel one to get through, the heat was so overpowering, and I was, besides, utterly unable to touch my disgusting food. Next day my dinner was the same. The smell of the putrid veal which the scoundrel brought made me draw back from it in horror. "Have you received orders," I cried, "to make me die of heat and hunger?" He shut the door without a word in reply. The third day did not differ from the two first. I asked for a pencil and paper to write to the secretary; no answer. In a state of desperation I swallowed my soup, and then soaking some bread in a little Cyprus wine of the worst quality, I tried to recruit my strength, that I might revenge myself on Lorenzo, by seizing and stabbing him with my spontoon. It seemed to me, in my fury, that I could do nothing else; but the night calmed me, and when my jailer next appeared, I contented myself by telling him I would kill him the instant I regained my liberty. He merely grinned.

After a time Casanova and the jailer came to a better understanding, the prisoner giving his keeper, as before, the surplus of his allowance. Books being Casanova's great want, Lorenzo told him that he could borrow some from another prisoner in the cell next to his, if he would lend his own in exchange. Casanova caught at this offer, and sending a volume by the jailer, he received another, on a blank leaf of which he found some translated verses, evidently written by the owner of the book. The hope of establishing a correspondence arose out of this circumstance.

I immediately sat down and made six more verses, having recourse to the following expedient to write them down. I had allowed the nail of my little finger to grow, that I might use it as an ear-pick. It was very long, and I cut it to a point, and converted it into a pen. I had no ink, and thought at first of pricking my finger and writing with my blood; but I recollected having some mulberries, and their juice would equally answer the purpose. Besides the six verses I also wrote a catalogue of the works I had and placed it in the back of the book. It is necessary to state that in Italy the books are generally bound in parchment, in such a manner that the book, when opened, forms a pocket. Under the title of the work I wrote, "Latet" (concealed). I was most impatient to receive an answer, and the moment I saw Lorenzo again I told him I had read the book, and wanted the owner to lend me another. The second volume was immediately obtained, and the instant I was alone I opened the book, and found a loose sheet of paper, on which was written in Latin the following words: "We are two in the same cell, and feel the greatest pleasure at finding that the ignorance of an avaricious jailer procures us a privilege unexampled in this place. I who write to you am Marino Balbi, a noble Venetian, and a regular Somasco" (a monkish order); "my companion is Count Andrea Asquin of Udino. He desires me to tell you that all the books he possesses, of which you will find a list in the back of this volume, are at your service; but we must warn you that every possible precaution is necessary to conceal our correspondence from Lorenzo."

Having received proper materials for writing from the monk, who was not under the same restrictions as Casanova, a correspondence was now regularly established by means of the constant interchange of books, and Casanova communicated to Balbi his intention of attempting his escape. The other was equally desirous of regaining his freedom, but knew not how to set about it. Casanova, having exacted from Balbi a promise to execute to the letter all he prescribed, informed him of his plan.

I then told him that I had in my possession a spontoon twenty inches in length, by means of which he could pierce the roof of his prison, then break through the wall that was between, by this aperture reach the roof of my

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cell and, having made an opening there, assist me out. "Arrived at this point," I said, "your task will be over and mine begun, and both yourself and Count Asquin shall be set at liberty." He made answer that when he had released me from my dungeon, I should not the less be in prison, and that our situation then would only differ from what it was at present by greater space, for we should be merely in the attics, which were closed by strong doors. "I know that, reverend father," I replied, "but it is not by the doors that we shall escape. My plan is settled and I am sure to succeed. I only ask of you exactness of execution and abstinence from objections. Think only of the way in which I can send you the instrument of our deliverance, without the bearer knowing anything about it. In the mean time, make the jailer buy you a quantity of pictures of saints, large enough to line the whole of the interior of your prison. These religious prints will excite no suspicion in him, and they will serve to hide the hole you make in the roof. It will take you several days to accomplish; and to prevent your work from being seen, you must cover it with one of your pictures. If you ask me why I do not perform this work myself, my answer is that I am suspected, and you are not." Though I recommended Balbi to think how my spontoon could reach him, I nevertheless, constantly dwelt on the subject, and at last a good idea came into my head. I desired Lorenzo to purchase for me a folio Bible which had not long been published. I hoped to conceal the spontoon in the back of the binding, but when I obtained the volume, I found that the instrument exceeded the length of the book by two inches. My correspondent, meanwhile, had written to say that he had covered his cell with the pictures, and in my turn I communicated the difficulty I was now in. He rallied me, in reply, upon the barrenness of my imagination, saying that I had only to send him the spontoon concealed in my fox-skin dressing-gown which Lorenzo had spoken of; as, without giving rise to any suspicion, Count Asquin might easily ask to see it. The jailer, he said, would not unfold the robe. I felt persuaded of the contrary; because an article of that kind is more troublesome to carry folded than loose; and though I sent the robe for them to look at, I did not enclose the spontoon. Balbi, not finding the weapon, thought it had been lost, and gave way to despair, but I assured him that I had hit upon a better plan than his.

This plan consisted in Casanova preparing an enormous dishful of maccaroni, as a present to the prisoner who had lent him so many books, which the jailer was to carry to the adjoining cell on the large Bible, and in the back of which the spontoon, wrapped up in paper, was hidden. As the dish was much larger than the book, the projecting ends of the instrument could not be seen, Casanova having taken care to fix the jailer's attention to the maccaroni, which was swimming in oil, and liable to be spilt if not carried steadily. All that was requisite for the success of this scheme was, that Balbi, apprised of it beforehand, should take the Bible and dish very carefully from the hands of the bearer. The scheme answered perfectly, and Casanova continues:

Father Balbi lost no time in setting to work, and, the roof of his cell being very low, he succeeded in the course of a week in making a hole large enough to pass through, which he masked, by pasting a large picture over it. On the 8th of October he wrote to me that he had passed the whole night in working at the upper partition wall, but had not been able to remove more than one brick, owing to the hardness of the cement; but he promised not to relax in his labours, all the time saying that we should only make our situation worse. I replied that I felt sure of the contrary, and that he must believe in me and persevere. Alas! I was sure of nothing, but I was obliged to say so, or abandon all. Balbi's work was only difficult the first night; the more he laboured, the easier it became, and at last he had removed as many as six-and-thirty bricks. On the 16th of October, at ten o'clock in the morning, while I was busy translating an ode of Horace, I heard overhead the stamping of feet and three gentle knocks. It was the concerted signal to show that we were not deceived as to the locality. He went on working till evening, and on the following evening he wrote to me to say that if my roof was formed of only two planks, his work would be finished next day. He assured me that he had taken care to make the aperture circular, as I had recommended, and that he would not penetrate the surface. This was quite necessary, as the slightest sign of its being broken would have betrayed us. The excavation, he added, was such, that a quarter of an hour would suffice to complete it. I had fixed on the night but one after as the period of my evasion, never, I trusted, to return; for with the assistance of a companion three or four hours, I thought, would be quite sufficient for making an opening in the great roof of the ducal palace, for getting out, and for finding the means of effecting a safe descent. But I had not yet arrived at that point, and before I could do so, my evil fortune reserved for me more than one difficulty to overcome.

On the same day that Casanova received Balbi's last letter, the jailer brought the prisoner another companion, named Soradici, a low spy who, for some neglect of duty, had been sent to the Leads. He was an ignorant superstitious faithless wretch, and not being able to trust him, Casanova practised on his credulity, to the extent of making him believe that an angel was at work for his deliverance from prison; and when he had succeeded in establishing this belief, he wrote to Balbi to resume his task. The month of October was waning fast—it was already the 25th—and the execution of his project of escape, if made that year, must not longer be delayed. It was the custom of the Inquisitors of State, together with the secretary, to pass the three first days of November at a village on terra firma; during their absence, Lorenzo, as Casanova knew by the last year's

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experience, would not fail to get drunk every night, and would consequently be late on the following mornings; that, therefore, was the most propitious time. With all his hardihood, there was a tinge of superstition in Casanova himself, and evidence of it was afforded just then. He was of opinion that Fate, after all, must determine the exact hour of his flight, and he resolved to have recourse to divination by consulting the "Sortes"—not in Virgil, for he had no copy of the Mantuan bard, but in his favourite Ariosto. Using a formula which he describes, certain figures resulted, which gave him the seventh line of the seventh stanza of the ninth canto, and there he read these words: "Fra il fin d'ottobre e il capo di novembre" (between the end of October and the beginning of November). This oracle agreed so exactly with his previous intention that Casanova resolved to do everything he could, to verify it. He then prepared his companion for the apparition of the monk.

At last, he writes, the hour struck which was to be the signal of our liberation, and I heard Balbi at work. Soradici wished to prostrate himself before the angel, but I said it was not necessary. In three minutes the aperture was made, the last fragment of wood fell at my feet, and Balbi dropped into my arms.

"Your labours are over now," I said, "and mine begin."

We embraced, he gave me the spontoon and a pair of scissors, and I told Soradici to trim our beards. It was impossible to help laughing at the astonishment that was depicted on his face as he gazed at the singular-looking angel; but, though almost out of his wits with wonder, he clipped us very dexterously. Impatient to examine the localities, I desired the monk to remain with Soradici, for I did not like to leave the latter alone, and I climbed through the aperture. The hole in the wall beyond, was narrow, but I managed to get through it, and I found myself on the roof of the count's cell. I entered and cordially embraced the respectable old man. He was one whose age and figure showed him to be incapable of exposing himself to the dangers and difficulties of such a flight as I proposed, along a steep roof covered with lead. He asked me what my plan was, and said he thought it rash, and that I could not accomplish my descent without wings; he wished me all success, but added that he had not courage to make the attempt; he would remain behind and pray for us. I then left him to inspect the palace roof, getting as close as I could to the lateral walls, where, seated amidst a heap of the rubbish which always encumbers such places, I probed the timbers overhead with my spontoon and rejoiced to find them quite worm-eaten. At every thrust I made, the wood crumbled away to dust, and feeling certain that I could make a hole large enough for my purpose in a quarter of an hour, I returned to my cell, and passed four hours in cutting up our sheets, bed cover, mattress, and paliasse, to make cords, taking care to knot them all well myself, to be sure of their strength, for a single slip might cost us all our lives. When my work was done, I had a length of a hundred fathoms. The rope being finished, I made a bundle of my hat and coat, my cloak, some shirts, stockings, and handkerchiefs, and we all three passed into the cell of the Count, who congratulated Soradici on his luck in having been confined with me, and thus procured his liberty. The fellow had not yet recovered from his surprise, for though he felt I had deceived him, he could not understand how I had managed to predict the time of the pretended angel's arrival. He listened attentively to the Count's endeavours to dissuade me, after all, from making my hazardous attempt, and I saw by his countenance that he had not courage to venture. I did not trouble myself about him, but told the monk to pack up his things while I went to make the hole in the roof. By two o'clock at night,* without any assistance, the opening was finished. I had pulverised the planks, and made the hole twice as large as was needful. I then came to the sheeted lead, but as it was rivetted I could not lift it alone, and was obliged to summon the monk, by whose aid and by driving the spontoon between the gutter and the lead, I succeeded in detaching the latter, and, applying all our strength, we bent it far enough back for our purpose. Putting my head out, I saw, to my great grief, the bright light of the moon, then entering her first quarter. This was a misfortune which had to be borne with patience, for it was necessary to wait till midnight, when the moon went down. On so fine a night as that, all Venice would be in the Square of St. Mark, and we must inevitably have been seen. The moon would go down at five,† and the sun not rise before thirteen and a half;‡ there would therefore remain eight hours of complete darkness, during which we might operate in perfect security, and have plenty of time for our purpose.

As Casanova had no money to assist his flight when once out of prison, and as Count Asquin was well provided, he tried to borrow thirty sequins of him; but the old man was not very willing to lend, urging that Casanova did not require money to get away, that he was poor and had a large family, that an accident might happen, and a variety of other excuses. But it was of too much importance to Casanova to obtain the wherewithal, so he persisted in his demand; and giving himself credit for not having beaten the old man, the discussion ended by his obtaining two sequins, which the Count handed out with the request that Casanova would give them back if he found, on examining the roof, that he could not get down. He little knew the man he had to deal with, for the enterprising Venetian would have died rather than return to his prison. If Count Asquin's characteristic was avarice, that of Balbi was mistrust; and while the first dissuaded him from attempting to escape, the other reproached him

* Two hours and a half after sunset.

† Half past ten, P.M. ‡ Seven, A.M.

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for not keeping his promise, saying, that if he had thought Casanova had no assured plan, he would never have helped him to leave his cell. Between the two, the three hours' delay was not very pleasantly passed; neither could Casanova place much reliance on Soradici, who sat without speaking a word. About half-past ten he sent him to see where the moon was; on his return he said that in an hour's time it would be perfectly dark, but that the mist from the canal would render the leads very slippery and dangerous. Casanova took no heed of this warning, but ordered him to roll up his cloak, and take a bundle of the cords which he had previously divided. On receiving this order, Soradici fell on his knees, and kissing Casanova's hand and weeping, begged him not to decree his death. "I am sure," he said, "to fall into the canal; I shall be of no use to you; leave me here, and I will pray to St. Francis for your safety all night. You may kill me if you please, but I am determined not to follow you." This happened to be precisely what Casanova wished, and he at once consented to his request, telling him to collect his books and take them to Count Asquin, as a set-off for the two sequins. He then asked for pen, ink, and paper, of which the Count had a supply, and, as well as he could in the dark, wrote a letter to the inquisitors, in which he deprecated their increased severity in the event of his being recaptured.

He left the letter in the hands of Soradici, with orders not to give it to Lorenzo, but to the secretary in person, for there was not the least doubt of his being taken before him, if, as was more than probable, he did not at once go to the cell on being informed of Casanova's escape.

It was time now, to be gone. The moon had sunk. I, continues Casanova, fastened half the cords round the neck of Father Balbi on one side, and secured his bundle of clothes on the other. I equipped myself in like manner, and, both in our waistcoats and wearing our hats, we took our way along the loft, and reaching the opening in the roof, passed through, and found ourselves—UPON THE LEADS.

Soradici, who had followed us to the aperture, received orders to replace the sheet of lead after we were gone, and then go back to his cell and pray to St. Francis. Placing myself on all-fours, I then firmly grasped my spontoon, and stretching out my right arm, thrust my weapon obliquely between the joints of the leads, and seizing with the other hand the edge of the sheet I had raised, dragged myself up the roof—the monk, who had followed me, clinging fast to the waistband of my breeches—so that I had to drag a heavy weight as well as climb, and that on a steep surface slippery with fog. Half way up this perilous ascent, Balbi called to me to stop, one of his bundles having fallen off. My first impulse was to kick out behind, and send him flying after his bundle; but I had presence of mind enough not to give way to my desire, for the punishment would have been too great on both sides, since, alone, I could not possibly have escaped. I asked him if it was our heap of cords, but as he replied that it was the bundle containing his clothes, I said he must put up with his loss, for a single step backward might be our ruin. The poor monk sighed and held on by my waistcoat, and we continued to climb. After having cleared about fifteen or sixteen divisions of the roof, we gained the ridge, of which I got astride, and Balbi, whom I hoisted up, followed my example. Our backs were turned to the small island of San Giorgio Maggiore, and two hundred paces in front of us were the numerous cupolas of the church of St. Mark, which forms part of the ducal palace. I began by unloading myself, and told my companion to do the same. He placed his heap of cords under him, but in trying to take off his hat, it fell from his hand, and went to join his bundle in the canal.

After passing some minutes in looking round me, I desired the monk to remain motionless till my return, and having only my spontoon in my hand, I urged myself forward, still astride. It took me a good hour to go all over the roof, examining it minutely throughout, but I could find no place fit to fasten a cord to, and I was in the greatest perplexity. I could neither think of descending into the canal, or the palace court, and the upper part of the church, between the cupolas, offered nothing to my view but precipices which terminated in no open space. To get beyond the church towards the Canonica, the roofs were so exceedingly steep that they did not appear to offer a chance of passing them. While revolving what to do, I fixed my eyes on a dormer-window, about two-thirds down the slope on the side towards the canal. It was far enough off from the point I had started from, to satisfy me that the loft to which it gave light did not belong to that of the prisons out of which I had broken. It could only belong to some garret, inhabited or not, above an apartment of the palace, where, at daylight, I should naturally find doors open. With this notion in my head, it was necessary I should examine the front of the window, and gently gliding down, I soon got astride of its narrow roof. Resting on the ledges, I leaned forward, and was able to see and touch a small grating, behind which was a lattice-window, the panes being set in lead. The window offered no great obstacle, but the grating, slight as it was, seemed an invincible difficulty, for without a file I could not remove the bars, and I had nothing but my spontoon. I was confused, and began to lose courage, when the simplest and most natural thought arose, and renewed it.

The clock of St. Mark's striking midnight, was the agent which roused me from the troubled state into which I had fallen. That clock recalled to my memory that the day about to begin was dedicated to All Saints, and as my patron saint, if I had one, must be amongst them, the moment for realising the Jesuit's prediction had arrived. But I own that what most roused my courage, and really added to my physical strength, was the profane oracle I had found in my dear

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Ariosto—"Fra il fin d'ottobre, e il capo di novembre." Lying flat on my face, and leaning well over, I drove my spontoon into the window-sash in which the grating was framed, and resolved to remove it bodily. In a quarter of an hour I accomplished my task. The grating came out unbroken, and having laid it down beside me, I had then no difficulty in breaking the window-panes, though the blood flowed freely from a cut in my left hand. Again making use of my spontoon, as I had done in the first instance, I climbed back to the top of the roof, and made my way towards the place where I had left my companion. I found him in a state of fury, and he heaped on me the vilest epithets for having been so long absent: saying that he only meant to have waited till seven o'clock, and would then have returned to his prison. I asked him what he thought had become of me? He replied that he supposed I had fallen from the roof.

"And you only express by abuse the joy you ought to experience in seeing me again?"

"What were you doing all that time?"

"Follow me and you will see."

Taking up my bundles, I proceeded along the ridge, and he followed. When we got opposite the dormer-window, I told him exactly what I had done, and consulted with him on the mode of entering and exploring the loft. The thing was easy enough for one of us, by means of the cord, which could be lowered by the other, but I did not see how the second person could afterwards descend, there being no way of fastening the cord to the entrance of the window. To drop from the window-sill into the loft was to run the risk of breaking my limbs, for I could not guess the distance to the floor. To this wise reasoning, made in the interest of us both, the brute replied by these words:

"Lower me, at all events, and when I am safe, you will have leisure enough to think how to follow me."

In the first movement of indignation I was tempted, I own, to stab him with my weapon; but my good genius prevailed within me, and I did not even utter a word to reproach his selfishness. On the contrary, I immediately unrolled my hank of cords, passed them firmly under his armpits, and having made him lie down, lowered him as far as the roof of the dormer-window. When he reached it, I told him to get inside as far as his middle, and sustain himself by resting with his arms on the ledge. This done, I slid down as I had done before, and as soon as I was on the window-roof, I held the cord fast, and desired the monk to leave go without fear. When he reached the floor of the loft, he unfastened the cord, and having withdrawn it, I found the depth was fifty feet—far too great for me to make the dangerous leap. While I hesitated what to do, the monk cried out to me to throw him down the cords, and he would take care of them, but I was not such a fool as to accept his invitation.

Doubtful how to proceed, I again ascended to the ridge of the roof, and perceiving a place I had not examined near the cupola, I went towards it, and discovered a small platform, where some workmen had left a tubful of mortar, a trowel, and a ladder: which latter I thought long enough to descend by, into the loft. Fastening my cord to the first round, I dragged my heavy load as far as the dormer-window, my object being to get it in, and the trouble it cost me to do so made me bitterly repent having parted with my companion. I had pushed the ladder in such a manner that one of its ends touched the window, and the other hung about a third of its length over the gutter. Mounting the roof of the dormer-window, I pulled the ladder on one side, and drawing it towards me, fastened the end of my cord to the eighth round, and then let it down till it was on a level with the window, which I endeavoured to make it enter, but I found that I could not possibly introduce it beyond the fifth round, the upper end of the ladder being stopped by the ceiling of the window, so that no human force could move it farther. The only remedy for this evil was to raise the lower end, and then its own weight would cause it to tilt over and descend into the loft. I might have dragged the ladder across the window, and, fastening my cord to the middle, have got down without danger, but its position there would at once have revealed to Lorenzo and the searchers the place where we might still be in the morning, so I at once rejected that plan, and determined, if possible, to get the ladder inside altogether. Having no one to help me, I was obliged to descend to the gutter to raise it, and though I succeeded in doing so, the act was attended with so much danger that it was little short of a miracle that I did not pay for my temerity with my life. I could afford to let go the ladder without fear of its falling into the canal, because it was caught by the gutter at the third round; and having done this, I crept down close to the edge, with my spontoon in my hand, and, lying on my face, with my feet pressed against the marble trough that formed the gutter, I had power enough in this position to raise the ladder and push it upwards, and to my unspeakable satisfaction I saw that the end had entered the window about a foot. Two feet more were necessary, for after that length had been obtained I felt sure that I could get the rest in from above, and to give it the requisite elevation I got upon my knees; but the effort I was obliged to make caused me to slide back so rapidly that in an instant I was shot beyond the roof as far as my chest, and only held on by my elbows. It was the most fearful moment of my whole existence, and I shudder at it still! The natural instinct of self-preservation made me, almost without my own knowledge, exert all my strength to stop myself by the pressure of my chest, and miraculously, I may say, I succeeded. Fortunately I had nothing to fear for my ladder, which had penetrated far enough and remained steady; but though I contrived to hold on, I was in the greatest danger. Slowly, then, and with the utmost caution, I raised my right leg, till I got

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that knee on the gutter, and then I lifted the other; but I was not yet altogether safe, for while in this position I was seized by excruciating cramp, which seemed to deprive me of the use of my limbs. Preserving my presence of mind, I remained perfectly still, till the cramp gradually subsided, and at the end of two fearful minutes I made another attempt, and got both knees over the gutter. As soon as I recovered breath, I carefully pushed the ladder again, till I left it balanced on the sill of the window; then, climbing up to that point, I lowered it into the loft, where Balbi received the end in his arms. I threw down my clothes, the cords, and broken fragments, and then descended myself; after which we drew the ladder in altogether.

Linked arm in arm we now inspected the gloomy place we had got into, and found it thirty paces long by about twenty wide. At one end was a folding door barred with iron, but as it was only latched I easily opened it, and we entered another loft, in the midst of which was a table surrounded by footstools that we stumbled over in attempting to get across. We then felt round the walls and discovered windows, looking through one of which we saw by the light of the stars, a forest of cupolas and steep roofs. Unable to recognize in what part we were, I closed the window and we returned to the spot where we had left our baggage. Exhausted beyond measure I threw myself on the floor, and, putting a heap of cords under my head, yielded at once to sleep. I must have done so had death even been the consequence, and to this day I can recal the pleasure of that slumber, which lasted for three hours and a half. I was awakened by the monk, who was shaking me violently and shouting. He said that twelve* had just struck, and could not conceive how sleep was possible at such a time and in such a place; it was natural enough, however, to me, for exhausted nature required it, and the result of the indulgence was my restoration to perfect vigour. As soon as I had cast my eyes round me, I cried: "This place is not a prison; there must be a means of egress, easy to find." Groping round the room we came at last to a door, and, feeling about, I found a keyhole. My spontoon quickly forced the lock, and we entered a small room where a key was lying on a table. I tried it in the lock of a door in front of us, but without turning the key the door opened. The monk went back for our bundles, and restoring the key to its place, we passed into a gallery with recesses filled with papers. These were the archives of the palace. We then came to a narrow stone-staircase, which we descended; another succeeded, and at the bottom of that was a glass door opening into a hall, which I remembered was the ducal chancery. I opened a window, and could easily have got out, but should have been involved in a labyrinth of small courts which surround the Church of St. Mark. On a desk I caught sight of a sharp-pointed instrument with a wooden handle, of the kind used by the chancery secretaries to pierce the parchments, to which they attach the leaden seals. I seized it, and opened the desk, where I found the copy of a letter announcing to the Proveditor of Corfu the transmission of a sum of three thousand sequins for the restoration of the old fortress. I looked for the sequins, and God knows with what satisfaction I should have pocketed the money, but it was gone! Going to the door of the chancery, I inserted my spontoon in the keyhole, but soon finding that I could not force the lock I resolved to make a hole in the door itself, and selecting a part where there were the fewest knots I split it with my spontoon, Balbi assisting with the punch which I had picked up. He trembled at every blow we struck, fearing that we might be heard: I also was alive to the danger, but it was no moment for hesitation. In the course of half-an-hour the opening was large enough to pass through, though its jagged edges presented a most formidable appearance. It was five feet from the ground, but by placing two footstools together we approached nearer, and the monk tried to pass first, head foremost, with his arms crossed, while I seized him by the legs and thrust him from behind. In this way he got to the other side. I then handed him my bundle of clothes, leaving the cords behind, and placing a third footstool on the two first, I was high enough to force my body backwards into the aperture, which I did with great difficulty, as it was too narrow; and having nothing to catch hold of or any one to push me as I had pushed the monk, I told him to seize me round the body and drag me through even if he tore me to bits. He obeyed, and I had sufficient constancy to endure the dreadful pain I felt from the gashes in my sides and thighs, which streamed with blood.

This dangerous passage effected, I caught up my clothes and we moved on, descending two flights of stairs, and opening without trouble a door that led to the great folding-doors of the royal staircase, beside the cabinet of the Savio alla scrittura. The vast portal, however, was locked, like that of the hall of archives, and a single glance sufficed to convince me that nothing but a battering-ram could force it open, and that our tools were utterly useless. The spontoon in my hand seemed to say, "Hic fines posuit, I can be of no further use to you, you may depose me." But it was the instrument of my liberty, and for that I cherished it. Calm, resigned, and perfectly tranquil, I seated myself, desiring the monk to follow my example. "My work is done," I said; "God or good fortune must do the rest. I cannot tell whether the palace sweepers will think proper to come here to-day or not, as it is All Saints'; or to-morrow, as it is All Souls'; but if any one does come, I shall make a rush, the moment I see the door open, and you must follow. If, on the other hand, nobody appears, I shall not stir from this spot, and if I die of hunger so much the worse."

* About half-past five in the morning.

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At this speech Balbi got into a perfect fury. He called me every name he could think of: madman, fool, deceiver, liar, nothing was too bad, but I remained quite unmoved. At this moment thirteen struck, we had only consumed one hour since we quitted the loft.

The important affair that next occupied me was changing my dress. Father Balbi had the look of a peasant, but his clothes were uninjured, while mine were torn to tatters and covered with blood. My legs were in a frightful state, and tearing up some handkerchiefs in bandages, I dressed my wounds as well as I was able. I then drew on a pair of white stockings as high as the bandages, put on a laced shirt for want of another, over it two more of the same kind, stuffed other handkerchiefs and stockings into my pockets, and threw the old ones into a corner. I put my silk cloak on the shoulders of the monk, who looked as if he had stolen it; and with my own fine coat and feathered hat, my appearance closely resembled that of one who having been to a ball had finished the night with very disorderly companions. The only thing that took away from the rakish elegance of my costume was the bandages at my knees. Such as I was, however, I opened one of the windows and looked out. Some idlers below soon caught sight of me, and not comprehending how anybody so gaily attired could be there at such an early hour, went to tell the porter who kept the keys of the palace. He, supposing he had accidentally locked some one in, the overnight, came out with his keys, but before he did so, observing that I was noticed, I withdrew from the window and sat down beside the monk, sorry at having shown myself, and far from thinking how greatly chance had befriended me. Balbi was in the act of reproaching me once more when I heard the jingle of the keys. I rose, with some emotion, and peeping through an opening between the folding-doors, I saw a man in a wig, without his hat, slowly ascending the steps with a large bunch of keys in his hand. In a very serious tone I orderd Balbi not to say a word, but to keep close behind and follow me. Grasping my spontoon, but concealing it in the sleeve of my coat, I placed myself where I could step out the instant the key was turned, all the time praying most devoutly that the man would offer no resistance, but fully determined to strike him down if he did. At length the door was opened, and at my aspect the porter was petrified with astonishment. I did not utter a syllable, but profiting by his stupefaction, hastily strode past him, followed by the monk.

Without appearing to run, but walking at a very rapid pace, I descended the Giants' Staircase, and paying no attention to the voice of Balbi, who cried, "Make for the church!" pursued my way straight to the "Riva dei Schiavoni," in front of the ducal palace, where, hailing the first gondolier I saw, I said I wanted to go quickly to Fusina, and required another rower. The gondola was ready, and we jumped into it, the men wondering at Balbi's strange appearance, in such a fine silken cloak, and without his hat, and taking me, probably, for a mountebank. He pushed off, and as soon as we doubled the point of the Dogana, the gondoliers gave way vigorously along the canal of the Giudecca, which leads both to Fúsina and Mestre, to which latter place I really wanted to go; and having indicated this altered destination, the gondola's prow was turned, and, wind and tide being in our favour, in three-quarters of an hour we landed at Mestre.

Although on terra firma, Casanova and his companion were still on Venetian territory, and in as great danger of capture as before. This was subsequently shown during the adventures which befel them during the following eight-and-forty hours, while, by separate routes, they made for Trent, their nearest place of safety. There is much that is amusing in this part of Casanova's narrative, but it is written at too great length for our purpose. We, therefore, leave this wonderful prison-breaker to close his story in the following words:

From Trent I went to Bolzano, where, being in want of money to buy clothes and linen, I addressed myself to a banker, named Mensch, who furnished me with a trusty messenger, by whom I sent a letter to Signor Bragadin. The old banker established me in a good inn, and there I stayed in bed for six days, at the end of which time my messenger returned. He brought me a hundred sequins, with which I provided Balbi and myself with what we most required. We then took post through the Tyrol, and on the third day reached Munich, where I put up at the "Stag." Eventually, without hindrance, having procured more money from Venice, and parted from Balbi, I continued my journey to Paris, where I arrived on the 5th of January, 1757.

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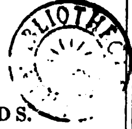

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER IX.

THREE months passed. During that time, Frank remained in London; pursuing his new duties, and writing occasionally to report himself to Mr. Vanstone, as he had promised.

His letters were not enthusiastic on the subject of mercantile occupations. He described himself as being still painfully loose in his figures. He was also more firmly persuaded than ever—now when it was unfortunately too late—that he preferred engineering to trade. In spite of this conviction; in spite of headaches, caused by sitting on a high stool and stooping over ledgers in unwholesome air; in spite of want of society, and hasty breakfasts, and bad dinners at chop-houses, his attendance at the office was regular, and his diligence at the desk unremitting. The head of the department in which he was working might be referred to, if any corroboration of this statement was desired. Such was the general tenour of the letters; and Frank's correspondent and Frank's father differed over them, as widely as usual. Mr. Vanstone accepted them, as proofs of the steady development of industrious principles in the writer. Mr. Clare took his own characteristically opposite view. "These London men," said the philosopher, "are not to be trifled with by louts. They have got Frank by the scruff of the neck—he can't wriggle himself free—and he makes a merit of yielding to sheer necessity."

The three months' interval of Frank's probation in London, passed less cheerfully than usual in the household at Combe-Raven.

As the summer came nearer and nearer, Mrs. Vanstone's spirits, in spite of her resolute efforts to control them, became more and more depressed. "I do my best," she said to Miss Garth; "I set an example of cheerfulness to my husband and my children—but I dread July." Norah's secret misgivings on her sister's account rendered her more than usually serious and uncommunicative, as the year advanced. Even Mr. Vanstone, when July drew nearer, lost something of his elasticity of spirit. He kept up appearances in his wife's presence—but, on all other occasions, there was now a perceptible shade of sadness in his look and manner. Magdalen was so changed since Frank's departure, that she helped the general depression, instead of relieving it. All her movements had grown languid; all her usual occupations were pursued with the same weary indifference; she spent hours alone in her own room; she lost her interest in being brightly and prettily dressed; her eyes were heavy, her nerves were irritable, her complexion was altered visibly for the worse—in one word, she had become an oppression and a weariness to herself and to all about her. Stoutly as Miss Garth contended with these growing domestic difficulties, her own spirits suffered in the effort. Her memory reverted, oftener and oftener, to the March morning when the master and mistress of the house had departed for London, and when the first serious change, for many a year past, had stolen over the family atmosphere. When was that atmosphere to be clear again? When were the clouds of change to pass off before the returning sunshine of past and happier times?

The spring and the early summer wore away. The dreaded month of July came, with its airless nights, its cloudless mornings, and its sultry days.

On the fifteenth of the month an event happened which took every one but Norah by surprise. For the second time, without the slightest apparent reason—for the second time, without a word of warning beforehand—Frank suddenly reappeared at his father's cottage!

Mr. Clare's lips opened to hail his son's return, in the old character of the "bad shilling;" and closed again without uttering a word. There was a portentous composure in Frank's manner which showed that he had other news to communicate than the news of his dismissal. He answered his father's sardonic look of inquiry, by at once explaining that a very important proposal for his future benefit had been made to him, that morning, at the office. His first idea had been to communicate the details in writing; but the partners had, on reflection, thought that the necessary decision might be more readily obtained by a personal interview with his father and his friends. He had laid aside the pen accordingly; and had resigned himself to the railway on the spot.

After this preliminary statement, Frank pro-

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ceeded to describe the proposal which his employers had addressed to him, with every external appearance of viewing it in the light of an intolerable hardship.

The great firm in the City had obviously made a discovery in relation to their clerk, exactly similar to the discovery which had formerly forced itself on the engineer in relation to his pupil. The young man, as they politely phrased it, stood in need of some special stimulant to stir him up. His employers (acting under a sense of their obligation to the gentleman by whom Frank had been recommended) had considered the question carefully, and had decided that the one promising use to which they could put Mr. Francis Clare was to send him forthwith into another quarter of the globe.

As a consequence of this decision, it was now therefore proposed, that he should enter the house of their correspondents in China; that he should remain there, familiarising himself thoroughly on the spot with the tea-trade and the silk-trade, for five years; and that he should return, at the expiration of this period, to the central establishment in London. If he made a fair use of his opportunities in China, he would come back, while still a young man, fit for a position of trust and emolument, and justified in looking forward, at no distant date, to a time when the House would assist him to start in business for himself. Such were the new prospects which—to adopt Mr. Clare's theory—now forced themselves on the ever-reluctant, ever-helpless, and ever-ungrateful Frank. There was no time to be lost. The final answer was to be at the office on "Monday, the twentieth;" the correspondents in China were to be written to by the mail on that day; and Frank was to follow the letter by the next opportunity, or to resign his chance in favour of some more enterprising young man.

Mr. Clare's reception of this extraordinary news was startling in the extreme. The glorious prospect of his son's banishment to China appeared to turn his brain. The firm pedestal of his philosophy sank under him; the prejudices of society recovered their hold on his mind. He seized Frank by the arm, and actually accompanied him to Combe-Raven, in the amazing character of a visitor to the house!

"Here I am with my lout," said Mr. Clare, before a word could be uttered by the astonished family. "Hear his story, all of you. It has reconciled me, for the first time in my life, to the anomaly of his existence." Frank ruefully narrated the Chinese proposal for the second time, and attempted to attach to it his own supplementary statement of objections and difficulties. His father stopped him at the first word, pointed peremptorily south-eastward (from Somersetshire to China); and said, without an instant's hesitation: "Go!" Mr. Vanstone, basking in golden visions of his young friend's future, echoed that monosyllabic decision with all his heart. Mrs. Vanstone, Miss Garth, even Norah herself, spoke to the same purpose. Frank was petrified by an absolute unanimity of opinion which he had not anticipated; and Magdalen was caught, for once in her life, at the end of all her resources.

So far as practical results were concerned, the sitting of the family council began and ended with the general opinion that Frank must go. Mr. Vanstone's faculties were so bewildered by the son's sudden arrival, the father's unexpected visit, and the news they both brought with them, that he petitioned for an adjournment, before the necessary arrangements connected with his young friend's departure were considered in detail. "Suppose we all sleep upon it?" he said. "To-morrow, our heads will feel a little steadier; and to-morrow will be time enough to decide all uncertainties." This suggestion was readily adopted; and all further proceedings stood adjourned until the next day.

That next day was destined to decide more uncertainties than Mr. Vanstone dreamed of.

Early in the morning, after making tea by herself as usual, Miss Garth took her parasol, and strolled into the garden. She had slept ill; and ten minutes in the open air before the family assembled at breakfast, might help to compensate her, as she thought, for the loss of her night's rest.

She wandered to the outermost boundary of the flower-garden, and then returned by another path, which led back, past the side of an ornamental summer-house commanding a view over the fields from a corner of the lawn. A slight noise—like, and yet not like, the chirruping of a bird—caught her ear, as she approached the side of the summer-house. She stepped round to the entrance; looked in; and discovered Magdalen and Frank seated close together. To Miss Garth's horror, Magdalen's arm was unmistakably round Frank's neck; and, worse still, the position of her face, at the moment of discovery, showed beyond all doubt, that she had just been offering to the victim of Chinese commerce, the first and foremost of all the consolations which a woman can bestow on a man. In plainer words, she had just given Frank a kiss.

In the presence of such an emergency as now confronted her, Miss Garth felt instinctively that all ordinary phrases of reproof would be phrases thrown away.

"I presume," she remarked, addressing Magdalen with the merciless self-possession of a middle-aged lady, unprovided for the occasion with any kissing remembrances of her own—"I presume (whatever excuses your effrontery may suggest) you will not deny that my duty compels me to mention what I have just seen to your father?"

"I will save you the trouble," replied Magdalen, composedly. "I will mention it to him myself."

With those words, she looked round at Frank, standing trebly helpless in a corner of the summer-house. "You shall hear what happens,"

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she said, with her bright smile. "And so shall you," she added for Miss Garth's especial benefit, as she sauntered past the governess, on her way back to the breakfast-table. The eyes of Miss Garth followed her indignantly; and Frank slipped out, on his side, at that favourable opportunity.

Under these circumstances, there was but one course that any respectable woman could take—she could only shudder. Miss Garth registered her protest in that form, and then returned to the house.

When breakfast was over, and when Mr. Vanstone's hand descended to his pocket in search of his cigar-case, Magdalen rose; looked significantly at Miss Garth; and followed her father into the hall.

"Papa," she said, "I want to speak to you this morning—in private."

"Ay! ay!" returned Mr. Vanstone. "What about, my dear?"

"About——" Magdalen hesitated, searched for a satisfactory form of expression, and found it. "About business, papa," she said.

Mr. Vanstone took his garden-hat from the hall-table—opened his eyes in mute perplexity—attempted to associate in his mind the two extravagantly dissimilar ideas of Magdalen and "business"—failed—and led the way resignedly into the garden.

His daughter took his arm, and walked with him to a shady seat at a convenient distance from the house. She dusted the seat with her smart silk apron, before her father occupied it. Mr. Vanstone was not accustomed to such an extraordinary act of attention as this. He sat down, looking more puzzled than ever. Magdalen immediately placed herself on his knee, and rested her head comfortably on his shoulder.

"Am I heavy, papa?" she asked.

"Yes, my dear, you are," said Mr. Vanstone—"but not too heavy for *me*. Stop on your perch, if you like it. Well? And what may this business happen to be?"

"It begins with a question."

"Ah, indeed? That doesn't surprise me. Business with your sex, my dear, always begins with questions. Go on."

"Papa! do you ever intend allowing me to be married?"

Mr. Vanstone's eyes opened wider and wider. The question, to use his own phrase, completely staggered him.

"This is business with a vengeance!" he said. "Why, Magdalen! what have you got in that harum-scarum head of yours now?"

"I don't exactly know, papa. Will you answer my question?"

"I will if I can, my dear; you rather stagger me. Well, I don't know. Yes; I suppose I must let you be married, one of these days—if we can find a good husband for you. How hot your face is! Lift it up, and let the air blow over it. You won't? Well—have your own way. If talking of business means tickling your cheek against my whisker, I've nothing to say against it. Go on, my dear. What's the next question? Come to the point!"

She was far too genuine a woman to do anything of the sort. She skirted round the point, and calculated her distance to the nicety of a hair's breadth.

"We were all very much surprised, yesterday—were we not, papa? Frank is wonderfully lucky, isn't he?"

"He's the luckiest dog I ever came across," said Mr. Vanstone. "But what has that got to do with this business of yours? I dare say you see your way, Magdalen. Hang me, if I can see mine!"

She skirted a little nearer.

"I suppose he will make his fortune in China?" she said. "It's a long way off, isn't it? Did you observe, papa, that Frank looked sadly out of spirits yesterday?"

"I was so surprised by the news," said Mr. Vanstone, "and so staggered by the sight of old Clare's sharp nose in my house, that I didn't much notice. Now you remind me of it—yes. I don't think Frank took kindly to his own good luck; not kindly at all."

"Do you wonder at that, papa?"

"Yes, my dear; I do, rather."

"Don't you think it's hard to be sent away for five years, to make your fortune among hateful savages, and lose sight of your friends at home for all that long time? Don't you think Frank will miss *us*, sadly? Don't you, papa?—don't you?"

"Gently, Magdalen! I'm a little too old for those long arms of yours to throttle me in fun.—You're right, my love. Nothing in this world, without a drawback. Frank *will* miss his friends in England: there's no denying that."

"You always liked Frank. And Frank always liked you."

"Yes, yes—a good fellow; a quiet, good fellow. Frank and I have always got on smoothly together."

"You have got on like father and son, haven't you?"

"Certainly, my dear."

"Perhaps you will think it harder on him when he has gone, than you think it now?"

"Likely enough, Magdalen; I don't say, no."

"Perhaps you will wish he had stopped in England? Why shouldn't he stop in England. and do as well as if he went to China?"

"My dear! he has no prospects in England I wish he had, for his own sake. I wish the lad well, with all my heart."

"May I wish him well, too, papa—with all *my* heart?"

"Certainly, my love—your old playfellow—why not? What's the matter? God bless my soul, what is the girl crying about? One would think Frank was transported for life. You goose! You know, as well as I do, he is going to China to make his fortune."

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"He doesn't want to make his fortune—he might do much better."

"The deuce he might! How—I should like to know?"

"I'm afraid to tell you. I'm afraid you'll laugh at me. Will you promise not to laugh at me?"

"Anything to please you, my dear. Yes: I promise. Now then, out with it! How might Frank do better?"

"He might marry Me."

If the summer-scene which then spread before Mr. Vanstone's eyes, had suddenly changed to a dreary winter view—if the trees had lost all their leaves, and the green fields had turned white with snow, in an instant—his face could hardly have expressed greater amazement than it displayed, when his daughter's faltering voice spoke those four last words. He tried to look at her—but she steadily refused him the opportunity: she kept her face hidden over his shoulder. Was she in earnest? His cheek, still wet with her tears, answered for her. There was a long pause of silence; she waited—with unaccustomed patience, she waited for him to speak. He roused himself, and spoke these words only:—"You surprise me, Magdalen; you surprise me, more than I can say."

At the altered tone of his voice—altered to a quiet fatherly seriousness—Magdalen's arms clung round him closer than before.

"Have I disappointed you, papa?" she asked, faintly. "Don't say I have disappointed you! Who am I to tell my secret to, if not to you? Don't let him go—don't! don't! You will break his heart. He is afraid to tell his father; he is even afraid *you* might be angry with him. There is nobody to speak for us, except—except me. Oh, don't let him go! Don't for his sake—" she whispered the next words in a kiss—"Don't for Mine!"

Her father's kind face saddened; he sighed, and patted her fair head tenderly. "Hush, my love," he said, almost in a whisper; "hush!" She little knew what a revelation every word, every action that escaped her, now opened before him. She had made him her grown-up playfellow, from her childhood to that day. She had romped with him in her frocks, she had gone on romping with him in her gowns. He had never been long enough separated from her to have the external changes in his daughter forced on his attention. His artless fatherly experience of her, had taught him that she was a taller child in later years—and had taught him little more. And now, in one breathless instant, the conviction that she was a woman rushed over his mind. He felt it in the trouble of her bosom pressed against his; in the nervous thrill of her arms clasped round his neck. The Magdalen of his innocent experience, a woman—with the master-passion of her sex in possession of her heart already!

"Have you thought long of this, my dear?" he asked, as soon as he could speak composedly. "Are you sure——?"

She answered the question before he could finish it.

"Sure I love him?" she said. "Oh, what words can say Yes for me as I want to say it! I love him——!" Her voice faltered softly; and her answer ended in a sigh.

"You are very young. You and Frank, my love, are both very young."

She raised her head from his shoulder for the first time. The thought and its expression flashed from her at the same moment.

"Are we much younger than you and mamma were?" she asked, smiling through her tears.

She tried to lay her head back in its old position; but as she spoke those words, her father caught her round the waist—forced her, before she was aware of it, to look him in the face—and kissed her, with a sudden outburst of tenderness which brought the tears thronging back thickly into her eyes. "Not much younger, my child," he said, in low, broken tones—"not much younger than your mother and I were." He put her away from him, and rose from the seat, and turned his head aside quickly. "Wait here, and compose yourself; I will go in-doors and speak to your mother." His voice trembled over those parting words: and he left her without once looking round again.

She waited—waited a weary time; and he never came back. At last, her growing anxiety urged her to follow him into the house. A new timidity throbbed in her heart, as she doubtingly approached the door. Never had she seen the depths of her father's simple nature stirred as they had been stirred by her confession. She almost dreaded her next meeting with him. She wandered softly to and fro in the hall, with a shyness unaccountable to herself; with a terror of being discovered and spoken to by her sister or Miss Garth, which made her nervously susceptible to the slightest noises in the house. The door of the morning-room opened, while her back was turned towards it. She started violently, as she looked round and saw her father in the hall: her heart beat faster and faster, and she felt herself turning pale. A second look at him, as he came nearer, reassured her. He was composed again, though not so cheerful as usual. She noticed that he advanced and spoke to her with a forbearing gentleness, which was more like his manner to her mother, than his ordinary manner to herself.

"Go in, my love," he said, opening the door for her which he had just closed. "Tell your mother all you have told me—and more, if you have more to say. She is better prepared for you than I was. We will take to-day to think of it, Magdalen; and to-morrow you shall know, and Frank shall know, what we decide."

Her eyes brightened, as they looked into his face, and saw the decision there already, with the double penetration of her womanhood and her love. Happy, and beautiful in her happiness, she put his hand to her lips, and went without

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hesitation into the morning-room. There, her father's words had smoothed the way for her: there, the first shock of the surprise was past and over, and only the pleasure of it remained. Her mother had been her age once; her mother would know how fond she was of Frank. So the coming interview was anticipated in her thoughts; and—except that there was an unaccountable appearance of restraint in Mrs. Vanstone's first reception of her—was anticipated aright. After a little, the mother's questions came more and more unreservedly from the sweet, unforgotten experience of the mother's heart: she lived again through her own young days of hope and love in Magdalen's replies.

The next morning, the all-important decision was announced in words. Mr. Vanstone took his daughter up-stairs into her mother's room, and there placed before her the result of the yesterday's consultation, and of the night's reflection which had followed it. He spoke with perfect kindness and self-possesion of manner—but in fewer and more serious words than usual; and he held his wife's hand tenderly in his own, all through the interview.

He informed Magdalen that neither he nor her mother felt themselves justified in blaming her attachment to Frank. It had been, in part perhaps, the natural consequence of her childish familiarity with him; in part, also, the result of the closer intimacy between them which the theatrical entertainment had necessarily produced. At the same time, it was now the duty of her parents to put that attachment, on both sides, to a proper test—for her sake, because her happy future was their dearest care; for Frank's sake, because they were bound to give him the opportunity of showing himself worthy of the trust confided in him. They were both conscious of being strongly prejudiced in Frank's favour. His father's eccentric conduct had made the lad the object of their compassion and their care, from his earliest years: he (and his younger brothers) had almost filled the places to them of those other children of their own whom they had lost. Although they firmly believed their good opinion of Frank to be well founded—still, in the interest of their daughter's happiness, it was necessary to put that opinion firmly to the proof, by fixing certain conditions, and by interposing a year of delay between the contemplated marriage and the present time.

During that year, Frank was to remain at the office in London; his employers being informed beforehand that family circumstances prevented his accepting their offer of employment in China. He was to consider this concession as a recognition of the attachment between Magdalen and himself, on certain terms only. If, during the year of probation, he failed to justify the confidence placed in him—a confidence which had led Mr. Vanstone to take unreservedly upon himself the whole responsibility of Frank's future prospects—the marriage scheme was to be considered, from that moment, as at an end. If, on the other hand, the result to which Mr. Vanstone confidently looked forward, really occurred—if Frank's probationary year proved his claim to the most precious trust that could be placed in his hands—then, Magdalen herself should reward him with all that a woman can bestow; and the future which his present employers had placed before him as the result of a five years' residence in China, should be realised in one year's time, by the dowry of his young wife.

As her father drew that picture of the future, the outburst of Magdalen's gratitude could no longer be restrained. She was deeply touched—she spoke from her inmost heart. Mr. Vanstone waited until his daughter and his wife were composed again; and then added the last words of explanation which were now left for him to speak.

"You understand, my love," he said, "that I am not anticipating Frank's living in idleness on his wife's means? My plan for him is that he should still profit by the interest which his present employers take in him. Their knowledge of affairs in the City will soon place a good partnership at his disposal—and you will give him the money to buy it out of hand. I shall limit the sum, my dear, to half your fortune; and the other half I shall have settled upon yourself. We shall all be alive and hearty, I hope"—he looked tenderly at his wife as he said those words—"all alive and hearty at the year's end. But if I am gone, Magdalen, it will make no difference. My will—made long before I ever thought of having a son-in-law—divides my fortune into two equal parts. One part goes to your mother; and the other part is fairly divided between my children. You will have your share on your wedding-day (and Norah will have hers when she marries) from my own hand, if I live; and under my will if I die. There! there! no gloomy faces," he said, with a momentary return of his every-day good spirits. "Your mother and I mean to live and see Frank a great merchant. I shall leave you, my dear, to enlighten the son on our new projects, while I walk over to the cottage——"

He stopped; his eyebrows contracted a little; and he looked aside hesitatingly at Mrs. Vanstone.

"What must you do at the cottage, papa?" asked Magdalen, after having vainly waited for him to finish the sentence of his own accord.

"I must consult Frank's father," he replied. "We must not forget that Mr. Clare's consent is still wanting to settle this matter. And as time presses, and we don't know what difficulties he may not raise, the sooner I see him the better."

He gave that answer in low, altered tones; and rose from his chair in a half-reluctant, half-resigned manner, which Magdalen observed with secret alarm.

She glanced inquiringly at her mother. To all appearance, Mrs. Vanstone had been alarmed by the change in him also. She looked anxious and uneasy; she turned her face away on the

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sofa pillow—turned it suddenly, as if she was in pain.

"Are you not well, mamma," asked Magdalen.

"Quite well, my love," said Mrs. Vanstone, shortly and sharply, without turning round. "Leave me a little—I only want rest."

Magdalen went out with her father.

"Papa!" she whispered anxiously, as they descended the stairs. "You don't think Mr. Clare will say No?"

"I can't tell beforehand," answered Mr. Vanstone. "I hope he will say Yes."

"There is no reason why he should say anything else—is there?"

She put the question faintly, while he was getting his hat and stick; and he did not appear to hear her. Doubting whether she should repeat it or not, she accompanied him as far as the garden, on his way to Mr. Clare's cottage. He stopped her on the lawn, and sent her back to the house.

"You have nothing on your head, my dear," he said. "If you want to be in the garden, don't forget how hot the sun is—don't come out without your hat."

He walked on towards the cottage.

She waited a moment, and looked after him. She missed the customary flourish of his stick; she saw his little Scotch terrier, who had run out at his heels, barking and capering about him unnoticed. He was out of spirits: he was strangely out of spirits. What did it mean?

MRS. MOHAMMED BEY "AT HOME."

Women travelling in the East have one advantage over male voyagers, and that is in the power of entering into the penetralia of the harem (pronounced hahrém, or sometimes hahrum), if an opportunity for so doing be afforded them.

During a brief stay in Cairo with friends of considerable influence there, such an occasion offered itself to me.

In the house next to the one in which I was visiting, a wedding was in progress; I say in progress, seeing that the ceremonies attendant thereon lasted five days. The house in question had belonged to Selim Pasha, a Turkish grandee, and very wealthy, but who had, shortly before, quitted this sublunary sphere: leaving his wealth, his harem, and his children, under the tutelage of persons appointed to undertake that charge. It was his eldest son, a youth who had attained the ripe age of fourteen, who was now being married. The bride was a Circassian slave, brought up and much beloved by the mother of Abbas Pasha, late nephew to the reigning viceroy, and who, a few years before, had been quietly disposed of, as was commonly believed, through the instrumentality of Nasli Hanoum, his aunt; but at all events with the approval, and probably the connivance, of all the family, as a measure of self-defence. The old lady, being of an advanced age, and wishing to provide for her protégé before her death, had made up the present match.

Often sunning myself on the balcony—for the season was winter, and the wind sometimes chilly—I used to look with curiosity into my neighbour's premises. The house, a very large one, stood between a court and garden, far back from the street, much farther than ours, so that we commanded a view of the whole of one side of it. It was built with the usual flat roof, which is common to all dwellings in Egypt, and with the windows of the harem, only excepting those looking on the gardens which specially belonged to it, very small, and so high up as to be quite beyond the reach of the inmates. Even the windows on the garden had close carved lattice-work more than half their height outside the casements. Attached to the house were a number of outbuildings, most of them in grievous want of repair, as is the custom of those regions, where hardly a wall is without vast cracks and seams, to say nothing of more serious dilapidation. It is said that a week of rain at Cairo, which happily is a circumstance unknown in its annals, would bring down the greater portion of the city. But this by the way.

The space between some of those buildings was closed in by canvas coverings, and from thence proceeded frequently the sounds of music, chiefly instrumental, but occasionally vocal as well. I had never heard Turkish music performed by a Turkish band, and was very glad of this opportunity. The music was quite peculiar, unlike any other I have had any experience of, and some of it was really fine. To English ears it has little melody—using the word in the technical sense—is generally monotonous, and often trivial—but occasionally there come wild bursts, snatches of

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that are very striking indeed. There are often, too, odd breaks in the air, as played by the leading instrument, while the accompaniment fills up the space until it be resumed, and then keeps up rather an echo of it than a simultaneous sound, which, in itself, produces a singular effect. The instruments I could not see; they seemed to be chiefly of brass, with drums of a dull sound, tambourines, and some other instruments in the nature of cymbals, but less loud and clashing.

From chimneys built in all sorts of queer places, most of them opening a little above the surface of the ground, issued the smoke of the cookery perpetually going on—forty sheep alone were slaughtered for the occasion, and the quantity of poultry sacrificed must have been almost beyond computation. The kites, which swarm in Cairo, gathered by scores to pick up the offal cast into the yards. At times, the air would literally be darkened and troubled by the wheelings of these picturesque scavengers, and resonant with their little vibrating tremulous whistle: while rows of them sat along the parapet running round the roof. Now and then

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some of the number would swoop, would rise again with a prize, and then would commence a chase of doublings, soarings, twistings, wheelings, and sharp cries: while, at times, one who had been so fortunate as to carry off his prey unobserved, might be seen tearing and devouring it with claws and beak while still on the wing.

So much for the exoteric turn of matters. But soon an unexpected opportunity was given me of judging of the esoteric; an invitation, of which the following is a literal translation, being procured by one of my friends, through a Turkish acquaintance intimate with the family of the bridegroom:

TO THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS MR. C——.

The Lord having afforded Mohammed Bey, son of the late Selim Pasha Tuturigi, happiness and joy, he desires that thou shouldst be pleased to see it, and therefore begs thee to honour the above-mentioned Bey's house, near the Esbekiah, by your company this evening, Wednesday, 7 Sciaban, 1278, at half-past one by Turkish reckoning, together with the lady Madame R., and the other lady.

May the Almighty prolong thy life.

The seal (or stamp) of

O

IBRAHIM, Wekil.*

It will be observed that in this invitation no particular allusion is made to the occasion on which "happiness and joy" are "afforded by the Lord" to Mohammed Bey, it being entirely contrary to Turkish etiquette for men ever to make any mention to each other of their harems, or the inhabitants thereof. Turks do not sign their names in writing, but stamp them with a signet, which they always carry about for the purpose.

This invitation was for the last day of the festival. It had been announced to us some time previously that we were to receive it, and about five o'clock it was brought by a messenger, with a request that we would accompany him to the house. We entered a court-yard, crossed it, and found ourselves in a sort of outer hall, where a number of persons and some of the musicians were assembled. Here we had to separate from the gentleman who accompanied us, he being led to join the male guests, while a Nubian eunuch, lifting the heavy curtain that fell over an arch, conducted my lady friend and myself to the staircase leading to the harem. Mounting this, we were met by a Circassian slave, light skinned and fair-haired, with a very beautiful figure though a somewhat plain face, and by her we were ushered into a large room, where several inmates of the harem were scattered in picturesque confusion.

Anything more strangely incongruous than the aspect of the place and of its inhabitants it is impossible to conceive. The walls of the room were covered with an ugly common European paper, and the floor with a gaudy and equally ugly Brussels carpet. Round the walls, were ranged a drawing-room set of two sofas and some chairs, covered with dark green silk. In the middle of the room stood a little round table, with a covering of the cheapest and most ordinary brown and white cotton print, trimmed with a coarse edging, such as may be bought in England for about a penny the dozen yards.

At one end of the room three large windows, but sheltered outside with the carved lattice-work, looked into the garden, and all along this end was a divan of crimson and gold-coloured satin, while some large cushions of the same were placed on the floor. On these sofas and chairs some of the ladies were sitting; others were gathered up, with their legs under them—not cross-legged—the Turks, both men and women, generally keep their legs up on their seat, but rather tucked up than crossed—and others squatted on the cushions and on the carpets, amid pipes and coffee-cups.

Of these ladies, truth compels me to state that few were young, still fewer at all good-looking. They were of all shades of complexion and casts of feature, one or two being nearly black and with negro faces, while others were fair and had no Oriental type at all in their countenances. Not one, however, had the slightest freshness or brightness of colouring, and the weary listlessness of expression visible—in the slaves especially—was too marked to escape notice. Many of the older women were immensely fat, and so unwieldy, that when they sat down, they had to be hauled up by some of their more active companions.

I observed that the same incongruity which marked the style of the furniture displayed itself in the women's dresses. A few were handsomely attired; others were a curious mixture of splendour and shabbiness; others were mere bundles of old clothes.

The costume consisted, first of a nondescript garment—half skirt, half trousers—wrapped loosely about the figure from the waist to the feet. This is a necessary part of every dress. Over this, some wore a tunic of another colour and material. Sometimes, the dress had a body to correspond, crossing over the bosom, with large loose sleeves and very short waist. But in general a jacket, long or short, in some cases quite loose, in others fitting the figure pretty closely, was worn over an under-vest. The head-dress consisted generally of a little Cashmere handkerchief, black or of some bright colour, and edged with gold or silver tinsel or spangles, pinned about the head; in some instances it was decorated with stars and other ornaments in diamonds; but some of the ladies, the old ones especially, had their heads tied up in anything that came to hand. I did not see a single turban in the harem. Long hair seems much prized among these fair ones, and I was amused at the naïve attempts made by some of those, who evidently studied appearance, to produce a semblance of it. I (being short-sighted) was struck with admiration at the two long thick plaited tails that fell low down the back of a lady handsomely dressed in rich lilac silk, trimmed with silver. But when the lady

* Wekil, pronounced Wekeel, is literally Lieutenant, and means a representative or agent.

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approached, I perceived that the hair which showed under her head-dress was black, while the tails were of a light brown.

To return to our reception. We were led to the divan at the end of the room, where two or three of the women were lounging, and where a fat shabby elderly lady (as a general rule all the elderly ladies were fat and shabby), with a good countenance, addressed herself to us. My companion speaking Arabic, with which most of the women are acquainted, though their own language is Turkish, and this being an accomplishment which I had not attained to, the burden of conversation fell upon her. While she and the old lady conversed, all the others looked on and listened, occasionally making remarks to each other in Turkish—on the subject, as it seemed, of their discourse. Meantime pipes and coffee were brought us by two young slaves, better dressed than the generality of their mistresses, with whom they seemed on very easy terms. The pipes were long chibouks, having amber mouthpieces, ornamented with diamonds; and the tobacco was so mild that I found it rather agreeable to smoke. The coffee, which was very strong and very sweet, and without milk, was served scalding hot, in tiny china cups, without saucers, but inserted in *sarfs*, which are precisely like egg-cups; these are in universal use in Egypt, as well with Europeans as with Turks. The common sort are made in clay or brass; the better, in silver filigree; and some of the finest are of magnificent materials and workmanship. Those on the present occasion were of open-work silver, with medallions of flowers in coloured enamels. And here I may remark that, throughout, the manners of these women were precisely those of children: children who lived a life of perpetual idleness, who were, for the most part, considerably bored thereby, and who were pleased and amused to get hold of anything in the way of novelty, and disposed to be kind and courteous to the strangers who brought them a new sensation.

The old lady having asked innumerable questions as to our names, ages, families, and so forth, there commenced an examinationof some trinkets we wore. A gold bracelet with little golden balls hanging from it having especially attracted the dame's attention, she clasped it on her own wrist, and, having contemplated it with considerable complacency, calmly requested my friend to make her a backshish thereof; but the request being declined, on the score that the bracelet was a keepsake, she returned it, somewhat disappointed, but not the least abashed at the refusal. Meanwhile, innumerable women, whom we had not seen at first, came and went, gliding about silently in yellow or embroidered slippers: though some wore leather boots, apparently of European make, but embroidered up the fronts with gold.

Presently, when we were beginning rather to wonder what was to be done next, there was a little stir in the room, and in walked a rather short and stout old lady, whose toilet was by no means remarkable for either elegance or tidiness, and whose head was bound up in two dark cotton pocket-handkerchiefs of the very commonest kind—one round her forehead, the other tied under her chin, gipsy-fashion, the corner hanging down behind, while a small interregnum of extremely unkempt hair was visible between the two. This lady, whose graciousness and dignity were in no wise affected by her state of dishabille, made us welcome in a way that showed she was the chief personage of the house, and indeed her manner was not without a certain ease and courtesy. She was, I believe, the mother of the defunct Selim Pasha, and grandmother of the bridegroom, consequently mistress of the harem.

During all this time we had not the slightest idea of the programme of the entertainment, how long we were expected to stay, or what we were expected to do. This was, as may be supposed, a slight source of embarrassment, especially as the conversation began most palpably to flag. The striking up of some music—the musicians being invisible—was a little relief. Most singular music it was. First, came a dull monotonous sound, as of tambourines without bells being struck in rhythm, first with the knuckles, then with the palm of the hand. Presently, followed the voices of eunuchs and women rising in one long vibrating shrill cry on a single note, beginning softly, swelling by degrees into a ringing tremulous thrilling treble which had an almost unearthly sound, then ceasing by degrees: the tambourine accompaniment forming all the while a sort of background which still added to the effect. This, we were told, was called a fantasia, but I must own that, singular as the performance was, there was an extremely limited amount of fancy expended on it.

Twilight now falling, lights were brought, and we were beginning to consult on the propriety of taking our departure, when the lady in lilac and silver returned and invited us to follow her into an adjoining room.

Not at all knowing why or wherefore, we obeyed, and were introduced into a small apartment with a good deal of gilding and blazing with light, where a number of women were assembled, most of them standing. At first, in the crowd and the sudden glare of light—for the outer room, probably with design, was very dimly illuminated—I distinguished nothing in particular; but, on advancing a few steps, I suddenly became aware of what appeared to me at the first glance some glittering image or idol, seated in a corner of the room on a high triangular divan of state, covered with crimson satin embroidered in gold.

This was the bride.

Immediately, gilt and satin-covered chairs were placed for us, within a yard of the divan, and directly in front of it; and the invitation, "Shoof aroussa" (Look at the bride), was given.

I have seldom experienced so singular an impression as that which seized me on obeying the injunction.

There she sat, a girl of sixteen, very beautiful, rich in the full possession of her woman's charms, but no woman. For the time being, she was

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simply the aroussa—a show, a sight, a thing on which to hang gorgeous jewels, gold, glittering stuffs, feathers, embroidery — nothing more.

She sat upright, supported and surrounded by cushions, her legs tucked or crossed under her, her hands folded on her lap, her eyes drooped. This position she never changed during the whole time—about an hour and a half—that we remained there. I shall never forget the cold handsome scornful weary face I then gazed on, nor the suggestions it conveyed to me of the struggles between the external and internal life some of these women must undergo, before they settle down into the usual routine of the harem existence.

There was this young creature, passively and silently submitting to what, to any woman, must have been a frightful penance, physical as well as moral—submitting without a murmer expressed, while her face was one persistent protest against the enthralment she was enduring, and which must have been inexpressibly painful, for her finely-cut closed lips were nearly colourless, and all her face was wan with the fatigues and constraint of her position, maintained daily during many consecutive hours.

Her dress consisted of a pale yellow silk robe, stiff and heavy with gold embroidery. Her head-dress was a mass of diamonds; at one side of her head were two feathers, a pink and an azure; on the other, falling on the neck, a dark blue feather: while a sort of lappet of some gold fabric hung down on either shoulder. Round her neck was a gorgeous necklace of pearls, emeralds, and diamonds; and, strange to see, on her chin, and on either cheek, diamonds were stuck in little clusters—I suppose with some paste or gum.

In addition to the innumerable lights in the room, there was placed on the floor, on either side of the bride, a brass candlestick, between three and four feet high, containing a huge candle with flowers painted on it. Cushions and mattresses were laid around, and on these the ladies coming and going, sat and chatted: their attention divided between the bride and us. While we stared, as it was evidently expected we should stare, at the unhappy aroussa, and discussed the fresh pipes and coffee that were brought. And now, by degrees, the tone of decorum that had hitherto prevailed began to relax. A third fat shabby elderly lady—the fattest we had yet seen—having imprudently squatted on the floor beside my friend, for the greater convenience of conversing and inspecting us and our dresses, finding it impossible to get on her feet again by her own unassisted efforts, beckoned to one of her younger companions to aid her in the operation, who responded by seizing her ankle, and dragging her forward, displaying, in so doing, a leg of curious proportions. Considerable mirth was excited by this sally, and the dame, who good humouredly joined in the laugh, having been hoisted to her feet, a fourth fat shabby lady took the place just vacated, and, having called our attention afresh to the bride—who but for the perpetual flashing glitter of gold and diamonds, caused by her respiration as the glare of light fell on her, showed no signs of life—she began to question my companion as to bridal customs and etiquette in England.

This old lady, who, in addition to being fat and shabby, was, as her subsequent conduct proved, so very jovial as to awaken a suspicion touching the use of stimulants, evidently considered that the answers indicated a very backward state of civilisation. Did they sing at the wedding? she inquired, beginning herself one of the tuneless monotonous chants of which Eastern song consists. No. She tossed her chin with an air of pitying contempt. Did they dance? And here, scrambling to her feet, she began a slow swaying rhythmed movement, twisting her arms and her head in a manner that would have been graceful had some twenty years been taken off the lady's age, and some four or five stone off her figure, accompanying the dance with a slow song (to which, however, she gave anything but a "slow" expression, in the slang acceptation of the word), and a clapping of the hands in time to the measure. And now, for the first and only time, did the bride indicate that she was a living woman, and not a deaf and dumb and blind and senseless image. At the first movement of the old lady, the shadow of a smile flickered over her fine set features, and was gone; but when the dance and song actually commenced, the passive scorn of her face changed for an instant into an indignant sneer; up went the chin, still lower dropped the lids, and a little, inarticulate sound, indicative of contemptuous impatience, escaped her lips; then again her face became rigid Meanwhile, considerable sensation was produced in the harem by the conduct of the old lady; and though some laughed, it was evident, from the demeanour of the ladies in general, that they were greatly scandalised by the proceeding. Many remonstrances were uttered, and various attempts made to put an end to the scene. But in vain. The dancer wavered and quavered on unheeding, addressing both dance and song especially to us, and, for the first time since my entrance into the harem, I began to acknowledge that there were cases where ignorance might be bliss; for there were evidently portions of the song so little suited to ears polite, that some of the women uttered exclamations of horror, and one or two covered their faces with their hands.

Presently, however, on the old dame's ceasing her movement and melody, and attempting to take a seat between us, apparently with the intention of enlightening our minds on the subject of the exhibition we had just witnessed, a tall handsome woman whom we had not before perceived, with a resolute face, firm, richly cut mouth, and splendid large bold eyes, came forward, pushed her away, and took the chair she was preparing to pos-

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sess herself of. This lady, who was evidently an authority in the harem, and who was more like a good-looking young man than a woman, began, with a determined rapid enunciation very unusual in Eastern women, to talk to my friend: the old lady, meanwhile, subsiding into silence and tranquillity.

Like all the East, her talk consisted almost entirely of a series of questions, while she leaned forward with her elbows on her knees, scanning us with her handsome insolent eyes in a manner that was really disconcerting. I thought, as I looked at her, here was another to whom harem discipline could not always have come easy!

At last, feeling that we were beginning to have enough of this, and shrewdly conjecturing that the bride must be having a deal too much of it—once while we sat, one of the women had arranged the pillows, the better to support her: she merely bending forward a little, and in no other way changing her position—we made a move to go. But the resolute lady and one or two others declared that we must positively stay to dine, and would take no refusal. Curious to see a Turkish dinner, we consented; and, after sitting a little while longer, the meal was announced, and we were taken back to the first room. The bride seemed no more cognisant of our departure than she had been of our arrival or of our presence, though I have little doubt she was heartily glad to get rid of us. She was, I trust, soon released from her durance vile.

On entering the room where we were to dine, we were placed on chairs at the cotton-covered table, and at the same time an immense tray was brought in and laid on it. In the centre was a huge turkey, dressed plain, though it looked too sodden to be roasted, and around were ranged little dishes of pickles, salt, sugar, and other condiments. We had plates, and were, moreover, favoured with knives and forks: respecting the necessity of which my friend had overheard a murmured conversation while we had been in the bride's room. All the spoons were of tortoiseshell or ivory, with rather flat bowls; and we had each a large napkin, worked at the ends with gold; and a small one more like an embroidered pocket-handkerchief. There was also Turkish bread: a sort of flat, soft, tough roll, cut into morsels, but not separated. Having taken our plates before us, a slave grasped the wing-bone of the turkey, nicked the joint very neatly with a knife, took off the wing, and then with her fingers tearing off long strips of the breast, put them on our plates. As we held it wise to follow as far as might be at Rome the customs of the Romans, we ate, and instantly another dish took the turkey's place, and then another, and then another, ad infinitum, with the most extraordinary rapidity. What the dishes were, or of what they consisted, it was impossible to say; and no order was observed as to the succession of meat and sweet dishes, the one replacing the other apparently at hazard. A tempting-looking white dish, we were told, was made of chicken, but on tasting it, it proved to be sweet and very sickly. It appeared to be considered a peculiar delicacy, and was composed of the white meat of chicken cut up very small, brayed in a mortar, and then mixed up with a variety of other ingredients, sweetened and perfumed.

One or two dishes were rather good, but as, from their number and rapid succession, we could barely taste them (of some, indeed, we only took morsels on our plates, which we pretended to take for courtesy's sake), we carried away a highly confused idea of the component parts of the feast. At last, to our great relief, dessert, and a huge glass bowl, not unlike a globe for gold fish but more open at the top, were brought in, and we were invited to drink. As neither glass, nor cup, nor any other convenience for drinking was supplied, we felt puzzled how to accede to the invitation, until large ivory and tortoiseshell spoons, or rather ladles, being produced, we were instructed to dip these into the bowl. This we did, and found the drink, which was clear and almost colourless, a sweet mawkish perfumed compound, in which were floating small slices of banana, and little stoneless raisins, or dried cherries. A very few sips were enough. We wound up with some morsels of apple, which the slave who chiefly served us had peeled and cut into little bits.

So singular and embarrassing a repast I never sat down to. The bold-eyed lady took her place beside me, and, quietly removing my bracelet—a chain with a diamond and enamelled locket—she, after examining it, folded her arms on the table and folded it in with them. On the other side, the old lady who had so distinguished herself in the dance and song, kept helping herself with her fingers from all the dishes; and as she had neither plate, spoon, nor napkin, the proceedings were not pleasant to witness. Only these two sat; but round the table crowded innumerable standing women, evidently curious to behold the spectacle of Europeans at feeding-time.

All this while, my bracelet was in the hands of my determined-looking neighbour; and how it was to be got out of those hands was a question my friend and I debated in brief sentences while we ate. At last, seeing the locket peeping out of the closed palm, I ventured, with the most insinuating smile I could command, to hold out my wrist, indicating the bracelet with my eye, the while. But the lady was little disposed to surrender her prize so easily. She asked if there were hair in the locket? And on being answered in the negative, she calmly expressed a wish to have a lock of mine to put in it and keep for a keepsake and tender souvenir! What excuse my friend gave for not acceding to this sentimental request I hardly know, but the result was that, with a very ill grace, the lady restored the bracelet, and, a moment afterwards, got up and walked off in extreme dudgeon.

Just as we were deliberating how to take our departure in a proper manner, a eunuch came to

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inform us that the gentleman who had accompanied us desired to know if we were ready to go home? The position having now become very difficult indeed, we hailed the message with considerable satisfaction, and requested the messenger to inform one of the chief ladies that we wished to express our thanks for the hospitality we had received, and to make our adieus. Also, we begged him to get my shawl, which had been taken off my shoulders before we sat down to dinner, and which did not appear to be forthcoming. Dashing in among the women in most unceremonious fashion, he presently returned with the shawl; then the lilac and silver lady and another lady came to receive our farewells, which, being tendered and graciously received, we took our departure and rejoined our escort at the bottom of the stairs.

He, it appeared, had also dined, but not, as in our case, in solitary grandeur, but with several other guests: among whom, happily, was a Frenchman of his acquaintance. He had also seen the bridegroom depart in state for the mosque. The boy looked, he told us, little older than any European lad of the same age. He was still in the hands of his tutor or governor, who had given him a week's holiday to be married in. After this remarkable vacation, he was to return to his studies and usual mode of life, and the bride was to remain in the harem of her grandmother-in-law until her husband should be of age to set up an establishment and harem of his own.

This arrangement is common in the East, where there is every reason to desire that a girl shall be either secured or provided for; superiority of age on the lady's side is considered a matter of no importance. One marriage of this kind was cited to me where the bridegroom was ten and the bride twenty-eight. As at that time of life, Eastern women already look old, the bride must have made rather a sorry figure when her husband came to years of discretion and set up his harem.

It seems to be pretty generally understood now that some of the more intelligent among the Turks are beginning to draw comparisons between their own customs and the European system of treating women, and that these are unfavourable to the former, and that the women themselves are not always satisfied to accept their present lot.

Halim Pasha, brother to the Viceroy, said to a friend of mine, "Some of our women complain that we care little for them individually, and ask why European husbands are content with one wife, to whom they can be fond and faithful. But how is it possible for us to attach ourselves seriously to one of our women? They have nothing to win respect and regard; they know nothing, they do nothing, they understand nothing, they think of nothing; they are mere children—utterly foolish, ignorant, and uncompanionable. We cannot *love* them in your sense of the word."

True, O Pasha! But whose fault is it? However, the first step towards remedying an evil, is, to become conscious of its existence; and this step is gained.

APRIL.

How many pipes have dittied unto thee,
  Rain-bringer, swathing the blue peaks in mist,
Whose blossom-lights are lit on wold and lea,
  Before the tempestings of March have ceast
To stir the heavens! Thy south wind comes and goes,
  And periwinkles twinkle in the grass,
    And oxlips faint amid the meadows cool:
Mayhap, the fiery-arched laburnum blows,
  Whilst, through the emerald darkness thou dost pass,
    With swallows skirring round the breezy pool.

With thee, ripe dawnings, saffron streaked with white,
  Float from the sunrise; and the happy lark,
Leaving the clover-buds to dew and night,
  Catches thy voice betwixt the light and dark.
By hooded porches, looking to the sun,
  The almond stirreth, and the wallflowers blush,
    Ascetic ivies pulse through stem and frond;
The jasmine bells, unfolding one by one,
  Take to their amber hearts a phantom flush;
    And long-haired willows whiten by the pond.

Season of broken cloud and misty heat,
  How the green lanes find echoes for thy horn,
Blown over purple moorlands, to the beat
  Of nodding marigolds in marsh and corn!
And thou hast benedictions for the birds,
  Couched in the red dead nettles, where they sit
    Choiring for seed-time; the poor robin shrills
A pipe of welcome; or, amid the herds,
  The martens chirrup greetings, as they flit
    Along the barren reaches of the hills.

Lo! as the day behind the chesnuts dies,
  And yonder cloud dissolves, half rain, half bloom,
Thy bow is bended in the weeping skies,
  Thy shadowy splendour bridges the vast gloom
'Twixt sunset and the stars. A mournful drowse
  Falls on the flockless meadows—a low swoon
    Tingles along the windless woodlands' rim;
The twilight sickens in the lampless house;
  And, merged in vapour, the half-risen moon
    Leans on the trunkèd forests, vague and dim.

HOW PROFESSOR GASTER LECTURED A GHOST.

The little French clock in the mottled walnut-wood case that stood on the mantelpiece of the Professor's laboratory, No. XC, Great Decoram-street, had just chimed out midnight in a silvery and musical way, when the Professor opened his front door with a latch-key and burglariously entered his own house on his early return from an evening party.

Now, the Professor was a popular lecturer on Food, Electricity, and other kindred subjects; and being, moreover, a jovial, fat, clever little man, was rather an acquisition at De Beauvoir-town, or any other parties, for he sang a little, played a little, danced a little, flirted a little, and made a fool of himself a little, yet was by no means a bore, but, on the contrary, a decidedly useful old bachelor, and would waltz

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with ugly girls, chat with talkative old fogies, and take gorgeous dowagers down to the supper-room. And as the Professor did not care about being joked at, but on the contrary liked it, and, when joked, laughed, and twinkled, and beamed through his silvery spectacles, like a merry old glow-worm, every one forgot his learning and celebrity and liked the Professor heartily.

On the night in question, the Professor was in high spirits—and with some reason. Firstly, he had made two jokes that had set the supper-table in a roar, and had made the jellies shake as if they felt the cold. Secondly, he had waltzed twice with pretty Fanny Ledger, and had received a smile that gave hopes of more intimate relationship being established some day between the houses of Ledger and Gaster. Thirdly, a great thought had struck him, as he walked briskly and chirpily home, for his celebrated Treatise on the Merrythought of the Dodo, which was to be read at the Royal Society on the ensuing Wednesday.

I do not wish to say that the Professor had taken champagne with more people that night than he ought, at Mrs. Fitz-Jones's great annual party (though even that would only tend to show the largeness of the excellent man's benevolence), but still I must concede that somehow or other he was abnormally exhilarated, for he danced a cavalier seul as he put his Gibus on the hall-table, and pirouetted as he took off his grey opera wrapper and shawl handkerchief, and lighted his moderator lamp at the flame of the expiring Palmer's night-light. But, as I have often observed that great benevolence and good animal spirits go together, I am sometimes inclined to think that the milk of human kindness is in some constitutions flavoured slightly with alcohol, and therefore partakes of the nature of milk-punch. However, I leave this abstruse question to those clear-headed gentlemen the physiologists.

The Professor was as brave as most men, but he was that night, it must be confessed, a little nervous. His nerves were sensitive and wide awake—in the state that I should be inclined to think the London and Epsom telegraph wires are in, when idle for a moment or two on a Derby Day—that is, constantly and almost fretfully expecting a message to be sent through their medium. The Professor, I think, had got a sort of vague suspicion of ghosts or thieves—material or spiritual intruders, he did not know which, and he did not care which either; for I am sure that in the one case he would have fallen on them with the slender dress-cane then in his hand (not a formidable weapon it must be allowed), and in the other have flung open the front door and shouted for the police. It was, at all events, owing to this slight nervous derangement, I suppose, that the Professor, as he lighted his lamp, went down the two steps that led to the kitchen stairs, and peered inquisitively and suspiciously into the empty darkness. But, good soul! there was nothing to see there save one black-beetle on the wall, and nothing to hear but the watchful drudging tick of the imprisoned kitchen clock below. The bells were all up at the shutters, and the door-mats were duly removed. Trusty Mrs. Dawson had forgotten nothing.

"Pooh! what a fool I am!" thought the Professor, as he turned the key of his laboratory door, opening out of the hall to the right, and stepped in. Everything was snug and trim, the stove was ruddy, the gas-lamps were just alight, and that was all: their little blue jets hoarding up the flame with due regard to the quarterly gas bill. How clear and bright the spirit lamp looked; how crystalline were the glass bowls; how ready to go through fire and water, the rough crucibles; how grand the retorts; how red the vermilioned horse-shoes of big magnets! In the exhilaration of those after-supper moments the Professor felt quite a boy again, and the old boyish delight at the sight of the chemical apparatus came over him with its old power. "Of what use was it to go to bed? He was sure not to get to sleep after that strong coffee. Why might he not sit up for an hour and work?"

"Work." But here a difficulty presented itself. What kind of work should Professor Gaster select? There wasn't time to go into "the dodo's merrythought,' and it wanted daylight to examine "the capillary circulation of the tadpole's tail." But the Professor had a will of his own; he decided in a moment; the struggle was over; he would—yes, that was it—pursue his researches on "the gastric juice and the effect of alcoholic liquids upon the human system." Thoughts suggested at Mrs. Fitz-Jones's party might possibly be useful; he might even from his own self-consciousness, and the memory of that lobster salad, digested so facilely, deduce certain facts not useless to humanity—humanity, I mean, with a big H—HUMANITY.

"What's that noise? Oh, only the policeman trying the front door to see if it is properly bolted."

The Professor sits down at his table, which is on the door-side of the stove, turns up the gas (up it flies like a willing spirit), and sits down to work quietly for an hour at his résumé lecture on the gastric juice. But first he goes (I should mention) to a side-table at the farthest end of the room beyond the stove, to see that that mischievous girl of Mrs. Dawson's, hasn't been touching the thermo-electrical instruments. No, the wires are right, and yesterday's solder, joining the bars of copper and the bars of iron, is firm and uncracked. But I think she has been moving the skeleton of the Polish soldier that the doctor keeps for his anatomical lectures, else why is one of the skeleton's legs thrust out before the other, as if our bony friend with the vacant eyes, and the Russian bullet in his skull, had been promenading the laboratory in his master's absence? With a "tut-tut" of impatience the doctor puts the skeleton into its right place in the corner, and makes as he does it quite a castanet clatter with the loose leg

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bones; at last it is right, hanging by the usual ring, safe on its gibbet-like frame, dry brown and ghastly as ever.

Now, the Professor settles down at last seriously to work. He carefully culls the best pen in his quiver and nibs it. He takes off the gutta-percha band that encircles his roll of lecture manuscripts, and he unscrews the top of his inkstand. Ye gods of medicine! be propitious, for the Professor has mounted the tripod—I mean, he has just seated himself with a plop on his red morocco-leather-covered library-chair. Now, he flattens the paper oratorically with the back of his hand, and with a slightly pompous hem! savouring somewhat of the British Institution, and with a slight hiccup, begins to read his preliminary résumé of the net results of stomachic digestion:

"First. The food is churned, ground, triturated, mascerated, disintegrated, and liquefied."

Here the Professor stopped, and seriously reflected whether those three last oyster patties that followed instead of preceding the liberal helping of Mrs. Fitz-Jones's blanc-mange, were not rather injudicious.

"2. The fats, liberated from their cellular envelope, have become oils."

"I shall suffer for this to-morrow," thought the gay Professor.

"3. The sugars have not much altered, for they are crystalline bodies; but the cane-sugars have turned to grape-sugars, and perhaps a small proportion of them have turned to lactic, or milk acid."

"I shall have a headache to-morrow," said the Professor's stomachic conscience, quite indifferent to the lecture on the gastric juice.

"4. The vegetable matters have been divided and made pulpy. The starch of some of them has turned into saliva."

Here the Professor lighted a cheroot.

"5. The albuminous matters have been macerated and some portion of them turned into peptones (how the gas flickers!); the whole has become a pulp."

"Excellent," said the good little man, rubbing his plump little hands—"excellently condensed, though I say it. Such should popular science be, and would that such it were! I shall then perform my extraordinary and expensive experiments of artificial digestion. Taking a—— Halloa! what's that noise? I'm rather nervous to-night—taking, I say, the stomach of a newly killed sheep, carefully cleaned and scented, I shall desire my attendant to place into it, bit by bit, an excellent dinner: turtle soup, salmon, salad, a slice of venison, vegetables, beer, wine, catchup, bread, pastry, and finally cheese. I shall then pour in two tablespoonfuls of my artificial gastric juice, and submit the whole to a gentle heat, showing by an electric light which will penetrate the tissues of the bag, the rapid solvency of the whole into one colourless pulp or chyle. This lecture will lead to tremendous discussions in the papers. One will talk cleverly about it, quote the Latin Grammar, and say some sharp ill-tempered things. Another, say The Fleam, that clever medical paper, will have discussions showing that there is no such thing as gastric juice, and never was: upon which the Cricket will reply and show that every drop of blood in our bodies is gastric juice. When the whole affair is finished, the Bottler will have some album verses on the gastric juice, and will have a leader proving that a belief in the indiscoverability of the component parts of the gastric juice is a Tory institution. Ha! ha!"

And here the Professor, pausing to take breath, actually rolled about in his chair at the images his exhilarated imagination had raised, but he suddenly drew up quite rigid and composed as the echo of his own laugh seemed to return to him from the bookcase behind the skeleton.

Now, the Professor, though a vain little man, and a trifle of a humbug, had a certain sense of humour, and he was not so wise that he could laugh at himself. I like him for it, and I think that that merry (perhaps rather champagny) laugh did him great credit.

The popular lecturer looked at the clock. It was ten minutes to one.

"Stay till two," he said, "and just read short notes that have drawn up for m' Christmas lecture on 'British and Foreign Wines, their uses and abuses, with special remarks, by request, on South African Port and Betts's Brandy.' Oh that Mrs. Fitz-Jones's champagne! there was something in it. What two glasses of cham——" Here the Professor again hiccuped. "But the cold air on February night (after supper-parties) does make one hiccup. What *is* that noise?

"Let us first consider the bouquet of wines and its causes (that'll do for them). The bouquet or vinous perfume arises from the presence and evolvement of a substance called œnanthic ether. (Here I must puzzle them a little; the public like to be puzzled.) Alcohol, you know, ladies and gentlemen, is a hydrate of the oxide of ethyle ($HO+O+C_4—H_5$). Now, if we put——"

I am not prepared to say how unintelligible the learned Professor might have become had not a certain strange shuffling stir that he heard, or fancied he heard, at this moment struck his attention. It was a sound like the walking of a very lame man, mixed up with the stir and drag of a moving chain and a sort of bony rattle, not at all pleasant at one o'clock in the morning.

The sound came from the direction of the bookcase beyond the stove, the little door of which, by-the-by, at this moment suddenly flew open with a jerk, as if frightened. The Professor could not see very well into the dark corner, for the bright globe of the gas-lamp shaded it from his eyes. When, however, he turned his head slightly on one side, and thus got rid of what (without a bull) might be perhaps called the overshadowing glare, he caught

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sight of an extraordinary object—visible, materially visible to his optic nerves, and to the eyes, which may be called their windows.

There was no doubt about it at all—*he saw, or thought he saw, distinctly*, TWO SKELETONS sitting and warming their shins in front of his stove door. One must be his laboratory skeleton, for it had the well-known black bullet-mark on the left temple; but the other was a perfect stranger. The one sat with legs stretched foppishily out, and his long right arm hung over the chair-back; the other cowered over the fire and rubbed his knees, which the fire reflexion turned to luminous crimson.

But the doctor was a brave man, and not a superstitious one. He had done his best, too, to expose the folly of table-rapping, and of the stuffed hands and lazy tongs, and all the rest of it. He did not, therefore, believe what he saw, but attributed it at once to a natural cause. All he said was, as he rose and pointed at the skeletons, these simple words of common sense:

"Diseased state of my retina."

Here the Polish ghost rose, and introduced his friend with a wave of the hand as "the Guy's Hospital skeleton."

Now, I may as well here premise that I am not myself answerable for the exact truth of what the skeleton said, as the doctor could never make up his mind afterwards whether the skeletons actually spoke, or whether the replies apparently addressed to him by those strange apparitions were not rather replies made by his inner consciousness to his own questions.

"Binocular deception—occasioned by temporary vinous affection of the optic nerve—very common after dinner."

At this moment, the Polish ghost coughed in the impatient way in which people do who wish to edge a word in.

The Professor continued in a contemptuous tone, feeling his pulse deliberately as he spoke, and making a note on his blotting pad of its condition "at 15 minutes past one, Thursday, February 15, 1862:"

"The blood heated; the nervous system by some subtle cause thrown off its balance—brain locally excited in the organ of caution—it's all that infernal champagne of Mrs. Fitz-Jones's — that's it — a species of waking nightmare." Here the Professor threw himself unconsciously into a lecturing attitude, and struck the table with a heavy ruler.

The ghost getting rather impatient and a little nettled, advanced to the table, and putting one hand on his hips oratorically, stretched the other deprecatingly towards the Professor, whose courage increased every minute the more scientifically heated he got.

"Just *one* moment," said the ghost, "if I may be permitted by my friend from Guy's."

"I have devoted much time to these cases," said the Professor (he was one of those men you constantly meet, who have always "devoted much time," to whatever subject you are discussing), "and I know all the precedents; they are all classified; there was Dr. Ferriar, and Monsieur Nicolai, the celebrated bookseller of Berlin."

"I often meet him," said the ghost.

"About the year 1791," said the Professor, treading down all interruptions, "Nicolai began to be visited by crowds of ghosts."

"I was one of them," said the Polish ghost. The skeleton from Guy's nodded, and bleared through a quite superfluous eye-glass, to indicate that he was another.

"Crowds of phantasmata," continued Gaster, "who moved and acted before him, who addressed him, and to whom without fear he spoke: knowing that they were mere symptoms of a certain derangement of health, such as suicidal feelings, and indeed all melancholy, arises from."

"Ladies and gentlemen," said the ghost, entreating silence, and actually winking slyly at the Professor.

"Silence, sir! You are a mere phantom, the result of hectic symptoms, febrile and inflammatory disorders, inflammation of the brain, nervous irritability, hypochondria, gout, apoplexy, the inhalation of gases, or delirium tremens. Go! You are the mere offspring of a morbid sensibility, and only fools and sceptics have any belief in you!"

"But one word."

"Not a word; I know all your relations; there is Dr. Gregory's old hag, who used to strike people with her crutch."

"My grandmother on my father's side," said the ghost, consequentially. "Mother Shipton was my aunt."

"Sorry for it, for she was no great things. I've seen too many ghosts, sir, as some great person once said, ever to believe in them—a pack of rubbish. The man who believes in a ghost, I tell you, ought to be sent to a hospital."

The quiet dittoing ghost suggested "Guy's," and smiled.

"*I* know the ghost in the tamboured waistcoat, and the skeleton that looked between the bed-curtains and frightened the doctor," said the Professor.

"Daren't look behind you, though!" said the Polish ghost, in a nagging and malicious way.

At this sneer the ghost from Guy's rubbed his knees harder than ever, and laughed till he rocked again.

"Daren't I," said the doctor, and turned quietly round; then, snapping back again, and catching the gentleman from Poland sliding forward to try and pull his coat and frighten him, he deliberately snatched up his heavy ruler, and hit the Pole a rattling blow on his bare skull; at which the Pole grew angry, and the friend from Guy's laughed more than ever.

"How about Maupertui's ghost? That's a settler, I think," said the Pole, stepping back to a safe distance from the table, and thrusting in the remark spitefully.

"The mere fancy of a possible event. Re-

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member the ghost that the captain sat down upon in the arm-chair, and then followed into bed—eh! Halloa! what! not a word to fling at a dog—what, quite chopfallen! Sir, I shall put you in my next lecture."

"Don't, don't!" said both ghosts, in a whining voice; "we'll go quietly away if you promise not to."

"Miserable impostors, begone! I know all your petty tricks—the voice that called Doctor Johnson—the young ensign who died of over-smoking at Kitchemegar, and that same night went and terrified his poor sister, for no reason in the world, at No. 999, Gower-street. Bah!"

"But, my dear sir, a moment's patience; let me put one argument before you. Look at the haunted houses in Great Britain, the rooms where no one can be induced, 'by even the boundless wealth of the antipodes,' to sleep; look at the clashing of our chains, the white shrouds, the groans, the——"

As the Polish skeleton here got out of breath, his lungs being evidently out of order, the Professor slipped in and continued his honest tirade.

"Stuff about your haunted houses—noises, all rats and draughts—unnatural deaths, bad sewers—the chains, rusty weathercocks—and all the rest, the tricks of deceiving servants, smugglers, or thieves."

Here the ghost from Poland shrugged his shoulders and looked piteously at the ghost from Guy's; then both shrugged their shoulders noisily.

"But the wet ensign who comes and tells his sister he is drowned at Cutchemabobbery, in the Madras Presidency?"

"Ah! what about the wet ensign?" said the ghost from Guy's, backing up his friend's query in a posing and rather hurt sort of way.

"Curse the wet ensign! A frivolous sister, nervous with incessant late hours, too much eau de Cologne, and the perusal of a sensation novel, has apprehensions about her brother in India, eventually goes to sleep over the piano, and dreams she sees him dripping."

"But she didn't dream," said Poland.

"No, she *didn't* dream," said Guy's, resorting again to his eye-glass.

"But I say she did," said the Professor.

"She didn't."

"She did."

"She didn't."

"But I attend her great-aunt, and I ought to know," said the Professor.

The skeleton from Guy's here clenched his fist, but the ghost from Poland groaned.

"It's no use," said the latter.

"Not a bit," said the former.

"On my word of honour, my dear sir," said the ghost from Poland, trying once more, and laying his hand on the vacuity where his heart ought to have been, "it was not a dream."

"It was not a dream, on my conscience," said Guy's.

"Now look you here, gentlemen," said the doctor, getting red in the face, and seriously angry, "I have borne this, I think, long enough. I have proved to you both, that you don't exist; why don't you go civilly like gen-'lemen?" (The doctor rather slurred the pronunciation of this word.) "You are impostors, scarecrows, mere bubbles; air, vapour, thought. Begone, or, I give you fair notice, if you are not off in five minutes by that clock, I will ring the bell, fire off a double-barrel gun, spring a rattle, throw open the front door, and alarm the street!"

This threat seemed to have a great effect on the two skeletons. Guy's sat down and warmed his shin-bones again in a desponding manner, but on Poland touching his shoulder, they both got up and began to whisper together in a violent and agitated way. They were evidently going.

* * * * *

The doctor fell suddenly into a deep sleep. He did not awake until Betsy Jane, the housemaid, came in to "do" the room at seven A.M. That fair vestal found the gas burning, and the doctor fast asleep in his arm-chair.

In alluding to the event afterwards, Dr. Gaster's friends always called that vision and sleep the result of "over-study;" but his enemies (and what great man is not troubled with such vermin?) called it "too much of Mrs. Fitz-Jones's champagne."

ABOARD AN EMIGRANT SHIP.

Some families are born emigrants; they inherit the propensity to rove as they inherit an ancestral brow, or an hereditary nose. The old proverb, "A rolling stone gathers no moss," has no terrors for them. They see neither use nor beauty in a stone whose surface is moss and mouldiness. If the vagrant tendency be merged for one generation in a few quiet domesticated women wedded to steady stationary irremovable husbands, it bursts forth again in their sons, who can no more settle down to a fixed occupation of their paternal homes than a horde of gipsies could take root in the cold dead solemn respectability of a cathedral town. I know a quiet man, who has lived his whole life, of upwards of thirty years, in the same little town in one of the midland counties, working silently at the same employment: in whose heart the Great Eastern has excited a romantic attachment, superior to the slow affection he professes for the once young woman to whom he has been engaged for fifteen years. When the Great Eastern is in port, he pays a substitute to take his work, and goes off to visit her, though his wages are those of a country letter-carrier. His distress at her manifold misfortunes is pathetic. He inquires of any news of the great ship with the solicitude of an ardent affection. And he is happy when she herself is declared faultless, and the blame of her misadventures is cast upon defective management.

Emigration is instinctive in my own family.

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The past generation, consisting of four sisters, was a band of staid sensible domestic home-keeping English matrons, strong and grave in character, with no perceptible tinge of Bohemianism. They dwelt inland, too, with husbands permanently localised in their own districts, who had no more experience of emigration than the Vicar of Wakefield had. My own father inhabited the same house for more than fifty years; and all the travelling he ever did was on the map, to which he was wont to refer instantly upon the mention of any place, at home or abroad. Still, at our fireside, there were narrated exciting traditions of the wanderings of our mother's family. How her uncle had lived for years with a Red Indian tribe, in the backwoods of America; and how he had become a bonâ fide chief, with an unpronounceable name, by marrying an Indian chief's daughter, who had given to us a race of red cousins. How her step-brother, who had never done any good in England, and had left it with scarcely a shilling, was growing wealthy and important in South Australia. And how her ancestors—for she had ancestors—were ever foremost in expeditions of religion, enterdrise, discovery, or gain, that would take them away to foreign shores. As children we sat round our nursery-fire and discussed the subject of emigration. I recollect how our eldest sister, who took after her father, and remains to this day immovable in the house where she was born, combated our plans decisively, and finished a singularly fluent speech—for her—with the Irish argument, "If Providence had intended you to emigrate to America, you would have been born there." Nevertheless, over Australia, in Port Natal, in India, in Canada, in California, and in New Zealand, our emigrant race is scattered.

Going from my home among a group of mountains in ancient Siluria, where not a murmur of the existence of an ocean lingers in the deep valleys, though the ripple-marks of its primeval tides and the fossils of its earliest inhabitants are perpetuated in the rocks—going thence, for the second time in my life, to the sea-shore, and to the great populous port of Liverpool—I am fascinated by everything that betokens the immediate vicinity of the sea; the dress of the naval officers; the hardy, weather-beaten faces of the seamen; the maritime talk of the children, who chatter familiarly of the tide, and the shore, and the ships, as our children prattle of bird-nesting and mushroom-hunting; above all, the thousands of masts, with their appendant shrouds and tackling, which stretch in clear lines against the sky, like colossal geometrical cobwebs, in whose meshes my eyes and thoughts are caught and detained by an irresistible charm.

The friend I am visiting has a brother, who is doctor of a ship; and he spins yarns to me, in which he unites a sailor's vivid fluency with the close and correct observation of an educated man. His talk is of voyages amid dense fog-banks, and fantastic icebergs; of threatened wrecks; of deeds of devotion and daring; of marvellous escapes. So, when the doctor invites me to spend some hours on board his ship the day before she sails, when the emigrants embark, I accept the invitation eagerly. My friend, who regards me as a country cousin, utterly incapable of steering a clear course through the bewilderments of Liverpool, conducts me to the landing-stage; and plants me at one end with instructions not to move until I see the steam-tug, the Sea King, which is plying between the shore, and the vessel lying out in the river, with the Blue-Peter floating from her mast-head.

Receiving my orders with humility, I watch him carefully out of sight, and instantly quit my post, and wander among the groups, which already occupy the floating stage; from whom I ask rural questions, in defiance of my instructions. Seeing a steam-tug lying outside two other boats, with quite a different funnel to the one my friend directed me to look for, I inquire from a very marine-looking man what it is, and receive the answer "The Favour-ite, waiting on the ship yonder." He points to my emigrant vessel; I dart across the two boats; the Favourite's steam is getting up; the captain, with his feet planted firmly on his paddle-box, looks down upon me with the air of a despotic monarch; and I forget my instructions altogether.

"Are you going to the Australian ship in the river?" I ask.

"Yes."

"Will you take me? I am a friend of the doctor's, and I'm to meet him there."

"Doctor's not gone aboard yet. Besides, if you ain't a passenger, my orders are not to take friends. Lumbering the ship with friends! You can't go."

I stand passively and despairingly watching the paddle-wheel make its first revolution, when a friendly seaman, who has just withdrawn the gangway, winks graciously at me, and bids me jump. I jump, under the awful eye of the despotic captain, and he takes no more notice of me than if I had become suddenly invisible. He has done his duty.

The ship: I have never been on board a ship before, but my hereditary instincts make me feel instantly at home. I measure it with my eye, as an architect might shrewdly scrutinise a building erected by some other architect. I know that this place is to be the abode of three hundred people, for upwards of two months; and to me it looks no larger in proportion than the toy we used to freight with pebbles, and man with dolls, and float upon our mountain tarn, with a string six yards long to convey it safely across. "Three hundred passengers," I exclaim, mentally, "there will not be room for them to stir!" But, referring to the Ships Passengers Act, I find that every emigrant ship passing within the tropics, must have a space of fifteen clear superficial feet upon the main deck, or on the deck immediately below, unencumbered with luggage or lading, for every passenger above fourteen years of age. I read,

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too, that the decks will be surveyed by an emigrant officer, before the ship sails; and I leave the matter to his superior judgment.

I feel circumscribed in limit above deck; but, in the steerage cabin below, my feeling is simply suffocation, empty though it is, with the exception of one poor girl in a rusty black dress, who sits mournfully on a trunk beside the door of a berth. The steerage is a long low narrow apartment, with a very narrow, immovable table and two benches running its entire length; the height is more than the minimum required by the act, which is six feet, yet it makes me almost afraid of walking upright; perhaps on the same principle that our geese always bend their long necks when they pass under the lofty doorway of the barn. The light is dismal, for it is admitted only by the open hatchway by which I have descended, and through a few panes of glass an inch and a half thick. Down each side of this room, are a number of little closets, not half so spacious as our country pantries, but looking very like them, with substantial shelves, about twenty inches wide, two on each side, and two along the end; they are plain deal shelves, with a board fastened along the outer edge to form them into a kind of case, but there is no other indication that these are designed for sleeping-rooms; and the whole space for standing in them is six feet by three, for six persons. The girl, who has red eyes and a pale face, tells me she has come from Halifax, in Yorkshire, to start her only brother to Australia, but he is standing on the landing stage, to look out for some decent comrades to share his berth with—a very wise precaution. For six persons to inhabit a closet of this size day and night without quarrelling, must require a miracle of good sense and good temper.

The main deck is quiet; on the quarter-deck the pilot saunters leisurely, whistling a sentimental tune; a knot of sailors are gathered in the forecastle; one of them a seaman after my imagination, and after the model of nautical pictures; middle height, sturdy, broad-chested and muscular, with slender legs; a face massive, but clearly moulded: grizzly hair, and shaggy, overhanging eyebrows, like moustaches; deep-set keen eyes and a humorous mouth, up to the lower lip of which a strong dark beard is growing. All the men look leisurely. There is but one busy person visible above deck, and he is the black cook in the galley opposite the forecastle; he seems of a contented disposition, and is cooking, by a species of magic, dinner for three hundred, in a hole not larger than one of our fireplaces at home. The cooking galley forms part of a house on deck; it is a small wooden lodge in the fore-part of the ship, and contains the intermediate berths, which are similar to those in the steerage below, but possess the advantages of more air and light, and of ensurance against being enclosed between decks in case of storms. Yawning before the entrance to the intermediate cabin, is a large square trap-door, now open, which reveals to my astonished eyes the immense depth and space of the hold of the ship. Upon the brink of this opening stands an anxious fretted-looking man, the ship's husband, who has to bear all the minor worry of the arrangements, and is bandied about from spot to spot, to meet and remove every difficulty. He is pensive just now, having time to be so; and I stand for a few minutes beside him. The hold is very like a left-luggage office on an immense scale. There are boxes, chests, tubs, barrels, sacks, and coffers, of every description. Here is a piano, looking as little and insignificant as a lady's work-box; there, is a steam-engine, packed in a case, and labelled "To be kept dry," as if it were only a plated teapot. The ship's husband directs my attention to the barrels of pork, and the great casks of water, provided for his large family during their seventy or eighty days' voyage. "Three quarts per day for statute adult," he says, and repeats in a tone wavering between high dudgeon and paternal satisfaction; "three quarts per day for statute adult at least, of sweet pure water; not to mention what is used in cooking."

I leave him, still pensive and at leisure; and, passing the sauntering pilot on the quarter-deck, descend a narrow flight of steps into the saloon of the first cabin passengers; it appears to me sumptuous, height and good size, with panelled walls of white and gold, cushioned seats, and a large dining-table. In one corner is the door of the captain's cabin, which impresses me as a very roomy place, after the berths in the steerage and intermediate. There are a chest of drawers, two or three chairs, a set of bookshelves, and some ornaments: consisting of ostrich eggs, an odd-looking weapon or two, and a picture of a man overboard. There is also a real bed—not a shelf—and the steward, a slim agile man, with a head covered with black curly hair in such profusion as to make it look out of all proportion to his body, is laying on sheets and blankets with the dexterity of a housemaid. This is the only token of human residence I have seen, for it is a received maxim that we live where we sleep; and this is the only preparation for sleep I have come upon. I turn, somewhat comforted, to the doctor's cabin. To denote its size by a pleasant word, it is snug; scarcely large enough to swing a cat in, if our tender-hearted doctor could take a fancy to such an amusement. And thinking of cats in connexion with the doctor's pet canary, which is to accompany him on his voyage, and is now chirping plaintively over his last fresh-gathered groundsel—I go back into the saloon to speak to a custom-house officer, concerning cats and rats. To be sure, there are rats, as I suspected, with all my strong country prejudice against them; rats in such numbers that the officer informs me gravely, there were nearly four hundred killed yesterday, and it makes no perceptible diminution; only, to reassure me for the doctor's safety, he adds, that they never gnaw the outer timbers of a vessel, being too wise for that. "As for cats, bless you! the seamen are that fond of them, that if

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there was a cat and a parson aboard, and one of them had to be thrown overboard, they'd ten times rather throw the parson. They've got some notion about Jonah in connexion with parsons." As he speaks, I see that the cabin opposite to our doctor's is ticketed with the name of a Reverend Somebody; and the ship's carpenter comes out of it grumbling, having had a difficulty in fixing a reading-desk to the approbation of its tenant.

The doctor and his wife having come on board, make for the quarter-deck at once, as to a place of refuge. I look down from thence upon our less privileged shipmates of the steerage and intermediate, and see them involved in a distracting whirl of confusion, which continues hopelessly all the afternoon. There are people of every age, down to babies but a few weeks old; men shouting; children crying; women silenced by utter inability to make themselves heard. Luggage is strewed about the deck in unsorted heaps. Every spot is full; every square foot is littered; every person is in a ferment. The majority of the women seem to give up all effort at settling, as if it were contrary to any reasonable expectation; so they seat themselves doggedly upon their most valued trunks, and make up their minds to voyage on them to Australia. The mates, and the carpenter, and the steward, are harassed out of their senses: yet their labour is easy and placid compared to that of the oppressed ship's husband, who has no rest, bodily or mental, for a single instant. The exertions of the black cook are fearful to behold, for he is preparing dinner for these multitudes. The dinner is served out in messes for four; and already the tin dishes and cans are coming into active use. When the ship is in order, the doctor tells me, it will be his duty to taste of every meal prepared for all but the first-cabin passengers, in order that he may judge whether it be wholesome and properly cooked. To-day the meal is taken upon the tops of boxes; on the quarter-deck steps; on the door-sill of the intermediate; on the floor of the deck, where there happens to be any space. It is cut with pocket-knives, or eaten in bites, or torn to pieces with fingers. As I watch a party, consisting of an old woman and three men engaged in the primitive process last mentioned, the woman apologises, and I venture upon asking her why she is emigrating.

"Why, I've two sons out there," she says, pointing down the river, "and they've sent me money to go out to them, but I know it'll kill me. I'm over sixty."

"Do you know anything about Australia?"

"Indeed, I don't know nothing; I went to the Mechanics' at home, to hear a gentleman as was preaching about it, and he said they were all upside down. I'm sure I never can walk upside down, myself, and my lads ought to have known it."

Before I can make any attempt to comfort and enlighten this disconsolate emigrant, the tug comes alongside again, bringing the owner of the ship, the government commissioners, and the captain, with the residue of the passengers. The captain (consumptive, and not in the least like what I had made him out to be in my mind), and the owner, and the commissioners, immediately sit down to dinner, as the first and most pressing part of *their* business.

I make a second raid upon the main-deck. Here is a young farmer, a sturdy bluff bronzed young fellow, who knows what work is: beside him lies a sheep-dog of the true Scotch breed, asleep: not curled up lazily like a spaniel, but dozing watchfully, with his head resting on his outstretched paws. The young man smiles when I lay my hand caressingly on the dog's sagacious head; and the dog wags his tail with a friendly salute. His name (the dog's, I don't ask the man's) is Moss; five pounds his master has paid for his passage, and is to find him in provisions; he only paid fifteen pounds for himself, rations and all; but rather than leave Moss behind, he says, he would pay fifty pounds for him. I tell him, what has been told to me, that there were objections raised against the doctor taking out a terrier, because of the danger of madness in passing the tropics. So the farmer quietly takes Moss down into the steerage, and lays the docile creature in his own berth, well covered up from observation with blankets and rugs.

Close by—but all are close by within these narrow limits—is a girl, in voluminous skirts, a mantle, a turban hat, and a spangled net, chaffering with a vendor of small wares; the object of the bargain being a boot-brush, which the pedlar offers for fourpence and recommends fluently. The turban hat is shaken, and its wearer produces two-pence from a bag hung for safety round her neck; then the wrath of the insulted dealer waxes eloquent, and he exclaims with a look and accent of cutting sarcasm, "Twopence! Where did you buy your hat?" Meeting this fashionable emigrant shortly after in a comparatively quiet corner, she informs me that she is going out alone; she has no friends expecting her in Australia, and—no—she does *not* think of going into service.

I suppose order is being restored; but the confusion is like the darkness of the night: denser just before the dawn. A helpless woman is shedding tears upon her topmost trunk, which stands breast-high before her. She is from the country, like myself, and tells me, weeping, that she is losing her faculties, for she is certain sure that when she came on deck Liverpool was to our right-hand, and now it is to our left. I look, and to my amazement find that her statement is correct; and from that moment I myself am plunged in bewilderment. The doctor explains something about the vessel turning with the tide, but I do not comprehend him in the least; all I know, is, that it makes me extremely uncomfortable to cast my eyes towards the shore, for Birkenhead and Liverpool seems to have changed sites, and I have my doubts as to our landing in the right place.

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The commissioners come on deck now; and the names of the crew and passengers are called over. The ship's husband has classified them, and appointed their berths; so there is nothing to do but to pass muster: this, however, is not so easy as it appears; the mate, and steward, and every official at liberty are actively employed in diving into the steerage, and exploring corners, in search of the persons wanted, whose names are shouted in every variety of key, until they appear, bewildered and frightened, under the impression that they have transgressed some unknown regulation. Then there is an inspection of decks, and pumps, and boats, and hose of the fire-engine.

Gradually the luggage gets stowed into the hold. It is stowed below, with the utmost indifference. Indeed, there is no pathos nor patriotism manifested. One must be in some measure comfortable, to be pathetic; and patriotism requires a very high degree of contentedness. If we weep here, it may be from fatigue, hunger, or exhaustion; but we cannot cherish sentiment. Even the doctor's little wife is too busy, knocking up nails and arranging the cabin for her husband's use, to find any time for tears. She tells me there will be plenty of time for *them* to-night. Miracles are wrought in the last hour before the sun goes down; for no naked lights are allowed between decks. The rule is stringent, but needful; and the doctor tells me of cases of illness, where the face could only be seen dimly, by covered lights. Once, he was called in the night to attend an apparently dying man, and found him laid straight upon his berth with a lighted candle, a holy candle, in each hand, "to light his soul to eternity!" One movement of the restless sufferer might have enveloped the ship in flames; and though it was at the risk of his life to disregard the religion of the ignorant people about him, he snatched the dangerous lights away, and extinguished them amid imprecations.

It is time to go; the twilight is falling; at the next high tide, in the sunrise, the ship will sail. In the tug alongside, many of the friends who have lumbered the ship, are already collected, and are looking up, from time to time, to the faces hanging over the gunwale. The vessel is ship-shape. The many ropes of the tackling are strung, like a huge harp, for the winds to play upon; the boats are slung up to their allotted places, all seaworthy, and ready for immediate use; the commissioners are satisfied that the provisions of the Ships Passengers Act have been complied with; the captain is going on shore, for the last time, to receive a certificate to that effect. On the deck of the Favourite are two sailor lads kissing a weeping old woman; a brother and sister standing at the edge of the gangway hand-in-hand; a girl gazing upward with a sorrowfully-set face, to catch every glimpse of a seaman busy in the rigging. The commissioners, the ship's owner, and the slim captain, step on to the paddle-box; and the doctor brings his wife to my side—closely veiled now, but brave to the last. We emerge from the shadow of the ship's great black hulk, into the last crimson gleam of day. Above us, all along the gunwale, are ranged the dark figures of the emigrants, crowding in great numbers towards the forecastle, where the sailors are gathered, and from whom rises the first note of a cheer, which runs through the whole line, and is repeated again and again—rather mournfully, as our feeble echo reaches them. In a few minutes we see the ship from the shore: a quiet, solitary, deserted-looking shape on the water, with no hint of the life, and sorrow, and hope, and fear, crowded together in that little space.

A LITERARY LIFE.

With the modern expansion of journalism, and the absorption of the writing faculty in the incessant production of a vast periodical literature, bearing for the most part on the immediate necessities or evanescent entertainment of the hour, we seem to be in some danger of losing the old scholarly type of authorship, such as existed in its highest perfection in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and in the earlier part of the present. We have abundance of rapid and able penmen—writers full of information on the topics of the day—illustrious novelists, and clever observers of current manners; but the race of literary men, pure and simple, is fast dying out under the glare of gas, the roar of steam, and the quick flash of electricity. The age has to attend to so many practical questions of urgency and weight, and is so hurried from one grave crisis to another, that it has no time to linger on the sward by the side of the great dusty highway, or to dream beneath the shadow of immemorial woodlands. The man who follows literature for its own sake, apart from any design at once recognisable by the hurrying crowd, stands a poor chance of being listened to; and the author of to-day is perforce obliged to mould his work into some tangible shape, such as he can at once take into the market, and offer for sale with the probability of finding purchasers. Except in the case of those few geniuses who possess the rare gift of creative power, the literary man finds himself speedily lapsing into the journalist. He may not have begun life as a politician; he may have had a strong predilection towards the greener regions of imagination and fancy; he may love old books and the abiding phantoms of old days, with a tender and unsatisfied affection; but the press demands him, and will have him. "How is it," asked an old journalist one day, "that so many young poets finally develop into sub-editors?" The answer is obvious. Moonbeams are a very innutritious diet, and the young poet soon learns to appreciate the advantages that belong to the sub-editor's room. Accordingly, the mere author sinks out of sight, and the journalist takes his place.

One of the completest specimens of the almost extinct literary man, in the most rigorous sense of the expression, was Leigh Hunt. He passed

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the seventy-five years of his life in a region of books; journeying from land to land in that immortal territory, with all the enthusiasm and ever-fresh wonder and delight of the old travellers in the marvel-haunted East, and receiving the very elements of his character from the sources that fed his mind. His recently-published Correspondence (to which we purpose to devote a few columns) shows very clearly the nature and habits of the man, and will remove a world of misapprehension by simply presenting facts in their right aspect. The book has come out under the best of all auspices, for it is edited by the poet's own son, Mr. Thornton Hunt—a name not only known for many years as that of one of the chief writers on the London press, but specially and worthily associated with the new edition of Leigh Hunt's Autobiography, in which the work of the father was completed by the son. The letters now given to the public range from the year 1803 down to within four days of the writer's death in August, 1859; and they show the same general tendencies from first to last, combined with remarkable variations in specific matters of taste, and the gradual emancipation of an original mind from the conventionalities in which it had been trained in youth, but which few have thrown off with such complete success as he.

Though only the other day one of the working world of authors, and though not of extreme age at the time of his decease, Leigh Hunt formed a direct link with a totally bygone school of letters. Born in the same year that Dr. Johnson died, his first ideas of literature were formed while the Johnsonian style was still dominant, before the French Revolution had had time to rouse the mind of Europe (or at least of England) out of its pseudo-scholastic lethargy, before the war with Bonaparte had come to confront the nation with the stern truths of a new state of things, and while yet the great inventions of our own day were unsuspected, except by a few thoughtful brains. It was the very worst period that our literature has ever known. The great dictator of Fleet-street had gone, leaving behind him a host of feeble satellites, who made the vices of his style apparent in their vapid and insincere imitations. Those who did not mimic Johnson did what was worse; for they wrote in a tone of maudlin sentimentality that had not even the aspect of strength. Burke, indeed, was still living; but he stood almost alone. In poetry, the Della Cruscan manner prevailed, with its false simplicity and real tinsel, its lachrymose tenderness and sham romance. Wordsworth and Coleridge had not yet risen above the horizon, and, in the dearth of original genius, Headley himself was looked upon as a prodigy. It is true that Cowper kept alive the feeling of a better day; but even *his* poems were to some extent imbued with the faults of the time. It was in the midst of these influences that Leigh Hunt's earliest literary style was fashioned. The age was one of pretence, and the young poet and essayist suffered in the first instance from the mistakes of others. He had "a good old aunt," who used to encourage him "to write fine letters," and on whom he composed an elegy after her death, in which he called her "a nymph!" In our days, none but a boy could commit such an absurdity; but at that time the boy simply followed the example of his elders, who in such affairs were probably in no respect his betters. The old lady herself, who was so fond of "fine letters," would doubtless have considered that her translation into the nymphal state was a perfectly proper thing—in poetry. In the same artificial and sophisticated strain, Leigh Hunt, when a boy, wrote "an ode in praise of the Duke of York's *victory* at Dunkirk, which," he relates, "I was afterwards excessively mortified to find had been a defeat. I compared him to Alexander, or rather dismissed Alexander with contempt in the exordium." In a letter to one of his daughters, he says that he described the duke "as galloping about through the field of battle, *shooting the Frenchmen in the eye!*" When he had shaken himself free of all this rubbish, Leigh Hunt became one of the most truthful writers that ever lived; but it was not until after some years that he corrected the false literary education of his youth.

His experiences at the Blue-coat School were not of a character to set him in the right road. The master, Boyer, seems to have been a pedant, without any appreciation of the spirit of classical learning, which he apparently regarded as an affair of grammar and of mechanical forms. The boy saw through and disliked the formalism; and he fled for refuge to the poets of his own country—but generally to the poorest and weakest of them. He forsook one kind of conventionality for another; he bathed his mind in the poetry of the period immediately succeeding Pope, and appears to have regarded the heroes of Dodsley's Miscellany as the greatest masters of verse. So true to him were the most sickly insincerities of the so-called pastoral school of poetry, that he and some of his school-fellows would occasionally row up the river to Richmond, that they might enact, literally and in good faith, Collins's ridiculous lines about Thomson's grave in his Ode on the Death of that poet:

> Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore
> When Thames in summer wreaths is dress'd,
> And oft suspend the dashing oar,
> To bid his gentle spirit rest.

Such was the style which he then believed in and reverenced; such was the style in which his earliest volume of poems, called Juvenilia, was composed. It was towards the close of the year 1799 when he quitted the Blue-coat School, and Juvenilia appeared some two years afterwards. Six years later than that—namely, in 1808—the Examiner commenced; but, in the meanwhile, the young author had been trying his wings in a variety of ways, though chiefly in the direction of essay-writing and theatrical criticism. The eighteenth century style was still in the ascendant, and some of the men whom we

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are accustomed to associate with that century almost exclusively, were yet living and composing. Sheridan had several years of life and authorship before him; Murphy, the friend and biographer of Johnson, might have been among the readers of Leigh Hunt's early productions; Mrs. Piozzi, whose portrait had been painted by Hogarth, was alert and vigorous; Porson was astounding Europe with his learning, and rejoicing his boon companions with his wit in the Cyder Cellars of Maiden-lane; and Burke, Gibbon, Cowper, and Horace Walpole were but newly dead. The prose writings of Leigh Hunt in those days were in a great degree modelled on a book which was then a favourite of his, and for which, indeed, he retained a regard to the end of his existence; that is to say, the Connoisseur of Colman the Elder, and Bonnell Thornton. It was a collection of periodical essays, in the manner of Addison's and Steele's Spectator and Tatler, and was distinguished by a vein of pleasant humour and wit, though devoid of the freshness, originality, and intellect of its prototypes. Its influence over Leigh Hunt was marked. He even caught up the pet phrases of the Connoisseur period; talked of "the town," "the critics," "the wits," "the fops," &c.; and reproduced with unconscious fidelity the tone of airy banter in which they delighted. Lying before us at the present moment is a small volume, entitled Critical Essays on the Performers of the London Theatres, including General Observations on the Practice and Genius of the Stage. By the Author of the Theatrical Criticisms in the Weekly Paper called the News. The author in question is the subject of this article; and it is curious to note the difference presented by the style of the book to that which distinguished the essayist throughout the greater part of his life. Instead of the easy, unambitious, conversational utterance of later years, sometimes even straggling into an apparent carelessness (though Leigh Hunt was in fact far from careless in anything), we find a style of conscious and laboured epigram, with the somewhat ostentatious scholarliness, and proneness to moralise and lecture, of a youth not long free from the influences of his tutor. It is not difficult, however, to see in any page you may open upon, that the youth is one of no small mark. The wit is often genuine, however assumed the manner: as where, speaking of John Kemble's eccentricities of pronunciation, he says: "I could mispronounce much better than he when I was a mere infant." This is like some of the happy retorts of Johnson in familiar conversation; but, a few lines further down, we have Johnson in his balanced literary style: "He (Kemble) does not present one the idea of a man who grasps with the force of genius, but of one who overcomes by the toil of attention." The very title-page of the book has a smack of the last century. It contains a picture wherein Tragedy and Comedy—the one with a goblet and dagger, the other with an arrow—attitudinise before a partially draped mirror, labelled "Yourself," and having more the appearance of a round table on end, than a looking-glass; and underneath is a motto from Horace.

A similar mixture of conventional manner and original observation is perceptible throughout the early letters contained in these two volumes of Correspondence. In the same month of the same year (February, 1806), he writes some love-verses containing such lines as,

> **Hears the accustom'd sighs thy bosom swell,**
> **Pensive, not sad, for him who loves so well,**

and some admirable remarks on the impropriety of people assuming the duties of sponsors when they either doubt the doctrines in which they undertake to see the child reared, or do not intend to give themselves any further trouble about the matter. The independence of the writer's mind, indeed, shows itself very early, though there is no doubt that Leigh Hunt began life with certain transmitted forms of thought which he afterwards threw off. The observations scattered about these letters are excellent and very original, even when the correspondent was a mere youth. In one, written in 1807, he says: "Affection, like melancholy, magnifies trifles: but the magnifying of the one is like looking through a telescope at heavenly objects; that of the other, like enlarging monsters with a microscope." The sentence is worthy of the writer's best days. Much of the ability for humorous character-painting which was afterwards strikingly exhibited in the Indicator, is also to be traced in the early letters. In the course of a visit to Nottingham, in the summer of 1808, he made the acquaintance of a medical man, who, knowing that his young visitor was the editor of the Examiner, determined upon "doing himself the honour of contributing his atom towards the said editor's general knowledge." Accordingly, he first galvanised the editor, "who felt as if he had been shot through the head;" then he showed him a lady's heart, thereby rather staggering his belief "that that interesting object could be the seat of love;" and, finally, "he introduced the said editor to a murderer!" The murderer existed in no more formidable shape than that of a dried skeleton, which was preserved in a cupboard in the medical man's room. "However," writes Leigh Hunt, "when the doctor galvanised me the other night, he put out the candles in his room; and there I sat in the dark, awfully enough, with a man before me who was creating strange fire, and a murderer standing behind me in a little closet. I thought of the skeleton in that facetious romance I read just before I came away, who was seen sitting and chattering with a monk, like two bricklayers over a pint of porter." The mingling of humour and grim wildness in this passage is fit for a German legend.

We find the happy boyishness of spirits gradually clouded with graver thoughts as life advanced. Leigh Hunt was only eight-and-twenty when, in February, 1813, he and his elder brother John were sent to prison for two years, for the celebrated libel on the Prince Regent;

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but from that period the shadows seemed to gather about the head of the youthful reformer, and the tone of his private writings acquired a corresponding hue. He had been married a few years before, and had now two children. Feeling himself in ill-health (for, though gifted naturally with a strong constitution, he was seldom free from depressing ailments, the result of excessive study, over-work, and insufficient exercise), and doubting whether he should ever live to see the end of his captivity, he resolved on keeping a kind of prison journal: partly for the sake of amusement, partly that he might leave some record, should such become necessary, of his "grounds of conduct and habits of thinking." He tells his children, however, that if he should never acquire any greater reputation as an author than he then possessed, they are not to allow the diary to pass beyond their own private circle, unless his memory should be "wantonly and ignorantly traduced by those who think it worth while to notice it." Both these conditions having been fulfilled, the diary finds its way before the public; and a very charming picture it presents of the prison-life of a man of genius and conscience, turning his very jail into a scene of domesticity and love, and filling it with visions of an honourable fame, to be won thereafter by constant devotion to literary toil. The writer was just then beginning the story of Rimini; but he did not forget his journalistic responsibilities. He had been vexed at the discovery of "a miserable blunder" which he had made a few weeks before, "upon a matter of every-day knowledge;" so he set himself to work to study with greater completeness than he had yet done, the details of politics and history. Even at that early period he had formed a just estimate both of the value and the short-comings of his newspaper writings. "I have hitherto confined myself as a journalist," he writes, "to very general politics, and principally to the ethical part of them, to the diffusion of a liberal spirit of thinking, and to the very broadest view of characters and events, always referring them to the standard of human nature and common sense; but although this may be enough for a general reformist, yet it is far from sufficient for a particular one. In short, the common sense, the moral part of my business, I know well enough, and am enabled by it to detect most of the wretched errors which the ordinary politicians of the day would pass upon us for good government; but I want the acquired learning—the details, the out-of-door experience." It is no disparagement to the true and valuable service which Leigh Hunt rendered to the Liberal cause in the early part of the present century, to say that he *never* acquired the practical knowledge of which he confesses the want in this passage. He admitted in later life that he could not understand a question when put in the form of an Act of Parliament; and, in truth, the bent of his disposition was too purely literary to permit of his obtaining a mastery over the mere business of politics But the kind of knowledge which he lacked, is so often accompanied in others by a want of the higher knowledge which he possessed—a sense of the lasting elements of morality, and of the wants of human nature—that even an exclusive exhibition of the latter is an advantage in the midst of more utilitarian views. In much of the political writings of the present day one could dispense with a large amount of technicality for the sake of a loftier regard for the first principles of truth.

The journal, unfortunately, was discontinued after a few days, as such things are apt to be when the novelty has worn off; but the letters, which become more numerous after the prison epoch, are in themselves a species of diary. The correspondence with Shelley is amongst the most interesting in the collection, the writer expressing himself with perfect unreserve when communicating with that "friend of friends." It is curious to note the influence which the two authors had upon one another. Although, as we have seen with respect to christenings, Leigh Hunt, even when a youth, dissented from received ideas in some important matters, we find him indulging in a greater freedom of speculation after he had become closely associated with the daring poet of the Cenci. On the other hand, Shelley's views were doubtless unconsciously modified by those of his friend; or in later life he abandoned the purely negative principles of his earlier years. Leigh Hunt admired the character of Shelley so highly, and defended it with so much warmth from the aspersions which had been cast upon it, that he was in time identified with the whole of Shelley's opinions, and suffered accordingly. This was a signal error, as Mr. Thornton Hunt has pointed out. The Examiner was never Republican, but was constitutional and monarchical; and in religion Leigh Hunt at no time adopted the extreme unbelief of Shelley's youthful speculations. Though not orthodox, his natural piety was always conspicuous; and the greater spirituality of Shelley's more mature works was not improbably owing to his communings with a mind at once liberal and devout. When Shelley lost his beloved son William, in Italy, Leigh Hunt wrote to him a letter of condolence, and suggested that so beautiful and intelligent a spirit as that of the dead child could not perish "like the house it inhabited." He then proceeds to a speculation of a very original and singular kind, expressed in language of such tender and thoughtful beauty, that we cannot forbear from repeating it. "I do not know that a soul is born with us," he writes; "but we seem to me to *attain* to a soul, some later, some earlier; and when we have got that, there is a look in our eye, a sympathy in our cheerfulness, and a yearning and grave beauty in our thoughtfulness, that seems to say, 'Our mortal dress may fall off when it will; our trunk and our leaves may go; we have shot up our blossom into an immortal air.'" Then, recollecting that he is speaking to one who, though desirous to believe whatever is beautiful and adorable, was apt to demand strict logical proof of any

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doctrine which he was called on to accept, the writer adds: "This is poetry, you will say, and not argument; but then there comes upon me another fancy, which would fain persuade me that poetry is the argument of a higher sphere." It would be interesting to know what response, if any, Shelley made to this letter; but there is no doubt that such a strain was precisely the one in which to write to him under the circumstances: considering that sentiment, emotion, and mysticism prevailed in his nature even over the habit of rigorously exacting a reason for every article of faith. With Leigh Hunt, the instincts of the affections were in themselves arguments. As he said in one of his published writings, with a depth and comprehensiveness worthy of Bacon, "Feelings are Nature's reasons." This truly religious tendency of mind increased and ripened with years and sorrow. When in great trouble in Italy after the death of Shelley, he composed a collection of Prayers and Meditations, subsequently printed for private distribution under the title of Christianism; and, about six years before his death, the beautiful volume called the Religion of the Heart proved to a wider circle of readers how seriously he had been misapprehended by those who called him a scoffer and materialist. Affliction, which exasperates some men and deadens others, had with him the effect of bringing out with greater ardour and sweetness the best and most loveable elements of his nature. "I am naturally a man of violent passions," he writes, as far back as 1806; and, much as this may startle those who complain of an excess of suavity in his published works, it was true to the extent of his having a West Indian vehemence of feeling (for he was the son of a Barbadoes gentleman)—a vehemence which sometimes implied strong antipathies, though never conscious injustice. But, at any moment of sorrow, his sympathies, broad at all times, became even more expansive and benignly human. He lost a child in the year 1827, at which period he was divided by certain differences from a near connexion; and it was in the first agony of his grief that he wrote to that connexion the following affecting words:

"You know what took place on Saturday last with my poor little boy. I think, if you could see his little gentle dead body, calm as an angel, and looking wise in his innocence beyond all the troubles of this earth, you would agree with me in concluding (especially as you have lost little darlings of your own), that there is nothing worth contesting here below, except who shall be kindest to one another. There seems to be something in these moments by which life recommences with the survivors: I mean, we seem to be beginning, in a manner, the world again, with calmer if with sadder thoughts, and, wiping our eyes and readjusting the burden on our backs, to set out anew on our roads, with a greater wish to help and console one another. . . . . He was always for settling disputes when he saw them. He showed this disposition to the last; and though, in the errors and frailties common to all of us, we may naturally dislike to be taught by one another, we can have no objection to be taught by an angelic little child."

The letter had its effect. The differences were put an end to, and the sorrow which had stricken the writer's heart was made to bear its worthy fruit—the healing of old dissensions, and the renewal of still older affection. Thirty years later, when Leigh Hunt was still suffering keenly from the death of another son, whom he had lost five years previously to the later date, another unhappy family quarrel drew him into writing thus, to one of the persons involved: "There is a name you love, which I have not yet had the courage to utter to you ever since its owner left us. Scarcely a day still passes in which I do not call upon it in tears in my lonely room. Do not let me miss another dear son, who is living. I am not well, and I do not think you would like me (though better) to continue sick without letting you know." The son whose name the writer had "not yet had courage to utter" was Vincent Leigh Hunt, who died of consumption in 1852, after having given evidence of possessing some portion of his father's faculty, and, what was better still, a nature of great nobility. For the remaining seven years of his life, this sorrow haunted the father's heart with ever-renewing sharpness; but it brought with it, at least, this consolation—that it made him the less unwilling to quit those of his family and circle of friends who still remained, and strengthened his hopes of the hereafter. Writing in November, 1857, to a friend who had recently experienced a great domestic calamity, he says: "I should be one of the unhappiest, instead of the most resigned, of men at this moment, if I did not constantly, and, as it were, instinctively, feel that I should rejoin all the dear ones whom I have lost—words that now, as I write, wring bitter and unsufficing tears from the quivering of the soul within me." References such as this are constant in the later letters; and that Leigh Hunt often expressed to himself, in private, the grief which he never exorcised, however much he might irradiate its darkness with the splendour of a supernatural dawn, seems to be shown by certain lines printed in the present volume, as a note to a letter communicating the death to which allusion has just been made. The second paragraph is somewhat obscure; but the "quivering of the soul" is painfully apparent throughout:

Waking at morn, with the accustom'd sigh
For what no morn could ever bring me more,
And again sighing, while collecting strength
To meet the pangs that waited me, like one
Whose sleep the rack hath watch'd, I tried to feel
How good for me had been strange griefs of old,
That for long days, months, years, inured my wits
To bear the dreadful burden of one thought.

One thought with woful need turned many ways,
Which, shunn'd at first, and scaring me, as wounds
Thrusting in wound, became, oh! almost clasp'd
And blest, as saviours from one dire pang
That mock'd the will to move it.

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Such was the man who was sometimes described, by those who misunderstood the southern vivacity that occasionally ran over in his published writings in the pleasurable glow of composition, as a person of unthinking levity, incapable of perceiving the grave facts of life! We have purposely dwelt on the sadder passages of his existence, because of the singular misapprehensions with regard to his character which have prevailed in many minds. His life was in several respects a life of trouble, though his cheerfulness was such that he was, upon the whole, happier than some men who have had fewer griefs to wrestle with. Death and domestic dissensions, as we have seen, often stabbed him in his tenderest affections; and, in addition to those trials, he had to confront the repeated presence of pecuniary distress, owing partly to the heavy fine imposed on account of the libel on the Prince Regent, partly to a want of the business faculty, and partly to the extreme independence of spirit of the man, which, all through his career, kept him to a great extent sequestered from the broad outer world. The fact comes out so frequently in the present volumes, that there need be no delicacy in alluding to it here. Mournfully, however, as a large part of the Correspondence strikes upon the reader, it must not be supposed that it refers entirely to painful details. Leigh Hunt's was an essentially human nature, rich and inclusive; and it is reflected with great completeness in the letters here given to the public. We see the writer in their varied contents, as those who knew him familiarly saw him in his every-day life: sometimes overclouded with the shadow of affliction, but more often bright and hopeful, and at all times sympathetic: taking a keen delight in all beautiful things—in the exhaustless world of books and art, in the rising genius of young authors, in the immortal language of music, in trees, and flowers, and old memorial nooks of London and its suburbs; in the sunlight which came, as he used to say, like a visitor out of heaven, glorifying humble places; in the genial intercourse of mind with mind; in the most trifling incidents of daily life that spoke of truth and nature; in the spider drinking from the water-drop which had fallen on his letter from some flowers while he was writing; in the sunset lighting up his "little homely black mantelpiece" till it kindled into "a solemnly gorgeous presentment of black and gold;" in the domesticities of family life, and in the general progress of the world. A heart and soul so gifted could not but share largely in the happiness with which the Divine Ruler of the universe has compensated our sorrows; and he had loving hearts about him to the last, to sweeten both. His letters to his daughters, to his son Vincent, and to some of his grandchildren, are exquisite specimens of parental tenderness—the loving playfulness of a wise and fresh-spirited old age. And the extreme tolerance and charity of his declining years brought him a host of new friends from all parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and even from America: some belonging to political parties totally distinct from that to which he remained unalterably attached to the latest breath he drew. This devotion to liberal ideas, which made him hail the French Revolution of 1848 as something "divine," and which excited in his mind so profound an interest in the recent uprising of Italy that he inquired eagerly of its progress only an hour or two before his death, contrasts very agreeably with the fluctuations of other authors.

It has been said occasionally that Leigh Hunt was a weak man. He had, it is true, particular weaknesses, as evinced in his want of business knowledge, and in a certain hesitation of the judgment on some points, which his son has aptly likened to the ultra-deliberation of Hamlet, and which was the result of an extreme conscientiousness. But a man who had the courage to take his stand against power on behalf of right—who in the midst of the sorest temptations maintained his honesty unblemished by a single stain,—who in all public and private transactions was the very soul of truth and honour—who never bartered his opinion or betrayed his friend—could not have been a weak man; for weakness is always treacherous and false, because it has not the power to resist.

From all such misunderstandings he is now released by death; and in closing this article we cannot do better than repeat the passage from his beloved Spenser which has been happily selected as the motto of his Correspondence—a passage which, though put by the poet into the mouth of Despair, is in truth full of a fine suggestion of a hope beyond the hopes of earth:

> What if some little payne the passage have,
> That makes frayle flesh to feare the bitter wave?
> Is not short payne well borne that brings long ease,
> And layes the soule to sleep in quiet grave?
> Sleepe after toyle, port after stormie seas,
> Ease after warre, death after life, does greatly please.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER X.

ON returning to the house, Magdalen felt her shoulder suddenly touched from behind, as she crossed the hall. She turned, and confronted her sister. Before she could ask any questions, Norah confusedly addressed her, in these words: "I beg your pardon; I beg you to forgive me."

Magdalen looked at her sister in astonishment. All memory, on her side, of the sharp words which had passed between them in the shrubbery, was lost in the new interests that now absorbed her; lost as completely as if the angry interview had never taken place. "Forgive you!" she repeated, amazedly, "what for?"

"I have heard of your new prospects," pursued Norah, speaking with a mechanical submissiveness of manner which seemed almost ungracious; "I wished to set things right between us; I wished to say I was sorry for what happened. Will you forget it? Will you forget and forgive what happened in the shrubbery?" She tried to proceed; but her inveterate reserve—or, perhaps, her obstinate reliance on her own opinions—silenced her at those last words. Her face clouded over on a sudden. Before her sister could answer her, she turned away abruptly and ran up stairs.

The door of the library opened, before Magdalen could follow her; and Miss Garth advanced to express the sentiments proper to the occasion.

They were not the mechanically-submissive sentiments which Magdalen had just heard. Norah had struggled against her rooted distrust of Frank, in deference to the unanswerable decision of both her parents in his favour; and had suppressed the open expression of her antipathy, though the feeling itself remained unconquered. Miss Garth had made no such concession to the master and mistress of the house. She had hitherto held the position of a high authority on all domestic questions; and she flatly declined to get off her pedestal in deference to any change in the family circumstances, no matter how amazing or how unexpected that change might be.

"Pray accept my congratulations," said Miss Garth, bristling all over with implied objections to Frank—"my congratulations, *and* my apologies. When I caught you kissing Mr. Francis Clare in the summer-house, I had no idea you were engaged in carrying out the intentions of your parents. I offer no opinion on the subject. I merely regret my own accidental appearance in the character of an Obstacle to the course of true love—which appears to run smooth in summer-houses, whatever Shakespeare may say to the contrary. Consider me for the future, if you please, as an Obstacle removed. May you be happy!" Miss Garth's lips closed on that last sentence like a trap; and Miss Garth's eyes looked ominously prophetic into the matrimonial future.

If Magdalen's anxieties had not been far too serious to allow her the customary free use of her tongue, she would have been ready, on the instant, with an appropriately satirical answer. As it was, Miss Garth simply irritated her. "Pooh!" she said—and ran up-stairs to her sister's room.

She knocked at the door, and there was no answer. She tried the door, and it resisted her from the inside. The sullen, unmanageable Norah was locked in.

Under other circumstances, Magdalen would not have been satisfied with knocking—she would have called through the door loudly and more loudly, till the house was disturbed, and she had carried her point. But the doubts and fears of the morning had unnerved her already. She went down stairs again softly, and took her hat from the stand in the hall. "He told me to put my hat on," she said to herself, with a meek filial docility which was totally out of her character.

She went into the garden, on the shrubbery side; and waited there to catch the first sight of her father on his return. Half an hour passed; forty minutes passed—and then his voice reached her from among the distant trees. "Come in to heel!" she heard him call out loudly to the dog. Her face turned pale. "He's angry with Snap!" she exclaimed to herself, in a whisper. The next minute he appeared in view; walking rapidly, with his head down, and Snap at his heels in disgrace. The sudden excess of her alarm as she observed those ominous signs of something wrong, rallied her natural energy, and determined her desperately on knowing the worst.

She walked straight forward to meet her father.

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"Your face tells your news," she said, faintly. "Mr. Clare has been as heartless as usual—Mr. Clare has said, No?"

Her father turned on her with a sudden severity, so entirely unparalleled in her experience of him, that she started back in downright terror.

"Magdalen!" he said, "whenever you speak of my old friend and neighbour again, bear this in mind. Mr. Clare has just laid me under an obligation which I shall remember gratefully to the end of my life."

He stopped suddenly, after saying those remarkable words. Seeing that he had startled her, his natural kindness prompted him instantly to soften the reproof, and to end the suspense from which she was plainly suffering. "Give me a kiss, my love," he resumed; "and I'll tell you in return that Mr. Clare has said—YES."

She attempted to thank him; but the sudden luxury of relief was too much for her. She could only cling round his neck in silence. He felt her trembling from head to foot, and said a few words to calm her. At the altered tones of his master's voice, Snap's meek tail reappeared fiercely from between his legs; and Snap's lungs modestly tested his position with a brief experimental bark. The dog's quaintly appropriate assertion of himself on his old footing, was the interruption of all others which was best fitted to restore Magdalen to herself. She caught the shaggy little terrier up in her arms, and kissed *him* next. "You darling," she exclaimed, "you're almost as glad as I am!" She turned again to her father, with a look of tender reproach. "You frightened me, papa," she said. "You were so unlike yourself."

"I shall be right again, to-morrow, my dear. I am a little upset to-day."

"Not by me?"

"No, no."

"By something you have heard at Mr. Clare's?"

"Yes—nothing you need alarm yourself about; nothing that won't wear off by to-morrow. Let me go now, my dear, I have a letter to write; and I want to speak to your mother."

He left her, and went on to the house. Magdalen lingered a little on the lawn, to feel all the happiness of her new sensations—then turned away towards the shrubbery, to enjoy the higher luxury of communicating them. The dog followed her. She whistled, and clapped her hands. "Find him!" she said, with beaming eyes. "Find Frank!" Snap scampered into the shrubbery, with a bloodthirsty snarl at starting. Perhaps he had mistaken his young mistress, and considered himself her emissary in search of a rat?

Meanwhile, Mr. Vanstone entered the house. He met his wife, slowly descending the stairs, and advanced to give her his arm. "How has it ended?" she asked anxiously, as he led her to the sofa.

"Happily—as we hoped it would," answered her husband. "My old friend has justified my opinion of him."

"Thank God!" said Mrs. Vanstone, fervently. "Did you feel it, love?" she asked, as her husband arranged the sofa pillows—"did you feel it as painfully as I feared you would?"

"I had a duty to do, my dear—and I did it."

After replying in those terms, he hesitated. Apparently, he had something more to say—something, perhaps, on the subject of that passing uneasiness of mind, which had been produced by his interview with Mr. Clare, and which Magdalen's questions had obliged him to acknowledge. A look at his wife decided his doubts in the negative. He only asked if she felt comfortable; and then turned away to leave the room.

"Must you go?" she asked.

"I have a letter to write, my dear."

"Anything about Frank?"

"No: to-morrow will do for that. A letter to Mr. Pendril; I want him here immediately."

"Business, I suppose?"

"Yes, my dear—business."

He went out, and shut himself into the little front room, close to the hall-door, which was called his study. By nature and habit the most procrastinating of letter-writers, he now inconsistently opened his desk and took up the pen without a moment's delay. His letter was long enough to occupy three pages of note-paper; it was written with a readiness of expression and a rapidity of hand which seldom characterised his proceedings when engaged over his ordinary correspondence. He wrote the address as follows, "Immediate:—William Pendril Esq., Searle-street, Lincoln's Inn, London"—then pushed the letter away from him, and sat at the table, drawing lines on the blotting-paper with his pen, lost in thought. "No," he said to himself; "I can do nothing more till Pendril comes." He rose; his face brightened as he put the stamp on the envelope. The writing of the letter had sensibly relieved him, and his whole bearing showed it as he left the room.

On the door-step, he found Norah and Miss Garth, setting forth together for a walk.

"Which way are you going?" he asked. "Anywhere near the post-office? I wish you would post this letter for me, Norah. It is very important—so important, that I hardly like to trust it to Thomas as usual."

Norah at once took charge of the letter.

"If you look, my dear," continued her father, "you will see that I am writing to Mr. Pendril. I expect him here to-morrow afternoon. Will you give the necessary directions, Miss Garth? Mr. Pendril will sleep here to-morrow night, and stay over Sunday.—Wait a minute! To-day is Friday. Surely I had an engagement for Saturday afternoon?" He consulted his pocket-book, and read over one of the entries, with a look of annoyance. "Grailsea Mill, three o'clock, Saturday. Just the time when Pendril will be here; and I *must* be at home to see him.

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How can I manage it? Monday will be too late for my business at Grailsea. I'll go to-day, instead; and take my chance of catching the miller at his dinner-time." He looked at his watch. "No time for driving; I must do it by railway. If I go at once, I shall catch the down train at our station, and get on to Grailsea. Take care of the letter, Norah. I won't keep dinner waiting; if the return train doesn't suit, I'll borrow a gig, and get back in that way."

As he took up his hat, Magdalen appeared at the door, returning from her interview with Frank. The hurry of her father's movements attracted her attention; and she asked him where he was going.

"To Grailsea," replied Mr. Vanstone. "Your business, Miss Magdalen, has got in the way of mine—and mine must give way to it."

He spoke those parting words in his old hearty manner; and left them, with the old characteristic flourish of his trusty stick.

"My business!" said Magdalen. "I thought my business was done."

Miss Garth pointed significantly to the letter in Norah's hand. "Your business, beyond all doubt," she said. "Mr. Pendril is coming to-morrow; and Mr. Vanstone seems remarkably anxious about it. Law, and its attendant troubles already! Governesses who look in at summer-house doors are not the only obstacles to the course of true love. Parchment is sometimes an obstacle. I hope you may find Parchment as pliable as I am—I wish you well through it. Now, Norah!"

Miss Garth's second shaft struck as harmless as the first. Magdalen had returned to the house, a little vexed; her interview with Frank having been interrupted by a messenger from Mr. Clare, sent to summon the son into the father's presence. Although it had been agreed at the private interview between Mr. Vanstone and Mr. Clare, that the questions discussed that morning should not be communicated to the children, until the year of probation was at an end—and although, under these circumstances, Mr. Clare had nothing to tell Frank which Magdalen could not communicate to him much more agreeably—the philosopher was not the less resolved on personally informing his son of the parental concession which rescued him from Chinese exile. The result was a sudden summons to the cottage, which startled Magdalen, but which did not appear to take Frank by surprise. His filial experience penetrated the mystery of Mr. Clare's motives easily enough. "When my father's in spirits," he said, sulkily, "he likes to bully me about my good luck. This message means that he's going to bully me now."

"Don't go," suggested Magdalen.

"I must," rejoined Frank. "I shall never hear the last of it, if I don't. He's primed and loaded, and he means to go off. He went off, once, when the engineer took me; he went off, twice, when the office in the City took me; and he's going off, thrice, now *you*'ve taken me. If it wasn't for you, I should wish I had never been born. Yes; your father's been kind to me, I know—and I should have gone to China, if it hadn't been for him. I'm sure I'm very much obliged. Of course, we have no right to expect anything else—still, it's discouraging to keep us waiting a year, isn't it?"

Magdalen stopped his mouth by a summary process, to which even Frank submitted gratefully. At the same time, she did not forget to set down his discontent to the right side. "How fond he is of me!" she thought. "A year's waiting is quite a hardship to him." She returned to the house, secretly regretting that she had not heard more of Frank's complimentary complaints. Miss Garth's elaborate satire, addressed to her while she was in this frame of mind, was a purely gratuitous waste of Miss Garth's breath. What did Magdalen care for satire? What do Youth and Love ever care for, except themselves? She never even said as much as "Pooh!" this time. She laid aside her hat in serene silence, and sauntered languidly into the morning-room to keep her mother company. She lunched on dire forebodings of a quarrel between Frank and his father, with accidental interruptions in the shape of cold chicken and cheesecakes. She trifled away half an hour at the piano; and played, in that time, selections from the Songs of Mendelssohn, the Mazurkas of Chopin, the Operas of Verdi, and the Sonatas of Mozart—all of whom had combined together on this occasion, and produced one immortal work, entitled "Frank." She closed the piano and went up to her room, to dream away the hours luxuriously in visions of her married future. The green shutters were closed, the easy chair was pushed in front of the glass, the maid was summoned as usual; and the comb assisted the mistress's reflections, through the medium of the mistress's hair, till heat and idleness asserted their narcotic influences together, and Magdalen fell asleep.

It was past three o'clock when she woke. On going down stairs again she found her mother, Norah, and Miss Garth all sitting together enjoying the shade and the coolness under the open portico in front of the house.

Norah had the railway time-table in her hand. They had been discussing the chances of Mr. Vanstone's catching the return train, and getting back in good time. That topic had led them, next, to his business errand at Grailsea—an errand of kindness, as usual; undertaken for the benefit of the miller, who had been his old farm-servant, and who was now hard pressed by serious pecuniary difficulties. From this they had glided insensibly into a subject often repeated among them, and never exhausted by repetition—the praise of Mr. Vanstone himself. Each one of the three had some experience of her own to relate of his simple, generous nature. The conversation seemed to be almost painfully

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interesting to his wife. She was too near the time of her trial now, not to feel nervously sensitive to the one subject which always held the foremost place in her heart. Her eyes overflowed as Magdalen joined the little group under the portico; her frail hand trembled, as it signed to her youngest daughter to take the vacant chair by her side. "We were talking of your father," she said, softly. "Oh, my love, if your married life is only as happy——" Her voice failed her; she put her handkerchief hurriedly over her face, and rested her head on Magdalen's shoulder. Norah looked appealingly to Miss Garth; who at once led the conversation back to the more trivial subject of Mr. Vanstone's return. "We have all been wondering," she said, with a significant look at Magdalen, "whether your father will leave Grailsea in time to catch the train—or whether he will miss it, and be obliged to drive back. What do you say?"

"I say, papa will miss the train," replied Magdalen, taking Miss Garth's hint with her customary quickness. "The last thing he attends to at Grailsea, will be the business that brings him there. Whenever he has business to do, he always puts it off to the last moment—doesn't he, mamma?"

The question roused her mother exactly as Magdalen had intended it should. "Not when his errand is an errand of kindness," said Mrs. Vanstone. "He has gone to help the miller, in a very pressing difficulty——"

"And don't you know what he'll do?" persisted Magdalen. "He'll romp with the miller's children, and gossip with the mother, and hob-and-nob with the father. At the last moment, when he has got five minutes left to catch the train, he'll say, 'Let's go into the counting-house, and look at the books.' He'll find the books dreadfully complicated; he'll suggest sending for an accountant; he'll settle the business off-hand, by lending the money in the mean time; he'll jog back comfortably in the miller's gig; and he'll tell us all how pleasant the lanes were in the cool of the evening."

The little character-sketch which these words drew, was too faithful a likeness not to be recognised. Mrs. Vanstone showed her appreciation of it by a smile. "When your father returns," she said, "we will put your account of his proceedings to the test. I think," she continued, rising languidly from her chair, "I had better go in-doors again now, and rest on the sofa till he comes back."

The little group under the portico broke up. Magdalen slipped away into the garden to hear Frank's account of the interview with his father. The other three ladies entered the house together. When Mrs. Vanstone was comfortably established on the sofa, Norah and Miss Garth left her to repose, and withdrew to the library to look over the ast parcel of books from London.

It was a quiet, cloudless summer's day. The heat was tempered by a light western breeze; the voices of labourers at work in a field near, reached the house cheerfully; the clock-bell of the village church as it struck the quarters, floated down the wind with a clearer ring, a louder melody than usual. Sweet odours from field and flower-garden, stealing in at the open windows, filled the house with their fragrance; and the birds in Norah's aviary up-stairs, sang the song of their happiness exultingly in the sun.

As the church clock struck the quarter-past four, the morning-room door opened; and Mrs. Vanstone crossed the hall alone. She had tried vainly to compose herself. She was too restless to lie still, and sleep. For a moment, she directed her steps towards the portico—then turned, and looked about her, doubtful where to go, or what to do next. While she was still hesitating, the half-open door of her husband's study attracted her attention. The room seemed to be in sad confusion. Drawers were left open; coats and hats, account-books and papers, pipes and fishing-rods, were all scattered about together. She went in, and pushed the door to—but so gently that she still left it ajar. "It will amuse me to put his room to rights," she thought to herself. "I should like to do something for him, before I am down on my bed helpless." She began to arrange his drawers; and found his banker's book lying open in one of them. "My poor dear, how careless he is! The servants might have seen all his affairs, if I had not happened to have looked in." She set the drawers right; and then turned to the multifarious litter on a side-table. A little old-fashioned music-book appeared among the scattered papers, with her name written in it, in faded ink. She blushed like a young girl in the first happiness of the discovery. "How good he is to me! He remembers my poor old music-book, and keeps it for my sake." As she sat down by the table and opened the book, the bygone time came back to her in all its tenderness. The clock struck the half-hour, struck the three-quarters—and still she sat there, with the music-book on her lap, dreaming happily over the old songs; thinking gratefully of the golden days when his hand had turned the pages for her, when his voice had whispered the words which no woman's memory ever forgets.

Norah roused herself from the volume she was reading, and glanced at the clock on the library mantelpiece.

"If papa comes back by railway," she said, "he will be here in ten minutes."

Miss Garth started, and looked up drowsily from the book which was just dropping out of her hand.

"I don't think he will come by train," she replied. "He will jog back—as Magdalen flippantly expressed it—in the miller's gig."

As she said the words, there was a knock at the library-door. The footman appeared, and addressed himself to Miss Garth.

"A person wishes to see you, ma'am."

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"Who is it?"

"I don't know, ma'am. A stranger to me—a respectable-looking man—and he said he particularly wished to see you."

Miss Garth went out into the hall. The footman closed the library door after her; and withdrew down the kitchen stairs.

The man stood just inside the door, on the mat. His eyes wandered, his face was pale—he looked ill; he looked frightened. He trifled nervously with his cap, and shifted it backwards and forwards, from one hand to the other.

"You wanted to see me?" said Miss Garth.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am.—You are not Mrs. Vanstone, are you?"

"Certainly not. I am Miss Garth. Why do you ask the question?"

"I am employed in the clerk's office at Grailsea station——"

"Yes?"

"I am sent here——"

He stopped again. His wandering eyes looked down at the mat, and his restless hands wrung his cap harder and harder. He moistened his dry lips, and tried once more.

"I am sent here on a very serious errand."

"Serious to *me?*"

"Serious to all in this house."

Miss Garth took one step nearer to him—took one steady look at his face. She turned cold in the summer heat. "Stop!" she said, with a sudden distrust, and glanced aside anxiously at the door of the morning-room. It was safely closed. "Tell me the worst; and don't speak loud. There has been an accident. Where?"

"On the railway. Close to Grailsea station."

"The up-train, to London?"

"No: the down-train at one-fifty——"

"God Almighty help us! The train Mr. Vanstone travelled by to Grailsea?"

"The same. I was sent here by the up-train: the line was just cleared in time for it. They wouldn't write—they said I must see 'Miss Garth,' and tell her. There are seven passengers badly hurt; and two——"

The next word failed on his lips: he raised his hand in the dead silence. With eyes that opened wide in horror, he raised his hand and pointed over Miss Garth's shoulder.

She turned a little, and looked back.

Face to face with her, on the threshold of the study-door, stood the mistress of the house. She held her old music-book clutched fast mechanically in both hands. She stood, the spectre of herself. With a dreadful vacancy in her eyes, with a dreadful stillness in her voice, she repeated the man's last words:

"Seven passengers badly hurt; and two——"

Her tortured fingers relaxed their hold; the book dropped from them; she sank forward heavily. Miss Garth caught her before she fell—caught her; and turned upon the man, with the wife's swooning body in her arms, to hear the husband's fate.

"The harm is done," she said: "you may speak out. Is he wounded, or dead?"

"Dead!"

SOLDIERS' LEISURE HOURS.

Every private soldier in the English army, when on colonial service, has been calculated by political economists to cost the nation about one hundred pounds sterling per annum. Without reckoning his heart or brain, which are thrown into the bargain, each individual soldier, therefore, whether at home or abroad, must represent, we presume, a cost of nearly one hundred pounds sterling—red coat, cross-belts, bayonet, &c., included.

Now, as we are an over-taxed people and ought not to throw more money away, let us for a moment, as sincere friends of the soldier, consider how we can honestly make the most of him in times of peace, when, as the old proverb goes, a soldier somewhat resembles "a chimney in summer." We do not want to overwork him, or to make a slave of him, but we want to prevent his becoming a worthless vagabond, idle and miserable himself, a cause of misery to others. We want above all, if we can, to prevent his enlisting in that already far too well-manned regiment, the Blackguards.

We have seen English soldiers in many parts of the world—in Gibraltar and Corfu, at Zante, in Canada, at Malta, in the Channel Islands, in Ireland, in Scotland—and we know their daily life, its pleasures and vexations, its petty annoyances, its monotony, its prison-like severity, its innumerable temptations. We have listened to English officers, hour after hour, as they told of scrub-fighting in Caffreland; of capture of forts in China; of hand-to-hand struggles with the Maories of New Zealand; of stormy charges of the Sikh horsemen; of terrible beleaguerments by yelling Sepoys. We respect the courage shown by the English soldier in every country; we admire his noble endurance; we love to hear of his grave unostentatious heroism; but the more we hear of him, the more we wish to render him a useful and prudent citizen.

The civilian, we must premise, must not look on the soldier in peace as by any means an idle man. If he be a foot soldier, he has his belts to pipeclay, his uniform to brush, his boots to clean, his gloves to wash, his rifle to furbish, his bayonet to scour or sharpen; he has also his parades and sentinel duty, his barrack-room work, and all sorts of regimental formulary to carry on. If he be in the cavalry, his horse gives him infinite trouble; not a hair on the animal's hide must be out of place, and then there are the sword, carbine, saddle, stirrups, and bridle chain, and many other trappings, to keep free from the all-penetrating rust, and to clean, scour, scrub, rub, and wash. If he be an artilleryman, there is endless gun drill, and there are many new rules of science hourly, to learn or to practise. If he be a musician, there is his instrument perpetually

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to study, alone or in company with other instruments. Indeed, so much have private soldiers to learn, individually and collectively, that it is supposed that a good and complete foot soldier can scarcely be turned out in less than three years. By a complete soldier, we mean one who performs by instinct every individual and collective manœuvre, whether he has to work in battalion or company, in solid square, or in broken and retreating masses.

It is, we think, universally allowed, that intellectually, the English labourer improves by becoming a soldier. The red-faced vacant-eyed lad, who moved his legs only a year ago as if they were solid lead from the knees downward: can he be that smart neat nimble fellow in the Guards standing sentinel at a door in Pall-Mall? A mountain of black bearskin hides the low heavy forehead; the legs, cased in red-corded black trousers, are firm, straight, and alert in movement. They obey the officer's orders as the ivory key of the piano does the finger of the player. The lad's mind has more grasp now, and, like his legs, can move more quickly and spontaneously. He is not a braver man than he was when he only knew how to handle the scythe or the reaping-hook; but he is a more orderly and methodical creature, and knows how to move about to some purpose, and that too in the fire and smoke of battle. His mind, too, is prompter, because it has been taught to reflect on a wider range of topics. He is a better man now, not merely because he has learnt to move his feet and hands in a certain way on certain words being uttered, but because he has been exercising his powers of reflection on a difficult routine, and in a new profession. His every-day life is in fact an education itself, compared to his old dreary existence in Downshire, where sheep-minding, pig-feeding, and driving horses to water, presented few subjects for thought.

Morally, however, we cannot say as much for him, for he has fallen among a set of men who spend all their time in the low public-houses leading from Pimlico to Westminster: who drink, gamble, swear, and cut unoffending people's heads open with their heavy-buckled belts: a vicious, idle set, with many broken constitutions among them that would not sustain the fatigues of a single campaign.

Alas, that we can nowhere see English soldiers but there are such men among them. Go to Gibraltar, and there inside the low rum-shops in "Snake-in-the-Grass-lane," you will find such fellows roaring, cursing, and threatening death. Go to Malta, and there in the back streets of Valetta reel along the same sort of men. Go to Quebec, and there, close to the ramparts, there is no alley in which you will not meet a bruised drunken soldier being bumped along, in the hands of the picket. Go to many an English garrison town, and ask the magistrate of the day if he finds the soldiers troublesome.

Now, cheap or gratuitous Reading Rooms and Free Libraries are excellent things for the more thoughtful and intellectual soldier. The man who has been a mechanic, the man who has taken at an early age to reading (Scotchmen generally do, to their infinite honour be it said), will naturally solace their leisure moments with books; and in these days of good cheap literature, they can do so easily, but these are not the men whose leisure hours we want to find occupation for. These men probably, in any profession, would be prudent, quiet, and industrious. To some men it is pain and grief to be idle. These readers soon get recognised, become corporals and sergeants, and pass into better places. It is the rough rank and file, the brute ordinary mass, that we want to see more civilised and better employed. It is the thoughtless Irish madcap, the bully of the regiment, the drunkard, the habitual deserter, the refractory, the mutinous, that we want to find healthy recreation for, and to wean from the misuse of the gin-bottle, the dirty cards, the tavern songs, the bagatelle-board, the dice, and the beer-jug.

Now, there are men of certain temperament, of certain ages, and of certain education, who cannot derive pleasure from intellectual pursuits. They have no imagination, no powers of reflection; they bring nothing to the book, so the book brings nothing to them; they prefer to see things rather than to read of them. They could talk for an hour over Sergeant Pontoon's story of the Kaiber Pass, but to read ten lines about it in a book would set them a yawning. They like a play, they like a story, but they have not the sort of mind that can appreciate a book, nor has culture of any kind ever enabled them to replace their loss. Their pre-regimental life, spent in a colliery, or in the street, or in a barge, or in a factory, was too hard and busy.

No! Our soldiers want what the mere healthy animal—man—always craves for, and that is, EXERCISE, made pleasurable in the form of athletic games, constant exercise stimulated by gymnastics, exercise that, under a tepid depressing climate, must be rendered competitive and exciting; exercise, above all, that will tend to make him a stronger, a more agile, and a more self-reliant soldier.

Our officers know well enough that it is not mere drill that makes the perfect soldier. It is not learning by mechanical instinct to fire so many times in a minute, or to click on and off the bayonet with astonishing but automaton quickness, that makes the model soldier. No drill can give men stamina or endurance, and no drill will enable them to "pull through" blundering Walcheren expeditions, or to baffle Yellow Jack in fever quarters at Barbadoes. Drill alone does not make the soldier return safe and healthy from Corunna retreats, or restore him and the hundred pounds sterling he represents, to the anxious tax-payer.

Our officers know well that it is their solemn duty to direct their soldiers' amusements; to forget now and then the billiard-room, Rotten-row, and what not, and to lead away their men's minds from the incessant filthy grog-shop and low vice; but yet they too often neglect this duty. They need sacrifice no position; they could still be officers

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and gentlemen, though they did lead the men at single-stick, at leaping hurdles, at boxing, at fencing, at back-sword and quarter-staff, at lifting weights, at climbing. At all of these healthy and useful amusements, education, a little science reflection and comparison, would give them an advantage over the mere brute strength and impetuosity of the common men. They might occasionally offer small prizes, while the corporals and sergeants could maintain order and prevent any unfairness, any brutality, or any undue exhibition of temper.

It is not enough that such exercises should be spasmodic and occasional; they should be incessant, in all climates and in all places. Wherever English soldiers are stationed, there athletic games should be established, and incessantly be kept a going. Such sports would soon, by their pure healthy influence, wean the drinker from his drink, and the gambler from his cards. They would do much, to "set up" our soldier: to widen his chest, to harden his limbs, and to make him as he should be—the strongest, hardiest, and most active of Englishmen. He surely needs hardening, for Heaven knows what rough weather and heavy blows he may have one day to endure; or in what bloody ditch or red-hot breach, he may have to fight for his life.

Our army, it must be remembered, is not all made up of strong countrymen; it is at least two-thirds composed of poor thin mechanics, of London prodigals, of decayed spendthrifts, and the wandering scum of our towns. No mere drill can give these men broad chests, strong arms, or quick legs, though regular food and settled hours make them, in time, stout, red, and hearty. It is the army with the best and most enduring stamina that wins—such had Cæsar's legionaries. It is the keenest and alertest intelligence that is victorious—as in the case of Napoleon versus Wurmser, when the latter complained that the young Corsican general did not fight according to "the old-established rules." It is the good cause and the pure heart, like Garibaldi's, that defeats the trained army and the Austrian woodenheads. It is the fervid faith, as of the Swiss mountaineers, that can break up a great power as if it were an image of ice.

There are wise and far-seeing doctors now living, who think that from some unknown cause our race is physically degenerating, and that our sons are growing up physically weaker and more nervous than ourselves.* Some think it is the incessant tea, that has taken the place of hearty breakfasts of meat and weak wine; others attribute it to smoking, late hours, and the increased wear and tear of our brain and nerves. It is found dangerous now, to bleed in cases of fever or of apoplexy. Men, apparently hearty, sink suddenly into old age. Nervous diseases increase daily. Our social hours grow every day less healthy and natural. We rise long after the sun and the animals, long after they are asleep we are wasting our brains and thinning our blood in heated rooms:

> The world is too much with us! Late and soon,
> Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers.
> Little there is in nature that is ours.

Now, as new forms of dress and diet are adopted by us all, hereditarily, irrationally, without reflection, and without any knowledge or thought of their wide-spreading results, it may be long before we learn how to stop this physical degeneracy. It is, therefore, most important, that by all means we contrive to keep our soldiers strong and vigorous, whosoever else may degenerate.

Every barrack should have a zinc-covered shed, open to every soldier when off duty, without fee and at all hours. Gymnastic poles, ropes, foils, and other such appliances, should be furnished by government, aided (perhaps) by regimental subscriptions. The men should or should not contribute, according to future opinion on the subject. The soldiers' library should contain books on all gymnastic subjects; and the sergeants and corporals should be taught by proper professors, at the government expense.

We would go even further than this. If an enormous standing army, occasioning millions of taxation, must be maintained, in spite of a hundred and fifty thousand volunteers, why not make our army as much as possible an army of good and not an army of evil, a force of industry and not of idleness, a power for use and not for show: a great regiment working with smiles from Heaven on it, and not smiled on from below? Why should we pay thousands of men, merely for pipeclaying belts, and standing at doors, guarding what never did, and never will, want guarding? Why should we not get work for our wages? Have we no great national needs to direct drilled labour upon? Are there no bog of Allan, no Curragh of Kildare, no Connemara morasses, to drain, and render fit for the crops to blossom over; no great national hill-roads to make; no refuge harbours to pile up, no Dartmoor to clear, no forest to cultivate? Suppose we did pay the soldier a few pence beyond his pay while engaged on these national works, would one tax-payer grudge it? When did great national works ever return a percentage? The Pyramids never paid; the Coliseum must have been commercially a failure. It is only the old stupid Chinese conservatism which bade Galileo fall on his knees, and, on pain of death, swear before God and the angels that "the world did not and could not move," that would oppose such work.

Were it possible that not merely the idle soldiers, but also the great shivering army of starving Englishmen, could now defile before me, I would then cry in their hearing, in a voice that should shake the Circumlocution Office and the Barnacles, these memorable words of one of our greatest thinkers:

"My misguided friends, I should think some work might be discoverable for you to become from a nomadic banditti of idleness, soldiers of

* We do not adopt this opinion, which is, to the best of our knowledge, opposed by all Life Office experience and Annuity Calculations.—Ed.

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industry. I will lead you to the Irish bogs, to the vacant desolations of Connaught, to mistilled Connaught, to ditto Munster, Leinster, and Ulster. I will lead you to the English fox covets, furze-grown commons, new forests, Salisbury Plains; likewise to the Scotch hill-sides and bare rusty slopes, which as yet feed only sheep, moist uplands, thousands of square miles in extent, which are destined yet to grow green crops, and fresh butter, and milk, and beef without limit (wherein no foreigner can compete with us), were the sewers once opened on them, and you with your colonels carried thither. In the three kingdoms, or in the forty colonies, depend upon it you shall be led to your work. To each of you I will say: Here is work for you; strike into it with manly soldier-like obedience and heartiness."

WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.

What significance lies in that little phrase—What might have been! Who does not know the days when his fortune was balanced on the chance of a moment, when the turning into one street instead of another, the paying one visit and leaving another owing, the writing of this letter and letting that remain unanswered, changed the whole current of his life, and gave the world another cycle of generations to what might have been? I can count up on my fingers numerous instances known to me, among my own friends, whose fortunes were this creation of chance moments, and who might as easily have obtained any other combination as that which gave them happiness or ruin. See what chance did for poor Miss Mary, the young governess at Merton Hall. Miss Mary had two offers—I mean for a situation, nothing more—one, was from a vicar's wife somewhere down in Wales; the other, from Miss Merton, of Merton Hall, a county family place in Devonshire. Miss Mary was a goose—as Miss Marys often are—and thought that the grand county family who sealed with a flourishing coat of arms, and who had their names in the county history, must be a better speculation than a little unknown parsonage behind the Welsh mountains; besides, they offered five pounds a year more, which represented a gown, a cloak, and a bonnet to Miss Mary. So, stifling the instinct which inclined her to the gentle motherly vicar's wife, who wrote so kindly and so modestly, she preferred Dives and his flourishing coat of arms, and transported herself to the grand county family. All very well; nothing to find fault with; Mrs. Merton as condescendingly considerate as fine ladies of good hearts generally are to their dependents; and Miss Mary was thankful, and remained where she was till the bloom of her youth had passed. She might have found a hundred worse situations, she said, and she said truly. But down in that Welsh village lived a certain clear-eyed clean-limbed brave-hearted young doctor, just setting up in practice, and sorely in need of a wife. If Mary had accepted that gentle lady's modest offer?—well! Mary would have been what the other governess became—young Doctor John's wife, and both Mary and Doctor John would have been better for the arrangement. She would have suited him better than Mrs. John, who was of a high temper, and somewhat overbearing manners; and she would not have lost all her roses so soon, or have been so ready to adopt gloomy views of life, and to believe in the virtues of conventual rule. Poor Miss Mary! If she had only known under which casket lay her happiness, and where was hidden the talisman of her fate! And yet how easily it might have been!

If rich old Mr. Scroggs, worth half a million, had not paid such persevering and demonstrative attention to pretty Evelina at that very dinner-party where young Captain Blake had decided to propose, she might now have been the happy wife of the portly Colonel, instead of the faded spinster, angular and peevish, who passes half her time in bewailing her positive misfortunes, and the other half in lamenting her possible blessings had fortune but taken the other turning in her lane of life. She knew that Captain Blake—timid, poor, and proud—wanted but courage and uninterrupted opportunity, and she, on her part, desired nothing better than to bring matters to a crisis and whisper "Yes," as her echo to his "Do you?" But that hideous old Scroggs who never meant anything serious, must needs plant himself between them at dinner, and make such open love to her over the champagne, that all her plans were brought to nought. Her pretty eye artillery and liberal armoury of charms missed fire and fell harmless of their mark; the shot fell into the ditch when she aimed it at the tower, and neither ditch nor tower yielded. Captain Blake, who thought his hundreds no match against the old sinner's thousands, went off to Norway for the summer, and next season married Laura May whom he had met upon his travels, and who understood to perfection the art of angling, hooking, and landing desirable fish. And all this brought about because Mrs. A. asked Evelina and Mr. Scroggs to the same dinner, and forgot to organise her table with due regard to the best pleasures of her guests! If Captain Blake had been placed next the fair Evelina, what might not have been of happiness for both!

And if Aunt Susan had never given that memorable party of hers, or if her favourite friend had not walked home in the moonlight with her favourite niece? Ah me! the years of pain and agony, and hope deferred, and long unending strife of love and circumstance that would have been spared—the bitter anguish of the present hour—the solitude of the one, the fettered loneliness of the other! Oh! all that might have been now passing before my eyes, had love and circumstance agreed together! I see a home set in a fair place, with love and honour like sweet blossoming roots about its gates: I see a troop of little children, blue-eyed and brown-haired, noble, brave, and strong as the father, faithful, loyal, and loving as the mother—I see them standing there, their baby fingers knitting

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together two souls with links stronger than death; I see two lives gently passed in love and good works—two lives softly blent into one great bond of truth and peace, making an exemplar of wedded bliss for future generations to quote and live by: I see all this in those dreamy words, "What might have been!"—but the visions pass, the dreams fade, the stern truth smites down those pleasant phantoms of the possible, and I see, instead, two suffering human hearts ruled over by desolation and despair. What might have been! what might have been!

And again: if that poor mother had not been struck with death when her friend went down on an ordinary friendly visit—if that illness had been deferred but a week or hastened but a week—what then? Then there might have been a motherless family abandoned and left to go down to ruin, and one lesson of human duty and God's loving-kindness to the desolate the fewer for the world to read. If Gustavus, too, had not come to Rosalinda's wedding, or if, coming, he had not fallen sick, and so been kept beyond his term, Rosalinda's sister would not have been Mrs. Gustavus, and a certain pair of soft gazelle-like eyes would not now be gazing curiously at life, with all too probable sorrow to many future beholders. And if Rosalinda herself had not gone to pay that Brighton visit, Edward, or George, or Frederick, or Charles, might have won the flower of price instead of Jacobus, and the world have seen another line and generation. If Jessie had put on her bonnet but half an hour earlier when she went one day, mournfully enough, to walk by the sea-shore, she would have met young Willie alone; they would have stopped and spoken, and the misunderstanding which had somehow sprung up like a sudden spectre between them, and which reached its culmination last night at the ball, would have been explained, and ultimately would have been lost in the traditional orange-blossoms and white veil. But Jessie sat and played idly with Fido instead; and the half-hour, lost, saw Willie packing his portmanteau for London, determined not to be fooled again. She would have been happier with him than she has been with that long Scotchman of hers; and Willie would not have gone to India to fall a victim to alcohol and caloric. What has crippled my poor young sister, and doomed her to a couch of pain and years of lonely suffering, but that one single pic-nic, arranged by chance, and by chance joined by her, when she over-walked herself, got heated, and then had the chill which all but killed her, and left her what she is now! What might not her fate have been, had she gone down into Kent before that third of July, as she intended, and so never rambled through the Loughton Woods and lost herself so far away from all the rest? Sadly those words stand now written up against her shattered life—"What might have been!" What a full harvest of love, and happiness, and health ruined for ever, lies like blighted grain in every letter!

If young Horatius had taken his beloved manuscript to the publishers on any day but the day on which the publisher's Reader had had a quarrel with his wife at home—that quarrel brought about, if one goes down to the origin of things, because he had supped on pork-chops the night before—very likely his verdict on the youth's first efforts would have been favourable, and the publisher would have taken his poem and paid for it like a man. The poetry was good, and Horatio had in him the potentiality of fame and riches; but under the malign influence of chance, embodied in pork-chops, he came to the actuality of poverty, despair, and suicide! Again: if he had called on his friend Atticus by the way home, and if he had heard his cheery voice ring out its "Never Despair," like a trumpet-call to manhood, and if he had drunk half a dozen glasses of his fine old port, do you think he would have bought that beggarly twopennyworth of laudanum to quench the fire of a masterly brain, and to still the throbbings of a noble, if too sensitive, heart? Not he! Had he turned aside for one brief half-hour, he might have been alive to this day, and in the foremost ranks of fame. The Might Have Been of his life was no ignoble theme—what was, was a lesson of hopelessness, cowardice, unmanly despair, and childish impatience—all because a certain man had a surcharged liver. Poor young Horatius!

If Tardius had asked for that consulship in Spain, a day sooner, my lord's secretary would not have pledged his interest to Prudentius just twelve hours in advance; and if my reverend cousin had preached that other sermon of his before my lord bishop, at the visitation, he would have got the vacant living he had applied for. But he chose the discourse on good works, which cut against my lord bishop's private views concerning the dignity of the order, and so lost six hundred a year for want of that natural clairvoyance which goes by the name of tact. I was sorry for my clerical cousin, and that pretty little girl down in Lincolnshire waiting to be married; but you cannot give a man natural clairvoyance when he is as blind as a beetle, and as obstinate as a mule: so the six hundred a year, with the pleasant parsonage among the roses, went into the pocket of a red-haired Welshman, who told my lord bishop that he held all right reverend fathers to be so many little popes, and gloried in forming one of the consistory of cardinals appertaining. The Might Have Been of my cousin's life was a very sweet and touching idyl, but the reality ended drearily somewhere down among the Essex marshes, with the pretty little Lincolnshire girl married to a captain of artillery, because papa and mamma disliked long engagements, and because my reverend cousin's clerical preferment seemed a thing not of this century.

In that kind of biography which is rather a leaf out of general history than the writing of one life, the Might Have Been of chances lies very thick. If Mr. Wortley, grave, fastidious, and

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learned, had not taken it into his head to dictate sentimental letters to Lady Mary Pierrepoint, it might have been that we should never have heard of innoculation, and that a great many unnecessary deaths and useless disfigurements would have been spared the young people of the last century. Also, it might have been "that the wicked wasp of Twickenham" would have died with fewer stings proceeding, and that posterity would have lost some witty but very cruel and unmanly rhymes. If poor Mrs. Thrale had not seen Piozzi standing at the shop-door, and had not spoken to him concerning music-lessons for her daughter, it might have been that she would have died of ennui and her children's coldness, and the society of the time would not have been torn to pieces with frantic horror of so ungenteel and debased a match; Dr. Johnson would not have written his famous Remonstrance; Baretti would not have penned his infamous lampoons; and human life would have lost the lesson which a brave little woman's preference of love to artificial distinctions, preached to it from the house-tops. If Nelson had never met that seductive gipsy Lady Hamilton, it might have been that a long line of lawfully baptised Nelsons would have sustained the family honour for generations yet to come; and then it might have been that, with family influence to stir up the lagging, and with family feeling to urge to that stirring, the lions at the base of the Trafalgar column would be now completed.

But the field is illimitable; and if we fly at all the game we might mark down, beginning with Adam and Eve, and ending with Disraeli's History of Events which have not happened, we shall not finish the subject under a volume; and then there might be, and in all probability would be, for the result—the rejection of this paper, and the world's enlightenment so far delayed.

VIOLETS.

Sweet is the legend of a happy soul,
Pacing, in dreams, the sward of Paradise;
Above her hung fruits 'tinct with fiery flush,
Around her blew flowers myriad in device.

Low was the clime, a twilight arched with stars,
Long, arrowy lights on cedared hill and dale,
Filled with a mellow atmosphere whose heart
Breathed of myrrh and spice and garlingale.

She, pausing underneath the tree of life,
Heard all its mystic branches palpitate,
And a low voice:—Take thou the fairest flower
Between the eastern and the western gate.

And, rising up, she wandered forth amidst
Lilies beloved in time by Solomon;
And forest frankincense and wondrous blooms,
Whose chalices were dyed with moon and sun.

Rounding her path, there glimmered in blue dusk
Vast star-eyed blossoms, bright and marvellous—
Great charms of streakèd splendour; living flowers
Lost to the fallen world and unto us.

At dawn the angel found her at the gate,
Weeping, but looping in her vesture's folds
Of all the gorgeous blooms of Paradise,
Passionate violets and marigolds.

And lifting up her low eyes, dashed with rain,
"I paced," she said, "between the east and west;
Heaven's fairest flowers were subject to my hand,
But I did gather what I loved the best."

Answered the radiant angel, "Sweet and wise,
Thy tender care hath chosen the fairer part,
Henceforth shall violets be loved of love,
And marigolds refresh the tirèd heart.

"Awake!" And she unclosed her eyes to see
The morning sunlight beating on the blind;
And round her bed the breath of marigolds
Swam with the violets' on the garden wind.

MEDIUMS UNDER OTHER NAMES.

When was juggling a thing that was not, and when were there no prestidigitators in this lumbering old world of ours? Men with clean brisk fingers daintily tapering at the tips, supple-jointed, and with a marvellous amount of sensibility about the cushion; men with flexible palms, broad and yet compact, well hollowed in the cup, and with the large blue muscle of the thumb, soft, springy, and well developed; men with hands and fingers which, if viciously educated, would take to picking the pockets of a lay figure hung round with bells, and never stir the most loosely hung clapper of them all; but which would, if virtuously inclined, content themselves with forcing cards, bringing pigeons out of wine-bottles, and sending half a dozen half-crowns rattling into a glass box by no other means apparently possible than an invisible railway. Among the ancients and among the savages—in the rough old mediæval times and now, in this luxurious learned scientific and all-inquiring nineteenth century—whenever men have gathered together in companies there has been the juggler among them. Sometimes under a religious garb, as the "medicine-man," the priest teaching truths, or the pythoness uttering oracles, one to whom the Great Spirit has given peculiar gifts and consecrated to the task of instructing men by bestowing an exclusive knowledge of divine things; sometimes as the magician, the professed trafficker with viewless spirits, good or bad, according to the moral nature of the man and the character of the tricks done, but viewless spirits nevertheless—things of supernatural powers and supernatural existence, which, if they did in truth haunt any man, would send him mad outright, or kill him with awe and horror; and sometimes, more simply, as the true juggler, the professor of hocus-pocus, who confesses that he does all his marvels by trick and sleight of hand, and who pretends to no superiority save what is found in keen sight, well-shaped fingers, a good memory, and untiring industry. It is of these last, by far the cleverest, and the honest men of the Medium tribe, that I am now going to speak; and when one knows what has been done by mere dexterity of arrangement and quickness of hand, sundry miracles of the present time will sink into insignificance, and will be held as by no means to be compared with hundreds of acknowledged tricks,

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about which was neither falsehood nor audacious pretence of communication with the dead.

Here is a glass of plain water, perfectly clear, limpid, colourless; hold it up to the light—you see nothing whatever but an innocent glass of spring water, without even an animalcule floating unconscious in the midst. Strike into it a glass rod or an iron tube. In a moment the plain water flashes out into innumerable crystals, and the glass is filled with brilliant prismatic spicula, glancing back all the colours of the rainbow. That is magic, if you like; natural magic; which is better than human. Another glass of pure water fresh from the spring—breathe on it gently, and it is no longer clear and pure but milky and turbid; another bit of nature's juggling very useful in its way. Do you see this piece of ice? Here, I press something down on it with my penknife; the ice bursts into flames, and the flames lick up the drops as they run. Again, I bring a lighted match to the surface of this block of Wenham, and there is at once an unmistakable bonfire, which burns until I put it out. I have another tumbler of quite clear water here. Gently I slip an egg into the tumbler, then raise my hand when it has slipped down midway, and bid it stop and float; it does stop, and it does float; and I hold up before my audience the admirable spectacle of an egg suspended in the water without hook, cord, magnet, or any other visible agent whatsoever. Why not? If my will can go into chairs and tables and make them walk and talk, why not into an egg to arrest its downward career? I have a slender-necked jar or bottle, bulbous in the body, contracted in the throat, yet comfortably located in that bulbous body is another egg, whole, sound, unbroken, but of such dimensions as could never possibly have passed through the neck. Yet it did. The bottle was not made over the egg, and the egg was got through a passage a full inch too small for it. How? Eggs are brittle things, and, so far as I know, not compressible: yet this mystery of the egg and the bulbous narrow-necked jar is true. I can light my candles by only pointing at them with a glass rod; I can pour a bucketful of water on to a heap of sand, and bring up the sand as dry as if I had taken it off Hampstead Heath on a windy day in March—a trick, by the way, made great use of by the Hindù jugglers, and also of life or death value in the ordeals of that enlightened people: the priests having the privilege of manipulating the sand. I can freeze water in a red-hot vessel standing close by the fire; I can dip my hand into water, and bring it out again as dry as if just wiped with a Baden towel—another Hindù trick known to the West. I can pour water on to a sheet of paper, and instead of wetting the paper, it shall run about in little balls like crazy quicksilver. A dead twig or a branch of summer beauty, green and leafy, I can fumigate with a little sweet-scented incense, and in a short time bring it you again white and sparkling with the crystallisation of hoar-frost. By merely shaking an uncorked bottle of oil, I can produce the loveliest moonlight effects of light—very like the luminous hands in present vogue. I can walk on hot metal plates, if you give me time beforehand for the preparation of my feet; and I, and M. de Boutigny, and some others, can boldly plunge our naked arms into glowing vats of fiercely boiling metal, which only feels to us like liquid velvet. All this I can do, by the aid and teaching of natural magic, and without any help from the "dear spirits." But I can do much more than this: as you will see if you go on.

Even so long ago as Chaucer's time, when I was a joculator or jougglour, I was an adept in the art of sleight of hand. I could cut off a boy's head as he lay on a table, and you should see the blood on the platter, and the livid hue of death on the face, as the jaws gaped and chattered in the last throes: when, with a "presto! pass! hey cockalorum fizgig!" I could put it on again, and the grinning jackanapes be none the worse; I could thimblerig as well as the best of the modern professors on Ascot Heath, pass cards at my will, and make the ace of hearts a live pigeon; I could make an egg dance a hornpipe indifferently well; I could change a groat into a tester, and a tester into a noble, if I had such a thing about me: yet somehow I never got the richer for the transformation. I could tie innumerable knots in a handkerchief, or you could tie them yourself, or as many of you as chose; but at the word of command they should all unloose themselves and fall out. I could give you ale or beer, sherris or sack, all out of the same barrel, and in larger quantity than the said barrel would hold without jugglery intervening—so Master Houdin's trick of the inexhaustible bottle, clever as it was, had its forerunners. I could cut off my nose; thrust a padlock through my cheek and turn the key upon myself to show you it was all right, and no deception, my masters. I could eat fire, and breathe it out again; swallow knives, pull a rope through my nose, and draw countless yards of ribbon out of my mouth. I could swallow a tin pudding, a yard long; make three bells come where you could all see for yourselves were only two before, and no possibility of a third; I could make a card vanish and turn up unexpectedly in another place; I could juggle you many a pretty picture beyond all chance for any of your duller wits to understand how. Could you tell me how I brought into my lord's hall, that water—seemingly fair living water—in which were boats with men rowing up and down? Or how I conjured up the show or presence of that grim lion? and of that ample field with posies growing rich and lush among the grass? How did I make the vine grow up in a moment, bearing white and red grapes, real to the touch and sweet to the taste? How did I build you a goodly castle with actual stone, and at a word make all disappear as swiftly as it had come?

A "learned clerk," a friend of mine, to amuse his company, made a "forest full of wild deer, where might be seen a hundred of them slain, some with hounds and some with arrows; then the hunting being finished, he caused a company

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of falconers to appear upon the banks of a fair river, where the birds pursued the herons and slew them, and then came knights jousting on a plain"—all by the noble art of jugglery and natural magic. Do you not believe me? Read Strutt's Sports and Pastimes, and then you will find that I have not boasted, and that when I merely clapped my hands together, "all was gone in an instant." I don't say that all this was not by a kind of magic lantern known only to the initiated. True, Kircher invented the real magic lantern as we have it now, but we were not all fools before Kircher came, and we had a pretty little store of optical secrets among us, and at least knew the effects of cylindrical mirrors, and the principles of reflection and refraction. Then people were so thick-witted and so superstitious! (almost as superstitious as they are now), and were so ready to cry magic and the devil, that if we ran more danger of being spitted and roasted as magicians, we got off with less criticism and far less chance of detection. Sir John Mandevill, a few years later, saw something of the same kind of thing as what I and my friend, the learned clerk, did in Chaucer's time. There were jugglers at the court of the great Chan, who made night at noon, and noon at night; who brought in fair damsels, heaven knows whence or how, and caused boar hunts and knights jousting, to appear: the splinters of whose spears flew over the hall.

In 1579, I went down to Ashwell Thorpe, where I performed a trick—I cannot do it now, I wish I could—like the famous mango trick of the Hindùs. I set an acorn in the midst of the hall, watered it, watched and tended it, and in a few moments caused it to grow up a goodly tree, bearing real acorns—I appeal for testimony to the swine of the period—which acorns ripened, fell, and were devoured, according to the laws of acorn life. Two stout woodmen with difficulty cut down this tree, the chips of which flew far and wide about the hall; but at my command my two green goslings carried away the fragments without any difficulty. Which is exactly the kind of thing some Hindù juggler is doing at this very moment somewhere in British Hindùstan. A ballad was made on this trick of mine, which, lest you have not got Bloomfield's History of Norfolk by you, I will transcribe:

THE BALLAD OF ASHWELL THORPE, MADE IN SIR THOMAS KNEVET'S TIME.

Once there lived a Man,
Deny it they that can,
Who liberal was to the Poore;
I dare boldly say,
They ne're were sent away,
Empty-Handed from *his* Doore.

When Misers in Holes crept,
Then open House he kept,
Where many then did resort,
Some for love of good Beere,
And others for good Cheere,
And others for to make Sport.

There was a Gentleman,
From London Citty came,
The countrey for to see,
And all in the Pryme,
Of jovial Christemas Time,
There merry for to be.

This Londoner did say,
If the Gentry would give way,
A Trick to them he w'd show,
That an Acorne he would sett,
If they would please to ha'te,
Which to a great Tree should grow.

The Acorn he pull'd out,
And shewed it all about,
In his Hand then he took it agayne,
In the presence of them all,
In the middle of the Hall,
He sett downe the Acorne playne.

While one could drink a Cup,
Then did an Oake spring up,
Which was so huge and tall,
With Arms it so put out,
And Branches all about,
That it almost fill'd the Hall.

This Oake then did beare,
Which was a thing most rare,
Acornes both black and brown,
For which the Swine did busk,
And they did loose their Husk,
As they came tumbling down.

This great Oake there did stand,
To the View of every Man,
Who saw, it was so playne,
But Roome then to afford,
To bring Supper unto Bord,
They wish't it gone agayne.

Then lowdly he did call,
And Two came into the Hall,
Who were both stout and strong,
And with the Tools they had,
To work they went like mad,
And laid this Oake along.

I'll tell you here no Lye,
The Chips there then did flye,
Buzzing about like Flyes,
And Men were forced to ward,
Their Faces well to guard,
For fear they sh'd loose their Iyes.

He bade them then behold,
And ev'ry one take hold,
This Oake for to carry away.
And they all hold did get,
But c'd not stirr't a whit,
But still along it lay.

He said they had no Strength,
Which he would prove at Length,
For it sh'd not lye long on the Floor,
Two Goslings young and green,
They then came whewting in,
And carried it out of the Door.

Then gone was the Oake,
That had so many a Stroke,
Before that it fell down,
Thus as it grew in Haste,
So quickly did it waste,
Not a Chip then could be found.

This Story is very true,
Which I have told to you,
'Tis a wonder you didn't heare it,
I'll lay a Pint of wine,
If Parker and old Hinde,
Were alyve that they w'd sweare it.

This is precisely the mango trick of the present day. The Hindù juggler takes a dry stick, plants it in a pot with some earth and water, makes his invocations, and covers it up. In a short time he removes the cover, and, behold, the mango has sprouted. Again he covers up, and again he looks—the sprout has widened to a full-grown shoot, with expanding leaves and forming blossom. Again—the blossom has now fructified, and the petals lie withering on the mould. Again—the fruit is fully formed. Again—it is ripening; and now, again, and for the last time, the cover is removed, when the mango, fully ripe, is plucked from the tree fully grown, and gracefully handed to the Mem Sahib to taste. In another moment the mango-tree is the withered stick it was in the beginning. Yet this is professed jugglery, a mere delusion of the senses by manual dexterity, such as the juggler of Ashwell Thorpe achieved when he planted his acorn and reared his oak, and caused the two goslings to carry away the chips which the couple of stout labourers had made.

Another Hindù trick is the girl and the basket. A circle is formed, say of soldiers, standing thick and serried; the juggler, the child, the basket, Mem Sahib, and Mem Sahib's friends are in the centre of the circle; and the whole

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scene, remember, takes place out of doors. The juggler, after going through his less exciting tricks—keeping up a shower of balls with his hands while he keeps up a shower of rings with his toes, perhaps at the same time balancing a loose stick tower on his chin—building up his jointed pole on his forehead, up which the trained goat runs and stands with all four feet on the top, on a space not half so large as one's hand—piling four or five waterpots on his head, with a girl standing on the top of all, with which singular head-dress he dances about the circle juggling his balls as usual, or stringing beads on a thread with his tongue—after holding a staff in his waistband and letting a brother juggler swarm up it and lay himself all abroad on the top, legs and arms flying to all four quarters, and the body balanced only on one part of the stomach—after these and other kindred displays he comes to the finale of all: the girl and the basket. The juggler calls the little girl to him and begins to play with her, at first gently, then a little more boisterously, until at last he thrusts her roughly under the basket, and tells her he shall keep her there till she is good. The little girl begins to whine and remonstrate from underneath the basket; the juggler gets angry, scolds her, and tells her to hold her tongue, else he will whip her; but the little one is unappeasable, and the quarrel goes on, increasing in intensity, until at last the man, in a paroxysm of anger, draws his sword and thrusts it wildly into the basket. The screams of the child are heartrending, her yells and cries agonising; but the juggler stabs and stabs again, and works his sword about the wickerwork in uncontrollable and fiendish fury. Then, the child's voice ceases, and just a few heavy sobs are heard; then, some fainter moans, fainter—fainter—as the last gasps of a murdered child would be—and then, all is still. The juggler pulls his bloody sword from the basket, wipes it, and composedly salaams Mem Sahib and her friends, who are generally in a state of hysterical distress; sometimes, indeed, the soldiers are with difficulty restrained from tearing the man to pieces, especially in one case known to me, when the captain of the company, himself quivering in every limb with horror and agitation, had actually to defend the juggler from the excited men. How it might have fared with him Heaven only knows, but that on his giving a peculiar cry, the little girl came bounding and laughing into the circle—coming from behind the soldiers—though every man was ready to swear that she had not passed him, and could not have passed through the thick ranks anywhere. Now, how is that trick done? It is nothing but jugglery from first to last—as much mere jugglery as Torrini's trick of sawing one live page into two, or as Robin's of pulling one pigeon into two; but, mere trick as it is, it is undiscovered yet, though hundreds of shrewd hard-headed unimaginative and scientific Englishmen have seen it, thought about it, tried it—and been baffled—for half a dozen generations.

We must rank amongst the more legitimate jugglers the rope-dancers and tumblers of old times. In Elizabeth's reign they all went together, classed with "ruffians, blasphemers, thieves, vagabonds, heretics, Jews, pagans, and sorcerers:" yet the old lioness liked looking at them well enough; and in Laneham's description of the Sports of Kenilworth, he speaks of "a man so flighty that he doubted if he was a man or a spirit," and could not tell what to make of him, save that he might guess his back to be "metalled like a lamprey, that has no bone, but a line like a lutestring." Before then, Queen Mary and Cardinal Pole, reviewing the royal pensioners in Greenwich Park, laughed heartily at the "pretty feats" of a tumbler; as generations agone Edward the Second had laughed, who was signally amused by a fellow who fell off his horse, and vaulted on his back again, as quick as you might see. Froissart speaks of a marvellous bit of rope-dancing, quite as good as Blondin's, if not better, on the occasion of the entry of Isabel of Bavaria into Paris. "There was a mayster came out of Geane; he had tyed a corde upon the hyghest house on the brydge of Saynt Michell over all the houses, and the other corde was tyed to the hyghest tower of Our Ladye's churche; and as the quene passed by, and was in the great streat called our Ladye's strete; bycause it was late, this sayd Mayster, with two brinnynge candelles in his handes, issued out of a littel stage that he had made on the heyght of Our Ladye's tower, syngynge as he went upon the corde all along the great strete, so that all that sawe him hadde marvayle how it might be; and he bore still in hys handes the two brinnynge candelles so that he myght be well sene all over Parys, and two myles without the city. He was such a tumbler that his lightnesse was greatly praised."

Another rope dancer in Edward the Sixth's time excited great wonder here in London. He stretched a rope as thick as a ship's cable, from the battlements of Saint Paul's steeple down to the floor before the house of the Dean of Saint Paul's, where he fastened it with an anchor; and down this rope he came, "his head forward, casting his arms and legs abroad, running on his breast on the rope, from the battlements to the ground, as it had been an arrow from the bow, and stayed on the ground." Then he went to the king and kissed his foot, and then swarmed up the rope again, halting midway to play "certain mysteries," as casting one leg from the other, and tumbling and dancing on the rope. Then he tied himself to the cable by his right leg, "a little space beneath the wrist of the foot," and hung by that leg a long while; then played more mysteries; and so up the rope again to safety and the high steeple of Saint Paul's.

Very clever, too, were the egg-dancers ("hoppesteres" in Chaucer's time), and the sword-dancers, and the vaulters, and the entortillationists. At the end of the last century there was a magnificent vaulter, an Irishman, over six feet in height, admirably made, and only eighteen years old: he could jump over nine horses

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standing side by side, with a man seated on the middle one; he could jump over a garter held fourteen feet high, and kick a bladder at sixteen feet; and at his own benefit he leaped over a machine like a broad wheeled waggon with a tilt. He had no spring-board, and jumped from an inclined plane of three feet. Strutt saw him, and examined his starting-place. Poor fellow! He sprained the tendon of his heel at last, so his fine vaulting got a little damaged. Joseph Clark, who lived under Charles the Second, and died in King William's reign—a tall thin well-made man—was one of the great entortillationists of the past. He could make himself up into all manner of humps and deformities, and dislocate his backbone in the most shocking manner; plaguing the tailors to death by going to them as a slender well-conditioned man, and receiving his clothes as a crabbed and crooked old hump-back, with humps sticking out all over his person, and not a joint in its proper place. Then there was Powel the fire-eater, whom Strutt saw eating burning coals brought from the fire, and putting a lighted match into his mouth, blowing the sulphur through his nostrils. He also carried a red-hot heater round the room in his teeth, and he, as Richardson had done before him, broiled a piece of beefsteak on his tongue. While the meat was broiling, one of his assistants blew the charcoal that lay under his tongue, to prevent the heat from decreasing, and in a short time the beef was thoroughly cooked, and not too much gravy remaining. By way of a conclusion, he made a composition of pitch, brimstone, and other combustibles, adding a small piece of lead; he then melted it all in an iron ladle and set it on fire. This was his "soup," and he spooned it out of the ladle with an iron spoon, and ate it, boiling and blazing as it was. Another worthy ate stones and cracked them, or was said to do so, and appeared to do so; he probably juggled them away instead.

Then Clench, a Barnet man, was a wonderful imitator of all things, living and dead. He was in Queen Anne's time, and imitated horses, huntsmen, and a pack of hounds, all at once; he was great in drunken men and shrill old women, but greatest of all in bells, flutes, the double cantrell, and an organ with three voices. He had a rival, one Rossignol, the foreshadowing of Herr Joel, who sang all the notes of all the birds, and played on a stringless violin, making the music with his mouth. But some of the more curious found out that he had a small instrument concealed within his lips when he did this, so his trick lost value. Taught animals—dancing bears, learned pigs, the "ball of little dogs," which personated fine ladies and their beaux so wonderfully well, canaries that made themselves into grenadiers, and shot the deserter canary at the word of command (this was at Breslaw's), clever horses that could do everything but talk, a rope-dancing ape as good as human—all these came into the juggling department; so did that brave little girl at Flockton's, "a noted but clumsy juggler," who appeared on the stage with four naked swords, two in each hand, with which she danced with incredible swiftness and dexterity; turning the weapons now out, now in, sometimes thrusting them into her bosom, sometimes holding them over her head, then dashing them down by her side, at last stopping suddenly after ten or fifteen minutes of this perilous work, apparently never a bit the worse. Sword-dancing was more common once, than it is now. Even a child of eight danced among the points of swords and spears at Bartholomew Fair in Queen Anne's time. And one of the Sadler's Wells company said that all who went to his place should see "a young woman dance with the sword, and upon a ladder, surpassing all her sex."

One of the most wonderful (if true) bits of jugglery that I have met with is to be found in the Southern Literary Messenger of 1835, from a manuscript of D. D. Mitchell, Esq., and purporting to be an account of what the Arickara Indians can do in that way. In 1831, Mr. Mitchell and some friends, travelling up the Missouri, lost their horses near an Arickara village. Now, the Arickaras, says Mr. Mitchell, are about the worst set of red men going, with all the vices and none of the virtues of their race; but they don't murder those whites who throw themselves on their hospitality: the reason being, that they once murdered a white man, and his ghost haunted their village ever afterwards, and frightened away the buffaloes. The travellers therefore took lodgings in the village itself, and the tribe all turned out to do them honour. And one of their ways of doing them honour was to show them what their band of "bears," or "medicine-men," could do. In a wigwam sat, in a circle, six men dressed as bears; the spectators standing round them, and the white men being given the best and nearest places. For a few moments the bears kept a mournful silence, then they bade a young brave go to a certain part of the river-side, and bring them a handful of stiff clay. The clay was brought, and the bears set to work to mould it into certain forms—buffaloes, men, and horses, bows and arrows—nine of each kind, as by the true bear recipe. They then placed all the buffaloes in a line, and set the clay hunters on the clay horses, with their bows and straw arrows in their hands. They were about three feet distant from the game, and in parallel lines. When marshalled, the elder bear said: "My childen, I know that you are hungry; it has been a long time since you have been out hunting. Exert yourselves to-day. Try and kill as many as you can. Here are white persons present, who will laugh at you if you don't kill. Go! Don't you see that the buffaloes have already got the scent of you, and have started?" At the word all the buffaloes started off at full speed, and the men after them, shooting their straw arrows from their clay bows, so that the buffaloes fell down as if dead; but two of them ran round the whole circumference of the circle, about fifteen or twenty feet, and one received three and the other five arrows before they fell over and

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died decently, as clay buffaloes should. They always kept apart at the distance of three feet, at which they were originally placed. When the buffaloes were dead, said the bear to the hunters, "Ride into the fire:" a small fire having been made expressly for the experiment in the centre of the hut. They set off as before, but stopped at the edge of the fire. Said the bear angrily: "Why don't you ride in?" and then the riders beat their horses with their clay bows, and so they rode into the flames, and fell down, and were baked to powder. Then, the bears took the powder from the floor, and cast it abroad to the four winds of heaven, at the top of the lodge. Which may be taken on the whole as a very pretty bit of jugglery indeed.

There are some capital anecdotes of sleight of hand in the last new book on the subject put forth—the Memoirs by M. Robert-Houdin, Conjuror, Mechanician, and Ambassador. But almost the best of all, as an instance of clever scheming and neat prestidigitation, is that anecdote of how Torrini juggled the Cardinal's unique and priceless Breguet watch into the Pope's holy pocket, after having first stamped it to pieces and brayed it to gold dust in a mortar—that valuable watch about which there could be no mistake or delusion, for there was not such another to be had anywhere. Yet Torrini had caused its fellow to be made expressly for this experiment; which shows at least what these juggling men will do when the humour takes them. Much, too, is said in that volume of the aid and assistance given to juggling by ventriloquism; and much of the many clever automata, both the tricky and the legitimate, which have helped to bewilder men's minds and disturb the relations between the real and the false. There was Vaucanson's flute-player, copied from Coysvoix's marble statue of the faun, which was of the true or legitimate kind; there was his mechanical duck, which, though marvellously clever, was of the tricky or juggling order—the said duck not performing all that it undertook to do, but deceiving folk's eyes by a crafty substitution and admirable pretence. Then, there was his famous loom on which a donkey worked cloth; made in revenge for the bad treatment of the Lyons weavers, who had stoned him because he wanted to simplify the ordinary loom (at the present day the weaving wonder is Bonelli's loom, worked by electricity); then, there was his asp which fastened on the actress's bosom with a hiss and a spring, sickeningly real; likewise, his endless chain, at which he was working when he died. Then, there was the Prussian Koppen's musical instrument, the Componium exhibited in 1829, which Componium was a mechanical orchestra, all kettle-drums and big drums and little drums, tambourines and fifes and flutes, triangles and cymbals, and what not; and there was the chain of rings all enclosed in each other, which, if you blew upon, though never so lightly, fell to pieces of its own accord, to the astonishment of all beholders. Then, there were the rhyming automaton, and the speaking automaton which got to the length of real sentences, and might, perhaps, with faith and patience, have at last been brought to intelligent conversation—who knows? And by-the-by, that speaking automaton was the most ingenious of all, but susceptible of great improvement, owing to certain quite modern mechanical and scientific advancement; and there was Robert-Houdin's own automaton, that drew so ominously—for the pencil broke in the act of tracing the figure of a crown for his dispossessed heirship, the Count of Paris. Will the count ever fulfil the old king's remark, and, "as he has learned to draw, finish the crown for himself"?

Houdin's system of second sight, too, was as clever as it was bold. The trick exists now, as any one may see who chooses to pay M. Robin an evening visit at the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, and hear Madame detail the things held in his hand, one after another, and always accurately, according to the preconcerted system of verbal signs. (M. Robin's is a very admirable entertainment, and he is an excellent conjuror, who to surprising dexterity of hand and eye, unites a very prepossessing appearance and address.) How clever, too, was that handkerchief trick at Saint Cloud!—how apparently without preparation, and only due to the inspiration of the moment!—what spiritualist Mediums could do anything half so striking? At that séance at Saint Cloud, in 1846, Robert-Houdin surpassed himself. Borrowing six pocket-handkerchiefs from the "illustrious" company, he desired several persons to write on cards the names of places whither they desired the pocket-handkerchiefs to be transported. Of the mass written, Houdin desired the king to select three; on one was written, "On the dome of the Invalides;" on another, "Under the candelabra on the chimney-piece;" on the third, "In the last orange-box of the avenue." The first was too distant, the second too easy, the third was the right one. Yes, in the last orange-box of the avenue, well under the roots of the tree. Immediately messengers were sent off by the king to see that no one played tricks with the chest, and then the royal servant was commanded to go and open the side of the orange-tree box, and see what he could find. And there, sure enough, he found an old rusty iron casket, quite under the roots of the tree, which casket he brought to the king, no one touching it by the way. Then Houdin lifted up the bell of opaque glass under which he had put his packet of handkerchiefs, and, lo! they were gone, while in their stead was a pretty little white dove, with a rusty old key fastened to a ribbon round its neck. The king took the key, opened the casket, saw first a paper or bit of parchment with some nonsense on it by Cagliostro, then a paper parcel sealed with Cagliostro's seal. This paper parcel he untied, unsealed, and opened; and behold the pocket-handkerchiefs borrowed not half an hour before!

Now, how came they there? It was jugglery, but mighty pretty jugglery, and very much out

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of the common, as people say. Then the Duchess of Orleans brought a green case, which was not to be opened, and the contents of which Emile, by virtue of his second sight, was to reveal. Of course Houdin opened it with a rapid, unseen gesture, gave the password to Emile, and received, as the reward of his dexterity, the diamond pin, with its stone surrounded by a garter of sky-blue enamel, which was its enclosure. It was Houdin, too, who, at the time when magnetic trances and cataleptic phenomena were at their height, invented the trick which it pleased him to call "Etherial Suspension," wherein he knocked off, one by one, the frail supports on which he had placed his youngest son, and left him seated on nothing, apparently suspended in the air in a state of cataleptic trance—a sight which never failed to bring down on the juggler's good-looking head, a storm of maternal indignation, and a shower of twopenny post letters, threatening prosecution and the police. And it was Houdin who improved on Philippe's trick of producing five or six huge glass bowls, with live gold fish swimming about, from nothing but an empty shawl wrapped round his body. What are the luminous hands in the carefully darkened room, or under the carefully covered table, to this, or to the heap of feathers brought out of the hat of an unoffending spectator—feathers in such quantities that they cover up a boy kneeling on the stage? Look at the tin cases flung out of that hat—enough to set up a tinman's shop; at the bouquets of flowers—a whole Covent Garden Market full; at the toys, the pigeons, rabbits, and ducks—all tossed out of a single black hat! Our mediums are bunglers. An ordinary fair-day conjuror could beat the best of them.

What can the Arab jugglers do? They are noted men in their trade, and are not unfrequently quoted by the superstitious as possessing more knowledge than is good for them, and as having a more intimate connexion with the Powers of Darkness than they choose to own. They eat glass and nails and thorns and thistles (the great prickly leaves of the cactus one of their grand feats); and they strike their arms, and the flesh opens and bleeds, and they strike again and the flesh closes and the blood ceases; they leap on the edge of sabres and don't cut their feet; they walk upon red-hot iron and don't burn their feet; they lie all along sharp sabres; and they eat snakes and scorpions; and all this they do accompanied with frantic gestures and mad excitement, so that the grain of jugglery bears a treble harvest of credulity, and the senses of the spectators are confused. It does not belong to this present paper to explain, by Houdin's method, all the arts and manœuvres of these mad Arab Marabouts; but it is enough to say that they are all to be reduced to simple juggling tricks, or the crafty application of some not commonly understood chemical and mechanical secrets. So far as we have gone yet, we have come to nothing miraculous or inexplicable anywhere. Quite the contrary. The most apparently miraculous things are all getting explained away, one by one, even to the cardboard stomach of the self-sabrer, who, when he seemed to pass the sword right through his abdomen—for was there not the blood to testify? and was he not a lean man, and with no superfluity of abdominal muscles?—was yet found to have done nothing more wonderful than pass it through a leathern scabbard led across a cardboard front, in which was a small sponge filled with blood: the real abdomen being all the while comfortably (or uncomfortably) braced up against the spine, and in no danger of anything save inflammation from over-pressure. This was a very clever trick, possible only to an extremely lean person like the self-sabrer—the invulnerable, as he was called. Sometimes, indeed, physical peculiarities aid a man in performing unique tricks; that is, tricks possible only to himself, and the few exceptionals like himself. Like the sabre-swallower with his enormous gullet, which could take in an egg and gulp it down, without cracking it; or like the pug-nosed invulnerable before mentioned, who, while tricking the public with a juggle, performed a real feat when he thrust knives up his nostrils without hurting himself, because his nostrils were so wide and flexible. These cases are rare, but when they do occur they are never inexplicable or out of nature as the credulous would have us believe.

Yet, with all the evidence before them of the cleverness of jugglers, and the dexterity with which deft of hand can deceive the wisest—with all the mass of evidence of frauds which have been discovered, both pious and impious—people go on believing in miracles, and the "possession" by unseen spirits of carnal-looking mediums. Why, the latest miracle of all, is the old stigmata medium; the medium with the large white-skinned arm on which the spirits scrawl blood-red letters in a very bad hand, and looking marvellously like an earthly scratch with a material pencil! This flesh-writing is of no recent date. The Oxford Council of 1222 crucified two "naughtie fellows" at Arborberie for feigning the stigmata; but St. Francis of Assisi was canonised for his fraud two years later—as a compensation, probably. The Dominicans who got caught in false flesh-writing tricks at Berne, and Maria da Visitiçam who disgraced herself in the same way at Lisbon, brought the fashion into temporary disrepute for a long long time, until lo! it starts up again in the Irish revivalist who had "Geasus" written over her stomach, and in the medium who bares his arm to show a scrawling "John" scratched there. What believer in the power of Revivals would doubt the heavenly handwriting of the one (never mind the spelling); and what enthusiast in the cause of mediumship and spiritualism would question the ghostly origin of the other? O! how strange it is, that with the collective knowledge and advancement of the ages for his guidance, a sane man can witness the marvellous dexterity of a modern juggler who confesses that all he does is by fraud of sense and mechanical combination, and can then accept the "spiritualism" of a bungler, who cannot speak

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tolerable English, and whose perpetually-failing tricks are of the lowest and most explainable order of legerdemain known.

RUSSIAN TRAVEL.

SERFS OF A VILLAGE IN THE INTERIOR. A LOOK ROUND THE CHURCH.

In outward expression the Russian serf is a mere clod of the valley. His dress is seldom varied. A little round low-crowned black felt hat, with narrow turned-up rims, covers the usual profusion of brown or carrotty tangled locks, which are sometimes parted in front, and cut straight at the neck. Every serf I have seen, who had reached manhood, had a beard, whiskers, and moustache, untouched by razor or scissors, so that most of these natural beards were magnificently long, rolling in soft curls, or spreading and bushy.

Beards are in Russia the peculiar prerogative of two classes only, but those the most numerous if not the most potent—serfs and priests; all other Russians crop and shave. Government officials of all kinds—and they are a host—gentlemen, barons, and soldiers, will not allow a hair to be seen, unless it be an imperial, a royal, or a Napoleonic moustache on the upper lip. Beard is the mark of servitude and priestcraft, and is, therefore, abhorred by the "respectability" of Russia. Count Pomerin's serfs were profusely hairy under their hats, were dressed in loose, often ragged, coats of grey, brown, or black felt, or in cloth, coarse as "herland heather," reaching a little below the knees, and held together at the waist by a belt, like a narrow horse-girth. Under the coat would be found either a striped cotton, or plain linen shirt, of the coarsest material, called "crash," sometimes used for kitchen towels. Trousers of the same material were stuck into brown or grey felt boots, and the toes within the boots would be wrapped round with a coarse linen rag in lieu of stockings. On their hands the serfs wear fingerless leather mittens; and in the girth-belt, on the right hip, carry a short-handled axe.

After passing through the crowd of serfs, we proceeded down the hill, crossed a morass which caused the horses some trouble, and then over a low wooden bridge, spanning a frozen stream, passed to the outskirts of the village of Evanoffsky. The peasants, who followed listlessly, sauntering, and silent, gradually vanished into their wooden huts. These thatched village huts are so low, that one wonders how such well grown men stand up in them, especially as their walls are sunk at all manner of angles off the square. The gables face the street or road; no door is visible, but there is a large wooden gateway next the house, and a small door leading to the dwelling, somewhere in the rear. The gateway is for horses and cattle, carts, &c., and the allotment of each peasant is fenced in from the road by a close high paling, which extends to the next hut. These allotments being of considerable breadth, a village spreads over a great space of ground.

In some parts of Russia the huts have a low under story, for sheltering cattle during winter. It admits horses, cows, sheep, pigs, goats, and poultry. The flooring is open, and the animal heat from so many bodies, ascending to the inmates above, helps to keep them warm. In the summer, the quadrupeds go to the field, and the bipeds above take possession of the vacant cellar as the coolest place for the hot weather. A trap-door admits from above to this ground-floor, and a long sloping board outside, with cross pieces of wood nailed on it, like the temporary ladders used for building purposes in England, is the way out into the open air. In the villages belonging to Count Pomerin, the cattle of the peasants are housed in outbuildings immediately adjoining the low huts, the communication between them being always open. It follows that the men and women and the cattle live very much on the social principle, and have all things in common. I saw cow and horse dung built up three or four feet high from the ground, and one and a half feet thick, all round the huts, to keep out the coming winter frost. What windows I noticed, were mere pigeon-holes.

The street or road betweeen these habitations was fully six times as broad as Cheapside in London, and a double row of tall trees ran down the centre, forming, no doubt, a cool and pleasant promenade in summer. Be it remembered that this was no roadside village, neither was it an outskirt to a town, but a genuine Russian feudal village, or as the Scotch would say, "clachan," a long way from any public road or corporate town, embosomed in the heart of a large valley, between immense regions of forest and the rolling plains.

After a long ride, we reached the church. It seemed to stand in the centre of the village; and the other long lines of mud streets, like the one we had passed, radiated from it as a centre. It was a very large and handsome new building of stucco brick, with a Corinthian front, and constructed—as all Russian churches are—in the form of a cross, with gilded domes, cupolas, minarets, and two immense belfries, each containing one large and six small bells, fourteen in all, which were now keeping up a most atrocious jangle. Over the front entrance was at one end a very fairly executed painting of the last supper, and at the other a picture of some saint's story which I did not understand. All the architectural designing and outside decoration was the work, I was told, of a serf belonging to the place. The church was open. It happened to be a Saint's day (St. Vladimir, I think), and the count, with his party, including myself, entered the sacred edifice. We were not very long in it, the count and the other Russians of our party getting very swiftly through their religious observances; but the religious faith and observances of any people have a powerful effect in the formation of their character, and what one sees of the Greek Church in its practical bearing on the Russians is worth note.

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This Greek Church is a schism from the Roman Catholic, or the Roman Catholic is a schism from the Greek; at all events the one split into two, on the elevation of Gregory the Sixth to the patriarchal chair of Rome. Before that time the four patriarchal chairs of Rome, Alexandria, Jerusalem, and Constantinople, had been independent, the one of the other, and each patriarch ruled in his own division; but squabbles had been going on between the patriarch of Rome and his brother patriarch of Constantinople, for the supreme headship of the whole Christian world. The two grand divisions which to this day are maintained—the Eastern or Greek, and the Western or Roman Church—now present so many points of similarity that a common origin is evident, and so many points of dissimilarity that the impossibility of any united action is equally evident. The Greeks have no purgatory, their priests must all be married, the Emperor is head of the Church in the same sense as the Queen of England is head of the Church of England and defender of the faith, and each diocese has a supreme patriarch who is only supreme in his own district. It is to the especial honour of the Greek Church that it has not been intolerant of other creeds, has not persecuted with fire and faggot, and at the present time allows in Russia every form of religious belief to be publicly followed by strangers and foreigners. But no proselytising is permitted. The great defect of the Greek system is the almost total exclusion of moral teaching. All is display of ceremony.

Service was being performed when we entered the church by four long-haired priests, attended by their clerks, and robed splendidly in sacred vestments of cloth of gold, with chains of gold and crosses hanging from them. The services consisted of chantings, genuflexions, crossings, and readings from a book of prayer; the voices of priests and assistants rising and falling the whole pitch of the gamut at a word, running in a low monotonous tone for a few seconds, then bursting afresh into a high key for a word or two, and then sinking into a mumble of inarticulate sounds. Immediately behind the popes (all priests are called popes in Russia), and facing the entrance, was a raised platform or dais, extending across that part of the church: with wings and side doors, not unlike the stage of a theatre. In the centre of this stage, stood the altar, around which were blazing a large number of wax candles. At the side-wings, were images and pictures by the dozen. A small rail, with an opening in the centre, separated this altar, and its attendant holy images, from the main body of the building.

The audience was pretty numerous, chiefly composed of women, many of whom carried babies, and were getting themselves crossed and sprinkled with holy water by one or other of the priests as they passed. There was not a single seat in the church; all worshippers were standing, bending, bowing, prostrating, and diligently crossing themselves. The prostrations were complete, to the touching of the cold flags with the forehead, and the kissing of the ground. A few reading-desks were placed here and there about the church among the people, and on each lay for study a small picture of some particular saint. The one I examined was a miserably mean representation of Joseph and Mary, with a child between them. On these desks beside each of the pictures, lay a plate for the reception of money, and there was a stand for tapers and candles. The poor devotees crowded to kiss the pictures, made their children do so too, and when the children were babies held the pictures to their lips. After a time the performing priests retired behind the side-scenes, and reappeared on the stage beside the altar. Then, was heard a choir of very good voices commencing another part of the performance, and now, bending, crossing, and prostrating were renewed with added energy. During all this time the people were going and coming, passing and repassing, through the church, as they sought out the particular saints' pictures before which they desired to perform their devotions. No one seemed willing to rest for a single moment. Wax tapers and candles were being sold near the door, varying in price from three kopecks to many rubles. I am told that the priests derive a considerable revenue from the chandlery trade—first selling their candles for sacred purposes, and after they have burnt for a short time, putting them out to be resold for common use.

On this and on many other occasions, I did not hear one syllable of preaching or homily reading, nor one hint of the moral precepts of Christianity.

At Easter, there is absolution given to the Greek Church people. Six weeks of common fasting have been previously observed, and a week of uncommon, almost absolute starvation precedes Easter Sunday. During that week confession is made, and absolution in some sense given in a very wholesale manner by the priests who attend for the purpose.

"Evan, where are you going?" said a friend of mine to his servant man, on one of these days of "Gavating;" that is, confessing.

"I am going to confession; I'll be back in a quarter of an hour, the church is just at hand."

"But I cannot let you go to-day, I want you."

"God help me, John the son of Thomas, but I must go; this is the last day of gavating, and if I don't go, I shall have no certificate to get a clean passport; I will be back in a few minutes."

"How can you manage to confess all your year's sins in a few minutes?"

"Your honour, if I had only five kopecks, the pope would keep me a long time, but I have a rouble and that will get me through in five minutes I know how to do." Off the fellow went, and returned in less than half an hour with all his spiritual accounts squared. On the Sunday after this week of confession, all Russia is cleaned and purged of twelve months' sins.

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A dramatic exhibition of the resurrection is given in every church in the empire on the Saturday evening at twelve o'clock precisely. On Easter Sunday there are kisses and congratulations, eggs are handed about from hand to hand, feasting is at its height, and the hospitals are full by Tuesday or Wednesday.

There is a manufactory near St. Petersburg, at which about two thousand hands used to be employed. On a week previous to a certain Easter Sunday, while confession was going on, in order to take as little time from Mammon as possible, the machinery was stopped in sections, and the people were permitted to go in batches, according to the nature of the work at which they were employed. Weavers confessed together at one time, spinners at another, and so on. Connected with and adjoining these works was the church where confession took place, and a private passage led from the works to the church by which the penitents passed into the church; having confessed, they went into the street by the main church entrance to go home. Now, in Russia, all workpeople are strictly searched by male and female searchers as they pass out from their place of employment; but in confessing season when these particular workpeople went direct to the church, by the private way, to confess a year's sins in the lump, the right of search had never been enforced. But on a certain day the director of this factory received a hint concerning this omission, and took his measures accordingly. At eleven o'clock a large batch (four hundred in all) of women, young and married, girls and old wives, left their various posts, and took their way across the yard, with demure and penitent looks, to the private entrance, where they were admitted as usual, filling the stairs and passages. When all were inside, the bottom door was bolted and guarded. Means of escape being thus cut off, the front rank on approaching the door of communication with the church, found half a dozen searchers, backed by as many policemen. The first two women searched were stripped of a large quantity of valuable material secreted under their clothes, in their boots—in fact, wherever they could stow it. Each had as great a weight of plunder as she could possibly carry. The work of searching went on, but the mass of women on the stairs and in the passages got scent of the presence of the searchers. The word was passed, a peculiar sound was heard as of many persons dressing and undressing, and in a few minutes the women were all standing as innocent as lambs, and as harmless as doves, up to their knees in material, valued according to an after computation at five hundred pounds sterling.

This had been going on for years. But let it be remembered that the people are not taught morality and honesty as part of their religion.

I will attempt to give an idea of what Holy Russia can achieve in this line. Saint Nicholas, or Nikoli, as he is termed in Russia, was "a saint so clever," who, many years ago, lived on the banks of Lake Ladago the Great. He was a man reputed for his wonderful sanctity, austerity, and wisdom. Many extraordinary cures had he effected, which were ascribed by the simple peasants to supernatural power. He belonged to the real old uncorrupted Greek religion, such as it was in the days of its purity; he flagellated himself unmercifully for his deficiencies, bemoaned the falling off of the primitive faith, and prophesied dire calamities in consequence. One of his favourite prophetic visions was the downfal of the Ottoman empire, the total destruction of all the Turks, the substitution of Russia for those "dogs" in the East, in the reign of a namesake of his own, a Nikoli, and the simultaneous restoration of the pure old faith. One day he was on a sloping bank of the great lake, seated on a large boulder-stone, talking and speaking words of wisdom to friends who had come a long way to hear him, and at the same time inwardly praying to be removed to the capital, that he might have there a wider field of duty, and give his counsel to the emperor, who was at that time consolidating Petersburg. At once the stone on which he sat began to move, and, sliding gently down towards the lake, carried him with it, in spite of the exertions of his friends. On the lake the stone swam like a duck, and set off, dead against the wind, across the sea (the Ladago is some sixty miles broad, and eighty long). Nikoli waved a farewell to his astonished friends, and calmly held his course. For six weeks he sailed on, buffeting winds and waves, not knowing whither he went. At length he passed from the great lake into the Neva. But he did not reach the capital. A ukase had gone out against the arrival of any more big stones, or monoliths, after that which Peter rides on, in the Admiralty Plains. Nikoli's stone must have known this, for when it came to a place called Ishora, it turned into a small tributary, and held on up the narrow river, dead against the stream, for four good miles. Then it stopped stone still at the village of Colpino, where the saint was obliged to get off and land. It so happened that just as Nikoli came sailing up this small river, the peasants had collected, and were dancing one of their holiday dances. They saw the strange sight of an old man sailing on a stone, and thought they saw the Evil One. "Churt! churt!" they cried, and ran off. One man, however, who had more sense, cried out, "God be with us! that is old Nikoli Nikoliovitch, from the Ladago, the wise man." This discriminating man took the poor exhausted mariner in, and dried his feet, set bread before him, got the samovar ready, and laid him on the peach bed, doing all he could to revive his poor weatherbeaten frame. But the saint's time was come; he died in the arms of his kind entertainer, prophesying many events, "which have all come to pass," and having by this expedition on the stone entitled himself to be canonised and placed in the highest rank among Greek saints. So, canonised he was; a picture of him was made and encased under silver, with

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rays of glory springing from his head; the picture was hung up in a frame, and a small church built on the spot where he died. To this church resorted many thousands every year on the anniversary of his death, the ninth of May. They who had diseases were healed, the lame walked, and the blind saw, after a visit to Colpino on the saint's day. By-and-by the Empress Catherine established at this place a cannon-foundry, and brought Gasgoine, from Carron, in Scotland, to teach her to make guns. He brought more people, and she also sent a host of Russians, so the little church became too small, besides being found at an inconvenient distance from the great new village. Then there was built a grand new church, as large and handsome as any ordinary saint could desire, for Nikoli; and as he had been a source of great profit in the old church, it was deemed that he would be more profitable than ever in the new one. They thought, therefore, to remove him; and one day they did, with great pomp and ceremony, remove him from among his old friends and old faces. The ceremony over and the door locked, the popes retired to play at cards at a party in Vassilia Petrovitch's grand government house. But if Nikoli came to Colpino on a stone without any free will of his own, he was not going to be removed from his old comfortable quarters by the will of the priests without his own sanction, so he got up in the night, kicked open the door, walked three miles back to his dear old church, and hung himself up again on his old nail, close to the altar. There he was found in the morning. The priests were not to be put out by an old picture, so they took Nikoli back, double nailed him, rolled stones to the door of the church, and set a watch. It wouldn't do. Nikoli came out at a window, and was found in his old berth on the morning of the second day. The priests now appealed to the empress, who sent Potemkin to negotiate with the saint, and after considerable trouble he managed to bring the old fellow to terms. Nikoli consented to be removed, on the condition that on the ninth of May in every year for all time to come, a procession of great priests should carry him on a visit to the old church, and carry him back. For, he was determined that the people should have this opportunity of receiving his blessing and enjoying his miraculous healing powers. This is the legend; now for its effects.

For a week previous to the ninth of May, I have seen the principal road to Colpino gradually assuming the appearance of a road leading to some great fair. Pilgrims of all ages and both sexes begin to pass me first singly and at intervals, then by groups in closer file, until the road is covered with weary travel-stained footsore and hungry-looking travellers. Many of them come from far distances, two or three hundred miles away. The great proportion are not moushuks, or mere peasants, but very respectably-dressed persons above the rank of serfs, and evidently possessing means. They are nearly all barefoot, and carry the pilgrim's staff and wallet. They must not enter a house on their journey, unless they would spoil the blessing they expect. The sun may be blazing on their devoted heads, the rain may be coming down in torrents—this does not signify, on flows the stream of devotees. I have seen them ill and sick and fainting, and I have seen cordials given to them by kind English women. The lame pass, and the blind, and the rheumatic, and people afflicted with various diseases; sick children in the arms of their fond mothers, and old tottering age supported by stalwart sons and daughters. On the eighth the road is densely crowded; the Petersburg pilgrims, who do not take the liberty "to boil their peas," start in the evening to walk all night, and arrive in good time in the morning. For those who do "boil their peas," trains run to Colpino, beginning early on the ninth, and pour out their teeming freight at the stations every half hour until twelve o'clock. Those who can command a team, drive down, instead of mixing with the poorer sinners in the train. The pedestrians and more sincere dupes have by this time reached the spot, so that on the final day carriages only are seen on the road.

I have been present at Colpino Place on the evening of the eighth, and have seen from fifteen thousand to twenty thousand wayfarers such as I have described, lying in the wind and rain all night around the church. I have been there on the ninth, and have seen this number doubled by fresh arrivals from Petersburg by train and road. Taking my stand at ten o'clock to see the procession, which begins at noon, I have had to wait until one, because Nikoli would not consent to move, until the large iron box for offerings was filled with money. I have gone into the church and taken my hat off to as ugly an old saint as it is possible to see; I have waited, not I am afraid in a very patient frame of mind, until my eyes have been gladdened by the sight of the holy banners, old tawdry and motheaten images and pictures, to the number of thirty, carried each by two priests clothed in sacred vestments. Then I have seen this great multitude rushing, crushing, squeezing, and pushing, to get into the line of march, and prostrating themselves in the mud in a long line huddled together, a mile long and more, enjoying the extreme felicity of having these banners and pictures—but especially old Nikoli—in a wormeaten frame, carried over them by the priests, who trod without mercy on the poor superstitious slaves. Then, as I have thought of the Indian Juggernaut, I have had my hat knocked over my ears, because I forgot to take it off as the humiliating spectacle passed by. I have followed this immense crowd with my eyes, as the people rushed again and again to be trampled over by the priests, and throw themselves again and again in the mud and dirt before and under the images. I have heard of miraculous cures effected on that great day; of those who came blind, going away seeing; of those who came on crutches, going away without them; of those who brought rheumatisms, leaving them behind; and even of women who never had

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children, bearing children thereafter. Beyond what I have described, however, nothing was to be seen, unless it were the shows, the dancing-bears, the sweetmeat stands, and the segans or gipsies, brown as copper, who are miracle-workers, and who for half a rouble read my hand, and bestowed upon me three wives, fifteen children, and four estates.

AN ELASTIC TRADE.

Indian-rubber, thirty or forty years ago, was known to the grown-up English world as a substance necessary to the furnishing of drawing-boxes, and to the use of all men and boys, women and girls, who had at any period of their lives pencil marks to efface. Paterfamilias smelt it on the surface of the holiday letter, electrical with energetic rubbing at the faint ruled lines which had saved the pen of the young caligrapher from travelling up hill and down hill and round all manner of corners. The consumption of Indian-rubber at some schools used to astonish the masters. My first school acquaintance with this article was, in fact, as a quid. When, therefore, I lately visited the Indian-rubber Works at Silvertown, and, being taken into the presence of the Masticator, was told that in the mastication of Indian-rubber began all its wonderful applications to the use of man, I saw in that engine an old grown-up schoolfellow. Mastication of Indian-rubber! Why, I have seen forty boys chewing like one, steadily, though surreptitiously; I have heard, here the creak of the tough fresh quid between the grinders; there, the juicier sound of work on the half-masticated article. The first machine masticator was found able to get through only about two ounces at a time. In the mouth, it was more than a day's work, and wearied the jaws to reduce to the right consistency a piece as big as a small filbert. Our manufacture was perfect when the hard rubber was transformed into a soft plastic mass, which we could use as dough for the manufacture of air-puffs or turnovers. This pastry was to be heard bursting during school hours with unaccountable little cracks that might have converted some schoolmasters of the present day to a belief in spirit-rapping. We had a prejudice in favour of black rubber. When white inside, we were firm to an opinion (established by the rounded shape of the fragments cut from the imported flask-shaped mass) that it was a cunning preparation of cow's udder. We did not accept whiteness as a sign of purity.

Well, we who survive have now lived to know all about it. No schoolboy's mind thirty or forty years ago was ever poisoned with information on natural history. Indian-rubber was leathery, therefore hide; was Indian, therefore, hide of elephant. When spurious, or English, it was got from bull or cow. Some such opinion may still prevail at Eton, though every little Sunday-schoolboy has this mysterious affair by heart as a "common object," and will reply to questions at a gallop with the information, that, This substance is the concrete milky juice obtained from several trees, but chiefly from one of the fig tribe. When first drawn, it resembles cow's milk in appearance; it has also a sweetish milky taste, and may be drunk with impunity. Like milk, it curdles, and then yields thirty or forty per cent of solid caoutchouc. Eton to Sunday scholar: Go on, little one. Why do you call it caoutchouc? Sunday-scholar to Eton: Caoutchouc from the Indian cachucu. The milky juice is received upon a mould of clay, generally pear-shaped, is white at first, but assumes its dark colour upon being dried in smoke. It is principally imported into Europe from Brazil, Columbia, and other parts of South America. Of late years, however, a considerable quantity has been brought from Java, Penang, Singapore, Assam, and Africa. Eton triumphant. Hollo, youngster. Foot short!

Jāvă Pĕ | năng Sĭngă | pōre | Āssăm ănd | Afĕrĭ(!) | că.

In the early days of Indian-rubber, the milky juice itself was now and then brought to us unchanged. Sir Joseph Banks had a bottle of it that did not for some time decompose. When it did, he in vain offered at Lisbon fifty louis-d'ors for another. In our own time it has been imported in barrels under the impression that advantage might come of its use in processes of manufacture; but it travels ill, and when it arrives in good order, after all the expense of cooperage and extra stowage, it is hardly so useful as a preparation that can easily be made by treatment of the solid rubber, which takes up the least possible room, and requires no care on the journey hither. Only a hundred years ago, Indian-rubber, which is now in some form part of almost every person's dress, of every room's furniture, was in this country a rare curiosity. In seventeen hundred and seventy, Dr. Priestley published a Theory and Practice of Perspective, with the following addition to its preface: "Since this work was printed off, I have seen a substance excellently adapted to the purpose of wiping from paper the marks of a black-lead pencil. It must, therefore, be of singular use to those who practise drawing. It is sold by Mr. Nairne, mathematical instrument-maker, opposite the Exchange. He sells a cubical piece of about half an inch for three shillings, and he says it will last several years."

Before this time the new substance had excited in France the attention of the learned. M. de la Condamine, a great French mathematician, who was sent in seventeen 'thirty-six to Peru, to observe the figure of the earth at the equator, wrote from Peru to the Academy of Sciences the first account of the curious juice used by the native Indians (after whom it has been called) and by other residents, for making syringes, bottles, boots, and so forth. He told how the articles were moulded in soft clay, how the moulds were broken, and the soft mass ornamented by pricks with a point of hard wood. He described the use of the liquid in those parts as a waterproof coating for cloth, and his own use of a great canvas prepared with liquid

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Indian-rubber to cover his quadrant circle, when set up, and save him the trouble of removing it to shelter in bad weather. At the mission of the Cordilleras and Andes they use, he said, waterproof boots, which appeared to have been smoked. Sprinkling with Spanish white, or even dust removed the stickiness of surface. In one place he found caoutchouc, wrapped in two leaves of the bananier, used as a torch; and when afterwards in seventeen 'fifty-one, M. Fresneau discovered in the French colony of Cayenne, trees yielding elastic resin, M. Condamine revived the discussion by dwelling upon the probably great commercial value of such a discovery. Nevertheless, the only commercial use found for the caoutchouc in France was that of the surgeons who dissolved the rubber in ether, and by successive dippings of wax rods obtained elastic coatings from which, the wax being melted out by boiling water, elastic surgical tubes, seldom of uniform thickness, were obtained. Somewhat later it was applied by Messrs. Charles and Robert to the manufacture of an air-tight varnish for balloons; but even at the end of the last century it was rarely put in Europe to any use except that of rubbing out pencil marks; little was known of it more than that it came from America, and that its price was a guinea an ounce.

Its toughness, elasticity, imperviousness to water and air, its power to withstand corrosion by all acids (except concentrated sulphuric or nitric, which act on it slowly) all alkalies, chlorine and the chemical agents, with other qualities only now being recognised, passed wholly without practical attention until our own day—until, in fact, the year eighteen hundred and nineteen, when Mr. Thomas Hancock, who is fairly to be called the founder of the new school of industry arising from the application of caoutchouc to the arts, and who deserves a statue in Indian-rubber more perennial than brass, began his experiments. He looked for a convenient solvent, and looked in the right direction, namely, to oil of turpentine; but he failed at first, abandoned that search for a time, and in eighteen 'twenty took out his first patent for cutting the raw bottle-shaped mass into glove wrists, waist-belts, garters, stocking tops, straps, waistcoat backs, unpickable pockets, boots, shoes, pattens, clogs, &c. His elastic pieces were fastened where they were inserted by stitches, from which the Indian-rubber broke away. Then, thicker edges were made, and prepared by steeping in hot water. The imported bottle of rubber was cut into rings for gloves and stockings. Next, a way was found of joining cut edges by pressure under hot water, and the use was discovered of a stream of cold water to keep constantly wet the sharp blade that passed through the rubber to be cut. But the great help in Mr. Hancock's manufactory came from the use of a small hand-machine—a masticator with sharp and strong teeth, like the hand masticator now generally used for mincing meat. The imported rubber was by no means uniformly pure. Thus torn and ground while heating itself with such tough resistance that a man could only work the handle on two ounces at a time, the tearing and grinding with the heat reduced all to an uniform workable mass. All waste cuttings and scraps of the workshop went into the mill, and the process, unpatented, was, wonderful to tell, kept a secret for twelve years by Mr. Hancock and his workmen—inquisitive minds being put on the wrong scent by the name of "pickling" given to the secret process. The first wooden hand-machine had soon been replaced by a larger iron machine worked by horse-power, which prepared fifteen pounds at a time, and of which the work was facilitated by previous heating of the raw rubber to a temperature of three hundred degrees. The charge of a steam masticator now, in the Manchester works, is nearly, or quite, two hundred pounds. This works the rubber into a solid uniform block six feet long, a foot wide, and seven inches thick.

The fifteen-pound blocks made by Mr. Hancock's smaller horse-power machine in eighteen 'twenty-one, were in the following year cut by him with an apparatus still in use for the purpose at all Indian-rubber works. The block, fixed on the movable bottom of a sort of trough, was raised, by simple machinery, to meet the sharp wetted edge of a slicing-knife that works over its face. Thus it was cut into those smooth oblong cakes for the drawing-school, which used to show the sawing strokes of the knife as a sort of grain upon their surface. In the same year, Mr. Hancock solved the problem of the turpentine solution, and in the next year he took out his patent for undersheathing ships (beneath their copper bottoms) with a mixture of dissolved caoutchouc, pitch, tar, &c. Now followed, naturally enough, the use of solution as a cement instead of thread, in the joining of Indian-rubber to other substances, as in gloves, &c. Boots coated with the solution became waterproofed. Then also the way was open, and was taken at once to many new appliances of caoutchouc, as in noiseless wheels, cushions of billiard-tables, gas-bags, collars for stopcocks, experimental balloons. By mixing the liquid caoutchouc brought from America, with felt, hair, and wool under pressure, Mr. Hancock made a strong watertight artificial leather. But in the same year, eighteen 'twenty-four, a new name became prominent.

Five years earlier the late Mr. Charles Macintosh, then a manufacturer at Glasgow of the violet red dye called cudbear, had contracted with the Glasgow gas works for their tar and ammoniacal refuse. Getting naphtha from this, it occurred to him that naphtha might prove a good solvent of Indian-rubber. He therefore experimented, and succeeded in doing with naphtha what Hancock had done with turpentine. Then, in the year 'twenty-four, he took out a patent for the use of his solution in a new method of waterproofing. He made a smooth sandwich of his caoutchouc paste, between two large slices of cloth, pressing and smoothing all together under rollers; and this double fabric was the water-

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proof which became so widely known under his name. Messrs. Hancock and Macintosh were in the following year one firm, working at Glasgow and London, and setting up a factory at Manchester for the working, by common agreement, of their patents. More applications of caoutchouc were devised by Mr. Hancock, who, among other contrivances, achieved a patent leather of the solution (instead of the original cream) pressed into flat fleeces of carded wool, between two layers of cloth: a tough substance, much used in machinery. Then, because tailors discouraged the use of their material, Messrs. Macintosh and Hancock opened shops for the sale of ready-made coats, capes, leggings, and other articles of dress, whereby the use of them was spread among travellers throughout the country. Twenty years ago, those old double fabrics, stiff in winter, and stinking in summer of turpentine or naphtha, keeping the wet out and all exhalations of the body in—feeling as if they were truly made of what Indian-rubber used sometimes to be called, lead-eater, and a lead-eater that retained all its food upon its stomach—still were in common use, although one beginning of the end of them had been made ten years before.

That lesser beginning of their end was made in Vienna, where the plan was devised of weaving goods with caoutchouc in the warp or weft. A thread of Indian-rubber had been made in 'twenty-six or seven by Messrs. Rattier and Guibal, of St. Denys, by a machine for cutting spirally a flat-pressed disc got from the bottom of one of the imported bottle masses. The process has since been perfected. A strip of caoutchouc stretched to five times its length, heated to the temperature of boiling water and then slowly cooled, does not again contract. The operation may be six times repeated, and a strip a foot long may be made to yield, by this sort of wire-drawing, fifteen thousand six hundred and twenty-five feet of Indian-rubber thread. Threads of caoutchouc made somewhat after this manner were sheathed by a braiding-machine with thread of silk or other fabric. Sheathed when at full stretch, and made elastic again by a hot iron passed over them, they contracted the surrounding thread into an uniform wrinkling, and afterwards allowed the play of the elastic core without breaking the fibres of its inelastic covering. Such compound thread was woven into elastic fabrics, first at Vienna, then in Paris, afterwards in London.

Meanwhile, pump-buckets, engine-hose, buffer-rings, elastic malting-shoes that would not crush the grain, caoutchouc corks, were coming into use, and the Manchester factory of Macintosh and Hancock produced four thousand square yards a day of double fabric waterproof cloth. At last, in the year eighteen 'forty-two, there began a great revolution in the Indian-rubber trade.

The natural rubber feels weather to an inconvenient extent; softens and becomes sticky under heat, and stiffens under cold. Mr. Goodyear, an American, having supplied by contract some Indian-rubber mail-bags which he took to be good and durable, they softened and decomposed under service, through heat, aided by some chemical action of their colouring material. The failure ruined the trade. Mr. Goodyear made some simple experiments of curiosity on the effect of heat upon the composition that destroyed his mail-bags, and, accidentally letting a piece fall on a hot stove, found that instead of melting, as caoutchouc does at a high temperature, it charred and hardened. Further experiments led to the use of sulphur under a certain heat for making that great and valuable change in the caoutchouc, now called vulcanisation. He sent an agent to England with his new elastic rubber, durable, workable, deprived of its stickiness, and able to pass unchanged through all vicissitudes of weather. He desired to sell his secret. Nobody would buy. But Mr. Hancock, on seeing Goodyear's material, without analysis of it, or any unfair dealing, applied his wits to the discovery of a process that would effect such a change. He discovered for himself the sulphur process, to which Mr. Brockedon gave the name of vulcanisation. It is effected now in several ways: by rubbing together caoutchouc softened in naphtha, with ten or twenty per cent of sulphur, and heating to three hundred and twenty degrees; by immersing sheets of Indian-rubber sliced from the block, for two or three hours in melted sulphur, at two hundred and forty degrees, and then heating to three hundred and twenty, when the change takes place immediately; or by dipping only for two or three minutes in a certain chemical tub that contains bisulphide of carbon, with two and a half per cent of protochloride of sulphur, and then washing to remove excess of chlorine. The vulcanised rubber undergoes a change not at all well understood theoretically when it is thus made to absorb ten or fifteen per cent of sulphur, whereof only one or two per cent is joined to it chemically. The great practical fact is that it then not only ceases to be sticky, but remains elastic at all temperatures.

In 'forty-three, Mr. Hancock took out a patent for his process of vulcanisation. In the year following, an English patent was also taken out for Mr. Goodyear, and the two patents were worked without open dispute until seven years ago, when an action being brought to try whether Mr. Hancock had stolen the idea of Mr. Goodyear, it was proved that he had not, though Goodyear's material suggested the independent investigation towards an achievement of the same result. To return to the history, we finish it by adding that in 'forty-five a new patent was taken out for getting rid of excess of sulphur by use of a strong hot solution of sulphate of soda or potash, and since that time new ways have every year been found of working and applying the vulcanised material: which has driven most of the old fabrics out of the market. Vulcanised in moulds under pressure, the Indian-rubber becomes hard like ebony, can be turned in a lathe, and will make combs, cups,

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light incorrodible scale-pans, opaque chemical bottles, ornaments of many kinds. Fifty patents were taken out by the firm of Macintosh and Hancock for new applications of the vulcanised material. Mr. Cow, of one of the royal dockyards, suggested the use by ships at sea of a large sheet of vulcanised Indian-rubber to be thrown over the side in case of leak by accident or shot-hole. The pressure of the water forcing it against the ship's bottom would stop the leak until the carpenter had done his work on it. The quantity of caoutchouc imported has been doubled and again doubled within ten years. Mr. Brockedon has kept vulcanised Indian-rubber for fourteen years in still water, and for ten years in damp earth without visible change. He has beaten a small piece, an inch and a half thick, with a steam hammer of five tons falling two feet, without injuring it or destroying its elasticity—falling four feet, with the result of tearing it, but without injuring its elasticity, which has borne the test of a pounding as between cannon-balls under the heaviest steam-hammers. Logs of wood, coated with vulcanised rubber, have been towed in a ship's wake to Demerara and back: the coated logs coming home perfectly sound, while the uncoated timber was riddled by marine creatures. Several projectors have declared that Indian-rubber resists cannon and rifle balls, and some have even offered to stand fire in their shot-proof Indian-rubber armour. But a leg of mutton so armed, shows in itself the bullet-hole, though the complete contraction of the elastic sheath effaces all trace of the points at which the bullet entered and passed out.

Such is the story of a trade yet in its infancy. At Silvertown—the Woolwich works of Messrs. Silver and Co. of Cornhill and Bishopsgate—all the processes here indicated may be seen at work, from the masticating-room with a cupboard full of raw material in bottle and crude lump, and the central machine that converts it into workable blocks, to the show-room of "ebonite" manufactures from the hardest vulcanised material, useful and ornamental, including even a hard and pleasantly elastic Indian-rubber pen. Beyond this, is to be seen evidence of the constant tendency of the new trade to conquer to itself new ground. Here, is an electrical room, with an outlook upon railway posts carrying electric wires, passed through all forms of insulators in addition to those of the crockery-ware or glass now commonly used. Each wire runs to a test apparatus, and it is demonstrated that no material can be employed that insulates so perfectly as the vulcanised Indian-rubber, which is also indestructible whether by fracture or corrosion. Over the way, therefore, we find in the factory, women and girls at work, making insulators.

In another room, is a marine telegraph cable, running across great reels, and being swathed in successive bands of the same tough incorrodible and perfectly insulating substance; for to this use of caoutchouc Messrs. Silver and Co. have for some time past paid peculiar attention. The workpeople of the factory have their invention stimulated by the capabilities of the material they work upon. Here, for example, is a shrewd foreman who has stumbled over the vulcanised Indian-rubber honeycomb mats now in much use, whereof all the hexagons have to be separately cut from cast tubes, and glued together. "Why the waste labour?" he asks; and turning to account the elasticity of his material, and the fact that a certain treatment with heat will make it retain any form into which it is stretched, he stamps his mat out of a single block, without letting fall a shred of waste, and so produces, with an enormous economy of labour, the same article, cheaper, nearer to perfection, and by far more durable.

Every inventive workman at Silvertown has credit for his own contrivances, not only from the firm, but from all visitors to the works who are informed of his discovery. It is most noteworthy that beyond this, in the space that is to represent Silvertown industry at this year's International Exhibition, inventions peculiar to the establishment will not be claimed in gross by the heads of the house. Every device originating with the men will have attached to it the name of the workman who is its inventor. This is part of a liberal and wise system, by which factory life is being greatly humanised in the hands of many English firms. At Silvertown, employment is found for women as far as possible, and in departments of those works occupied by other branches of the business of a great outfitting contractor—as in the caning of chairs among the cabinet-makers—there is work for children. For the children there is a school; for all hands there is a chapel, with the superintendence of an active chaplain-schoolmaster. The men form a rifle-corps of their own, with a head of the house for major; and they have mustered among themselves a good brass band. Comfortable dwellings are built in a little street outside the factory gates. There is a Silvertown Mechanics' Institute, with free weekly lectures, there is a school-treat on Easter Monday, and there is a concert on Whit Monday. The tall chimney by the river-side at Woolwich, marks, in fact, not only a place of mechanical industry, but the centre of a cheerful, wholesome influence; and this is, happily and honourably, becoming true now-a-days of many a tall chimney in our land of factories.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S NEW READINGS.

On Thursday, April 24th, at St. James's Hall, Piccadilly, at 8 o'clock precisely,

Mr. CHARLES DICKENS will read his

DAVID COPPERFIELD

(In Six Chapters),

AND

MR. BOB SAWYER'S PARTY,

FROM PICKWICK.

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER XI.

THE sun sank lower; the western breeze floated cool and fresh into the house. As the evening advanced, the cheerful ring of the village clock came nearer and nearer. Field and flower-garden felt the influence of the hour, and shed their sweetest fragrance. The birds in Norah's aviary sunned themselves in the evening stillness, and sang their farewell gratitude to the dying day.

Staggered in its progress for a time only, the pitiless routine of the house went horribly on its daily way. The panic-stricken servants took their blind refuge in the duties proper to the hour. The footman softly laid the table for dinner. The maid sat waiting in senseless doubt, with the hot-water jugs for the bedrooms ranged near her in their customary row. The gardener, who had been ordered to come to his master, with vouchers for money that he had paid in excess of his instructions, said his character was dear to him, and left the vouchers at his appointed time. Custom that never yields, and Death that never spares, met on the wreck of human happiness—and Death gave way.

Heavily the thunder-clouds of Affliction had gathered over the house—heavily, but not at their darkest yet. At five, that evening, the shock of the calamity had struck its blow. Before another hour had passed, the disclosure of the husband's sudden death was followed by the suspense of the wife's mortal peril. She lay helpless on her widowed bed; her own life, and the life of her unborn child, trembling in the balance.

But one mind still held possession of its resources—but one guiding spirit now moved helpfully in the house of mourning.

If Miss Garth's early days had been passed as calmly and as happily as her later life at Combe-Raven, she might have sunk under the cruel necessities of the time. But the governess's youth had been tried in the ordeal of family affliction; and she met her terrible duties with the steady courage of a woman who had learnt to suffer. Alone, she had faced the trial of telling the daughters that they were fatherless. Alone, she now struggled to sustain them, when the dreadful certainty of their bereavement was at last impressed on their minds.

Her least anxiety was for the elder sister. The agony of Norah's grief had forced its way outward to the natural relief of tears. It was not so with Magdalen. Tearless and speechless, she sat in the room where the revelation of her father's death had first reached her; her face, unnaturally petrified by the sterile sorrow of old age—a white changeless blank, fearful to look at. Nothing roused, nothing melted her. She only said, "Don't speak to me; don't touch me. Let me bear it by myself"—and fell silent again. The first great grief which had darkened the sisters' lives, had, as it seemed, changed their every-day characters already.

The twilight fell, and faded; and the summer night came brightly. As the first carefully shaded light was kindled in the sick-room, the physician who had been summoned from Bristol, arrived to consult with the medical attendant of the family. He could give no comfort: he could only say, "We must try, and hope. The shock which struck her, when she overheard the news of her husband's death, has prostrated her strength at the time when she needed it most. No effort to preserve her shall be neglected. I will stay here for the night."

He opened one of the windows to admit more air as he spoke. The view overlooked the drive in front of the house, and the road outside. Little groups of people were standing before the lodge-gates, looking in. "If those persons make any noise," said the doctor, "they must be warned away." There was no need to warn them: they were only the labourers who had worked on the dead man's property, and here and there some women and children from the village. They were all thinking of him—some talking of him—and it quickened their sluggish minds to look at his house. The gentlefolks thereabouts were mostly kind to them (the men said) but none like *him*. The women whispered to each other of his comforting ways, when he came into their cottages. "He was a cheerful man, poor soul; and thoughtful of us, too: he never came in, and stared at meal times; the rest of 'em help us, and scold us—all *he* ever said was, better luck next time." So they stood, and talked of him, and looked at his house and

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grounds, and moved off clumsily by twos and threes, with the dim sense that the sight of his pleasant face would never comfort them again. The dullest head among them knew, that night, that the hard ways of poverty would be all the harder to walk on now he was gone.

A little later, news was brought to the bed-chamber door that old Mr. Clare had come alone to the house, and was waiting in the hall below, to hear what the physician said. Miss Garth was not able to go down to him herself: she sent a message. He said to the servant, "I'll come, and ask again, in two hours' time"—and went out slowly. Unlike other men in all things else the sudden death of his old friend had produced no discernible change in him. The feeling implied in the errand of inquiry that had brought him to the house, was the one betrayal of human sympathy which escaped the rugged, impenetrable old man.

He came again, when the two hours had expired; and this time Miss Garth saw him.

They shook hands in silence. She waited; she nerved herself to hear him speak of his lost friend. No: he never mentioned the dreadful accident, he never alluded to the dreadful death. He said these words, "Is she better, or worse?" and said no more. Was the tribute of his grief for the husband, sternly suppressed under the expression of his anxiety for the wife? The nature of the man, unpliably antagonistic to the world and the world's customs, might justify some such interpretation of his conduct as this. He repeated his question, "Is she better, or worse?"

Miss Garth answered him,

"No better; if there is any change, it is a change for the worse."

They spoke those words at the window of the morning-room which opened to the garden. Mr. Clare paused, after hearing the reply to his inquiry, stepped out on to the walk, then turned on a sudden, and spoke again:

"Has the doctor given her up?" he asked.

"He has not concealed from us that she is in danger. We can only pray for her."

The old man laid his hand on Miss Garth's arm as she answered him, and looked her attentively in the face.

"You believe in prayer?" he said.

Miss Garth drew sorrowfully back from him.

"You might have spared me that question, sir, at such a time as this."

He took no notice of her answer; his eyes were still fastened on her face.

"Pray," he said, "as you never prayed before, for the preservation of Mrs. Vanstone's life."

He left her. His voice and manner implied some unutterable dread of the future, which his words had not confessed. Miss Garth followed him into the garden, and called to him. He heard her, but he never turned back; he quickened his pace, as if he desired to avoid her. She watched him across the lawn in the warm summer moonlight. She saw his white withered hands, saw them suddenly against the black background of the shrubbery, raised and wrung above his head. They dropped—the trees shrouded him in darkness—he was gone.

Miss Garth went back to the suffering woman, with the burden on her mind of one anxiety more.

It was then past eleven o'clock. Some little time had elapsed since she had seen the sisters, and spoken to them. The inquiries she addressed to one of the female servants, only elicited the information that they were both in their rooms. She delayed her return to the mother's bedside to say her parting words of comfort to the daughters, before she left them for the night. Norah's room was the nearest. She softly opened the door and looked in. The kneeling figure by the bedside, told her that God's help had found the fatherless daughter in her affliction. Grateful tears gathered in her eyes as she looked: she softly closed the door, and went on to Magdalen's room. There, doubt stayed her feet at the threshold; and she waited for a moment before going in.

A sound in the room caught her ear—the monotonous rustling of a woman's dress, now distant, now near; passing without cessation from end to end over the floor—a sound which told her that Magdalen was pacing to and fro in the secrecy of her own chamber. Miss Garth knocked. The rustling ceased; the door was opened, and the sad young face confronted her, locked in its cold despair; the large light eyes looked mechanically into hers, as vacant and as tearless as ever.

That look wrung the heart of the faithful woman, who had trained her and loved her from a child. She took Magdalen tenderly in her arms.

"Oh, my love," she said, "no tears yet! Oh, if I could see you as I have seen Norah! Speak to me, Magdalen—try if you can speak to me."

She tried, and spoke:

"Norah," she said, "feels no remorse. He was not serving Norah's interests when he went to his death: he was serving mine."

With that terrible answer, she put her cold lips to Miss Garth's cheek.

"Let me bear it by myself," she said, and gently closed the door.

Again Miss Garth waited at the threshold, and again the sound of the rustling dress passed to and fro—now far, now near—to and fro with a cruel, mechanical regularity, that chilled the warmest sympathy, and daunted the boldest hope.

The night passed. It had been agreed, if no change for the better showed itself by the morning, that the London physician whom Mrs. Vanstone had consulted some months since, should be summoned to the house on the next day. No change for the better appeared; and the physician was sent for.

As the morning advanced, Frank came to make inquiries, from the cottage. Had Mr. Clare entrusted to his son the duty which he had personally performed on the previous day, through

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reluctance to meet Miss Garth again after what he had said to her? It might be so. Frank could throw no light on the subject; he was not in his father's confidence. He looked pale and bewildered. His first inquiries after Magdalen, showed how his weak nature had been shaken by the catastrophe. He was not capable of framing his own questions: the words faltered on his lips, and the ready tears came into his eyes. Miss Garth's heart warmed to him for the first time. Grief has this that is noble in it—it accepts all sympathy, come whence it may. She encouraged the lad by a few kind words, and took his hand at parting.

Before noon, Frank returned with a second message. His father desired to know whether Mr. Pendril was not expected at Combe-Raven on that day. If the lawyer's arrival was looked for, Frank was directed to be in attendance at the station, and to take him to the cottage, where a bed would be placed at his disposal. This message took Miss Garth by surprise. It showed that Mr. Clare had been made acquainted with his dead friend's purpose of sending for Mr. Pendril. Was the old man's thoughtful offer of hospitality, another indirect expression of the natural human distress which he perversely concealed? or was he aware of some secret necessity for Mr. Pendril's presence, of which the bereaved family had been kept in total ignorance? Miss Garth was too heart-sick and hopeless to dwell on either question. She told Frank that Mr. Pendril had been expected at three o'clock, and sent him back with her thanks.

Shortly after his departure, such anxieties on Magdalen's account as her mind was now able to feel, were relieved by better news than her last night's experience had inclined her to hope for. Norah's influence had been exerted to rouse her sister: and Norah's patient sympathy had set the prisoned grief free. Magdalen had suffered severely—suffered inevitably, with such a nature as hers—in the effort that relieved her. The healing tears had not come gently; they had burst from her with a torturing, passionate vehemence—but Norah had never left her till the struggle was over, and the calm had come. These better tidings encouraged Miss Garth to withdraw to her own room, and to take the rest which she needed sorely. Worn out in body and mind, she slept from sheer exhaustion—slept heavily and dreamlessly for some hours. It was between three and four in the afternoon, when she was roused by one of the female servants. The woman had a note in her hand—a note left by Mr. Clare the younger, with a message desiring that it might be delivered to Miss Garth immediately. The name written in the lower corner of the envelope was "William Pendril." The lawyer had arrived.

Miss Garth opened the note. After a few first sentences of sympathy and condolence, the writer announced his arrival at Mr. Clare's; and then proceeded, apparently in his professional capacity, to make a very startling request.

"If," he wrote, "any change for the better in Mrs. Vanstone should take place—whether it is only an improvement for the time, or whether it is the permanent improvement for which we all hope—in either case, I entreat you to let me know of it immediately. It is of the last importance that I should see her, in the event of her gaining strength enough to give me her attention for five minutes, and of her being able at the expiration of that time to sign her name. May I beg that you will communicate my request in the strictest confidence, to the medical men in attendance. They will understand, and you will understand, the vital importance I attach to this interview, when I tell you that I have arranged to defer to it all other business claims on me; and that I hold myself in readiness to obey your summons, at any hour of the day or night."

In those terms the letter ended. Miss Garth read it twice over. At the second reading, the request which the lawyer now addressed to her, and the farewell words which had escaped Mr. Clare's lips the day before, connected themselves vaguely in her mind. There was some other serious interest in suspense, known to Mr. Pendril and known to Mr. Clare, besides the first and foremost interest of Mrs. Vanstone's recovery. Whom did it affect? The children? Were they threatened by some new calamity which their mother's signature might avert? What did it mean? Did it mean that Mr. Vanstone had died without leaving a will?

In her distress and confusion of mind, Miss Garth was incapable of reasoning with herself, as she might have reasoned at a happier time. She hastened to the ante-chamber of Mrs. Vanstone's room; and, after explaining Mr. Pendril's position towards the family, placed his letter in the hands of the medical men. They both answered without hesitation, to the same purpose. Mrs. Vanstone's condition rendered any such interview as the lawyer desired, a total impossibility. If she rallied from her present prostration, Miss Garth should be at once informed of the improvement. In the mean time, the answer to Mr. Pendril might be conveyed in one word—Impossible.

"You see what importance Mr. Pendril attaches to the interview?" said Miss Garth.

Yes: both the doctors saw it.

"My mind is lost and confused, gentlemen, in this dreadful suspense. Can you either of you guess why the signature is wanted? or what the object of the interview may be? I have only seen Mr. Pendril when he has come here on former visits: I have no claim to justify me in questioning him. Will you look at the letter again? Do you think it implies that Mr. Vanstone has never made a will?"

"I think it can hardly imply that," said one of the doctors. "But, even supposing Mr. Vanstone to have died intestate, the law takes due care of the interests of his widow and his children——"

"Would it do so," interposed the other

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medical man, "if the property happened to be in land?"

"I am not sure in that case. Do you happen to know, Miss Garth, whether Mr. Vanstone's property was in money or in land?"

"In money," replied Miss Garth. "I have heard him say so on more than one occasion."

"Then I can relieve your mind by speaking from my own experience. The law, if he has died intestate, gives a third of his property to his widow, and divides the rest equally among his children."

"But if Mrs. Vanstone—— ?"

"If Mrs. Vanstone should die," pursued the doctor, completing the question which Miss Garth had not the heart to conclude for herself, "I believe I am right in telling you that the property would, as a matter of legal course, go to the children. Whatever necessity there may be for the interview which Mr. Pendril requests, I can see no reason for connecting it with the question of Mr. Vanstone's presumed intestacy. But, by all means, put the question, for the satisfaction of your own mind, to Mr. Pendril himself."

Miss Garth withdrew to take the course which the doctor advised. After communicating to Mr. Pendril the medical decision which, thus far, refused him the interview that he sought, she added a brief statement of the legal question she had put to the doctors; and hinted delicately at her natural anxiety to be informed of the motives which had led the lawyer to make his request. The answer she received was guarded in the extreme: it did not impress her with a favourable opinion of Mr. Pendril. He confirmed the doctors' interpretation of the law, in general terms only; expressed his intention of waiting at the cottage, in the hope that a change for the better might yet enable Mrs. Vanstone to see him; and closed his letter without the slightest explanation of his motives, and without a word of reference to the question of the existence, or the non-existence, of Mr. Vanstone's will.

The marked caution of the lawyer's reply dwelt uneasily on Miss Garth's mind, until the long-expected event of the day recalled all her thoughts to her one absorbing anxiety on Mrs. Vanstone's account.

Early in the evening, the physician from London arrived. He watched long by the bedside of the suffering woman; he remained longer still in consultation with his medical brethren; he went back again to the sick-room, before Miss Garth could prevail on him to communicate to her the opinion at which he had arrived.

When he came out into the ante-chamber for the second time, he silently took a chair by her side. She looked in his face; and the last faint hope died in her before he opened his lips.

"I must speak the hard truth," he said, gently. "All that *can* be done, *has* been done. The next four-and-twenty hours, at most, will end your suspense. If Nature makes no effort in that time—I grieve to say it—you must prepare yourself for the worst."

Those words said all: they were prophetic of the end.

The night passed; and she lived through it. The next day came; and she lingered on till the clock pointed to five. At that hour, the tidings of her husband's death had dealt the mortal blow. When the hour came round again, the mercy of God let her go to him in the better world. Her daughters were kneeling at the bedside, as her spirit passed away. She left them unconscious of their presence; mercifully and happily insensible to the pang of the last farewell.

Her child survived her till the evening was on the wane, and the sunset was dim in the quiet western heaven. As the darkness came, the light of the frail little life—faint and feeble from the first—flickered, and went out. All that was earthly of mother and child lay, that night, on the same bed. The Angel of Death had done his awful bidding; and the two Sisters were left alone in the world.

CHAPTER XII.

Earlier than usual, on the morning of Thursday, the twenty-third of July, Mr. Clare appeared at the door of his cottage, and stepped out into the little strip of garden attached to his residence.

After he had taken a few turns backwards and forwards, alone, he was joined by a spare, quiet, grey-haired man, whose personal appearance was totally devoid of marked character of any kind; whose inexpressive face and conventionally-quiet manner presented nothing that attracted approval, and nothing that inspired dislike. This was Mr. Pendril—this was the man on whose lips hung the future of the orphans at Combe-Raven.

"The time is getting on," he said, looking towards the shrubbery, as he joined Mr. Clare. "My appointment with Miss Garth is for eleven o'clock: it only wants ten minutes of the hour."

"Are you to see her alone?" asked Mr. Clare.

"I left Miss Garth to decide—after warning her, first of all, that the circumstances I am compelled to disclose are of a very serious nature."

"And *has* she decided?"

"She writes me word that she mentioned my appointment, and repeated the warning I had given her, to both the daughters. The elder of the two shrinks—and who can wonder at it?—from any discussion connected with the future, which requires her presence so soon as the day after the funeral. The younger one appears to have expressed no opinion on the subject. As I understand it, she suffers herself to be passively guided by her sister's example. My interview, therefore, will take place with Miss Garth alone—and it is a very great relief to me to know it."

He spoke the last words with more emphasis and energy than seemed habitual to him. Mr. Clare stopped, and looked at his guest attentively.

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"You are almost as old as I am, sir," he said. "Has all your long experience as a lawyer not hardened you yet?"

"I never knew how little it had hardened me," replied Mr. Pendril, quietly, "until I returned from London yesterday to attend the funeral. I was not warned that the daughters had resolved on following their parents to the grave. I think their presence made the closing scene of this dreadful calamity doubly painful, and doubly touching. You saw how the great concourse of people were moved by it—and *they* were in ignorance of the truth; *they* knew nothing of the cruel necessity which takes me to the house this morning. The sense of that necessity—and the sight of those poor girls at the time when I felt my hard duty towards them most painfully—shook me, as a man of my years and my way of life, is not often shaken by any distress in the present, or any suspense in the future. I have not recovered it this morning: I hardly feel sure of myself yet."

"A man's composure—when he is a man like you—comes with the necessity for it," said Mr. Clare. "You must have had duties to perform as trying in their way, as the duty that lies before you this morning."

Mr. Pendril shook his head. "Many duties as serious; many stories more romantic. No duty so trying; no story so hopeless, as this."

With those words, they parted. Mr. Pendril left the garden for the shrubbery path which led to Combe-Raven. Mr. Clare returned to the cottage.

On reaching the passage, he looked through the open door of his little parlour, and saw Frank sitting there in idle wretchedness, with his head resting wearily on his hand.

"I have had an answer from your employers in London," said Mr. Clare. "In consideration of what has happened, they will allow the offer they made you to stand over for another month."

Frank changed colour, and rose nervously from his chair.

"Are my prospects altered?" he asked. "Are Mr. Vanstone's plans for me not to be carried out? He told Magdalen his will had provided for her. She repeated his words to me; she said I ought to know all that his goodness and generosity had done for both of us. How can his death make a change? Has anything happened?"

"Wait till Mr. Pendril comes back from Combe-Raven," said his father. "Question him—don't question me."

The ready tears rose in Frank's eyes.

"You won't be hard on me?" he pleaded faintly. "You won't expect me to go back to London, without seeing Magdalen first?"

Mr. Clare looked thoughtfully at his son; and considered a little, before he replied.

"You may dry your eyes," he said. "You shall see Magdalen before you go back."

He left the room, after making that reply, and withdrew to his study. The books lay ready to his hand, as usual. He opened one of them, and set himself to read in the customary manner. But his attention wandered; and his eyes strayed away from time to time, to the empty chair opposite—the chair in which his old friend and gossip had sat and wrangled with him good humouredly for many and many a year past. After a struggle with himself, he closed the book. "Damn the chair!" he said: "it *will* talk of him; and I must listen." He reached down his pipe from the wall, and mechanically filled it with tobacco. His hand shook; his eyes wandered back to the old place; and a heavy sigh came from him unwillingly. That empty chair was the only earthly argument for which he had no answer: his heart owned its defeat, and moistened his eyes in spite of him. "He has got the better of me at last," said the rugged old man. "There is one weak place left in me still—and *he* has found it."

Meanwhile, Mr. Pendril entered the shrubbery, and followed the path which led to the lonely garden and the desolate house. He was met at the door by the man-servant, who was apparently waiting in expectation of his arrival.

"I have an appointment with Miss Garth. Is she ready to see me?"

"Quite ready, sir."

"Is she alone?"

"Yes, sir."

"In the room which was Mr. Vanstone's study?"

"In that room, sir."

The servant opened the door; and Mr. Pendril went in.

GIGANTIC ATTRACTION.

I NEVER, from the story-book period of childhood, entirely shook off my intense distrust of every thing that, in human form, approached exaggerated proportions. Many a delightful polka have I sacrificed to the craven fear (I am of the feminine gender) which prompted me to transfer some immensely tall partner to my sister—rather than put finger on his colossal arm. Strangely enough, mingled with all this was a kind of fascination that irresistibly impelled me to approach, or converse about, the thing I feared. To gaze, however, was one thing; to touch, another.

This lingering impression of my childhood was destined to involve me, when grown up, in a singular train of circumstances:

Twenty years since, in the course of a few weeks' residence at M——, in the south of France, I happened to be passing down the principal street, when my eye was caught by a placard intimating that the "Greatest Man of the Age" had arrived at M——, and had consented to receive its citizens without any more marked distinction of rank, sex, or age, than was conveyed in the charge of five sous for children under eight, as against one franc for those of any riper age. Monsieur Dermot O'Leary requested that, in view of the immense concourse to be expected from the catholic nature of this

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invitation, visitors would limit their stay to five minutes.

"Dermot O'Leary." The name, as that of a public man, did not sound familiar. I was beginning to speculate how in the world our Cæsar had "grown so great," when a young gentleman, in a blue frock, suddenly hung out a second placard, presenting to my startled eyes the figure of a man of colossal stature, with his arm extended horizontally, about two feet above the head of another, presumed to be of ordinary height, standing at his side.

A GIANT! I felt my blood curdle. I shrank back instinctively; but, in a moment, the accustomed counter-feeling urged me forward, and I perused, from end to end, the condensed biography of the "Greatest Man of the Age," as set forth, in type inaptly small, on the bill. "Age, twenty-seven; height, eight feet, wanting an inch; weight, nineteen stone; father and mother, average size; sister, six feet four, shooting up." Such were some of the particulars. A very respectable monster indeed.

I tried to move on. Impossible! My feet seemed rooted to the ground. A strange longing to *see* the creature was becoming every instant more importunate. To enter *alone*, however, was a thing not to be thought of. Where was the expected crowd? Safely ensconced in their midst, I might have enjoyed my gaze, and vanished.

As I hesitated, two persons came forth, in eager conversation. I caught a few words, which were not uttered in a confidential tone—"most interesting," — "singular physiological phenom——,"—"crowd too dense for——"

The last expression sufficed. I paid my franc, and, ascending a few stairs on the right, arrived at a heavy crimson curtain, before which was seated the young gentleman in blue. He took my check, and demanded my parasol. Why did he want my parasol? Did he think I might injure his little giant with that lethal weapon? On no consideration that could be proposed to me would I place myself within its length of the Greatest Man, but part with it I would not. Seeing me resolved, the boy lifted the curtain, and admitted me. To my utter astonishment I was *alone!*

A sickening horror seized me. I clutched the curtain.

"Open . . . . let me out," I gasped, trying madly, but in vain, to find the opening.

"P-p-pardon me," said a very small, nervous voice, somewhere near the ceiling. "Will you not t-take a chair?"

I lifted my eyes to the region of the little voice. There, within a few paces of me, stood the giant. How he entered I never knew; probably through another curtained entrance at the side. He was in complete evening dress, even to white cravat and gloves; he carried an opera hat, and bore altogether the appearance of a highly-magnified waiter with a teatray. His immense countenance conveyed no ideas of savage passion or inordinate appetite. It was a perfect sea of vacuous good humour, chequered with an expression of awkward diffidence, which, in an individual of his proportions, struck me as absurd. If such a word as "finikin" could with any propriety be applied to a gentleman eight feet high and broad in proportion, here was that monster.

I could not restrain a faint giggle; then, angry with myself, coloured to the eyes, and made a new attempt to get away.

If giants giggle, the sound emitted by the greatest man partook of that character. Blush I am sure he did, and the idea that he was at least as alarmed and embarrassed as myself, was so far reassuring, that, though annoyed, I was still sensible of the unkindness of quitting so shy a monster without the interchange of a word. But what to *say?*

The giant shifted from one huge foot to another, curled his moustache with an effort to appear at ease, and finally, with another giggle, inquired:

"Did you ever, madame, see so large a man as myself?"

I murmured, faintly, that I could not bear testimony to anything so prodigious.

The giant did not seem gratified. On the contrary, to my surprise he appeared to wince, and certainly knit his brows. The thought flashed across me, "Have I hurt his feelings? This immoderate structure is, after all, a deformity—a misfortune. How could I have been so thoughtless!"

"*But,*" I hastened to add, with desperate politeness, "you, with your fine proportions—so—so well——"

Again I stopped, colouring scarlet. Here was I, an English lady, bred up in all the delicate restraints of society, coolly paying my franc for the privilege of a tête-à-tête with a monstrous stranger, of whose existence I had never before heard, openly discussing with him his personal appearance, and unable to advance any better apology for all this unreserve than that my friend was twice the ordinary size. I was resolved to put an end to the interview. Bowing slightly, as perfectly satisfied, I made a feint to go. But this movement seemed to give the giant, courage. He gently interposed his huge bulk.

"Let me hope, madam," he said, "you will not confine yourself too rigidly within the terms of my bill. My arrival is, at present, but little known in M——. It is rarely, indeed, that I—that is, I——Forgive me" (he sighed deeply). "All I mean to say is, that my time, every second of it, is completely at your service. Ask me any questions you please."

Questions! What could he mean? What do little people ask giants? How they are fed? Who cuts their hair? Where they take exercise unseen? If they ever find horses big enough to ride? What weather they have "up there"? The little voice broke on my meditations.

"Would you like," it asked, with a slight tremor, "to s-span my chest!"

"Sir!"

"Or p-poke my leg?"

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Poke his leg! Hardly knowing what I did, but certainly acting on an impulse rather defensive than curious, I made a feeble dab with my parasol at one of those mighty members, which had been slid bashfully a few inches nearer to me.

The giant mistook my demonstration.

"Don't be afraid, I beg. No delusion, my dear madam. All fair flesh and blood, I pledge you my honour. The circumference of my calf is twenty-two inches and a quarter; that is to say, considerably more than your—your waist." Again the giant sighed.

It was excessively embarrassing. I could not make out whether my colossal friend expected compliment or condolence. If he was ashamed of his dreadful calf, why present it to my notice? If proud, why sigh?

Presently, he drew himself up to his full height, and, extending his arms like the sails of a windmill, invited me to pass beneath. In this attitude he appeared so very gigantic, that my courage, always wavering, gave way. The dread and antipathy of my nursery days came upon me with overwhelming power. I grew hot and cold, felt faint, began to cry.

The giant, alarmed, regained with a start his natural position.

"You are agitated, my dear madam! Permit me, I beseech you—the sofa—Ohi, Alphonse!" (to the blue boy)—"a glass of water for madame! Quick!—"Is it possible," he continued, "that your generous, tender heart has suggested—dare I believe that . . . . For Heaven's sake, answer! What, oh *what*, has moved you thus?"

"Your—size!" I gasped, half resentfully. And fainted.

I went home in a carriage, and was for several days far from well. During that interval I had numerous visitors, almost all of whom mentioned, as one of the topics of the hour, the advent and extraordinary success of Monsieur Dermot O'Leary, the renowned "géant Irlandais." As for me, I preserved the secret of our interview with religious care, trying, though with little success, to regard it rather as a horrible dream than an actual occurrence, and nursing myself diligently into travelling condition, with the fixed intention of quitting the giant-haunted precincts. In the mean time, with the curious inconsistency I have described, my ears drank in every word that bore reference to the great subject.

"Certainly. Remarkable man," I heard one of my visitors observing. "One is apt to associate some degree of awkwardness with the movement of large bodies. Now, with Monsieur Dermot O'Leary all is tranquil ease—careless grace—a complete——"

"So perfectly unembarrassed!" put in a lady. "His self-possession is singular! Sitting there, the object of every eye, most of them furnished with opera-glasses (for the room was literally crammed), you would have imagined him one of the least interested spectators, rather than the marvel all had come to see."

"Converses so well!"

"So thoroughly well! A most retentive memory."

"*One* thing seems to have been deeply impressed upon it," said the first speaker. "Did you notice the grateful fervid enthusiasm with which he alluded to the first—the very first—visit he received here? It gave me a strong prepossession in his favour: the more so, because it is clear to me that he is a man accustomed to exercise considerable self-control, and to preserve a calm exterior, whatever lurks within."

A calm exterior!

"I am confident," concluded my friend, with a smile, "that this first mysterious visitor was a lady."

I am afraid it was, I thought.

Left alone, I fell into a deep reverie. Something whispered that it was to my unlucky visit the monster had referred; but why on earth *my* franc should have impressed him more deeply than any of the thousands that had succeeded, I could not divine. Then, why was his manner so different—calm and collected with everybody else, nervous and diffident with *me?* Vanity itself could not insinuate that there was anything in my person or manner especially calculated to captivate this Polypheme. The bare thought of being in the remotest degree associated, as it were, with the tremendous man, almost threw me into a fever. I resolved to leave the place the very next day.

The train to my destination not starting until the afternoon, I took advantage of this to bid farewell to a friend who lived in the next street; I paid my visit, and was again within a hundred yards of home, when a carriage, going at a foot pace, and attended by a crowd of several hundred men and boys, cheering something at the full pitch of their lungs, turned into the street.

I hate a crowd, and skipping up quickly on a door-step, stood well back to let the people pass. It was a fatal movement. As the mob swept by, a gigantic head became visible, peering from the carriage-window, which it exactly filled. It was *He!* His eye caught me in a moment. The immense table-land of his face was covered with a scarlet blush. He smiled, and kissed his hand: not ungracefully it must be owned, but still in such a manner as to induce his attentive escort to turn to see who could be the giant's particular friend! They probably expected another giant; there was a sort of derisive disappointed laugh, and—

"A cheer for madame!" squeaked a mischievous little urchin near me. It was given. On swept the procession, and I hardly knew what was passing till I found myself on the sofa, half fainting with shame and annoyance; nor could I regain my tranquillity of spirit till I was fairly on my road away.

The groves and gardens of the place of my destination had just put on the fresh green robes of spring, and I was in the full enjoyment of the change of scene and season, when I had the additional delight of meeting an old friend, who had arrived the previous day. She was on her road to England, and purposing to halt but

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one day, made me promise to spend the whole of it with her: dining at the table d'hôte of her hotel, at which only a quiet party of some ten or twelve usually assembled.

Descending to the saloon at the usual summons, we found, to our utter surprise, not less than a hundred and twenty persons already seated; the board, in fact, seemed full. We had not thought it necessary to retain places, and were hesitating in what direction to move, when the landlord himself, accosting us with civil smiles, marshalled us to the upper end of the table. Here he had, as he informed us, reserved the two seats he judged to be most accordant with the wishes of mesdames.

Charmed with his politeness, we accepted the seats provided: thus filling up the only gap at the table, with the exception of the single place at the top, where stood a remarkably large chair, still unoccupied.

It seemed to us that an unusual air of hilarity pervaded the party. There was a kind of carnival look in the appointments of the room and table, and even the air and step of the nimble waiters announced of something beyond the common routine of festivity. The cheerfulness of the scene, joined to the presence of my old friend, raised my spirits to an unusual pitch; I was speculating gaily as to what manner of neighbour I should have on my left, when a sudden pause ensued in the clatter of plates and tongues, followed by an eager buzz. Every head was turned in our direction. Many of the gentlemen half rose, as if in respect, or curiosity; a group of waiters opened; there was a heavy step, a mighty black and white cloud—the GIANT was seated at my side!

How I felt when this fact established itself in my mind I will not seek to describe. I knew I must not faint, nor make a scene, nor even contrive a pretext to withdraw. In short, I flatter myself I acted on that trying occasion in a manner which, under other circumstances, would have obtained for me the character of a heroine.

To do the huge man justice, he behaved with all consideration. No gentleman could have demeaned himself—no ten gentlemen—of ordinary size—could have demeaned themselves—with more refined courtesy. His recognition was not so marked as to draw any especial attention to myself. He was far more collected than at our first meeting, and chatted in a lively tone with all who were within reach: particularly with my friend, who, far from evincing surprise or alarm, appeared delighted at the good fortune that had placed us in the immediate vicinity of the lion of the hour.

Upon what meats, or in what respective quantities the giant fed, I cannot say. I know that three chosen waiters, active powerful men, danced a perpetual reel about his chair, relieving each other in the administration of vast plates of something. Also, that before the close of that tremendous meal, a perfect little semicircle of bottles formed a chevaux-de-frise between us.

The dinner seemed interminable. I do not think I could have borne the situation five minutes longer, when my friend rose. At the moment, the giant bent forward his enormous head, and whispered—*what* I know not. I was far too agitated to know. Enough that my retreat was effected. I was panting for air, and begged my friend to walk with me into one of the shady garden terraces, where, leaving me seated in a little trellised bower, she went back to the house to make some change in her dress.

No sooner had she quitted me than my spirits suddenly gave way. I burst into a violent flood of tears. I don't know if I have made it plain to the reader; but, to *me*, it was all too certain that I had by some strange fatality made an impression on the heart or fancy of this too susceptible monster. He did not want to eat me. On that score my mind was at rest. He was a kind monster and a gentle. But could anything be more unfortunate—more absurd? A creature whose presence, harmless as he was, filled me with fear and horror! Morbid as might be the antipathy, I could no more overcome it than I could have wrestled successfully with the giant himself. What was to be done? Nothing, but resume my flight, and keep my movements as secret as possible. "Oh, giant! giant!" I sobbed out audibly; "why—*why* is this——"

"This *what?*" said a voice close at hand. There was a loud rustle among the trees, a step that nearly shook down the arbour, the giant was kneeling before me! Even in that position his mighty head towered far above me. He caught my hand.

"Speak, speak, dearest; most generous of—— Eh! ha!"

I had fainted again.

In the course of that evening, I should say that nearly the entire population of the place informed themselves, either by direct inquiries at the hotel, or otherwise, that the English madame who had fainted while sitting with Monsieur O'Leary ("son prétendu") in the arbour, was as well as a slight fluttering of the nerves permitted. It was understood that the marriage would not take place until monsieur had fulfilled several important provincial engagements, when the young people would be united at Paris, and proceed at once to their residence, Castle O'Leary, Ballyshandra, Tipperary.

That night I made all needful preparations, bade adieu to my friend, and by noon next day was at our obscure little village, sixty miles off, and as remote from railway, or any other communication, as possible. Here, I drew free breath. I had bribed my postilions to conceal my route, I had ordered my letters to be forwarded in a different direction, and taken other precautions which could not fail to secure my object.

I was very happy in that forgotten little village. I had lodgings in a farm-house, and (barring industry) lived the life of its merry and contented inhabitants: rising at half-past four, dining at noon, and going to rest when the first bat began to circle round the thatched porch. The sweet summer fled away only too rapidly, but duties recalled me to the busy world, and,

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now that all seemed safe, I had no excuse for lingering. I therefore bade farewell to my happy valley, and started for Paris, purporting to stop a day or two at St. B——, the town to which my letters had been addressed.

It was, I think, on the third evening of my stay, that the servant handed me a visiting card, adding that a gentleman was below, who earnestly entreated a few minutes' private conversation—

"Colonel Austin Dolmage,
87th Royal Irish,
Scallabogue."

An Irishman! I had no acquaintance bearing that name. What could his visit mean? My heart began to palpitate; strange misgivings came upon me.

"What sort of a gentleman, Marie? Is—is he—he—tall?"

Not remarkably tall in Marie's opinion, but well-mannered, genteel, amiable.

"Alone, Marie? Did he desire to see me *alone?*"

Marie's belief was, that he made that request. She would fly and learn. Back she came breathless.

The colonel truly desired to see madame alone, but would not venture to make conditions. As madame pleased.

I directed Marie to show him up, and to remain—a sort of compromise, since Marie knew no word of English.

The gentleman who presented himself was all that Marie had described him: with the addition of a singularly frank and handsome countenance, and most winning smile. He looked, nevertheless, pale and anxious; and, in a somewhat hurried manner, began to apologise for his intrusion:

"It is," he went on, "a matter so delicate, that nothing short of the painful and urgent circumstances of the case could have induced me to accept a mission, which (first earnestly bespeaking your kind indulgence) I will unfold as briefly as possible. You have been, I think, within these few months at M—— ?"

I bowed.

"And there became acquainted with a—a gentleman—whose unusual stature may possibly, independent of other reasons, suffice to recal him to your recollection?"

My lips faltered a faint admission that the little peculiarity referred to, had *not* wholly escaped me.

"Dermot O'Leary is a connexion of mine—and—" Colonel Dolmage added, with some emotion, "my most intimate and confidential friend."

Even at that agitated moment it occurred to me that the selection was inconvenient: since, unless the giant sat down, or his friend mounted a table, there could be little interchange of "confidence."

"He is dangerously ill—reduced, by several weeks' severe sickness, to a degree of prostration, from which his medical advisers deem it impossible he can recover. Poor Dermot is greatly beloved by us at home, and, hearing of his sad condition, I obtained leave of absence, and hurried hither. *Now*, my dear madam, comes the most difficult part of my embassy. My poor friend, whose nature is most susceptible, and responds readily, almost *too* readily, to the slightest demonstration of interest, touched to the heart by some expression of yours, conceived a strong attachment to the kind speaker. The discovery he subsequently made, or fancied he made, that your affections were already engaged, brought on his fatal illness. He is dying, but hearing that you had followed him hither——"

"'Followed,' sir? Allow me to assure you that to you alone am I indebted for the information that the g——that Mr. O'Leary—is here."

The colonel looked surprised, but bowed politely:

"At all events, he is aware of your arrival in this rather out-of-the-way spot, and, to be brief, adjured me by every tie of friendship to seek you out, and entreat you to vouchsafe him one minute's interview. He has that to say to you which may materially affect your future happiness. Permit me, my dear madam," concluded the colonel, "to add my petition to that of my generous-hearted cousin; let me hope that you will not refuse this solace to his dying hour."

What could I say? For an instant I tried to frame some form of refusal, but speak it I could not. Go I must. A few minutes found me actually on my way to the giant's lodging, leaning on Colonel Dolmage's arm, and attended by Marie.

My heart throbbed almost audibly as I ascended the stair, and I was glad to sit down for a moment in the ante-chamber, while the colonel went to announce my arrival to his friend.

He returned on tiptoe; in the way in which men usually walk in a sick-room, to the great derangement of invalid nerves.

"He wanders a little. Don't be alarmed; he is too weak to speak above a whisper, and can with difficulty move hand or foot. He is a little flighty; but on the *one* subject I think you will find him perfectly clear. Shall we go in?"

I trembled in every joint as I approached the four beds which, placed together, formed a sufficient cot for the poor giant. Alas! how changed! All my fears, all my old antipathies, were at once swallowed up in a sense of profound pity for the noble form, now reduced to a wreck with which a child might cope. The large sunken eyes turned on me with a look of gratitude I shall never forget. His lips moved; he beckoned me to the bedside. The colonel stood opposite.

Then, with all his remaining strength, the giant took my hand in one of his, and with the other clasped his friend's. He signed to me to put down my head. I obeyed, listening eagerly.

"I—know—your—secret," faltered the poor giant; "take—my—b-blessing."

To my inexpressible amazement, he then joined my hand with that of Colonel Dolmage, and, exhausted with the effort, sank back unconscious on the pillow.

The colonel coloured, and bit his lip, hardly able to repress a smile.

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"I was not prepared for *this* part of the hallucination," he said, hurriedly. "You will acquit me of any participation. Good Heaven! I fear he is gone."

It was not so; the invalid had only sunk into an exhausted slumber—a state which, in his case, as in some others, proved to be the precursor of a favourable change.

From the moment when his poor disordered brain pictured that he had secured my happiness, and that of his friend, he began to rally. It is true that, as reason regained her sway, he became fully sensible of his little mistake; it could not, however, be recalled, nor was it so embarrassing as might be imagined.

I know not how it came about—whether from the community of interest engendered in the sick-room, or how far the noble-hearted giant himself contributed to the result—but my acquaintance with Colonel Dolmage, so oddly commenced, ripened into mutual regard and esteem. In fact, about six months after the scene above described, our hands were a second time united: this time with the Church's blessing in addition to that of Mr. O'Leary. We were married at the chapel of the British embassy in Paris. A French journal, reporting the occurrence, remarked as a singular feature that the monsieur who assisted as groomsman, had two metres fifty-five millimetres of height.

Years after that happy day, I was sitting in my pretty Irish garden, with my tall cousin, of whom I had long since lost all fear, when it came into my head to ask him on what possible word of mine he had based his early impression that I had conceived an especial personal interest in him?

He spoke of my embarrassment, my blushes. &c. &c.

"But the *word*, cousin, the word. The mysterious 'expression' of which Austin spoke?"

"Well, do you recollect my asking you what moved you thus keenly? And do you remember what you replied?"

"Perfectly: 'Your size.'"

"Good; you are answered."

"Am I?"

I pondered for a moment; then I asked:

"Cousin, how would you *spell* 'size'?"

"How? S—i—g—h—s."

"No, no, my dear cousin; S—i—z—e. It makes all the difference."

"A very considerable difference," said my companion, rather thoughtfully. "To be sure. *Size.*"

FANCIFUL INSANITY.

Several classifications have been suggested of the varieties which madness assumes, but the present notes are confined to that ideal or fanciful insanity exhibiting vivacity of imagination, when the brain is filled with strange and whimsical conceits.

An educated man, whose mind had a philosophic turn, believed that the entire surface of the globe was formed of thin glass, beneath which he perceived and traced serpents of all sizes without number. He trembled and feared to tread on the brittle expanse, lest it should break and he should fall through and be devoured by the monsters he saw beneath. Another man of letters fancied that his legs were made of glass, and that they would inevitably break if he rose from his bed and stood upon them. A poet of Amsterdam carried the notion further, for he absolutely could not be induced to sit down—under an apprehension that his brittle and transparent foundation, if it touched a chair, would be shivered to atoms. A once eminent painter remained a whole winter in bed, imagining that his bones were as soft and flexible as wax, and that if he attempted to stand upon them they would give way under his weight, and his body would sink down into a misshapen mass. Others have fancied themselves made of butter, and have been fearfully apprehensive of melting away. Mr. Haslam mentions the case of a man of letters who, in addition to wearing a thick flannel night-cap, always slept with his head in a tin saucepan, in order, as he said, to exclude the intrusions of the *sprites*. The feature in the human face which has occasioned most uneasiness in the minds of madmen has been the nose. One man believed that his nose had grown to such a size, that he was afraid of stirring out of doors, or of being seen in the streets, lest people should tread on it as they passed him by. Another imagined that his nasal organ dangled from his face like the proboscis of an elephant, and that it was constantly so much in his way at dinner, that he could not prevent it from dipping into and floating in the dishes. We read of a man who not only saw but felt, a pair of stag's antlers growing from his forehead; and of persons of both sexes who fancied themselves grains of wheat, and were in constant apprehension of being gobbled up by fowls. In an Irish lunatic asylum there were, not long ago, three patients whose insanity assumed a most whimsical turn. One was persuaded he was an umbrella, and would remain for hours lying up against the wall in a corner of his apartment. Another fancied he was a clock, and would repeat the tick and the motion of the pendulum until nature was exhausted. The third patient believed he was a hen, engaged in the process of incubation, and used to remain for hours squatting over imaginary eggs. The quiet perseverance of this poor lunatic had something so indescribably earnest about it, as almost to neutralise the ludicrous effect of the prolonged and barren process in which days and months were consumed.

A patient from Berkshire, in Bethlehem Hospital, felt convinced that he had been hatched at his father's door by the sun, and that he had commenced his existence as a *flea*, but had been, when two years old, metamorphosed into a boy. Another believed that he was Atlas, carrying the world on his back; and always expressed intense alarm lest it should fall and crush, not only himself but all mankind. Baron Larrey re-

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lates an instance where the imagination realised the fiction of Swift in Gulliver's travel to Brobdingnag, by magnifying to the eye ordinary men to the stature and dimensions of giants. The ear, too, by which we receive impressions of "the airy tongues that syllable men's names," has been an endless organ of delusions, in sounds musical as well as inharmonious. While some men have believed themselves endowed with the power of flying like birds through the air, others have fancied that they possessed the faculty of hanging in a state of suspended animation, like bats. Many have imagined themselves transmuted into wolves, dogs, cats, gamecocks, cuckoos, pipkins, and teapots. To this strange fancy, Pope thus alludes in describing the Cave of Spleen, in the Rape of the Lock:

> Unnumbered things on either side are seen,
> Of bodies changed to various forms by spleen,
> Here living teapots stand, one arm held out,
> One bent—the handle this, and that the spout.
> A pipkin there, like Homer's tripod walks,
> Here sighs a jar, and there a goose-pie talks.

In a note on this passage, Bishop Warburton states as a fact that an English lady of distinction actually fancied herself a goose-pie. Strange as these phantasies are, they are scarcely more remarkable than the effects insanity produces upon the sensation and nerves. It would seem sometimes to deprive its victim of the sense of cold, for it is common for a lunatic to tear off all his clothes, the want of which he scarcely seems to feel. It has also been found apparently to deaden, and even extinguish, all sensations of pain. There have been cases in which the coldest bodies have been described as feeling intensely hot, so that the impression of burning would seem to follow from the slightest touch. M. Marc describes a man who for many years had been in the habit of licking the bare walls of the apartment in which he lived, until he had actually worn away the plaster. The man himself accounted for this singular freak, by declaring that he had been tasting and smelling the most delicious and fragrant fruit.

Fanciful insanity, in its vivid succession of images, its rapid capacity of invention, and its aptitude to catch striking associations, occasionally presents some of the attributes of genius. Under its singular impulses, the naturally ingenious and acute have sometimes become astronomers without instruction, philosophers without thought, and poets by immediate inspiration. Amongst the ancients, monomaniacs frequently appeared as prophets and sibyls; and in the dark ages as wizards and witches, demoniacs and vampires. Men have, before now, gloried in assuming the attributes of Satan—"accursed of God and man." Fear has constantly been the parent of insanity. During the reign of terror, many people fancied they had been guillotined, and had acquired new heads: either by the special gift of Providence, or by exchange with others who had been decapitated like themselves. To a ludicrous instance of this nature, Tom Moore alludes in his "Fudge Family in Paris:"

> Went to the madhouse, saw the man,
> Who thinks, poor wretch, that when the Fiend
> Of discord here, full riot ran,
> He like the rest was guillotined.
> But that when under Boney's reign
> (A more discreet though quite as strong one),
> The heads were all restored again,
> He in the scramble got *a wrong one!*
> Accordingly he still cries out,
> This strange head fits him most unpleasantly;
> And always runs, poor devil, about,
> Inquiring for his own incessantly.

In modern times we have had self-asserted royal pretenders and royal personages victims of vain or self-important insanity, who, carrying straws in their hands, fancied that they were sceptres, and that they swayed the world. These cases have appeared in great numbers. When Louis the Sixteenth was beheaded, the hospitals of Paris were crowded with Dauphins destined to succeed him on the throne; and the mournful fate of the Duc D'Enghien immediately produced many aspiring impersonators. The military successes of Napoleon the First, stimulated ambitious insanity in many men who had been his soldiers. These, in their cells at the Bicêtre, proclaimed themselves emperors.

It is certain that in America, and it is but too probable that in England, the lunatic asylums contain many unfortunate persons labouring under delusions produced by overwrought credulity, and the errant flights of an ill-regulated fancy, misguided by "spirit media," professional and amateur, honest and dishonest. It may be worth consideration at this time, whether it is not quite as rational in a man to believe himself made of glass, or to be firmly convinced of his having assumed the shape and substance of a pipkin, or a teapot, or a goose-pie, as to derive his convictions of the immortality of the soul from wretchedly indifferent juggling under a table and cover in a dark room; or, to believe that the spirits of the departed and beloved who have passed through the awful change that wrung the hearts of us, the bereaved survivors, when we looked upon it in its terrible solemnity, can be recalled out of eternity, at so much a head, by Showmen.

OUT OF THE HOUSE OF BONDAGE.

My mother died soon after I was born, and I was petted by my father until the age of eight, when I was sent to Canada for my education. I remained under the care of a kind family at Quebec until I had attained the age of sixteen, when my father called me home to keep house for him, as he was very lonely, and his health was giving way.

My father had desired that I should be taught by the best masters that could be obtained, and no expense was to be spared in my education.

I had lived a happy life in Canada, and Mrs. Summers, the lady under whose care I had been placed, loved me, I really believe, almost as well as she did her own daughter. She was most unwilling to part with me, and sought to

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retain me for another year; but my father was inexorable, and home I had to go.

"My dear," said she, as we parted, "when your father placed you under my care, he knew what my sentiments were with regard to slavery—that I was opposed to the whole system, and that I looked with contempt on that feeling of abhorrence which is generally entertained, even in the free states, for all persons of negro descent. If your father had objected to the free expression of my opinions, I could not have undertaken your tuition. I have earnestly endeavoured to imbue you with my own feelings on this question of humanity and justice, and I look to you to do all that may lie in your power to mitigate the horrors of the system, and raise the character of those unfortunate beings whom your father owns: so that, if it shall please God to grant you the glorious privilege of emancipating any of your fellow-creatures, you may have the satisfaction of feeling that you have conferred freedom on persons who are really capable of benefiting by its blessings."

She promised that her thoughts and prayers should be with me in my holy labour.

I was only sixteen when I went to my father's to live, in a very hot-bed of slavery. If I had been older, perhaps I might have withstood for a longer time the force of example and custom. I say *perhaps*, for I have known men and women coming out from free England, resisting the system of the lash for a certain time, and then gradually succumbing to its use. I have known even ladies of good education use the cowhide until the feminine softness of the eye was changed to a tyrannical hardness.

But I did for a time strive to do some good, beginning with those placed immediately under me. I did this, too, under great discouragement; for my father, at the very first when he welcomed me home, told me with stern decision that I must at once forget all the sentimental trash I had learnt in the North. I ventured timidly to put in a word about kindness.

"Kindness, my girl? I feed my niggers well, and clothe them well, don't overwork them, nurse them when they are sick or old; but, if I were to rule with what you call kindness instead of cowhide, I should be a ruined man in three months."

The slaves about us were dreadfully demoralised. My kindness—for I did begin by being excessively kind and indulgent—was mistaken for weakness. I was laughed at. The work of the house was wretchedly attended to. Then my father interfered; his remedy was effectual, and everything went well with the lash.

I became weary and disheartened, but I had still one great hope in which I firmly trusted: an appeal to reason and affection. Surely, I thought, with human beings, however low, there must be a response to such an appeal, that response being the proof of their humanity. The very strength of my conviction in this matter led to error. I made my attempt with great earnestness and resolution, and signally failed. To mention one instance—there was a girl specially appointed to wait on me. I devoted hours of labour to the task of developing a better nature in her soul, but it was all in vain. My shallow vanity led me to believe that what I had done was remedy enough for all her defects of a moral growth, for all her dwarfing from the cradle, and in consequence of my failure I gradually adopted the creed that men and women with African blood in their veins belonged to a lower humanity; that there was a great gulf fixed between their nature and mine; that we were not equals in the sight of God.

I succeeded in making myself feared, and all things then, to my father's great satisfaction, apparently went well in the house; but, looking back now, I can see how terribly my own nature was affected. All those valuable qualities of patience, of forbearance, of restraint on sudden impulse, which ought to govern our dealings with those round about us, were destroyed. My will must never be thwarted for a moment. I grew to be quickly incensed at the slightest opposition. In my way I was kind, just as my father was kind—kind, as people are kind to lower animals.

My father praised me for the excellent manner in which the household arrangements were now conducted.

"I let you come round of yourself to common sense, my dear," he said, with a smile. "I knew six months would teach you the proper kindness for niggers."

At this period, to strengthen me still further in my impious creed, came my introduction to my cousin, Abel Duncan.

I had observed from my window a stranger arrive at the house—on business with my father, I supposed—and went on with what I was about. After some time I was attracted by loud talking in my father's business-room; it was evident that an angry discussion was taking place. In fear lest something serious might occur, I ventured to knock at the door, on pretence of asking a question about household affairs. From the few words which caught my ears, the dispute appeared to be about money matters, and I could see that my father was in a towering passion. My presence, however, seemed to cast a sudden restraint upon him.

"Clara!" he exclaimed, "here's your cousin Abel I've so often told you about; go, and kiss him, and say how pleased you are to see him—your only cousin, recollect."

I went towards him at my father's bidding, but my cousin seemed to shrink away from me. I attributed this, at the time, to bashfulness.

"Abel!" exclaimed my father, in a passionate voice. And then my cousin came forward and gave me a kiss, but the kiss seemed to hiss through his lips.

"Your cousin Abel comes from the North," said my father; "so you two can worship the niggers together."

"Uncle knows how I worship them," laughed Abel. "That story goes down in the North, that both we and the Britishers would cry out loud enough for cowhide, if the cotton supply stopped."

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"Ah!" retorted my father, "leave us to do the dirty work, all the flogging and that sort, hey? And then finger the cotton yourselves with clean hands?"

I felt that this badinage was directed against my old sentiments, and I protested that I had learnt, at least, how to treat niggers.

"Ah, ha!" laughed Abel. "Cowhide for ever!"

There was something vindictive in his voice and in the gleam of his eye, which jarred me through and through.

In the progress of our acquaintance I could see, as regarded myself, notwithstanding the outward respect he showed me, that he entertained no real sympathy, but rather a feeling of repugnance. I could detect, moreover, a certain falseness of manner in his intercourse with my father, couched under an apparently frank and outspoken demeanour; still, there was nothing sufficiently tangible for me to take notice of, and he had succeeded in strongly prepossessing my father in his favour.

Abel and I were naturally thrown a great deal together, and though I could not help disliking him, there was one sad cause which gave him a certain power of fascination over me. There were certain times when the good teaching I had received from Mrs. Summers would, defying all my efforts to strangle the thoughts, start up in judgment against me—times, perhaps, when my temper had been more particularly ruffled, and I had sent a slave to the overseer for chastisement. Then, when a distant cry of anguish broke upon my ear, the doubt would come. I would sugar it over as best I might: the girl had shamefully neglected my orders; had been disobedient, lazy, and wilfully perverse; it was not difficult to square the doubt with reasons; but still the doubt remained. What if it were really true, that this was a human being created as myself in the image of God, and that this act of mine was adding still further to her debasement, destroying that work of His, and levelling her to the condition of the brute?

Abel was always ready enough to answer my doubt, and afford me fresh faith in my new creed. With blasphemous perversion he would point to the Bible itself in confirmation of all he asserted as to the inferiority of the African race; he would say that they bore the wrath of God stamped in the very form of the forehead; that they were destined to be hewers of wood and drawers of water, to the end of time; that their mental capacity was so low that they could only be ruled by fear. His illustrations and arguments appeared reasonable, and I was only too ready to admit all he advanced.

I recollect with what diabolical ingenuity he used to compare the drop of black blood, to insanity lurking in the frame. He would admit that persons of mixed race might be good enough, up to a certain extent, and for a certain period; but, like insanity, the black fibre would be certain, sooner or later, to work to the surface, and then the whole moral nature would be thrown out of balance. He would quote instances of men ruined body and soul by Quadroon women, with their fair faces and devilish hearts—yes, men even, whom he had known, who had lost fortune and respectable position, and life itself.

I fear his words found a readier response in an under-current of pride which caused me to rejoice in my own exaltation above the debased race. Looking back, however, to my feelings at that period, I think it was owing rather to Abel's frequent reiteration of his opinions, than to any logical considerations of my own, that I came to acquiesce in the principle which he so strongly asserted. Abel Duncan had effectually poisoned my soul.

My father was not on terms of intimacy with any of the families in the neighbourhood, and, with the exception of one or two old bachelor friends whose estates were close to ours, we received scarcely any visitors. My father told me that the coolness which had arisen with his neighbours was occasioned by some questions of property, which made it impossible for him to make any advances towards reconciliation; and, though he regretted that he could not then afford me that social intercourse which was so fitting for my age, yet the matter was of less consequence, as he intended within a year or two to realise his property and proceed to Europe, where I should enjoy all the pleasures and amusements of society.

It chanced that an English doctor, a widower with an only daughter, came to settle in our neighbourhood. There was some difficulty in finding a house suitable for Dr. Evans, and my father, who was very hospitable, insisted on their taking up their residence with us until they could be comfortably settled. Mary Evans was about my own age, and we soon became great friends. Her affection for me was increased by my nursing her through a severe fever which she caught while staying at our house. She often declared that neither her father nor herself could ever repay me for my attention and devotion.

One day, when she was convalescent, we were sitting together under the verandah. It chanced that we fell to talking on the question of slavery, which up to that time had never been alluded to between us. I imagined what her sentiments would be, as she had so recently left England, and I begged her to speak without reserve to me; but I cautioned her that it would be prudent, in a general way, to suppress anti-slavery opinions.

In the warmth of our ensuing argument, I had not perceived that Abel was standing by us, listening.

I shuddered as I caught his hateful smile, and felt a dread at his knowing how entirely I was a convert to his opinions.

"Abel," said I, "you will explain this matter to Miss Evans better than I can."

"No, no," he answered, with a sneer; "you understand it perfectly."

"It's too terrible for belief!" exclaimed Mary Evans. "Why, Clara tells me that one drop of

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black blood could destroy her very nature. I know her love and goodness, and I won't believe it."

"It's the opinion generally entertained, North as well as South," replied Abel.

Mary turned earnestly to me, and prayed me to discard the horrible theory. I had been good and kind to her, she said, and she loved me so much that she could not bear to know of a thought like this having a place in my mind.

I could not deny my convictions, and the subject was at last dropped; but I felt that I had destroyed the bond of sympathy which until then existed between us.

I don't think that I have mentioned the extreme indulgence and tenderness which my father showed towards me. My smallest wishes and fancies were immediately gratified, and the only return he seemed to desire was my company and my presence near him. He delighted in my singing and playing, overwhelming me with praise, and always holding out as his reward a speedy journey to Europe, and a happy life in the old world.

All this time I became more and more tyrannical, unreasonable, and petulant, in my intercourse with the slaves. One evening my temper was roused by one of the girls in the house being more than usually careless and inattentive. In my anger I struck her. She was much fairer than any other of our slaves, and consequently by far the most troublesome of all.

To my amazement she muttered a few words in an under tone. These words drove me frantic, but I mastered my feeling of indignation. When I recovered myself, I told her she should be severely punished for the insult she had shown me, and in the greatest anger hurried down to my father. He and Abel were smoking together under the verandah. He perceived how greatly I was moved, and drawing me towards him, bade me tell him my grievance. It was disgusting and painful to me even to whisper the girl's words in his ear.

Yet, indignant and angry as I was, I felt terrified by the excess of my father's rage.

"It shall be flogged out of her," he exclaimed, "if the punishment goes within an inch of her life. And all the niggers on the plantation shall see it done."

It haunts my conscience to this day that I did not fall on my knees and ask my father to spare the girl. Her prayer for mercy rings in my ears even now. You will marvel, notwithstanding the greatness of my anger, that I could allow a human being to suffer extreme pain for the purpose of appeasing my wounded feelings; you will naturally think that I was dead to every generous and noble impulse. Yet you must remember that I had just nursed Mary Evans, who was a comparative stranger to me, at the peril of my own life.

Abel had followed my father out, when the girl was dragged away. He returned in about half an hour. "Clara," said he, "we've taught her not to say your mother was a slave, and she wont forget the lesson in a hurry."

The tone in which he uttered this, nettled me. "Abel!" I exclaimed, "good taste might have prevented you from paining me by a repetition of her words."

He offered me a very elaborate apology; but I could see that a sneer remained on his lips.

I turned from him, and in my agitation I drew from my bosom the minature-locket I was accustomed to wear, and bursting into tears, I exclaimed, "My dear fair beautiful mother to be called a slave!"

"What's that?" cried Abel. "My aunt's portrait? How did you get it?"

I said I had discovered it one day in my father's desk. I had begged him as a great favour to let me have it for my mother's sake. He had refused his consent for a long time. At last I had teased him into compliance.

My father entered the room. I tried to get the locket away from Abel; but he held it tight, on pretence of examining it carefully.

"Clara!" exclaimed my father, "you promised me faithfully never to show that portrait to any one."

"But only Abel, papa," I pleaded.

He said that he had expressed a strong wish on the subject—that I had broken my promise—and he ordered me instantly to restore the locket.

I had been so accustomed to have my own way, playing and trifling with any wishes of his that thwarted mine, and always succeeding in wheedling him in the end, that I refused to give up the miniature. I ought to have perceived how irritated the events of the night had made him. He stepped forward, and, seizing my hand, wrenched the locket from me; then, in his anger at my opposition, he struck me a blow with a switch he held in his hand.

The pain was scarcely anything; it was the indignity—and Abel standing by with a smile of triumph! I wanted to say something, but I was absolutely choked. If Abel had not seen the blow, I think even on the instant I could have humbled myself, and forgiven my father, and asked his forgiveness. But to stoop before my cousin! I left the room with proud defiance, and hurrying to my own room, locked the door, and threw myself on the bed. After the lapse of half an hour, I heard a gentle tap at the door, and my name pronounced with tenderness. It was my father's voice. I felt that he wanted to be reconciled with me. I would have given worlds to have opened the door and kissed him; but my wretched pride, which told me I must resent the blow to uphold my dignity in Abel's eyes, held me still.

Next morning I felt my father was longing for reconciliation, but my thought of Abel's triumph caused me to be cold and sullen.

It was strange that the man I so detested should have stood thus between my father's heart and mine. My feelings, too, at that time were greatly excited against Abel by reports of his conduct with one of the women on the plantation. Far above my strongest sense of morality was contempt for his degradation, and

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I could not endure the thought of being humbled in the presence of a man I so heartily despised. I little knew how Abel was taking advantage of my conduct towards my father to work out his own wicked purpose.

At length I was ashamed of my wilful perversity, and eagerly courted a reconciliation; then, to my sorrow, I was met with coldness instead of the warmth I had expected, and I gradually found, to my amazement, that my father's heart had changed towards me.

Though I was mortified, yet when I thought over the whole matter in quiet moments, I blamed my own conduct. It almost seemed as if there must be some inherent defect in my nature.

There were certain little matters connected with our mode of life which had always struck me as being odd; they had relation chiefly to my father's little intercourse with his neighbours. In my morbid condition, I could not help thinking these things over; and the more I thought of them, the less satisfactory had the explanations I had been used to receive from my father appeared. I strove to reconcile these anomalies, but racking my brains to the utmost, could only find one reason which would make the whole matter plain and consistent. That reason was frightful, but it was so manifestly impossible that I was able to laugh it away. "Stupid fancy!" I exclaimed, gazing in the glass, and gladly gathering from my own features a resemblance to the features in the miniature. Still, at certain times, the fancy came again; and more particularly when any question arose as to my going into society.

The frightful thought was aroused one day by my father's objecting to my going to a public ball at which I had heard Mary Evans was to be present. My wishes on the subject were met with the same inadequate objections. I had been spending the day with Mary Evans, and, to my surprise, she had made no allusion to the ball. We were sitting together in the evening, and I held her hand against mine, trying, as I told her, to discover whose was the smaller. It was natural, born as I was in the South, that my complexion should be less fair than hers, yet my hand was but little darker. I alluded casually to the ball, saying that I had a great wish to be present at it with her, and then from her lips came the same excuses, spoken with hesitation and confusion. I grasped her hand again, gazing on the two hands with deep anxiety. The comparison reassured me; the haunting idea I felt to be the mere creation of my own morbid fancy; and the words I said then to Mary Evans were said in very mockery of my fears. "You won't take me to the ball because of the negro blood in my veins.

I expected a laughing answer. I trembled when I saw the deep compassion expressed in her face. "Alas! who has broken the secret to you?" she asked, sorrowfully. I could not speak, I could not tell her that it was she who in those words had revealed the fearful truth.

My senses seemed numbed. I was barely conscious that she assured me of her love, covered my face with her kisses, and prayed me to kiss her. My heart felt like stone. Her very love itself was loathsome in the thought of its compassion, and my lips were set in rigid coldness. A frightful gulf seemed fixed between us which no human love could bridge. I asked her to summon our carriage—to let me get home. Ah, that fearful ride! Abel had been also at the Evanses, and he was to return with me. I would have given anything to have been alone, but I was already in the carriage before he got in, and I seemed to have lost all power of will, and all womanly dignity.

Abel sat at my side without speaking a word, but I was sure he knew that I had learnt the secret of my birth. Then I knew why it was that on our first meeting he had disliked to kiss me as his cousin, why all his manner towards me had appeared so false, why he had taken so much pleasure in proclaiming the degradation of the negro race. He sat quite silent, but I could read his thoughts. I who had deemed myself his lawful cousin, his equal by right of birth, his superior in every gift of soul, so that if, as the only child of a rich planter, he should have the presumption to make me an offer of marriage, I had resolved to spurn him away with contempt—I shuddered and crouched away from him—I knew that in his vile thoughts he held me no higher than that wretched girl he had abused. He pray me to be his wife! The very laws forbade my being the Christian wife of any white man! His contemptuous silence awed me; he sat perfectly still, letting me sink to the floor of the carriage.

The daughter of a slave! That dreadful idea turned the current of my thoughts from Abel, and the blow my father had struck me burnt anew, like fire; but that girl who had suffered the torture of the lash for my sake! The recollection of that night flashed into my soul, crushing me with an overwhelming remorse. Her nature was the same as mine; there was the same dark blood in our veins; the same capacity for moral elevation, the same capacity for pain, God forgive me! My crime struck home.

I resolved to see the girl before entering the house. Her forgiveness would, I felt, ease the load on my heart.

"I found my way in the dark, as well as I could, to the negro huts, and discovered where she was being nursed. She was lying asleep on a mat, but the old woman who attended on her had not gone to bed.

"Is she nearly recovered?"

"She is."

"Was the punishment very severe?"

I felt the utmost anguish at the woman's answer.

No one had been so severely flogged on the plantation, for years!

I sank on my knees at the girl's side. By this time she had awoke. I poured forth my words of contrition, and my scalding tears fell on her hand which I grasped in mine. She was partly dazed with sleep, but both she and the

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old woman gazed on me with astonishment. My behaviour was so utterly incomprehensible to them. To ask pardon of a slave was an idea beyond the limit of their thoughts. And even then as I knelt there, with the sense of my own wickedness full upon me, I could scarcely bring myself to believe that I was praying forgiveness of a being who partook to the full of my own humanity!

It was only when I told the girl I had discovered that she had spoken the truth—that I knew that I *was* the daughter of a slave—it was only then that their senses were aroused; fear was strongly visible on their countenances; the girl started forward and vehemently contradicted me. No, no! I was Mrs. Duncan's child, she cried, and the perspiration stood out on her brow; she piteously implored me to leave her, lest she should be again punished, owing to my having come to the hut.

I assured them both, again and again, that they had no occasion for fear, in speaking about the truth. The old woman then told me that before I was brought home, my father had given the strictest injunctions, enforced with stern threats, to everybody on the plantation, that not a word should ever be breathed to me concerning my birth; and that it was to show his determination in the matter that he had made such a severe example of the poor girl.

Stronger even than my bitter feelings of remorse for the suffering I had caused, was the anxious desire which possessed me to hear the account of my real mother—my own mother, notwithstanding her misery and degradation and shame. At first the old woman would not speak. I swore not to reveal a word of her statement; in my passionate eagerness, I threatened, coaxed, bribed her. At last I forced the story bit by bit from her most unwilling tongue.

She had nursed my mother when she died, and had nursed me when I was born. To the best of her recollection, my mother had died where the girl was then lying before my eyes, and I too had been born in that very hut.

"How did she die?" I inquired eagerly. And then I became so nervously fearful lest she should in any degree conceal the truth from me, that by force of old habit I threatened her with the most severe chastisement if I should ever find that she had deceived me one iota.

But my hasty threat brought punishment on my own head, for when I repeated my question, the woman looked significantly towards the girl. Then came the frightful conviction that my mother herself had suffered the very pain I had so often been the means of inflicting. On my knees I prayed the old woman's forgiveness for my threat, and I poured all the money I had in my purse, into her lap.

My mother died of a broken heart, the woman said. She had been sold away from her children. As far as I could understand the account, she had at first been treated with degrading kindness and indulgence, but nothing could drive a cloud of past love from her brow, and in spite of her beauty she grew wearisome.

"But when I was born?" I asked anxiously. "Was she happier then—did she forget the past a little, in her love for me?"

In the woman's answer a curse seemed to fall on my head. I had never been blessed with a mother's smile. I had been nursed with hatred on her bosom; my very life had been saved out of her hands! And so she had lain down to die, lying where that beaten girl was then lying. I kissed the girl in pity for her sufferings; my tears fell wet upon her face; but every kiss seemed to bring me nearer to my dead mother, and to all her sorrow and all her shame.

If I had been left to myself I should not have returned home that night, but the old woman, partly by force, partly by persuasion, led me up to the entrance of the house.

I could not endure the thought of meeting my father, and I stole on tiptoe past the room where he and Abel were sitting. My father must have seen the conflict of that night written on my face when he met me the next morning. I believe his heart was moved with pity, for he came forward to kiss me; but I involuntarily shrank from him before his lips touched mine. An irresistible influence seemed to drag me away.

He called me to him, but I had no power to move.

Then his indignation was excited; he upbraided me for my ingratitude; true, I had discovered the secret of my birth, though he had done all in his power to hide it from me; but yet the knowledge of my origin ought only to have increased my affection and gratitude. He reminded me that I had been treated as the daughter of the house, though my mother was a slave. All that education could do, had been done for me; but he feared it was only too true that there was some radical perversion in natures such as mine, which unfitted them for love.

O! It was intolerable anguish to hear such words from his lips, and to feel, as I did then feel, that they were true.

He finally told me with great sternness that although I was free, free beyond all question or doubt, yet my future destiny depended on my own behaviour. Whether I gave him my heart or not—he had once looked for a daughter to solace his old age, but that hope was gone—he would at least have a return for the money spent upon me. I should amuse him, read and play to him as heretofore, and arrange the household affairs; I should suffer for it if I failed.

Abel entirely usurped my place in my father's heart. The affection and indulgence which had been mine, were lavished upon him. I had stood between him and his hope, as nearest lawful heir, of inheriting my father's wealth; there was no longer any danger that I should spoil his prospects.

He still kept up the show of treating me with great outward respect: taking care, however, that the crushing thought of my degradation

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should be continually before me; for he well knew that thought to be the main cause of my estrangement from my father.

There was no one to support me through this heavy trial. Mary Evans, indeed, was true; she would twine her arms round me, drawing me affectionately to her bosom, protesting an eternal friendship; yet I felt at those times more than ever, my isolation. Her nature was not my nature; the drop of dark blood and the iron hand of the law, had decreed our separation; her pity might be as great and as good as the pity of an angel; but it could not afford that blessed consolation which arises from the possession of a common nature liable to the same trials and the same sufferings.

Do not imagine that this was merely a morbid fancy of mine; its truth was too evident in the ordinary intercourse of life. When Mary Evans and Abel and I were sitting together, and he talked in a bantering tone of some friends of his who had fallen in love with us, his words amounted to no more than familiar badinage, to which the laughing retort of Mary Evans formed, on her part, a fitting answer. But those same words addressed to me were laden with unutterable shame, bringing a burning blush to my cheeks.

But the lash—ah me! the day of retribution had come. While I was yet responsible for all household matters, the ability to command had left me, and the slaves knew it, as the horse knows an unskilful rider. I dared not punish. The thought of my own mother, and the knowledge that I was ordering a creature of like nature with myself to be lashed, tied my tongue and held my hand. Things were often neglected, and my father would receive no excuses for any short-comings he discovered. I had the means of punishment, he said, and he would summon the overseer, and force me to give the order for punishment. Sometimes in his irritation at what he termed my stupid "nigger-worship," he would strike me, even in the presence of Aleb, with his switch.

There was a clergyman, a Mr. Graham, a neighbour of ours, who occasionally visited at our house. He was an old man, towards whom I entertained the strongest feelings of respect and veneration; it was impossible not to be attracted by the tenderness of his manner, and by the strong but unobtrusive piety which marked his demeanour. When I tell you that he held slaves, you will in all probability smile at the thought of his tenderness, and utterly deny his piety. Yet he was not a hypocrite. I will mention, by way of illustration, that memorable instance of the great leader of the Evangelical party in past days—the pious John Newton, of Olney, successor of Whitfield, and intimate friend of Cowper. Well, he was in his earlier days a slave-trader, the master of a slave ship. On board his vessel, as I have read, the negroes were packed together like herrings, stifled, sick, and broken-hearted. But, separated by a single plank from his victims, the voice of their jailer might be heard, day by day, conducting the prayers of his ship's company, and joining them in singing devout compositions of his own. He experienced on his last voyage to Guinea—these are his own words—"sweeter and more frequent hours of Divine communion" than he had ever elsewhere known. Even in his old age, long after he had entered the Church, holding a conspicuous position as a Christian minister, honoured and revered by a large congregation, he coldly and phlegmatically avowed his participation in the slave trade; and to the last he was little conscious of the heinousness of his guilt.

Mr. Graham would have resisted as indignantly any assertion that the negroes are the intellectual and moral equals of the white race, as he would have opposed the theory that mankind at large have been developed from monkeys.

Yet it was impossible for him to be harsh or severe to any living creature. No trouble was too great, if he could only alleviate pain and suffering wherever they might exist. When any slave chanced to be ill, he would watch with the utmost solicitude at the bedside, speaking the kindest words, and noting every change which took place in the patient. An ordinary observer would have marvelled at such devotion, and would have felt the greatest admiration for such conduct on the part of a man towards his poorer fellows; but Mr. Graham never for a moment entertained the idea that the sufferer was bound to him by the bond of a co-equal humanity. He would have acted—indeed I have known him act—with the same tenderness towards a poor dog which had been, by accident, severely wounded. In his establishment, both slaves and lower animals were equally spoilt; but, as a matter of principle, he would have no more thought of denying that the lash was, at times, necessary for the correction of slaves, than he would have denied that it was necessary for the correction of brute creatures.

One day, in an agony of despair, I threw myself at Mr. Graham's feet, and poured out all my sorrow. His manner was very kind and affectionate—but still that taint of blood! I read the thought in his words of tender pity. He evidently felt that there was *some* difference in our respective natures—a radical defect existing in mine, which demanded his deepest sympathy. The same sort of conversation might have taken place between us on the supposition that some slight germ of insanity existed in my mind, so slight that my reasoning faculties were scarcely affected by it—so slight, in short, that there was every hope the evil might be overcome by healthy mental discipline and strict watchfulness.

My feeling of estrangement towards my father appeared to him unnatural, and not to be accounted for by any ordinary cause. He admitted that mine was a bitter trial; but yet my father had done all that lay in his power to lighten the burden. I had received the blessing of a good education. I had been

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brought up in the paths of religion and virtue. I had been associated, as far as possible, with my father's own friends and connexions. I had been treated with the utmost affection and regard. I ought to humble myself to my father's will, and to strive to cast out the evil pride which hardened my heart. By God's grace I might hope to do it; but I must make earnest effort, using frequent prayer.

That interview with Mr. Graham only added to my despair. I had sought consolation of one for whom I felt the greatest reverence and respect; I had sought consolation where consolation may be most surely found—in religious converse and advice; but his words and love utterly failed to alleviate the sorrow of my heart. I little imagined at that time, that what I looked upon with the utmost misery as being the dark depravity of my own heart, was an intuitive sense of God's justice in rebellion against man's false principle and practice. My heart could not be humbled by prayer, but it was humbled by the endurance of ignominy. All pride was cast out of me at last. My cheek no longer flushed at the vile, yet cleverly hidden, insinuations of Abel. I had lost all sense of degradation in a blow from my father. I was callous to all affronts from the visitors who now frequented my father's house for Abel's pleasure and amusement.

Shut out from earthly hope and heavenly consolation, I felt that I was gradually sinking to the level of the wretched beings around me. My mother had claimed me as her own—the inheritor of her nature and her degradation. I suppose it could only have been a question of time how long my bodily strength would have endured this fearful conflict of feeling. The end came at last.

My father was taken dangerously ill. It was my duty to nurse him; and then, God be thanked! I experienced a gleam of relief. I could love him with some of my old love when he was in pain, for those social ties which had estranged me from him were lost in the sick-room. There seemed, in some strange way, to be a bond of union, arising from his sufferings, which bound him to my dead mother and myself. Alas! it was but a slender link.

The hasty vehemence of health and a passionate disposition left him now; he became very mild in his manner, thoughtful beyond his wont, and his thoughts turned heavenward. Mr. Graham frequently came to visit him, reading and conversing on religious matters.

My father one day, when we chanced to be alone, gave me his keys, and bade me get the miniature from his desk. He held it awhile feebly in his hands, gazing fondly upon it, and then made me fasten it by a ribbon round his neck. From that period his thoughts, with few intermissions, centred in the recollections of his wife. Her name was always on his lips, uttered with terms of endearment. All his hope was to meet her again, and be with her in heaven. Not one word, through all this, not one thought, of my mother! I used to sit at his bedside, my heart ready to burst, hoping and praying that the remembrance of the shameful past might rise up in his mind. They told me that the slightest excitement might be fatal to him, so my tongue was bound to silence.

One night my father desired to be left alone with Mr. Graham. I was told to leave the room; but I stole back, crouching behind a curtain. There was something still on his mind which troubled him. It had no reference to my mother. Mr. Graham cheered him with Christian hope and consolation. I could endure it no longer. I arose from my hiding-place and stood before them.

"My mother!" I exclaimed; "has he prayed forgiveness for that wrong?"

Mr. Graham was startled by my presence. "He has repented," was the reply, "of the grievous sin which gave you existence. I have the fullest confidence in his repentance."

"But his sin against my mother," I cried; for some feeling I could not resist impelled me to speak out. "Torn away from her husband and children—sold away to infamy and shame—that is the sin I speak of!"

"You speak," answered Mr. Graham, "as if this act had been done to some white woman, living in holy matrimony."

I burst into tears, and fled from the room.

They never let me see him again; they never forgave me what I had said. Towards the end, they told me he became very calm, lying a while almost insensible, with the miniature clasped in his hand. Then, with a last convulsive effort, he stretched forth his arms, as if in the act of clasping some form to his bosom, and crying aloud the name he loved so well, fell back and died.

Mary Evans took me away to her house. I was in the greatest need of comfort and support. The misery which appeared to arise from the innate defect of my nature, was wrought to its utmost pitch. I felt that I was guilty of hastening my father's death, and that the inherent defect of my nature was to blame for my guilt.

Abel succeeded in all his plans. The bulk of the property was left to him: a moderate competency only being reserved for me. But the loss of wealth seemed nothing, in comparison with the dark taint upon my soul.

It was long before my bodily health sufficiently recovered to allow of my leaving the Evanses. I then joined Mrs. Summers in Canada, and in her company came to this brave England. It was only by little and little that my broken spirit was built up; that I regained my feeling of self-respect, of self-confidence. Free! I might have been free, and yet have lived degraded, even in the Northern States. At first it seemed utterly marvellous that people in England did not shrink from me. I could not for a long time believe in the possibility of being loved and treated as an equal, by the pure white race. They used to think me cold and proud, when in reality I was holding back in the misery of my old sense of inferiority, and my old fear of insult.

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Mrs. Summers and her daughter supported my faltering confidence, and cheered my heart. I told them that I would not have their friends deceived in respect of my personal history, and I was astonished when I found that this knowledge only elicited for me the warmest sympathy and regard. Every lingering doubt was dispelled one day, when those words, which in my own land would have covered me with shame, were whispered in my ear, and the good man asked me to be his wife, who has been my kind husband these many and many happy years.

BUSINESS IN THE BLACK FOREST.

Lenzkirch, one of the chief towns of the Black Forest, lies in a sunny nook, over which frown the ruins of a keep called Urach Castle. It consists of one hundred and seventy houses and twelve hundred and fifty inhabitants, is quite modern, and only dates back to 1813. In that year the whole market-town was burnt to the ground—an accident only too common in the Black Forest, for the peasants persist in covering their houses with shingles instead of tiles. The priest all but saved the parish-books; but, at the moment when he got them out of the cupboard he lost his head, and they were burned with his house. That is the reason why I cannót describe more than the very latest history of Lenzkirch, but perhaps it is no great loss. It is, however, one of the richest and most industrious towns in the whole of the Badois, and perhaps in all Germany, if we compare the income of the townspeople with their numbers.

In 1775, two peasant lads of Saig, a village about four miles from Lenzkirch, resolved to try their luck as porters in Lorraine. Alois Faller and Mathäe Tritzcheller started in the autumn of that year with a load of Black Forest clocks, and returned next summer with full pockets to help as labourers in getting in the harvest. A few years later they met in Lorraine with some Bavarian chapmen, who dealt in straw caps, or what are called cornets de paille. They soon reckoned it up that it would be more profitable for them to carry home some of these hats instead of their money, and they made such profit by the transaction that it occurred to them that a summer trade in straw caps was preferable to a winter march over hill and dale with a heavy load of wooden clocks. Hence they devoted themselves principally to the new branch, but they grumbled at being compelled to buy of the Bavarians, as they lost at least half their profits, through having to pay the middleman. Hence they tried to discover from the chapmen where their factory was, but they were carefully kept from the secret. The Bavarians on one occasion left an invoice in a hat-box delivered to Alois Faller. He could neither read nor write, and had not the remotest knowledge of Italian; but, as he had long been watching to detect the secret, he had it translated, and discovered that the invoice was dated from Trent. Next autumn Alois was on his road to the Tyrol with a quantity of Lorraine lace which he had taken in exchange, and a heavy load of bird-organs, watch-glasses, snuff-boxes, &c. By the time he reached Botzen, he had disposed of the whole of his stock, and he then started on a tour of discovery for Trent. When he reached that city, he learned that the hats he was seeking were made in the "Sette Communi," the seven Cimbro-Teuton communities of Upper Italy, and the enterprising forester, therefore, continued his journey to that spot. How he managed to get on with no knowledge of the language, we are not told; but it is quite certain that he laid in a stock of straw hats at a much cheaper rate than he had previously paid the chapmen.

Two of Alois's brothers, John and Kaspar, and his two brothers-in-law, Laurence and Philip Fürderer, of Lower Lenzkirch, now formed a company with the two original founders of the straw-hat trade, under the firm of "Faller, Tritzcheller, and Co." John Faller had belonged to the company of the Alsace porters, but left it in anger on being recalled from Altkirch, where he managed the business of the company. He brought the experience of the Alsace porters into the new firm, and thus established it so firmly that the former were soon induced to join the new company. But both parties looked too eagerly after their own profit, and thus injured the general trade, and so at the end of a year they dissolved partnership, and each went their own road. The new firm had great difficulties to overcome, not so much in wars, bad harvests, and depression of trade, as in the obstinacy and domineering spirit of the partners. Several times the firm was dissolved through quarrels, but when the partners grew cooler, they came together again. In spite of all this the firm prospered; the pack was laid aside and carts were substituted, orders were given by post, until at length the firm had its own entrepôt at Florence for the sale of Black Forest wares, and in 1809 opened a house of its own at Vallarona, in the "Sette Communi," for the straw-hat trade. The Florence branch, however, proved a failure, for the manager's ideas of the business to be done were too magnificent. It was therefore closed in 1811, but it was destined to bear good fruit at a future day. The manager, greatly to the disgust of his partners, married at Florence a poor Italian girl, who, however, understood straw-plaiting, and thirty years later her daughter gave lessons in the art to her Schwarzland relations, and thus aided in establishing the straw-hat manufactory at home.

If the Florence business entailed considerable anxiety, there was even greater trouble experienced in founding the branch at Vallarona. All the competitors in the straw-hat trade were extremely annoyed at seeing the simple, persevering, and acute foresters settling at the fountain-head of the trade. The Italian brokers even managed to arouse the national jealousy of the native workmen; there were regular tumults, to

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which the foresters opposed the brave tranquillity of a conscience at rest, and at length obtained protection and support from the officials. These proved to the communal authorities of Vallarona that the Black Foresters had for forty years been the mainstay of the hat-factories: that when war had kept all other purchasers aloof, they had not allowed themselves to be frightened, and hence their coming had been heralded with peals of joy-bells by the workmen, whose only hope was in them. The truth of this statement eventually gained the mastery, the communes no longer opposed the settlement of the company, and they have since derived considerable profit from the immense trade carried on by the company in all parts of the world.

The great events of the War of Liberation naturally checked the Schwarzwald trade, and when it was hoped that peace would give it a fresh impetus, obstacles were raised by the restoration of those frontier regulations which it was supposed that the French Revolution had abolished for ever. The new generation, however, that now represented the firm of Faller and Co., was not to be baffled by this: one of the partners attended to the business at Lenzkirch, the other at Vallarona. They were also the founders of the hat-manufacture in the Black Forest. The government of Baden had frequently requested them to transplant this trade to their native land; but all attempts failed, through the proportionately higher price of the raw material—the straw. An augmented tax on straw-hats induced the company to make a fresh essay, and the daughter of the Florence manager set to work teaching the Lenzkirch girls the art of straw-plaiting. The manufacture, after many struggles, became a semi-success, and then competition set in. The augmentation of the import duties in America, where the chief trade in straw hats went on, almost entirely ruined the factories. All the smaller rivals disappeared from the scene, and Faller and Co. alone continued the struggle. The universal crisis of 1832 was another very severe blow for the young factory, which did not burst into full life until Baden joined the Zollverein in 1835, and the protection thus afforded the company restored its courage.

The Lenzkirch hat-manufacture soon went on so regularly and satisfactorily that the grandsons of those brave "porters," who defied all the trouble, privation, and dangers of the hawking trade, did not find sufficient toil and excitement in it. In the same way as the earliest founders took to the hat trade, because it offered them employment for the summer, while the clock trade appeared to them almost too hard for the winter, their descendants considered that the summer trade in hats did not suffice them, and they returned to the clocks. The first Black Forest clocks were made at the beginning of the last century. Porters, who had seen such in Holland, on their return employed the long winter evenings in experiments. Some of them succeeded sufficiently to introduce their clocks into trade, and the secrecy with which they surrounded their work, caused a general desire to discover it; hence clock-making soon was established in several villages. Improvements were then made in the plain wooden clock. In 1730 the first cuckoo-clocks were made; ten years later, perpendicular clocks; ten years after that again, metal works were substituted for wooden. About the year 1770, eight-day clocks were manufactured in the Schwarzwald; and almost simultaneously musical clocks, first with bells, and then with whistles. The latter were gradually so improved that they performed the masterpieces of Haydn and Mozart. At the present day, magnificent musical instruments, playing any quantity of tunes, may be inspected at Schöpperlin's manufactory in Lenzkirch. Some fifteen years ago, a young man of the name of Hauser worked for this gentleman, who gradually grew dissatisfied with his task, and desired progress. A characteristic feature is perceptible throughout the history of the Schwarzwald trades; the forester who comes across anything that strikes him, never rests till he has thoroughly learned how to produce it. The first wooden clocks, as we have seen, were made by peasants, who admired similar articles in foreign parts, and the other foresters no sooner saw their neighbours turn out such things, than they must also set to work at them, and generally improved them. The lucky inventors took the greatest trouble to hand down the secret to their children; but the ambitious neighbours set every wheel in motion, until they had detected it. The same was the case with young Hauser; he knew no peace, because both table clocks and pendules were made in the Paris factories, but none in the Black Forest. He set to work in his leisure hours, making experiments, and was tolerably successful, though he convinced himself that, until he had visited Chaux le Fonds, Geneva, or Paris, he should never be able to produce so perfect a work as was made at those places. Hence he formed the resolution of going on his travels.

In the mean while, he found a supporter in the manager of Faller's Hat Company, who warmly applauded his plans, and promised to find the money to set the business going. Hauser set out and worked as a simple mechanic in the clock factories of Switzerland, and eventually in those of Paris. Of course, the secrets of the trade were not shown him at once; he had often to undertake jobs which he knew by heart during entire months; but as this was the only way in which he could get at the heart of the secret, he put up with it. The result of his perseverance was, that he returned to Lenzkirch in 1850, competent to make as good pendules as were turned out of hand anywhere. A company was soon formed, with a capital of one hundred thousand florins; in 1851 operations were commenced, and although for the first few years no profits were made, the partners bided their time, and at the present moment the shares pay so considerable a dividend, that they are quoted considerably above par.

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Any one who has the courage to visit Lenzkirch, will do well to visit the two factories I have referred to.

THE CARTE DE VISITE.

There are probably few pairs of eyes turned towards this page which have not been directed before now to some nob, or moulding, or keyhole, or door-handle in a photographic studio, and so have remained fixed in a delirious stare till the carte de visite was an accomplished fact. It is commonly a very heavy blow when one first sees the result of that operation which we have so many of us gone through. We explain ourselves in our different ways when we have our first interview with our own portraits after they come from the photographer's. If we are of a demonstrative nature, and besides have not been bred at the Court of St. James's, we exclaim "Lor!" when we first see ourselves. Some again will utter a mere unintelligible exclamation of surprise or grief; others will bless themselves; and truculent and hot-livered persons will invoke upon the head of the artist that which is not a benediction. There remains yet a class of well-bred and undemonstrative individuals who confine themselves to a speechless examination of the newly-arrived cards, merely expressing their agony by an eloquent silence, by twisting the work of art first this way and then that, holding it now at a distance, and now near, and anon upside-down.

We get accustomed to the portrait after a time, are able to face it, to see it on our drawing-room table in a small frame, or in an album, or even in the books of our dear friends and acquaintances. If we are public characters (and it is astonishing how many of us now find that we are so), we are actually obliged at last to get accustomed to the sight of ourselves in the shop-windows of this great metropolis. Our shepherd's-plaid trousers, our favourite walking-stick, our meerschaum pipe, meet our gaze turn where we will.

We do not all come out of the photographic studio alike unhappy. There are those to whom the process does justice, as well as those to whom it does injustice; nay, there are some on whom it confers actual benefits, and who show to greater advantage on the carte de visite than in their own proper persons. I have myself sat on two occasions for one of these portraits. On the first I was simply occupied in keeping still and presenting a tolerably favourable view of my features and limbs to the fatal lens; but the result was so tame and unimposing a picture that I determined on the next occasion to throw more intellect into the thing, and finding a certain richly-gilded curtain-tassel convenient to my gaze, I gave it a look of such piercing scrutiny, and so withered and blasted it with the energy of my regard, that I almost wonder it did not sink beneath the trial. That look has, I am happy to say, been reproduced faithfully, and no one could see the portrait without giving its original credit for immense penetration, great energy and strength of character, and a keen and piercing wit. It is difficult to lay down rules of general application, but it may be safely said that the people who come out of the photographic struggle the best, and who are least injured in the engagement, are people of ordinary appearance, from whom we do not expect much. It is common to hear some lady who is generally acknowledged to be pretty, urged by her friends to sit for a carte de visite. "You really *ought* to have it done," they say; "you would make such a charming portrait." The portrait is taken, and is, after all, not charming. On the contrary, it is sufficiently the reverse to make the dearest of the victim's female friends happy.

Those to whom this process does the greatest justice are people the proportions of whose faces are well balanced, whose features rather err on the side of smallness than largeness, and who are not generally considered to be beautiful. It is possible to have symmetrical features and a well-proportioned face and yet to fall very far short of beauty; and it is equally possible for a countenance to be wrong in some of its proportions, and yet leave an impression of beauty on our minds. But any one in this last case will be a great sufferer in going through the photographic process. As the two likenesses appear side by side in the album they will astonish all who look at them. They thought the one was such a much plainer person than she here appears, and the other so much prettier.

There are many beauties of colour and expression which cannot be rendered by the agency of the camera. Colour of hair, colour of the complexion generally, of the lips, the cheeks, the eyes, all these go for nothing; and as to expression, the most expressive countenances suffer most invariably: a little happy touch of expression is a phenomenon one hardly ever remembers to have seen caught in a photographic portrait. If the face be left to take its chance—so to speak—a heavy or mournful look is the usual result, and if any particular expression be attempted it is almost sure to look like a grimace; a truth of which we constantly see illustrations in the portraits of those engaged in the theatrical profession, when some special expression has been attempted. People of mediocre abilities, as people of mediocre beauty, will come off best in sitting for their photographs. They will astonish us by looking so clever, as the others by looking so pretty. Real genius and real beauty will often astonish us the other way. It is as difficult to give a man's outside, with all we know of it in a portrait, as to produce a fair representation of his mind in a biography.

There are, however, very many motives which all work in consonance to make us patronise this very thriving business of photography. First of all there is the appeal to our vanity. You yourself are the subject of your own especial consideration and that of one or two others for some considerable space of time. What a delightful thing that is. Whether you are good-looking or ugly you like that, depend on it. Then, the portrait done, you have the

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opportunity of distributing yourself among your friends, and letting them see you in your favourite attitude, and with your favourite expression. And then you get into those wonderful books which everybody possesses, and strangers see you there in good society, and ask who that very striking-looking person is?

Those albums are fast taking the place and doing the work of the long cherished card-basket. That institution has had a long swing of it. It was a good thing to leave on the table that your morning-caller while waiting in the drawing-room till you were presentable, might see what distinguished company you kept, and what very unexceptionable people were in the habit of coming to call on you. But the card-basket was not comparable to the album as an advertisement of your claims to gentility. The card of Mrs. Brown of Peckham would well to the surface at times from the depths to which you had consigned it, and overlay that of your favourite countess or millionnaire. Besides, you could not in so many words call attention to your card-basket as you can to the album. You place it in your friend's hands, saying, "This only contains my special favourites, mind," and there is her ladyship staring them in the face the next moment. "Who is this sweet person?" says the visitor. "Oh, that is dear Lady Puddicombe," you reply carelessly. Delicious moment!

Yet, sitting for one's photograph is, after all, not a pleasant performance to go through. Of course it is a mere nothing to what one used to endure in sitting for a regular portrait in a gloomy apartment in Newman or Berners-street. Many of us remember that operation vividly enough, and some even of the new generation can call to mind what they have suffered as children in the artists' quarter just named. They remember the dismal house with the curious window on the first-floor cut up so as to encroach on the second. They remember the dirty servant of all work who opened the door, and who ushered the victims into that dingy dining-room which was too suggestive of dentistry to be pleasant. As in the dental dining-room, so in this of the artist, there was a wonderful impossibility of identifying the apartment with eating and drinking. It would be impossible for anybody to enjoy either food or wine within its precincts. A few very old periodicals, a very fat and dirty volume of the Every-day Book of Hone, and some one or two books of amateur poetry, were on the central table, and as to works of art these abounded at the dentist's as at the painter's, but with this difference: at the first they would be engravings by different hands, and bearing affecting inscriptions in pencil, that made one's grinders shake in their sockets. "To Mr. Lipscrush, with the artist's *grateful* remembrances," or, "from a grateful patient," or, "in commemoration of many professional *favours* conferred on the artist." In the Berners-street dining-room the works of art were without such inscriptions. The pictures which hung round the artistic dining-room—and many of which had no frames—were ordinarily of elevated subjects: Titania with Bottom wearing the ass's head, Ophelia hovering over the book, Ugolino gaunt with starvation, Virginius sacrificing his daughter, and other exhilarating companions to the dinner-table. There they hung, a perpetual monument to the want of taste of the British public, and there hung some of the portraits which the artist had been driven to paint, when he found that high art left his dining-table with nothing more eatable upon it, than an army list or a number of Blackwood. Among these latter works would be included "Portrait of the Artist," painted evidently at the Ugolino period, glaring round at society out of hollow, sunken eyes. The artist's father, his mother, and a general officer, who bore a strong resemblance to the artist himself in a Nathanic red coat and epaulets.

What wonder that one should go up from such a dining-room expecting to hear in a soothing voice the words "Open, a little wider," with an accompaniment of rattling instruments in a drawer? And what a place was the Studio itself when you reached it. That window observed from outside as encroaching on the second-floor was blocked up as to the lower half, so that there was no chance of seeing anything of the street unless it was the garret-window and the parapet of the house opposite, with an old flower-pot, a dangling fragment of clothes-line, and a row of hideous distorted chimneys showing their gnarled and twisted arms against the dull grey sky. To spend an afternoon looking at such a prospect was not hilarious. Nor was the interior of the room much better. The half-finished pictures leaning against the wall, the studies from nature or copies of the old masters—old enough to have grown up into misters one would think by this time—the plaster casts of nude arms doubling themselves up so as to bring out the muscles in a very unnecessary manner, for nobody ever said they were *not* muscular, the antique heads, with noses on which the blacks and dust had gathered loweringly; their hollow parts and sunken lines protected by the nobbier portions, relieving with a white and brilliant glare the bits of old tapestry, frouzy costume, and improbable armour—all these matters made up an interior which if it was picturesque (which it wasn't) was infinitely dismal and disheartening.

You were seated on a throne, too, which to persons not of the regal class was in itself disconcerting. Some question of perspective, or of points of view, rendered it needful that you should be raised on high, and so you were perched up on a green-baize throne. You sat on a cut-velvet old-fashioned chair, whose timbers creaked responsive every time you sighed, and more old-fashioned chairs were placed about the room, which might have reminded one of ancient times, if they had not been so much more suggestive of Auction Marts and nosey brokers.

What an afternoon's entertainment! If the artist talked, you felt he was not minding his business; if he worked, he was apt to be silent; while, if he tried to combine labour and conversation, his talk would be characterised by the Remark unconnected and the Reply inap-

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propriate, and the afternoon's labour would very likely result in that disastrous phenomemon, an unrecognisable likeness.

Now what is the photographic ordeal after this? Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

But, just as the sufferings which we are called on to undergo have in this age been reduced, so also, alas! have the powers of endurance, and so the same human being, who once bore a journey of three days and nights by coach, grumbles at a two hours' whirl by railway; and he who has known the horrors of a month or so of sittings, finds that to wait an hour or so in a photographer's gallery, going right through all the portraits on the wall and table, exhausts his patience. When at last he is released from the waiting-saloon and mounts to the operating-room above, that he is in the worst possible cue for the performance in which he is to take a part. He feels at once dazzled and oppressed by that glare of light above his head. It makes him blink, it closes up his eyes, it gives him a sense of having been up all night. The properties about the room, too, are bewildering. There are all sorts of things appropriate to all the different professions which different sitters may be expected to follow. There is a piece of complicated wheel-work for a mechanician, a pair of globes for a geographer, a nautical compass for the mariner, and a pair of compasses for a civil engineer. There, too, is a palette and an easel for the artist, a book for the divine, an empty brief for the lawyer, an hour-glass for the philosopher, and an inkstand and a pen with a tremendous feather in it for the author. Lastly, there is a wretched painted scene which is intended to take the public in as a landscape-background, but the honest instrument will never fall into the scheme, and hating the landscape always proclaims it for the sham which it is. This background is intended for private and non-professional persons, and there is also a pillar and a curtain—but who are those for? What is the profession of that unhappy and misguided wretch who is supposed to pass his life in a perpetual environment of pillar and curtain? There may have been persons so situated once, but now we turn our pillars into letter boxes, and the curtain draperies into ladies' cloaks rich in festoons of crimson.

The thirty seconds which the light requires to take a likeness are so utterly exhausting, that if there were one more necessary I believe no human being could go through with the thing. The horrible necessity of keeping motionless is an incentive, of almost irresistible force, to violent action. Terrific are the temptations of those thirty seconds. You feel that you must make a face, yell, spring up, and cut a frantic caper. You say to yourself: "Suppose I were to sneeze, to choke; suppose I were to burst out into a rude guffaw? I will, I must! Suppose I were to squint; I think I *am* squinting. The brass knob on which I am told to fix my eyes is getting muzzy; it is huge in size; it revolves; I can't see it. My hands are tingling, swelling, bursting. All is dizzy before me—I shall explode!"

There is, in truth, much that will always be adverse to the production of an agreeable photographic likeness; but at the same time, it is quite as true that a very great deal might be done by a little more knowledge, thought, and painstaking, to render such portraits infinitely more pleasant than they are generally found to be.

People who are considered good-looking, and those even who are beautiful, have a hundred different aspects, and to seize the best one and reproduce it is a function of Genius and not of Chemicals. If you have had a friend whom you have wished to show off to another friend, have you not often been disappointed that the first was "in such bad looks" as really not to look even pretty? The person who was expected to be struck with admiration has wondered at your taste, and you have been obliged to own that there was matter for disappointment. Even in nature, out-of-door nature, this is so. The view which you saw from the hills above the old French town, with the evening sun lighting up the rich plain, making the mountains in the distance amethysts, and the river a line of gold, while the one cloud shadow lay over the old cathedral tower and blackened it, so that all the rest sparkled the more—what is that very same scene when the sky is grey, and the mountains grey too, and plain and river and cathedral are all of one monotonous slate-colour!

But though it may take a Reynolds to do justice to the beauty of the living creature, and a Turner to reproduce that of the mountain and the plain, there is much to be got out of the Photographic Lens—which it would be wickedness to disparage—infinitely more than it is ordinarily made to convey to us. There are one or two simple matters which might be borne in mind by photographers with immense advantage to their sitters, and to their own reputations as well. They do not yet quite understand their trade.

The two great main considerations which should occupy the mind of every photographer are these: What is the best view he can take of his sitter, and what the effect of light and shade which will be most becoming to that sitter's countenance. On these two considerations the success of the portrait entirely depends.

Now as to the question of view there is some tolerable amount of understanding manifested by the great body of photographers. The sitter is generally so placed that the most favourable aspect of his face may come before the lens. and so that the rapid perspective to which he is subjected shall distort him as little as may be. It is pretty well known that if his legs are nearer the machine than his body the first will be disproportionately large for the last; that if his hand is stretched out towards the artist, it will be twice the size it ought to be, and that even the fact of his nose being nearer the camera than the rest of the face will give to that central feature a large and swollen aspect.

Such general rules as these, applying equally to all sitters, are then pretty well understood. But this is not enough. The photographic artist who would wish to produce a really successful portrait, should study the special defects

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and the special beauties of the individual before him, and consider in what view the faults of such a physiognomy will assert themselves least strongly, and the merits show the most. This is the function of an artist, of a man of considerable natural abilities, and immense experience. It is exercised by some of the best French photographers in an eminent degree, and by one—M. Camille Silvy—who has set up his studio here in England.

M. Silvy—and almost he alone in this country—seems to understand the immense importance of *shadow* as an ingredient in a successful portrait. This is his great stronghold, more even than the taste which he shows in his choice of view, costume, and accessory. These last are great elements in M. Silvy's portraits, but the distinguishing merit of them is the well-chosen light and shade. It is perfectly surprising that this has not been more considered by all photographers. Their process is a thing simply of light and shade. It is the light that makes the portrait come into existence at all. The patches of shade, more or less dark, alone prevent a carte de visite from being a sheet of blank paper. Surely the shapes of those patches of shade are all-important. It is little known—and when it *is* known we shall have prettier photographs—that a light coming from above the head of the sitter is the most unbecoming thing in the world, and that a face so lighted cannot by any possibility show to advantage. Now, the ordinary photographer's glass-room has a diffused light all over it, but mainly coming from above, so that the eyes show in two dark caverns of shadow, while a black patch appears under the nose, throwing the termination of that feature up to the skies, and making it show as an isolated nob, the full size of which is—and few of us can bear this—done the amplest justice to. This top-light, moreover, scores out relentlessly those baggy marks which many of us have too well developed under the eyes, and which are not characteristics of the human beau-ideal, while—in the case of ladies—a kind of trough on each side of the mouth is joined to the chin-shadow after the fashion of a Vandyke beard.

In ladies' portraits, the elimination of beauty, and not so much of character as in men, is the thing to be borne in mind. Now, the most becoming light is one level with the face, or even, perhaps, somewhat beneath it—it being a great mistake to suppose that the foot-lights on the stage are unbecoming. Such a light as that described above would make any face in the world ugly, and yet it is just such a light which is to be found in most photographers' rooms.

As much as possible, as much as may consist with the action of the photographic process, the light from above should be got rid of in taking these portraits, and a light from the side brought into use. This seems to be understood in a rare manner by M. Silvy. His portraits are very popular, but, perhaps, many of the people who like them are ignorant of the reason which causes their preference. The reason lies, to a large extent, in the softness and size of the shadows which lie in such agreeable masses on the faces which come within the range of this photographer's skill. He has discovered the simple truth, that in an affair in which it is a question altogether of shadows, the distribution of those shadows is a thing of vital importance. Of every face in this town there is a view to be taken, and a light and shade to be selected, which will show it to advantage or disadvantage. To subject all to the same glaring light, descending on all alike, and to all unbecoming, is scarcely the way to produce agreeable results. Yet we have known a photographer standing under his own light, and most hideously distorted by that circumstance alone—without the additional help of his instrument—to argue with us, the wretched sitter, that we were none the worse for his light!

It is difficult to speak strongly enough about this question of shadows and their value. Queen Elizabeth, in her ignorance, thought shadows unbecoming to the glory of her majesty, and wished to be painted without any at all; and, doubtless, there are people who now-a-days think shade a smudgy dirty thing, the less of which comes upon their countenances the better. But light cannot be thrown out in its full brilliancy, nor forms shown in their variety, without its aid. Why, one of the main differences between a fine day and a dull one lies in the shadows which proclaim the first, and are wanting in the other. On a wet, dull day, as you stand in the grey sickly light, you may look all round about in vain for your shadow; it is not to be found. A cheerless, monotonous glare is over all things. The sun comes out, and the first thing it does is to cast your shadow dark and clear and sharp upon the ground—your shadow and that of the trees, the buildings, and all things else that come within reach of its rays. How different everything looks then; how solid, how bright, how finished! Those shadows are larger in the early morning and again as the day declines, and it is one reason of our admiration of those two seasons that then the rising or sinking sun catches but one side of every object, and leaves so large a portion of the scene lost in a mysterious and softened shade.

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER XII. (CONTINUED).

The governess stood alone at the study window. The morning was oppressively hot, and she threw up the lower sash to admit more air into the room, as Mr. Pendril came in.

They bowed to each other with a formal politeness, which betrayed on either side an uneasy sense of restraint. Mr. Pendril was one of the many men who appear superficially to the worst advantage, under the influence of strong mental agitation which it is necessary for them to control. Miss Garth, on her side, had not forgotten the ungraciously guarded terms in which the lawyer had replied to her letter; and the natural anxiety which she felt on the subject of the interview, was not relieved by any favourable opinion of the man who sought it. As they confronted each other in the silence of the summer's morning—both dressed in black; Miss Garth's hard features, gaunt and haggard with grief; the lawyer's cold, colourless face, void of all marked expression, suggestive of a business embarrassment and of nothing more—it would have been hard to find two persons less attractive externally to any ordinary sympathies than the two who had now met together, the one to tell, the other to hear, the secrets of the dead.

"I am sincerely sorry, Miss Garth, to intrude on you at such a time as this. But circumstances, as I have already explained, leave me no other choice."

"Will you take a seat, Mr. Pendril? You wished to see me in this room, I believe?"

"Only in this room, because Mr. Vanstone's papers are kept here, and I may find it necessary to refer to some of them."

After that formal interchange of question and answer, they sat down on either side of a table placed close under the window. One waited to speak, the other waited to hear. There was a momentary silence. Mr. Pendril broke it by referring to the young ladies, with the customary inquiries, and the customary expressions of sympathy. Miss Garth answered him with the same ceremony, in the same conventional tone. There was a second pause of silence. The humming of flies among the evergreen shrubs under the window, penetrated drowsily into the room; and the tramp of a heavy-footed cart-horse, plodding along the high-road beyond the garden, was as plainly audible in the stillness as if it had been night.

The lawyer roused his flagging resolution, and spoke to the purpose when he spoke next.

"You have some reason, Miss Garth," he began, "to feel not quite satisfied with my past conduct towards you, in one particular. During Mrs. Vanstone's fatal illness, you addressed a letter to me, making certain inquiries; which, while she lived, it was impossible for me to answer. Her deplorable death releases me from the restraint which I had imposed on myself, and permits—or, more properly, obliges me to speak. You shall know what serious reasons I had for waiting day and night, in the hope of obtaining that interview which unhappily never took place; and in justice to Mr. Vanstone's memory, your own eyes shall inform you that he made his will."

He rose; unlocked a little iron safe in the corner of the room; and returned to the table with some folded sheets of paper, which he spread open under Miss Garth's eyes. When she had read the first words, "In the name of God, Amen," he turned the sheet, and pointed to the end of the next page. She saw the well-known signature: "Andrew Vanstone." She saw the customary attestations of the two witnesses; and the date of the document, reverting to a period of more than five years since. Having thus convinced her of the formality of the will, the lawyer interposed before she could question him, and addressed her in these words:

"I must not deceive you," he said. "I have my own reasons for producing this document."

"What reasons, sir?"

"You shall hear them. When you are in possession of the truth, these pages may help to preserve your respect for Mr. Vanstone's memory——"

Miss Garth started back in her chair.

"What do you mean?" she asked, with a stern straightforwardness.

He took no heed of the question; he went on, as if she had not interrupted him.

"I have a second reason," he continued, "for showing you the will. If I can prevail on you to read certain clauses in it, under my superintendence, you will make your own discovery of the

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circumstances which I am here to disclose—circumstances so painful, that I hardly know how to communicate them to you with my own lips."

Miss Garth looked him steadfastly in the face.

"Circumstances, sir, which affect the dead parents, or the living children?"

"Which affect the dead and the living both," answered the lawyer. "Circumstances, I grieve to say, which involve the future of Mr. Vanstone's unhappy daughters."

"Wait," said Miss Garth; "wait a little." She pushed her grey hair back from her temples, and struggled with the sickness of heart, the dreadful faintness of terror, which would have overpowered a younger, or a less resolute woman. Her eyes dim with watching, weary with grief, searched the lawyer's unfathomable face. "His unhappy daughters?" she repeated to herself, vacantly. "He talks as if there was some worse calamity than the calamity which has made them orphans." She paused once more; and rallied her sinking courage. "I will not make your hard duty, sir, more painful to you than I can help," she resumed. "Show me the place in the will. Let me read it, and know the worst."

Mr. Pendril turned back to the first page, and pointed to a certain place in the cramped lines of writing. "Begin here," he said.

She tried to begin; she tried to follow his finger, as she had followed it already to the signatures and the dates. But her senses seemed to share the confusion of her mind—the words mingled together, and the lines swam before her eyes.

"I can't follow you," she said. "You must tell it, or read it to me." She pushed her chair back from the table, and tried to collect herself. "Stop!" she exclaimed, as the lawyer, with visible hesitation and reluctance, took the papers in his own hand, "One question, first. Does his will provide for his children?"

"His will provided for them, when he made it."

"When he made it?" (Something of her natural bluntness broke out in her manner as she repeated the answer.) "Does it provide for them now?"

"It does not?"

She snatched the will from his hand, and threw it into a corner of the room. "You mean well," she said; "you wish to spare me—but you are wasting your time, and my strength. If the will is useless, there let it lie. Tell me the truth, Mr. Pendril—tell it plainly, tell it instantly, in your own words!"

He felt that it would be useless cruelty to resist that appeal. There was no merciful alternative but to answer it on the spot.

"I must refer you to the spring of the present year, Miss Garth. Do you remember the fourth of March?"

Her attention wandered again; a thought seemed to have struck her at the moment when he spoke. Instead of answering his inquiry, she put a question of her own.

"Let me break the news to myself, she said—"let me anticipate you, if I can. His useless will, the terms in which you speak of his daughters, the doubt you seem to feel of my continued respect for his memory, have opened a new view to me. Mr. Vanstone has died a ruined man—is that what you had to tell me?

"Far from it. Mr. Vanstone has died, leaving a fortune of more than eighty thousand pounds—a fortune invested in excellent securities. He lived up to his income, but never beyond it; and all his debts added together would not reach two hundred pounds. If he had died a ruined man, I should have felt deeply for his children—but I should not have hesitated to tell you the truth, as I am hesitating now. Let me repeat a question which escaped you, I think, when I first put it. Carry your mind back to the spring of this year. Do you remember the fourth of March?"

Miss Garth shook her head. "My memory for dates is bad at the best of times," she said. "I am too confused to exert it at a moment's notice. Can you put your question in no other form?"

He put it in this form:—

"Do you remember any domestic event in the spring of the present year, which appeared to affect Mr. Vanstone more seriously than usual?"

Miss Garth leaned forward in her chair, and looked eagerly at Mr. Pendril across the table. "The journey to London!" she exclaimed. "I distrusted the journey to London from the first! Yes! I remember Mr. Vanstone receiving a letter—I remember his reading it, and looking so altered from himself that he startled us all."

"Did you notice any apparent understanding between Mr. and Mrs. Vanstone, on the subject of that letter?"

"Yes: I did. One of the girls—it was Magdalen—mentioned the post-mark; some place in America. It all comes back to me, Mr. Pendril. Mrs. Vanstone looked excited and anxious, the moment she heard the place named. They went to London together, the next day; they explained nothing to their daughters, nothing to me. Mrs. Vanstone said the journey was for family affairs. I suspected something wrong; I couldn't tell what. Mrs. Vanstone wrote to me from London, saying that her object was to consult a physician on the state of her health, and not to alarm her daughters by telling them. Something in the letter rather hurt me at the time. I thought there might be some other motive that she was keeping from me. Did I do her wrong?"

"You did her no wrong. There *was* a motive which she was keeping from you. In revealing that motive, I reveal the painful secret which brings me to this house. All that I could do to prepare you, I have done. Let me now tell the truth in the plainest and fewest words. When Mr. and Mrs. Vanstone left Combe-Raven, in the March of the present year ——"

Before he could complete the sentence, a sudden movement of Miss Garth's interrupted him.

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She started violently, and looked round towards the window. "Only the wind among the leaves," she said faintly. "My nerves are so shaken, the least thing startles me. Speak out, for God's sake! When Mr. and Mrs. Vanstone left this house, tell me in plain words—why did they go to London?"

In plain words Mr. Pendril told her:

"They went to London to be married."

With that answer he placed a slip of paper on the table. It was the marriage certificate of the dead parents, and the date it bore was March the twentieth, eighteen hundred and forty-six."

Miss Garth neither moved nor spoke. The certificate lay beneath her unnoticed. She sat with her eyes rooted on the lawyer's face; her mind stunned, her senses helpless. He saw that all his efforts to break the shock of the discovery had been efforts made in vain; he felt the vital importance of rousing her, and firmly and distinctly repeated the fatal words.

"They went to London to be married," he said. "Try to rouse yourself: try to realise the plain fact first: the explanation shall come afterwards. Miss Garth, I speak the miserable truth! In the spring of this year they left home; they lived in London for a fortnight, in the strictest retirement; they were married by license at the end of that time. There is a copy of the certificate, which I myself obtained on Monday last. Read the date of the marriage for yourself. It is Friday, the twentieth of March—the March of this present year."

As he pointed to the certificate, that faint breath of air among the shrubs beneath the window, which had startled Miss Garth, stirred the leaves once more. He heard it himself, this time; and turned his face, so as to let the breeze play upon it. No breeze came; no breath of air that was strong enough for him to feel, floated into the room.

Miss Garth roused herself mechanically, and read the certificate. It seemed to produce no distinct impression on her: she laid it on one side, in a lost bewildered manner. "Twelve years," she said, in low hopeless tones—"twelve quiet happy years I lived with this family. Mrs. Vanstone was my friend; my dear, valued friend—my sister, I might almost say. I can't believe it. Bear with me a little, sir; I can't believe it yet."

"I shall help you to believe it, when I tell you more," said Mr. Pendril—"you will understand me better when I take you back to the time of Mr. Vanstone's early life. I won't ask for your attention just yet. Let us wait a little, until you recover yourself."

They waited a few minutes. The lawyer took some letters from his pocket, referred to them attentively, and put them back again. "Can you listen to me, now?" he asked kindly. She bowed her head in answer. Mr. Pendril considered with himself for a moment. "I must caution you on one point," he said. "If the aspect of Mr. Vanstone's character which I am now about to present to you, seems in some respects, at variance with your later experience, bear in mind that when you first knew him twelve years since, he was a man of forty; and that, when I first knew him, he was a lad of nineteen."

His next words raised the veil, and showed the irrevocable Past.

CHAPTER XIII.

"The fortune which Mr. Vanstone possessed when you knew him" (the lawyer began) "was part, and part only, of the inheritance which fell to him on his father's death. Mr. Vanstone the elder, was a manufacturer in the North of England. He married early in life; and the children of the marriage were either six, or seven in number—I am not certain which. First, Michael, the eldest son, still living, and now an old man, turned seventy. Secondly, Selina, the eldest daughter, who married in after-life, and who died ten or eleven years ago. After those two, came other sons and daughters whose early deaths make it unnecessary to mention them particularly. The last and by many years the youngest of the children was Andrew, whom I first knew, as I told you, at the age of nineteen. My father was then on the point of retiring from the active pursuit of his profession; and, in succeeding to his business, I also succeeded to his connexion with the Vanstones, as the family solicitor.

"At that time, Andrew had just started in life by entering the army. After little more than a year of home-service, he was ordered out with his regiment to Canada. When he quitted England, he left his father and his elder brother Michael seriously at variance. I need not detain you by entering into the cause of the quarrel. I need only tell you that the elder Mr. Vanstone, with many excellent qualities, was a man of fierce and intractable temper. His eldest son had set him at defiance, under circumstances which might have justly irritated a father of far milder character; and he declared, in the most positive terms, that he would never see Michael's face again. In defiance of my entreaties, and of the entreaties of his wife, he tore up, in our presence, the will which provided for Michael's share in the paternal inheritance. Such was the family position, when the younger son left home for Canada.

"Some months after Andrew's arrival with his regiment at Quebec, he became acquainted with a woman of great personal attractions, who came, or said she came, from one of the southern states of America. She obtained an immediate influence over him: and she used it to the basest purpose. You knew the easy, affectionate, trusting nature of the man, in later life—you can imagine how thoughtlessly he acted on the impulses of his youth. It is useless to dwell on this lamentable part of the story. He was just twenty-one: he was blindly devoted to a worthless woman; and she led him on, with merciless cunning, till it was too late to draw back. In one word, he committed the fatal error of his life: he married her.

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"She had been wise enough in her own interests to dread the influence of his brother-officers, and to persuade him, up to the period of the marriage ceremony, to keep the proposed union between them a secret. She could do this; but she could not provide against the results of accident. Hardly three months had passed, when a chance disclosure exposed the life she had led, before her marriage. But one alternative was left to her husband—the alternative of instantly separating from her.

"The effect of the discovery on the unhappy boy—for a boy in disposition he still was—may be judged by the event which followed the exposure. One of Andrew's superior officers found him in his quarters, writing to his father a confession of the disgraceful truth, with a loaded pistol by his side. That officer saved the lad's life from his own hand; and hushed up the scandalous affair, by a compromise. The marriage being a perfectly legal one, and the wife's misconduct prior to the ceremony, giving her husband no claim to his release from her by divorce, it was only possible to appeal to her sense of her own interests. A handsome annual allowance was secured to her, on condition that she returned to the place from which she had come; that she never appeared in England; and that she ceased to use her husband's name. Other stipulations were added to these. She accepted them all; and measures were privately taken to have her well looked after in the place of her retreat. What life she led there, and whether she performed all the conditions imposed on her, I cannot say. I can only tell you that she never, to my knowledge, came to England; that she never annoyed Mr. Vanstone; and that the annual allowance was paid her, through a local agent in America, to the day of her death. All that she wanted in marrying him was money; and money she got.

"In the mean time, Andrew had left the regiment. Nothing would induce him to face his brother-officers after what had happened. He sold out, and returned to England. The first intelligence which reached him on his return, was the intelligence of his father's death. He came to my office in London, before going home, and there learnt from my lips how the family quarrel had ended.

"The will which Mr. Vanstone the elder had destroyed in my presence, had not been, so far as I knew, replaced by another. When I was sent for, in the usual course, on his death, I fully expected that the law would be left to make the customary division among his widow and his children. To my surprise, a will appeared among his papers, correctly drawn and executed, and dated about a week after the period when the first will had been destroyed. He had maintained his vindictive purpose against his eldest son; and had applied to a stranger for the professional assistance which I honestly believe he was ashamed to ask for at my hands.

"It is needless to trouble you with the provisions of the will in detail. There were the widow, and three surviving children to be provided for. The widow received a life-interest only, in a portion of the testator's property. The remaining portion was divided between Andrew and Selina—two-thirds to the brother; one-third to the sister. On the mother's death, the money from which her income had been derived, was to go to Andrew and Selina, in the same relative proportions as before—five thousand pounds having been first deducted from the sum, and paid to Michael, as the sole legacy left by the implacable father to his eldest son.

"Speaking in round numbers, the division of property, as settled by the will, stood thus. Before the mother's death, Andrew had seventy thousand pounds; Selina had thirty-five thousand pounds; Michael had—nothing. After the mother's death, Michael had five thousand pounds, to set against Andrew's inheritance augmented to one hundred thousand, and Selina's inheritance increased to fifty thousand.—Do not suppose that I am dwelling unnecessarily on this part of the subject. Every word I now speak bears on interests still in suspense, which vitally concern Mr. Vanstone's daughters. As we get on from past to present, keep in mind the terrible inequality of Michael's inheritance and Andrew's inheritance. The harm done by that vindictive will is, I greatly fear, not over yet.

"Andrew's first impulse, when he heard the news which I had to tell him, was worthy of the open, generous nature of the man. He at once proposed to divide his inheritance with his elder brother. But there was one serious obstacle in the way. A letter from Michael was waiting for him at my office when he came there; and that letter charged him with being the original cause of estrangement between his father and his elder brother. The efforts which he had made—bluntly and incautiously, I own; but with the purest and kindest intentions, as I know—to compose the quarrel before leaving home, were perverted by the vilest misconstruction, to support an accusation of treachery and falsehood which would have stung any man to the quick. Andrew felt, what I felt, that if these imputations were not withdrawn, before his generous intentions towards his brother took effect, the mere fact of their execution would amount to a practical acknowledgment of the justice of Michael's charge against him. He wrote to his brother, in the most forbearing terms. The answer received was as offensive as words could make it. Michael had inherited his father's temper, unredeemed by his father's better qualities: his second letter reiterated the charges contained in the first, and declared that he would only accept the offered division as an act of atonement and restitution on Andrew's part. I next wrote to the mother, to use her influence. She was herself aggrieved at being left with nothing more than a life-interest in her husband's property; she sided resolutely with Michael; and she stigmatised

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Andrew's proposal as an attempt to bribe her eldest son into withdrawing a charge against his brother, which that brother knew to be true. After this last repulse, nothing more could be done. Michael withdrew to the Continent; and his mother followed him there. She lived long enough, and saved money enough out of her income, to add considerably, at her death, to her elder son's five thousand pounds. He had previously still further improved his pecuniary position by an advantageous marriage; and he is now passing the close of his days either in France or Switzerland—a widower, with one son. We shall return to him shortly. In the mean time, I need only tell you that Andrew and Michael never again met—never again communicated, even by writing. To all intents and purposes, they were dead to each other, from those early days to the present time.

"You can now estimate what Andrew's position was when he left his profession and returned to England. Possessed of a fortune, he was alone in the world;—his future destroyed at the fair outset of life; his mother and brother estranged from him; his sister lately married, with interests and hopes in which he had no share. Men of firmer mental calibre might have found refuge from such a situation as this, in an absorbing intellectual pursuit. He was not capable of the effort; all the strength of his character lay in the affections he had wasted. His place in the world was that quiet place at home, with wife and children to make his life happy, which he had lost for ever. To look back, was more than he dare. To look forward, was more than he could. In sheer despair, he let his own impetuous youth drive him on; and cast himself into the lowest dissipations of a London life.

"A woman's falsehood had driven him to his ruin. A woman's love saved him, at the outset of his downward career. Let us not speak of her harshly—for we laid her with him yesterday in the grave.

"You, who only knew Mrs. Vanstone in later life, when illness and sorrow and secret care had altered and saddened her, can form no adequate idea of her attractions of person and character when she was a girl of seventeen. I was with Andrew when he first met her. I had tried to rescue him, for one night at least, from degrading associates and degrading pleasures, by persuading him to go with me to a ball given by one of the great City Companies. There, they met. She produced a strong impression on him, the moment he saw her. To me, as to him, she was a total stranger. An introduction to her, obtained in the customary manner, informed him that she was the daughter of one Mr. Blake. The rest he discovered from herself. They were partners in the dance (unobserved in that crowded ball-room) all through the evening.

"Circumstances were against her from the first. She was unhappy at home. Her family and friends occupied no recognised station in life: they were mean, underhand people, in every way unworthy of her. It was her first ball—it was the first time she had ever met with a man who had the breeding, the manners, and the conversation of a gentleman. Are these excuses for her, which I have no right to make? If we have any human feeling for human weakness, surely not!

"The meeting of that night decided their future. When other meetings had followed, when the confession of her love had escaped her, he took the one course of all others (took it innocently and unconsciously) which was most dangerous to them both. His frankness and his sense of honour forbade him to deceive her: he opened his heart, and told her the truth. She was a generous impulsive girl; she had no home ties strong enough to plead with her; she was passionately fond of him—and he had made that appeal to her pity, which, to the eternal honour of women, is the hardest of all appeals for them to resist. She saw, and saw truly, that she alone stood between him and his ruin. The last chance of his rescue hung on her decision. She decided; and saved him.

"Let me not be misunderstood; let me not be accused of trifling with the serious social question on which my narrative forces me to touch. I will defend her memory by no false reasoning—I will only speak the truth. It is the truth that she snatched him from mad excesses which must have ended in his early death. It is the truth that she restored him to that happy home-existence, which you remember so tenderly—which *he* remembered so gratefully that, on the day when he was free, he made her his wife. Let strict morality claim its right, and condemn her early fault. I have read my New Testament to little purpose indeed, if Christian mercy may not soften the hard sentence against her—if Christian charity may not find a plea for her memory in the love and fidelity, the suffering and the sacrifice, of her whole life.

"A few words more will bring us to a later time, and to events which have happened within your own experience.

"I need not remind you that the position in which Mr. Vanstone was now placed, could lead in the end to but one result—to a disclosure, more or less inevitable, of the truth. Attempts were made to keep the hopeless misfortune of his life a secret from Miss Blake's family; and, as a matter of course, those attempts failed before the relentless scrutiny of her father and her friends. What might have happened if her relatives had been what is termed 'respectable,' I cannot pretend to say. As it was, they were people who could (in the common phrase) be conveniently treated with. The only survivor of the family, at the present time, is a scoundrel calling himself Captain Wragge. When I tell you that he privately extorted the price of his silence from Mrs. Vanstone, to the last; and when I add that his conduct presents no extraordinary exception to the conduct, in their lifetime, of the other relatives—you will understand

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what sort of people I had to deal with in my client's interests, and how their assumed indignation was appeased.

"Having, in the first instance, left England for Ireland, Mr. Vanstone and Miss Blake remained there afterwards, for some years. Girl as she was, she faced her position and its necessities without flinching. Having once resolved to sacrifice her life to the man she loved; having quieted her conscience by persuading herself that his marriage was a legal mockery, and that she was 'his wife in the sight of Heaven;' she set herself, from the first, to accomplish the one foremost purpose of so living with him, in the world's eye, as never to raise the suspicion that she was not his lawful wife. The women are few indeed who cannot resolve firmly, scheme patiently, and act promptly, where the dearest interests of their lives are concerned. Mrs. Vanstone—she has a right now, remember, to that name—Mrs. Vanstone had more than the average share of a woman's tenacity and a woman's tact; and she took all the needful precautions, in those early days, which her husband's less ready capacity had not the art to devise—precautions to which they were largely indebted for the preservation of their secret in later times.

"Thanks to these safeguards, not a shadow of suspicion followed them when they returned to England. They first settled in Devonshire, merely because they were far removed there from that northern county in which Mr. Vanstone's family and connexions had been known. On the part of his surviving relatives, they had no curious investigations to dread. He was totally estranged from his mother and his elder brother His married sister had been forbidden by her husband (who was a clergyman) to hold any communication with him, from the period when he had fallen into the deplorable way of life which I have described as following his return from Canada. Other relations he had none. When he and Miss Blake left Devonshire, their next change of residence was to this house. Neither courting, nor avoiding notice; simply happy in themselves, in their children, and in their quiet rural life; unsuspected by the few neighbours who formed their modest circle of acquaintance to be other than what they seemed—the truth, in their case, as in the cases of many others, remained undiscovered until accident forced it into the light of day.

"If, in your close intimacy with them, it seems strange that they should never have betrayed themselves, let me ask you to consider the circumstances, and you will understand the apparent anomaly. Remember that they had been living as husband and wife, to all intents and purposes (except that the marriage service had not been read over them) for fifteen years before you came into the house; and bear in mind, at the same time, that no event occurred to disturb Mr. Vanstone's happiness in the present, to remind him of the past, or to warn him of the future, until the announcement of his wife's death reached him, in that letter from America which you saw placed in his hand. From that day forth—when a past which *he* abhorred was forced back to his memory; when a future which *she* had never dared to anticipate was placed within her reach—you will soon perceive, if you have not perceived already, that they both betrayed themselves, time after time; and that your innocence of all suspicion, and their children's innocence of all suspicion, alone prevented you from discovering the truth.

"The sad story of the past is now as well known to you as to me. I have had hard words to speak. God knows I have spoken them with true sympathy for the living, with true tenderness for the memory of the dead."

He paused, turned his face a little away, and rested his head on his hand, in the quiet undemonstrative manner which was natural to him. Thus far, Miss Garth had only interrupted his narrative by an occasional word, or by a mute token of her attention. She made no effort to conceal her tears; they fell fast and silently over her wasted cheeks, as she looked up and spoke to him. "I have done you some injury, sir, in my thoughts," she said, with a noble simplicity. "I know you better now. Let me ask your forgiveness; let me take your hand."

Those words, and the action which accompanied them, touched him deeply. He took her hand in silence. She was the first to speak, the first to set the example of self-control. It is one of the noble instincts of women, that nothing more powerfully rouses them to struggle with their own sorrow than the sight of a man's distress. She quietly dried her tears; she quietly drew her chair round the table so as to sit nearer to him when she spoke again.

"I have been sadly broken, Mr. Pendril, by what has happened in this house," she said, "or I should have borne what you have told me better than I have borne it to-day. Will you let me ask one question, before you go on? My heart aches for the children of my love—more than ever my children now. Is there no hope for their future? Are they left with no prospect but poverty before them?"

The lawyer hesitated before he answered the question.

"They are left dependent," he said, at last, "on the justice and the mercy of a stranger."

"Through the misfortune of their birth?"

"Through the misfortunes which have followed the marriage of their parents."

With that startling answer he rose, took up the will from the floor, and restored it to its former position on the table between them.

"I can only place the truth before you," he resumed, "in one plain form of words. The marriage has destroyed this will, and has left Mr. Vanstone's daughters dependent on their uncle."

As he spoke, the breeze stirred again among the shrubs under the window.

"On their uncle?" repeated Miss Garth. She considered for a moment, and laid her hand sud-

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denly on Mr. Pendril's arm. "Not on Michael Vanstone!"

"Yes: on Michael Vanstone."

A SOUTH KENSINGTON LEGEND.

Once upon a time, in a great hardware city which shall be nameless, a great hardware capitalist formed a pious wish. He had made money of the hardest kind from the hardest materials, and he wished to display his gratitude in some striking manner.

After many days and nights of anxious deliberation, assisted by the advice of many art fanciers and teachers, the happy idea was hit upon of erecting a hardware cathedral. From the days of St. Augustine to those of Cardinal Wiseman many religious temples had been raised in stone and brick, but no one had ever dedicated an iron cathedral to the presiding saint of hardware. A contract was accordingly given to a leading ironmaster, accompanied by a plan prepared by a true hardware architect, and in due time a long building was raised, which was half way between a factory and a cathedral. Great care had been taken to put in clerestory windows, as much like the windows of gunmakers' workshops as possible, and the iron columns were carefully moulded in that shape which hardware people thought was the only proper Gothic. The roof was made as bare and simple as the roof of a barn, and no labour or ingenuity was spared which could make the building look hard, practical, and unattractive. £ s. d. was marked in ornamental metal-work whenever it was thought necessary to employ a little decoration; maxims from Poor Richard's Almanack, Harrison's System of Book-keeping by Double Entry, the Counting-house Monitor, and the Complete Tradesman, were put up as "legends;" screens were erected in various parts, formed of dustpans, fish-kettles, and a variety of hardware productions; an organ was built in the centre of the nave, side by side with a lighthouse, a monument made of stomach-pumps, and an iron water-butt; and, finally, the whole structure was dedicated to St. Bilston the Black: a saint who made roasting-jacks in the fourth century at a place called Wolverhampton.

When this singular place was duly consecrated and opened for public worship, the hardware people—a peculiar race of beings—were in ecstasies. They thought nothing so perfect had ever been seen before, in the whole range of Oriental, classic, Gothic, and romantic architecture. Some even went the length of pooh-poohing Bramanti, Michael Angelo, and Wren, as men whose reputation was the growth of the dark ages.

St. Bilston the Black (before alluded to) was a very worthy and important saint in his way, but he was not the only member of his family who felt an interest in cathedrals. Several elder brothers were in existence, whose virtues had been embalmed in the best of stone, and they were not very tolerant of this new temple of iron. With every disposition to respect the nineteenth century for what it really could do well, they thought it ought not to meddle with cathedral architecture. The canons of that art had been fixed by the great unknown, with the materials, proportions, and sites, of the world's cherished temples; and they thought that while thousands were daily making pilgrimages to the grand old shrines, no parody in iron should be allowed to stand in mocking magnificence.

As these discontented saints were as powerful as they were dissatisfied, not many hours were allowed to pass without something being done to relieve the world of this eyesore.

Being, like all saints, strictly conservative, they objected to destroy even such a thing as the hardware cathedral, and they therefore looked out for some appropriate spot in England to which they could at once remove it. After a very wide survey they selected a place called South Kensington, where a celebrated government engineer was trying his hand at a railway station. In the dead of the night the hardware cathedral was torn up by the roots; was carried to the great nursery-ground of science and art, where Shakespeare, taste, and the musical glasses, are forced in government hotbeds; and was dropped neatly into the middle of the unfinished railway station.

When the government engineer came out on the following morning to look at his work, he was startled by the change which a few hours had made in it. He rubbed his eyes, and looked at the building, and then he ran into his office, rubbed his eyes again, and looked at his plans, and after this he ran out into the muddy road, rubbed his eyes once more, and again stared at the building. A well-meaning, but injudicious friend, who was coming by at the time, congratulated him on the artistic effect of the structure; and this caused him to come to a hasty and unwise determination. Without wasting his time in trying to fathom a mystery that he felt was beyond his reach, he at once accepted the new hardware-ecclesiastical-railway-factory-Gothic building as his own design.

A new difficulty now arose which the unfortunate engineer had never anticipated. The place was spoilt as a railway station, and spoilt as a cathedral. The railway company for whom it was being built on speculation, refused to have anything to do with it, because it was not practical enough for their purpose; the Mormons, to whom it was offered as a temple, at a very moderate price, refused to buy it because it was too practical. The government engineer was thus left with this huge building on his hands, unable to find a tenant, and with every inducement to let it out piecemeal. One trader made him an offer for a part as a carriage repository; a philanthropic society wished to take the offices attached, to fit up as almshouses; the celebrated society for teaching grandmothers to suck eggs were half inclined to secure a large portion for their schools; and offers were made (much to the disgust of the South Kensington aristocracy) to rent the annexes as rope-walks

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The bewildered engineer was on the point of closing with several of these offers, when the project was revived of a second International Exhibition. An offer was made in the lump for the whole structure, and joyfully accepted; but an objection was raised by the exhibition managers to the very practical character of the architecture. The engineer was so delighted at securing such excellent tenants that he at once devised a daring method of removing this objection. He planned two monster domes, which cost about thirty thousand pounds apiece, and these he placed in such a position at each end of the hardware cathedral that at most interior points they could not be seen at all, and at only one point could they both be seen together. Consequently, this sixty thousand pounds, invested in iron and glass, was behind a screen three-fourths of its time, and, when it peeped out, only one half of its value was generally visible. The ingenuity of this arrangement, elaborately devised to swallow up money and show little or nothing for it, was so apparent to the meanest capacity, that no one ever accused the building, after this, of being too practical.

PIERRE GRINGOIRE'S MIRROR.

Once upon a time—nearly three hundred and fifty years ago—there was a preacher who said to himself, "Others may have the doctrine, but I have the manner. I have the real turn of the wrist; the exact modulation which insinuates all that I teach infallibly into the hearer's mind." One Sunday afternoon the Thespis of the market-place, Master Jean du Pontalais, marching his gay theatrical troop through the street, drew up in a crossway under the windows of the church where this preacher was at work, and ordered his tambourine to play, for he desired to draw out the congregation and carry them away with him into the market-place, where he had set up his platform. The more noise the tambourine made, the more the preacher shouted. The contest became furious. At last the preacher cried, "Let somebody go out and stop that tambourine!" Several went out, but not to stop the tambourine. "Then," said the preacher, "truly I will go myself. Let nobody stir. I shall be back immediately." Going out into the crossway, furious with rage, he cried to the mummer, "Hallo! what has made you so bold as to play your tambourine when I am preaching?" Pontalais looked at him, and said, "Hallo! what has made you so bold as to preach when I am playing on my tambourine?" The preacher, taking a knife from his man, cut a great gash in the tambourine and stopped its music, then returned into the church to end his sermon. But Pontalais, going behind, slily fitted the gash in the tambourine to the preacher's head, so that he wore it, unconsciously, like an Albanian hat when he remounted his chair; and as he urged the wrong that had been done him, everybody laughed. That story is told in an anecdote book by a chamberlain to Margaret of Navarre, sister to Francis the First of France; and it represents a not uncommon contest in the France of that day between the player and the churchman.

We do not now hear for the first time of a Pope who is troubled, and a cause of trouble through the struggle to hold in the same hand temporal and spiritual authority. There was such a Pope—Julius the Second—in the days of Pontalais; he was opposed, not abetted by the government of France, and it is curious to see how he was dealt with in the market-place by the old French Aristophanes, Pierre Gringoire—the most famous of the old writers of Follies and Farces, which in the days of Louis the Twelfth and of Francis the First, his successor, held the mirror up to life, and were often applied as closely to the service of politics as the mystery plays to the services of religion.

Pierre Gringoire began to write, as a young man of about five-and-twenty, at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Between gross abuse and affected worship women lost the due honour of men in the old days of chivalry, talk as we may about their poetical delicacy. Termagant wives were a stock-subject of the early farces. One such woman, says a farce, having married her lover on written conditions that he should make beds, cook, clean, fetch, and carry, kept the husband to his bond, till finding himself a slave, he tilted her into the great tub on a washing-day. All her entreaties to be helped out are answered by the objection that no such duty is written in the bond. Her mother coming in, when she is at the last gasp, saves her, and she becomes a better wife for her experience. Somewhat thus ran the doggrel dialogue between the wife in the tub and her Shylock of a spouse:

SHE. My good husband, save me, pray,
I'm already fainting away;
Put your hand in just a little bit.
HE. In my paper that was never writ.
Down, down, down she must go.
SHE. Ah, ah! Can you leave me so?
Help me at once or I'm dead.
HE. "— You'll bolt the meal and bake the bread,
Heat the oven and wash the linen—"
SHE. Now the chill of the blood's beginning;
A moment more and I die.
Save me! O, why don't you try?
HE. "—Wash the linen, cook the food—"
SHE. Only a hand, do be so good!
HE. "—Carry the grist up the hill to the mill—"
SHE. You're a beast of a cur! I shrivel! I chill!
HE. "—Make the beds the moment you're drest—"
SHE. Ah! you make my peril a jest!
HE. "—Then go down and put on the pot—"
SHE. Alas, where is my mother, Lolotte!
HE. "—And sweep the kitchen and keep it neat."
SHE. Go fetch the parson to me, I entreat!
HE. I've read the whole of the articles through,
But tell you without any more ado,
This duty was never set down by you.
Save yourself as well as you're able,
My duty now, is to rub the table.

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SHE. Fetch me a little boy out of the street!
HE. Is that in the bond? I cannot see't.
SHE. Come, come, your hand, my own my sweet;
I haven't strength to lift myself out.
MOTHER. Hola! ho!
HE. Who knocks without?
MOTHER. Only a friend. There's nothing to fear.
I just drop in to inquire, my dear,
How all goes, and how's your poor head?
HE. Very well, since my wife's dead.

That is pretty exactly Pierre Gringoire's mind upon matrimony. Of his own wife, he says that he bought her for thirteen-pence, and wishes the fellow hanged who overcharged him. Gringoire wrote also a poem against "the abuses of the world." At first an inventor of the dumb show of the pantomimic street-play, he became also an author of political street dramas, having been affiliated to the "Children without Care"—les Enfans Sans Souci—and attained to the second rank among them, that of Mère Folle, or Foolish Mother. Most probably also he reached the first rank, and became supreme over these playful souls as Prince of Fools. There were three sort of dramatists in the France of that day—the priests, who produced Scripture mysteries; the Bazochians, who produced worldly wisdom in moralities, and its lower follies in their farces; and those "Children without Care," who, founding their system on the doctrine that, since Adam, most men have been fools, gave to poor humanity the name of folly, and under that name satirised it in their pieces. Louis the Twelfth was a popular king, against whom the chief indictment by his people was parsimony. The Sans Souci children sometimes aimed their shafts even at that, and he took no offence. He would rather, he said, that his economies should excite laughter, than that his wastefulness should be a cause of tears. Gringoire, in his robes as Foolish Mother—a monk's robe and hood garnished with a pair of ass's ears—appears in effigy before his books of this time, surrounded by a motto, claiming reason under all his jest—"Tout par Raison; Raison par tout; Partout Raison." He set himself forth as a laughing cynical philosopher. The dog, said Rabelais, is the most philosophical animal in the world. The only use he makes of a dry bone, is to apply all his power to the extraction of its marrow.

But to Gringoire, the marrow of his political street-plays was not the principle they advocated so much as the substantial reward he got for them. He had an eye rather to the king's favour than to the cause at stake, when he attacked Pope Julius in the Paris market-places with his "Play of the Prince of Fools and of the Foolish Mother." It was produced on Mardi Gras of the year fifteen hundred and eleven, when the contest between France and the Pope was at its height. Then the piece begins with the awakening of the Seigneur Jean de Pontalais—he of the tambourine and the great antic sword—to make ready for the assembling of the States-General of Folly. The deputies come and take their places, nobles first, then clergy, and then foolish commonalty. All being in their seats, the Prince of Fools ascends his throne, attended by his faithful companion, the Lord of Gaiety. Compliments, containing political allusions, are then sung to him, after which, as Father of the People, he inquires as to the condition of his subjects. Accusations against the prelates rain at once from every side; after which, the Foolish Commonalty raises its doleful complaint, and through it—some years before Luther—Gringoire predicts, as most shrewd men foresaw, the coming schism in the Church. But when, after a chorus in his praise, the Prince of Fools asks the Commons what they want, seeing that they have a wise prince and this and that excellent privilege, they answer, that for want of money their grief's very sore. A new personage now mounts the stage, before whom all—without exception of the Prince himself—make their obeisance. But the new comer explains apart to the audience that—

Holy Mother Church, I say I am,
I anathematise and curse and cram;
But underneath this robe I wear another,
Being, in truth, only the Foolish Mother.

The pretended Mother Church confides to Foolish Occasion and Foolish Confidence her project for uniting the temporal and spiritual power. Having won the beneficed clergy by promises of canonries and red hats, she attempts to seduce the French landed proprietors; but they all oppose her, and swear fealty to the king, except the Seigneur de la Moon—emblem of versatility. The General of Childhood is hot against the popes, but False Mother Church herself is first to give the signal of war:

Prelates forward! what ho! what ho!
To the assault, prelates! to the assault!

Julius the Second, at Ravenna, acted such a part as well as Pierre Gringoire did in his person. The Prince of Fools is less hot than the General of Childhood. He hesitates to attack Mother Church. The seigneurs and the Foolish Commons assure him in vain that he may defend himself justly and canonically. His scruple can only be silenced by a sufficient answer to his question, "Is it really the Church?" His friend, the Lord of Gaiety, to put an end to his doubt, suddenly plucks away the outer robe of the hypocrite, and reveals under it the Foolish Mother, with her ass's ears. So the political play ended.

A trilogy, or succession of three pieces, was the fashion. On the same day, therefore, and immediately after this new "Folly," Gringoire presented a new Morality that dealt still more irreverently with the temporal pretensions of the Pope. It was a dialogue between the Peoples of France and Italy on the subject of *the Obstinate Man*. Both complain; for the lot of the peoples was then always to have matter of complaint. The People of Italy tells the People of France that complaint is unreasonable under a humane and honest king. How much worse is it for Italy, that is plagued with the pigheadedness of the Obstinate Man. The Obstinate

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Man presently comes himself upon the scene, and describes himself in stanzas that might pass for a very good political description of the Obstinate Man of our own day, who, sitting in the same chair, troubles Italy with his tenacity, and has even condescended to keep brigands in his pay:

I cannot keep my hands from doing ill;
Thieves, gallows-birds, and liars work my will,
Brigands are my allies, whose purse I fill.

Every stanza ends with the refrain, "Look at me, all! I am the Obstinate Man." Careless of the threats of Divine Punishment, Gringoire's Obstinate Man took for his helpers two redoubtable demons, Simony and Hypocrisy, the latter describing himself as "given wholly to God, except body and soul." Punishment still threatens. Even Simony and Obstinacy repent; but the Obstinate Man holds to his course. The end is a resolve to assuage the griefs of the People of Italy without regard to the Obstinate Man, and at his expense.

Gringoire's new farce of "Saying and Doing," drawing its merriment from coarse jesting, ended the trilogy.

Pierre Gringoire, however, was not a great moral satirist. He fought the king's battle against the Pope when that was the battle of France, and after laughing as Foolish Mother at all courtiers, received, as part of his reward for political service, the post of Herald-at-Arms to the wife of the Duke of Lorraine, Renée de Bourbon. Then he ceased to write himself Foolish Mother Gringoire, but assumed the territorial style of Vaudemont, and profited so much from royal favour, that he had to defend himself against the questioning of friends, who asked why he was gone into that voluntary servitude. It was, he said, to get a better point of view for the study of shams;—wherein he proved himself a sham. Again, in spite of his earlier arguments against papal ambition, after the concordat, being paid by the religious fraternity of St. Louis to write a "Mystery of St. Louis," he therein satisfied the priests by exaltation of the Pope, and personification of the laity under the name of "Outrage." That Mystery, except that it retains some allegorical personages—Good Counsel, Chivalry, Populace, Outrage, Church—is a historical drama, running over the events of the life of the sainted king, and introducing historical characters, all with addition of a full measure of legend and miracle. A bear falls dead after having defiled a cross, raised by some captives in the Holy Land, and of two Turks, Brandeffer and Billonard, who raise their swords against it—one has his arm dried up, the other perishes. Among the episodes in this Mystery, is the story of a spoilt son who runs into excesses, and disdains the counsels of his mother. Many a time, she says, I have bought you from prison—if you are seized again by the law, by my soul I shall die of sorrow. "Eh!" he replies, "the justice is my cousin, that sets my mind at ease." But the cousin is Etienne Boileau, ancestor of the poet, and that Boileau was famous for his rough, stern justice. The mother in despair goes at last to take counsel with Etienne, and ask him to reason with her boy. He receives her roughly, accuses her of having lost him by her own weakness, and promises to take him to task on the first opportunity. Occasion comes. The prodigal son asks money of his mother. "I have none," she answers. "Borrow," is his reply. She then herself sends him to borrow of their cousin the justice. But as the youth talks to his cousin in the strain he is used to hold towards his mother, and replies lightly to counsel, "Every one to his taste; nothing can change me," the justice changes him to a dead man, by having him hanged upon the stage for the edification of the audience. In another scene, three little children are also, before the people, piteously slain with the knife by order of the Sire de Coucy, for having killed a hare on his preserves. The king talks of hanging the Sire de Coucy, but he is a gentleman, and game is game. So he is spared to die at last, mourned by Church, Good Counsel, and even Populace.

Rough old days are reflected from Pierre Gringoire's Mirror of his Age. These present days are not altogether smooth days yet, and in some form the figure of the Obstinate Man still passes across what mirrors are held up to show the form and fashion of the time in France and Italy.

COMMITTED TO THE DEEP.

If a landsman threatened with consumption take a long sea-voyage, say to Australia and back, he probably comes home with a new lease of life. The pure open sea air is of all air the wholesomest; and though at river mouths in some hot climates, fevers and dysenteries may fairly enough be expected, yet those hot climates tend rather to cure than to cause lung disease. Who would suppose, then, that consumption, which has been so fatal in the army, is the great scourge of the British navy too? Dr. Gavin Milroy, with whose name and services as a medical inspector and sanitary commissioner in Jamaica, in the Crimea, and elsewhere, most people are familiar, has just issued, in the pamphlet form of a letter to Sir John Pakington, some valuable considerations on the health of the Royal Navy.

The subject is one of great interest as a mere question of national economy. By disease alone we lose every year out of the navy—out of a population of able-bodied men exempt from the tenderness or the infirmities of either childhood or old age—fifteen or sixteen men in every thousand; while the estimate for sickness amounts to the average loss of rather more than three weeks in a year from every man's duty. That is to say, from the whole available working power represented by the sailors of the navy one-seventeenth has to be struck out or cancelled by sickness. Of the men not on the sick list, it is to be remembered that on board ship every sick man's work must be distributed among the diminished number of the sound; and

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labour done by overwork, diminishes in the long run a man's ordinary working power.

Let it not be supposed that there is culpable neglect of the health of seamen in the Royal Navy. So far is this from being the case, that the navy, with the problem how to keep in health a small community locked for months together within narrow space, was really the first school of sanitary science. Between the beginning and the end of the continental war, closed by the battle of Waterloo, so much had been done, that, by reason of improved health and chance of life in their crews, two ships, in 1815, were capable of more service than three of the same rate had been three dozen years earlier. But even in that improved state of things the yearly death-rate, during the last three years of the war, was one man in thirty. In those earlier days, when men seized by the press-gang, without much regard for bodily condition, were crammed into filthy receiving-vessels, where many perished of fever even before they went on board a man-of-war; when in the men-of-war the holds were noisome as the jails of the same day, and "the air used to become so contaminated," wrote Sir Gilbert Blane, a wise doctor, who knew what he had seen, "as in innumerable instances to produce instantaneous and irremediable suffocation;" when bad provisions were served out, and, lemon-juice not having come into use, crews were desolated year after year by scurvy; in those earlier days nearly a twelfth part of the whole force of men afloat, must have died every year; and more than a sixth part must have been every year cancelled by death and sickness. Yet when the mortality was so great, twenty years before the diet of the navy was improved, and lemon-juice was served out as a protection against scurvy, Captain Cook had sailed round the world, and had lived, with a hundred and twelve men, for three years in a ship well-cleaned, ventilated, and provisioned, bringing all the men home, except five, of whom four were lost by accidents, one only by disease. At the beginning of this century, too, when the frightful mortality among convicts sent to Botany Bay, attracted attention, Sir Gilbert Blane and Count Rumford fitted up an old East Indiaman, the Glatton, for conveyance of four hundred convicts. Of these, only seven died, five men and two women, of old-standing diseases which they had before they sailed; and the crew of a hundred and seventy, after a twelvemonth's absence, during which the vessel had been round the world, came back without loss of a single man. How was that result achieved? Especially by providing for the ventilation between decks. There were a series of tubes passing up from where the convicts slept, into the open air; there was a narrow opening amidships, along the whole length of the upper deck, protected by a penthouse covering raised a few inches above it, to keep out weather. These were always open, and there were also scuttles at the side, to open as weather permitted. What could be done was thus demonstrated, a dozen years before the end of the great continental war: at which time, remarkable as had been the progress made upon the strength of sanitary experience, Sir Gilbert Blane still objected that the mortality of the navy from all causes—about thirty-three per thousand—was, as it ought not to be, double the then rate among persons of the same ages in civil life.

The study of health in the navy has for some years past been aided by the issue of very excellent statistical returns. We find, of course, that the sick rate varies greatly in our fleet, according to the stations at which ships are employed. It is (or was when last heard of) highest on the East Indian and China station, where, for the last three years of which the health reports are published, there was a daily average sick list of ninety-three men in the thousand. The sick-rate is lowest on the Australian station, where it is only half that on the coasts of India and China. Next in degree in sickliness is—throughout we say is, referring only to the last reports in question—the body of ships engaged in irregular duty on various stations, which are by the rate of only one man in a thousand less healthy than the ships on the West Coast of Africa. On that dreaded coast, although the sick-rate is high—sixty-eight in a thousand—it does not approach the ninety-three in a thousand of India and China. The sick-rate at the other stations ranges from fifty-nine to fifty in a thousand, and they are beginning with that of fifty-nine and rising in average healthiness to that of fifty, the Cape of Good Hope, North America, and the West Indies, the Brazilian, the Pacific, the Mediterranean, the Home fleet—the Home service being exceeded in healthiness only by the Australian.

The death-rate at the several stations does not hold the same proportion to the sickness. There is not only more sickness, but more fatal sickness, in the East Indian and China service, where the mortality is as high as forty-seven or eight in a thousand; and the Brazilian fleet, though it stands only fifth in the order of sickliness, ranks—with a wide interval—second in the average of deaths—five-and-twenty out of every thousand men. Even the North American and West Indian station, with a death-rate of twenty-four in a thousand, is worse in this respect than the West African, which has so traditionally bad a name. The use of quinine, and avoidance of prolonged boat service at the mouth of rivers, have reduced the death-rate in our ships on the West African station to twenty or twenty-one per thousand. The irregular service, which stood very high for sickliness, has a comparative low death-rate, about twelve. In the home fleet it is ten and a fraction; in the Australian, a fraction under ten; in the Pacific, lowest of all, between eight and nine. Two of the three years 'fifty-six, 'seven, and 'eight (the last three of which returns are published), were years of war for the West Indian fleet; and although the increased death-rate in them is due infinitely more to disease than to casualty of battle, yet

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the state of war involved so frequently the sudden placing of crews under unhealthy conditions, that the death-rate in 'fifty-eight was twice what it had been in 'fifty-six. Unless especial care be taken and the right season for operation happen to suit the political conditions of the case, there is always a very great additional mortality produced by the sickness that will take fleets and armies at a disadvantage in the time of war. The last "operations" in China, following the attack on the Peiho forts, were made in a favourable month, May, and under special provision for the health of troops; the consequence was that, when in the beginning of July, after conclusion of the treaty, the troops re-embarked, there had been among them very little suffering from sickness.

Apart from causes of sickness lying ashore that produce indeed too much destruction of the sailor's health, but of which the prevention depends rather on wholesome provisions that should be made, and usually are not made, by the authorities of seaports than on anything that can be ruled or done on shipboard, the great causes of death in the navy are fevers, diseases of the bowels (dysentery, cholera, &c.), and diseases of the lungs, foremost among which is consumption. Ships themselves vary, of course, very much in sickliness. Whatever the sailors suffer from the influence of climate, or the miasma of river-mouths under hot latitudes, bears small proportion to the suffering by imperfect sanitary condition of the ships themselves. The trimmest and cleanest ship may be a place in which health, strength, life, is assailed every hour. The cleanest and handsomest house may have under it some lurking cesspool, or damp unaired basement, to account for the pale cheeks of its inmates, the closed shutters, and the mutes at the door. An unsuspected heap of rotten matter in the hold, may yield the fever poison that shall waste a fine ship's crew. The emanation from the bodies of men—hard working, moreover, and less than half washed—packed too closely together in their berths in an ill-ventilated space between decks, yields a sure and not slow poison. This is the one great defect left to be remedied in our well-managed men-of-war. It is a main source of fever, and the chief source of the consumption which, in spite of every other influence that tends to check it, makes fearful head among our seamen.

In 'fifty-five, the crew of the Hannibal, numbering eight hundred and thirty, when in the Black Sea, besides suffering especially from bowel complaints, had a fourth part of the men down with typhus fever. She suffered five times more than other ships of her size on the same duty. In the year following, fever clung to the ship in the Mediterranean, for it depended on a cause within. The Conqueror and Centurion, with crews of nine hundred and seven hundred and forty, respectively, served together in the Mediterranean for two years, during which one ship had ten times more fever in it than the other. The Dauntless, which had lost nearly seventy of her crew in a few weeks from yellow fever when on the West Indian station three years before, had a high fever rate during the whole time of her service in the Baltic and the Black Sea. Sometimes, a ship has become so notoriously sickly, that her name has become a name of dread, and has been changed. In the case of one such ship, the Rosamond, formerly the Eclair, the ventilation between decks was found to be most imperfect, and "there was a considerable accumulation of filth under the magazine." Forty cases of fever broke out between April and June, 'fifty-six, in the Eurotas, while in the Mediterranean. Her medical officer was "unable to account for the disease, unless it arose from the extreme lowness and closeness of the deck on which the men were berthed." In May, 'fifty-eight, there was an outbreak of fever in the Valorous, when on the way from Ferrol to Plymouth: the sole ascertainable cause, defective ventilation. "Air," said Sir Gilbert Blane, "contaminated by foul and stagnant exhalations, particularly those from the living body, is the ascertained cause of typhus fever, which has been a more grievous and general source of sickness and mortality in the navy, than even the scurvy. The infection of fever is generated by the breath and perspiration of men, crowded for a length of time in confined air, and without the means of personal cleanliness." Freer ablution is no doubt practised by sailors than by soldiers, among whom, with all the enforced regard to cleanliness of dress, real cleanliness of person is under our barrack system still impossible. The smell of a marching regiment is sometimes intolerable. The state of the air where men sleep in barracks, is as serious a cause of invaliding and death, in the army, as the want of pure air for the sailors in their berths between decks, is of invaliding and death in the navy. Lord Herbert put the country on the road to mighty changes; and lives enough to make a brigade of men, are now saved every year through his exertions. There is still more to be done. Wholesome air to sleep in, is a first requisite of health, certainly not yet secured in every barrack, or on board of every Queen's ship. Fever broke out in the Princess Royal when she was conveying troops from Malta to Alexandria, in January, 'fifty-eight. Boisterous weather made it necessary to keep the ports, both on the main and lower deck, barred in, during nearly the whole of the passage. The disease was checked by bringing the men up to the main deck. But the Princess Royal, though a new ship, had been always sickly; imperfect ventilation of the sleeping space, being the sole assignable reason. Whatever the disease, the want of fresh air by the sick will beget or strengthen it. The Megæra, in 'fifty-eight, put off from Calcutta with cholera on board. At sea the cholera increased. There came boisterous weather, the main deck ports had to be kept shut, and the sick therefore were brought on deck and placed under an awning. From that time, though an eighth part of the crew had perished, and the disease was then

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making head, the cholera subsided, and soon disappeared. In the Britannia, when she was in the Black Sea, just before the sailing of the expedition to the Crimea, within five days two hundred and twenty-nine of a crew of nine hundred and twenty were attacked with cholera, and of these one hundred and thirty-nine died. There were also four hundred cases of diarrhœa. The ship had put to sea, to get rid of the disease on its first showing itself, and the change seemed to be beneficial until rough weather came, and the lower deck ports had to be closed. Then, on the following night, cholera broke out with all its fury. As soon as the crew could be removed into some empty transports, the scourge vanished, after destroying twice as many men as were killed in the whole fleet by the enemy's fire in the attack on the sea batteries of Sebastopol.

There is need, in fact, to follow the lead of Count Rumford and Sir Gilbert Blane in securing for the sleepers between decks a system of ventilation that no stress of weather can destroy.

During the three years under consideration ('fifty-six, 'seven, and 'eight), the deaths by disease were two thousand one hundred and twenty-five; to this we have to add the invaliding of men discharged as permanently sick, and who go to swell the tables of mortality ashore. In the same years, four thousand two hundred and twenty-one men were discharged as invalids, so that the average loss to the fleet by sickness and death was two thousand one hundred men a year. It was least in 'fifty-six, and most in 'fifty-eight, when it reached a number equal to that of the combined crews of three of the largest line-of-battle ships in the navy; the loss being, it is to be remembered, among picked men of an age when death does not come to them in the healthy course of nature. At the same time it is to be added that under the healthy conditions which now prevail in ships of war on the home station, or on stations where the mortality is even less, the death-rate from all causes is only two or three in a thousand greater than that among the picked men of the London Fire Brigade, and is not sensibly greater than that for men of the same ages in all England.

In our home fleet, for example, there are but eight or nine deaths in a year from fever. The same men in their old homes ashore, would yield more cases. The great fever station at home is Sheerness and the estuary of the Medway, the ships anchored high up the Medway generally suffering more than those at Sheerness. The people afloat and ashore, in ship and dockyard, and in the town of Sheerness, suffer so much from malaria, that in Chatham Hospital, Sheerness is said to be spoken of as "the African station of our home service." There is three or four times as much fever in the Mediterranean as in the home fleet. There, in the course of a twelvemonth, about seventy men in a thousand are attacked, and two in the seventy die. But the West Indian station is the fever station, and of half the annual deaths from fever in our service yellow fever is the cause. Within the last fifteen or twenty years, yellow fever seems to have been more destructive to our sailors than even in the old bad times of neglected hygiène.

The reason of this we may find in the fact that all the vessels most severely smitten have been steamers. The excessive heat on board aggravates the defect of ventilation; there is also liability in steamers to the accumulation of offensive rubbish under the machinery: which adds to the impurity of the hot air in the between decks. A particular part of a ship is thus sometimes marked for its deadliness. In the cases of two ships, the Argus and Virago, it was "about the after part of the lower deck and in the fore part of the engine-room," the mortality being greatest among the men berthed near these parts; and in the Leopard, nearly all the attacks occurred among the men living in the steerage, where they had been more exposed than the rest of the crew to "an offensive effluvium which had for some time previously issued from the hold and spirit-room." On examination, much black mud, mixed with half-rotten chips, which had been accumulating for a long time, was found in the limbers. "The exhalations from that part of the ship, the surgeon believed, were the cause of the yellow fever, as the malarious influences from the shore were the cause of the cases of remitting fever."

Take the yellow fever crew out into airy quarters ashore, and the disease is checked. It all but vanished in the case of the Argus, after the crew, sick and well, had been landed at Bermuda. Yellow fever is, in fact, the typhus of the West Indies, bred like typhus, and to be met with the same measures of prevention. The removal of a ship to a cooler latitude is a remedial measure. But above all things, the crew, either sick or well, must not be cribbed or cabined between decks, without ample ventilation. To bring the sick on deck under awnings, or to send them ashore (they have gone to lie and heal among the patients of the well-ventilated Barbadoes Hospital, without spreading infection in a single case), is to arrest the disease pretty surely. Something is due, of course, to other causes. It is hard to say why there was no yellow fever on the Brazilian station until twelve years ago, when it appeared for the first time, and has since added much to the mortality among our sailors on that coast.

Not less famous than the West Indian Islands are for the favouring of fever, are the East Indian and China stations for the breeding of cholera, dysentery, and diarrhœa. Of not quite five hundred deaths from dysentery and diarrhœa in three years, four hundred and twenty-five occurred on this station. Of one hundred and sixty cholera cases, all, except only twenty-two, occurred in these waters: usually between May and November. Whatever may be the existing cause, and that is open to discussion, it is certain that among the predisposing causes few are more sure than an over-crowded and ill-ventilated space between decks for the hammocks of the sailors.

But of all diseases fostered by want of ventilation, those of the lungs are, as we set out

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by saying, the most universal, and consumption is the most common. They represent no less than a sixth part of the entire sickness throughout the service, clinging to our sailors even in the mild climate of the Mediterranean, and under the bright skies of the tropics. Here, also, there is a marked and instructive difference between ships lying side by side on the same service. In some ships it is no slight matter that there is facility for getting warm food after a cold and wet watch before turning in. "Generally speaking," says the report for 1856, "the comparative frequency of inflammatory affections of the lungs, in the home force, is to be ascribed to the exposure of the men to cold and wet, which it is difficult to avoid when there is a necessity for employing them on dockyard duties and in boats, and their being quartered in cold, damp, and windy hulks during the winter months, where they have few opportunities for drying their clothes." As showing the difference in different ships' crews employed in similar work, it is stated that "in the Royal William, the Hawke, Formidable, and Blenheim, there did not occur a single case of inflammation of the lungs and pleura, while in other ships they amounted, in some instances, to eight, and even to fifteen or sixteen."

During three years, three hundred and thirty-nine of the deaths from chest diseases were caused by consumption: one hundred and eleven only arising from all other affections of the throat and lungs. In the same period, between five and six hundred seamen were discharged consumptive, most of whom would die within six months after discharge. That was a number three times larger than the number of discharges for all other forms of chest disease.

Consumption among soldiers was, by the report of the recent royal commission on the sanitary state of the army "traced in a great degree to the vitiated atmosphere generated by over-crowding and defective ventilation, and the absence of proper sewerage in barracks." Special inquiry into the prevalence of lung disease in certain districts of England, led Dr. Greenhow to the conclusion that it proceeded from working and sleeping in ill-ventilated rooms. The following description of the berthing of the men at night, and of its consequences, was given in the First Statistical Report of the Navy in 1840. "The usual space between the suspending points (clues) of the hammocks is from seventeen to eighteen inches, so that, when they are extended by the beds, their bodies are in contact. The effect is to bring the bodies of the men into contact in greater or less number, according to the size of the ships. When at sea, with a watch on deck, the accumulation and pressure are reduced by a half; but when in secure harbours, five hundred men perhaps sleep on one deck, their bodies touching each other over the whole space laterally, and with very little spare room lengthways. The direct results of elevated temperature and deteriorated air, may be conceived; but it is not easy to conceive the amount of the first, nor the depressing and debilitating power of both, as measured by sensation, within the tropics. The tendency of such a state of things must be to subvert health, and lay the subject of it open to attacks of serious disease."

Many important reforms have been effected, some partial reforms in this direction also; but it is to this part of the ship, and the arrangements for the sleeping of the sailors, that attention may be paid with the largest resulting gain of life, health, and efficiency of service. The necessity has become more pressing, since the general use of steam power in the service. Almost all recent instances of extraordinary mortality have occurred in steam vessels. So writes Dr. Gavin Milroy, to whose letter the public is indebted for the fresh attention now called to this subject.

The mortality by war in the navy, as in the army, is inconsiderable even in hot war times when compared with the loss by disease. In the fleets during the Russian war, including the marines and naval brigade serving with the army before Sebastopol, one thousand five hundred and seventy-four died of disease, but only two hundred and twenty-seven died of wounds received in action. In our fleet during the China war of 'fifty-seven, thirty-eight men died of wounds received in action, while three hundred and twenty-seven fell by the unseen enemy, disease. In the year 'fifty-eight, on the India and China station, thirty-five men were killed in action, while five hundred and fifty-one were victims of disease.

The need in our ships seems to be of more than ventilating tubes. Why is it insisted that the lower deck in two-decked and frigate-built ships, and the lower and middle in three-deckers, shall be the only decks for sleeping the whole crew? What is there, except blind adherence to usage, that should prevent the men from being distributed over all the decks, to their immense gain in space and air, and therefore in health, life, and efficiency?

GENTLE SPRING.

We are apt to think that, to see wondrous phenomena, we must travel into distant regions. If for "wondrous" we read "unaccustomed," the proposition is perfectly correct. Of what we are used to, we think but little; familiarity has bred indifference. But to strangers arriving from the uttermost parts of the earth our own climate offers much that is striking. The native of northern Ultima Thules—of the Faroe Islands, the Shetlands, St. Kilda, Iceland—is especially fascinated by our trees. To him they are not inanimate, impassive things; they are living hamadryads—attractive wood nymphs—captivating him to such an extent that he can hardly tear himself away from them. His immediate impulse is to abduct them forcibly, and fix them in his own treeless land. He longs for trees to adorn his dwelling, with an ardour similar to

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that with which the wifeless settler entreats the emigration of women, to render Home possible in his adopted land. The beau-ideal of domestic bliss has ever been a Family assembled beneath the shade of their own tree—no matter what—fig-tree, vine, olive, oak, or fir. The Northman who has penetrated to the far South—perhaps, even, to the valleys of Mull and Argyle—scarcely knows how to choose between the symmetrical stature of the pine, the drooping tresses of the birch, and the leafy arms of the beech, stretched out to welcome him. They have voices too: they whisper, they threaten, they lament, they allure. Go and spend only a month at John o'Groat's house; on your return to your woodland park, or your blooming orchard, you will fully feel the attractive influence of trees.

But all trees are not the same trees. Young people of English parentage, born and brought up amidst tropical verdure, sent home to Europe to complete their education, and arriving in winter, have been greatly astonished. How curious! Trees without leaves! And so intricate and finely-branched! The solid stems seem to bear a Medusa's head of interlacing twigs, multitudinous yet orderly, if you examine their disposition and arrangement. Surely no gardener's art can keep them alive in that unclad exposed condition! They must perish, starved into lifeless brooms! Still, they are graceful, even in death.

We are walking through the wood after a calm night of hoar-frost. A mist from the meadow has been stealing through it, silvering every twig with an ornament, beside which silver itself is dull. It is a forest of gigantic ostrich feathers, such as no Eastern potentate can produce to decorate the courts of his palace, or to wave around his mausoleum. The sun breaks forth: his ray, though feeble, is yet powerful enough to scatter around us a shower of diamonds. And then, the snowflakes, as they fall! How completely novel! What a realisation of the impossible! The King of Siam might well believe in the mountain from whose top you may knock a nail into the sky, while he refused to believe that water could harden so as to allow an elephant to walk across a river. And you tell us that, in a few short weeks, this dazzling scene of barrenness will be shady, leafy, full of blossoms, song-birds, and butterflies? We must watch the coming of the change you call Spring, for no similar changes are to be witnessed in our ever-green, ever-sultry Asiatic home.

In another way are we favoured in Great Britain and Ireland: there are countries which *have* a spring, and there are countries which, although experiencing the extremes of heat and cold, have none. For a week's great thaw—flooding you with torrents of dirty water, making roads and garden-walks alike impassable, depositing the collected filth of winter wherever the retiring inundation shall leave it, threatening bridges, and rendering ferry-boats impossible by an irresistible stream of fresh-water icebergs—is not a season; it is a catastrophe, a break-up, for which we have no word so expressive as the French débâcle. Neither is the opening of the windows of heaven, after a six months' or a twelvemonth's drought—during which the collecting naturalist has to dig for torpid specimens of insects, spiders, and lizards, and during which you may pitch your tent over the spot where a crocodile lies buried in the hardened soil—Spring. Neither is the substitution of tepid cataracts from the skies for whirlwinds of burning dust upraised from the plain—when lethargic fish, crustaceans, beetles, snails, not to mention enormous boas, wake up from their feverish sleep in the hard-baked mud; when the scanty hortus siccus still remaining on the land drinks water like a sponge, and, with a convulsive effort to profit by the occasion, concentrates its powers in the production of a few new shoots and flowers and seeds—neither is this Spring. It is a resuscitation from the trance almost of fossil nature; it is a short-enduring spasmodic manifestation of vitality; but it is not the gentle yet steady influence which, with us, brings forth flowers, vegetables, and fruit, each after its kind. In those regions, whose climate alternates periodically between parching heats and tempestuous rains, foretold by earthquakes—in those regions, daisies, snowdrops, and primroses are visions of another world; buttercups and butter are alike unknown; strawberries and cream are incredible fables; radishes, though not square, are impossible roots, for you cannot extract what does not exist; sea-kale and rhubarb tart are as mythological as the ambrosia of the gods and goddesses; while the words "spring salad," "green peas," "asparagus," serve merely as spells to bring the water into your mouth.

There are also countries where, if you like, you may have no summer, nothing but winter, then a long spring, and then winter again. For this, you have not to go very far—that is, the journey is short in these railroad days. Arriving in the Oberland in April, you have only to pitch your tent at the edge of the melting snow, following it as it retreats upward before the advancing breath of summer, to behold a succession of little springs, as the green sward is exposed to air and sunshine. You will have crocuses in May and June, and, at the end of August, the dear little Alpine linaria will be still coming into bloom at the glacier's edge. You will behold patches of azure gentian so like a little bit dropped out of the sky, that you look upward to see whence it has fallen. The cows and their keepers are well aware of all this and more. "Excelsior" is their motto. By constantly climbing, they contrive to give you spring grass-butter, and spring cream cheese, until the snows of October put a sudden extinguisher on vernal ideas, and drive them all down together to their well-built stables in the valley.

Spring, in the United Kingdom, is not merely a lovely sight; it is a pleasant feeling. Lead a

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blind person round your garden on a genial sunshiny day, and he will tell you at once,

Spring is coming; Spring is coming;
Hark! the little bee is humming.

Nor is the bee needful to give the information. His own sensations serve to apprise him that the sun is climbing rapidly up the ecliptic. Every sound, ringing more clearly than heretofore, tells him that there is more space in the atmosphere; the thick heavy curtain of mist and fog is upraised and withdrawn, at least temporarily and partially; there is an odorous freshness in the air; the earth feels firmer under his tread, promising a supply of that March dust a bushel of which is worth a king's ransom. The lower creatures, even the sightless worm, manifest an instinctive foretaste of the coming change. Winter is quite inadequate to repress the elastic energies of Spring. Under the tardy snow the pansy will blossom, the strawberry plants will prepare their flowers. To *retard* the growth and blooming of plants much behind their due season, is one of the more difficult problems in gardening. A tyro is able to *forward* them; he can show you moss roses in May; but he cannot show you lilies of the valley in August; while not a few clever gardeners are able to supply you, at the cost of x (the unknown quantity) shillings per pound, with fresh ripe grapes on New Year's Day. Spring is thus a high-mettled racer whom you may spur on to almost any pace, but whom you cannot keep lagging at the starting-post when once his rival steeds are off and away.

Without being sensitive to the manifestations of the newly discovered primordial power, Od (if the discovery be made), without pretending to see in utter darkness, to perceive that our friend's hands and heads are phosphorescent, to distinguish the north from the south pole of a magnet by the touch only, to behold luminous clouds emanate from a bell as long as it is kept ringing, with the rest of the catalogue of odic impressions —many persons are able to divine the state of things around them, by their feelings. The impression of season and of weather is particularly lasting. A bright Spring day never comes to greet you without being accompanied by a tail of memories of the spring days of other times and localities; how you looked over the precipice on the Island of Capri, whence Tiberius tossed his dishonoured victims; how you gathered bouquets of vernal squills in the chesnut groves of Tuscany; how you awoke to the sounds of curious chimes as the sun rose over Belgian cities; how the salmon in highland streams refused your ill-thrown fly, and what an electric shock it gave you to feel you had hooked a fish at last. On no stronger thread than an April breeze, may hundreds of such pearls be strung.

Altitude, again—a small difference of altitude —is a physical condition which affects the sensorial faculties, and awakes the reminiscences of many persons. Have you no antipathy to a bedroom on the ground-floor? Even in a house on the top of a hill, do you not prefer, as a lodging by night, and perhaps by day, the first floor to the one below? In the fifth or sixth story of a Paris house—Alphonse Karr talks of dwelling in the fourteenth, in the days of his youth—do you ever lose the consciousness of your elevation, or suppose yourself in the entresol? Ladies long resident in cities, accustomed to go up-stairs to the drawing-room, feel comparatively out of their element in one which allows them to step at once into a flower-garden without breaking their necks from a balcony.

At the watershed, the topmost ridge of any lofty mountain pass—the St. Gothard or the Simplon—do you not recognise sensations similar to those experienced at the top of other mountain passes? Nay, more; the analogies which physical geographers have established between altitude and latitude are confirmed by yourself in the counties of Caithness and Wick, on comparing your bodily impressions there with those experienced in the uplands of Bavaria, before making the grand plunge from it, down to the Tyrol and Italy. A considerable elevation above the sea is betrayed by certain indescribable personal hints, as surely as it is a sign of change of weather when old Betty's joints are on the rack.

Spring is not only a Season; Spring is a Force, which begins to manifest itself at an earlier period, and in more out-of-the-way places than very many people suspect. The phenomena occurring on and about St. Valentine's Day are unmistakable symptoms that something unusual is in the wind. Birds don't choose their mates, nor are postage-stamps purchased by millions, for nothing. But who would look for the first signs of the coming Spring, at the bottom of rivers, lakes, and ditches? The mysterious influence, nevertheless, penetrates the bed of waters, and works unsuspected at the preparation of next summer's crop—of weeds?—no; grant them the dignity of aquatic plants. Before the Sun has walked into the Ram, the water-lily has thought of unfolding new leaves, and the water-soldier bedecks himself with starry green cockades. The start of growth once made, there is no further stoppage or check; spring frosts cannot penetrate the liquid mantle which envelopes their tender foliage; the malignant rays of the "red moon"—the moon which scowls on and blights the earth between the Paschal and the Pentacostal moons—are powerless to injure, when they reach the bottom of the gliding stream.

This unseen vivifying force is especially manifested in things that are invisible to the multitude. Early Spring, the moment of nature's revival, is the time to search for protozoa, creatures who represent the earliest dawn, the very first beginnings of animated life. Submit this droplet of ditch water to your microscope, with a magnifying power of from two hundred and twenty to two hundred and fifty diameters, and you see—what? A bit of clear, trans-

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parent, colourless jelly, apparently about the size of a pea. It is called Amæba princeps, otherwise Proteus (although the latter name has been less appropriately given to the swan-necked animalcule, quite a different creature), for shape it has none. Its outline varies from second to second. It has really no parts or organs; but instead thereof it pushes out from its mass a protuberance here, and draws in a hollow there. The pea becomes a bean, or a boot, or a hand with half a dozen gouty fingers; often, it resembles some island you have seen in the map of the Indian Archipelago. It progresses, gliding slowly across the field of view, drawing in after it its irregular protuberances as it goes. It never, through carelessness, leaves any portion of itself behind it. Its motion alone would not entitle it to be considered an animal; for many microscopic plants frisk about, or writhe and twist, or slide along with far more energetic movements. But the Proteus eats; note in its substance sundry coloured morsels it has swallowed; and now, on its way coming in contact with a dainty bit, it annexes it—enveloping it entirely in its own proper substance. As the Proteus, when it chooses, can be all limbs, so, when it requires, is it all stomach. It eats, and is therefore an animal. It does not feed indiscriminately, but lets some prey go, while it appropriates others; therefore it has a will of its own. Learned men tell us that the jelly of which its bodily substance is composed, is "sarcode." Sarcode is further capable of secreting shells, many of great symmetry and beauty, besides the substance known as sponge. The portion of sarcode which sponges in their growing and living state contain, constitutes their only claim to belong to the animal kingdom. Indeed, sponges begin life as solitary, naked Amœbæ, who club together to build themselves a skeleton pro bono publico. Of course the sarcode, of the consistence of white of egg, has disappeared, long before sponge reaches our washing-stands.

And is mighty Man acted on by the same natural stimulus which awakens creatures who are lower than the starfish and the worm? The answer is read at once in the elastic step, the brighter eye, the rosier cheek, the plump cherry lip of youth. It is legible also in the fitful effort with which elderly invalids gird up their loins to perform the concluding stages of their journey of life. Spenser tells us that over earthly things *mutability* is the reigning power:

> So forth issued the seasons of the year;
> First, lusty Spring, all delight in leaves of flowers
> That freshly budded, and new blossoms did bear
> (In which a thousand birds had built their bow'rs
> That sweetly sung to call forth paramours):
> And in his hand a javelin he did bear,
> And on his head (as fit for warlike Stours)
> A gilt engraven morion he did wear;
> That as some did him love, so others did him fear.

—With reason feared him, propitiating his forbearance with periodical bleedings and doses of medicine. Spring, who gives strength to the strong, spreads snares for the feeble. By his bright sunshine he tempts them to venture prematurely out of their wearisome winter retreats, perhaps even to cast aside their tried defensive woollen armour; and then, with blast of his cutting winds, or with the wet blanket of his chilling fogs, or with his sharp artillery of hail and sleet, he extinguishes the flickering flame of life. May Hill is a hard climb for the wayworn, the sickly, and the burdened with years. Before reaching the top, many are they who lie down to slumber by the roadside, unable to attain the summit of the pass, and to make the gentle descent into June.

Spring, therefore, is to many the close, as it is to multitudes of living creatures the commencement of their earthly existence. A year beginning precisely at midnight, as soon as the sixtieth minute past eleven P.M. of the thirty-first of December is concluded, is chronologically convenient, business-like, and exact; but the Roman year, which allowed the dark inclement period to pass before it ventured to step out of doors, is far more natural and intelligible for amateurs. What is the order of the seasons? Spring, summer, autumn, winter. How run the signs of the Zodiac? The Ram, the Bull, the Heavenly Twins, the Crab, the Lion, the Virgin, and the Scales. The minute and the hour of the day in March when the sun invades the territory of Aries is the beginning of the year, according to the Calendar of Nature, when a not very old but nearly forgotten almanack tells us that the republican months Pluviose and Ventose are succeeded by Germinal and Floreal. So be it. May this year's March and April showers be plentifully followed by May flowers!

ABOARD THE CONSTELLATION.

"Going for seventeen hundred dollars! a shameful, aggravating sacrifice! No advance on seventeen hundred dollars? Gentlemen, gentlemen, be spry with your biddings, and don't let such valuable property be sweepered out of the U-nited States for a fractional splinter of its worth! The splendid yacht Constellation, with all her new stores and fixings, cabins paneled with maple and mahogany, mirrors, pictures, new sails as white as the President's best table-napkins, masts as tough as a hickory fishing-rod, going to be knocked down to a foreign bidder for the ridiculous rate of seventeen hundred dollars."

This fervid burst of oratory was uttered in the Auction Mart of Buffalo city, on a broiling August day; and the auctioneer stopped to take breath, wiped his forehead, and kept the ivory hammer still suspended in mid air.

There was a hum among the spectators—a hum and a smothered laugh, but no effort to avert the "sacrifice" so much deplored by the man of sales. One Quaker flour-dealer remarked that, had the craft possessed more stowage, he might have made an offer; but that such tawdry gimcracks were useless to a sober citizen.

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"Dont't libel the property, brother Broadbrim," exclaimed the flushed auctioneer; "and you, gentlemen, let me requisition you to throw aside your supineness, and bid for the lot as becomes the land of enlightenment. No advance? I wish I had her at New York, I do! I wish she were lying off Brooklyn, and then the force of competition would——"

"Never mind the force of competition, Mr. Kettering. You're longer-winded than a Congress-man. Call the next lot, mister, and knock this'n down to the cap., can't you? We've listened to enough bunkum about that tarnation toy-shop schooner."

Mr. Kettering made one more appeal. He begged of the audience not to "give the Britisher a triumph," not to "let this gorgeous yacht, comparable to the gilded galley of the Europian princess Cleopatra the Great go out of the country;" but, finally, he rapped down the hammer of fate.

"Cap., she's yours."

I was the captain. Attracted by certain glowing advertisements in the American and Canadian papers, I had come across to Buffalo to view the yacht and be present at the sale; and now I was the undisputed owner of the schooner Constellation, a craft fit for yachting, and fit for nothing else. Her lines were graceful and good, and she lay like a duck upon the water, with her taper masts and bright paint: a strange contrast to the uglier and more serviceable vessels on the lake. But her tonnage was trifling, her speed by far surpassed her power of carrying freight, and there was some foundation for the scorn with which the traders of Buffalo regarded her. For wafting flour-barrels, wheat, Indiana cheese, and Illinois apples, eastward, and of bearing European goods and Lowell cotton-prints, westward—she was as unfit as a racehorse for ploughing. A melancholy story, which I heard in after-days, but of which I then knew but little, attached to her. She had been built and decorated for a young Buffalo exquisite, the heir of a wealthy townsman, who had acquired costly habits in New York. By herself, the yacht might have been all very well, and might even have kept her feather-brained owner out of mischief; but, unluckily, young Breckett had a taste for play, and preferred écarté and lansquenet, with fashionably high stakes, to the cribbage and "poker," for quarter dollars, of his native province. When a man seeks his own ruin, whether in the Old World or in the New, he seldom has long to wait. Two gamblers from the Empire City visited Buffalo in the course of a professional tour, became acquainted with the younger Breckett, and emptied his pockets as the price of their intimacy. To replenish his purse and have his "revenge," the silly young man was tempted to borrow the contents of his father's cash-box, in the idle hope of replacing the money he had taken when luck should turn. The stolen dollars and golden eagles brought with them no change of fortune; they soon chinked in the purses of the sharpers; and the wretched dupe ended his desperate folly by blowing his brains out. Thus it occurred that the pretty schooner, almost new from the builder's hands, was brought to the hammer at Buffalo mart, and sold for a fraction of her original cost.

I was then a raw emigrant; not one of those emigrants who cross the Atlantic to conjure fortune with axe and ploughshare, but one of the army of small capitalists. The price of my captain's commission in the Hundred and Ninth, added to a small sum in the funds, sufficed to purchase a good many acres of land in West Canada, mostly overgrown with rough wood, but of fair natural fertility. There was a good storehouse on the "farm," as I modestly called what, in respect to acreage at least, was worthy to be dubbed an estate; and though I had been more lucky than shrewd in my selection, old settlers told me that I had secured a remunerative bargain. Summer came round, and events proved that the old settlers were right. There were some "bottoms" of fine alluvial land, that gave a first-rate wheat crop with scanty trouble. There were good natural meadows for hay, the proportion of barren ground was below the average, and a friendly creek afforded water-carriage for my felled timber to the broad sheet of Lake Erie. If not an experienced farmer, I was no sluggard; my head man was honest and skilful; and I found myself thriving beyond my first hopes. Then, I had leisure time on my hands; I had some money to spare; I saw and was attracted by the advertisements of the intended sale of the Constellation; and I went over to Buffalo to examine the much-lauded vessel. What I saw of her pleased me greatly. She was swift and handsome, her sails, cables, anchors, and cordage—everything, from the stewpans of the cook's caboose, to the boats towing astern—was in first-rate order. She would not need repairs for a long time, and a very small crew would suffice to handle her. I was born on the banks of Southampton Water, and was passionately fond of boating from a boy. My father had owned a yacht, and I had been used to knocking about the Solent and the Channel at an early age; while, in the transports that had the honour of conveying our regiment to India, Malta, and Bermuda, I had kept watch and watch, and had added to my stock of sea-lore. I was, therefore, fairly qualified to be a commander of a well-found craft in the fresh-water navigation of a lake: although Erie, shallowest of the American inland seas, is liable to tempests of peculiar fury.

I bought the Constellation, paid for her, hired a couple of boatmen out of work to help me across with her, and left Buffalo under easy canvas: steering my new purchase in person, and feeling a pardonable pride in the elegant appearance and good behaviour of my little vessel. Half Buffalo sauntered to the quays to see us off. We had the topsails set, the foresail clued up, and the large mainsail gently swelling to the light air that turned the glittering sheet of water into frosted silver. Many duller sailers were crawling

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along, but the yacht went through the ripple like a wild swan, cutting through the water with her knife-like bows, and heeling prettily to the breath of the south-easter. Although I had hauled down the star-spangled flag of America, and had replaced it with a small British ensign and a plain blue burgoo, the people watched our departure with some sympathy, and a few Irish stevedores gave me a cheer as the schooner gathered way. One well-dressed man on a lean horse eyed us with remarkable interest, scanning our motions through a pocket-telescope. Something in the mien or features of this personage attracted my notice. He was a good-looking large-whiskered man of thirty-five: tall, dark, and with hawk's eyes and an aquiline nose. He wore a white hat, a green coat, and trousers and waistcoat of unbleached linen—a very sensible hot-weather costume, but not American. Indeed, he was quite a shining speck among the creased black suits and crumpled satin vests, the "goatee" beards, and the lean yellow faces, of those around him.

"That man is from the old country," said I to myself, and then steered the schooner a point nearer the wind, and forgot him. Little did I think how our future fates would become involved! The wind was light, and not favourable, and it took many hours to beat across to the Canada shore. My home was at the north-eastern angle of Lake Erie, between the stirring town of Dover and that smaller settlement which has assumed the aspiring name of Niagara. I had the advantage of a creek and a commodious bay on my own property, where twenty Constellations might have lain at anchor, secure from spiteful squalls. There we moored the schooner; my supernumeraries were paid and dismissed; and before three days were out, I had a regular crew. Crew, however, is almost too ambitious a word whereby to designate an old man-of-war's man, half worn out, but still active and resolute, and a stout colonial lad. Such as they were—old Bill and young Eli—they cost me but little in the way of cash, being housed in a sort of wooden barracks where my labourers lived, and drawing regular rations from the store which my foreman superintended.

Harvest was coming on; some large lots of timber had been felled in the woods; and the process of squaring, hauling, and raft-making, demanded the master's eye. So some little time elapsed, during which I was unable to use the yacht, and she lay at anchor, taut and trim, a provoking little beauty coaxing one to a holiday excursion.

The corn being cut, and the pines having been transformed from live spires of darkling green to yellowish logs floating in the smooth water of the creek, I began to feel myself more at liberty to avail myself of my new acquisition. I am of a companionable nature, and should have been glad of a friend or two to cruise with me. But, unluckily, summer is the season for work among the Canadians, who look on their long winter as the time for play, and I could find no one disengaged. There was but a small detachment of military then quartered in the district, and the solitary subaltern could not venture to give himself leave of absence and abandon his command, even for a day. I should have been obliged to remain on shore, or to put forth alone, but for an acquaintance which I made fortuitously in the public billiard-room at Dover. This was with the tall dark hawk-eyed gentleman whom I had seen for a moment on horseback on the quay of Buffalo, and who was now touring through the western districts of Canada. He was, as I had conjectured, of British birth, and gave his name Mr. Gartmore. But, although of English, or rather Irish, extraction, Mr. Gartmore had been so long in America that he had learned the Yankee habits of grammar and pronunciation, and had roamed about the States from Michigan to Florida. It was after a dinner at the Victoria—then, as now, the chief hotel in Dover—that I gave my new friend an invitation to take a cruise with me in the schooner.

"I'd be very happy, slick away felicitous, now, to accept your hospitality," said Mr. Gartmore, "only the governor-general will be waiting for me at Quebec, you see," here he dropped his voice and looked mysterious; "there are messages to be conveyed from somebody I won't particular, not a thousand miles from Washington, that can't be thrusted to the post."

My comrade had the oddest way of mixing Hibernianisms with Pennsylvanian phrases, that I remember, and at another time I might have laughed at the broad hint that he was a secret emissary of the British legation at Washington. But it does not do to be over-critical in a new country; the man was amusing, and I had no reason to regard him with mistrust. I pressed Mr. Gartmore to go with me on a cruise, and, after some little parley, he closed with the invitation. "The Quebec folks," he said (he did not again allude to the Governor-General of the Canadas), "must just keep their impatience cool for a few days. It was but putting high-pressure speed on, when he *did* start, and he should reach the capital in time to make all square."

So, to sea, or rather to lake, we put, in the schooner yacht, well provisioned. It was a pleasant trip we had. The leaves were reddening fast, on millions of beech and maple trees, on sumach and creeping vine; and the scarlet tints of a portion of the forest made a rich contrast with the sombre green of the pine and the light green of the spruce fir. The winds were light and variable, exactly the weather best adapted to display the sailing qualities of the yacht, and the broad grey sheet of water, glimmering like opal at sunset, made a fine framework for the rocky birch-crested islets. Mr. Gartmore proved an agreeable companion. He could sing well, played the key-bugle better than a mail-coach guard, was very skilful at all games from draughts to piquet, and had plenty of anecdotes to tell. Altogether, he pleased me much, and when we landed on the forest-fringed north-

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western shore, and had a day's sport in the woods, he handled his rifle with practised adroitness, and killed the only two bucks we could succeed in approaching.

"Upon my word," said I, on one of these occasions, "that is a pretty shot. A hundred and thirty yards, at the lowest calculation, and the buck actually bounding from the covert when you shouldered the piece! You must have had great practice."

My new friend ceased wiping out the barrel of his long rifle, cast his eye on the dead stag lying at his feet, and then looked at me with rather a comical expression on his bronzed face.

"Practice, captain? You may say that. I've known the time when 'twas touch and go with Patrick Gartmore, his life or another's—and all lay on the finger that was steadiest on the trigger, and the eye that drew the truest bead on the enemy."

"The Indians, I suppose?" said I. "Ah! There is wild work on the frontier, I believe?"

Mr. Gartmore's reply was rather vague.

"Indians! They're some wild cats, that's true for you, the red scalpers, but there are worse savages in America, Captain Pownall, than ever wore paint and eagle's feathers. Why, down south, I've known the day when the bloodhounds——"

He stopped short, bit his lips, and his sunburnt face flushed scarlet.

"Bloodhounds?" said I. "The mention of those brutes puts me in mind of the old Spanish conquerors, and their merciless pursuit of the Caribs. I have heard, but I can hardly believe, that the slave-owners in the south employ such dogs still, in negro catching!"

To my surprise, Mr. Gartmore broke out into a tirade against the whole coloured race, and especially against fugitive slaves and the white abolitionists who helped them. He was so violent on this topic, that we had a long argument; for I was sorry to see a native of our own islands so blinded by prejudices, picked up among the planters of the south. But on this subject Mr. Gartmore would not listen to reason.

"It's too bad, sir, to defend such subversionary principles," said he; "forgive my warmth, captain, but you see the question lies in a nutshell. I know niggers; you don't. What air, they, then? Why, animated property, and that's just about all, the ebony-coloured possums! Senator Call never said a sensibler or more philosophical thing than when he galvanised the House with that definition. As for emancipation, sir, it's robbery the most barefaced; and if any one asks Pat Gartmore's opinion, there it is for him."

I laughed, and changed the subject. It was not the first time that I had found persons who were kind and liberal in other matters, hopelessly impracticable on this question. That evening we took advantage of a brisk breeze, and ran over to the American shore, anchoring in front of Munroe. The next morning at an early hour a boat came alongside, and two persons asked leave to come on board. One of them was a stern-looking man, in plain clothes, but with policeman written on his face as plainly as if D 42 had been embroidered on his collar; the other, was a big bony Kentuckian, with a fierce eye and a lowering brow that indicated anything but good humour.

"Morrow, mister!" growled the Kentuckian, whose homespun clothes and high riding-boots of ill-dressed leather showed many a stain of clay and mud, but yet half-dried; "this gentleman's a States marshal, and I and he hev comed on business."

"Indeed?" said I, rather nettled by the fellow's coarse tone; "what may that business be?"

"Let *me* speak, Mr. Gregg," said the officer of justice, in a dry, but civil manner; "I told you before I came off, that we had no complaint against the gentleman. We only require an answer to one or two questions, which in the name of the law, sir, it is my duty to put."

This puzzled me, but I saw that the last speaker, though firm, had no wish to be offensive, and I therefore professed my willingness to afford any needful information.

"Your name, sir?" said the marshal, pulling out pocket-book and pencil.

"Henry Wadmore Pownall."

"Nationality, and pro-fession?"

"An Englishman, late a captain in her Majesty's service, now a settler in Canada West."

The Kentuckian's features relaxed into a less ferocious expression. The people of his native State have a considerable respect for military men, and the announcement of my social standing seemed to mollify him.

"We needn't trouble the cap.; *our* bird won't be treed here, I guess," he said, as he chucked his cigar, now reduced to a stump, overboard.

"Wait a moment, Mr. Gregg," said the marshal; "sir, I owe you an explanation of this. I am here in execution of my duty to carry out the pro-visions of the Fugitive Slave Act."

"Of the Fugitive Slave Act?" I exclaimed; "what, in the name of all that's absurd, have I to do with such a law or its provisions?"

"Wall, cap.," said the Kentucky man, lighting a fresh cigar, "this is how her head lays. A lot of pesky black varmint have made tracks out of Tennessee, and there's more than four thousand dollars reward to be got by the white gentleman that claps his fist on them. They were run, that's what they war, stampedoed and run off by a darned skunk, whom I'll scalp if I set eyes on his ugly face—or may I be mosquitoed out of creation!"

The marshal here interfered, as my patience was evaporating, and briefly informed me: first, that a number of valuable slaves, fourteen in all, had escaped from an estate in Tennessee: secondly, that the Kentuckian was Joshua Gregg, one of the most celebrated of the professional man-hunters whose trade was to pursue runaway negroes: thirdly, that the present search was less for the slaves, who had hitherto been closely concealed, than for the man who had prompted and aided their flight.

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"That's the no-torious Dan Holt, the wickedest Irish loafer that ever 'listed in pay of them cheatin' cowards, the Underground Railway Abolition men," Gregg broke in with a vigorous oath; "twice we've met, Dan Holt and I, and twice the snake's got off with a whole skin; but let me on'y get a grip, once more, that's all!"

The marshal observed the disgust with which I heard this ruffian's threats. He was himself calm and resolute, but it was with him a matter of duty, not a labour of love, to hunt down slaves and their abettors. He therefore briefly noted down my residence, the name of the yacht, and the names of my crew, Bill Bradstreet and Eli Cobb, and coaxed his rough ally into the shore boat again. As the boathook was pressed against the vessel's side, to push off, the marshal seemed to remember something.

"Hold on a moment, mister!" cried he to the waterman. "I say, Captain Pownall! I quite forgot to ask—have you any company on board?"

"Only one friend, Mr. Patrick Gartmore, a naturalised American, here by invitation."

"None of them canting Quaker-cut venomous abolitionists?" growled the man-hunter from the stern-sheets.

"By no means," answered I, quite tickled by the comparison of my sporting friend to a Quaker; "Mr. Gartmore holds opinions very much like yours on the subject of slavery. I doubt if he thinks niggers have souls at all, or are more than flesh and blood machines for picking cotton and hoeing rice."

This was conclusive. The negro hunter grinned; the marshal bade the waterman "give way;" and off went my unwelcome visitors shoreward.

"But where is Mr. Gartmore?" I asked in some surprise, as old Bill, who was steward and cook as well as foremast man, bustled by with hot coffee and waffle cakes. Indeed my guest was habitually an early riser. He had never been so slow to appear on deck before. The old sailor said Mr. Gartmore had a bad headache. He had sent me his compliments, and should join me presently if he felt well enough to get up.

"Nothing serious, Bill, I hope? No signs of fever?" I asked in some alarm.

Bill said, "No, not as he knowed on. The gen'leman said perhaps the punch last night had been brewed too strong, but afore noon he'd be as right as a trivet."

"Very well, Bill; when breakfast's over, we'll weigh, and stand out."

The punch; very odd! It had been, to my fancy, a very moderately potent brewage, and I had noticed that my guest's head was a strong and cool one. But the ice, the ice which in that sultry climate turned liquor into nectar, perhaps that made a difference. Well! We weighed and stood out for the eastward. The shore lessened from view, and on deck came Mr. Gartmore, apologising for the late hours he had kept, and looking remarkably well in health.

The coffee, he said, how splendaciously my steward made it! had swept the cobwebs out of his brain. His headache was all but gone.

He was very cheerful and chatty, and laughed heartily as I recounted the visit I had received that morning, and as I described the threatening aspect of the formidable Joshua Gregg.

"One of those men, sir, who resemble na-tive gold, rough-hewn from the mine;" said he, eulogistically; "I have read of that energetic citizen, sir, in the New Orleens Picayane and other papers. He is unpolished, but such are Columbia's props."

"Every man to his taste, Gartmore," said I; "for my part, I had rather come down with a crash, were I a country, than rest on such precious pillars as your amiable fellow-citizen."

Gartmore laughed with perfect good nature. He was as blithe as a bird, all day. We were once becalmed, but a friendly breeze came to ruffle the lake, and we ran down to Buffalo, and dropped anchor at moon-rise. We spent the greater part of the next day in rambling about the city, and I afterwards remembered that Gartmore left me deeply engaged in a match at billiards, slipped out, and did not return for more than two hours. In fact, as I left the billiard-room to go on board, he came up and passed his arm through mine.

"I have taken a great liberty, Pownall, my dear boy," said he; "I have ventured to give a sort of half promise to an old friend, that you would give a pleasure-trip to him and his wife along the summer lake. Will you, like a hospitable good fellow?"

"To be sure. Any friend of yours!"

"Ah!" said Gartmore, "there *is* the individual, just across the street, looking into that dry goods store. He's too short-sighted to make us out, so we'll go over, and I'll introduce you. He's a man of high principles, and his wife is a most accomplished matron." So saying, Gartmore half dragged me to the opposite pavement, where his friend stood, and nudged the latter's elbow.

"Well met, again, Kinder! This is my kind host. Professor Kinder, Captain Pownall. I have been mentioning the whim of your respected lady, Kinder. Poor Mrs. K. is a sad invalid, though a charming person, Pownall."

An odd-looking man the professor! I could not doubt his being short-sighted, for he not only wore spectacles, but blinked like an owl in the daylight. He was short of stature, but a wiry man in make, and appeared to be neither young nor old, with a very palpable wig, a sallow complexion, and high cheek-bones. He wore the regular civilian costume of tail-coat, black satin vest, long cravat, ill-made pantaloons, and dusty varnished boots. And so Mrs. Kinder was an invalid, poor soul? Dear me, my yacht was never intended for sufferers of the fair sex! A party of merry Canadian girls would have been all very well, used as they are to rough it in all manner of holiday expeditions; but I rather shuddered at the idea of a dieaway

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American bluestocking on board the Constellation. There was no escape, however. Mrs. Kinder was evidently very much bent on her fancy, and the professor was an indulgent husband. Thus I was trepanned into giving a formal invitation; and next morning we took on board fresh milk, fruit, turkeys, doe venison, and Mr. and Mrs. Kinder.

The day, early as it was, was hot and bright, but Mrs. Kinder wore a great cloak with a hood, closely resembling an Arab burnous, and kept her veil down. As she ascended the yacht's side, not without a good deal of assistance, I could see hardly anything of her but the tip of her nose. In the cabin, however, she took off her wraps. I was surprised to see how very many years she was younger than her husband: although she, too, was short-sighted, and wore spectacles. She was a handsome young woman, in spite of the unbecoming manner in which her glossy hair had been brushed back and hidden away; her complexion was of the rich olive of a Spanish girl; her features were well shaped; and her teeth were wonderfully white and good for those of a town-bred American lady. I helped to get the anchor up, and to shake out the brails of the mainsail, while old Bill bustled with the unusually sumptuous breakfast, and Eli, the lad, took the helm.

"Where to, captain?" asked the boy.

The trip was Mrs. Kinder's bespeak. Common gallantry made me place the yacht at her entire disposal. Her husband whispered to her, and she timidly spoke:

"She should like," she said, "to coast along the south-east shore, and stay awhile, if I pleased, in that delightful bay, Hunter's Cove. She longed to see the scenery there."

She said this in a slow awkward way, like a child repeating a lesson. I saw the professor's eyes twinkle; even his glasses could not hide that. But I had given Mrs. Kinder her choice, and must obey.

"Keep her well in shore," were my orders, "and when you round the point of Hunter's Cove, drop the lightest of the anchors. I know the ground is good, and there's no current."

I cannot say that Mrs. Kinder contributed much to the general amusement. She spoke very little, and in a very low tone, and never sure when addressed. Her health did not appear to me in so bad a state as her husband's anxious fears had prompted him to represent it. But she was singularly shy, and averse to any parade of her accomplishments. When I asked her to favour us with a little instrumental music—there was a piano on board—she gently but decidedly refused. Nor did she seem to care much for the scenery, or for any artistic, literary, or scientific talk. But she was evidently very anxious, quite nervously anxious, to see the Hunter's Cove.

We had to hug the land closely, for the freshening breeze did its best to impel us across to the Canada shores; but the yacht behaved well, and we could manage her fairly enough, on condition of my taking the helm whenever Eli and Bill were busy in trimming sail, or hauling at tack and sheet. As for Bill, he seemed on this particular day to be ubiquitous: clattering saucepans at one moment, and next moment setting more head-sail on the craft. Mr. Gartmore, too, always obliging, often lent us the aid of his strong arms; so we kept the schooner well in hand, as she bounded like a mettled horse over the steel-grey waves that foamed around.

When we reached the bay which Mrs. Kinder so longed to explore, it was almost dinner-time, and it was agreed upon that we should postpone landing until after our meal. The yacht was moored in the still water, calm and clear as a mill-pond, which the rocky headland fenced from the waves and currents of the broad lake. Bill called Eli to assist him in the critical process of dishing the good things that had been simmering on his stove in the caboose, and we sat down to dinner in the cabin with something of the gaiety which generally attends a pic-nic. Mrs. Kinder seemed in better spirits. She said little, her timidity quite overpowered her conversational abilities, but she laughed now and then at some mirthful remark—a very silvery little laugh she had, and not by any means what one would expect to hear from a Minerva in spectacles.

Hunter's Cove is a very sequestered bay to be so near towns and a well-peopled country, and I have seldom seen a more lonely spot, with its rough woodland and crumbling crags. Only one dwelling was visible: a sort of log-hut, long and low in structure, but tumbling in ruin. I had seen this hovel before, and had been told by a woodcutter that it was built for the accommodation of a lumbering party, many years before. It showed no signs of human habitation; but as the wind waved the tall reeds in a neighbouring creek, I caught a glimpse of something like a large boat, cracked and weather-beaten, yet afloat. Of this, however, I thought very little. The bay might be the resort of fishermen, or others; as for the boat, it had probably been left there as unserviceable. We sat down to dinner, broaching some old hock and champagne in honour of the occasion. The corks popped, and the conversation was gay and agreeable. I had never seen Gartmore in such spirits. Professor Kinder, too, seemed another man—he was so much brighter and better; while his sick wife, saying little, could still laugh and seem pleased. Once or twice it occurred to me that Gartmore's spirits were almost too high to be natural; he was loud, jovial, almost boisterous, but every now and then he would stop short in the flow of talk and mirth, bend forward, and seem to listen. Then, he would be as cheery and noisy as ever. Once or twice I could have sworn that, through their spectacles, Mrs. Kinder's great dark eyes were fixed on me in a half-alarmed, half-mournful manner; but the moment she met my glance, the expression vanished.

"No more wine, thank you," said the lady, as I offered again to fill her glass.

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I paused, with the bottle in my hand. "Gartmore," said I, "do you hear that odd splashing sound, like oars or paddles close at hand?"

"Eh? no; I hear nothing," said he, rising from his seat and approaching the cabin-window, as if to look out through the glazed scuttle.

"Ha! you hear *that*, I suppose?" cried I, as a new and more formidable noise succeeded.

This was no other than a trampling of many feet on the deck overhead, a sound of struggling panting and blows, and a smothered outcry of blended voices, in which I thought I recognised the energetic forecastle oaths of old Bill. Mr. Gartmore did not answer me, but threw himself upon me, with a bound like that of a tiger, and wrapped his arms round me, pressing mine closely down to my sides.

"Are you mad?" cried I, indignantly, struggling hard. We were both strong men, and Gartmore had enough to do to hold me.

"Quick, Kinder, quick!" he said.

Professor Kinder's proceedings were very curious. Deliberately taking off and flinging aside his spectacles, he rose from his chair, picked up a napkin, and very dexterously applied himself to bind my arms together at the wrist. Furious at this incomprehensible perfidy, I made a violent effort, disengaged one hand, and gave Kinder a blow that sent him staggering among the plates and glasses on the sideboard.

The false professor's yellow face grew livid. "I'll make that a dear hit to you, Britisher. If I don't gin ye goss, I'm no man."

He drew a revolving pistol from his breast-pocket, and hurriedly presented it at me. I remember what followed very vaguely indeed. That Gartmore seemed to remonstrate—that Mrs. Kinder sprang forward and thrust herself between me and the deadly weapon, with outstretched arms—I know; but of what was said, nothing remains in my recollection. There was a scuffle, and I am pretty sure that Kinder dealt me several blows on the head with some blunt instrument, and I know that I lay stunned and fainting on the floor, and that the last impression my faculties retained was one of stupid wonder that Mrs. Kinder, whose spectacles had dropped off, and whose long black hair had been shaken in rippling masses over her shoulders, should look so young and pretty as she lifted one slender arm over my prostrate form, and seemed to intercede for my life. Then I swooned away. When I regained my senses I was alone, lying on a sofa in the cabin, stiff and sore, and with dizzy and aching brains. I tried in vain to rise; my limbs could not stir. In vain I tried to call aloud, for a gag was between my teeth, and my voice sounded like the inarticulate murmurs of the dumb. I was fast bound hand and foot, but my head lay on a soft pillow. I could guess that it was a woman's kindness of heart that had occasioned this slight alleviation of my captivity. I could feel that the yacht was in rapid motion, bounding over the waves of the lake, and heeling over to a gale. What was the meaning of the perfidious violence of which I had been the victim? I could not doubt that some deep-laid plot was at the bottom of the affair, but why had I been singled out for such an attack? Not for revenge; no man, I believed, owed me a grudge, and Gartmore least of all men. Not, surely, for the sake of the few dollars on board? Not for the purpose of gaining possession of the yacht? At sea, pirates might make her useful, but not on a lake, however large. What was that? A gun! Yes, it was the report of a small cannon, and then followed that of another, and a distant dropping fire of musketry succeeded. I wondered for a moment, and then sank into a lethargy again.

The next thing I remember is being in bed in my own chamber, in my own house on the Canadian shore. Mrs. Mackieson, the motherly old Scotchwoman who acted as my housekeeper, and who was a good and kind nurse in illness, was shuffling about the room in list slippers, and there were phials of medicine near, and the room was darkened.

"Ne'er a word will I tell ye, sir, till ye're weel enough to hear it and the doctor gies consent. Sae if ye hae ony curiosity aboot it, ye maun just take your medicine and gruel, and give up speiring till ye're bonny again. Na, na, ye canna mak auld Effie Mackieson betray her trust, neither by fleechin nor flytin."

The worthy woman was inexorable, and so was the doctor, as to giving me any exciting information until I was fairly convalescent. Once or twice I heard old Bill's grumbling voice without, but he was never permitted to enter. At last, when I was well enough to sit up and take as much beef tea and jelly as my attendants thought good for me, the doctor introduced Bill. The old sailor wanted little pressing to tell all he knew.

"Ye see, captain," said he, "I'm right down ashamed to have been such a greenhorn as to let them landsharks weather on me. But I was down below, and Eli he were on deck, and the stupid young cornstalk never sings out till the boat was alongside, and the niggers a scrambling aboard of us. Then he holloas out, and up I comes, and we played pull devil pull baker for a minit. But bless your soul, sir, I'm an old hulk, hardly seaworthy, and I couldn't make much fight agin eight big he niggers and two whites——"

"Niggers?" said I, eagerly; "do you mean to say they were our assailants?"

"Yes, your honour," said Bill, turning his hat round and round, "the niggers were hid in that log-hut ashore, and had been there for weeks, a lookin' out for means of getting over to Queen Victoria's ground, where in course they're free. For you see, sir, they'd given leg-bail to their masters, out in Tennessee State, helped by some of them 'mancipation chaps."

"The niggers were escaped slaves, desperate of getting out of the reach of American law, and Mr. Gartmore and the professor——?"

"If ever I come across them two lubberly land pirates," energetically cried old Bill,

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"I'll settle scores with them in a way they won't like. To capture the yacht was bad enough, but to maul your honour so! But here, sir, is a letter the villain bid me hand you, when he got over to the Canada side, and untied Eli and me, after the most of the niggers was in the boats."

The letter was short:

"A thousand excuses, my dear Pownall, for the liberty we have taken with your handsome yacht. Necessity, you know, has no law. Our dark-skinned friends desire me to thank you for helping them out of the clutches of the Columbian eagle, and the whole matter would be mere food for laughter, but for the unlucky blow you were foolhardy enough to strike the professor. *That* nearly turned the farce into a tragedy, for it was all we could do, to prevent our peppery friend from washing out the affront in blood. We were chased, but the Constellation's heels, quicker than greased lightning, saved our bacon. Should we never meet again, which, alas! is probable, I will give you one parting word of advice in return for your hospitality: Be a little less confiding—what you English call 'green'—another time.

"Gratefully yours,

"P. G."

"And now, my dear sir, allow me to tell you, briefly as may be, the rest of the story," said the doctor; "this Mr. Gartmore, alias Daniel Holt, is about the most famous of the paid agents of the Underground Railway, as they call the active part of the society. He had aided the escape of a number of slaves from Tennessee—eight men, five women, and several children—and, with much trouble, the party was lodged at Hunter's Cove, to await means of transport to Canada and freedom. Besides these, the society had charge of a very beautiful Quadroon girl, Cornelia Rashleigh, from Mobile. Hers was a story you may have often heard in America. It is sufficient to know that she was the petted child of an old planter, who neglected to set her free; that, at his death, she was claimed as property by his heirs; that she was menaced with sale, slavery, and shame; and that her only hope was in flight to our free country. She was, as you have guessed, probably, the fictitious Mrs. Kinder, and to her you probably owe your life; for I understand that the sham professor, whose name is Hiram Leech, is a ferocious ruffian."

The doctor went on to tell me that the fugitive Quadroon girl had been long concealed in Buffalo, in the house of an elderly Quaker lady, who had braved the mob and the law, to shelter the helpless creature. She had been disguised, so as to pass for Kinder's wife, and, on landing at Dover, would be received into a family of zealous abolitionists, who would procure her friends and employment, at Toronto or Montreal. The plot to secure the yacht had been contrived by my first guest, who had sought my acquaintance for that very end and aim. The negroes, with two whites to aid them, had easily mastered my crew, and Gartmore was quite competent to manage the schooner in the run for Canada. But, in some manner, the doctor added, the scheme had leaked out. A sloop, with two carronades, and a number of armed men on board, headed by Joshua Hudson, and backed by a marshal and a warrant, had arrived at Hunter's Cove, in time to give chase to the schooner, and to riddle her mainsail with shot. Luckily, no one was hurt, and the yacht far outstripped her pursuers, landing her human freight in safety.

"The conduct of Holt and Leech is indefensible," said the doctor, "but what can you expect? The society must work with such tools as can be got; the work to be done is desperate; and these paid agents, who care for nothing but profit, are not overburdened with scruples. To do Holt justice, I have heard that he was sincerely sorry that you should have sustained bodily hurt."

"I am very much obliged to him," said I.

A few days later, a Yankee speculator from Buffalo paid me a visit.

"Mister," said he, "I've come to trade with you for the schooner. She ain't no manner of use to you no more, she ain't."

"How so?" I asked, rather tartly.

"Captain," said the man, "the bhoys won't believe that rigmarole about a forcible seizure. They swear it was a planned thing, out of jealousy of our glorious institutions. And when the sloop come back, beat, from the pursuit, you never heerd such a row as there war in Buffalo. The people burned you in effigy, they did—meanin' no offence—and swore great guns they'd do it in real, next time you showed yourself, after jaunting off them darkies. As for the yacht, they'll burn her, they will. Now, cap., be advised. Yacht work won't be no fun, now you can't land on our shores—and you can't, sure as coons climb! So just trade her to me, and I'll send her on by the canal, and swop her to Brooklyn."

I was sick of my bargain, and tired of aquatics, as the Yankee probably guessed. He bought the famous yacht Constellation for about a hundred dollars, and there the matter ended.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S NEW READINGS

On Wednesday Afternoon, May 7th, at ST. JAMES'S HALL, Piccadilly, at 3 o'clock precisely,
And on Wednesday Afternoon, May 21st, at 3,
MR. CHARLES DICKENS will read his
DAVID COPPERFIELD.
These are the only TWO AFTERNOON READINGS that can possibly take place.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER XIII. (CONTINUED).

MISS GARTH'S hand still mechanically grasped the lawyer's arm. Her whole mind was absorbed in the effort to realise the discovery which had now burst on her.

"Dependent on Michael Vanstone!" she said to herself. "Dependent on their father's bitterest enemy? How can it be?"

"Give me your attention for a few minutes more," said Mr. Pendril, "and you shall hear. The sooner we can bring this painful interview to a close, the sooner I can open communications with Mr. Michael Vanstone, and the sooner you will know what he decides on doing for his brother's orphan daughters. I repeat to you that they are absolutely dependent on him. You will most readily understand how and why, if we take up the chain of events where we last left it—at the period of Mr. and Mrs. Vanstone's marriage."

"One moment, sir," said Miss Garth. "Were you in the secret of that marriage at the time when it took place?"

"Unhappily, I was not. I was away from London—away from England at the time. If Mr. Vanstone had been able to communicate with me when the letter from America announced the death of his wife, the fortunes of his daughters would not have been now at stake."

He paused: and before proceeding further, looked once more at the letters which he had consulted at an earlier period of the interview. He took one letter from the rest, and put it on the table by his side.

"At the beginning of the present year," he resumed, "a very serious business necessity, in connexion with some West Indian property possessed by an old client and friend of mine, required the presence either of myself, or of one of my two partners, in Jamaica. One of the two could not be spared: the other was not in health to undertake the voyage. There was no choice left but for me to go. I wrote to Mr. Vanstone, telling him that I should leave England at the end of February, and that the nature of the business which took me away afforded little hope of my getting back from the West Indies before June. My letter was not written with any special motive. I merely thought it right—seeing that my partners were not admitted to my knowledge of Mr. Vanstone's private affairs—to warn him of my absence, as a measure of formal precaution which it was right to take. At the end of February I left England, without having heard from him. I was on the sea when the news of his wife's death reached him, on the fourth of March; and I did not return until the middle of last June."

"You warned him of your departure," interposed Miss Garth. "Did you not warn him of your return?"

"Not personally. My head-clerk sent him one of the circulars which were despatched from my office, in various directions, to announce my return. It was the first substitute I thought of, for the personal letter which the pressure of innumerable occupations, all crowding on me together after my long absence, did not allow me leisure to write. Barely a month later, the first information of his marriage reached me in a letter from himself, written on the day of the fatal accident. The circumstances which induced him to write, arose out of an event in which you must have taken some interest—I mean the attachment between Mr. Clare's son and Mr. Vanstone's youngest daughter."

"I cannot say that I was favourably disposed towards that attachment at the time," replied Miss Garth. "I was ignorant then of the family secret: I know better now."

"Exactly. The motive which you can now appreciate is the motive that leads us to the point. The young lady herself (as I have heard from the elder Mr. Clare, to whom I am indebted for my knowledge of the circumstances in detail) confessed her attachment to her father, and innocently touched him to the quick by a chance reference to his own early life. He had a long conversation with Mrs. Vanstone, at which they both agreed that Mr. Clare must be privately informed of the truth, before the attachment between the two young people was allowed to proceed further. It was painful, in the last degree, both to husband and wife, to be reduced to this alternative. But they were resolute, honourably resolute, in making the sacrifice of their own feelings; and Mr. Vanstone betook himself on the spot to Mr. Clare's cottage.—You no doubt observed a remarkable change in Mr. Vanstone's manner on that day; and you can now account for it?"

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Miss Garth bowed her head; and Mr. Pendril went on.

"You are sufficiently acquainted with Mr. Clare's contempt for all social prejudices," he continued, "to anticipate his reception of the confession which his neighbour addressed to him. Five minutes after the interview had begun, the two old friends were as easy and unrestrained together as usual. In the course of conversation, Mr. Vanstone mentioned the pecuniary arrangement which he had made for the benefit of his daughter and of her future husband—and, in doing so, he naturally referred to this will, here, on the table between us. Mr. Clare, remembering that his friend had been married in the March of that year, at once asked when the will had been executed; received the reply that it had been made five years since; and, thereupon, astounded Mr. Vanstone by telling him bluntly that the document was waste paper in the eye of the law. Up to that moment, he, like many other persons, had been absolutely ignorant that a man's marriage is, legally, as well as socially, considered to be the most important event in his life; that it destroys the validity of any will which he may have made as a single man; and that it renders absolutely necessary the entire reassertion of his testamentary intentions in the character of a husband. The statement of this plain fact, appeared to overwhelm Mr. Vanstone. Declaring that his friend had laid him under an obligation which he should remember to his dying day, he at once left the cottage, at once returned home, and wrote me this letter:"

He handed the letter open to Miss Garth. In tearless, speechless grief, she read these words:

"My dear Pendril,—Since we last wrote to each other, an extraordinary change has taken place in my life. About a week after you went away, I received news from America which told me that I was free. Need I say what use I made of that freedom? Need I say that the mother of my children is now my Wife?

"If you are surprised at not having heard from me the moment you got back, attribute my silence, in great part—if not altogether—to my own total ignorance of the legal necessity for making another will. Not half an hour since, I was enlightened for the first time (under circumstances which I will mention when we meet) by my old friend, Mr. Clare. Family anxieties have had something to do with my silence, as well. My wife's confinement is close at hand; and, besides this serious anxiety, my second daughter is just engaged to be married. Until I saw Mr. Clare to-day, these matters so filled my mind that I never thought of writing to you, during the one short month which is all that has passed since I got news of your return. Now I know that my will must be made again, I write instantly. For God's sake, come on the day when you receive this—come and relieve me from the dreadful thought that my two darling girls are at this moment unprovided for. If anything happened to me, and if my desire to do their mother justice, ended (through my miserable ignorance of the law) in leaving Norah and Magdalen disinherited, I should not rest in my grave! Come, at any cost, to yours ever, "A. V."

"On the Saturday morning," Mr. Pendril resumed, "those lines reached me. I instantly set aside all other business, and drove to the railway. At the London terminus, I heard the first news of the Friday's accident; heard it, with conflicting accounts of the numbers and names of the passengers killed. At Bristol, they were better informed; and the dreadful truth about Mr. Vanstone was confirmed. I had time to recover myself, before I reached your station here, and found Mr. Clare's son waiting for me. He took me to his father's cottage; and there, without losing a moment, I drew out Mrs. Vanstone's will. My object was to secure the only provision for her daughters which it was now possible to make. Mr. Vanstone having died intestate, a third of his fortune would go to his widow; and the rest would be divided among his next of kin. It is the cruel peculiarity of the English law, that the marriage of the parents does not legitimatise children born out of wedlock. Mr. Vanstone's daughters, under the circumstances of their father's death, had no more claim to a share in his property, than the daughters of one of his labourers in the village. The one chance left, was that their mother might sufficiently recover to leave her third share to them, by will, in the event of her decease. Now you know why I wrote to you to ask for that interview—why I waited day and night, in the hope of receiving a summons to the house. I was sincerely sorry to send back such an answer to your note of inquiry as I was compelled to write. But while there was a chance of the preservation of Mrs. Vanstone's life, the secret of the marriage was hers not mine; and every consideration of delicacy forbade me to disclose it."

"You did right, sir," said Miss Garth; "I understand your motives, and respect them."

"My last attempt to provide for the daughters," continued Mr. Pendril, "was, as you know, rendered unavailing by the dangerous nature of Mrs. Vanstone's illness. Her death left the infant who survived her by a few hours (the infant born, you will remember, in lawful wedlock) possessed, in due legal course, of the whole of Mr. Vanstone's fortune. On the child's death—if it had only outlived the mother by a few seconds, instead of a few hours, the result would have been the same—the next of kin to the legitimate offspring took the money; and that next of kin is the infant's paternal uncle, Michael Vanstone. The whole fortune of eighty thousand pounds has virtually passed into his possession already."

"Are there no other relations?" asked Miss Garth. "Is there no hope from any one else?"

"There are no other relations with Michael Vanstone's claim," said the lawyer. "There are no grandfathers or grandmothers of the dead child (on the side of either of the parents), now alive. It was not likely there should be, considering the ages of Mr. and Mrs. Vanstone, when they died. But it is a misfortune to be reasonably lamented that no other uncles or

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aunts survive. There are cousins alive; a son and two daughters of that elder sister of Mr. Vanstone's, who married Archdeacon Bartram, and who died, as I told you, some years since. But their interest is superseded by the interest of the nearer blood. No, Miss Garth; we must look facts as they are resolutely in the face. The law of England, as it affects illegitimate offspring is a disgrace to the nation. It violates every principle of Christian mercy, by visiting the sins of the parents on the children; it encourages vice by depriving fathers and mothers of the strongest of all motives for making the atonement of marriage; and it claims to produce these two abominable results, in the names of morality and religion. It is not the law of Scotland, not the law of France, not the law (so far as I know) of any other civilised community in Europe. A day may come, when England will be ashamed of it; but that day has not dawned yet. Mr. Vanstone's daughters are Nobody's Children; and the law leaves them helpless at their uncle's mercy."

He spoke those words with the energy of honest indignation; and rose to his feet.

"It is useless to dwell longer," he said, "on past and present. The morning is wearing away; and the future claims us. The best service which I can now render you, is to shorten the period of your suspense. In less than an hour I shall be on my way back to London. Immediately on my arrival, I will ascertain the speediest means of communicating with Mr. Michael Vanstone; and will let you know the result. Sad as the position of the two sisters now is, we must look at it on its best side; we must not lose hope."

"Hope?" repeated Miss Garth. "Hope from Michael Vanstone!"

"Yes; hope from the influence on him of time, if not from the influence of mercy. As I have already told you, he is now an old man; he cannot, in the course of nature, expect to live much longer. If he looks back to the period when he and his brother were first at variance, he must look back through thirty years. Surely, these are softening influences which must affect any man? Surely, his own knowledge of the shocking circumstances under which he has become possessed of this money, will plead with him, if nothing else does?"

"I will try to think as you do, Mr. Pendril—I will try to hope for the best. Shall we be left long in suspense before the decision reaches us?"

"I trust not. The only delay on my side, will be caused by the necessity of discovering the place of Michael Vanstone's residence on the Continent. I think I have the means of meeting this difficulty successfully; and the moment I reach London, those means shall be tried."

He took up his hat; and then returned to the table, on which the father's last letter, and the father's useless will, were lying side by side. After a moment's consideration, he placed them both in Miss Garth's hands.

"It may help you in breaking the hard truth to the orphan sisters," he said, in his quiet self-repressed way, "if they can see how their father refers to them in his will—if they can read his letter to me, the last he ever wrote. Let these tokens tell them that the one idea of their father's life, was the idea of making atonement to his children. 'They may think bitterly of their birth,' he said to me, at the time when I drew this useless will; 'but they shall never think bitterly of me. I will cross them in nothing: they shall never know a sorrow that I can spare them, or a want which I will not satisfy.' He made me put those words in his will, to plead for him when the truth which he had concealed from his children in his lifetime, was revealed to them after his death. No law can deprive his daughters of the legacy of his repentance and his love. I leave the will and the letter to help you: I give them both into your care."

He saw how his parting kindness touched her, and thoughtfully hastened the farewell. She took his hand in both her own, and murmured a few broken words of gratitude. "Trust me to do my best," he said—and, turning away with a merciful abruptness, left her. In the broad, cheerful sunshine, he had come in to reveal the fatal truth. In the broad, cheerful sunshine—that truth disclosed—he went out.

CHAPTER XIV.

It was nearly an hour past noon, when Mr. Pendril left the house. Miss Garth sat down again at the table alone; and tried to face the necessity which the event of the morning now forced on her.

Her mind was not equal to the effort. She tried to lessen the strain on it—to lose the sense of her own position—to escape from her thoughts for a few minutes only. After a little, she opened Mr. Vanstone's letter, and mechanically set herself to read it through once more.

One by one, the last words of the dead man fastened themselves more and more firmly on her attention. The unrelieved solitude, the unbroken silence, helped their influence on her mind, and opened it to those very impressions of past and present which she was most anxious to shun. As she reached the melancholy lines which closed the letter, she found herself—insensibly, almost unconsciously, at first—tracing the fatal chain of events, link by link, backwards, until she reached its beginning in the contemplated marriage between Magdalen and Francis Clare.

That marriage had taken Mr. Vanstone to his old friend, with the confession on his lips which would otherwise never have escaped them. Thence came the discovery which had sent him home to summon the lawyer to the house. That summons, again, had produced the inevitable acceleration of the Saturday's journey to Friday; the Friday of the fatal accident, the Friday when he went to his death. From his death, followed the second bereavement which had made the house desolate; the helpless position of the daughters whose prosperous future had been his dearest care;

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the revelation of the secret which had overwhelmed her that morning; the disclosure, more terrible still, which she now stood committed to make to the orphan sisters. For the first time, she saw the whole sequence of events—saw it as plainly as the cloudless blue of the sky, and the green glow of the trees in the sunlight outside.

How—when could she tell them? Who could approach them with the disclosure of their own illegitimacy, before their father and mother had been dead a week? Who could speak the dreadful words, while the first tears were wet on their cheeks, while the first pang of separation was at its keenest in their hearts, while the memory of the funeral was not a day old yet? Not their last friend left; not the faithful woman whose heart bled for them. No! silence for the present time, at all risks—merciful silence, for many days to come!

She left the room, with the will and the letter in her hand—with the natural, human pity at her heart, which sealed her lips and shut her eyes resolutely to the future. In the hall, she stopped and listened. Not a sound was audible. She softly ascended the stairs, on her way to her own room, and passed the door of Norah's bedchamber. Voices inside, the voices of the two sisters, caught her ear. After a moment's consideration, she checked herself, turned back, and quickly descended the stairs again. Both Norah and Magdalen knew of the interview between Mr. Pendril and herself: she had felt it her duty to show them his letter, making the appointment. Could she excite their suspicion by locking herself up from them in her room, as soon as the lawyer had left the house? Her hand trembled on the stair-rail; she felt that her face might betray her. The self-forgetful fortitude, which had never failed her until that day, had been tried once too often—had been tasked beyond its powers at last.

At the hall-door, she reflected for a moment again, and went into the garden; directing her steps to a rustic bench and table placed out of sight of the house, among the trees. In past times, she had often sat there, with Mrs. Vanstone on one side, with Norah on the other, with Magdalen and the dogs romping on the grass. Alone, she sat there now—the will and the letter, which she dared not trust out of her own possession, laid on the table—her head bowed over them; her face hidden in her hands. Alone, she sat there, and tried to rouse her sinking courage.

Doubts thronged on her of the dark days to come; dread beset her of the hidden danger which her own silence towards Norah and Magdalen might store up in the near future. The accident of a moment might suddenly reveal the truth. Mr. Pendril might write, might personally address himself to the sisters, in the natural conviction that she had enlightened them. Complications might gather round them at a moment's notice; unforeseen necessities might arise for immediately leaving the house. She saw all these perils—and still the cruel courage to face the worst, and speak, was as far from her as ever. Ere long, the thickening conflict of her thoughts forced its way outward for relief in words and actions. She raised her head, and beat her hand helplessly on the table.

"God help me, what am I to do!" she broke out. "How am I to tell them?"

"There is no need to tell them," said a voice behind her. "They know it already."

She started to her feet; and looked round. It was Magdalen who stood before her—Magdalen who had spoken those words.

Yes, there was the graceful figure, in its mourning garments, standing out tall and black and motionless against the leafy background. There was Magdalen herself, with a changeless stillness on her white face; with an icy resignation in her steady grey eyes.

"We know it already," she repeated, in clear, measured tones. "Mr. Vanstone's daughters are Nobody's Children; and the law leaves them helpless at their uncle's mercy."

So, without a tear on her cheeks, without a faltering tone in her voice, she repeated the lawyer's own words, exactly as he had spoken them. Miss Garth staggered back a step, and caught at the bench to support herself. Her head swam; she closed her eyes in a momentary faintness. When they opened again, Magdalen's arm was supporting her, Magdalen's breath fanned her cheek, Magdalen's cold lips kissed her. She drew back from the kiss; the touch of the girl's lips thrilled her with terror.

As soon as she could speak, she put the inevitable question. "You heard us," she said. "Where?"

"Under the open window."

"All the time?"

"From beginning to end."

She had listened—this girl of eighteen, in the first week of her orphanage, had listened to the whole terrible revelation, word by word, as it fell from the lawyer's lips; and had never once betrayed herself! From first to last, the only movements which had escaped her, had been movements guarded enough and slight enough to be mistaken for the passage of the summer breeze through the leaves!

"Don't try to speak yet," she said, in softer and gentler tones. "Don't look at me with those doubting eyes. What wrong have I done? When Mr. Pendril wished to speak to you about Norah and me, his letter gave us our choice to be present at the interview, or to keep away. If my elder sister decided to keep away, how could I come? How could I hear my own story, except as I did? My listening has done no harm. It has done good—it has saved you the distress of speaking to us. You have suffered enough for us already: it is time we learnt to suffer for ourselves. I have learnt. And Norah is learning."

"Norah!"

"Yes. I have done all I could to spare you. I have told Norah."

She had told Norah! Was this girl, whose courage had faced the terrible necessity from

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which a woman old enough to be her mother had recoiled, the girl Miss Garth had brought up? the girl whose nature she had believed to be as well known to her as her own?

"Magdalen!" she cried out passionately, "you frighten me!"

Magdalen only sighed, and turned wearily away.

"Try not to think worse of me than I deserve," she said. "I can't cry. My heart is numbed."

She moved away slowly over the grass. Miss Garth watched the tall black figure gliding away alone, until it was lost among the trees. While it was in sight, she could think of nothing else. The moment it was gone, she thought of Norah. For the first time, in her experience of the sisters, her heart led her instinctively to the elder of the two.

Norah was still in her own room. She was sitting on the couch by the window, with her mother's old music-book—the keepsake which Mrs. Vanstone had found in her husband's study, on the day of her husband's death—spread open on her lap. She looked up from it, with such quiet sorrow, and pointed with such ready kindness to the vacant place at her side, that Miss Garth doubted for the moment whether Magdalen had spoken the truth. "See," said Norah, simply, turning to the first leaf in the music-book. "My mother's name written in it, and some verses to my father on the next page. We may keep this for ourselves, if we keep nothing else." She put her arm round Miss Garth's neck; and a faint tinge of colour stole over her cheeks. "I see anxious thoughts in your face," she whispered. "Are you anxious about me? Are you doubting whether I have heard it? I have heard the whole truth. I might have felt it bitterly, later; it is too soon to feel it now. You have seen Magdalen? She went out to find you—where did you leave her?"

"In the garden. I couldn't speak to her; I couldn't look at her. Magdalen has frightened me."

Norah rose hurriedly; rose, startled and distressed by Miss Garth's reply.

"Don't think ill of Magdalen," she said. "Magdalen suffers in secret, more than I do. Try not to grieve over what you have heard about us this morning. Does it matter who we are, or what we keep or lose? What loss is there for us, after the loss of our father and mother? Oh, Miss Garth, *there* is the only bitterness! What did we remember of them, when we laid them in the grave yesterday? Nothing but the love they gave us—the love we must never hope for again. What else can we remember to-day? What change can the world, and the world's cruel laws, make in *our* memory of the kindest father, the kindest mother, that children ever had!" She stopped; struggled with her rising grief; and quietly, resolutely, kept it down. "Will you wait here?" she said, "while I go and bring Magdalen back? Magdalen was always your favourite: I want her to be your favourite still." She laid the music-book gently on Miss Garth's lap—and left the room.

"Magdalen was always your favourite."

Tenderly as they had been spoken, those words fell reproachfully on Miss Garth's ear. For the first time in the long companionship of her pupils and herself, a doubt whether she, and all those about her, had not been fatally mistaken in their relative estimate of the sisters, now forced itself on her mind.

She had studied the natures of her two pupils in the daily intimacy of twelve years. Those natures, which she believed herself to have sounded through all their depths, had been suddenly tried in the sharp ordeal of affliction. How had they come out from the test? As her previous experience had prepared her to see them? No: in flat contradiction to it.

What did such a result as this imply?

Thoughts came to her, as she asked herself that question, which have startled and saddened us all.

Does there exist in every human being, beneath that outward and visible character which is shaped into form by the social influences surrounding us, an inward, invisible disposition, which is part of ourselves; which education may indirectly modify, but can never hope to change? Is the philosophy which denies this, and asserts that we are born with dispositions like blank sheets of paper, a philosophy which has failed to remark that we are not born with blank faces—a philosophy which has never compared together two infants of a few days old, and has never observed that those infants are not born with blank tempers for mothers and nurses to fill up at will? Are there, infinitely varying with each individual, inbred forces of Good and Evil in all of us, deep down below the reach of mortal encouragement and mortal repression—hidden Good and hidden Evil, both alike at the mercy of the liberating opportunity and the sufficient temptation? Within these earthly limits, is earthly Circumstance ever the key; and can no human vigilance warn us beforehand of the forces imprisoned in ourselves which that key *may* unlock?

For the first time, thoughts such as these rose darkly—as shadowy and terrible possibilities—in Miss Garth's mind. For the first time, she associated those possibilities with the past conduct and characters, with the future lives and fortunes of the orphan-sisters.

Searching, as in a glass, darkly, into the two natures, she felt her way, doubt by doubt, from one possible truth to another. It might be, that the upper surface of their characters was all that she had, thus far, plainly seen in Norah and Magdalen. It might be, that the unalluring secresy and reserve of one sister, the all-attractive openness and high spirits of the other, were more or less referable, in each case, to those physical causes which work towards the production of moral results. It might be, that under the surface so formed—a surface which

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there had been nothing, hitherto, in the happy, prosperous, uneventful lives of the sisters to disturb—forces of inborn and inbred disposition had remained concealed, which the shock of the first serious calamity in their lives had now thrown up into view. Was this so? Was the promise of the future shining with prophetic light, through the surface-shadow of Norah's reserve; and darkening with prophetic gloom, under the surface-glitter of Magdalen's bright spirits? If the life of the elder sister was destined henceforth to be the ripening-ground of the undeveloped Good that was in her—was the life of the younger doomed to be the battle-field of mortal conflict with the roused forces of Evil in herself?

On the brink of that terrible conclusion, Miss Garth shrank back in dismay. Her heart was the heart of a true woman. It accepted the conviction which raised Norah higher in her love: it rejected the doubt which threatened to place Magdalen lower. She rose and paced the room impatiently; she recoiled with an angry suddenness from the whole train of thought in which her mind had been engaged but the moment before. What if there were dangerous elements in the strength of Magdalen's character—was it not her duty to help the girl against herself? How had she performed that duty? She had let herself be governed by first fears and first impressions; she had never waited to consider whether Magdalen's openly acknowledged action of that morning might not imply a self-sacrificing fortitude, which promised, in after-life, the noblest and highest results. She had let Norah go and speak those words of tender remonstrance, of pleading sympathy, which she should first have spoken herself. "Oh!" she thought bitterly, "how long I have lived in the world, and how little I have known of my own weakness and wickedness until to-day!"

The door of the room opened. Norah came in, as she had gone out, alone.

"Do you remember leaving anything on the little table by the garden-seat?" she asked, quietly.

Before Miss Garth could answer the question, she held out her father's will, and her father's letter.

"Magdalen came back after you went away," she said, "and found these last relics. She heard Mr. Pendril say they were her legacy and mine. When I went into the garden, she was reading the letter. There was no need for me to speak to her: our father had spoken to her from his grave. See how she has listened to him!"

She pointed to the letter. The traces of heavy tear-drops lay thick over the last lines of the dead man's writing.

"*Her* tears," said Norah, softly.

Miss Garth's head drooped low, over the mute revelation of Magdalen's return to her better self.

"Oh, never doubt her again!" pleaded Norah. "We are alone, now—we have our hard way through the world to walk on as patiently as we can. If Magdalen ever falters and turns back, help her for the love of old times; help her against herself."

"With all my heart and strength—as God shall judge me, with the devotion of my whole life!" In those fervent words Miss Garth answered. She took the hand which Norah held out to her, and put it, in sorrow and humility, to her lips. "Oh, my love, forgive me! I have been miserably blind—I have never valued you as I ought!"

Norah gently checked her before she could say more; gently whispered, "Come with me into the garden—come, and help Magdalen to look patiently to the future."

The future! Who could see the faintest glimmer of it? Who could see anything but the ill-omened figure of Michael Vanstone, posted darkly on the verge of the present time—and closing all the prospect that lay beyond him?

INNS OF COURT.

The Inns of Court, formerly "Hostels," or town mansions of the great nobility, like the hotels of France, are now four in number: Lincoln's Inn, the Inner and Middle Temples, and Gray's Inn. The first derives its name from having been erected on the ground where the residence and gardens of Henry Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, once stood. Tradition tells us that this nobleman, "being well affected to the knowledge of the laws," in early times induced a body of legal professors to settle on his property. The two inns which bear the name of the Temple, deduce that appellation from the once celebrated mixed religious and military order of the Knights Templar, who, in 1185, settled there. On their dissolution, according to Dugdale, "divers professors of the law that came from Thavyes Inn, Holburne," became the tenants, but their settlement was plundered in the rebellion of Wat Tyler, by the mob, and the buildings were burned. The destruction of the property, both of the professors and of the students, including all their books and records, accounts for our imperfect acquaintance with their early history. In the reign of Henry the Eighth, the members of the Temple were divided into the two societies as they now exist, but they still retain the ancient church in common. James the First, 1608, granted the possessions they severally hold to the benchers of the two inns and their successors for ever. Gray's Inn takes its name from the ancient and noble family of Lord Gray of Wilton, but the estate reverted to the crown long ago, and from the crown the benchers hold as tenants. The government of the several inns is vested in their benchers, or, as they were formerly termed, "ancients," who fill up vacancies as they occur, by selections from those members of the inn who have been most distinguished at the bar. The benchers have for centuries exercised the exclusive power of admitting students of their respec-

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tive inns into the higher branch of the legal profession.

The recumbent effigies of crusaders attest the antiquity of the Temple Church, in the erection of which the early knights copied the Sepulchre at Jerusalem. Although the superior classic taste of the benchers of Lincoln's Inn rejected his original architectural design, and refused to adopt any but a Gothic model, their church was built by the celebrated Inigo Jones. Fuller assures us that Ben Jonson, as a bricklayer, "helped in the structure, having his trowel in one hand and his Horace in his pocket." Shakespeare made the Temple Gardens the scene in which the badges—the red rose and the white—of the rival houses of York and Lancaster, were first assumed in a brawl by their respective partisans. To this the prediction of Warwick, afterwards more than fulfilled, alludes:

> ———This brawl to day,
> Grown to this fashion in the Temple Gardens,
> Shall send between the red rose and the white,
> A thousand souls to death and deadly night.

We are informed by Fortescue, who held the great seal in the reign of Henry the Fourth, that "from the Temple all vice was discountenanced and banished;" but we learn from Fuller that in later days "at the Inns of Court, under pretence to learn law," the student "learns to be lawless—there he grows acquainted with roaring boys." The benchers made an order in the reign of Philip and Mary that the fellows of the Middle' Temple might wear beards of three weeks growth, but not longer; and in the first year of Elizabeth it was ordered in Lincoln's Inn, "that no fellow of that house should wear a beard above a fortnight's growth under pain of losing his commons, and, if obstinate, of expulsion." In the Calendar of Domestic State Papers, recently published, we find a grant from Elizabeth to John Brydal, "of collector of fines in Courts Ecclesiastical and Marine, as a recompense for having helped to raise the gallant regiment of volunteers of the Innes," in which he was captain under Lord Keeper Littleton. We have witnessed in our day the revival of the same martial spirit among the students. That Calendar also acquaints us that regular returns were made to Elizabeth "of such as refuse or neglect to attend church in their inns." With the view, perhaps, to keep the gentlemen of the societies to their proper studies, James the First issued a royal proclamation, in which the voters for members of parliament were commanded "not to choose curious and wrangling lawyers who seek reputation by stirring needless questions," and clauses were constantly inserted in the writs prohibiting their election.

Revels in early times were at certain seasons amongst our national recreations, and were regularly observed at the Inns of Court. The chroniclers describe the gay scenes and masques—favourite amusements in the infancy of dramatic exhibitions—which were honoured by the presence of Elizabeth; but the last record we have of such merriment was in 1773, on the elevation of Mr. Talbot to the woolsack. After an elegant dinner, every member of each mess had a flask of claret, besides the usual allowance of port and sack. The benchers, after their potations, all assembled in the great hall, and a large ring was formed round the fireplace, when the master of the revels, taking the Lord Chancellor by the right hand, he with his left took Mr. Justice Page, who, joined to the other serjeants and benchers, danced about the coal fire according to the old ceremony three times, while the ancient song, accompanied with music, was sung by one Toby Aston, dressed in a bar gown.

A Pegasus, or flying horse, is the emblem of the Inner Temple; for, the Knights Templar before they adopted the lamb, had appropriated a galloping horse with two men on his back as their armorial ensign, and it was emblazoned on their shields. The sacred lamb bearing a banner surmounted with a cross, is the ensign of the Middle Temple, and seems to have been borne by the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem; for the same emblem may still be seen on the grained roof of St. John's Gate at Clerkenwell. This order succeeded the Knights Templar in their possessions at Temple Bar. A rhyming lawyer, whether seriously or ironically we are left to conjecture, thus claims for his profession the peculiar excellences attached to those emblems:

> That clients may infer from thence
> How just is *our* profession,
> The lamb sets forth *our* innocence,
> The horse *our* expedition.

A poetic suitor, not having been enabled by his experience to discover those transcendant virtues, assured his fellow-victims:

> 'Tis all a trick, these all are shams,
> By which they mean to cheat you:
> But have a care, for you're the lambs,
> And they the wolves that eat you.
> Nor let the thoughts of no delay
> To these their courts misguide you,
> 'Tis you're the showy horse, and they
> The jockeys that will ride you.

In early times, the clergy engrossed all the earning of the nation, and were therefore better qualified by study than the laity, for legal as well as ecclesiastical pursuits. The bishops constantly presided in some of the courts, sometimes as sole judges, and sometimes associated with functionaries delegated by the crown. The inferior clergy practised in these courts, and by reason of superior education having improved their intelligence, clients preferred them as advocates. The Papal See, in 1217, inhibited the bishops from assisting in the law courts, and the clergy from practising before any but ecclesiastical tribunals. The prelates obeyed, but the inferior orders of the priesthood could not be easily induced to relinquish a course so lucrative and so suited for display. The tonsure was in those days the badge of religious ordination, and the barbers had the dimensions of the several

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clerical crowns they were to leave: the extent of the tonsure being measured according to the different grades. The invention of the coif was, according to the conjecture of Spelman, a device to hide the tonsure in such renegate and rebellious clerics as were tempted to remain in the secular courts, notwithstanding the prohibition of the canons. The coif was made of lawn, worn on the head; and the black patch emblematic of the degree of the coif, is still retained as the badge of serjeants-at-law.

The benchers of the several inns have always exercised the exclusive and summary power of admitting or rejecting students; of *excommoning* them, that is, of excluding them from commons; and of *disbarring* members, which is synonymous with silencing them in court. We have the authority of Lord Mansfield that the powers of the Inns of Court respecting the bar are delegated to them from the judges, and that in every instance the conduct of those societies is subject to the control of the judges as visitors. The anxiety of the brethren to pocket fees, and their disposition to regulate the services rendered, by the amount received, have been old and inveterate failings: an imputation from which even the celebrated Serjeant Maynard* did not escape. Roger North relates that being "the leading counsel in a small *feed* case, he would give it up to the judge's mistake and not contend to set him right, that he might gain credit to mislead him in some other cause in which he was *well feed*." One of the earliest recorded cases in which the benchers interfered, was that of a certain Serjeant Davy, whom they summoned to appear before them on a charge of taking a fee in copper: a practice which they held to be derogatory to the dignity of the bar. The offence having been proved, and the learned brother of the coif called on for his defence, he assured his judges that he had never accepted, even silver, until he had first got from the client all the gold he had; and that he had not condescended to touch copper, until he had in like manner exhausted all the silver of the suitor. He then confidently submitted that his procedure was not degrading to his order; but we are not told whether or no the benchers concurred in this opinion.

The authority exercised by the "ancients" as to admitting to the bar, led from time to time to open revolts. Pepys, writing in 1667, tells us, "Great talk of how the barristers and the students of Gray's Inn rose in rebellion against the benchers the other day who outlawed them, but now they are at peace again." The most remarkable man over whom the benchers of any inn ever achieved a triumph, was the celebrated John Horne Tooke, the famous antagonist of Junius. Educated at Westminster and at Eton, he had entered his name as a law student on the books of the Inner Temple in 1756, in order, as he expressed, "to eat his way to the bar." Four years afterwards, in 1760, having obtained a degree at the University of Cambridge, he took holy orders; and, having been admitted into the Church, was presented with the rectory of New Brentford, Middlesex, and became a popular preacher. Wilkes subsequently excited the emulation of the country parson, who determined also to acquire position and fame as an agitator and redresser of public wrongs. Men in power were in those days peculiarly sensitive; and one of Horne Tooke's earliest introductions into public life was an indictment for libel; although he defended himself before Lord Mansfield, Chief Justice, with great boldness, ability, and address, he was, according to the fashion of the day, found guilty. A sentence of fine and imprisonment followed, and the gates of the jail had hardly closed after his liberation, when, elated with the reputation he had acquired from his defence, he determined to take up his forensic calling. On presenting his petition to be called to the bar, he was met by the obsolete canons of the Church, in which its members had, in ages long gone by, disclaimed communion with the law tribunals of the State; and he was rejected as being in holy orders. This rejection led to loud public clamour. Horne Tooke made a subsequent attempt, but was again rejected, in 1779, after a close division in the secret conclave, by a majority of one—Mr. Bearcroft, a queen's counsel, who was immediately after rewarded for his vote by high employment at Chester. Horne Tooke had resigned his living, and it was conceived by many that his having been once in holy orders, was used as a mere pretext to crush a formidable political partisan, whose entry into parliament would have been facilitated by admission to the bar. By others, the opposition was attributed to the jealousy of some practising barristers, who were afraid of being eclipsed by the man who had faced, and who was believed by some to have even vanquished, Junius in the press, and who in the arbitrary days of high prerogative judges had braved the threats and terrors of the Court of Queen's Bench. After his exclusion, Tooke again successfully bearded, in the Queen's Bench, another Lord Chief Justice, Lord Kenyon: who quailed on being told by Tooke that the most illustrious judicial characters, Coke and Hale and Holt, had remained commoners, and that the first common-law judge who was ever ennobled, was the infamous Jeffreys in the infamous reign of James the Second. The old principles of exclusion pursued him when he took his oaths and seat in parliament on the 16th of February, 1801, as member for the borough of Old Sarum. The House, adopting the precedent of the benchers,

* "The lawyers paid their homage" to William, "headed by Maynard, who at ninety years of age was as alert and clear headed as when he stood up in Westminster Hall to accuse Strafford. 'Mr. Serjeant,' said the prince, 'you must have survived all the lawyers of your standing.' 'Yes, sir,' said the old man, 'and but for your highness, I should have survived the laws too!'"—Lord Macaulay's History of England, vol. ii. p. 581.

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sat in judgment, as Tooke expressed it in his defence, "on the representative eligibility of an old priest." A committee having been appointed to search for precedents, they reported that a cleric was neither a knight, a citizen, nor a burgess; and "that no person who either is or has been in priest's orders, or held any office in the Church, can possibly be a member of the House of Commons." Horne Tooke, in resisting the bill brought in for his exclusion, urged that the maxim "once a captain always a captain," ought not to be extended to him. And to the objection that a clergyman had the cure of souls to attend to, he replied by assuring the House that he had no person's soul to take care of but his own. His powerful reasoning and ridicule on the occasion, did not avail; the bill passed the House of Commons, but was fiercely opposed in the House of Lords by Lord Thurlow, the ex-Chancellor, who, as Attorney-General, had prosecuted Tooke for libel. He denounced the measure as vindictive, declared that it was undignified to legislate against a single individual, and warned the right reverend bench that the principle might one day exclude *them* from parliament. Tooke was permitted to retain his seat for the remainder of the session, but the act for his exclusion became law.

The next most serious contention in which the benchers were involved, was with the members of the press. A very high tone prevailed in parliament, even in the early part of the present century, against permitting the publication of the debates. Mr. Wyndham, then a leading member, who has been designated by Lord Macaulay "the first gentleman of his age," declared "that if this practice had been tolerated, winked at, and suffered, it was no reason that persons should make a trade of what they obtained from the galleries." He "did not know any of the conductors of the press, but he understood them to be a set of men who would give in to the corrupt misrepresentations of opposite sides." Opinions so opposed to our present notions, were quite congenial to the tendencies of the benchers of Lincoln's Inn, who in 1807 passed a most arbitrary general order, that they would exclude any applicant for admission who had ever received payment for any publication or report in a newspaper. The other inns having been requested to adopt a similar regulation, they, to their honour, refused. This attempt to proscribe a class then becoming highly influential, aroused indignation, and became the subject of very animated discussions in parliament, on a petition presented by Mr. Farquarson, who had been a reporter for the press, and against whose admission to the bar it was sought to enforce this obnoxious proscription. Mr. James Stephens, then a member of the House of Commons, who had raised himself to the bar by being a reporter, and who afterwards became a master in chancery, manfully maintained the rank and privileges of the press. Sheridan introduced an interesting anecdote of Dr. Johnson, illustrative of the value of paid authorships even to the highest parliamentary renown. Two celebrated published speeches of the great Lord Chatham, in the House of Lords, had been compared to orations of Demosthenes and Cicero, and, a question having been raised which resembled the Greek and which the Roman orator, it was agreed to refer the determination to the great arbiter of literature. His answer was, "I cannot decide that point; but this I well remember, that I wrote them *both*." It was in the end conceded that the regulation attempted by the benchers was wholly indefensible; and it was admitted that this illiberal edict was framed at the suggestion of eight practising barristers, suddenly after dinner, when the benchers were flushed with wine. The order was of course revoked, and it is to be regretted that the secret post prandial deliberations of the benchers "upon honour," did not terminate with that revocation.

The legal profession in France, as well as in England, is divided into two branches—the avocat or barrister, and the avoué or solicitor. In the University of Paris there exists a faculty of law as well as of medicine, and the president and council of that department admit to the bar. There are different degrees conferred by the faculty: those of Bachelor Licentiate and Doctor of Law. The discipline of the Roman law passed into Gaul with the conquerors; and the capitularies of Charlemagne, in the year 802, first mention the profession of an advocate. With a recognised antiquity, far more remote than that of the barrister in England, the present very complete organisation of the French Bar comprises and preserves all the rights, duties, and obligations of advocates, derived and adopted from its earliest traditions. In the progressive advance of law reform in England, it is not impossible that the inns may be consolidated into a legal university, endowed with the faculty of conferring degrees, and reserving both to students and members of the bar the right of public appeal to the superior courts. We trust that whatever necessary and liberal changes be made in the powers and doings of the Inns of Court—where liberal changes akin to the spirit of the times are sorely needed—the individuality of the inns may so far remain unaltered as that their halls and cloisters will be religiously preserved. In those cloisters repose the remains of men who have adorned and enriched the literature of their country, and have graced and dignified the bar, the bench, and the senate. A monument in Westminster Abbey, with an immortal epitaph, from the pen of Johnson, records of Oliver Goldsmith—poet, naturalist, historian—that he left no kind of writing untouched, and that he touched nothing he did not adorn. A plain white marble tablet placed in their church by the benchers of the Inner Temple, sixty-one years after the erection of that monument, attests that "a very great man"—we again adopt the affectionate words of Johnson—who had never been a law student or member of the bar, died

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and was buried within the Temple. Beneath the cloisters of Lincoln's Inn moulders the dust of the upright and incorruptible Edward Thurloe, secretary of Cromwell, and minister of England during the Commonwealth, styled in its records, "One of the Fellows of this Society." The Thurloe papers, famous as memorials of our history, were accidentally discovered many years after his death in a false ceiling to the chambers he had occupied in Lincoln's Inn. Within the same cloisters rests one and one only of the gentler sex. The greatest living ornament of the profession, Henry Lord Brougham, selected, as a bencher, the chapel of Lincoln's Inn for the grave of his only child, Eleanor Louisa Brougham, who was buried there on the fourth of December, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-nine, aged eighteen. It may be, that when the learned and venerable octogenarian shall terminate his earthly career—distinguished in the varied circles of law, literature, eloquence, philosophy, and public utility—his mortal remains will repose by the side of her whom he held dear, and to whom, his only direct descendant, he was devoted.

THE CHICKLEBURY SILVER CUP.

As I happen to live in a little stone cottage standing close to the road that leads to Chicklebury Butts, I had many opportunities of observing the local excitement which was occasioned by the announcement that Captain St. Ives was going to give a silver cup to be shot for by the Chicklebury Company, at the Chicklebury Butts, Bufton Magna. I could see from my windows that gay Lothario of our country-side, O'Donnell the handsome young Irish exciseman, clothed in a black velvet coatee, trotting by on his fast cob, with his rifle gallantly slung behind him. I heard the butcher discussing the forthcoming match with the village gunmaker, who lives nearly opposite to me. The Buyborough Independent announced the match in thrilling paragraphs all about the "steel-clad chivalry of other days," the tournament at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, "the smiles of beauty," "lion hearts," and other fine editorial furniture.

The shooting began at twelve. About half-past eleven a white tilt-cart, bristling with rifles and resonant with negro melodies, jolted over the little grey two-arched bridge opposite my cottage. This cart contained the Chicklebury Company, rejoicing in their holiday. The landlord of the Flying Sun, the glazier of Melsome, the two farmers from Redfont, with one sergeant and several rank and file from Brattleton, including two of the Marquis of Flintshire's gamekeepers, were all ambushed in that jogging cart, on their way to the butts at Stranger's Corner.

I snatched up my hat, struggled into my great-coat, and sallied off after them to the Upper Downs, through a lane that a rainy and intolerable March had almost turned into a trout stream. In that sloping field to my right-hand, sharp green tongues of the young barley were rising thick and fast; far away to the left the stone-pickers were spread out like skirmishers over the grey fallows; on the ridge above them, the smoke of weed-fires drifted as from a burning village; while over my head a plover screamed, and some wild-ducks fled in alarm. Down the budding hedges the blackbirds chattered in dismay; and out yonder in a rank green field of young tares a large reddish hare, big as a pointer, sat up and stared at me with frightened astonishment. I could track down the lane where the children had been, by the spoil of primroses they had scattered after picking; for children believe the final cause of a flower is to be picked. Where the lane ended with a mossy direction-post whose foot is buried in nettles, and where a lichened stone indicates that I was XII. miles from Buyborough, and XC. from Great Babylon, I crossed the road by some pools cut in the turf for the sheep, and was on the downs. Dark masses of fir plantations crowd the horizon like clouds of advancing Frenchmen just above Stranger's Corner, and in a moment I caught sight of the butts.

A massive wall of chalk, faced with green squares of turf. The two targets, one a little slip, looked from here like a visiting card, "good up to 300 yards;" and a larger one, about the size of a soap-dish, "good up to 700." The one represents the height and breadth of two men, and the other of three men abreast. The small one has an outer black ring and a black bull's eye; the larger has only a large black centre; for seven hundred yards is too long a distance for very fine shooting. The sloping wall of loose chalk to the left, bastioned with hurdles and piled stakes, is the mantlet for sheltering the scorer with his three flags.

There, too, was St. Ives and the Chicklebury Company drawn up in line. When the firing began, I could see the puff of white smoke, and hear the subsequent sharp report, and the "tang," as the conical bullet struck the iron shield of the target, four hundred yards off. How small and toy-like the men looked at this distance! Their rifles were mere bulrushes.

There were the Lothario Exciseman; that handsome brown-skinned fellow the young miller from Applewood; Serjeant Brotherhood, honest landlord of the Flying Sun; and privates Randall, Barnes, Archer, Ridler, Anstie, Jefferies, Nott, Farret, Butler, Vincent, Sherrin, Lenthall, Humphries, &c. &c. To the left of them stood a chair and a rough deal table, covered with writing materials; and, near these, a suspicious-looking object, wrapped up neatly in brown paper, which, no doubt, was the silver cup.

The men were not in uniform, because the match was a private one. St. Ives alone appeared in the grey with the rhubarb lace, he being the commander, having to regulate the proceedings. There were numerous by-standers, farmers, small tradesmen, and others. All whispered bets to one another on their special favourites. There was a momentary pause; for there had been a

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shot with a half-filled cartridge, which was disputed.

The ammunition clerk, a crimson-cheeked young farmer's son, who carried a large canvas haversack stuffed with ball-cartridges and packets of caps, informed me that the cup was to be shot for in or out of uniform, and in any position; but the pull of the trigger was not to be less than six pounds. No artificial rests nor magnifying sights were to be admitted; all scores were to be reckoned as points, and to be shot off at one shot each at the longest range.

A prize for the second shot was to come out of the entrance fees, and there was a sweepstakes of one shilling each for the third, and sixpence each for the fourth best shot.

"Two to one, or a level sixpence!" were the cries of the bettors, as the riflemen now moved on to the two hundred-yard range. The young nut-brown miller, buttoning up his chest, advanced to fire. He stood well forward, and the rifle-barrel lay as firm and even in his left hand as if it were built into a wall. He raised the sight slowly, and, with his right elbow well up, released the trigger almost imperceptibly. A thin angry gush of fire; a quick report; a choking drift back, of powder-smoke, and the bullet ting-tanged on the target just above the bull's eye. I saw the whitewash fly off the target, as if a puff of smoke had passed from the iron. The bullet left a leaden star mark. Hurrah! it was a 2; for the marker waved his blue flag over his turfen rampart.

The good shots all came first. Lothario stepped forward next, and, with quick aim, let fly with an elegant and studied carelessness—his shot was high to the left, and the white flag waved high to the left, too. Sergeant Brotherhood, a stolid man, aimed carefully and pulled carefully; the result being a bull's eye, and a triumphant wave of the red flag. "Two to one on Brotherhood!"

"Five hundred yards," shouted St. Ives; "right about face!" And off went the champions to the distant white stump far away beyond the thorn-bush and that third clump of prickly furze on which the yellow blossoms showed so starred and coldly. Sergeant Brotherhood was champion, for he made one red, three blues, and one white out of his five shots at two hundred yards. Next to him in the score, came the miller and the gay exciseman, while private Nott, who had not got the right way of holding his rifle, missed three times, and scored only two points at the same range.

The red danger flag was now hoisted, and Squire Hanger's groom—there on a superb chesnut hunter—was now told to gallop up to the target, and tell the keeper to come out of his fortress and repaint it.

Presently the groom came galloping back to say that the targets were ready, the red flag taken down. The firing began. The privates were joking each other about the "ducks' eggs," or O misses. I was hailed as umpire, and the bets grew more numerous. Many of the attitudes now were eccentric. St. Ives was busy with the score-book. How carefully, with a grave smile, Brotherhood loaded his rifle! He twitched off dexterously the top of the cartridge—he poured in the large black grained powder—he put in the bullet so clean and bran new, and it slid down the barrel with a gurgling sound of content till the steel cap of the ramrod proclaimed it home—now he canted up the piece, ticked off the burnt cap and refitted the nipple with a fresh little copper hat—then he half cocked the piece and brought it to the "order."

Meanwhile, it was the miller's turn to fire. He chose to kneel, and get a firm rest with his elbow on his left knee. Bang! the sound from the target told us that it was an outside shot; the marker waved the white flag—he had gained one point.

Brotherhood now sat down in the Ross manner, and cuddled up the butt of the rifle with his coat collar: the barrel beautifully steady, his neck craned up uncomfortably to look over the high turnpike gate of a rest straight to the target. Will the trigger never move? Whish! tang! it was a three, positively. Very good, Sergeant Brotherhood!

The next man laid down flat on his stomach and fired; the consequence of which attitude, and it not being properly allowed for, was that the bullet fell forty yards short of the target, ploughed a long dark groove in the turf, and splashed up over the target, turf-wall and all, into the woods far above, to the serious injury of the young oaks.

The target looked very small from hence, and, with the worse shots, the bullets have a special tendency to fall short; but the defeated men bear their losses very well, and joke about "shooting well when they choose," and wanting "a brooding hen to put some of their ducks' eggs under." With good-humoured grumbling they poured their lost sixpences into the receptive hands of the stakeholder, and Brotherhood and the miller were still the champions. Again the groom galloped up to the target to order the marker to repaint it; for now the shooting at the six hundred yards—the real tug of war—commenced.

The target still stared at us steadily with its one eye, but it was smaller than a pocket-handkerchief; and, when a rifle-barrel wavered the sight, was lost in a moment.

"Now, then, do your best, sergeant, and the cup's yours," says St. Ives to Brotherhood, quietly dotting up the score-book all the while; "nothing to do, man, but aim straight and pull steadily."

"Very easy, isn't it, when you know how, captain?" says Brotherhood, kneeling, and putting up his rest to the line marked six hundred. Breathless excitement.

A long aim, lost once, and once readjusted, and Brotherhood fired a nervous shot—the glittering of the silver cup in his eyes—but Fortune was with him, for it was a blue.

The miller followed with a white, the exciseman with a miss, which he could not account for.

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We were still so far from the target, that the sound of the stroke on it took quite two seconds reaching us. We could not now see the target smoke when it was hit; but there was still the sharp *tang* and the dull flat cleaving sound when the bullet drove into the turf.

At this distance the inferior shots only hit about once in three times; but the miller with the iron hand was still redoubtable, for he struck the mark four times running.

The last shot came, to decide the fate of the cup, whether it was to go to Applewood or Melsome. The bets were in favour of the landlord, for the miller was choleric and rather flurried.

Brotherhood went first, he being already one ahead; if he got a blue this time he was the victor. A blue for the miller, and there would be a tie.

The landlord fired first, kneeling; a steady hit and long aim; a careful, good shot. The red flag of danger suddenly appeared, and the marker came out to examine the shot. Much agitation; it must be a white: no, hurrah! it was actually a blue.

The miller knelt—anxious and too quick; he was too sure of himself, was the miller. The aim was perfect—full on the bull's eye. "Good for a liner," called out private Barnes, who was betting on the miller; but he pulled too quickly, the barrel flew up, and lodged the bullet exactly on the very top ridge of the seam that divided the target.

"Excellent line," cried the backers of the miller—but the cup—the cup was Brotherhood's.

His companions now broke their ranks and crowded to congratulate the victor, who modestly leant his chin on his rifle-barrel and said he "scarcely expected to do it;" but you could see he did expect it, by the contented twinkle of his left eye.

The exciseman in a graceful attitude was relating to his adherents the exact reasons why ne lost the cup; but these did not seem to be quite satisfactory; a comrade saying, "But you pulled too quick—you pulled too quick."

As for the miller, he was rather in a temper, I fear, for he said nothing, looked rather red under the eyes, and kept wiping away nothing in particular from his rifle lock.

The ceremony of the day now began.

"Form hollow square!" shouted St. Ives, nodding at Brotherhood, who looked as uncomfortable as if he were going to be instantly hanged, and fumbled about at his cartridges, which surely scarcely wanted counting just then.

The hollow square was formed. In the centre was throned St. Ives with the cup glittering before him on the table, its top-coat of brown paper peeled off.

Sergeant Brotherhood—that grave, stolid, honest fellow, now blushing just like a girl—was called forward. St. Ives, in a short pithy speech, presented him with the cup, which he received with stammered thanks. The lesser prizes were given and the riflemen dispersed to lunch. Loaves were tumbled out of haversacks, great stone crocks of beer gurgled out their contents, and the riflemen formed a ring round jovial St. Ives and the winner of the silver cup. I left them chanting out brave old songs, and went homeward.

I had not walked more than two miles when Sergeant Brotherhood came up to me, and reined in the gaunt camelopard of a horse he rode, to have a talk. The silver cup dangled from his rifle, nor can I call the display of a trophy so stoutly won, mere vanity. I asked to look at it, and read the inscription:

24TH DOWNSHIRE RIFLES, V. R.,
APRIL, 1862.
PRESENTED BY LIEUT. ST. IVES;
WON BY——

Brotherhood's name was still to be added by the Buyborough silversmith. In the dusk of the April twilight, the cup glimmered brightly, and the gold of the lining shone with a mellow radiance. I trust I have in me as little envy as most men; yet I could scarcely resist envying the winner of the cup when he placed it on the table at home, and his wife and children ran to kiss him.

Turning for a moment in a Whittington attitude, I could hear the quick shot of the Chicklebury Company as they went on with their concluding sweepstakes.

INFALLIBILITY AT TOULOUSE.

An amiable French archbishop, having forgotten where his allegiance was due, and proved himself a stronger Papist than patriot, has lately subjected himself to the disgrace of having his archbishoply orders countermanded. He wished to hold an open-air jubilee, promising plenary indulgence, and enhanced with every possible pomp of ceremonies, to commemorate a glorious victory. His government interposed, saying "No; you shall do no such thing. The event you would celebrate, is best forgotten. It is a grievous and bloody episode of our ancient religious discords. Your jubilee will probably excite division and hatred, besides disturbing the public peace. We cannot prevent the procession of the Sacrament, which is sanctioned by ancient custom; but we *will* prevent the rest of the street performances which you threaten in your pastoral letter."

Will you? Sundry staunch fanatics, zealous and crafty, of the bad old sort, openly declare that you will not. The month of May will soon show which spirit shall prevail in the city of Toulouse—the spirit of the Vatican, or the spirit of the Tuileries.

Strangers who are only acquainted with the north-west, the north, and the north-east, of France, are apt to conclude that the Roman faith pervades the whole land unquestioned; but history, as well as further travel, will teach them that, in the west and south-west at least, a reformed religion has struck deep and ancient root. Whenever the two opposing creeds came to try issues it was as the meeting of fire and water. In one thousand five hundred and sixty-two, just three hundred years ago, the city of Toulouse amused itself with a public rehearsal of the massacre of St. Bartholomew. Four thousand Protestants who had been inveigled

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into laying down their arms, were slain on Whit-Sunday afternoon, by assailants who rushed out of vespers for the purpose. An eye-witness, of some experience, declared that he never before beheld heads flying about in such multitudes. This is the glorious victory of which the present amiable Archbishop of Toulouse proposes to hold a centenary celebration, to last a week, as a Feast of deliverance, on and about the seventeenth of May, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, and respecting which festival, although prohibited, good Catholics intimate that where there's a will there's a way.

However we may dispute about the origin of evil, one thing is certain: that evil begets evil. One evil thing gives rise to, induces, and is the cause of, another. As a good tree brings forth good fruit, so, a bad tree brings forth bad fruit. The last centenary celebration of the wicked deed, namely, that in 1762, was a thunder-cloud whose coming was ushered in by crimes that make us shudder, and which we would gladly leave in oblivion had not a Christian prelate strained after their possible repetition. The cloud was already charged with lightning ready to strike the first devoted head that chance or passion might single out. Months beforehand, the popular mind was excited by preparations for that coming seventeenth of May. The magnificence of the decorations, the cloth of gold expressly ordered at Lyons, the costumes, and the altars to be built in the streets for this monstrous and revolting revival of horrors, were talked of on all sides. Protestants were regarded as worse than infidels, and as more pestiferous than mad dogs.

There dwelt then at Toulouse, a respectable family—to their sorrow members of the reformed religion—of the name of Calas, doing a good business as drapers, irreproachable in conduct, leading a life of modest competency, and respected by their neighbours.

The family consisted of Jean Calas, the father, aged sixty-four; Anne Calas, the mother, aged forty-five (the legal documents called her la demoisell Calas Mère, because a bourgeoise, even when married, was not allowed to be called madame); and six children. Of these, four were sons; Marc Antoine, the eldest; Jean Pierre, the cadet or second son; Louis, of whom more anon; and Jean Louis Donat, who scarcely enters into our story, being then (fortunately for him) apprenticed in a commercial establishment at Nîmes. The two daughters happened to be staying at a friend's country-house.

Another member of the household was Jeanne Vignier, a servant, who had lived with the family five-and-twenty years, who professed, and doubtless felt in her way, a strong attachment to them, converting it into a privilege to speak and act pretty nearly as she pleased. Her faith was opposed to that of her master's. She was a bigoted Catholic—that is, she was a Catholic of her day; and she selected as her especial favourites the eldest and the third sons. Her zeal and affection carried her so far as to attempt young Louis's secret conversion, with the object of ensuring his eternal welfare by bringing him back to the pale of the true church. Her endeavours were seconded by friends and neighbours, by the barber Durand, his wife, and their son the abbé, and by another abbé named Benaben.

Both Marc Antoine and Louis Calas were dissatisfied with their humble circumstances, or rather with the humble appearance which their father's faith and social position required them to be contented with. Their weakness was the inconsistent folly of Quaker's children, who should pant to rush into Vanity Fair. Both aimed at making an appearance above their sphere of life; a superior education only excited their ambition. They probably believed their parents more wealthy than they really were. They longed to wear bright-coloured clothes—an unreasonable wish at that time of day—to distinguish them from poor grey-clad tradesmen; and their importunities at last extorted the grant of blue coats with metal buttons.

When Louis attained his eighteenth year his secret vanity and his distaste for regular business exceeded all moderate bounds. He tried hard to get his father to concede a more showy establishment than that intended for him. Unable to bend his parent's wise resolution, he resolved to break through it violently. It is no harsh judgment to suppose that Louis, greedy and selfish, was perfectly aware of the consequences of his abjuring the faith of his ancestors. The law furnished the children of Hugenots with terrible arms against parental authority. An ordonnance of the seventeenth of June, one thousand six hundred and eighty-one, made the son of a Protestant his own master at seven years of age, allowed him to renounce his parents' religion, and to exact an allowance enabling him to live separate from the family. Louis therefore drew up a memorial, addressed to the Intendant of the Province, in which he demanded the King's orders, not only for his own proper sequestration, but also for that of his two sisters and his younger brother Donat. There is nothing like the zeal of new made converts.

This petition, which Louis carried about with him in his pocket, accidentally fell into Marc Antoine's hands, who, as soon as he was aware of its contents, bitterly reproached his brother with the wicked attempt to bring misery into the family. Louis, in his guilty shame, went and hid himself in the Durand's house. Only Jeanne, the servant, knew where he was, and she supplied him with money out of her savings. From his retreat, Louis, holding fast to his project, negotiated with his father. Jean Calas had no possible means of preventing a conversion which grieved him deeply. After a time, he was visited by a councillor of the parliament, M. De La Mothe, a highly respected and influential person, who informed him of Louis's determination, and advised him to make no opposition.

"Monsieur le Conseiller," replied the father, coldly, "I approve of my son's conversion, if it

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be but sincere. Attempts to force people's consciences only result in making hypocrites, who end by being of no religion."

Calas, therefore, however unwillingly, consented to the abjuration; but still he wished to place his son, according to his own ideas and his own resources, with a stocking manufacturer at Nîmes, who, moreover, was a good catholic. But Louis refused, on the ground that Nîmes was infected with heresy, and insisted on remaining at Toulouse. The archbishop intimated to the parent that he ought to yield: adding, that it was better to do so with a good grace than compulsorily, or on an order from the minister. Calas had to pay six hundred livres for debts which his son had contracted—a heavy sum, under all the circumstances—and besides, to supply four hundred livres for Louis's apprenticeship.

The wicked child was not satisfied with these concessions; he had put the screw on, and he would screw it tight. He wanted more, and wrote a threatening letter to the effect that if they did not make him a sufficient allowance he would apply to the authorities to compel them to do so. The wretched lad was as good as his word; the father was obliged to make an annual payment of one hundred livres for his maintenance. The "deserter," as he was called, went a step still further. The father, being short of money, and neglecting to pay the quarter's allowance to the day, was threatened by the son with legal proceedings. In spite of all this, the long-suffering parent still regarded the unnatural child with unabated affection. Louis, having requested his assistance to take an establishment which suited his views, Calas offered him three thousand francs in money and ten thousand in merchandise. But the parents were stricken to the heart. The son of a protestant who had abjured his faith was prohibited from returning to the paternal mansion. The mother wept every time she saw her son pass the door without entering.

If Marc Antoine were another source of grief, it was not by open ingratitude. He also longed for a higher position, but he would not attain it by ruining his family. He hated trade; he had artistical tastes, with a decided inclination for luxury and dissipation. His literary acquirements and a certain fluency of speech turned his thoughts to the profession of advocate. He consequently studied law, and, at the age of twenty-seven, had taken his bachelor's degree. He was about to pass his licentiate's examination, when he discovered, somewhat late in the day, that a certificate of catholicism was indispensable for further progress in his legal career, and indeed in almost every other. Every post, place, and office, nearly every profession, was closed to protestants. Attorneys, bailiffs, constables, sheriffs' officers, printers, booksellers, physicians, goldsmiths, apothecaries, and surgeons, must all be good catholics. Trade was open, with sundry exceptions; a Protestant could not be a grocer.

Marc Antoine, thinking to take the bull by the horns, boldly asked the curé of the parish for a certificate. The priest good-naturedly shut his eyes, and was about to sign it, when his servant exclaimed, "Why, all the Calases are heretics!"

"If that is the case," said the curé, "I cannot give the certificate until you bring me a ticket of confession."

Marc Antoine returned sorrowfully back to the shop.

"Why don't you do like your brother Louis?" asked one of his acquaintance, who had obtained his license to practise, that very morning.

"Never!" replied Marc Antoine. "One of that sort is enough in a family."

From that time the young man, baffled in his hopes, became taciturn and gloomy. He associated little with his family, but spent the greater part of his time with idle companions at tennis and billiards, where he lost as much as a louis d'or at a time—an enormous sum at that time for a tradesman's son. He regarded business, as a galley-slave regards his chain. He grovelled in low orgies, in the company of gamblers, declaiming poetry and singing loose songs. His ruling passion was for private theatricals, in which he played with applause Polyeuctes and other tragic parts. Hamlet's soliloquy was one of his favourite pieces. Anything relating to self-destruction he recited as if it came from his inmost heart. In short, Marc Antoine Calas was not the first nor the last weak mortal whom conflicting passions and insufficient self-control drove to take refuge in suicide.

On the thirteenth of October, one thousand seven hundred and sixty-one, a cry was heard from the Calas's house. Jeanne, the servant, rushed into the street screaming "Ah! my God! Murder has been committed!"

The neighbours crowded in and found Marc Antoine lying in the shop, with his head resting on a bale of goods; his mother hanging over him bathing his temples with Hungary water, and trying to make him swallow a few drops; the father leaning on the counter, sobbing in the despair of grief. A surgeon's apprentice examined the body, and found it quite cold, with no discoverable wound, but with a black mark round the neck.

Then came the authorities, making their inquiries, and backed by the populace, who soon found a clue to the mystery. Calas, the father, had strangled his son to prevent his turning Catholic, like Louis. Did not everybody know that Huguenots condemned and put to death any of their members who showed symptoms of abjuring their errors? Marc Antoine had been sentenced in some secret assembly, and had been executed by his own family.

The family, conscious of their innocence, could not comprehend that they were charged with a crime. The capitoul titulaire, or head magistrate, of Toulouse, David de Beaudrique, a fervent exterminator of heresy, soon made up his mind.

"Could we not act a little more calmly, a little less hastily?" asked another capitoul of lower degree.

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"Monsieur," answered David, "I take the responsibility upon my own shoulders. The cause of religion is here in question."

The prisoners were ordered off to the Hôtel de Ville. While Calas mechanically prepared to lock the door, his son Pierre set a lighted candle in the passage, ready for use on their return. David ordered him to put out the light, sulkily observing, "You will not be back quite so soon as you think."

Summarily interrogated, the Calases persisted in their first statement; namely, that when young Pierre and his friend Lavaysse went down stairs after supper, they found the lifeless body lying near the shop-door. The others could give no further information.

This statement, which was not correct, sealed the ruin of the family.

"Come, come," said David brutally. "You killed him, Pierre Calas; it's of no use your denying that you killed him."

"He killed him," said Savanier, the registrar, "as surely as I hold this pen in my hand."

"I see," said David, knitting his brows, "that we shall have to try what a few turns of the rack will do."

Even yet, the prisoners could hardly appreciate the gravity of their position. But when they learned that they were to be parted and each led off to a separate dungeon, they corrected themselves and unanimously declared that Marc Antoine *had been found hanged*. In this respect, after their separation, their statements never varied nor disagreed with each other.

At this point of the story it is natural to ask what could have tempted conscientious and religious people to swerve, ever so little, from the truth. The answer is, they were sorely tempted to suppress the fact of the suicide. At that epoch, the crime of self-destruction was visited in France with most cruel, unjust, and absurd penalties. An indictment was drawn up against the body, which was dragged naked on a hurdle, exposed to the insults of the populace, to a gallows on which it was hung. All the deceased's goods were confiscated to the king. Thus the innocent survivors were made to suffer for their guilty relative—if guilt there were and not a derangement or perversion of the reasoning faculties. There was, in those days, no possible verdict of "Temporary Insanity," to alleviate the feelings and satisfy the conscience of a scrupulous juryman or judge.

The actual state of the case was this: On the fatal evening, a young friend of the family, named Lavaysse, happening to pass through Toulouse, was invited to supper at seven o'clock. The whole party were present. Marc Antoine, in an absent fit, paid little attention to what was going on. He ate sparingly, drank several draughts of wine, and withdrew at dessert, according to his usual custom. No uneasiness was felt about him; he was doubtless gone, either to the tennis court or the Four Billiards. Madame Calas worked at her embroidery, chatting meanwhile with those around her. At half-past nine, Lavaysse rose to retire. Pierre had fallen asleep on his chair. They woke him up, and joked him for so doing; and the guest took his leave amidst laughter. Pierre went down-stairs, to see Lavaysse to the door, and close it after him. As they passed the door which communicated from the passage with the shop—"Look," said Lavaysse, "the warehouse door is open! I wonder whether there is any one there."

They looked in. Instantly they uttered a cry of horror. The warehouse door was what we call a folding-door, similar to those with which modern dining and drawing-rooms often communicate. The two leaves stood ajar; across them had been placed a thick round stick, or roller, used in packing; and from this, hung, by a rope with a double slip-knot, the body of Marc Antoine Calas, in his shirt sleeves. With a curious precaution, which is far from rare with persons about to commit suicide, before fixing the fatal noose he had carefully deposited his grey coat and his nankin waistcoat on the counter. Pierre seized his brother's hand; the swinging of the body increased their terror and renewed their cries of alarm. Calas the elder, hearing them, rushed down-stairs. At the sight, he exclaimed, "My child! my poor child!" and mustered strength to lift and raise the body in his arms. This movement caused the stick to fall; and Calas, laying his son on the floor, unfastened the slip-knot, calling to Pierre, "In God's name, run to the surgeon; perhaps my poor boy is not quite dead." The mother was coming down-stairs, but Lavaysse sent her back again, saying, "Oh, Madame! this is no place for you." But she could not rest; after telling the maid to go and see what was the matter, she returned herself, and beheld the spectacle of her child's lifeless body.

Instead of the surgeon, came his apprentice Gorrse, who took it for granted that Marc Antoine, overbearing in his temper, had been murdered by some enemy.

"Mon Dieu!" said Pierre, "has he been quarrelling with anybody? I will go to the Four Billiards—I will inquire everywhere——"

"Do nothing of the kind," interrupted the father. "Take care how you spread the report that your brother has destroyed himself. At least save the honour of your wretched family."

This one false step led to irretrievable misery. The falsehood, the suppression of the truth necessary to "save the honour of the family," was ten times more disastrous than the truth would have been. The authorities, discovering at the outset that there was an understanding among the family to give a coloured version of the facts, were in some degree excusable for retaining their preconceived ideas during more advanced stages of the case.

On the ninth of March, one thousand seven hundred and sixty-two, Calas was condemned, first, to the rack, "to draw from him the avowal of his crime, its accomplices, and circumstances," and, secondly, to an awful death.

But grave events, as far as the public were concerned, arising out of young Calas's decease,

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occurred before the final catastrophe. The fearful prejudice entertained by the judges left no doubt whatever on their minds. As they had insisted from the beginning that Marc Antoine had been strangled by his relations, they were obliged to hold, without further proof that he had become a convert to Catholicism. Suicide had nothing to do with Marc Antoine's death; therefore it was a case of martyrdom. As a logical sequence, and as a lesson to mankind, his memory must be honoured by a funeral of the utmost magnificence. Here we see that martyrdom is no novelty as a rallying cry in religious warfare. David and his associates resolved to bury the defunct in consecrated ground, and the curé of St. Etienne, the Calas's parish, agreed to perform the ceremony.

Every circumstance of the funeral pomp was calculated to excite the public mind and prepare it for the coming jubilee. A Sunday was selected, in order that the whole population might join the procession. Forty priests marched to the Hotel de Ville, to precede the body: which had been preserved in lime. The whole Fraternity of the White Penitents, acting on a rumour that Marc Antoine had intended to join that religious association, followed the corpse with tapers and banners. A few days afterwards, the same Fraternity celebrated in their chapel a solemn service for Marc Antoine's soul. The church was hung with white, and on the top of a splendid catafalque they placed a skeleton hired from a surgeon for the occasion. The skeleton held in one hand the palm of martyrdom, and in the other a streamer inscribed, ABJURATION OF HERESY. On the catafalque was the name of Marc Antoine Calas. At this service all the religious fraternities of the town were present, and the Grey Friars soon afterwards performed a similar ceremony.

How was it possible to doubt that Marc Antoine belonged to the Catholic Church? How was it possible to doubt the father's guilt? A less impressionable population than that of Toulouse might have been persuaded of the facts, perhaps. The pretended martyr's own brother, Louis the Convert, sanctioned the ceremony by his presence. True, he could not bear the sight of the hideous skeleton; he was taken ill and was carried out. He even dared to ask what right they had to claim his elder brother as one of their body. "Did you not tell us yourself," they rejoined, "that the deceased fully intended to join the White Penitents?" Shortly, Marc Antoine was more than a martyr; he was on his way to become a saint. Miracles were wrought over his grave.

The father's examination in the torture chamber resulted in nothing but clear and consistent assertions of innocence. It was a fearful trial for the unhappy man; a moment's weakness, an inability to bear increase of pain, an ambiguous expression, would have involved in his own condemnation four persons very dear to him; namely, his wife, his son Pierre, the servant Jeanne, and his friend's son, Lavaysse. The interrogation was long, and when it was concluded, he had not strength left to sign it; but his moral firmness stamped it with the seal of truth. On perusing it, we can perceive that the judges, hitherto so prepossessed against him, begin to be tormented with a secret anxiety.

In the eyes of the multitude, Jean Calas's sentence was only an incident in the holy war which religion was waging against impiety. Consequently, on the day of the execution, the tenth of March, one thousand seven hundred and sixty-two, the excitement at Toulouse was very great. Not a single Protestant family dared to stir out of doors; the houses where Huguenots dwelt, were recognised by their closed shutters. One solitary member of the reformed religion astonished the town by his fearlessness; Dr. Sol walked about the streets and visited his patients as if nothing unusual were taking place.

As the fatal procession proceeded to its destination, the windows were filled with thousands of faces, and the roofs were covered with spectators. Tradition tells that on the way, the poor old man passed before his own house, where he had spent so many peaceful and happy years. He asked permission to kneel down in the cart, and bestow a blessing on his dwelling. Then, began a reaction in the minds of the crowd. This simple and touching act unsealed the eyes of many. "I am innocent," he continued to repeat, without anger and without despair. At the foot of the scaffold, Father Bourges, who attended him, said, "My dear brother, you have only a moment to live; by the God whom you invoke, and who died to save you, I conjure you to let the truth shine forth in all its glory!"

"What, father!" Calas replied, "do you, too, believe that it is possible to kill one's own son?"

When his bones crunched under the first blow of the executioner's iron bar, a fearful cry escaped him; the other blows he bore without a murmur, as well as without a word of angry passion or vengeance. "My God!" he said, "forgive my judges; they have been deceived by false witnesses!" When they exhorted him to name his accomplices, he answered, "Alas! Where there is no crime, how can there be accomplices?" David, in a terrible state of agitation, rushed on the scaffold and shouted to his victim, "Wretch! behold the pile of wood ready lighted to reduce your body to ashes. Speak the truth!" Calas, now unable to speak, cast a last look to Heaven and turned his head on one side. His two hours on the wheel had been completed; the executioner took pity on him, and strangled him. Riquet de Bourepos, the public prosecutor, hastened to meet Father Bourges, inquiring, "Well, Father! Well! Has our man confessed?"

"Not a word. He died protesting his innocence."

"He died like one of our own martyrs," added a Dominican monk who was present at the execution. Riquet de Bourepos turned pale and held his tongue.

The subsequent sufferings of the surviving family would occupy many pages to relate. In

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the May following, the glorious jubilee was celebrated with great éclat, and with little sympathy for them; but on the ninth of March, exactly three years afterwards, a royal decree acquitted them, and also acquitted the victim's memory, and in the month Brumaire, Year II., the Convention rehabilitated all the Calases. David de Beaudrique, in fits of madness, twice threw himself out of a window. The second fall proved fatal; he died muttering the name of Calas.

Europe will do well to be curious to know how the seventeenth of May, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, is spent at Toulouse. It will be the three hundredth anniversary of the bloody triumph of Romanism in the old head-quarters of Heresy. If the descendants of the persecutors have acquired the feelings of men, and the charity of Christians, it will be spent as a day of humiliation; the feast will become a fast; and the rich brocade and the cloth of gold, will be exchanged for penitential sackcloth and ashes.

POISON-PROOF.

Every day we find reason to shrink from saying of most things, "This is so," a sweeping assertion being disproved now-a-days by somebody or other almost as soon as it is out of our mouths. A powerful instance of this in connexion with one of our medical impressions has lately appeared, and is too curious to be passed over without notice. We have most of us hitherto been in the habit of looking upon strychnine as a deadly poison. We shudder at the mere mention of the word. We remember the Rugely tragedy, and see before us Palmer's wretched victim distorted in the agonies of tetanus. What does the reader say to a discovery recorded in the pages of the Pharmaceutical Journal, that there is a class of living creatures actually in existence who not only partake of this terrific poison habitually, without injury, but who live upon it as their usual food, and thrive upon the diet?

The living creatures who are given up to this abnormal pastime of devouring strychnine, and who may be regarded as the opium-eaters of the animal creation, are minute beings resembling those which will sometimes become developed by a mouldy Stilton. They are called by the vulgar "mites," and by the learned acari. They are, however, not common cheese-mites, but so different from them that, when an attempt was made (to be presently alluded to) to induce some of the respectable cheese amateurs to change their diet for a course of strychnine, the poor things died incontinently, as well-regulated mites might be expected to do.

The unnatural mites, then, concerning whose habits we have these few words to say, were discovered by a gentleman of considerable chemical attainments, while engaged in a microscopical examination of certain efflorescences which appear on the surface of medicinal extracts, "juices of plants concentrated to a semi-solid condition." Now, the most remarkable thing about this was that the preparations themselves were of a nature which might reasonably have been expected to produce very injurious effects upon animal life, while upon these mites they appeared to exercise no evil influence whatever. Here were mites living upon extract of colocynth, which it must be admitted seems a rather choleraic diet, others upon taraxacum, and others yet upon strychnine, the extract of nux vomica.

The specially terrible effects of this horrible poison on the muscular and nervous system make this very wonderful, and the more so when it is quite certain that it is not upon any fibrous part of the plant in which the poisonous principle was not that these animals thrived, but upon the very poison itself. It appears from Mr. Attfield's very interesting account of his experiments that there are other mites which have been found living upon irritating vegetable substances, but in those cases the "starchy and soft fibrous matter only has been eaten, the active principle being rejected." Mr. Attfield's account is given in so comprehensible a form, and is so curious and interesting to the general reader, that we will give it now in his own words:

"Remembering that all extracts have once been liquid, their perfect homogeneousness precludes the idea that an animal could select any particular constituent. On the contrary, the conclusion is irresistible, that in taking a mouthful it must be devouring a portion of every constituent; and that in eating nux vomica, therefore, an acarus must be eating strychnine. But, as ingeniously suggested by a physiological friend, though the poison be eaten it may not be assimilated, but pass through the intestinal canal unchanged. To decide this point I examined a few hundreds of acarine excrement from nux vomica; about as much as would lie on a threepenny piece. The collection of this substance was easy, for, like the cheese-mites, the nux vomica acari have rapid digestive and excretive faculties. Moreover, the extract is heavier than the excrement, so that on placing a quantity of the disintegrated material on water the former sinks, while the latter floats and may be skimmed off. Only a trace of strychnine, however, was found in the excrement; a quantity that, considering the facility with which this alkaloid can be separated from other organic matter, was exceedingly minute; a quantity that, doubtless, was dissolved from the extract by the water in the separating process, and remained adhering to the floating excrement.

"But to incontestably prove that mites live and thrive upon food that is to man a deadly poison, I secured some lively growing specimens from the nux vomica extract, and after searching them with a high magnifying power, in order to be certain that no extract was accidentally adhering to their bodies, confined them singly in glass microscope cells, giving to several pure strychnine. In less than two days the foodless ones were all dead, killed, doubtless, by starvation; while those supplied with strychnine were as lively as ever. Three weeks after mounting they

were as well as at first, and specimens were exhibited to the members of the Chemical Discussion Association of the Pharmaceutical Society. Some have lived on for two months, and are apparently still healthy, and increased in size.

"Moreover, the acari from the extracts of taraxacum and colocynth have lived on strychnine equally well with those from nux vomica; and, to show their indifference to the quality of food presented to them, will partake of strychnine, morphine, or cheese, with equal avidity.

"Poison-mites having a relish for cheese, I thought that cheese-mites ought not to object to poison, and so, having obtained some from a cheesemonger, treated them to powdered strychnine. But they all died; the change in diet was too sudden. Obviously they should have been placed on a mixed diet first, for in another experiment a number greedily ate up some cheese, with which twenty per cent of strychnine had been thoroughly incorporated.

"The fact, then, that substances which are intensely poisonous to the higher animals do not affect acari is thus substantiated. This is more especially astonishing in reference to strychnine, which is of all poisons one of the most energetic, its frightful effects on the nervous and muscular systems being but too well known. Again, strychnine is a very stable body, standing almost alone among organic principles in its power of resisting the carbonising action of concentrated and hot sulphuric acid. And yet, setting aside its tetanic influence, its assimilation as food is not altogether inconceivable, for, as is well known, it is very susceptible of oxidation, and if eaten by an animal whose nervous system differs from that of most other animals, it would, after solution and circulation, be readily oxidised in the blood, and its chief elements removed by the lungs.

"With regard to the action of poisons generally, the above facts would seem to be but one extreme of a chain of evidence, many links of which, it is true, are still wanting, but which appears to indicate that a so-called poison is only a poison when the animal taking it is unaccustomed to it, or when the amount swallowed is far larger than that usually taken in the system. Thus in all parts of the world men are to be found who gradually habituate themselves to eat arsenic, opium, tobacco, &c., until their daily dose is sufficient to kill from two to ten persons of their own species. Sheep have been known to gradually consume unwholesome plants to such an extent as to render their flesh capable of producing serious effects upon those partaking of it. Hedgehogs will, I am told by a high authority, eat almost anything; and the common toad cares little for hydrocyanic acid or the ordinary mineral poisons. In these and many other instances that might be mentioned, a very large amount of the particular poison would have to be taken before the usual effect ascribed to it could be produced. Ultimately we come down to acari, a class that may be brought to subsist entirely upon a so-called poison: for here strychnine is only a poison in the same sense that starch would be a poison to man, namely, in that it does not contain every element necessary for the reproduction of tissue.

"But the physiologist can better generalise on this subject, and will, I am sure, find it a field of research yielding rich fruit; for, in the words of Professor Busk, F.R.S., 'The facts concerning these acari would seem to point out the interest that would attend experiments in the same direction on other articulate animals, and suggest that they might all be found equally proof against poisons which act powerfully on the nervous system of higher animals.'"

NOTES OF INTERROGATION.

I HAVE many reasons for growling at everything. I am rheumatic; I am a comfortless old bachelor; I am a disappointed barrister; I am a writer of epics that I cannot get published; I once stood for the Cheshire Hundreds, and lost the election—also two thousand pounds; I hate London, and yet am obliged to live in it; I detest government offices, and yet am in the Docket-office—an expensive establishment kept up to study how best, some years hence, to reduce the expense of government offices. I live with three cross old-maid sisters, and am generally called "Diogenes" by my friends. When I growl at existing nuisances, I could spit at them all, and turn yellow with suppressed bile at daily seeing those Docket-office striplings who sneer over the newspaper at my spencer, my big umbrella, my gold spectacles, and my low-brimmed, good substantial beaver hat.

I am become an incarnate mark of interrogation, from constantly asking who is it that prevents the removal of existing annoyances? It is of no use railing at the general public, for that is only kicking a feather-bed; it is of no use going round to all the boards of guardians, and pulling their collective noses, for then I should get into prison, and there I should have to complain of felons' luxuries and spurious philanthropy. Nor can I go and preach in the street, for then I shall be sure to be taken up as a vagrant zealous Christian. So, in default of all these different methods, I have determined, before this chronic liver complaint of mine becomes fatal, as I know it will one day, to draw up a sort of code of great and small grievances, taking them just as they rise in my mind.

To begin:

Why is it, when the Parisians and Americans have for years had lofty and comfortable omnibuses, that we, their notorious superiors (no one, I think, will deny this), have not loftier omnibuses, with two brass rods running along either side of the roof, to aid the passenger who has to enter and take his seat while the vehicle is still in motion, and who now treads on every one's toes, and eventually wedges himself down into his place by sheer brute force? Why should I have to poke at the conductor's ribs, and to make vain signals of my desire to be put

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down, when I might easily, as in America, have a means of communication with the driver, whom I could pay, and to whom I could give the signal for stopping? And why should there not be a regular ladder to the knife-board instead of two or three dangerous steps?

As London streets are always dirty and crowded—are daily becoming more and more miserable and impassable, and as to bore through Cheapside at noon is now a work of time, labour, and danger—why are not flying iron bridges thrown over the principal streets at the chief crossings, as once cleverly proposed? The result would be less delay, fewer accidents, fewer stoppages. And why, in the narrower streets, could not the ground-floors be purchased, turned into covered paths, and thus the present pavement removed in order to widen the carriage way?

As nearly all our public statues are contemptible, and are erected to persons to whom the nation owes no gratitude, why should there not be a jury appointed to sit on them every twenty-five years; to order their removal, to arrange alterations to be made in them, or to decide on their permanence? Why should not, say, Garibaldi supersede the Duke of York? (famous for certain military jobbings;) and by all means put up a manlier Nelson, and give Mr. Fox, in Bloomsbury-square, a sound washing.

Why is not the indescribable confusion of the coinage ended for ever by the decimal system, so entirely successful in France and America? And why does our Queen never get older on our coins than five-and-twenty?

How long is the wrangle about the relative superiority of Greek and Gothic architecture to continue? Is not every style good in its way for certain purposes? And can a style of building originally without windows, or a style devised by men at a time when glass windows were not used, be a good style for dwelling-houses here in the English climate? Must not the best style be an entirely new one, adapted for our new wants?

Why is it that our wise government complains of the want of sailors, when every workhouse in England is full of brave strong boys, who could easily be trained as naval recruits, and whose waxen minds a few lectures on a sailor's life, or a few sea stories, would irresistibly urge to a profession full of adventure and romance?

As railway collisions, in spite of our greater experience, become annually more disastrous and more frequent, why should we not carry out an old, but excellent idea, and insist on one of the directors of each company accompanying every train? Why, also, since signals through the train, and a communication between every carriage has been found eminently successful in America, should it not be practised universally in England? Surely it is not difficult to run a jointed and removable wire through the roof of every carriage, and have it fixed at one end to a bell or dial on the engine, and at the other to a bell or dial in the guard's carriage?

Why do not our medical boards examine, analyse, experiment with, and report on, every new quack-medicine introduced? If it be useful and successful, let it be received at once into our Materia Medica; if noxious, useless, or a deception, let it be at once posted up in every druggist's shop, and at every hospital in England, as an exposed and proved humbug.

As no one style of dress fits every lady's face, complexion, and age, why should not every one devise his or her own dress? Why should our ugly, obsolete, black dress for men be retained as the only fit costume for evening parties? Why also should the ugliest hat ever worn in any age remain an unchangeable article of English costume, since it has been proved costly, fragile, hideous, an attraction to the wind, and no shelter against sun or rain?

As theatres are much less frequented than they might be — considering the intellectual and interesting nature of the drama, a love for which is rooted deep in human nature—because they are dirty, uncomfortable, unventilated, and in inconvenient neighbourhoods, why should not all these things be either quickly or gradually altered? Why does not the Lord Chamberlain, or whoever it is who is paid to meddle with such matters, refuse to license theatres that have no safe or sufficient means of exit in case of fire? Why should not those troublesome fruit-women be kept in their proper place, which I take to be the refreshment-room?

Why is it that we still retain that ridiculous custom of having red-nosed mutes with black fire-screens, to stand at death's door? Why do people of small incomes, for the gratification of foolish pride—not of affection—keep up the ludicrous paraphernalia of a mediæval baron's funeral? Why, above all, do people send empty carriages to a friend's funeral?

Why do people allow their servants to charge their visitors for beds, dinners, and petty services on visits of a day or two's duration? And, since there is one universal groan going up from all "genteel" England about the badness of modern servants, why are not schools established, to which mothers could send children to be educated as thoughtful cooks and as mindful housemaids?

Since we know that the Greeks, and every truly great people, never educated the mind without educating the body—as the robust mind, however, morbidly active in some special faculty, can seldom exist in a weak body—why is it that children at forcing schools are allowed to kill themselves by premature study?

Why is it that England has no historical gallery of English painting, when she collects, at infinite pains and absurd cost, every fourth-rate bungle of the fourteenth century?

And here I conclude. In case of reference being wanted of my respectability, I may state that my name is Junius Quiller, Esq., 30, Montgomery-street, Dalston, where I can be found any day after six P.M. I am about sixty-three

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years old, slightly bald. I wear black gaiters, a spencer, and a claret-coloured tail-coat. Why shouldn't I?

DEAD (AND GONE) SHOTS.

Not very long since, a military tribunal at Dublin was investigating serious charges involving the character of an officer and a gentleman, one of which had reference to the prisoner's having failed to vindicate his honour in the manner customary among gentlemen fifty years ago. Almost at the same moment, but "in another place," an Irish chieftain was pursuing the same antiquated mode of obtaining redress for an insult, to be frustrated by a comic premier, who, with infinite address, turned this grave bit of chivalry into a political pantomime. These two instances will serve as a text, while we glance back at the palmy days when the duello was part of the gentleman's profession, and when twelve paces and a saw-handled Manton were the most grateful salve for wounded honour.

The English, in many other ways notably distinguished, fail egregiously in this elegant accomplishment. In the fasti of the nation there is a discreditable absence of these exciting encounters. True, Chalk Farm has its roll of worthies, the Ring in Hyde Park and the King's Walk have a few meagre entries; gentlemen carrying swords have brushed their skirts, drawn, and exchanged passes. But this is but a spurious fashion of battle—a gruelly diet. It never appeared to be racy of the soil: it had no healthy root in the country, to be relished with a keen zest. The natives did not fling themselves into it with a boisterous abandon. It lagged and drooped.

Irishmen, on the contrary, have been the most enthusiastic professors of this refined chivalry: and Ireland has been the happy hunting grounds of satisfaction. Wounded honour came to the green island, and went away soothed with "a bullet through its thorax"—perhaps was "pickled and sent home to his friends" in the legitimate mortuary chest. In no country has duelling enjoyed so healthy a vitality. It was sustained con amore. The men and women of the country flung themselves in the exciting pastime with a generous enthusiasm. It was part of the curriculum of education. Every man was a knight of the pistol.

The days of jubilee for Irish duelling were those prior to the Union. Now-a-days, this happy and simple mode of adjustment has fallen into disfavour. Nothing is so mysterious as the gradual alteration in a nation's manners. Strange to say, the old mode of arbitrement in the very country of "satisfaction" appears to be utterly extinct. The cold shade of the Saxon has blighted the honest combativeness of the children of Erin.

Ireland then was the garden of duellists. Nay, it almost filled the function of the Propaganda College at Rome, and supplied a stock of missionaries to the rest of the world. The Hibernian element gave the tone to the rest of the fighting community; and it is remarkable that in most of the recorded encounters of note, Captain Kelly, or Captain Lynch, or Captain Bodkin, had invariably something to do with the arrangements, in capacity of principal, second, or, perhaps, accomplished referee—to be consulted on some neat duelling crux, such as only a man of elegant experience could decide on. The world is much beholden to these gentlemen for their gratuitous services.

About the year seventeen hundred and sixty, it was usual for every respectable family to have among its heirlooms the hereditary pistols—the preservatives and vindicators of the family honour. These were tenderly regarded and kept scrupulously clean and oiled: for no man knew the moment when they would be required. The handles were mysteriously notched, and it was with a pardonable pride that the head of the house, when called on by the admiring stranger, would proceed to tell off (guided by those rude chroniclers) the history of each notch; for by each hung a tale, and—it must be added—a catastrophe. Sir Jonah Barrington swells with enthusiasm over a pair which had been in *his* family—in constant work too—since the days of Elizabeth. Of course, adds the baronet, the cocks and barrels had been renewed. One of these ancestral "tools" was known by a phrase of endearment as "sweet lips;" the other as "the darling," and the accumulated trophies, contributed by a long series of the Barrington family, must have been something very considerable. There was usually also a companion weapon kept carefully in the armoury, in case of an adversary drawing a "choice of weapons;" and the baronet had a powerful instrument of this description known as "skiver the pullet"—a happy expression, in which there lurks what Mr. Carlyle would call a "deep no-meaning," and on which gloss or comment would throw much interesting light. Every domestic hearth had its "skiver the pullet;" and it may be taken for granted that each "skiver the pullet" had its own tally of little legends.

This holy Irish chivalry chastened even the family circle. On Easter-day a lady from the west tells the writer how in her youth she recals one early morning, barely forty years ago, when the son of the family was sent forth with blessings to prosecute a last night's quarrel; and how, when he returned scathless himself, and without having scathed others, he was met with lowering brows and ill-concealed displeasure. The family honour had not been properly vindicated. The gloom even reacted upon the children and domestics. The matron and mother would barely speak to her degenerate offspring—a picture of the unhealthy state of manners of the period. Indeed, in the education of a young man about this time, there was considered to be an indefinable something wanting, analogous to the absence of a degree at college, when he had not qualified with the pistol. As soon as he became conspicuous enough to be the

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subject of any conversation, two questions were sure to be put, considered excellent tests in their way: "What family is he of? Has he ever *blazed?*" In nuptial matters, "Big brother" looked with as much nicety into these qualifications of the pretendant as the father did into his pecuniary abilities and settlements. A gentleman of some duelling eminence was heard trying to quiet his little boy with some such little endearments as these: "Come, now, be a good boy! Don't, don't cry, and you shall have a case of nice little pistols, and we'll shoot them off all in the morning." The lively offspring, delighted with the notion, began to dry its eyes, and revelled in the pleasing pastime.

A sacred procedure like this, was not to be left to the discretion of its own wild and unlicensed professors who at any moment might bring discredit on their calling, by some little irregularity, unwarranted by rule. A few earnest spirits put their hands to the good work, and fashioned a series of pandects, which may be said to have regulated the practice of the honourable profession. The names of these lawgivers should not be lost, they were "Crow" Ryan who was president, and James Keogh and "Amby" Bodkin, secretaries. They "redacted" the "famous thirty-six commandments of Galway"—so they were called, with a pleasant profanity—which were headed thus:

"The practice of duelling and points of honour settled at Clonmel Summer Assizes, 1777, by the gentlemen delegates of Tipperary, Galway, Mayo, Sligo, and Roscommon, and prescribed for general adoption throughout Ireland."

By these constitutions it was prescribed that "the first offence requires the first apology," though the retort may have been the most offensive. However, it is to be open that the second offence may be explained away by apology, after one fire, that is.

But if the parties would rather fight on, says constitution the second, then after two shots each (but in *no case before*) the second offender may explain first, and apologise afterwards. That little parenthesis ("in no case before") should surely be read with small probability "after," for the intermediate necessity of "two shots each" rendered the chances of explanation or apology doubtful at the very least. Sometimes explanations are tolerated *after* three interchanges of shots, but this is a rare indulgence. Any wound sufficient to make the hand shake or agitate the nerves must end the business *for that day*.

No "dumb shooting," the constitution goes on to say, with a happy expression, "or firing in the air is admissible in any case." In slight cases the principals are furnished with one pistol, in gross cases two; the second holding *another case ready* charged, in reserve.

Sometimes painful disagreements have been known to arise between the seconds, which can only be arranged by the same agency as the principals are availing themselves of. In these cases symmetry is consulted, and the parties stand in a pretty quartett at the four corners of a square, and fire at the same moment. The difficulty to discover a safe place of retreat for the gentleman who gives the word must be great, as the fire more or less covers each quarter of the horizon.

At this epoch the counties of Tipperary and Galway were looked up to with a fond pride as the universities of the science. Galway was held to turn out the best swordsmen, much as Cambridge is now so deservedly esteemed for its mathematics. But Tipperary took the higher honours of the pistol. The most notable graduates have the name of Jemmy Keogh, Buck English, Cosey Harrison, Crowe Ryan, Paddy Long, Amby Bodkin, Squire Falton, Squire Blake, and Amby Fitzgerald—names significant in the highest degree. These gentlemen bore the highest reputation, and were profoundly skilled in all the points and niceties of this elegant chivalry.

It is on record that one of the curious quartette shooting-matches was fought between Sir John Bourke, of Glirsk, and Amby Bodkin, Esq., together with their two seconds. The practice was spoken of as very exciting; and the little heir of the family, then only some five or six years of age, was brought out and hoisted upon men's shoulders, to "see papa fight." An umpire gave the signal by firing a pistol; but it is not mentioned in what place of security he had posted himself. At the first discharge the principals were slightly wounded, but not at all so seriously as to interfere with the prosecution of the sport. The next volley, the chronicler, with an allowable enthusiasm, tells us, "told better." Both the seconds, and Amby Bodkin, Esq., were seen tottering from the ground. "They were well hit," the chronicler adds, with undisguised satisfaction.

Sometimes, far down in the country districts, the wager of battle was decided on horseback after the Arab manner. There was a notable duello of this description some time about the year seventeen hundred and sixty, between a sturdy veteran, Colonel Jonah Barrington, and a neighbour, Mr. Gilbert. Their animosities were increasing daily, there was an unhealthy state of secret hostility, not openly declared, until some judicious friends at last interfered, and, from a fear that the feud might descend by way of vendetta to the innocent offspring, pressed that the matter should be cleared off in an open, honest, and legitimate way. To their humane argument, the champions, to their credit be it said, at once acceded. The ground was fixed to be the Green of Maryborough, the distance one hundred yards of race, the weapons two holster pistols charged with ball and swan-drops, broadsword and dirk. The engagement had been advertised for some six months previous, and the whole country round flocked to see the exciting spectacle. The ground was kept, as at a race, by master gamekeepers and huntsmen.

The details of the fight are recorded. So, too, and with more minuteness, were the "rounds"

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at Farnborough last year. There was much slashing and hewing. The veteran received three cuts early in the fight; but, as both wore steel caps under their hats, there was no very serious danger to be looked for. The other gentleman had been pierced in the thigh, but so as to cause him serious inconvenience. At last the veteran, growing tired of the struggle, closed upon his adversary, stabbed his horse several times and, with his dagger at his enemy's throat, was proclaimed the victor. Curious to say, the well intentioned purpose of the judicious friends who arranged the meeting was happily carried out, for they became sworn friends on the very field.

It was within the Irish barristerial ranks, in the sacred order whose province was the vindication and the interpretation of the law, that this violation of its strictest injunctions was carried out. The priests and preachers of the Legal Temple were by far the most daring sinners. The judges of the land—where their arguments failed to convince, and were fortified by a tone and expression derived from no higher source than the mere accident of exalted position—were willing to gauge the issue by a fairer test. There is a list of legal worthies preserved, who have adopted this impartial mode of arrangement.

Another list has been handed down of the more notable encounters. We find a Lord Chancellor fighting a Master of the Rolls; a Chief Justice fighting two peers and two other gentlemen; a local Judge fighting a Master of the Rolls and four others; a Baron of the Exchequer fighting his own brother-in-law and two others; a Chancellor of the Exchequer fighting a Privy Councillor; a Provost of College fighting a Master in Chancery; and another Chief Justice disposing of three gentlemen from the country, one with swords, another with guns, wounding all three. So repeated were these little differences in the case of the well-known Lord Norbury, that he was happily said to have "*shot up*" into preferment. It strikes the modern mind with astonishment—the mind that has not as yet become "more Irish and less nice"—to see the intimate manner in which these two departments of the profession were linked together. A nice capacity for pleading, and a nice eye for levelling, were equally essential. It would be madness, indeed, to be deficient in either, when there was to be found a noble lord who, being worsted in a series of suits, determined to vindicate himself by calling out, seriatim, the dozen barristers or so who were retained on the other side. Commencing with the attorney and distributing the parts among his own sons, he disposed of three, when some circumstances interfered and checked his further progress. Counsel often fell out on circuit, would leave court and hurry to an adjoining field, "blaze" and return (if the issue admitted of it) to the court, where judge and jury were anxiously expecting them. A perfect chronicle of duelling, taken on its facetious as well as on its serious side, may be found set out in detail in Sir Jonah Barrington's volumes, who enumerates no less than two hundred and twenty-seven "memorable and official" duels as having occurred during his "grand climacteric." So lately as the O'Connell trials, the Attorney-General prosecuting showed himself no degenerate member of his order, and wrote a challenge across the table to his adversary.

Even when sojourning in a strange land, and under the blighting influence of the cold and order-loving Saxon, the traditions of his country did not desert the Irish gentleman. In the little pugnacious entries in the London Chronicle, which were as invariably recorded as the births and marriages, the exiled Hibernian took his part not ingloriously. He turns up, often playing principal, very often second. His known experience made him an invaluable assistant, or even arbitrator. The inexperienced Saxon was grateful for his services. Thus, in the year 'seventeen seventy-seven, where my Lord Milton met my Lord Poulett "this morning at ten o'clock," my Lord Poulett was fortunate enough to secure "Captain Kelly's" advice and aid as his second. The artificial ties of kindred—often carried to an absurd extent—were, in the case of unhappy Irish differences, no bar to a happy adjustment according to the laws of honour. Thus, "a duel was this day fought (in 'seventeen sixty-three) between two brothers, Irish gentlemen, in Kensington gravel-pits, in which one received so dangerous a wound that his life is despaired of." This quarrel arose out of the barbarous treatment of a sister by one of her brothers—she having married an officer against the wishes of the family. Again, the rather shabby protection afforded by what is called "the cloth" was not allowed to avail; or, at least, was gracefully waved by the offender. The instance of the Reverend Mr. Hill is full of instruction. In 'seventeen sixty-four, "a duel was fought in Epping forest between Colonel Gardiner of the Carabineers, and the Reverend Mr. Hill, Chaplain to Bland's Dragoons, when the latter received a wound of which he died two days later. Mr. Hill," continues the obituary notice, "was an *Irish* gentleman of good address, great sprightliness, and an excellent talent in preaching, but rather of too volatile a turn for his profession."

The misunderstanding between Lords Townshend and Bellamont, which occurred in the year seventeen hundred and seventy-two, was, indeed, a model difficulty. As an "affair of honour," arising out of no vulgar incidents of assault and battery or strong personal language; as one negotiated through all its stages with a rare delicacy; and, finally, as one brought to a satisfactory issue upon the field, it takes rank among the highest on record. As exhibiting the supremest niceties which then regulated the code of honour, it deserves our careful study. The details of this famous transaction, which filled the newspapers of the time, were something in this wise:

Lord Townshend was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, lived in the Castle of Dublin, received

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all the nobility and "jontry" at levees and "drawn-rooms," and was sprinkled copiously with "excellency" and other proconsular adulation. One morning came the Earl of Bellamont—and note how melodious and romantic these Irish titles are—craving audience, in company with other postulants. To him presently enters an aide-de-camp with word that he, the earl, need not wait, for that his excellency would not be at leisure to see *him* that day; and then turning to other parties bade *them* wait, as his excellency would see *them* presently. No doubt this speech was flavoured with the true ante-room hauteur, and delivered about as offensively as it conveniently could. "Then," said the Earl of Bellamont, "his excellency will be pleased to ascertain at what time he will see me. I have already waited several times by appointment, and have been sent away each time." To him presently the aide-de-camp, returns with a fresh message, that the thing was impossible, and that he should come on Wednesday which was the day for military matters. "Sir," said the earl, "you will be good enough to inform his excellency, that as a peer of the realm, I have a right to audience. But, if his excellency does not know what he owes to me, I also know what I owe to myself, and therefore will not wait upon him here or elsewhere."

This last assurance was a mistake; for by-and-by his excellency comes to London, and after some twelve days is waited on by another earl, Dr. Johnson's Lord Charlemont, on the part of the Earl of Bellamont. This nobleman commenced matters by requesting permission to read a statement on the part of his noble friend, which was at once accorded. Nothing could be in better taste than this document, or more graciously worded; it even commenced with a handsome acknowledgment: "I wait on your lordship," read the "elegant Charlemont," as Macaulay calls him, "first to return your lordship thanks for the recommendation to the king with which you honoured him, and for which it was his intention to have thanked you in person." He then apologises for not waiting on him earlier, but he felt a reluctance to break in upon him when he would be engaged giving an account of his province to the king. He then recapitulated all the details of the scene at the castle; stated that Lord Bellamont had resigned his commission in his majesty's service, in order that he might with more propriety proceed in this delicate matter without being restrained by duty.

Poor Lord Townshend, who had no doubt forgotten all about the transaction, then asked what apology Lord Bellamont required? Upon which the "elegant Charlemont," prepared at all points, began again to read. "The only apology that the nature of the affront will admit of, is that of asking Lord Bellamont's pardon." It was added that there was no wish to hurry his lordship, but that an answer would be expected at *least one day before his lordship* left town. Lord Townshend replied, "I cannot ask pardon, as it would be an acknowledgment of an offence I never intended." But the two Irish noblemen had "drawn the pleadings" between them too skilfully to admit of any loophole. "I am not at liberty," said the elegant Charlemont, "to take back any answer to Lord Bellamont than that your lordship begs his pardon; or, that your lordship desires to take time to consider it. I therefore entreat your lordship to reflect before you lay me under the absolute necessity of delivering another message to your lordship, which Lord Bellamont sends with the extremest regret, and which I shall deliver with equal reluctance." Lord Townshend having persisted in his refusal, Lord Charlemont then read the following article: "I am enjoined by Lord Bellamont to state to your lordship, that he considers *you divested* of every principle *that constitutes the character of a man of honour*."

This severe language was no doubt delivered with all the sweetness and affability of which the accomplished nobleman was capable. The situation was getting to be grave; so Lord Townshend asked permission to call in a friend, and presently arrived Colonel Fraser; he then requested that the last passage might be read over again, for the benefit of the new comer, which was done. Then Lord Townshend proposed entrusting Lord Charlemont with a reply to carry back to Lord Bellamont. This was declined, the skilful diplomatist pleading that his instructions were to receive no message, but that such must come through a channel of his lordship's own providing.

This took place on Christmas Eve, and at half-past eleven on boxing-night—an appropriate festival—a letter was left at Lord Bellamont's, in Curzon-street, from Viscount Ligonier, politely requesting to know when it would be convenient to his lordship to receive a message from Lord Townshend, with which he should have the honour of charging himself. In conclusion, he had "the honour to be,

"My lord,
"Your lordship's most
"Obedient and most humble servant,
"Ligonier."

To this Lord Bellamont replied that same night that he should be at home the whole of the next day.

Accordingly, on Sunday morning at half-past eleven o'clock, "Lord Viscount Ligonier" arrived, and was about delivering his message, when Lord Bellamont interfered, and hoped he might have permission to introduce his friend Lord Charlemont, for, as Lord Townshend had called in *his* friend, Colonel Fraser, to hear himself described in no very complimentary language, it was only equitable that he should have the same privilege. Lord Charlemont then came in, and all preparations being now duly made, "Lord Viscount Ligonier" began to deliver his terrible message. "What will your lordship say when, notwithstanding the force of this message, I am authorised to assure your lordship that Lord Townshend never meant to offend you." No doubt the Irish

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noblemen were a little staggered by this announcement; and, after a pause during which gloom and disappointment gathered upon their faces, Lord Bellamont said, "I confess, my lord, this is more than I expected. But since Lord Townshend's first care is to justify his intention towards me, and end his present situation, let him do it in such a manner as to justify me in releasing him *from* that situation. The apology your lordship has delivered is not yet sufficient." Then Lord Ligonier begged permission to return to his principal; and, by-and-by came back with another apology shaped more satisfactorily; in which he repeated that he never meant to offend, and was sorry, generally, that the business had occurred.

This last "article" was surely sufficient for the noble lord, for it made him play penitent for what he owned to having known nothing of. But the insatiable Irish noblemen were not to be balked. The Earl of Bellamont now requested permission to send for a fourth actor in the piece, who had not as yet "come on," but who was to figure, he said, in the responsible function of his "second in the field"—namely, Lord Ancram. Lord Charlemont's powers, it would appear, did not stretch beyond that of pacificator and diplomatist: the new negotiator had sterner duties. Accordingly, Lord Ancram presented himself. The original expression of regret, together with its amendment, was read over to him, considered gravely, and pronounced satisfactory. A wonderful instance of abnegation on the part of the new negotiator, considering that it was a virtual renunciation of his new office and powers. Still the earl was not yet easy in his mind. The atonement offered was almost too complete to be satisfactory. The very handsomeness of the apology disturbed him. There should at least have been qualification and protocolling. There may have been a snake hidden in the grass. So, on the whole, the noble earl requested permission to retire into an adjoining chamber to think the matter over. Presently he reappeared with an instrument drawn up carefully, embodying the apology given, and framed with great legal nicety. He presented this with some mistrust, as though he were doing something prejudicial to his own interests, but generously said he will not insist on this exact shape of words. Lord Ligonier, however, accepted it, took it with him, and went his way home to his principal.

This affair of honour may be said to have been thus far happily piloted through all its stages; and, though some nice perceptions may consider it to have been strictly an affair of honour spoiled, and, like abortive actions-at-law, to have gone off on a technical point, still it reflected credit on all the parties concerned. No doubt my Lord Townshend, thinking the business over, was not quite pleased with the gentle and submissive part he had been made to play in the matter. But it was not fated to end in this lame and prosaic fashion: awkward versions of the arrangements began to be whispered about the clubs. Therefore when, about three weeks afterwards, a paper was tendered to my Lord Ligonier for signature, embodying a version of the whole transaction, he gladly seized the opportunity of protesting against that version, and gave this very remarkable explanation. Who would imagine that the visit of "Lord Viscount" Ligonier, on Sunday morning, was for the express purpose of challenging Lord Bellamont, for the forcible and depreciatory opinion which Lord Charlemont read out? Who could suppose that he had instructed primarily to call the noble earl to account, and that the apologetical disclaimers of any intention to offend was mere prefatory matter? Yet this is Lord Ligonier's version. When he found this overture so well received, he thought it possible that the affair might be patched up in a conciliatory way. Still it is mentioned that he returned to his principal, and got him to amend his apology, by which it would appear that he had put him in possession of the entire facts of the case, as it proceeded, which is not very consistent with his story.

However, on this, negotiations were opened afresh, and a meeting happily arranged. The lovers of this manly mode of adjusting human differences were gratified with a genuine duel. The belligerents met behind Marylebone-fields, Lord Bellamont having been attended by an Irish gentleman, the Hon. Mr. Dillon; Lord Townshend by Lord Viscount Ligonier. The Earl of Bellamont was destined to be the sufferer; for he missed his adversary, who succeeded in lodging his ball in the fleshy part of the earl's groin. He was placed in a coach, but the pain of the wound was such, that he had to be moved to a sedan-chair. The surgeons were long in finding the ball, and, after a doubtful struggle, he was pronounced out of danger, and finally recovered.

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER XV.

On the next morning but one, news was received from Mr. Pendril. The place of Michael Vanstone's residence on the Continent had been discovered. He was living at Zurich; and a letter had been despatched to him, at that place, on the day when the information was obtained. In the course of the coming week an answer might be expected, and the purport of it should be communicated forthwith to the ladies at Combe-Raven.

Short as it was, the interval of delay passed wearily. Ten days elapsed before the expected answer was received; and when it came at last, it proved to be, strictly speaking, no answer at all. Mr. Pendril had been merely referred to an agent in London who was in possession of Michael Vanstone's instructions. Certain difficulties had been discovered in connexion with those instructions, which had produced the necessity of once more writing to Zurich. And there "the negotiations" rested again, for the present.

A second paragraph in Mr. Pendril's letter contained another piece of intelligence entirely new. Mr. Michael Vanstone's son (and only child), Mr. Noel Vanstone, had recently arrived in London, and was then staying in lodgings occupied by his cousin, Mr. George Bartram. Professional considerations had induced Mr. Pendril to pay a visit to the lodgings. He had been very kindly received by Mr. Bartram; but had been informed by that gentleman that his cousin was not then in a condition to see visitors. Mr. Noel Vanstone had been suffering for some years past, from a wearing and obstinate malady; he had come to England expressly to obtain the best medical advice, and he still felt the fatigue of the journey so severely as to be confined to his bed. Under these circumstances, Mr. Pendril had no alternative but to take his leave. An interview with Mr. Noel Vanstone might have cleared up some of the difficulties in connexion with his father's instructions. As events had turned out, there was no help for it but to wait for a few days more.

The days passed, the empty days of solitude and suspense. At last, a third letter from the lawyer announced the long-delayed conclusion of the correspondence. The final answer had been received from Zurich; and Mr. Pendril would personally communicate it, at Combe-Raven, on the afternoon of the next day.

That next day was Wednesday, the twelfth of August. The weather had changed in the night: and the sun rose watery through mist and cloud. By noon, the sky was overcast at all points; the temperature was sensibly colder; and the rain poured down, straight and soft and steady, on the thirsty earth. Towards three o'clock, Miss Garth and Norah entered the morning-room, to await Mr. Pendril's arrival. They were joined, shortly afterwards, by Magdalen. In half an hour more, the familiar fall of the iron latch in the socket, reached their ears from the fence beyond the shrubbery. Mr. Pendril and Mr. Clare advanced into view along the garden-path, walking arm in arm through the rain, sheltered by the same umbrella. The lawyer bowed as they passed the windows: Mr. Clare walked straight on, deep in his own thoughts; noticing nothing.

After a delay which seemed interminable; after a weary scraping of wet feet on the hall mat; after a mysterious, muttered interchange of question and answer outside the door, the two came in—Mr. Clare leading the way. The old man walked straight up to the table, without any preliminary greeting; and looked across it at the three women, with a stern pity for them, in his rugged wrinkled face.

"Bad news," he said. "I am an enemy to all unnecessary suspense. Plainness is kindness, in such a case as this. I mean to be kind; and I tell you plainly—bad news."

Mr. Pendril followed him. He shook hands, in silence, with Miss Garth and the two sisters; and took a seat near them. Mr. Clare placed himself apart on a chair by the window. The grey rainy light fell soft and sad on the faces of Norah and Magdalen, who sat together opposite to him. Miss Garth had placed herself a little behind them, in partial shadow; and the lawyer's quiet face was seen in profile, close beside her. So the four occupants of the room appeared to Mr. Clare, as he sat apart in his corner; his long claw-like fingers interlaced on his knee; his dark vigilant eyes fixed searchingly now on one face, now on another. The dripping rustle of the rain among the leaves, and the clear ceaseless tick of the clock on the mantelpiece, made the minute of silence which

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followed the settling of the persons present in their places, indescribably oppressive. It was a relief to every one, when Mr. Pendril spoke.

"Mr. Clare has told you already," he began, "that I am the bearer of bad news. I am grieved to say, Miss Garth, that your doubts, when I last saw you, were better founded than my hopes. What that heartless elder brother was in his youth, he is still in his old age. In all my unhappy experience of the worst side of human nature, I have never met with a man so utterly dead to every consideration of mercy, as Michael Vanstone."

"Do you mean that he takes the whole of his brother's fortune, and makes no provision whatever for his brother's children?" asked Miss Garth.

"He offers a sum of money for present emergencies," replied Mr. Pendril, "so meanly and disgracefully insufficient, that I am ashamed to mention it."

"And nothing for the future?"

"Absolutely nothing."

As that answer was given, the same thought passed, at the same moment, through Miss Garth's mind and through Norah's. The decision which deprived both the sisters alike of the resources of fortune, did not end there for the younger of the two. Michael Vanstone's merciless resolution had virtually pronounced the sentence which dismissed Frank to China, and which destroyed all present hope of Magdalen's marriage. As the words passed the lawyer's lips, Miss Garth and Norah looked at Magdalen anxiously. Her face turned a shade paler—but not a feature of it moved; not a word escaped her. Norah, who held her sister's hand in her own, felt it tremble for a moment, and then turn cold—and that was all.

"Let me mention plainly what I have done," resumed Mr. Pendril; "I am very desirous you should not think that I have left any effort untried. When I wrote to Michael Vanstone, in the first instance, I did not confine myself to the usual formal statement. I put before him, plainly and earnestly, every one of the circumstances under which he has become possessed of his brother's fortune. When I received the answer, referring me to his written instructions to his lawyer in London—and when a copy of those instructions was placed in my hands—I positively declined, on becoming acquainted with them, to receive the writer's decision as final. I induced the solicitor on the other side to accord us a further term of delay; I attempted to see Mr. Noel Vanstone in London for the purpose of obtaining his intercession; and, failing in that, I myself wrote to his father for the second time. The answer referred me, in insolently curt terms, to the instructions already communicated; declared those instructions to be final; and declined any further correspondence with me. There is the beginning and the end of the negotiation. If I have overlooked any means of touching this heartless man—tell me, and those means shall be tried.

He looked at Norah. She pressed her sister's hand encouragingly, and answered for both of them.

"I speak for my sister, as well as for myself," she said, with her colour a little heightened, with her natural gentleness of manner just touched by a quiet, uncomplaining sadness. "You have done all that could be done, Mr. Pendril. We have tried to restrain ourselves from hoping too confidently; and we are deeply grateful for your kindness, at a time when kindness is sorely needed by both of us."

Magdalen's hand returned the pressure of her sister's—withdrew itself—trifled for a moment impatiently with the arrangement of her dress—then suddenly moved the chair closer to the table. Leaning one arm on it (with the hand fast clenched), she looked across at Mr. Pendril. Her face, always remarkable for its want of colour, was now startling to contemplate, in its blank bloodless pallor. But the light in her large grey eyes was bright and steady as ever; and her voice, though low in tone, was clear and resolute in accent as she addressed the lawyer in these terms:

"I understood you to say, Mr. Pendril, that my father's brother had sent his written orders to London, and that you had a copy. Have you preserved it?"

"Certainly."

"Have you got it about you?"

"I have."

"May I see it?"

Mr. Pendril hesitated, and looked uneasily from Magdalen to Miss Garth, and from Miss Garth back again to Magdalen.

"Pray oblige me by not pressing your request," he said. "It is surely enough that you know the result of the instructions. Why should you agitate yourself to no purpose by reading them? They are expressed so cruelly; they show such abominable want of feeling, that I really cannot prevail upon myself to let you see them."

"I am sensible of your kindness, Mr. Pendril, in wishing to spare me pain. But I can bear pain; I promise to distress nobody. Will you excuse me if I repeat my request?"

She held out her hand—the soft, white, virgin hand that had touched nothing to soil it or harden it yet.

"Oh, Magdalen, think again!" said Norah.

"You distress Mr. Pendril," added Miss Garth; "you distress us all."

"There can be no end gained," pleaded the lawyer—"forgive me for saying so—there can really be no useful end gained by my showing you the instructions."

("Fools!" said Mr. Clare to himself. "Have they no eyes to see that she means to have her own way?")

"Something tells me there *is* an end to be gained," persisted Magdalen. "This decision is a very serious one. It is more serious to me——" She looked round at Mr. Clare, who sat closely watching her, and instantly looked back again, with the first outward betrayal of emotion which had escaped her yet. "It is

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even more serious to me," she resumed, "for private reasons—than it is to my sister. I know nothing yet, but that our father's brother has taken our fortunes from us. He must have some motives of his own for such conduct as that. It is not fair to him, or fair to us, to keep those motives concealed. He has deliberately robbed Norah, and robbed me; and I think we have a right, if we wish it, to know why."

"I don't wish it," said Norah.

"I do," said Magdalen; and, once more, she held out her hand.

At this point, Mr. Clare roused himself, and interfered for the first time.

"You have relieved your conscience," he said, addressing the lawyer. "Give her the right she claims. It *is* her right—if she will have it."

Mr. Pendril quietly took the written instructions from his pocket. "I have warned you," he said—and handed the papers across the table, without another word. One of the pages of writing was folded down at the corner; and, at that folded page, the manuscript opened, when Magdalen first turned the leaves. "Is this the place which refers to my sister and myself?" she inquired. Mr. Pendril bowed; and Magdalen smoothed out the manuscript before her, on the table.

"Will you decide, Norah?" she asked, turning to her sister. "Shall I read this aloud, or shall I read it to myself?"

"To yourself," said Miss Garth; answering for Norah, who looked at her in mute perplexity and distress.

"It shall be as you wish," said Magdalen. With that reply, she turned again to the manuscript, and read these lines:—

" . . . . . You are now in possession of my wishes in relation to the property in money, and to the sale of the furniture, carriages, horses, and so forth. The last point left, on which it is necessary for me to instruct you, refers to the persons inhabiting the house, and to certain preposterous claims on their behalf, set up by a solicitor named Pendril; who has no doubt interested reasons of his own for making application to me.

"I understand that my late brother has left two illegitimate children; both of them young women, who are of an age to earn their own livelihood. Various considerations, all equally irregular, have been urged in respect to these persons, by the solicitor representing them. Be so good as to tell him that neither you nor I have anything to do with questions of mere sentiment; and then state plainly, for his better information, what the motives are which regulate my conduct, and what the provision is which I feel myself justified in making for the two young women. Your instructions on both these points, you will find detailed in the next paragraph.

"I wish the persons concerned, to know, once for all, how I regard the circumstances which have placed my late brother's property at my disposal. Let them understand that I consider those circumstances to be a Providential interposition, which has restored to me the inheritance that ought always to have been mine. I receive the money, not only as my right, but also as a proper compensation for the injustice which I suffered from my father, and a proper penalty paid by my younger brother for the vile intrigue by which he succeeded in disinheriting me. His conduct, when a young man, was uniformly discreditable in all the relations of life; and what it then was, it continued to be (on the showing of his own legal representative) after the time when I ceased to hold any communication with him. He appears to have systematically imposed a woman on Society as his wife, who was not his wife; and to have completed the outrage on morality by afterwards marrying her. Such conduct as this, has called down a Judgment on himself and his children. I will not invite retribution on my own head, by assisting those children to continue the imposition which their parents practised, and by helping them to take a place in the world to which they are not entitled. Let them, as becomes their birth, gain their bread in situations. If they show themselves disposed to accept their proper position, I will assist them to start virtuously in life, by a present of one hundred pounds each. This sum I authorise you to pay them, on their personal application, with the necessary acknowledgment of receipt; and on the express understanding that the transaction, so completed, is to be the beginning and the end of my connexion with them. The arrangements under which they quit the house, I leave to your discretion; and I have only to add that my decision on this matter, as on all other matters, is positive and final."

Line by line—without once looking up from the pages before her—Magdalen read those atrocious sentences through, from beginning to end. The other persons assembled in the room, all eagerly looking at her together, saw the dress rising and falling faster and faster over her bosom—saw the hand in which she lightly held the manuscript at the outset, close unconsciously on the paper, and crush it, as she advanced nearer and nearer to the end—but detected no other outward signs of what was passing within her. As soon as she had done, she silently pushed the manuscript away, and put her hands on a sudden over her face. When she withdrew them, all the four persons in the room noticed a change in her. Something in her expression had altered, subtly and silently; something which made the familiar features suddenly look strange, even to her sister and Miss Garth; something, through all after years, never to be forgotten in connexion with that day—and never to be described.

The first words she spoke were addressed to Mr. Pendril.

"May I ask one more favour," she said,

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"before you enter on your business arrangements?"

Mr. Pendril replied ceremoniously by a gesture of assent. Magdalen's resolution to possess herself of the Instructions, did not appear to have produced a favourable impression on the lawyer's mind.

"You mentioned what you were so kind as to do, in our interests, when you first wrote to Mr. Michael Vanstone," she continued. "You said you had told him all the circumstances. I want—if you will allow me—to be made quite sure of what he really knew about us when he sent these orders to his lawyer. Did he know that my father had made a will, and that he had left our fortunes to my sister and myself?"

"He did know it," said Mr. Pendril.

"Did you tell him how it happened that we are left in this helpless position?"

"I told him that your father was entirely unaware, when he married, of the necessity for making another will."

"And that another will would have been made, after he saw Mr. Clare, but for the dreadful misfortune of his death?"

"He knew that, also."

"Did he know that my father's untiring goodness and kindness to both of us——"

Her voice faltered for the first time: she sighed, and put her hand to her head wearily. Norah spoke entreatingly to her; Miss Garth spoke entreatingly to her; Mr. Clare sat silent, watching her more and more earnestly. She answered her sister's remonstrance with a faint smile. "I will keep my promise," she said; "I will distress nobody." With that reply, she turned again to Mr. Pendril; and steadily reiterated the question—but in another form of words.

"Did Mr. Michael Vanstone know that my father's great anxiety was to make sure of providing for my sister and myself?"

"He knew it in your father's own words. I sent him an extract from your father's last letter to me."

"The letter which asked you to come for God's sake, and relieve him from the dreadful thought that his daughters were unprovided for? The letter which said he should not rest in his grave if he left us disinherited?"

"That letter and those words."

She paused, still keeping her eyes steadily fixed on the lawyer's face.

"I want to fasten it all in my mind," she said, "before I go on. Mr. Michael Vanstone knew of the first will; he knew what prevented the making of the second will; he knew of the letter, and he read the words. What did he know of besides? Did you tell him of my mother's last illness? Did you say that her share in the money would have been left to us, if she could have lifted her dying hand in your presence? Did you try to make him ashamed of the cruel law of England which calls girls in our situation Nobody's Children, and which allows him to use us as he is using us now?"

"I put all those considerations to him. I left none of them doubtful; I left none of them out."

She slowly reached her hand to the copy of the Instructions; and slowly folded it up again, in the shape in which it had been presented to her. "I am much obliged to you, Mr. Pendril." With those words, she bowed, and gently pushed the manuscript back across the table; then turned to her sister.

"Norah," she said, "if we both of us live to grow old, and if you ever forget all that we owe to Michael Vanstone—come to me, and I will remind you."

She rose and walked across the room by herself to the window. As she passed Mr. Clare, the old man stretched out his claw-like fingers, and caught her fast by the arm before she was aware of him.

"What is this mask of yours hiding?" he asked, forcing her to bend to him, and looking close into her face. "Which of the extremes of human temperature does your courage start from—the dead cold or the white hot?"

She shrank back from him; and turned away her head in silence. She would have resented that unscrupulous intrusion on her own thoughts from any man alive but Frank's father. He dropped her arm as suddenly as he had taken it, and let her go on to the window. "No," he said to himself, "not the cold extreme, whatever else it may be. So much the worse for her, and for all belonging to her."

There was a momentary pause. Once more the dripping rustle of the rain, and the steady ticking of the clock filled up the gap of silence. Mr. Pendril put the Instructions back in his pocket, considered a little; and, turning towards Norah and Miss Garth, recalled their attention to the present and pressing necessities of the time.

"Our consultation has been needlessly prolonged," he said, "by painful references to the past. We shall be better employed in settling our arrangements for the future. I am obliged to return to town this evening. Pray let me hear how I can best assist you; pray tell me what trouble and what responsibility I can take off your hands."

For the moment, neither Norah nor Miss Garth seemed to be capable of answering him. Magdalen's reception of the news which annihilated the marriage prospect that her father's own lips had placed before her not a month since, had bewildered and dismayed them alike. They had summoned their courage to meet the shock of her passionate grief, or to face the harder trial of witnessing her speechless despair. But they were not prepared for her invincible resolution to read the Instructions; for the terrible questions which she had put to the lawyer; for her immovable determination to fix all the circumstances in her mind, under which Michael Vanstone's decision had been pronounced. There she stood at the window, an unfathomable mystery to the sister who had never been parted from her, to the governess who had trained her from a child. Miss Garth remembered the dark doubts which had crossed her mind, on the day

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when she and Magdalen had met in the garden. Norah looked forward to the coming time, with the first serious dread of it on her sister's account, which she had felt yet. Both had hitherto remained passive, in despair of knowing what to do. Both were now silent, in despair of knowing what to say.

Mr. Pendril patiently and kindly helped them, by returning to the subject of their future plans for the second time.

"I am sorry to press any business matters on your attention," he said, "when you are necessarily unfitted to deal with them. But I must take my instructions back to London with me to-night. With reference, in the first place, to the disgraceful pecuniary offer, to which I have already alluded. The younger Miss Vanstone having read the Instructions, needs no further information from my lips. The elder will, I hope, excuse me if I tell her (what I should be ashamed to tell her, but that it is a matter of necessity), that Mr. Michael Vanstone's provision for his brother's children, begins and ends with an offer to each of them of one hundred pounds."

Norah's face crimsoned with indignation. She started to her feet, as if Michael Vanstone had been present in the room, and had personally insulted her.

"I see," said the lawyer, wishing to spare her; "I may tell Mr. Michael Vanstone you refuse the money."

"Tell him," she broke out passionately, "if I was starving by the roadside, I wouldn't touch a farthing of it!"

"Shall I notify your refusal also?" asked Mr. Pendril, speaking to Magdalen next.

She turned round from the window—but kept her face in shadow, by standing close against it with her back to the light.

"Tell him, on my part," she said, "to think again, before he starts me in life with a hundred pounds. I will give him time to think." She spoke those strange words, with a marked emphasis; and turning back quickly to the window, hid her face from the observation of every one in the room.

"You both refuse the offer," said Mr. Pendril, taking out his pencil, and making his professional note of the decision. As he shut up his pocket-book, he glanced towards Magdalen doubtfully. She had roused in him the latent distrust which is a lawyer's second nature: he had his suspicions of her looks; he had his suspicions of her language. Her sister seemed to have more influence over her than Miss Garth. He resolved to speak privately to her sister before he went away.

While the idea was passing through his mind, attention was claimed by another question from Magdalen.

"Is he an old man?" she asked, suddenly, without turning round from the window.

"If you mean Mr. Michael Vanstone, he is seventy-five, or seventy-six years of age."

"You spoke of his son, a little while since. Has he any other sons—or daughters?"

"None."

"Do you know anything of his wife?"

"She has been dead for many years."

There was a pause. "Why do you ask these questions?" said Norah.

"I beg your pardon," replied Magdalen, quietly; "I won't ask any more."

For the third time, Mr. Pendril returned to the business of the interview.

"The servants must not be forgotten," he said. "They must be settled with and discharged: I will give them the necessary explanation before I leave. As for the house, no questions connected with it need trouble you. The carriages and horses, the furniture and plate, and so on, must simply be left on the premises to await Mr. Michael Vanstone's further orders. But any possessions, Miss Vanstone, personally belonging to you or to your sister—your jewellery and dresses, and any little presents which may have been made to you—are entirely at your own disposal. With regard to the time of your departure, I understand that a month, or more, will elapse before Mr. Michael Vanstone can leave Zurich; and I am sure I only do his solicitor justice in saying——"

"Excuse me, Mr. Pendril," interposed Norah; "I think I understand, from what you have just said, that our house and everything in it belongs to——?" She stopped, as if the mere utterance of the man's name was abhorrent to her.

"To Michael Vanstone," said Mr. Pendril. "The house goes to him with the rest of the property."

"Then I, for one, am ready to leave it to-morrow!"

Magdalen started at the window, as her sister spoke, and looked at Mr. Clare, with the first open signs of anxiety and alarm which she had shown yet.

"Don't be angry with me," she whispered, stooping over the old man with a sudden humility of look, and a sudden nervousness of manner. "I can't go, without seeing Frank first!"

"You shall see him," replied Mr. Clare. "I am here to speak to you about it, when the business is done."

"It is quite unnecessary to hurry your departure, as you propose," continued Mr. Pendril, addressing Norah. "I can safely assure you that a week hence will be time enough."

"If this is Mr. Michael Vanstone's house," repeated Norah, "I am ready to leave it to-morrow."

She impatiently quitted her chair; and seated herself farther away on the sofa. As she laid her hand on the back of it, her face changed. There, at the head of the sofa, were the cushions which had supported her mother, when she lay down for the last time to repose. There, at the foot of the sofa, was the clumsy, old-fashioned arm-chair, which had been her father's favourite seat on rainy days, when she and her sister used to amuse him at the piano opposite, by playing his favourite tunes. A heavy sigh, which she tried vainly to repress, burst from her lips.

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"Oh," she thought, "I had forgotten these old friends! How shall we part from them when the time comes!"

"May I inquire, Miss Vanstone, whether you and your sister have formed any definite plans for the future?" asked Mr. Pendril. "Have you thought of any place of residence?"

"I may take it on myself, sir," said Miss Garth, "to answer your question for them. When they leave this house, they leave it with me. My home is their home; and my bread is their bread. Their parents honoured me, trusted me, and loved me. For twelve happy years they never let me remember that I was their governess, they only let me know myself as their companion and their friend. My memory of them is the memory of unvarying gentleness and generosity; and my life shall pay the debt of my gratitude to their orphan children."

Norah rose hastily from the sofa; Magdalen impetuously left the window. For once, there was no contrast in the conduct of the sisters. For once, the same impulse moved their hearts, the same earnest feeling inspired their words. Miss Garth waited until the first outburst of emotion had passed away; then rose; and taking Norah and Magdalen each by the hand, addressed herself to Mr. Pendril and Mr. Clare. She spoke with perfect self-possession; strong in her artless unconsciousness of her own good action.

"Even such a trifle as my own story," she said, "is of some importance at such a moment as this. I wish you both, gentlemen, to understand that I am not promising more to the daughters of your old friend than I can perform. When I first came to this house, I entered it under such independent circumstances as are not common in the lives of governesses. In my younger days, I was associated in teaching with my elder sister: we established a school in London, which grew to be a large and prosperous one. I only left it and became a private governess, because the heavy responsibility of the school was more than my strength could bear. I left my share in the profits untouched, and I possess a pecuniary interest in our establishment to this day. That is my story, in few words. When we leave this house, I propose that we shall go back to the school in London, which is still prosperously directed by my elder sister. We can live there as quietly as we please, until time has helped us to bear our affliction better than we can bear it now. If Norah's and Magdalen's altered prospects oblige them to earn their own independence, I can help them to earn it, as a gentleman's daughters should. The best families in this land are glad to ask my sister's advice where the interests of their children's home-training are concerned; and I answer, beforehand, for her hearty desire to serve Mr. Vanstone's daughters, as I answer for my own. That is the future which my gratitude to their father and mother, and my love for themselves, now offers to them. If you think my proposal, gentlemen, a fit and fair proposal—and I see in your faces that you do—let us not make the hard necessities of our position harder still, by any useless delay in meeting them at once. Let us do what we must do; let us act on Norah's decision, and leave this house to-morrow. You mentioned the servants, just now, Mr. Pendril: I am ready to call them together in the next room, and to assist you in the settlement of their claims, whenever you please."

Without waiting for the lawyer's answer, without leaving the sisters time to realise their own terrible situation, she moved at once towards the door. It was her wise resolution to meet the coming trial by doing much, and saying little. Before she could leave the room, Mr. Clare followed, and stopped her on the threshold.

"I never envied a woman's feelings before," said the old man. "It may surprise you to hear it; but I envy yours. Wait! I have something more to say. There is an obstacle still left—the everlasting obstacle of Frank. Help me to sweep him off. Take the elder sister along with you and the lawyer; and leave me here to have it out with the younger. I want to see what metal she's really made of."

While Mr. Clare was addressing these words to Miss Garth, Mr. Pendril had taken the opportunity of speaking to Norah. "Before I go back to town," he said, "I should like to have a word with you in private. From what has passed to-day, Miss Vanstone, I have formed a very high opinion of your discretion; and, as an old friend of your father's, I want to take the freedom of speaking to you about your sister."

Before Norah could answer, she was summoned, in compliance with Mr. Clare's request, to the conference with the servants. Mr. Pendril followed Miss Garth, as a matter of course. When the three were out in the hall, Mr. Clare re-entered the room, closed the door, and signed peremptorily to Magdalen to take a chair.

She obeyed him, in silence. He took a turn up and down the room, with his hands in the side-pockets of the long, loose, shapeless coat which he habitually wore.

"How old are you?" he said, stopping suddenly, and speaking to her with the whole breadth of the room between them.

"I was eighteen last birthday," she answered, humbly, without looking up at him.

"You have shown extraordinary courage for a girl of eighteen. Have you got any of that courage left?"

She clasped her hands together, and wrung them hard. A few tears gathered in her eyes, and rolled slowly over her cheeks.

"I can't give Frank up," she said, faintly. "You don't care for me, I know; but you used to care for my father. Will you try to be kind to me for my father's sake?"

The last words died away in a whisper; she could say no more. Never had she felt the illimitable power which a woman's love possesses of absorbing into itself every other event, every other joy or sorrow of her life, as she felt it then. Never had she so tenderly associated Frank with the memory of her lost parents, as

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at that moment. Never had the impenetrable atmosphere of illusion through which women behold the man of their choice—the atmosphere which had blinded her to all that was weak, selfish, and mean in Frank's nature—surrounded him with a brighter halo than now, when she was pleading with the father for the possession of the son. "Oh, don't ask me to give him up!" she said, trying to take courage, and shuddering from head to foot. In the next instant, she flew to the opposite extreme, with the suddenness of a flash of lightning. "I won't give him up!" she burst out violently. "No! not if a thousand fathers ask me!"

"I am one father," said Mr. Clare. "And I don't ask you."

In the first astonishment and delight of hearing those unexpected words, she started to her feet, crossed the room, and tried to throw her arms round his neck. She might as well have attempted to move the house from its foundations. He took her by the shoulders, and put her back in her chair. His inexorable eyes looked her into submission; and his lean forefinger shook at her warningly, as if he was quieting a fractious child.

"Hug Frank," he said; "don't hug me. I haven't done with you yet: when I have, you may shake hands with me, if you like. Wait, and compose yourself."

He left her. His hands went back into his pockets, and his monotonous march up and down the room began again.

"Ready?" he asked, stopping short after a while. She tried to answer. "Take two minutes more," he said, and resumed his walk with the regularity of clockwork. "These are the creatures," he thought to himself, "into whose keeping men, otherwise sensible, give the happiness of their lives. Is there any other object in creation, I wonder, which answers its end as badly as a woman does?"

He stopped before her once more. Her breathing was easier; the dark flush on her face was dying out again.

"Ready?" he repeated. "Yes; ready at last. Listen to me; and let's get it over. I don't ask you to give Frank up. I ask you to wait."

"I will wait," she said. "Patiently, willingly."

"Will you make Frank wait?"

"Yes."

"Will you send him to China?"

Her head drooped on her bosom, and she clasped her hands again, in silence. Mr. Clare saw where the difficulty lay, and marched straight up to it on the spot.

"I don't pretend to enter into your feelings for Frank, or Frank's for you," he said. "The subject doesn't interest me. But I *do* pretend to state two plain truths. It is one plain truth that you can't be married till you have money enough to pay for the roof that shelters you, the clothes that cover you, and the victuals you eat. It is another plain truth that you can't find the money; that I can't find the money; and that Frank's only chance of finding it, is going to China. If I tell him to go, he'll sit in a corner and cry. If I insist, he'll say yes, and deceive me. If I go a step farther, and see him on board ship with my own eyes—he'll slip off in the pilot's boat, and sneak back secretly to you. That's his disposition."

"No!" said Magdalen. "It's not his disposition: it's his love for Me."

"Call it what you like," retorted Mr. Clare. "Sneak, or Sweetheart—he's too slippery, in either capacity, for my fingers to hold him. My shutting the door won't keep him from coming back. Your shutting the door will. Have you the courage to shut it? Are you fond enough of him not to stand in his light?"

"Fond! I would die for him!"

"Will you send him to China?"

She sighed bitterly.

"Have a little pity for me," she said. "I have lost my father; I have lost my mother; I have lost my fortune—and now I am to lose Frank. You don't like women, I know; but try to help me with a little pity. I don't say it's not for his own interests to send him to China; I only say it's hard—very, very hard on *me*."

Mr. Clare had been deaf to her violence, insensible to her caresses, blind to her tears; but under the tough integument of his philosophy, he had a heart—and it answered that hopeless appeal; it felt those touching words.

"I don't deny that your case is a hard one," he said. "I don't want to make it harder: I only ask you to do, in Frank's interests, what Frank is too weak to do for himself. It's no fault of yours; it's no fault of mine—but it's not the less true, that the fortune you were to have brought him, has changed owners."

She suddenly looked up, with a furtive light in her eyes, with a threatening smile on her lips.

"It may change owners again," she said.

Mr. Clare saw the alteration in her expression, and heard the tones of her voice. But the words were spoken low; spoken as if to herself—they failed to reach him across the breadth of the room. He stopped instantly in his walk, and asked what she had said.

"Nothing," she answered, turning her head away towards the window, and looking out mechanically at the falling rain. "Only my own thoughts."

Mr. Clare resumed his walk, and returned to his subject.

"It's your interest," he went on, "as well as Frank's interest, that he should go. He may make money enough to marry you in China; he can't make it here. If he stops at home, he'll be the ruin of both of you. He'll shut his eyes to every consideration of prudence, and pester you to marry him; and when he has carried his point, he will be the first to turn round afterwards, and complain that you're a burden on him. Hear me out! You're in love with Frank—I'm not, and I know him. Put you two together often enough; give him time enough to hug, cry, pester, and plead; and I'll

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tell you what the end will be—you'll marry him."

He had touched the right string at last. It rung back in answer, before he could add another word.

"You don't know me," she said, firmly. "You don't know what I can suffer for Frank's sake. He shall never marry me, till I can be what my father said I should be—the making of his fortune. He shall take no burden, when he takes me; I promise you that! I'll be the good angel of Frank's life; I'll not go a penniless girl to him, and drag him down." She abruptly left her seat, advanced a few steps towards Mr. Clare, and stopped in the middle of the room. Her arms fell helpless on either side of her; and she burst into tears. "He shall go," she said—"if my heart breaks in doing it, I'll tell him to-morrow that we must say Good-by!"

Mr. Clare at once advanced to meet her, and held out his hand.

"I'll help you," he said. "Frank shall hear every word that has passed between us. When he comes to-morrow, he shall know, beforehand, that he comes to say good-by."

She took his hand in both her own—hesitated—looked at him—and pressed it to her bosom. "May I ask a favour of you, before you go?" she said, timidly. He tried to take his hand from her; but she knew her advantage, and held it fast. "Suppose there should be some change for the better?" she went on. "Suppose I could come to Frank, as my father said I should come to him——?"

Before she could complete the question, Mr. Clare made a second effort, and withdrew his hand. "As your father said you should come to him?" he repeated, looking at her attentively.

"Yes," she replied. "Strange things happen sometimes. If strange things happen to *me*, will you let Frank come back before the five years are out?"

What did she mean? Was she clinging desperately to the hope of melting Michael Vanstone's heart? Mr. Clare could draw no other conclusion from what she had just said to him. At the beginning of the interview, he would have roughly dispelled her delusion. At the end of the interview, he left her compassionately in possession of it.

"You are hoping against all hope," he said; "but if it gives you courage, hope on. If this impossible good fortune of yours ever happens, tell me; and Frank shall come back. In the meantime——"

"In the meantime," she interposed sadly, "you have my promise."

Once more, Mr. Clare's sharp eyes searched her face attentively.

"I will trust your promise," he said. "You shall see Frank to-morrow."

She went back thoughtfully to her chair, and sat down again in silence. Mr. Clare made for the door, before any formal leave-taking could pass between them. "Deep!" he thought to himself, as he looked back at her before he went out; "only eighteen; and too deep for my sounding!"

In the hall, he found Norah, waiting anxiously to hear what had happened.

"Is it all over?" she asked. "Does Frank go to China?"

"Be careful how you manage that sister of yours," said Mr. Clare, without noticing the question. "She has one great misfortune to contend with: she's not made for the ordinary jog-trot of a woman's life. I don't say I can see straight to the end of the good or the evil in her—I only warn you, her future will be no common one."

An hour later, Mr. Pendril left the house; and, by that night's post, Miss Garth despatched a letter to her sister in London.

THE END OF THE FIRST SCENE.

THE DIARY OF A CONFEDERATE BOY.

When General McClellan, compelled into activity, crossed the Potomac after the council of war held on Friday, the seventh of March, I also went to Manassas. At one o'clock on Friday the council overruled McClellan's wish for more delay. In an hour the result was known to the enemy, and those positions which had been held only until seriously menaced were retired from in the interval between the time of the decision and the Federal movement on the Monday following. Since I am nobody's own reporter, and my purpose is not to tell of my own adventures, but to show a picture of a poor boy's life in days of civil war—a picture that I found in the wreck of the deserted camp at Manassas, I shall only say so much of my ride thither as may help to suggest something of the gulf of war into which that young life, with many, many others, has been thrown.

My own journey was to the head-quarters of the German division in the Federal army. It had been raining all night, and the tough clay of the roads through which Uncle Sam's horses dragged the government waggons reached up to the horses' knees. In pulling out their feet they often left their shoes behind. Having slept at Mr. Hunter's farm-house, the old head-quarters of the commanders of the German division, I pushed on next day with a comrade. The road was covered with teams. We hurried on to pass them, in vain, for they had no end. We reached Hunter's Mills. Over the brook is a bridge, such as you find, out of America, only in operas and melodramas. One hesitates to cross on horseback, yet over it passed the whole army, with its horses and its heavy guns. We had to stop; for the holes before it were of serious depth. We crossed the stream, one of us reaching the other side covered with mud to the eyes, and advanced to Centreville through desolate—alas! most desolate—Virginia. Forests are cleared, and the trees not yet removed. Farm-houses are forsaken and lie empty, or with soldiers for their occupants. For miles we rode

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and saw no pig nor hen nor duck, and no man in civilian's costume. The fences are all either broken down, or have been carried off for winter fuel in the camps. The fields lie untilled, and few signs even of their past cultivation now remain. Dead mules and dead horses (in one place five-and-twenty all together) lie upon the road. At Centreville we found, in a strong position, the sham fortifications that had sufficed to check the advance of McClellan, armed with logs painted black outside, to resemble guns. Behind them, are yet standing admirable camps, each of about two hundred and fifty log huts, coated with clay and covered with shingle, all furnished with fireplaces, and those of the officers even with carpets—palaces compared with the kennels supplied to the men of the Union Potomac army. The Union soldiers, in whom habits of temperance had been so carefully cherished that they had been confined to cider and small beer, looked with envy at the numerous empty brandy and whisky bottles left by the enemy. We pursued our journey across the field of the battle of Bull Run, which we reached by a ford near a broken bridge, where there is a destroyed railway on our right. Striking aside from the line of the railway that would guide us to Manassas, we rode through the woods, here and there thinned with large clearings; and, for miles, except the birds, a dying mule was all of life we saw. Then we regained the clue of the railway, and were in Manassas before we knew it; for there are no houses, only a few burnt huts with a quagmire road between them, in which my horse sunk to his belly.

At the station the scene was most curious. There lay scattered in confusion, property of all kinds that the Confederate soldiers, in the hurry of departure, had not time to pack and carry with them. Trousers, coats, shirts, drawers in abundance; old iron and brass; bottles and tin boxes, trunks, valises, knapsacks and boots, barrels of provisions, bacon and hams, flour and cracknels; bowie-knives, swords, guns, cars and carriages, blankets and horse-covers, books and papers. A troop of our cavalry arrived, dismounted to rummage the plunder, suddenly mounted again at sound of trumpet, and rode forward to pursue stragglers behind the retreat of the Confederates; whose main body had been withdrawn in railway cars. Only two or three persons remained at the station after the departure of the cavalry; one of them, the artist of an illustrated New York paper, who, by sticking a large bowie-knife into a chest, made a peg whereto we fastened our horses, while we joined the rummage of the field. Our own artist, having a professional turn for the picturesque, laid hands on a very fine scarlet under shirt—which he put on over his coat—and a white woollen veil—which he attached to his hat. With the lance of a Confederate flag in his hand, he looked on horseback competent to bring down three rounds of applause at Astley's. Buttons bearing the regimental stamp are tokens much in demand, and a commissary who came from afar with a doctor for the express purpose of doing a stroke of business, loaded his horse with bowie-knives, coats, horse-covers, and other plunder. He was much envied also for the discovery of several muskets and a secession flag. A few negroes stood about, rolling their eyes at the desirable things on the ground. Encouraged to help themselves, they went away, and returned soon with sacks, which they deliberately filled.

My own inclination was for search among the books and papers. The books were chiefly bibles, prayer books, sermons, and books of sacred music. There was a sprinkling, also, of very moral novels. Little else of any value. A couple of illustrations of the volunteer spirit found among the scattered papers interested me. One of them will, I am sure, interest others. The less interesting is an old letter from his brother, left behind by one of the soldiers. These brothers evidently belong to the poorer class of volunteers from South Carolina ("old S. C."). One is already in arms, and the other, detained to take care of a family, has his heart with the men who volunteer, if he has not himself already enlisted. To make his information somewhat more intelligible, I will so far meddle with it as to divide the sentences by an interpolation of full stops:

"S. C. Abbevill Destrict, Sept. the 19.

"Dear Brother i seat my self this morning to Drop you a few lines to let you no that i and family is Well excep the Hooping Coff and Hoping when thes few lins com to hand they may find you enjoying the same Blessing. the People is Generly well a Bout her at presen. i received your letter on the 8 of this month. i was glad to her that you was gitting well. i am Doen pulling fedder. i am now piking Cottan. Cottan is haf open. i took a trip throwe goirgia this summer. Crops is good in som Parts and very sory in others. i was at uncle thaniel Pluket. they was all well and dooing torable well. ther is too of his Boys in the army. they went from mississippi and they had never herd from them sences they left. they Dont no whether they ar in virgina or not, and ther is a nother one of his Boys volenteered but he wasent gon. Georgia aint turing out volenteers like old S C. Givinit County has only sened one Company to the war. They ar scird in georgia. Kernel Harper's Company is at lightwood knot springs; orr rigment is en roliven's island at galy and Pinok Tucker is making up a Company. hisakier Hall Gohn Hall, lewes Hall, Mashel Hall, S Mecadams R D tucker and all the rest of the Halls and newels, and Games sarks has volenteer in that Company. Pickers Black is at home verry sick with the tiford fever. it is thot that he won't git well. Cornelie armathly is well and harty. G D Press has got the Hooping cof but it Dont hirt him much. He grows fast. i will haft to Close my letter for the want of news to wright. i will haft to start after the mail this morning. wright to me as soon as you Can. So no more at present fare Well.

The more interesting witness to the spirit of the South is the diary of a widow's son, one of a half adult family of boys and girls. It opens with a record of his schoolboy life at Lexington, county Rockbridge, Virginia, in one of the colleges in many respects so creditable to the American States, which, carrying on the work

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of the primary and of the grammar schools, educate youths of from sixteen to twenty. Here is the country youth of seventeen or eighteen, with the child's unsated enjoyment of plum-cake and apples, with the heart yet tender for his mother, with the conscience yet pure by close home observance of religious duties, and the first dawn in him also of the young romance of love. He is not a clever fellow. He is, here and there, uncertain about his spelling, but he works hard now and then as a freshman in his second or third term, though he has fits of novel-reading and fits of rough frolic.. He is too young to be alone in a room of his own, where the card-playing and idling youths may make themselves at ease with him, but he is a good little fellow, who accounts it no shame to run to his "ma" whenever she comes into town. The political ferment begins. The town is disturbed, the students are unsettled. The young diarist begins to "cut" his classes freely; has lost his earlier tenderness of conscience about missing chapel and prayer-meeting. He runs wild, increases his expenditure upon tobacco, is with the students who hoist secession flags and create disturbance in the streets of nights, is with the first to volunteer. He records the buying cloth for his first pair of trooper's trousers, his days of pistol practice when he should be studying, his march with the army, his fighting at Bull's Run, his picket duties, and the incidents of his camp life. Another of the widow's sons had volunteered. The diarist mentions this brother from time to time as in the camp; but the record is not continued to the date when I picked up the little book stained with the college student's oil and scarred at the edges with fire, from among the papers left at Manassas. It was broken off five or six months before, on the seventeenth of last October, at a record of picket duties and eating chesnuts in the neighbourhood of Fairfax Court-house, where it is remembered that a picket party was surprised one day while chesnut gathering, and some of the men were shot. Perhaps the diarist was then killed. At Manassas, doubtless, it was either his brother or some friend who left the diary behind. Here, then, are some records of the last nine months of the life of a widow's son in Virginia during days of civil war.

The diary begins with New Year's-day sixty-one, in the boy's home, on the farm at a village about nine miles from Lexington, the county capital of Rockbridge, in Virginia. Deep snow is on the ground. The diarist records that he rose at eight, "read a novel named the Children of the Abbey, had some rasper, and took steps towards making a Yankee jumper. The trees were all covered with a beautiful frost." Next day he worked on at his jumper, which is a sort of sledge, "cut a pair of poles, shaved them, and bored the holes." Also, he "helped feed the hogs and beef." This day he records too that they were "visited by a pretty lady and gentleman," and that "Sis Fan and Mat started for Lynchburg when it thawed a little." Lynchburg is a town bigger than Lexington, good thirty miles away. We may suppose sister Fan to be going home thither with the brother in trade there, after a Christmas visit to the mother in the old home at the farm.

On the next day, the fourth of January, Friday, the young diarist is humorous and happy. This being fast-day appointed by the President, he says that he "kept it till breakfast-time." These were the last days of President Buchanan, I may remind readers. Only South Carolina had seceded. At Charleston, Fort Sumter had just been occupied by Major Anderson. Political feeling was near boiling-point. Secession of the other Southern States and outbreak of the civil war were imminent. The diarist, after breakfast, went to a preaching in the sleigh of his own making, "heard a good sermon, had a fine time generally, bought a new hat," &c. (Not long, by the way, after return to school he "traded hats with another boy.") So ended the holidays, of which the record is boyish and simple. Next day, he "started to town on the stage, had a pleasant time, a very heavy load was on board, roads in a very bad condition."

There was still heavy snow next morning when the youth returned to college, "heard a first-rate sermon from Parson White, attended college prayer-meeting, smoked, chatted, and ate apples with some of the boys till bedtime." Next day, after setting down his college occupation, his record is equally boylike. "Bought several things that were necessary, eat some of my cake, and then went to bed." He had gone to school, of course, with apples and a cake in his box. Next day, he was "put through" by each of the professors, "mailed" (i. e. posted) "a good many tickets," which on the previous day he had "fixed up to send to ladies;" also he "wrote to ma," paid a debt to a schoolfellow, sent a newspaper to his brother Jimmie (the one who afterwards as well as himself turned volunteer). "Helped fusee Nat and Nowell" (possibly the playing of a school trick), "scratched on the fiddle untill bedtime, eat another piece of my cake, dreampt of my betrothed."

Next day the snow was all gone: he bought a load of wood, carried a boot to be mended, did not study much, wrote to his brother Jimmie, delivered a school declamation, smoked and talked with a schoolfellow before he "went to shut-eye town." On the day after that he fixed an almanac on his table to save trouble of getting up, for dates of the day interested him; again he "fixed up a paper to send to Jimmie," and on that day "a disunion flag was raised on top of Coll. Old Doe was very angry." On the day after that he "had a perfect set of recitations ready, but was not put through." There was another sort of learning by heart then astir. "Took part," he writes, "in a discussion on the question of Union or Disunion, broke up in a general row, had but one fight"—when he shed, doubtless, his first blood in the cause—"was sent for home on urgent business."

He had left for school but a week before. The urgent business he does not mention, but it was not of a grievous sort; for, next day, he

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"went with Sis Joe, and some other ladies to the singing-school. Had a fuss with Miss Flora, went home with Miss Sue, had some fine singing after supper." Where he supped he slept, and next day, being Sunday, "went to church with Miss Sue, heard a very poor sermon, had a very pleasant time in general, and stole a picture of my DUCK," &c. Probably she was a neighbour at the house of which Miss Sue was a daughter. There is record that the poor boy saw her once again. From the same friend's house he started the next morning to return to school, where he recited mathematics, bought cigars, "kissed my DUCK's picture five or six times, studied with ——, and —— sat up untill twelve." He had left his sweetheart with the spirit of industry freshened, but it was still a rare thing for him to sit up till midnight. Next day, "snowy bad morning, felt a little unwell, studied hard untill eleven o'clock" (at night), "finished eating the apples I brought from home." Alas for the innocent boy-life that was to melt into rough passion with the snows of winter, and to perish with the autumn leaves!

"Wednesday, 16th of January. Snow nearly all gone. Was put through by —— and —— also ——, was sold by ——. Scratched some on the fiddle." The last record of the next day is, "Wrote to ——, and told her all about my sweetheart." These lines are written by the boy among the money accounts on the last leaves of his diary:

> Farewell! but never from my heart
> Shall time thine image blot.
> The dreams of other days depart
> Thou shalt not be forgot,
> And never in the suppliant high
> Poured forth to Him who rules the sky
> Shall my own name be breathed on high
> And thine remembered not.
> So, my Duck,
> I ask for thee a gem more rare
> Than those in famed Golconda's mine.
> 'Tis not to sparkle in thy hair
> Or on thy stainless breast to shine.
> Ah, no, 'tis not for outward show,
> This precious jewel I would crave;
> It is to keep thy spirit pure,
> And from all inward ill to save.

After two days of study, varied by the purchase of a Harper's Magazine, "a social game of cards with several boys," and some games of chess and backgammon, came again a quiet Sunday. "Heard a first-rate sermon from Parson White, read Harper's Magazine part of the day, attended College prayer meeting, sung several tunes." Then followed days of work, letter-writing, bandy-playing, a night of preparation for the College anniversary, "did plenty of cutting up in chapel that night, went to bed some time between twelve o'clock and daylight." There is snowfall, sloppy weather, the turn-out of his last stick of wood. There is hearing of home through Sis Emma, who came to Lexington, reading "a very fine novel," going to see Sister Emma, a Sunday with "a first-rate sermon. Went again at night and heard Dicky Baker preach," after which he came home and "finished reading a very good novel." He "was treed" one day on mathematics, and received a lot of Evening Posts. But at the end of January he was still a simple-hearted schoolboy, finishing the month thus: "Sewed on a button and fixed my pants. Reviewed about twenty-five pages of algebra, studied untill twelve o'clock, then went to sleep."

In the second week of February he got a step up in classes. He goes on working, buys books, pays his subscription to a book society, and has passed out of Cornelius Nepos into Cicero, with whom he does not become friends at sight. On the thirteenth of February, when he said or "recited" his first lesson out of the De Senectute, he records that "he was treed like storms." Next day he "had a notion of laying up on account of a bad cold" caught the night before. So he "fixed up" a newspaper for brother Jimmie, and "took a social game of seven-up with some students." But on the day following he got up early and worked hard till evening, when we find the beginning of change in "some talk about the Cow Committee with some brother Fresh, which wound up the day." The Cow Committee seems, by the diary, to have been an organisation for semi-political night riots by a section of the students. On Saturday the sixteenth of February, the boy writes that he "did intend to review" (learn lessons) "all day, but had other fish to fry. However, I did review a little in the evening." Next day, Sunday, still unsettled, for the first time he records that he "did not go to preaching at all. Attended College prayer meeting in the evening."

On the day after that, the record of study becomes impatient. He goes to a professor and is "put through by the scamp;" the change of tone and the influence of wilder associates appear both in the same entry; for he goes on to say: "Took a social game of whist in the evening, found my furniture all piled up in my room, got a little angry." Next day the boy "cut ——'s recitation. Played whist during the hour." Something one may observe in the injurious sapping of home influence by American public school-life that points in the direction of an exaggerated complaint once made in eighteen hundred and fifty-eight by the New York Board of Education, that the public schools of the United States were "worse than valueless—injurious to the morals and fatal to the religious interests of the pupils, and that the alleged deterioration in the morals of the community is justly chargeable to the public schools." The unsettlement of the youth who wrote this diary is much more chargeable to the contents of the newspapers that he "fixed up" for brother Jimmie, and the effect of the news of the day upon the wilder spirits in the college. At this date (in the middle of February last year), South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana had seceded, and Jefferson Davis had been elected by these states President of the Southern Confederacy. But there was no actual war, and Virginia, yet abstaining from secession, had, two days before the boy's entry

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of his "other fish to fry" than Cicero and Legendre, seen its State Convention meet, to hear from its President a Union speech, with the proviso "that Virginia would insist on her rights as a condition of remaining in the Federation." From this time the question of secession is a fire-ball in the state. The diarist is utterly unsettled. Two days after his whist-playing in lecture-time he records that he "was treed by every professor. Had some rare sport at night. Helped to steal a waggon and pull it all over College Campus. Was taken by the Cow Committee, but made out to make my escape by joining them. Received a load of wood from home and a letter from ma. Was very thankful for it. Paid fifty cents for to get it carried up into my room." The wood, not the letter. Of the last wood he had, he noted that he stole it from the faculty, and in his little memorandum of college expenses—thirty-seven cents for a fluid lamp, twenty-five cents for a slate, eighty for books, fifty for skate straps, ten for tobacco and pipe, early in the list, fifty a little later, fifty cents also for "apples one time and another"—the great item in dollars is "three loads of wood—six dollars twenty-five cents; cutting it up, two dollars ten cents." There is nothing like it except the three dollars odd for beer at three initiations into the "G. P. Society."

In the states round about Virginia, preparation was being now made for a bloody contest. In ten days more, on the fourth of the next month, Mr. Lincoln would be inaugurated as President, and the formal inauguration of the Southern President had taken place at Alabama four days before the date of this Virginian holiday. Friday, February 22. "Was free. Walked about town, and was my own man. Marched over to the church with the students. Saluted the cadets as I passed the corps, who gracefully presented arms and lowered their flag in honour to the students. Splurged around, and played first at one thing and then at another untill evening. Formed a corps of students, and drilled around for some time. At night attended the celebration of the Mash. Society. Went over town after night to get some confectionary. Wound up the day's proceedings by going to bed at three o'clock." The next day was idle also, and on Sunday he "came near being late at chapel." Still the hold of the home training is not shaken off. He found also "a good piece of poetry," which he copied. It is juvenile and amatory in its tone. On the last day of February the youth was "very much surprised" to find his mother in town. He was then going every day to see the parade and drill, for the war spirit was now astir, and on the second of March—still with his mother, who seems to have aided in preparing her boy to take his part in the coming conflict—he records that he "bought cloth for a pair of trooper's pants." With his hand in his mother's he had now become a volunteer for the approaching war.

"Sunday, March 3. Went to preaching twice with mama. Read a very interesting work on Woman by Walker. Put my clothes to send home," &c. His mother had brought him other clothes. He was exchanging his civilian's dress for military uniform. Monday, the fourth, was the day of President Lincoln's installation, and on that day the youth records that he "was up by two o'clock to help raise a Disunion Flag on College. Succeeded in our purpose, and carried off the ladders. It floated magnificently on the breeze until it was taken down by the servants and burned by a *Black Republican* while the students were at recitation. Boys all very much excited and enraged at ——'s conduct. Made preparations for raising another. Marched about College Campus with a disunion flag for our banner. Drew my pistol from Compton for the troop. After ten o'clock two or three boys, together with myself, went up to visit and shroud" (the statue of) "Washington for the burning of the flag, which waved over him in defiance of the Faculty, and fired a salute of six rounds of pistols from the old chap's feet." On the following day the boy "got leave to go to see ma. Received a letter from Jimmie. —— was raging mad when he saw Washington with his shrowd wraped around him. Fixed up my things to send out home by mama." Mother and son were clearly of one mind about the volunteering. We find as we proceed that brother Jimmie's newspaper reading and his letters had pointed to the same end. He also was turning volunteer.

The text of President Lincoln's "inorgeral" having reached Lexington, the diarist read it, and "considered it a very poor thing to come from a President of these United States." His neighbours were of the same mind. Even the "black republican" chief of the Faculty now amuses the boy "with his wit and sarcasm," and the last entry of the day is "whole of Lexington turned secessionist." "Took my pistol all to pieces to see how it was made."

The habit of study remains, but is not strong. One day he says that he studied a little, "played several tunes on the fiddle, went to bed and dreamed of my DUCK." He arose quite early the next morning to learn his lessons, otherwise "prepare recitations," before going after the ladder and "fixing our flag up in readiness to put on top of College." In the evening the ladder was taken to the statue of Washington, and a secession flag was planted by the diarist himself in the patriot's back. Thereupon he helped to light a large bonfire, already prepared, and the boys spent part of the night in keeping the blaze alive; "carried off," he says, "all the old goods, boxes, and barrels from Lexington, kept the town awake untill three o'clock in the morning, when we quieted down and went to sleep. Had two or three egg suppers," &c.

"Saturday, 9th March. Looked for my horse until ten o'clock. Saw the troop turn out. Quite a small number. Riflemen also turned out. Drew my saber, and practised a little with it before night."

On Sunday he "did not go to preaching; read some good novels, and played some hymns on

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the fiddle, and sang also." On Monday he was perfect in his lessons; but on Tuesday, being "up with —— and ——," he "'scunced' them bad. Practised with my pistol in the evening, studied my Greek, and had a social chat with two or three boys. Broke my fiddle bow. Wrote a letter to ma. Sold a book to a schoolboy over in town." On Wednesday, besides studies, "went down to the pond and practised shooting with my pistol. Did tolerable well. Helped eat a cake and apples; had a pleasant time," &c. Next day, Friday, he sold another book and "got the money;" and on the following evening —apparently too short of money to go by the evening coach—"walked out home; had a tough time, toes blistered and sore." At home on Saturday, "practised with my pistol nearly all day, worked in the garden in the evening, sowed tomatoes, cabbages, and lettuce-seed. Made fence also. Toes still sore." On Sunday, of course, he went to preaching, and there was a prayer-meeting at home. On Monday he lay in bed till ten o'clock, and his toes being then sound, "walked about all day. Went a visiting in the evening to see my DUCK."

When he left her before, it was with a fresh zeal for study. Now he leaves her as a gallant volunteer, and, although still at school, cares little for school discipline and duties. On his return to Lexington he had, on the same night, a supper in his room at ten o'clock, "a fine time afloat," &c. The next day was wilder: "Have forgotten everything I did on the above day. Military company convened," &c., while the day after that was spent in shooting, with "a heap of fun," and winds up with "very sick at night, eat too much," &c. He had not gone back to school so poor as he departed. The day after the night's sickness began with cheating in the matter of school exercises. On that day the volunteer company was organised, the officers were chosen. Seven-up and whist; Latin and pistol practice; "did not go to preaching, but wrote letters and read novels all day;" "full of fun and frolic; fell out with ——, and like to had a fight. Worried the students after dark by dragging a piece of tin about the pavement;" "was corrected for yawning in class;" "was treed and reported for making a noise; went out to practise with my pistol." These are the characteristic entries now, day after day. "Cut ——'s recitation." But "wrote to Sis Bene, to ma also." Thursday, 28th March: "Received a letter from ma. Blues had their first drill. Did very well. Had any quantity of fun with cows and sheet-iron; adjourned to bed at half-past one, &c. Cut ——. Friday, 29th. Had a fine time. Fixed up in white, with a high military hat on, to go out on a calithuness" (calisthenic?). "Gave the people of Lexington a good round. Did not go to bed untill three o'clock. Saturday, 30th. Roved about all day. Had a heap of fun with the boys. Went out to practise in the evening, but could get no caps that were worth anything. Sunday, 31st. Went to the Episcopal Church, stayed five or ten minutes, and left. Read a newspaper the rest of day. Went to the Presbyterian graveyard. Went to preaching at night." From the newspaper reading to the graveyard was indeed the way!

I have given petty details from this schoolboy's diary, because the young life rises fresh to the imagination out of them, and because they suggest very distinctly the inevitable taint of corruption that belongs to war-time, even when the sentiment is patriotism, and while it is yet unpoisoned by the touch of rapine and the taste of blood. In the diarist's next unsettled week he was most interested by the noise he made of nights, "rare sport with a cow."

Next Sunday he "did not go to preaching, on account of weather," but records, whatever the entry may mean, that he "went into the cabinet by a nail and pick. Took a good look at the pretties." Then another week of little study, of "fun with a cow," of "fun with a dog. Tied a sardine-box to his tail, and let him go. Wednesday, 10th April. Was excused from recitation. Got off from declamation. Stole some wood, &c. Thursday 11. Was stealing wood all night." Excitement follows of debates on "the question of the day," union or secession. "Secessionists raised a flag-pole. Union men in a perfect trance. Saturday, 13th April. Raised the flag of our country. Union flag-pole broke into five or six pieces. Great excitement. Corps of cadets whipped the whole of Lexington. Next Sunday was spent exclusively upon the newspapers. Lexington on Monday was still excited. The Union flag-pole was again raised. The disunion pole cut down." But next day "received news of Lincoln's course. All for secession to a man. Raised a large fifteen star-flag over college." Still the boy's mother was in Lexington, and she was there to bid him good speed when, on the 18th of April, he turned his back on college walls, "started from Lexington with the troop," and began his short career as a boy soldier. He records that he wrote to her next day from Staunton, forty miles away upon his road to glory.

On the second of July the first military movement on the Potomac was made by the advance of General Patterson's division against the forces under General Jackson, near Martinsburg. In this direction, to the Confederate army of the Potomac, the young diarist had been marched, and of the defeat and reported rout of General Jackson's force of five infantry and one cavalry regiment on that second of July, the diarist, who belonged to the cavalry, writes: "July 2nd. Started from camp to meet the enemy. Went as an advance guard, and came within thirty yards of the main army, and then reported back to Ed. Jackson. Engaged the enemy about six miles from Martinsburg, and had a terrible fight. Killed on our side one, and wounded fifteen, on the enemy's side about one hundred and fifty." This fight was reported in the North and in England as an utter rout and dismay of Jackson's force. The boy may be wrong, but certainly the pencil scrawl in his diary stained with the oil of Lexington college rooms, was not de-

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signed for publication, and he does not seem to know that he was routed. On the same day, instead of flying with his general and comrades, he enters that he "went on a scout to Shepherd's Town, and back by ten o'clock. Saw the Misses ——." Clearly he didn't know that he had been routed, and that the camp had been abandoned in confusion. Next day "was up by daylight, and in the saddle. Started with the regiment, but was detached and sent on a scout to find Captain Carter. Saw the enemy advancing, and reported it to Colonel Stuart. Ate breakfast at Martinsburg; fell back before the enemy until we passed Martinsburg. Enemy took possession about eleven o'clock. Was detailed as a rear-guard, and continued to watch the movements of the enemy until evening."

Here was a slow and orderly enforced retreat before superior force, but the diary is evidence against the sudden panic of the enemy reported at the time for northern readers. The diary continues: "July 5. Still no fight. In a bad condition. Supplies cut off. Was out all day pressing horses. Got five. Rode about fifty miles. Was close to the enemy's picket. Had to sup on parched corn, with no prospect of breakfast. July 6. Was in camp nearly all day. Was detailed as a guard for the corn-waggon. Had a pop at the enemy. Drove them back. Was roused up at twelve o'clock at night. July 7th. An order came to pack up and retreat on to Bunker Hill. Had a hot time of it. Provisions scarce. Went out in the country and pressed a good breakfast. Got dinner at Buckle Town, and then marched on to Bunker Hill, where we encamped for a few days. Was detailed for picket guard. July 8. Was out all night on duty. Pressed a breakfast from an old woman. Picked and ate some dewberries. Sat about on the fence nearly all day. Found a hen's nest and pressed her eggs. Ate some cherries. July 9. Rode back to camp. July 12. Was detailed on picket at Smithfield. Made the acquaintance of a prettie Miss ——. Was run off post by the Yankee Doodle's march into Winchester that night. July 13. Joined my company about five miles below Winchester, and was scared by Yankee bombs, and run into Winchester. July 14. Slept that night within two miles of the Yankee camp. Left it at four in the morning." On the 18th, after hovering, detached, about the enemy, the active schoolboy volunteer was at Berryville, when he "fared sumptuously." Next day he arrived at Piedmont with his brother Jimmie, who was "very sick." On the 20th he rode to Manassas Junction, and "encamped about four miles from the Yankees. Was detailed for sentinel duty." The next day is the date of the battle of Bull's Run, in which the boy fought, and of which this is the account entered by him in his diary: "July 21. Was aroused very early by the sound of the bugle, and received orders to saddle up, which was quickly done. Then went to water and wash my face and hands, and water my horse, and drank out of a standing pool. Formed line by companies. Was third on the row. In a short time we received orders to mount, and proceed to the scene of action. Arrived on the field about half-past twelve o'clock, and made a charge at two o'clock, and then continued to flank until evening, when we made another charge on their rear. Then our company was detailed to take some prisoners, which we did in fine style. Slept that night in a wheat-field. July 22. Picked up a good many Yankee tricks" (spoils left on the battle-field), "and remained on guard all day in the rain." Certainly this is one of the least inflated accounts of a great victory man or boy ever wrote.

Next day, on the march to Fairfax Court-house, he says only, "Passed thousands of dollars' worth Yankee tricks along the road." For the next three days there is one short entry only: "Staid about the C. H., and picked up tricks," &c. &c. Then follow entries of picket work, varied by such notes as "Pressed chickens, turkeys, and such things; during this time lived very fine." Having charge of a mess, he reports simply that he "stole," at different times, kitchen furniture, "Yankee chickens," &c.; a skillet, "did very well, but was not large enough." He had sometimes "a heap of fun running the Yankees;" and a fortnight before the journal ends, the fatal danger to him is cheerfully foreshadowed with this entry: Oct. 5. "Went out on the Lewinsville picket, and had a lively time. Was in sight of five thousand Yankees all day. Gathered some chesnuts and ate them." Again he notes, "riding as a scout within sight of the Yankees." On the eleventh of October, again with the Lewinsville picket, he says, "Crowds of Yankees in sight. Saw them advancing on one of the posts, and gave the alarm. Sent for some infantry, and followed the villains back to their encampment, and killed four, and wounded several others." Out on a scout two days afterwards, he lay in sight of the enemy for an hour or two. A day or two more contain entries of such picket service on the skirts of a strong enemy. The last is on the seventeenth of October, but as while he was keeping it with regularity the diary abruptly closed, we may suppose that on the day following he was himself one of the shot. And it was little more than nine months since he had gone to school at Lexington, a quiet, active, mother-loving, country boy, with cake and apples in his box.

A ROMAN TOMB.

One starlit night upon the Appian way
  I stood among the tombs of ancient Rome,
The nameless monuments of men who lay
  Gathered to their last home.

Mighty in life, they haply here had raised
  Stones that should tell, when they were underground,
Of the great names that flatterers had praised,
  And Poets' lays had crowned.

Ambition, Pride, all sensual delights
  That bind the soul in leaden chains to earth,
Once filled the measure of their days and nights—
  What lives to show their worth?

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How much to rouse our sympathy and love,
In what is left of those world-famous men,
The conquerors in the field, or they who strove
To conquer with the pen?

What but the stinging verse of satires bought
And sold to flay a friend with fatal ease?
The cirque, where men were slain by beasts for sport:
What monuments but these?

What, in the name of all their Gods of stone,
But polished plynths of temples raised to lust,
Triumphal arch or portico o'erthrown?
Dust back again to dust!

In every form, self-worship and self-love;
Passions in marble deified with grace;
The cultured arts, like fruitage, carved above
A quickly-crumbled base.

The spirit fled—the informing fire is cold.
And herein lies the difference between
The ruin of the things that we behold,
And of the things unseen.

While the rude stones upraised by peasant hands
Mark where the shattered cross once held control,
The spirit there, Time's cruel scythe withstands,
Soul answers still to soul.

But not so here. I said: when through the gloom
(Cold horror seized and held me there, I wist),
Methought the headless Roman on his tomb,
Moved in the moonlight mist.

The arm was slowly raised wherewith he held
His toga's folds; and in the very place
Where the stone head erst stood I now beheld
A pale stern Roman face.

Then from those lips, as when a night-wind grows
'Mong trembling reeds on Thrasimene's cold lake,
In Latin tongue, a hollow voice arose,
And hoarsely murmuring spake.

"Mortal, now twice ten hundred years are past,
Com'st thou to vex the ashes in my urn,
With all thy vain and shallow wisdom, cast
On the great names that burn

In the world's temple, like fed-lamps of old?
Let none, presumptuous, dare to quench the light,
Because the growing centuries behold
The dawn succeed to night.

The dawn; nor yet the day! The vapours curled
But slowly rise; and ignorances cloud
Which the All-wise hath laid upon his world,
Doth half mankind enshroud.

And He whom blindly we adored as Jove,
O, thou vain Mortal, was it not His will
That knowledge feebly scales the stair above
Higher and higher still?

We found the world barbarian: is it nought,
That where we trod arts sprang beneath our feet?
The tales of virtue and of valour wrought,
Your children still repeat.

Who framed just laws, to govern Kings and crafts?
Who made the streams from hill to hill to flow?
Through Europe's heart who drove the roads, like shafts
Shot from a mighty bow?

The fierceness, wolf imbibed of all our race,
Made half the world the Roman Eagle's home.
From Greeks, we borrowed poetry and grace,
Our arms belonged to Rome.

And if the antique virtue ceased to shine,
In days when I had long been out of sight,
Did Rome but share the natural decline
Of all things at their height?

For peace is kin to luxury: they sank
By slow degrees, those latter men, supine,
Rose-garlanded, inglorious, as they drank
The red Falernian wine

Cool from their grottos by the tideless sea,
Where mantled round with pine and olive wood,
With gardens, baths, and fishponds fair to see,
Their stately villas stood.

Feasting on Lucrine oysters, or the fruit
Of many a distant sea, while boys in praise
Of love their voices mingled with the lute,
In soft emasculate lays.

Not such our lives. We fed, in days of old,
With less refinement, and had rougher games,
Our sterner measures, saturnine and bold,
Had nobler, worthier aims.

We sang the God-like hero in his urn;
We crowned the living Victory with bays,
We worshipped Mars; and Justice, blind and stern,
Sat in our open ways.

To prove the public virtues in this life,
Stands not the Ædile's tomb unto this hour?
And, as a monument to wedded wife,
Behold Metella's tower.

The Vineyard, where the Scissios' ashes lie,
And linked with them, that motherhood, whose name
While Gracchus is remembered shall not die,
Old Roman worth proclaim.

And there are memories, greater e'en than these,
Embalmed in History, their graves unknown;
While soon or late, Time's ruthless hand doth seize
The perishable stone.

The stone that mocks for some few hundred years,
The honoured relics, gathered 'neath that tomb,
Raised by a loving hand, with pious tears,
Over—ye know not whom!

Such lot is mine. A lucky flight of birds
Presaged my birth: my life was crowned with fame,
Men in the forum ever met my words
With reverent acclaim.

They made me Prætor: placed on high my bust;
And when for ever I had passed away,
The city trailed their garments in the dust,
With covered heads that day.

They bare my ashes here: the Senate raised
This sculptured marble, which hath long survived
The recollection of the man it praised,
—A memory so short-lived!

Why doth it cumber still the ground?" And here
The hollow voice grew tremulous with scorn.
"To point a moral, obvious and clear,
To ages yet unborn?

That builded tombs, and all the strong desire
To be remembered after death is vain;
The centres of small systems that expire
With us, our souls sustain.

The conscious loss of all that pride believed,
Should keep us living through the future years:
We learn, O Mortal, how we were deceived,
When the hot bitter tears

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Shed by those few whose lives were bound with ours,
Or wife's, or freedman's—(since we only know
In death what depth of root have Love's fair flowers)—
When these have ceased to flow,

Oblivion quickly gathers round our lives:
The spade may strike some urn that tells of fame,
But of the struggle of that life survives
Naught save an empty name.

Our race is passed away. At dead of night
The Master called us; and we did His will,
Ye, who through widening avenues of light
Are gathering knowledge still,

Who, to the Past's accumulated wealth,
Add, day by day, fresh stores that inward roll,
The large experience that bringeth health
And wisdom to the soul,

Learn yet one thing. He who is wise above,
Leadeth in every age His children home;
And He, beholding, something found to love,
Even in Pagan Rome."

FROM THE BLACK ROCKS, ON FRIDAY.

I.

I am an English clergyman, and the following is a truthful record of a memorable passage in my life.

I had been living for two years amongst the tribe called Ngapuhis, the most powerful and important tribe in the northern part of New Zealand. I planted my own potatoes and kumeras or sweet potatoes, caught my own fish, and lived in a house built in great part by myself, assisted by two natives: one called Tinana, and the other Rewharewha: on a piece of ground given to me by the latter, and called Opipito. I was employed in teaching the Maori or New Zealand children, and trying to establish a little church: working meanwhile with my own hands to obtain my own livelihood, and learning from the rude, uncivilised, yet hospitable natives, many of their ways and customs. The chief of the tribe was an old man named Mānu, tall, well formed, old yet erect, grey-haired and venerable. When dressed in his long flowing robe of native manufacture, with his "Houi" or native symbol of authority in his hand, he looked

Every inch a King.

His son, named Monganui, took upon himself the more active duties of the chieftainship. Although he was too fond of "firewater," yet he was kind, hospitable, and friendly, and to him I owe many obligations which I fear I can never repay. One of them was the gift of two young men, his slaves: a youth named Paihia, a lad about seventeen years old: and a young man named Waipuna, about twenty. These two were of great assistance to me in my labours on my piece of land, bringing in my firewood, helping to cultivate the ground, and rowing and managing my boat in my fishing excursions.

II.

In the month of August in the year 1859, in the second week of the month, on a Friday, the nineteenth morning, about the middle of the wet season (in the northern part of New Zealand we have in reality but two seasons in the year, summer or the dry season, and winter or the wet season), I wished for a change of diet, and made up my mind to go out for a day's fishing. Outside the harbour of the Bay of Islands, about sixteen miles off, is one of the most noted capes in New Zealand, called Cape Brett. This cape is a well-known landmark to vessels entering the port, and, as the whole breadth of the Pacific washes up against its rocky sides, and rebounds with a deep sullen roar, there is nearly always in its neighbourhood a dangerous sea rolling; while, to add to the difficulties of navigation, there are several sunken rocks, some covered at all times, and known only by the white water around them; others bare at low tide, and only covered at high water—these are more clearly seen and avoided—whilst about six miles out to sea, eastward from Cape Brett, are two groups of rocks, always out of water, though at high tide but a few feet out; over these the sea breaks wildly, and, except on very still days, they are dangerous for small boats or canoes to approach. Hard by, there is good fishing for a kind of codfish named by the natives Wahpuka or Hahpuka, frequently weighing fifty or sixty pounds each.

On this Friday morning, then, as soon as our morning meal was over, I stated my wish to my two boys, desiring them to get my boat ready, and go with me to the Black Rocks. My boat was sixteen feet over all. I had before gone out alone, off Cape Brett, and had returned in safety; so that, when the boys asked me if I could spare them, as they were desirous of taking up our potatoes—which they were afraid were spoiling from the frequent rains we had had—I started off alone.

At the end of two hours' pleasant sailing, I arrived safely at the fishing-grounds. I lighted my pipe, baited my lines, and waited patiently for a bite, which soon came, and I took a fish of about twenty pounds weight. I had been out about three hours, and had caught five fish. The day was beautifully sunny and warm, the breeze had died away, and a soft easy swell was all that disturbed the surface of the ocean. I was rebaiting my hook after catching my last fish, when I felt a breath of air fan my cheeks, and, looking up, saw a little ripple curling and crisping the waters. A land breeze was setting in. In great haste, and much apprehension, I rolled up my lines, hoisted my sails, and attempted to regain the place I had left in the morning. Meanwhile, the breeze freshened, the tide was ebbing, and a strong current set me more and more rapidly from the Black Rocks and the land. To add to my perplexity, the gaff of my mainsail gave way, and the sail came down. This took several minutes to repair, and all this time I was being gradually drifted farther out to sea. Feeling that I could not manage the boat single-handed against wind, tide, and current, I hauled down both sails, and, putting out my small paddles, attempted to row back. After

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nearly two hours' hard and strenuous exertion, completely foiled and weary, I had to give that up.

In this state of affairs, I took out my pipe, and, with a strange feeling of despair, began to smoke, letting the boat drift. A sense of utter helplessness and hopelessness stole over me. I felt as if all that was passing were a hideous dream. How long I remained in this state, I can hardly say. I took no note of time. But when I roused myself, and looked once more around, I found the sun setting, and a thin grey mist slowly creeping along the land, quietly veiling it from my sad and lingering gaze. Thank God there was a moon! I can hardly say how its light comforted me. Even now I scarcely dare to think how that long and weary night would have passed, had it been dark and cloudy.

I knew that far away out at sea were a group of three small islands. I had heard the natives frequently speak of them as being high, rocky, and covered with forest. I had, moreover, heard of canoes having drifted out there, carried onward by the very wind which was then blowing. By degrees it dawned upon me that I might reach them. I accordingly once more set sail, and ran all night before a steady mild breeze. Oh, how long that night seemed!

The day—so eagerly longed for, and yet bringing with it a dreary consciousness of affording no relief—at length came: first, a light grey streak along the eastern horizon, gradually assuming a rosy hue, then changing to a deeper crimson flush. The sun, round, large, and red, rose like a vast ball of blood, softening to a brilliant gold: the whole sky being flecked with little golden clouds. I remember how I marked each change of the dawn; how dreamily I watched the sun rise; and then, waking up as it were with a start, how I placed my hand over my eyes, and looked long and eagerly in the direction where I thought the islands lay. Afar off on the distant horizon, I saw what at first I thought were clouds low down and resting on the water. I looked again when a short time had elapsed. The outline was unchanged, but more distinctly defined, and, as the sunlight glinted on it, I discerned the peaks of some high lands. I steered straight towards them. I kept on my course. I then ate some of my cold potatoes, and drank eagerly of the water, the first food that had passed my lips since I had started. I then lighted a pipe, and patiently awaited the course of events. Here a new and unexpected shock awaited me. Happening to look behind my boat, I saw a huge shark following silently in my wake. I can hardly describe the cold thrill of horror that tingled through my veins at the sight. Every moment my excited imagination made me think it was going to attack me. Already I pictured myself as being torn to pieces. I was fascinated, and could not turn away my gaze, as the creature quietly followed every motion of my boat: seeming instinctively to know the predicament I was in, and looking upon me as its lawful prey. About noon I was sufficiently near the shore to mark the outlines of the coast, which seemed to be rocky and precipitous, gloomy and forbidding; the hill-summits crowned with large trees. When I approached within two miles of the land I tacked, and ran along shore until I rounded a rocky point and saw a small bay with a wall of rocks on each side, about, as near as I could guess, two hundred yards wide and one hundred and fifty deep. Here I hauled down my sails, put out my paddles, and pulled on shore, landing on a steep pebbly beach. I took out my blankets to have a sleep, for I felt exceedingly weary; first, however, fastening my boat a short distance out from the beach, letting out a small grapnel from the bows, a large stone fastened in a noose from the stern, and taking the further precaution of carrying a long rope I always had with me in the boat, on shore, and fastening it to a large tree that sprang out from a cleft in the rocks. I then rolled myself up in my blankets, and fell fast asleep.

III.

When I woke, the moon was shining bright and clear high up in the sky. I was roused from my sleep by a thumping grating sound on the beach, which mingled strangely with my dreams. I started up, and found my boat bumping on the beach. It was high water when I had landed, and the ebb of the tide had partly stranded her. The stone had slipped out of the noose, and the boat had swung round. The wind during my sleep had freshened, and a heavy surf rolled in. I untied the rope on shore, and pulling up my grapnel, got into the boat and tried to paddle out from the beach. I saw a small indent in the rocks on the right side of the bay, past which the breakers rolled, and, concluding that it was somewhat more sheltered in there, I thought I would pull the boat thither. I managed with no small difficulty to get about fifty yards from the beach, when I heard a dull heavy roar behind me, and, looking round, I saw a large breaker rolling in, rearing up its white-crested mane, and seeming as if it would overlap and tumble in. I gave one short terrified glance, let go my oars, threw my arms round the middle thwart of the boat. There was a dull heavy crash, and I felt the boat borne swiftly along, rolling over and over until it settled with a bump on a low rock at one side of the bay, and I found myself flung out a little higher up, bruised, sore, half-choked, and half-blinded with the salt water. I dragged myself a little higher up the rock, and there sat and looked in dismay at my poor boat, with her side stove in, and a sharp pointed rock sticking through her bottom. My boat was irretrievably broken and ruined, and I had foolishly left in it, my fishing lines, the fish, and the remainder of my potatoes, as well as the two empty bottles. Mechanically I put my hands into my pocket for my pipe; it was gone too; I had left it on one of the thwarts of the boat, and thus I was deprived of even this poor comfort

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and consolation. It may seem ridiculous, but it is nevertheless true, that I took the loss of my pipe more to heart than every other loss I had sustained. Doubtless, I ought to have been thankful I had escaped with my life; but I cannot say I felt so. I could do nothing but rock backward and forward on the stone on which I sat, cold, wet, and shivering, and bitterly lamenting my hard fate.

How long I might have remained thus, I cannot say; time passed altogether unheeded; I marked not the sun's rise, I heeded not the breaking morn. Lonely, deserted, forlorn, and sad, I was once more roused to a consciousness of my position by hunger. I looked round, and found the rocks on which I sat covered with oysters. Gathering up a large pebble, I began breaking some open, and I tore my fingers in the operation, and felt a sort of savage pleasure in the pain. After satisfying my hunger, I next looked round for water, which to my exceeding joy and thankfulness I found trickling down one of the rocks. Thither accordingly I hastened, and took a good long draught. After bathing my face and washing my hands, I sat down somewhat refreshed.

What next? I scarcely knew. Anything rather than sit still; that nearly drove me wild. I tried to murmur a prayer, but my thoughts would wander away, and I found that I could only tranquillise my mind by moving about. I wandered back to the boat, and, hopeless as the task was, tried to mend her. I had with me my pocket-knife, and I tried various poor devices with it. Although perfectly convinced of the uselessness of my task, I could not abstain from working at it, and it was not until I had thrown away two whole days that I desisted. The first night I gathered a heap of long dry fern, and slept on it, rolled up in my blankets. It was on a Saturday that I landed on the island, and, although the following day was Sunday, I worked all day at the boat. It was not until Monday night that I finally gave up the attempt.

IV.

The small bay was surrounded by a rocky rampart, varying in height from ninety to two hundred feet, surmounted by a dense forest. At the feet of these rocks was another rock of from ten to twelve feet broad, sloping and covered at high tide, but bare at low water, and encrusted with oysters. The beach was composed of shingle, descending steeply into the water. Inland was a small piece of level ground, about half an acre in extent, the middle of which was a basin, into which the little spring of water tumbled, whose waters fell and rose with the ebb and flow of the tide: the water of the sea percolating through the pebbly beach. In this small pond grew a sort of flag called by the natives of New Zealand raupo, and of which their huts are mostly built. Round the pond, the ground was composed of small pebbles, or gravel and sand; growing over it, was a coarse kind of bent or grass. Nearer the rocks which enclosed this flat piece of ground in an irregular semicircle, grew tall ferns, finding root in the soil and débris washed down from the upper grounds, and shaded and kept moist by the overhanging rocks. Down a steep gully, narrow and blocked up with huge boulders, fell the small stream of water, trickling finally in little rills over the green slimy surface of a rock about thirty feet high. In the clefts of the rock were growing shrubs, with here and there the larger growth of a pohutukawa, a large crooked limbed evergreen tree found in New Zealand, and bearing, about Christmas, a most beautiful crimson bloom: the boat-builders in New Zealand use the crooked limbs of this tree for the knees and elbows of their boats. On the top of the rocks surrounding this small flat of ground, was the dense forest, and, towering up again in the far background, were several volcanic peaks, conical shaped, and rising to a height of from nine hundred to one thousand feet, all tree-clad to their summits.

This is an imperfect description of the place on which, Crusoe-like, I had been so strangely thrown, with no earthly possessions beyond a small pocket-knife, a pair of blankets, a few pieces of broken glass (the remains of my two bottles which I found on the rocks, and which I carefully treasured), and my tattered sails and a broken boat. My long rope I lost from carelessly leaving it too near the water when mending my boat. How far the island was from any inhabited land, I knew not. I only knew it was uninhabited by human beings, and that I could have no fellowship with any of my kind, not even savages, during my sojourn on it. How long that sojourn was likely to be, God only knew. Unlike Robinson Crusoe, I had not even a dog or a cat for my companion, I had no wrecked ship wherefrom to draw any resources. I was totally unarmed. I had no tools wherewith to build, or plant, or dig; I had no seeds to plant even had I had tools. I had no books to while away the long tedious hours, no means whereon to write even an account of my sufferings and fate, though perchance they might one day be read in my bones whitening on the beach. I was without house or shelter, and without fire.

V.

Tuesday morning came, with rain, and I woke wet through; fortunately, it was not very cold. After I had been down to the rocks and taken my morning meal of oysters, I sat down and had a long consultation with myself about a house. I examined all the rocks to see if I could find a cave. I did find a small one; but I could not live in it, for the water dripped incessantly from the roof, and the floor was wet. My next thought was to build a small hut after the fashion of the Maories, and I spent the whole of that and the two following days in cutting with my knife the bulrushes or raupo in the swamp, and two days more in tying it up in bundles, using the flax I found growing near the pond for that purpose. All this occupied that week. The employment diverted my thoughts

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from brooding too much. I took care to tire myself so thoroughly that I generally fell asleep as soon as I had said my prayers and laid myself down. Sunday following, I resolved to keep free from work. I climbed up the narrow rocky pathway into the forest, and found growing, as I expected, among the trees, abundance of the wild palm or nikau. The heart of two or three of these I cut out with my knife. The heart of this palm is about the thickness of a man's wrist, is about a foot long, and tastes not unlike the English hazel-nut, when roasted on the ashes of a fire. It is very nutritious. This, with the oysters, composed my supper on the second Sunday of my stay on the island. The day was warm and sunny, and, coming after the four or five wet days, was very cheering. After supper I planned out my house, having chosen a place for it during my walk in the afternoon.

Before I lay down for the night, I sat on a great stone, looking over the sea, and kept repeating the psalm in which occurs the verse: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise Him for the help of his countenance."

So ended my second Sunday on the island.

VI.

I woke early next morning; and, after my usual visit to the rocks, went to my boat, and, taking one of the lining boards, spent an hour or so in trying to fashion it into something like a spade. Then, I dug a small trench round the spot where I intended placing my house, and then made perfectly level, a space of about fourteen feet long by ten feet wide, pulling up the grass and plants. I went into the forest and cut down four long straight sticks, about an inch and a half in diameter, and five to six feet long, forked at one end. These were for the corners. I cut two about the same thickness, and about nine feet long, forked in the same manner at one end. These were to carry the ridge pole. I then cut down three or four bundles of long straight sticks of various lengths and thickness. This took me altogether two days—namely, cutting and carrying them down to the place I had chosen for my house; the framework of which took me three more days to complete. The labour of breaking open the oysters in sufficient quantities to satisfy my appetite very considerably abridged the length of my day. It was a task of no small difficulty, in which my fingers nearly always suffered; and, let me eat as many oysters as I would, I rarely left the rocks perfectly satisfied; there was ever within me a disagreeable sensation of hunger. I was tortured with dreams of solid substantial breakfasts, dinners, and suppers. I had not even the comfort of a drop of water at hand, when I awoke with a raging thirst upon me, having no vessel to keep it in. (I afterwards tried to make a vessel capable of holding water from some soft clay; but though I baked it in the fire to harden it, it was so porous that the water evaporated during the night, and I generally found the vessel empty in the morning.)

I had frequently seen the Maories obtain fire by rubbing together two sticks, and I had once or twice attempted it myself, but without success. Now, however, the obtaining of fire was a matter of such consequence to me that I resolved once more to make the attempt. First, I sought for some hard stone, thinking therewith to strike fire with the aid of my knife; but I could not find any stone fit for my purpose, and if I had, there was no tinder whereon to strike the spark. I therefore resolved to make an effort to obtain fire by rubbing the two sticks—with but small hope of success. I gathered some very dry ferns and small manuka twigs, which are very resinous and inflammable. I rubbed it between two pieces of wood—slowly at first. Presently the wood began to smell of burning, and a little wreath of white smoke curled upward. I then quickened my motion, until the perspiration streamed down my face, while my elbows and wrists began to ache painfully. In this way I rubbed for well-nigh twenty minutes, and all the result I obtained was the smell of fire and smoke. I nearly despaired, and was about to give it up, when one of the minute shavings flew up a living spark; what a thrill of joy it sent through me! I forgot my weariness; and, redoubling my efforts for a few seconds, had the satisfaction of seeing several more sparks. I dropped the stick, and blew gently on the heap until it was on fire. I then gently shook it upon the fern, wrapped the fern up in fir-twigs, and waved it quickly round my head until the whole mass was in flames. This fire I never allowed to go out.

VII.

I kept a good stock of firewood, and dug a hole in the middle of my house, which I kept always filled with hot embers, besides keeping a pile of dry purin sticks for light at night. With a gun, I could have materially improved my food, as I saw plenty of wild ducks on the small pond, besides parrots and pigeons in the forest. I attempted to hit the ducks with stones, but never succeeded in killing any, although I twice hit. I next thought of a bow and arrows, but my attempts proved futile. However, I added another dish to my meagre fare, and that was fern-root, of which I had abundance.

I had now been about three weeks on the island; although in no way reconciled to the idea of living there, the hope of ever getting away again daily became fainter and fainter, until at times, if I sat down for a short while and tried to think over my situation, I was well-nigh driven to despair. One morning, on going out of my house, I perceived an intolerable stench, coming up from the beach. I went down to see what it was, and, to my great disgust, found the dead body of a large shark, in the last stage of decomposition, washed up by the tide. After a time, however, it occurred to me that, as I had seen the Maories

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make their fish-hooks out of shark bones, why should not I?

I had already tried to make hooks out of the copper nails of my boat, but the metal was too soft, and bent too readily. Now, however, I could try on the shark's bones, and moreover it would be some occupation for my long tedious evenings; for the evening was always the most wearisome part of my time. Many a dull evening I spent, my thoughts far far away, roaming free and uncontrolled over spots where, in all likelihood, my feet would never tread again; or I wearied myself with brooding over my condition, and wondering what my friends would think of my long-continued absence.

In six evenings, with the aid of my knife, and some stones, and my broken glass, I made two bone hooks, sufficiently sharp and strong to catch any fish I might find off the rocks. Another week was spent in twisting raw flax into fishing lines. Next morning I was up with the early dawn, and, after many failures, captured a large rock cod, which I speedily roasted at my fire. How much of it I ate, I should be ashamed to confess.

VIII.

I may here give a diary of my daily proceedings on the island. I generally woke early, and, after saying my prayers, betook myself to the spring of water and had a good fresh bath. My next task was to go to the rocks, and either obtain a supply of oysters or fish for breakfast. I next went up into the forest for a supply of firewood, looking well about me for any discoveries that might prove useful. I found growing among the shrubs, a large orange-coloured pod, producing a very fragrant pepper. With this, I flavoured my fish. I also found salt in the crevices of the rocks, deposited there by evaporation. After collecting firewood, I next gathered fresh fern for my bed. Then came the preparation for my mid-day meal, for which I generally now had fish, and either the wild palm or wild cabbage, which I found growing at the foot of the rocks. I made a change occasionally in my diet by the mode of cooking it: one day broiling it, and another day cooking it in a native kapura or hougi, with hot stones in a hole. The afternoon I generally spent in a walk in the forest, into which, however, I dared not penetrate very far, for fear of losing my road. In the evening I went down to the pond and caught a few eels, ready for bait the following morning. As soon as it was dark I retired into my hut, and, throwing a few sticks on the fire to make a light, employed myself in making hooks, or lines, or any other thing I could think of making and was able to make. I had dug a hole in the centre of my floor, in which I deposited every night sufficient fuel to last until morning. My last employment was my prayers, after which, rolling myself up in my blanket, I tried to sleep. Thus, in dull monotony, the time passed slowly away. Each day's dawn found me with hope diminished, and in its place a cold feeling of despair gradually settling over me. Ofttimes I seemed to be moving about, mechanically.

I had been seven weeks and two days on the island, according to my reckoning—which reckoning consisted in merely repeating to myself occasionally, during each day, its name and the date of the month—when, as I was coming from the forest with a load of firewood, I looked towards the sea, and was startled by the sight of a vessel, passing at about eight miles' distance. At first I scarce knew what to do. I threw down the wood and rushed over the rocks to my hut, for my blankets, to hang up in a tree for signal. I carried the blankets up the rocks, and climbed half way up a tree, when the thought occurred to me I should be too late, and that the smoke of a fire would be seen more plainly. I accordingly slid down the rocks again for some fire, lighted the pile of wood I had thrown down, and then began to climb once more into the tree, to hang out my blankets. Alas, I had made the fire of dry wood, and it burnt too brightly to emit much smoke. It was now too late to place some green branches on it. The vessel faded slowly out of sight, never having noticed my attempts at signalling her.

I know not what effect such an event would have had on others placed in my situation, whether it would have awakened and encouraged other men to hope, or would have driven them to despair. It had the latter tendency on me; and, for the first time since I landed on the island, I gave way to tears. I sat down, listless and dejected, and cried long and bitterly. All that day I cried bitterly.

At night I was startled. I had caught, as usual, several small eels, and placed them on the roof of my hut, to be ready for my morning's fishing. In the middle of the night I was aroused by hearing a strange scratching scrambling noise upon the roof. It was with no small trepidation that I ventured out to see what it was. The night was very dark, and the first thing I saw were two fiery balls of light glaring at me from the top of the hut; next moment, a black object flew at me. I stooped suddenly, and the animal went over me with a loud hiss, and disappeared in the darkness. It was a large black cat. How it came there, I know not. I had never seen it before and never saw it afterwards, although I heard it once or twice wailing dismally in the forest.

Of the next two or three days I have a very confused recollection. I remember wandering about all day, seeking rest and finding none, careless, heedless, hopeless. It was during this time, I doubt not, that I lost my reckoning; for somehow or other I found that I had lost three days.

How long this state might have continued I cannot tell, but it was most mercifully diverted in the following way. I had penetrated deeper into the forest one day than I had ever ventured before, where I came to a rather abrupt gully; here I stumbled over a tree root, and rolled down a descent. When I recovered my-

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self I got on my feet and looked round. I had rolled into the midst of some tall plants, with a broadish leaf, long, entire, and smooth, that felt sticky or glutinous when touched, and with a dusky-coloured flower. It was tobacco. A coarse, bitter kind, but still it was tobacco. Eagerly I gathered all I could find, and then retraced my steps. As soon as I arrived at home, I hung up my tobacco-leaves on a long string of flax inside my hut. I then set my wits to work, to invent a pipe, in which I at last rudely succeeded. How great a comfort it was, no words of mine could adequately tell.

IX.

One thing that more than any other impressed my mind with the utter solitude of the island on which I was cast, was the absence of animal life and the silence. I had seen, during several weeks' residence, little or no traces of life beyond the solitary instance of the wild cat, which had probably been thrown overboard or had swum ashore from some passing ship. The only other-living things I had yet seen, except birds, were lizards. Wild pigeons abounded. I made about twenty snares to catch some. For several days I did not succeed, and I had almost despaired, when one day, to my great delight, a couple were caught. How eagerly I cooked them, and the enjoyment I had in eating them I need not describe. I afterwards took several more, securing altogether during the time I was on the island, fourteen birds.

I now went up on the rocks, where I had cleared a place to lie and bask in the sun, and whence I could overlook the sea. Several weeks had elapsed since I saw the vessel.

About this time I found in the forest, near my tobacco plot, some yellow clay, a quantity of which I carried home, and occupied my evenings in trying to convert into some vessel to hold water. I made several ungainly looking things, and spoilt all but two in trying to bake them. The occupation, however, served to divert my attention, and keep me from brooding too much over my misery.

In the hope of finding honey, I had several bee hunts. How bees came on this desolate island puzzled me; but there they were; they could hardly be indigenous. I traced an immense swarm to a tree, which I had the cruelty to burn down; that being the only expedient by which I could obtain the honey hived high up in the trunk. I was rewarded for this toil (which was great, first and last) by the largest stock of honey I had ever yet seen taken, even in New Zealand, from a tree. A part of the mass of honey was two or three seasons old, being of a deep yellow colour, and the wax brown; the rest was of a pale straw colour, in snow-white virgin combs. Of the latter I ate eagerly, and then collecting the rest, deposited it in my clay vessels, leaving the oldest a prey to the lizards and ants. I found this honey a delicious addition to my fish. I found afterwards two more bee trees, the contents of which I obtained and enjoyed.

X.

I had frequently noticed what I took to be the footsteps of some kind of animal on the pathway leading up the rocks into the forest. I had not, however, seen anything of any animal. I knew pigs and goats to be the only animals found in New Zealand in a wild state, and they are not indigenous: having been introduced, I believe, by Captain Cook. One day, as I was returning with a load of firewood, I heard below, to my great surprise, some animals bleating. Laying down my load quietly, I looked on the ground below, and, to my great delight, saw a herd of wild goats licking the salt on the rocks. How was I to come at them? How could I catch one of them? I remembered that Robinson Crusoe became swift enough of foot to run them down. I much doubted my capability of doing so. As, however, no plan suggested itself to me other than that of stealing quietly upon them, and then making a sudden rush, I resolved forthwith to try that course. Slowly and stealthily I got within fifty yards of them unnoticed. One suddenly observed me and gave a loud bleat of warning, and they all made a rush up the rocks where no human foot could follow. Having got out of my reach, they turned round and stared at me. What could I do? Nothing, but quietly return for my firewood, and try to devise some mode of catching them at some future time. Many were the devices that passed through my mind, all equally futile. Lying in the hut some days later, I heard some animals running over the gravel in front of it. It was mid-day, and I was resting from the heat of the sun. I peeped out, and saw six goats separated from their companions and browsing on some karaka bushes near my spring. I crept out as stealthily as cat after mouse; the plashing of the little stream over the rock, drowned any little noise I might have made, and, fortunately, the wind blew from them to me. I found the distance between me and them gradually lessen, while the space between the pool of water and the steep precipitous rocks gradually narrowed, leaving them less and less room to rush past me. At length they saw me, and seemed so near that for a moment they stood perfectly still—paralysed. I rushed at them with a whoop. Five passed me; but the last, a she-goat, heavy with kid, got separated from her companions, and in her perplexity leaped upon a large stone in the water, and there stood bleating most pitifully. I made one bound after her, threw my arms about her neck, and held her in a close embrace. Now, I thought, I have succeeded in catching the very goat I would have chosen; how shall I get her home? My doubts as to this important question were very soon settled. The stone on which we both were, was covered with a green slimy moss, and gradually I felt my feet slipping from under me. The goat made a sudden plunge for liberty, and down I came with her into the water. I was forced to loosen my hold. She beat me at swimming, short as the distance was to land;

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and, with a loud bleat, she rushed up the rocks after her companions.

I was consoled on the same evening by finding an enormous shell which had been washed up by the tide; this, along with two or three smaller ones, I carried away, rejoicing in them as vessels to hold water. Many and many a time, however, I sat planning how to secure a goat. For even one goat, as a companion, would have been a great boon; but it was all to no purpose; I never got one.

One bright moonlight night, I fell short of wood. I had that day neglected getting it (why, I forget now), so I had to turn out and go up into the forest. The moon shone beautifully, and the effects of light and shade among the huge trees and gigantic creepers were so fantastic and weird-like that I could not help sitting down on a fallen tree, and, half-frightened, yet utterly entranced, gazing on the wonderful scene. As I sat, a loud shrill whistle sounded close behind me. After a short time I recovered sufficient self-possession to look cautiously around, and saw a dark object moving. I waited until it came into the full light of the moon, when I saw what at first I took for a quadruped. But it was a bird: a bird with neither wings nor feathers, but a sort of fur. It occurred to me that this must be the "kiwi" I had heard much of from the natives, called by the whites the apteryx. Apart from its skin, which I wished to obtain, it was, as I knew, exceedingly good eating. I looked round for a stick or a stone, and at length got hold of a stick without alarming the bird. I started forward, and made an unsuccessful blow at it. It ran very quickly; I managed, however, to overtake it, when the brute threw itself on its back and struck at me with its legs, ripped up my trousers with a sharp hind claw, and tore the skin of my leg most grievously. I was so taken aback that the bird escaped. I had one satisfaction, however; I had ascertained the cause of the mysterious whistling, and thus set all fears on that score at rest. In a day or two I found apteryx eggs, which made a welcome addition to my larder.

XI.

Four long weary months and two weeks had passed. Three or four times in the day I regularly went up the rocks, trying to sight a sail. A long time had now elapsed since I saw the last, and my hopes of ever seeing another became every day fainter and fainter. At length, one fine warm sunny day as I was lying on the rock, looking every now and then seaward, I descried a small speck far out to sea. At first I thought my eyes deceived me; I rubbed them, and looked again, and saw it still more distinctly. I took a short walk in the forest, and, coming back, found the object grown larger and plainer. I could now discern glistening in the light of the sun, the white sails of a vessel. How my heart beat! Would she come near enough for me to signalise her? I made ready a fire, and, this time, gathered several green branches to make a smoke with. Nearer and nearer she came, until at length I made her out to be a large schooner bound to the southward, I supposed to Auckland. When she arrived (as near as I could guess) about four miles from the island, I lighted my fire, and heaped on it a mass of green wood and damp moss, and watched the smoke ascend in a large dense cloud. I looked eagerly towards the schooner. She came nearer and nearer. My heart palpitated. I could distinctly hear and almost count its loud and anxious throbs. "They see the smoke, they see it!" I cried in ecstasy, as she suddenly hauled up to the wind, and I heard her sails flap sharply against her masts. In my excitement I screamed until my throat was sore, with the vain hope that the people on board would hear my cries. Do they really see the smoke? Will they lower a boat for me? The few minutes of suspense during which she lay aback, seemed hours. Hours? Years. "I know they see the smoke, I know it!" I cried; "how cruel not to hasten! Why do they not lower a boat and pull off?" "They are going!" I shrieked, in my agony, as I saw the vessel's head slowly turn, and the sails again belly out to the wind. "They are going! Oh, my God, they are going! And leaving me here! Have mercy, have mercy, and do not utterly forsake me!" I cast myself with my face to the ground, my eyes hot, dry, and tearless. I dared not look again. I felt as if I was going mad. At length I got up, and took one last despairing look at the receding ship now again diminished to a small speck.

Silent and tearless, I sat for hours looking down into the quiet deep blue waters. Here and there, corals of all strange hues and many forms branching out in different directions, with bright coloured strange shaped fish gliding in and out among the grotesque stony foliage, and snow-white shells gleaming in the bright clear water amongst the dark green weed, which swayed idly backwards and forwards with the plashings of the tide. All down there looked so serene and peaceful that the thought crept into my mind, "Would it not be better to roll off this rock, and seek that resting-place? It would be but one plunge, a very brief pang, and then to sleep."

As I sat brooding over those wicked thoughts, the words, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: *I will deliver thee*, and thou shalt glorify me," came suddenly into my mind. I rushed down to my hut, fell on my knees, and prayed God to pity me and give me patience and submission.

XII.

Four more weary weeks passed without any incident worth noting. Methodically I fished, and gathered firewood, roamed through the forest, and formed futile plans for catching goats. In this manner another month passed. I had now been five months alone on the island.

I had retired to bed one night as usual, when I was startled by hearing something bump on the beach. I jumped up, and listened. It can-

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not be my old boat lifted off the rocks by a high tide? No, it could not be that; for the boat had been almost all removed for one purpose or other. And, yet I heard footsteps; and then a loud gruff voice, saying, "Kumea, Kumea!" I knew that voice well, but I almost thought I was dreaming. I rushed out, and saw by the light of the moon, which was then near the full, five or six dusky figures trying to haul up a large boat out of the reach of the breakers. With a loud shout of joy I ran forward, but stood amazed and appalled at the sudden yell which escaped from the persons, who left off dragging the boat, and tumbled precipitately into her, as if their only safety were there. Moreover, I saw to my horror a large bare brawny arm held up, with something glittering in the moon's silver light, and I feared its flying at me. "Kowai koe?" (Who are you?) shouted a loud voice. "Ko Henare ahau" (I am Henry), I exclaimed. "Stop," answered the voice, "or I throw this!" at the same time brandishing the small tomahawk. I well knew the fatal aim that would follow if I moved. I stood perfectly still. The figure then moved towards the boat. "Stop, Monganui," I cried, in an agony of fear lest they should go off again and leave me. "I am Henry—do not leave me." "Ka teka koe" (You lie), he exclaimed, "kua mate Henare (Henry is dead). You are his spirit." "No, no," I answered, "I swear to you I am he. Come and touch me, and see whether I am not flesh and blood." "No," he said, "I do not believe you. You are a spirit, and I shall go." He made towards the boat. What agony I suffered at that moment! But suddenly he turned, and stood still, calling to me, "Ka kite koe tera kowhatu?" (Do you see that stone?) pointing to one at my feet. "Ae ra" (Yes), I answered. "Take it up, then." I did so. "Now, do you see that tree?" pointing to the very tree I had tied my boat to when I first landed, and which grew out of the rocks. "I see it." "Throw the stone at it." I did so, and hit it. "Ah!" he said, "no ghost could do that—only flesh and blood could lift and throw a large stone like that." "May I come, then, to you?" "Yes," he said, still, however, hesitating. I went up to him with the usual Maori salute of "Tena koutou."

He caught hold of me and grasped my hand so hard that I flinched. "Ah," he said, "that is real flesh and blood;" and then looking me full in the face, he said, "and you look something like Henry, only thinner." "Live here five months, Monganui," I replied, "and try to keep stout on it."

As soon as he had fully got it into his mind that I was the person I represented myself to be, he began asking me innumerable questions. The others had been listening all this time in the boat, and on his order came out reluctantly; we pulled the boat up high on the beach, the women (for they were the chief's five wives) casting all the time side glances of doubt and mistrust on me. But I contrived once or twice to knock against them rather roughly, as only flesh and blood and bones could do, and this seemed to set their minds at rest. Monganui, who was the chief who had given me the two boys, came up to my hut, while his wives busied themselves in making a shelter for the night with the oars of the boat and their blankets. Monganui and I remaining at my house after supper, we lighted our pipes. I proceeded to narrate my adventures of the last few months, in the course of which I was frequently interrupted by his savage ejaculations of astonishment. When I had done, he said, "Ah, well, you would make a good Maori," that being the very highest compliment he could pay me. I then asked him how he had come, and why? He told me he had been fishing at the Black Rocks, and it had come on to blow very fresh, as in my own case; so freshly did it blow at last, that, despite his having a whale boat and crew, they could not pull against it, and so ran before it to these islands.

In the morning, as soon as it was light, we went out. We found the women already up, a fire lighted, and some potatoes and fish being cooked in an iron pot, or kohua. The women at first looked somewhat askance at me, but seeing me take a potato out of the pot and deliberately peel and eat it, they again seemed considerably relieved.

Of course Monganui had made his mind up that I would leave the island with him as soon as the weather moderated, which it seemed about to do. He arranged for our leaving early the following morning. The morning opened clear and fine, with the wind in the right direction for sailing back again. We were all astir early, and in a bustle of preparation. As soon as breakfast was over, the things were all put on board the boat, and everything was ready for the start. Just then my heart failed me, despite my long and lonely residence on the island. I could not overcome my fears of trusting myself in that small boat, deeply laden as she was, and leaking, as I knew of old she did, for so long a journey. When it came to the point, I drew back, much to Monganui's astonishment. "I will stay," I said; "should you land safely, please go to Kororaika and tell the white people I am here, and that I have been living here five months. Seek the magistrate there, and ask him to send a small vessel for me, and I will remain patiently here until it arrives." "But, Henry," he answered eagerly, "there is room. The sea is quiet, and I think I can find my way home again. Do come with us." Again and again he urged me, but to no purpose. They all got into the boat and prepared to start, when up jumped the chief again and ran to me, pressed his nose against mine, and, with tears in his eyes, said once more, "Now, Henry, now for the last time!" "No, Monganui, I feel I cannot." I rushed away to my hut scarcely daring to trust myself any longer, and there gave way to a flood of tears. After a lapse of about a quarter of an hour I rushed up the rock and looked after the boat; there it was, a little white speck

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dancing up and down on the swelling waters, and, as I watched it, my heart changed once more, and I shouted and shrieked for them to come back.

XIII.

Alone, alone once more. Oh! that dreadful word "alone." Perhaps I should never get away from this horrible place; never, never more! Fool! Coward! How I missed the sound of human voices. How I listened for human footsteps. How horribly lonely I was. I prayed to God that they might land safely and send off some means of rescue. I felt I could not wait long; that a very short time would elapse before I became in very truth mad. I went up the rock and strained my aching eyes with gazing across the bright blue waves. Night came at last, beautiful, still, cloudless, and moonlight, and still I sat and gazed at the sea, listening in unutterable sadness to its moanings. At length, cold, weary, and sad, I betook me to my bed.

Unrefreshed, I woke in the morning, and, as soon as breakfast was over, took my lonely station once more on the rocks, and spent the weary weary day in gazing over the sea. I calculated that at least six days must elapse before any vessel could come, yet I could not leave my look-out. So passed the second day, and so the third, and so the fourth, and so the fifth. The sixth day came, and somewhat more hopefully I took my station, waited and prayed, and watched, but the daylight faded and night came, and still no sign. So passed the seventh day, and so dawned the eighth, and so died the eighth, and so passed the ninth, and so came the tenth. On the tenth day, I was scarcely conscious. Still mechanically I sat and gazed over the bright water of the cruel mocking sea.

At length, towards mid-day, I fancied I discerned a small dark speck. But I had been deceived so often, that I expected it to fade away like all the rest. But no, it did not fade. I looked again, and I looked again, and still it was there, and surely increasing in size. I rushed off for a few minutes into the forest, and when I returned—there it was still; and now I saw and knew it was a vessel coming towards the island!

Nearer, nearer, and nearer. It was a small schooner. Again I lighted my fire and watched the smoke curl upwards in thick dense clouds. A gun was fired. I could not hear the report. I could only see the small puff of white smoke fading slowly away.

What passed during the next few hours I very dimly know. I have a faint idea that I shouted, and danced, and whooped, and laughed, and cried. I rushed again and again down the rocks to my hut, and then again to the rocks. Once I fell and rolled down, tearing my clothes and skin, and bruising my hands and knees, and finally finding myself in the sea, whence with no small difficulty I emerged. Now, a small boat rapidly approached the beach, pulled by two men. I rushed down to meet them. They grounded on the pebbles. One figure leaped out, and rushed up to me, throwing his arms about my neck, and rubbing his nose against mine, crying all the time like a child. I felt my hand grasped by the other, and I saw before me my two native boys.

XIV.

I hastened to my hut, and, taking my blankets and the things Monganui had left with me, I got into the boat, and they quickly pulled me alongside the schooner. From two English sailors in her, I heard my own native tongue the first time for nearly six months. How strangely it sounded in my ears!

As soon as I got on board, they took me below and gave me some tea. I remained on deck all that night, scarcely able to realise the events of the past few months. And so I sat and watched, and thanked God through all the watches of that most blessed night, too excited to sleep, too thankful to do anything but return Him my humble thanks for all His goodness.

Next day, in the early morning, we neared land; there, were the ill-fated rocks; there, loomed up once more that dreadful Cape Brett; a few hours and we should enter the bay. We rounded the point, and once more I saw the houses on the beach. Strangely they seemed to sway to and fro—strangely a mist came before my eyes. There was the well-known pier, and on it a number of faces, dark and white, all eagerly looking towards our small vessel as she swept up the bay. Once more I got into the boat, and was rowed rapidly towards the pier. I reached the steps, and a loud and deafening cheer saluted my ears. I looked up, I saw a face I well knew, I heard a voice I dearly loved. I heard and saw no more. As I tried to mount the last step of the pier I fell down on my face, and when I came to myself I found myself in bed in my friend's house, and a doctor sitting at my side—once more, thank God, at home!

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BOOTS AT THE HOLLY-TREE INN,

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

BETWEEN THE SCENES.

I.

FROM NORAH VANSTONE TO MR. PENDRIL.

"Westmorland House, Kensington,
"August 14th, 1846.

"DEAR MR. PENDRIL,—The date of this letter will show you that the last of many hard partings is over. We have left Combe-Raven; we have said farewell to home.

"I have been thinking seriously of what you said to me, on Wednesday, before you went back to town. I entirely agree with you, that Miss Garth is more shaken by all she has gone through for our sakes, than she is herself willing to admit; and that it is my duty, for the future, to spare her all the anxiety that I can, on the subject of my sister and myself. This is very little to do for our dearest friend, for our second mother. Such as it is, I will do it with all my heart.

"But, forgive me for saying that I am as far as ever from agreeing with you about Magdalen. I am so sensible, in our helpless position, of the importance of your assistance; so anxious to be worthy of the interest of my father's trusted adviser and oldest friend, that I feel really and truly disappointed with myself for differing with you—and yet I do differ. Magdalen is very strange, very unaccountable, to those who don't know her intimately. I can understand that she has innocently misled you; and that she has presented herself, perhaps, under her least favourable aspect. But, that the clue to her language and her conduct on Wednesday last, is to be found in such a feeling towards the man who has ruined us, as the feeling at which you hinted, is what I cannot and will not believe of my sister. If you knew, as I do, what a noble nature she has, you would not be surprised at this obstinate resistance of mine to your opinion. Will you try to alter it? I don't mind what Mr. Clare says: he believes in nothing. But I attach a very serious importance to what *you* say; and, kind as I know your motives to be, it distresses me to think you are doing Magdalen an injustice.

"Having relieved my mind of this confession, I may now come to the proper object of my letter. I promised, if you could not find leisure time to visit us to-day, to write and tell you all that happened after you left us. The day has passed, without our seeing you. So I open my writing-case, and perform my promise.

"I am sorry to say that three of the women-servants—the housemaid, the kitchenmaid, and even our own maid (to whom I am sure we have always been kind)—took advantage of your having paid them their wages to pack up and go, as soon as your back was turned. They came to say good-by with as much ceremony, and as little feeling, as if they were leaving the house under ordinary circumstances. The cook, for all her violent temper, behaved very differently: she sent up a message to say that she would stop and help us to the last. And Thomas (who has never yet been in any other place than ours) spoke so gratefully of my dear father's unvarying kindness to him; and asked so anxiously to be allowed to go on serving us, while his little savings lasted, that Magdalen and I forgot all formal considerations, and both shook hands with him. The poor lad went out of the room crying. I wish him well; I hope he will find a kind master and a good place.

"The long, quiet, rainy evening out of doors—our last evening at Combe-Raven—was a sad trial to us. I think winter-time would have weighed less on our spirits: the drawn curtains, and the bright lamps, and the companionable fires would have helped us. We were only five in the house altogether—after having once been so many! I can't tell you how dreary the grey daylight looked, towards seven o'clock, in the lonely rooms, and on the noiseless staircase. Surely, the prejudice in favour of long summer evenings, is the prejudice of happy people? We did our best. We kept ourselves employed, and Miss Garth helped us. The prospect of preparing for our departure, which had seemed so dreadful earlier in the day, altered into the prospect of a refuge from ourselves, as the evening came on. We each tried at first to pack up in our own rooms—but the loneliness was more than we could bear. We carried all our possessions down stairs, and heaped them on the large dining-table, and so made our preparations together, in the same room. I am sure we have taken nothing away which does not properly belong to us.

"Having already mentioned to you my own

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conviction that Magdalen was not herself when you saw her on Wednesday, I feel tempted to stop here, and give you an instance in proof of what I say. The little circumstance happened on Wednesday night, just before we went up to our rooms.

"After we had packed our dresses and our birthday presents, our books and our music, we began to sort our letters, which had got confused from being all placed on the table together. Some of my letters were mixed with Magdalen's, and some of hers with mine. Among these last, I found a card, which had been given to my sister early in the year, by an actor who managed an amateur theatrical performance in which she took a part. The man had given her the card, containing his name and address, in the belief that she would be invited to many more amusements of the same kind, and in the hope that she would recommend him as a superintendent on future occasions. I only relate these trifling particulars to show you how little worth keeping such a card could be, in such circumstances as ours. Naturally enough, I threw it away from me across the table, meaning to throw it on the floor. It fell short, close to the place in which Magdalen was sitting. She took it up, looked at it, and immediately declared that she would not have had this perfectly worthless thing destroyed for the world. She was almost angry with me, for having thrown it away; almost angry with Miss Garth for asking what she could possibly want with it! Could there be any plainer proof than this, that our misfortunes—falling so much more heavily on her than on me—have quite unhinged her, and worn her out? Surely her words and looks are not to be interpreted against her, when she is not sufficiently mistress of herself to exert her natural judgment—when she shows the unreasonable petulance of a child on a question which is not of the slightest importance.

"A little after eleven we went up-stairs to try if we could get some rest.

"I drew aside the curtain of my window, and looked out. Oh, what a cruel last night it was; no moon, no stars; such deep darkness, that not one of the dear familiar objects in the garden was visible when I looked for them; such deep stillness, that even my own movements about the room almost frightened me! I tried to lie down and sleep, but the sense of loneliness came again, and quite overpowered me. You will say I am old enough, at six-and-twenty, to have exerted more control over myself. I hardly know how it happened, but I stole into Magdalen's room, just as I used to steal into it, years and years ago, when we were children. She was not in bed; she was sitting with her writing materials before her, thinking. I said I wanted to be with her the last night; and she kissed me, and told me to lie down, and promised soon to follow me. My mind was a little quieted, and I fell asleep. It was daylight when I woke—and the first sight I saw was Magdalen, still sitting in the chair, and still thinking. She had never been to bed; she had not slept all through the night.

"'I shall sleep when we have left Combe-Raven,' she said. 'I shall be better when it is all over, and I have bid Frank good-by.' She had in her hand our father's will, and the letter he wrote to you; and when she had done speaking, she gave them into my possession. I was the eldest (she said), and those last precious relics ought to be in my keeping. I tried to propose to her that we should divide them; but she shook her head. 'I have copied for myself,' was her answer, 'all that he says of us in the will, and all that he says in the letter.' She told me this, and took from her bosom a tiny white silk bag, which she had made in the night, and in which she had put the extracts, so as to keep them always about her. 'This tells me in his own words what his last wishes were for both of us,' she said; 'and this is all I want for the future.'

"These are trifles to dwell on; and I am almost surprised at myself for not feeling ashamed to trouble you with them. But, since I have known what your early connexion was with my father and mother, I have learnt to think of you (and, I suppose, to write to you) as an old friend. And, besides, I have it so much at heart to change your opinion of Magdalen, that I can't help telling you the smallest things about her which may, in my judgment, end in making you think of her as I do.

"When breakfast-time came (on Thursday morning) we were surprised to find a strange letter on the table. Perhaps I ought to mention it to you, in case of any future necessity for your interference. It was addressed to Miss Garth, on paper with the deepest mourning border round it; and the writer was the same man who followed us on our way home from a walk, one day last spring—Captain Wragge. His object appears to be, to assert once more his audacious claim to a family connexion with my poor mother, under cover of a letter of condolence, which it is an insolence in such a person to have written at all. He expresses as much sympathy—on his discovery of our affliction in the newspaper—as if he had been really intimate with us; and he begs to know, in a postscript (being evidently in total ignorance of all that has really happened), whether it is thought desirable that he should be present, among the other relatives, at the reading of the will! The address he gives, at which letters will reach him for the next fortnight, is, 'Post-office, Birmingham.' This is all I have to tell you on the subject. Both the letter and the writer seem to me to be equally unworthy of the slightest notice, on our part or on yours.

"After breakfast, Magdalen left us, and went by herself into the morning-room. The weather being still showery, we had arranged that Francis Clare should see her in that room, when he presented himself to take his leave. I was upstairs when he came; and I remained up-stairs for

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more than half an hour afterwards, sadly anxious, as you may well believe, on Magdalen's account.

"At the end of the half-hour, or more, I came down stairs. As I reached the landing, I suddenly heard her voice, raised entreatingly, and calling on him by his name—then loud sobs—then a frightful laughing and screaming, both together, that rang through the house. I instantly ran into the room; and found Magdalen on the sofa in violent hysterics, and Frank standing staring at her, with a lowering angry face, biting his nails.

"I felt so indignant—without knowing plainly why, for I was ignorant of course of what had passed at the interview—that I took Mr. Francis Clare by the shoulders, and pushed him out of the room. I am careful to tell you how I acted towards him, and what led to it; because I understand that he is excessively offended with me, and that he is likely to mention elsewhere, what he calls, my unladylike violence towards him. If he should mention it to you, I am anxious to acknowledge, of my own accord, that I forgot myself—not, I hope you will think, without some provocation.

"I pushed him into the hall, leaving Magdalen, for the moment, to Miss Garth's care. Instead of going away, he sat down sulkily on one of the hall-chairs. 'May I ask the reason of this extraordinary violence?' he inquired, with an injured look. 'No,' I said. 'You will be good enough to imagine the reason for yourself, and to leave us immediately, if you please.' He sat doggedly in the chair, biting his nails, and considering. 'What have I done, to be treated in this unfeeling manner?' he asked, after a while. 'I can enter into no discussion with you,' I answered; 'I can only request you to leave us. If you persist in waiting to see my sister again, I will go to the cottage myself, and appeal to your father.' He got up in a great hurry at those words. 'I have been infamously used in this business,' he said. 'All the hardships and the sacrifices have fallen to my share. I'm the only one among you who has any heart: all the rest are as hard as stones—Magdalen included. In one breath she says she loves me, and in another, she tells me to go to China. What have I done to be treated with this heartless inconsistency? I'm consistent myself—I only want to stop at home—and (what's the consequence?) you're all against me!' In that manner, he grumbled his way down the steps, and so I saw the last of him. This was all that passed between us. If he gives you any other account of it, what he says will be false. He made no attempt to return. An hour afterwards, his father came alone to say good-by. He saw Miss Garth and me, but not Magdalen; and he told us he would take the necessary measures, with your assistance, for having his son properly looked after in London, and seen safely on board the vessel when the time came. It was a short visit, and a sad leave-taking. Even Mr. Clare was sorry, though he tried hard to hide it.

"We had barely two hours, after Mr. Clare had left us, before it would be time to go. I went back to Magdalen, and found her quieter and better; though terribly pale and exhausted, and oppressed, as I fancied, by thoughts which she could not prevail on herself to communicate. She would tell me nothing then—she has told me nothing since—of what passed between herself and Francis Clare. When I spoke of him angrily (feeling as I did that he had distressed and tortured her, when she ought to have had all the encouragement and comfort from him that man could give), she refused to hear me: she made the kindest allowances, and the sweetest excuses for him; and laid all the blame of the dreadful state in which I had found her, entirely on herself. Was I wrong in telling you that she had a noble nature? And won't you alter your opinion when you read these lines?

"We had no friends to come and bid us good-by; and our few acquaintances were too far from us—perhaps too indifferent about us—to call. We employed the little leisure left, in going over the house together for the last time. We took leave of our old schoolroom, our bedrooms, the room where our mother died, the little study where our father used to settle his accounts and write his letters—feeling towards them, in our forlorn situation, as other girls might have felt at parting with old friends. From the house, in a gleam of fine weather, we went into the garden, and gathered our last nosegay; with the purpose of drying the flowers when they begin to wither, and keeping them in remembrance of the happy days that are gone. When we had said good-by to the garden, there was only half an hour left. We went together to the grave; we knelt down, side by side, in silence, and kissed the sacred ground. I thought my heart would have broken. August was the month of my mother's birthday; and, this time last year, my father and Magdalen and I were all three consulting in secret what present we could make to surprise her with on the birthday morning.

"If you had seen how Magdalen suffered, you would never doubt her again. I had to take her from the last resting-place of our father and mother, almost by force. Before we were out of the churchyard, she broke from me, and ran back. She dropped on her knees at the grave; tore up from it passionately a handful of grass; and said something to herself, at the same moment, which, though I followed her instantly, I did not get near enough to hear. She turned on me in such a frenzied manner, when I tried to raise her from the ground—she looked at me with such a fearful wildness in her eyes—that I felt absolutely terrified at the sight of her. To my relief, the paroxysm left her as suddenly as it had come. She thrust away the tuft of grass into the bosom of her dress, and took my arm, and hurried with me out of the churchyard. I asked her why she had gone back—I asked what those words were, which she had spoken at the grave. 'A promise to our dead father,' she answered, with a momentary return of the wild look and the

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frenzied manner which had startled me already. I was afraid to agitate her by saying more; I left all other questions to be asked at a fitter and a quieter time. You will understand from this, how terribly she suffers, how wildly and strangely she acts under violent agitation; and you will not interpret against her what she said or did, when you saw her on Wednesday last.

"We only returned to the house, in time to hasten away from it to the train. Perhaps, it was better for us so—better that we had only a moment left to look back, before the turn in the road hid the last of Combe-Raven from our view. There was not a soul we knew at the station; nobody to stare at us, nobody to wish us good-by. The rain came on again, as we took our seats in the train. What we felt at the sight of the railway; what horrible remembrances it forced on our minds of the calamity which has made us fatherless—I cannot, and dare not, tell you. I have tried anxiously not to write this letter in a gloomy tone; not to return all your kindness to us by distressing you with our grief. Perhaps I have dwelt too long already on the little story of our parting from home? I can only say in excuse, that my heart is full of it; and what is not in my heart my pen won't write.

"We have been so short a time in our new abode, that I have nothing more to tell you—except that Miss Garth's sister has received us with the heartiest kindness. She considerately leaves us to ourselves, until we are fitter than we are now to think of our future plans, and to arrange as we best can for earning our own living. The house is so large, and the position of our rooms has been so thoughtfully chosen, that I should hardly know—except when I hear the laughing of the younger girls in the garden—that we were living in a school.

"With kindest and best wishes from Miss Garth and my sister,

"Believe me, dear Mr. Pendril,

"Gratefully yours,

"NORAH VANSTONE."

II.

FROM MISS GARTH TO MR. PENDRIL.

"Westmorland House, Kensington,
"September 23rd, 1846.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I write these lines in such misery of mind as no words can describe. Magdalen has deserted us. At an early hour this morning, she secretly left the house; and she has not been heard of since.

"I would come and speak to you personally; but I dare not leave Norah. I must try to control myself; I must try to write.

"Nothing happened yesterday to prepare me, or to prepare Norah, for this last—I had almost said, this worst—of all our afflictions. The only alteration we either of us noticed in the unhappy girl, was an alteration for the better when we parted for the night. She kissed me, which she has not done latterly; and she burst out crying, when she embraced her sister next. We had so little suspicion of the truth, that we thought these signs of renewed tenderness and affection, a promise of better things for the future.

"This morning, at a little after eight o'clock, when her sister went into her room, it was empty; and a note in her handwriting, addressed to Norah, was lying on the dressing-table. I cannot prevail on Norah to part with the note; I can only send you the enclosed copy of it. You will see that it affords no clue to the direction she has taken.

"Knowing the value of time, in this dreadful emergency, I examined her room, and (with my sister's help) questioned the servants, immediately on the news of her absence reaching me. Her wardrobe was empty; and all her boxes but one, which she has evidently taken away with her, are empty too. We are of opinion that she has privately turned her dresses and jewellery into money; that she had the one trunk she took with her, removed from the house yesterday; and that she left us, this morning, on foot. The answers given by one of the servants are so unsatisfactory, that we believe the woman has been bribed to assist her; and has managed all those arrangements for her flight, which she could not have safely undertaken by herself.

"Of the immediate object with which she has left us, I entertain no doubt.

"I have reasons (which I can tell you at a fitter time) for feeling assured that she has gone away, with the intention of trying her fortune on the stage. She has in her possession the card of an actor by profession, who superintended an amateur theatrical performance at Clifton, in which she took part; and to him she has gone to help her. I saw the card at the time; and I know the actor's name to be Huxtable. The address, I cannot call to mind quite so correctly; but I am almost sure it was at some theatrical place, in Bow-street, Covent-garden. Let me entreat you not to lose a moment in sending to make the necessary inquiries; the first trace of her will, I firmly believe, be found at that address.

"If we had nothing worse to dread than her attempting to go on the stage, I should not feel the distress and dismay which now overpower me. Hundreds of other girls have acted as recklessly as she has acted, and have not ended ill after all. But my fears for Magdalen do not begin and end with the risk she is running at present.

"There has been something weighing on her mind ever since we left Combe-Raven—weighing far more heavily for the last six weeks than at first. Until the period when Francis Clare left England, I am persuaded she was secretly sustained by the hope that he would contrive to see her again. From the day when she knew that the measures you had taken for preventing this had succeeded; from the day when she was assured that the ship had really taken him away, nothing has roused, nothing

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has interested her. She has given herself up, more and more hopelessly, to her own brooding thoughts; thoughts which I believe first entered her mind, on the day when the utter ruin of the prospects on which her marriage depended was made known to her. She has formed some desperate project of contesting the possession of her father's fortune with Michael Vanstone; and the stage career which she has gone away to try, is nothing more than a means of freeing herself from all home-dependence, and of enabling her to run what mad risks she pleases, in perfect security from all home-control. What it costs me to write of her in these terms, I must leave you to imagine. The time has gone by when any consideration of distress to my own feelings can weigh with me. Whatever I can say which will open your eyes to the real danger, and strengthen your conviction of the instant necessity of averting it, I say in despite of myself, without hesitation and without reserve.

"One word more, and I have done.

"The last time you were so good as to come to this house, do you remember how Magdalen embarrassed and distressed us, by questioning you about her right to bear her father's name? Do you remember her persisting in her inquiries, until she had forced you to acknowledge that, legally speaking, she and her sister had No Name? I venture to remind you of this, because you have the affairs of hundreds of clients to think of, and you might well have forgotten the circumstance. Whatever natural reluctance she might otherwise have had to deceiving us, and degrading herself, by the use of an assumed name, that conversation with you is certain to have removed. We must discover her, by personal description—we can trace her in no other way.

"I can think of nothing more to guide your decision in our deplorable emergency. For God's sake, let no expense and no efforts be spared. I send my letter by private messenger: it ought to reach you by ten o'clock this morning, at the latest. Let me have one line in answer, to say you will act instantly for the best. My only hope of quieting Norah is to show her a word of encouragement from your pen.

"Believe me, dear sir,

"Yours sincerely and obliged,

"Harriet Garth."

III.

FROM MAGDALEN TO NORAH (ENCLOSED IN THE PRECEDING LETTER).

"My Darling,—Try to forgive me. I have struggled against myself, till I am worn out in the effort. I am the wretchedest of living creatures. Our quiet life here, maddens me; I can bear it no longer; I must go. If you knew what my thoughts are; if you knew how hard I have fought against them, and how horribly they have gone on haunting me in the lonely quiet of this house, you would pity and forgive me. Oh, my love, don't feel hurt at my not opening my heart to you as I ought! I dare not open it. I dare not show myself to you as I really am.

"Pray don't send and seek after me; I will write and relieve all your anxieties. You know, Norah, we must get our living for ourselves; I have only gone to get mine in the way which is fittest for me. Whether I succeed, or whether I fail, I can do myself no harm, either way. I have no position to lose, and no name to degrade. Don't doubt I love you—don't let Miss Garth doubt my gratitude. I go away miserable at leaving you; but I must go. If I had loved you less dearly, I might have had the courage to say this in your presence—but how could I trust myself to resist your persuasions, and to bear the sight of your distress? Farewell, my darling. Take a thousand kisses from me, my own best dearest love, till we meet again.

"Magdalen."

IV.

FROM SERGEANT BULMER (OF THE DETECTIVE POLICE) TO MR. PENDRIL.

"Scotland Yard,

"September 29th, 1846.

"Sir,—Your clerk informs me that the parties interested in our inquiry after the missing young lady, are anxious for news of the same. I went to your office to speak to you about the matter to-day. Not having found you, and not being able to return and try again to-morrow, I write these lines to save delay, and to tell you how we stand thus far.

"I am sorry to say, no advance has been made since my former report. The trace of the young lady which we found nearly a week since, still remains the last trace discovered of her. This case seems a mighty simple one, looked at from a distance. Looked at close, it alters very considerably for the worse, and becomes, to speak the plain truth—a Poser.

"This is how we now stand:

"We have traced the young lady to the theatrical agent's in Bow-street. We know that at an early hour on the morning of the twenty-third, the agent was called down stairs, while he was dressing, to speak to a young lady in a cab at the door. We know that, on her production of Mr. Huxtable's card, he wrote on it Mr. Huxtable's address, and heard her order the cabman to drive to the terminus. We believe she left by the nine o'clock train. We followed her by the twelve o'clock train. We have ascertained that she called, at half-past two, at Mr. Huxtable's lodgings; that she found he was away, and not expected back till eight in the evening; that she left word she would call again at eight; and that she never returned. Mr. Huxtable's statement is—he and the young lady have never set eyes on each other. The first consideration which follows, is this:—Are we to believe Mr. Huxtable? I have carefully inquired into his character; I know as much, or more, about him than he knows about himself; and my opinion is, that we *are* to believe him. To the best of my knowledge, he is a perfectly honest man.

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"Here, then, is the hitch in the case. The young lady sets out with a certain object before her. Instead of going on to the accomplishment to that object, she stops short of it. Why has she stopped? and where? Those are, unfortunately, just the questions which we can't answer yet.

"My own opinion of the matter is briefly as follows:—I don't think she has met with any serious accident. Serious accidents, in nine cases out of ten, discover themselves. My own notion is, that she has fallen into the hands of some person, or persons, interested in hiding her away, and sharp enough to know how to set about it. Whether she is in their charge, with or without her own consent, is more than I can undertake to say at present. I don't wish to raise false hopes or false fears; I wish to stop short at the opinion I have given already.

"In regard to the future, I may tell you that I have left one of my men in daily communication with the authorities. I have also taken care to have the handbills offering a reward for the discovery of her, more widely circulated. Lastly, I have completed the necessary arrangements for seeing the playbills of all country theatres, and for having the dramatic companies well looked after. Some years since this would have cost a serious expenditure of time and money. Luckily for our purpose, the country theatres are in a bad way. Excepting the large cities, hardly one of them is open; and we can keep our eye on them, with little expense, and less difficulty.

"These are the steps which I think it needful to take at present. If you are of another opinion, you have only to give me your directions, and I will carefully attend to the same. I don't by any means despair of our finding the young lady, and bringing her back to her friends safe and well. Please to tell them so; and allow me to subscribe myself,

"Yours respectfully,

"ABRAHAM BULMER."

V.

ANONYMOUS LETTER ADDRESSED TO MR. PENDRIL.

"SIR,—A word to the wise. The friends of a certain young lady are wasting time and money, to no purpose. Your confidential clerk and your detective policeman are looking for a needle in a bottle of hay. This is the ninth of October, and they have not found her yet: they will as soon find the North-West Passage. Call your dogs off; and you may hear of the young lady's safety, under her own hand. The longer you look for her, the longer she will remain, what she is now—lost."

[The preceding letter is thus endorsed, in Mr. Pendril's handwriting:—"No apparent means of tracing the enclosed to its source. Post-mark, 'Charing-cross.' Stationer's stamp cut off the inside of the envelope. Handwriting, probably a man's, in disguise. Writer, whoever he is, correctly informed. No further trace of the younger Miss Vanstone discovered yet."]

THE POLITE WORLD'S NUNNERY.

IN some parts of North Germany the suppression of monasteries has diverted their funds not into the hands of the State, nor into great hospitals, nor into school endowments, but to the use of modified nunneries, Protestant of course, and devoted to the particular solace of persons of condition: a sort of fashionable almshouses for unmarried ladies of high rank. Such ladies have comfortable apartments in the cloister, a handsome income out of its revenue, and a position in society as easy as that of a married woman. They are called canonesses. Each secularised nunnery, founded by noble families whose descendants have especial right of entrance, maintains a certain number of ladies, who are elected from a list of candidates whenever, by marriage or death, vacancies occur. In addition to the family claim and the entrance by vote, the abbess, who attains her own power, which is absolute, by free election of the sisterhood, has a fixed number of independent nominations, and so has the sovereign of the country. Whether poor or rich, nobody may become a canoness who is not of noble blood. In some cloisters, nobility for sixteen generations old, is an indispensable condition of sisterhood.

On the wide moors and dreary plains of North Germany the approach to a cloister is marked by a change of scenery, at the least from poverty of soil, to a show of wealth and luxury. One of these institutions, in which the writer lived for many years, was on a vast bleak heath over which, before the time of railways, men travelled for days seeing nothing but heath, herbage, and dwarf firs, with here and there some fields of buckwheat, oats, or rye, around villages of a dozen low thatched cottages. The villagers, who are rich, become so chiefly by the keeping of bees and sheep.

Our cloister was Heilthal, the oasis in such a desert. It had been built near to a rivulet. There were rich pastures, wooded hills, splendid chesnut avenues, and a large forest chiefly of beach and oak, besides two smaller woods of fir, birch, and lime trees. Amidst all this, lay the cloister, an old majestic building with a dozen pretty residences clustering about it in gardens, some on the rivulet side, half hidden behind trees. There was a village of old Heilthal within an hour's walk, and legend said that the cloister had been originally built there, many hundred years ago. The original nunnery, however, was burnt down, and when it was being rebuilt with increased magnificence, the arch enemy fought in vain against the holy labour. The day of the consecration was at hand, after which he would lose all power against the work. He resolved, therefore, to destroy the abbey, by pouring down upon it large pieces of rock during the night

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before the consecration. Laden with a great sackful of rocks, he set out on his errand, but in his eagerness he had overloaded his strength, for he did not fly over the moor with his usual swiftness. He dropped, therefore, a piece of rock here and there to lighten the weight—those pieces are still pointed out—but it was of no use. So he flapped on and on, until a sudden terror seized him at the smell of morning. The dark mass of nunnery was dimly visible in the grey mist. It was but a few minutes' flight, when the cock crew. The reign of night was over, and, with a heavy fall, the thousands and thousands of devil's stones came harmlessly down upon the barren moor, where to this day they lie, only half an hour's walk from the cloister.

If the present convent be really the same that gave shelter to the pious nuns of old, it must have been very much altered since their time. The poor little cells have developed into light and airy rooms; and, where they have kept their original dimensions they are transformed into charming boudoirs or cozy studios, as the taste of their present owners may direct.

The building has some old walls overgrown with ivy, and is either windowless, or closely set with windows in the most fantastical manner. Some of these windows are narrow, others small prison squares, and some are round.

This ancient part of the building is the most picturesque, but except two small side wings, which have some beautifully carved bay-windows, and are partly fitted up for the personal use of the ladies, the old cloister is either uninhabited, or used only for domestic offices. The front is nearly all new, forming two long wings on either side of a church, and containing twenty-five suite of apartments, occupied by as many canonesses. Each suite consists of five rooms: one large drawing-room, a somewhat smaller dining-room, a bedroom, and a boudoir or cabinet, with a room either for use of the lady's maid or as a sort of store-room. Each lady has her own stores for her separate household, but there is one large kitchen for common use. There are, also, two large saloons for grand occasions, and half a dozen spare rooms for visitors; these, like the kitchen, the saloons, the domestic offices and servants' halls, are common property.

In one wing, resides the lady abbess; in the other, the prioress. The abbess has a part of the building wholly to herself, her separate kitchen, her own cook, gardener, &c., and everything on a scale far above that of the canonesses. The prioress has also some decided privileges, and a larger income; but she is subordinate to the abbess, who has the chief care of administration, and is aided by men of business, including a well-paid lawyer steward. From the property of the cloister, everybody in the community receives a certain income paid in ready money: the amount is not generally known, but cannot be inconsiderable, as it not only enables the canonesses who are without any private property to live in ease and comfort, but even to support poor relatives. A canoness often takes her mother, sister, or some other female relative to live with her; but this requires special consent of the abbess, which is not always obtained. Great care is required in adding new elements to a society of women.

The abbess of Heilthal, when the writer lived there, was not over-particular in this respect. Gentle, kind-hearted, and obliging, she liked to grant favours, and had so deep a sense of justice, that she rarely claimed anything for herself which she would not have granted to another. She had living with her, a widowed sister with half a dozen titles, enormous German pride, much firmness, and an immoderate love of the exercise of power. Whether the most highly gracious Frau von Bombadenheim was a blessing to her sister the abbess, might be questioned. The sisters, at any rate, seemed truly fond of one another; each spoke as "we," and they were constantly mentioned in the plural as "abbesses—" at times, of course, with a mocking emphasis on the last syllable. Everybody loved and respected the gentle and well-meaning abbess in the singular, but everybody hated her double, from whom there was no escape. It was curious to see the two sisters together, when advice or favour of the lady abbess was required. She never gave either, without a glance into the face, where she seemed to read more quickly than in her own mind a "Yes or No," or the evasive "We will think of it, my love."

This "We will think of it, my love," was the answer that Fräulein Elise von Dachstrutter and her aunt received when they had asked whether the lady abbesses might have any objection to their giving tea and a dance?

Elise von Dachstrutter was one of the new comers, had just taken the veil, as it was called, and was spending her first quarter in Heilthal. She was not more than nineteen, was graceful and accomplished and fascinating in no common degree, and had got up a perfect revolution, not only within the walls of the cloister, but in its vicinity. Everybody admired her, men and women, old and young, high and low.

"She will let us know," said Elise to her aunt. "That means Yes, of course; but why not say so at once?"

"Wait and see, darling. I am rather afraid the abbesses will not like the idea; it is so decided an innovation, that I scarcely think the Bombadenheim will give her consent."

"Oh! She looked quite pleased; nay, she looked at me, even with an expression of sympathy and tenderness, when I, trembling a bit, made my request. She kept my hand all the time in hers, and pressed and patted it softly."

"Worse and worse," said the elder lady. "I have often seen mischief come after that. You do not know yet, child, what a life ours is. She seldom patronises anything which others suggest. She meddles with everything, and spies into everybody's private affairs. She knows the

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exact number of the dishes one has for dinner, to declare them to be more numerous than they ought to be. She knows, sooner than you do yourself, that your maid is a flirt, and had better be dismissed. She strongly suspects that new cloak of yours to be lined with scarlet (a prohibited colour), and she is sure to find you out. Why, niece, the other day she had even the impudence to send her maid to inquire whether I was aware that the carriage had been at my door for ten minutes or more, and that the horses would catch cold, if I kept them so long."

"How can you be angry at that, aunt? Surely it is not everybody who cares for other people's horses. She must be a good woman after all."

The lady abbesses returned the visit the same morning, and introduced some confidential friendly discussion, in which she explained her general and warm sympathy with the innocent pleasures and enjoyments of youth, but, at the same time, mentioned her duties in regard to the position of the cloister and the necessity of extreme caution not to expose members to calumnies and false reports—there might be some little occasional dance among themselves, she would not mind that, but invitations and preparations, no, it could not possibly be! So Elise's quadrilles were never danced.

These cloisters are strictly Lutheran Protestant, as all North Germany is, and their church service is like that of all the other churches. Nevertheless, they have retained many customs and ceremonies of the nuns, which are strangely mixed up with their present lay constitution. The canonesses attend service on Sundays with the rest of the congregation, but the communion is held for them separately, and on a few particular occasions they have a private service in their choir (adjoining the church), attended by their servants only. Then, above all, most of the cloisters possess figures of Patron Saints to this day. They are kept in secret shrines and said to be costly figures of gold and silver, which are not shown to the inquisitive stranger, nor much talked about by the canonesses and their friends. Report says that these precious patrons have their principal part to perform at the installation of the ladies, but nobody knows how and where. The day of installation is celebrated with great pomp, and closed with a grand evening party, but the act itself is a bit of freemasonry held perfectly secret among the ladies, not even their pastor or most intimate friend being admitted.

The new comer gets first her "half veil," as it is called (novitiate), and after some time—the length of which depends on circumstances—the whole veil; which whole veil imposes on her all the duties, advantages, and privileges of her state, but leaves her free to give it up whenever she desires.

The ladies have their special costume, which they wear in church on solemn occasions, and at large dinners or evening parties. Their every-day dress is of the common fashion, with the exception of a few colours, which are forbidden. The costumes of the Canonesses vary somewhat in the different cloisters, but they are more or less similar to each other. In Heilthal it consists of a black satin gown, lace frill, sky blue and silver ribbon across the shoulder, with a small enamelled star on the left breast, and, finally, the veil. This is a very peculiar sort of head-dress, composed of white lace, more like a narrow turban or fez than a veil, and highly becoming. Under this mass of white lace young faces look particularly fresh and lovely, old faces more stately and dignified, than under any other head-dress. At dinner or evening parties the ladies of the cloister always form the centre of attraction, and their uniform shows to great advantage in comparison with costumes of the present fashion.

The establishment keeps a considerable staff of servants. A night-watchman or two to guard the premises all night, three gardeners, and four cooks, with one housemaid for every two ladies. Only the female servants live in the cloister, where they form a little host by themselves. The ladies of Heilthal showed much taste and a generous disposition in surrounding themselves with the very prettiest girls in the neighbourhood. A pity only that this transplantation into the luxuriant soil of the cloister did not always secure the prosperity of the little wild flowers! These girls, spoilt by an easy independent life, became unfit for other service, as well as for their future humble lot as poor artisans' and farmers' wives.

There is domestic authority exercised by a Lady of the Kitchen, to whom the servants have to apply in any serious difficulty, and who has to keep watch over their proceedings. Not a very enviable office, one would think, and full of responsibility; but Fräulein von Langsam, our Lady of the Kitchen, filled it with great equanimity and without troubling herself much. She was then more than seventy, scarcely looked fifty, and was reported to have been the finest woman of her time. She used to have a particularly clever and experienced maid, with whom she was closeted for about three hours every morning, at the end of which seclusion she came forth the dazzling star of the day. Her mental capacities were rather low, and it seemed impossible for her to deliver a sentence of more than half a dozen words without the strangest mistakes. How this poor soul came to be Lady of the Kitchen never appeared, but whenever the servants, riotous in mirth or quarrel, had to be spoken to, Fräulein von Langsam went down and delivered her speech to the general stupefaction.

Each of the other ladies had some trifling domestic duty to perform. One of them had to keep the keys of the cloister, and occasionally to see that the hall doors were locked at the appointed time. Another lady had to be present at the corn deliveries; a third to assist the abbess in her business correspondence. Some of the offices were very peculiar. For example, there was a Lady of the Gloves, whose duty it was to knit, against every Christmas time, three pairs of gloves for the clergymen, and an odd glove

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for the schoolmaster of Heilthal. These gloves were of a very ancient pattern, made of black wool, wadded, lined with purple silk, and of enormous size—an advantage for the poor schoolmaster, who perhaps managed to put his two hands into the odd glove without waiting a whole year for its fellow.

The great paneled kitchen of Heilthal, in the old part of the building, would perhaps have looked a little cold and gloomy but for a most glorious wood fire which burnt all day and lighted up the ancient hall so as to produce a wonderful effect. The oak carvings assumed a golden tinge, and all the faces around glowed with a beautiful blush as from the setting sun. Seldom even in the palaces and halls of princes is there seen anything as grand and picturesque as that cloister kitchen with its glorious fire. The use of such a fire, before which an ox might have been roasted off-hand at any hour of the day, is another question. The waste of fuel was said to be enormous; the poor cooks, who had to stand near it, were half roasted along with their dozens of joints, and could never keep their places long. The food was often spoilt, the pots and vessels were burst by the intense heat, and there were many applications for a change to some more modern and reasonable cooking apparatus. But the abbess always declined.

Early in the morning, after each lady had given her orders for dinner, her maid sallied forth to carry the required provisions to the kitchen, to deposit them there, and to transmit the directions to the head cook, who must needs be a woman of great powers and wonderful memory. This done, all ladies' maids and superfluous persons were turned out at the kitchen-door till dinner-time, when the old hall swarmed again: every spinster—the title of the ladies' maids—carrying a large flat basket lined with a snowy cloth, in which she had to take her lady's dinner home.

The social intercourse between the cloister and the families of the gentry in and around Heilthal, was very lively. There were friendly meetings every day, musical and reading evenings especially patronised by the younger members of society; select circlets of friends of equal tastes, interests, or accomplishments, met for a certain object; and large parties, where everybody met everybody, and where the object was not quadrilles but card-playing.

The company on such an evening assembled at seven or soon after, and the first hour was spent in conversation, generally very animated. The ladies, sitting in a large circle in the drawing-room or in small knots in the adjoining rooms; the gentlemen standing hat in hand either before them or behind their chairs; the servants going round with tea and cakes. The tea was poured out in cups of all shapes and colours; sugar-basin, cream-jug, and two small decanters, one with rum, the other with red wine, were placed in the middle of the tray—the rum and wine for those gentlemen all of the olden times who considered tea an old woman's beverage that needed enlivening. Coffee is never served in these German evening parties; it is only taken for the early breakfast, and again shortly after dinner.

If the hostess were not very experienced, she would, however smoothly and pleasantly everything went on, feel nervous and uneasy, for all depended on her tact in arranging the card-tables. The moment would draw nearer and nearer; now the hostess would glance at her watch—half-past eight—and she would feel still uncertain about the third and fourth table. Of course, she had been considering the ceremonies for days, but how could she know that Major A. B. would be unable to come, and that Fräulein v. C. D. would come, with her troublesome headache. She must be sure that Frau v. E. F. would be mortally offended if placed at the third table, as she always aimed at the second, if not at the first—but how could it be helped, when Count G. H. I. J. K. belonged, of course, to the abbess-table, and she found it impossible to shut out the prioress and the dear Herr Pastor from the second.

There was a liberal party, a conservative party, a sentimental party, and a strong-minded party. The head of the latter was a very peculiar woman. Masculine in appearance, and without any apparent attractions, she exercised a great influence over most of her friends, whom she governed by her intellect and charmed by her wit. She was always in opposition to the abbesses, and that openly and defiantly—ready to fight her battle out with them to the last. Independent in mind, she tried hard to be so in every respect, and succeeded better than any one else. She had her own little intellectual circle, and formed it without the least reference to rank and station; though rumour said—and rumour had something to say about everything and everybody—that she rather preferred the talk of the opposite sex!

The soul of the sentimental party was a canoness, extremely thin and fair, mild and sympathising to a painful degree. She wore a white or light grey dress, and spoke in a faint voice. If any passion found place in her breast it was a passion for music; though a perfect pianoforte player herself, and a competent judge, she would swallow every kind of music, and so got the epithet of our musical glutton. The organ-grinders were much favoured by her. They were sure to play under her windows the most heartrending tunes, and one coin after the other would rain down upon them; a small white hand would sign to them to repeat again and again, until her next-door neighbour, in despair, would rush in and cry, "For Heaven's sake stop that man, I cannot bear him any longer."

So the spirit of faction, jealousy, and intrigue prevailed among us. But our prioress, who never belonged to any of the opposing elements, was esteemed and loved by all parties. She was the good spirit of the cloister, in form of a matron of nearly seventy, with plain features, a very short stout figure, no waist whatever, and a set of false brown curls. These

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were, I dare say, put on by her maid every morning, quite as they should be; but, gradually, they got wrong as the day advanced, standing up here, hanging down there, revealing small streaks of silver-white hair, so soft and silken, that the writer was always struggling to imagine those brown delusions altogether away, and to picture the sweet matron's face in its own natural adornment. The young people doted on the lady prioress; for, though she had a heart for all mankind, and was the friend and comforter of those who needed comfort and help, her especial sympathies with youth and happiness were obvious. She had a child's mind and simplicity, a child's facility of enjoyment, and a touch of harmless humour which was irresistible. Why were there not more of her stamp? It seems strange that a place like Heilthal, which provided its inhabitants so liberally with all the comforts of life, and with so many ways to happiness, should yet sour their tempers, nurse their faults, and take away their peace of mind. The root of the evil was, undoubtedly, that the canonesses had nothing worth mentioning to do.

WRECKED ON ISLAND NUMBER TEN.

"I can't stand this any longer, Ned; I shall turn out, and go on deck. This stifling heat is bad enough to bear, without the stings of the confounded mosquitoes. I could as soon sleep in a kiln with a blister all over me."

I scrambled out of my berth, and huddled on my clothes as well as the dim light would allow. The other occupant of the little cabin, my dear old friend and kinsman, Ned Granger, merely yawned and stretched himself. Petty annoyances did not trouble him. He had been sleeping as contentedly as if the villanous little den of a cabin close to the engine, which we had been talked into hiring on board the Van Buren, were a cool and airy bed-chamber. We had both been outwitted by the steamboat clerk, a "smart citizen," who had assured us on his honour that the only disposable cabin left on board the Mississippi packet was a snug and pleasant one, free from bugs and cockroaches, and not in the least too hot. And now I was stewed and stung to the verge of fever, while Ned, whom nothing seemed to hurt, turned over on his pillow with a little sigh, murmuring, "Take it coolly, old chap. You'll forget the temperature and the gnats when we get to Cairo and have our breakfast ashore. Take it coolly."

I replied rather testily that I wished I could, but that, not being a salamander, I couldn't. And with this withering retort I left the cabin, and stumbled my way on deck. The hurricane-deck of an American river steamer is a gay scene by day, but it had a melancholy and lonely look as I saw it in the feeble moonlight, bare and deserted. The pilot in his lofty wheelhouse, intent upon the helm and the bearings, and a solitary deck hand who filled the office of look-out, appeared to be the only human beings awake save myself. To be sure, from the hatchway of the engine-room there gushed at times a transient glare of dull crimson firelight, and a pitch-black figure crossed the gleam, while a sound as of the dull roaring of a caged wild beast, told that the furnace had been supplied with fresh wood. It was very hot and sultry, even in the air; but the atmosphere was endurable when compared with the oven-like oppression of the heat below. The mosquitoes were still troublesome, but I felt that I could bear their sharp stings better than when I lay in the close cabin.

I leaned over the side rail and gazed upon the yellow river, whose turbid waters stretched for an immense distance on either hand; the moon was new and pale, but I could make out the bold bluffs of the Tennessee shore, though the low-lying forest of the Missouri bank was hid in dark shadow.

"'Tis lonesome here, mister, ain't it?" drawled out a nasal voice at my elbow. I could not help starting.

"I didn't mean to skear you, Mr. Barham," apologised the voice, which I now recognised as that of an American passenger, General Jeremiah Flint, who had taken a fancy to Ned Granger and myself, and with whom we had struck up a travelling friendship. General Flint was a thorough-bred Yankee, one of those tall lathy dark-browed down-easters who are found in active employment all over the Union. His complete history, of which he now and then favoured us with piquant scraps, would have been very amusing even in print, and partook a good deal of the adventurous ups and downs in the career of Hajji Baba. Just now the general was at rather a low pitch of the social see-saw, being on board the boat in no more exalted capacity than that of travelling salesman to a "jobber" of dry goods at Philadelphia. General Flint was not and never had been a military man. He had been postmaster-general of some small State, Vermont or Maine, and had retained the latter and more portable half of his quondam official designation.

"It's kinder dull up here, but I couldn't sleep," said the new comer; "I've got it happened home upon my mind to night that mischief's on the brew."

"On the *what?*" said I, laughing.

"On the brew, sir," answered the general, very solemnly. "Young men like you, Mr. Barham, air too apt to ridicule the presentiments of their elders, but Jeremy Flint's no greenhorn, and he don't relish the feel of matters."

I had observed before, that the general was a little oracular, and, what may seem odder in a Yankee, slightly superstitious; but I knew he was a keen practical person who had seen ten times as much of the world as I, an ex-Oxonian of four-and-twenty, could possibly have done. Therefore, when my queer acquaintance seemed ill at ease, I strongly suspected that his prognostications of coming evil were based on other grounds than those of sentiment.

"I'll let you know, mister, the long and short

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of it," said the Yankee, dropping his voice; "this Van Buren we're afloat in, is an old craft, old and leaky, and clean wore out from her keelson to her b'iler, that's jest truth. The owners held a talk about giving her up, they did, a month ago, but old Barnabas Kyle, senior partner, said, Hold on—she's good for a voyage or two, and if she breaks up, the fixings are no loss—let her rip!"

"Do you mean to say that the owners have permitted this boat to sail, knowing she was unsafe? If so, and harm happens, it is murder!"

The general nodded. "That's a Eurōpian idea, sir. I don't say I approve of what old Kyle's done, but it's common enough. Still, this child wishes he were in his boots, and his boots ashore, *he* does."

And the American drummed the devil's tattoo on the side rail with his long bony fingers.

I asked whereabouts we were? I knew that Flint was familiar with every bend of the river.

"We're past New Madrid," he answered, scanning the shore line sharply; "and we're going mortal slow for all our puffing and straining. Let me see—that's Red Bluff on the Tennessee bank, and yon dark line on the larboard must be Island Number Ten."

As if the words had been the sounds of some fearful spell, there was, at that instant, a roar as loud as the roar of a hundred cannon, a crash of breaking timber and riven iron-work, and the deck was torn into splintered fragments, while fire, shattered beams, and scalding vapour, came spouting up as from a volcano. I was struggling with the cold waters of the Mississippi, which bubbled and hissed in my ears, as the strong current sucked me down stream. What had happened I hardly knew. I was stunned and deafened, but I fought for life with mechanical energy, and, being able to swim, could just keep myself above the surface. My wet clothes and boots embarrassed me, and the stream was too strong to be resisted; but, just as I felt myself being swept away like a leaf upon the river, I jostled against a floating mass of wood-work, and clutched it.

"Give me your fingers, whoever you air," cried a familiar voice, and a strong hand caught my wrist. "Mr. Barham, by all that's airthly! Wall, I'm glad to see you alive, Britisher. Get hold of the beam, and scramble up where I am."

General Flint assisted me to crawl to the top of the floating timber, where he sat at ease, with his feet dangling in the water.

"Tain't first time this child has seen a b'iler bust. Apple quiltings! I thought it would be a final smash! The notions I was taking back to Philadelphia were all well insured, that's one comfort, and my notes are in my waistband."

"Boiler burst! Then the boiler *did* burst, and we are alone! The rest of us? Ned Granger?"

"There's not much moon, but you may make out the hull of the steamer afloat yet," said the Yankee; "what's left of her, a drifting like a floating coffin. If there's any living human being aboard her—drowning will be welcome, after the misery they're in, I guess. The water and steam did scald, I reckon!"

A dull pain in my hands attracted my notice. I looked down and could see that they were swollen and red. I remember that I had grasped the side rail at the moment of the explosion, and I had no doubt that I had been partially injured by the dash of heated water, from which Flint seemed wholly to have escaped.

I do not recollect what followed. I heard Flint's voice very indistinctly—a mere humming of meaningless words—and I rocked to and fro, from weakness. My brain reeled. Then I grew sick and faint, and I remember being in deadly fear lest I should tumble off the spar. I remember, too, trying to call to my companion for help, but failing to speak intelligibly. And then I remember no more until I was lying on a heap of brushwood ashore, and Flint was insinuating between my lips some drops of whisky from a metal flask.

"Cheer up, Britisher; you'll do now. It kinder came over you," said the good-natured Yankee, lifting the flask to his own lips, and imbibing several sups of the cordial.

I gave his hand a feeble squeeze.

"I owe you my life; but where are we? And Ned—are any saved?"

The Yankee shook his head. "We're on Island Number Ten, that's where *we* air. Jest after you gave in, we grounded, and I got a grip of a snag sticking out of the mud, and we're on dry airth again. If you're strong enough, mister, we'd best look for a shelter, for 'tain't wholesome to lie out, so far south."

I was bruised and weak, and my hands were very painful, but I could walk pretty well. We made our way across a sort of swampy meadow, the general talking rapidly and continually, in his kindly wish to divert my thoughts from the sad fate of my gallant cousin. I gathered from him that the island had no permanent inhabitants, but was occasionally frequented by ferrymen, flatmen, and others, at the particular seasons when their trades were in full activity. General Flint scarcely fancied that we should find any living possessors of this dreary spot; but he made no doubt we should discover some log-house in tolerable repair, where we could pass the night.

"And in the mornin', mister, we'll signal a steam-boat and get picked off. No fear of our playin' Robinson Crusoe too long here, I guess. We'll have a banyan breakfast, but our appetite for dinner will be a caution to alligators. Ah! here's a con-venient location."

In effect, we were on the threshold of a large and substantial log-house, behind which we could dimly discern the outlines of other buildings. The heavy door was ajar, and yielded sullenly to our push. We entered. The interior was, of course, quite dark, but a feeble red glow proceeded from some dying embers on the hearth, proving that human beings had been there within a few hours. The general showed no surprise. He merely observed that a timber flat, bound for New Orleans, had probably

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run aground on the island, and wished the men had remained, that they might have given us a cast ashore in their broadhorn. He stooped, blew the embers to a glow, laid on dry brush and fresh wood, and soon the hut was illuminated by a cheery glare. It was large, in good repair, and contained an old table of unbarked wood, and several broken barrels which had probably served for seats. There were shelves nailed up, but they were empty, nor were any provisions visible. But in an inner recess, half partitioned off from the larger apartment, were several heaps of brushwood and flowery grasses: beds not to be despised when mattresses and pillows were out of the question. I do not suppose that Jeremiah Flint had ever heard of the French proverb, *Qui dort dîne*, but he showed some sagacity in remarking that when asleep, our foodless and comfortless state would be less vexatious. We dried our clothes before the large fire, and prepared to obtain such repose as we might, in the inner compartment of the cabin. General Flint had been, in the course of his adventurous life, accustomed to queer sleeping-places, and it was with a grunt of satisfaction that he adjusted his bony frame to the heaps of withering brush.

"Pull some o' them sassafras boughs over your face, mister: that's the way to cheat the skeeturs," said he; "we'll have a good long nap, and wake up in time to hoist a handkercher on one of those hemlocks down by the waterside. If a steamer don't see it, a flat-boat may."

I lay still a few moments, and then rolled restlessly from side to side. My nerves were strung to a painful tension, and my brain was too active to allow sleep to visit me. The accident, with all its horrors, rather imagined than actually seen, was ever before my eyes, but it seemed unreal and unnatural, a vivid nightmare rather than a sad reality. Poor Ned Granger, too! What sad news to carry home to the quiet Devonshire rectory, where father, mother, and sisters, were hopefully awaiting his return! To die so early, and by a death so horrible and abrupt—how should I ever dare to tell it? Poor dear Ned, who saved my life once, who had done me fifty kindnesses, with whom I had never exchanged an angry word. Where should I ever again in life find such a friend as that early one, now lost?

How long I mused I cannot tell, but I was startled by a sound which broke the stillness of the night—a very odd sound to be heard on Island Number Ten—the neigh of a horse. I shook off my reverie, and half raised myself to listen. The sound was not renewed, but so sure was I that it had been no cheat of fancy that I determined to rouse my companion and solve the doubt. It was not until I had shaken Flint, who was a heavy sleeper, that he woke up, grumbling.

"Jerusalem, mister, what's afloat? Not a b'ar swum across, sure-ly."

"No," said I, rather ashamed, "only the neighing of a horse, close at hand."

"Unpossible—couldn't be! There's no horse beasts here. What should they be doing on the island? You must have been dreaming, Mr. Barham."

The general yawned and sank back into the pile of brushwood, nor was it long before his heavy breathing announced that he was fast asleep. I was far from convinced, but I was puzzled; imagination, I knew, does often play us strange tricks. Besides, was it not possible that a horse had neighed on shore, on either the left or right bank, and that my ear, perhaps unusually acute after the excitement of the night, had caught and exaggerated the distant sound. I pondered yet awhile, but I was weary; gradually my nerves relaxed, my eyelids became heavy, and I sank into deep slumber. Not so deep, however, but that my dreams were stirring and various, changing like the shifting patterns of a kaleidoscope. One dream was particularly distinct. I have forgotten it now, but I know that a conversation between ideal personages attracted my fullest attention, and that by degrees this conversation grew more and more real and audible.

"I don't care a cuss how it kept alight," said some one; "jist clap on a kipple more sticks, and I'll blow up the kindlers."

Directly afterwards I heard the familiar noise—familiar, at least, to one fresh from prairie travel—of somebody blowing the embers of a fire into a blaze, while the sharp crackle of burning wood succeeded.

"Where's Stone's marm?" asked some one else, in a high cracked voice, that contrasted with the deep tones of the first speaker: "where's the old critter got to, I admire! I'm as starved, for one, as any wolf, and there's never a scrap to eat until she briles the meat. Ten hours' work makes a man peckish, and we must clear out of this before day."

Vaguely the thought dawned in my half-unconscious mind that I was no longer asleep, and that the words I heard were real words, spoken by beings of flesh and blood. I opened my eyes. The larger compartment of the log-house was suffused with dull red light, which brightened into a clearer glow as the wood, heaped on the fire with a lavish hand, caught the ascending blaze. Around this fire were grouped five or six men, most of whom wore the red flannel shirts and coarse homespun of the regular Mississippi working garb, though one was in a suit of rusty black, of city make. Several more dark figures hovered about the open doorway, going and coming, bringing bags and barrels, which were received by two of the men within. Boatmen, thought I, who had probably put in for a safe haven when benighted on the rapid and dangerous river. I was preparing to accost them, when a shrill neighing, unmistakably that of a horse this time and close by, was answered as shrilly and distinctly by an equine companion.

"Darn them brutes! pinch their nostrils, you loafing dunces! or, if a steamer goes by, the place will be blown upon," said a deep and fierce voice from the hut. And a man whom I had not observed, sprang up from a sitting posture

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and strode across the illuminated space. I rubbed my eyes, and cautiously raised myself on my elbow.

The last speaker was of gigantic stature, with a fell of shaggy black hair tumbling on the collar of his red woollen shirt; his face was a stern and forbidding one, like that of some robber soldier in a Flemish picture; he wore a pistol and a bowie-knife, ostentatiously displayed, in the black leather belt around his waist.

"All right, captain! 'twar that rampaging black beast, Jem Hudson's colt, that got loose a minit," answered a man from without; and very soon several men and two or three women entered the log-house. Most of the new comers were ruffianly figures, with the brass-bound handles of knives or pistols peeping out of their pockets, or protruding from the breasts of their homespun coats; but one or two had the air of educated men, though their keen faces showed traces of evil passions and evil habits. One old man—he must have been more than sixty—was well dressed in the unpretending garments of a respectable Western farmer, and his weather-beaten but mild face contrasted with the ferocity and recklessness of the countenances around him. The man with the high cracked voice, who wore a town-made suit of dilapidated broadcloth, accosted this new comer as Mr. Stone, and asked if his wife intended to give the company any supper or not?

"The mississ is comin' in: you'd best ask her," said the old farmer, philosophically lighting his pipe. Mrs. Stone, a tall bony virago, here bustled forward to answer for herself, which she did by telling the hungry querist that he was "a greedy, cowardly, troublesome, turkey-buzzard of a Yankee, and that he had better have been helping to caché the horses and unload the boats, than calling for food as if he was in some fine city hotel."

While thus upbraiding the man in black—who indeed seemed to hold a very low position in the esteem of his comrades—Mrs. Stone bustled furiously to and fro, and before long a great frying-pan, full of pieces of pork, was sputtering on the fire, while several junks of beef and venison were broiling on impromptu spits made of ramrods stuck in the soft clay of the floor. Mrs. Stone was aided in these culinary processes by a pretty modest looking girl of eighteen, whose pale sad face looked out of keeping with the place and company, and whom I discovered to be her eldest daughter. A younger girl, about fourteen years of age, looked on from the outer circle. I no longer felt the slightest inclination to address the members of this group, and hardly knew in what light to consider them. I could form no guess as to their calling or object, but I instinctively cowered down among the branches and hid myself from observation. I felt that something was amiss, and that discovery might lead to awkward results. General Flint was asleep, but I feared that every moment he might awake and utter some exclamation, while it was always possible that his heavy breathing might draw the attention of some sharp-eared member of the band. Some of the party had seated themselves on barrels or logs, with every sign of fatigue, but the rest stood watching the pork as it bubbled in the pan, and the steaks browning before the fierce fire. Several voices were speaking at once, and I only caught unconnected scraps of the talk.

"Jem Hudson was terrible riled. He set such a vally on that colt. If his gun hadn't had too much powder in it, this child would have been a gone coon, I guess."

"I think Hiram Stout's a deal uglier than Jem. He owes us a grudge, he does. I reckon Tennessee's gettin' too hot to hold us."

"Keep your opinion till it's axed for, greenhorn," said the big man who had been addressed as captain, and who spoke in a tone of bullying authority. "This nigger don't need a Pennsylvany chicken to tell him when a melonsquash is squeezed dry."

"Here's your victuals ready, and no lady in Illinoy State could have fixed 'em better, nor yet slicker," exclaimed Mrs. Stone, in an argumentative manner, as if to challenge contradiction. But nobody picked up the gauntlet. A circle was formed, some walnut-wood platters and pewter pannikins were produced from a hiding-place, the company drew their bowie-knives, and Mrs. Stone carried round the frying-pan, in order that every one might help himself: while her two daughters followed, one with the steaks still stuck upon the iron-tipped ramrods, the other with some lumps of "corn-bread" in a basket.

It was at this moment that I felt my wrist cautiously grasped by a set of long lean fingers, and could hardly repress an exclamation, when, looking round, I saw that Jeremiah Flint was awake, and had risen to a kneeling position, keeping at the same time well behind the screen of brushwood.

"It's well I woke. We're in a fix, mister, we air." I looked round. I could see by the faint light that my companion's resolute face was very pale. "Very bad this—wuss than scalding water, mebbe; we've got into the den of a grizzly, mister; and if we carry our scalps out, we may be thankful a few."

I began to be seriously alarmed. I was yet in ignorance as to the true character of those on whose bounds we seemed to be unwitting trespassers, but I knew that Flint, who had spent years in the wild West, had a stout heart, and that his apprehensions were not likely to be roused without reason.

"I know more than one of 'em, Mr. Barham," whispered the general; "that tall fishrod of a man in the tail-coat, comes from Concord, Mass.: he was a regular penitentiary bird, he was. That German rogue in the cap, is Fritz Vogel, who was nigh hanged at Chicago last fall. And —may I never!—but that big chap in the red shirt—the captain—turns out to be Black Dave."

"Black Dave?"

"Ay, Black Dave, or David Jossam, the most e-tarnal thief! Famous for stealing horses,

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coining bogus dollars, robbing stores, and breaking out of prison. Last time I saw him was at Little Rock, Arkansas, in the Supreme Court, under trial, and but for a rogue of a lawyer——"

Here my friend's reminiscences were cut short by the abrupt question, put by a gentleman whose mouth was very full, and who had a huge clasp-knife in one hand, and a pound or two of beef in the other: "Captain Dave, when are we to paddle over with them hosses?"

"We'll see about it," answered the chief. "Some one must go over to scout fust. I expect the brutes will be a nation deal safer when they git into Missouri, and out of sight of the river."

These words were a revelation. The general pressed my elbow. "They're horse-thieves, mister."

This announcement of the quality of our unconscious hosts was by no means calculated to dissipate my apprehensions. I listened, nervously enough, to an animated debate which now ensued among the members of the gang, as to the propriety of hurrying over the stolen horses to the Missouri shore, or of lying concealed for some days, until the first fury of the pursuers should be baffled and spent. Opinions varied. The only person of the male sex who took no part in the argument, was the old farmer-looking man whom I had heard addressed as Mr. Stone. He sat quiet, having finished his meal and resumed his pipe, and we could see nothing but his respectable-looking grey head, and the silvery wreaths from his soapstone meerschaum, inasmuch as his face was towards the outer door. Mrs. Stone, his better-half, took an active part in council, urging a stay on the island, since there had been "nothing but scurrying here and stampedeing there for weeks, and her darters were worrited and worn out with it." It was curious, but this notable woman's character appeared little if at all changed by lawless companionship and outlaw life. In the midst of robbers she was still the shrewish hard-working housewife, and I could see no remorse written on her parchment cheeks. With her daughters it was different. The eldest was evidently melancholy and ill at ease. She sat a little apart, never replied save with a monosyllable to any remark or rough compliment, and her downcast eyes and colourless face told of regrets and scruples that her mother did not share. The younger girl showed the same mental condition, but in a minor degree. Her answers were short, but pert, and she occasionally exploded into a giggle at some jocular sally of the Massachusetts man, or the German, who were the wits of the assembly. But one glance from her sister's sad dark eyes checked her rising spirits, and she subsided into gloom again. We listened with considerable interest to a discussion which materially affected our safety; but over which we could exercise no influence whatever. We gathered from the discourse that another hut existed, not far off, which was assigned to the Stone family, but that the rest of the association had no residence on the island save the log-house in which we were concealed, and no couches but those heaps of brush and flowering grasses on which we were growing fearfully uneasy. The horses, we also learned, were hidden hard by, in a cache dug where the scrub grew thickest, and which was effectually masked from careless eyes by a sort of broad trap-door of osier work and sassafras boughs. Here it was customary to conceal them—they were all stolen from owners in Tennessee—until an opportunity occurred for transporting them to Bolivar or Greenville, in Missouri, where certain accomplices of the band resided, and whence they were sent to St. Louis, to be sold to emigrants bound for California.

Very unwillingly did we thus acquire possession of the secrets of those desperate men, every fresh admission or unguarded word serving to increase our danger, until at last we heard with dismay the final award of Black Dave, the captain.

"We'll jest stop. This location's good, and nobody knows of it [we trembled], and, as Marm Stone says, the gals are tired some, and we'd all be the better of rest. So we'll jest keep close for a few days, and then absquotilate with the hosses, and scurry for Bolivar."

There was a growl of assent, overtopped by the shrill voice of Mrs. Stone, who clamorously expressed her approval. I glanced at the general's face. It was white but firm; and the compressed lips and brightening eye told of a new resolve.

"It's a bitter pill, sir, 'tis, but we must gulp it," he whispered; "we must give ourselves up, and the sooner the better. It will go harder with us if we were found cachèd than if we come out bold."

This was logical, but startling. I demurred for an instant, suggesting the possibility of our making our way out at the back of the cabin by cutting a hole with our knives in the comparatively thin roof. But our deliberations were unexpectedly cut short. Up to this time the party had contented themselves with eating and reposing, but now a huge can of water and some lemons and sugar and some fresh sprigs of mint were produced, and a cry was set up for whisky.

"Where did you stow away the stone jars with the Monongahela, Marm Stone?"

Mrs. Stone replied that the jars were "under the brush of the beds," and bade the Massachusetts man fetch them. He rose at once, took up a pine torch, lighted it, and advanced. "Now," cried Jeremiah, rising to his feet; and we both stepped out into the lighted circle, causing the startled bearer of the torch to drop the blazing brand in his surprise.

"Dog-gone it all," yelled one of the gang, "the Philistines are on us!"

With wild shouts and curses, the ruffians scrambled up and clutched their weapons.

"Hurroo, boys, it's only two spy varmints!" thundered Black Dave, who was really a bold

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villain; "kim back, you down-east coward, you! And you Dutch cur (for the Massachusetts man and the German were already in full retreat), they air but two, and without weepons."

When they were certain of this last reassuring fact, the more timorous of the robbers became almost beyond restraint in their bloodthirsty fury. Pistols and bowie-knives menaced us on every side, and it was with some trouble that the captain prevented our summary extermination. Black Dave, however, was firm. By his orders our wrists were tightly bound together with handkerchiefs, and we were placed in the centre of a circle of hostile faces and threatening revolvers, and bidden to confess.

"Speak up, ye skunks, who air ye?"

In answer to this query, the general gave a succinct and graphic account of the steam-boat accident, of our escape and immersion, of our landing on the island, and of how we happened to fall asleep in the log-house and become the involuntary auditors of the robbers' council, though this point was rather lightly touched upon. A bellow of fierce incredulity answered this statement.

"Cut out the lyin' snake's tongue!" bawled one.

"Murder 'em both, the oily spoken slippy-skinned Yankee eels," cried another, flourishing his glittering knife within an inch of my nose, while two pistol-barrels were pressed to the forehead of the unflinching Jeremiah.

"Hold a bit, gentlemen," said Black Dave. "Out with the truth, ye skulking crawlers! Who sent you? Air ye State police, or mere informers? You, specially, with the Connecticut phiz and satin waistcoat. Hevn't I seen your ugly features before? What's your name?"

"I dare say you have seen me before. I am General Jeremiah Flint, of New England, and I ain't ashamed of parentage nor raising," replied the general.

There was a murmur. Three or four of those present knew the general by repute or by sight. The Massachusetts man observed that "Flint was a hypocrite, that passed for doing things on the square." The German abused him for a "schelm," who had ill-treated an acquaintance of his at Memphis: which accusation afterwards resolved itself into the fact that Flint had broken the arm of a bully who tried to gouge him. Two other men had heard Flint was "a cute chap," and had been soft-hearted enough to help more than one person they had known, and who had been ruined and half-starved in the South.

All this time Black Dave, with an ominous frown on his dark brows, had stood toying with the lock of his revolver, making the hammer play up and down between his strong fingers, and tapping the bullets that lay in each charged chamber. Presently he fixed his keen eyes on the steady eyes of the principal captive. I say principal, because I attracted little or no attention, being quite unknown.

"Last time we met," said Dave, deliberately, "you and me, Jeremiah Flint, you sat on the bench along with the sheriff and the squires, and I stood in the dock. Now times air altered. I am judge, now, and by all that's airthly, I'll hev justice. You say you're no spy. That mebbe true; but how if we let you go to the next town——"

"You'll never be such a 'tarnal fool, captain," said a bystander.

I took the opportunity of eagerly and solemnly assuring the outlaw that he had nothing to fear from our indiscretion. We would be silent, until silence could no longer be necessary.

"Shut your mouth, Britisher," said Dave, roughly, and instantly resumed. "Gineral, you must die. It goes agin me to kill in cold blood, but it's our law, and unless we'd all be strung up to trees by the Reg'lators of Tennessee, we must silence you for sartin." Dave lifted his pistol, and pointed it at the forehead of poor Flint, who gave a slight shudder, and then stood firm.

"I'll settle the other sneak," said a brawny boatman, cocking his revolver, and grasping my collar.

"I'll count twenty, slow," said Dave. "If you've got religion, you can mumble a prayer; and you, too, Britisher, for, when I get to twenty, I crook my claw."

The boatman's pistol was pressed to my ear. The muzzle felt icy cold, like the touch of Death's hand. My arms were bound, and all resistance impossible.

"One," began Dave.

The face of old Stone was contorted for a moment, as by a twinge of pain, and he let his pipe go out, unheeded, but said nothing. The girls were sobbing in a corner, and Mrs. Stone was apparently urging them, in a whisper, to withdraw.

The robber captain continued to count. "Two, three, four, five."

Such a scream! Mary Stone broke from her mother who sought to detain her, threw herself on her knees at Black Dave's feet, and began to beg our lives with an incoherent energy and a passionate sobbing and outpouring of words that it was painful to hear. This girl, usually so quiet and depressed, was now fully roused by the horror of the cruel deed about to be done. She wept and clung to Dave's brawny arm, and supplicated for mercy: mixing her entreaties with broken Scriptural phrases and incautious censures on the lawless life and pursuits of the band. But the chief, though startled, was not softened. He shook off the weak hands that grasped his.

"Marm Stone, take off your darter, and leave me to settle accounts with the spy. Men ain't to be twisted round, like milksops, by a useless screechin gal. You've made me lose my count, young one, but I'll pick it up by guess. *Twelve!*"

But scarcely had he levelled the weapon when Mrs. Stone advanced, and boldly beat it down.

"I've been a puzzlin' my brains," said the virago, "to recklect the man, and if he's him I think, he shan't die. None of your ugly frowns

at me, cap.; Bessy Stone's not the woman to be frit by black looks. Warn't you, Jeremiah Flint, once the actuary chap of the Boston Argus Life and Fire Company?"

"Yes, I was," said Flint.

"Of course!" sneered the German, maliciously.

"We'll prove that," returned Mrs. Stone. "'Tis long years agone, but can you remember going to a village, nigh Lexington, to see a farm-house and barns belonging to a farmer that had been burnt out, and the comp'ny suspected 'twar done a purpose, and were shy to pay the policy thing?"

"Stay a moment," said Flint, pondering; "the farmer's name was Burke, and the village was Brentsville, Mass."

"All right!" screamed the audacious virago, positively wrenching the revolver from between Dave's murderous fingers; "one good turn deserves as good, and as sure as my name's Bessy Stone, and was Bessy Burke, the man that saved my old dad from being ruined, root and branch, shan't be shot dog fashion—and you, Stone, if you're a man, you'll say so too."

The old farmer, who had evidently the highest reverence for his wife's judgment, rose from his seat, picked up the rifle that had lain beside him, and composedly sounded the barrel with the tough ramrod.

"The bit of lead's in its place!" he said, in his phlegmatic way, and stood still, but ready for action. A violent quarrel ensued; oaths, threats, and hard words were freely bandied to and fro; but four of the least villanous-looking of the gang took the side of mercy, and Mrs. Stone's dictum obviously carried great weight with it. Her bitter tongue and the masculine energy of her character, coupled with the respect habitually paid to females in America, had made her a potentate in the association: while her husband, though slow of wit, was known to be a brave man and a first-rate judge of a horse. The end of the matter was, that our lives were spared, but that it was decided that we should be kept prisoners until the evacuation of the island. We were accordingly placed in a sort of underground magazine, where forage was stored, and within a few inches of the pit in which the horses were concealed, and to which access was obtained by a drawbridge of stout planking.

Our bonds were slackened, but not removed, and we were made to give our parole not to attempt to escape until the horse-thieves should quit the island. Mrs. Stone, to whose capricious gratitude we owed our lives, was not unkind to us in her rugged way; and she and her daughters supplied us with food and blankets, and sometimes deigned to descend and converse with us, besides lending us one or two well-thumbed books, which constituted the family library. In the course of these conversations the apparent enigma of the connexion between the Stones, who seemed decent folks, and the utter villains who composed the gang, was solved. Old Stone had been a hard-working farmer in Illinois, illiterate, but respectable and honest in deed and thought. Unluckily, he had invested his hard-earned savings and the price of his own farm in the purchase of a tempting bargain of landed property, with a fatal flaw in the title. The knavish vendor had fled, and the honest dupe, assailed by a lawsuit, had been stripped of all, and had found himself a beggar. Unhappily, Mrs. Stone was a woman of strong will, and a warped and one-sided judgment. She passionately declared that as the law had robbed them of their earnings, the law was their enemy, and a mere device for oppression. Anger blinded her; she was ashamed to live poor where she had been well to do, and in the cities of the South the exiled family soon picked up associates whose whole life was one war with society.

It was impossible to make Mrs. Stone comprehend that she was really a transgressor in sharing the perils and profits of wholesale plunder. She had got to regard all judges, governors, lawyers, and men of reputed honesty, as rogues, in league to pillage the simple; and she considered the work in which the horse-thieves were engaged as reprisals and warfare. Her husband, long used to obey the shrewd and violent woman who had attained such dominion over him, only saw through his wife's eyes. I believe the couple had some vague idea of buying land in Oregon or California, and setting up "on the square," when they should be rich enough—a hope which has lured on, many a half-reluctant criminal. The daughters, on the other hand, less prejudiced and better taught, since they had picked up some instruction in a tolerable school in Chicago, saw nothing but misery and degradation in the companionship to which they were condemned. They passed their lives in sighing over the old days and the innocence of their life in Illinois, and never willingly exchanged a word with the outlaws.

"I'll tell you what, Mr. Barham," said the general to me one day, "I'd like to give a lift out of the mire to them Stones. They've saved the lives of us both, for gospel truth, and my heart aches to think of their bein' caught one day, the old man hung, the woman locked up for life, and the daughters driven out to come to want, or worse. I'm not rich, no more, I suspect, air you; but land's not dear up in Oregon, nor yet in Californey, and between us we might buy 'em a farm, and let 'em live honest, and repent when grace was borne in upon 'em. A farm would be jest heaven to 'em, and three thousand dollars would buy and stock it in a small way."

I willingly agreed, and we quietly settled with Mary Stone, who was wild with joy at the idea, that a certain sum should be lodged, two months hence, in the Bolivar bank, in her name. She agreed that it was best to communicate this to her mother after the migration of the band. This was soon to occur. We had been prisoners for a fortnight, when one morning we were informed that a general flitting was at hand, and our release imminent.

With much snorting and trampling, the horses were led up from the cache, and embarked on

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board two flat boats, which were to be towed across by two broadhorns, while a third followed with the rest of the party. Dawn was just breaking, no steamer was in sight, no wreath of filmy wood-smoke was on the horizon. Once on the Missouri bank, safety would be easily secured, since the depredations had been confined to Tennessee. We were allowed to come out of our prison, and found ourselves, blinking like owls in the daylight, on the margin of the turbid water. The first flat boat, full of horses, was towed off by a broadhorn pulling six oars. The two girls and their father were in the stern-sheets, but Mrs. Stone lingered, lest the German or Black Dave might do us, as she said, "a mischief at parting." But the captain was in good humour. He patted us on the back, laughing heartily, and advised us to "stick to Broadway pavement and Philadelphy park, onst we got there."

The last horses were embarked, and the rowers of the broadhorn settled themselves on the benches and grasped their oars. "All aboard, quick, boys!"

"Stay," said Black Dave, looking round, "where's that Massachusetts bird?"

Nobody knew. One said he was in the first boat. Another denied this. No one had seen him since the previous evening. Black Dave ground his teeth, and muttered a deep curse.

"He's deserted, the cur! To git the reward them Reg'lators offered!"

"He's stole the third broadhorn. It's gone!" cried a panting scout, running up. There was a moment of suspense, then a rush, and the remaining boat was so crowded that it was sunk gunwale deep in the water. The captain, rifle in hand, stood up in the stern-sheets.

"Pull, all! I hear the dip of oars!"

Flash! went the six oars into the water, and off went the heavily-laden boat, towing the flat with the horses. The progress was necessarily slow. But a few yards had been gained, before a loud outcry proved that the island was invaded. We were still standing on the shore, waving our hands to Mrs. Stone, whose hard face had relaxed into a smile, and who seemed heedless of the danger.

"Hurrah! Bang at 'em, boys—there the villains air!" bawled fifty voices, and a crowd of armed men in gaily fringed hunting-shirts or homespun suits, well armed, came at a run through the bushes. "Down!" cried Flint, throwing me to my knees and stooping himself, just in time to escape death, as the rifle-balls whizzed over us. I looked up. I saw Black Dave drop on his knees, fire his gun, rise again, stagger, and finally roll over into the river, mortally wounded by the discharge. No one else was hit. Cutting the tow-rope and crouching down as much as possible, the outlaws managed to escape further harm, and, abandoning their plunder, reached the Missouri shore.

We were at first roughly handled, and were even in some danger of being promptly hanged or shot by order of Judge Lynch, when two witnesses to character came forward. One, on whom we looked with disgust, was the treacherous scoundrel who had betrayed the rest of the gang for gold; the other, wonder of wonders, was—Ned Granger, who caught me in his arms and hugged me like a bear!

"Dear Ned, I thought you were dead."

"That's exactly what I thought of you, Barham, dear old boy, and of the general there. No, I was very little hurt, and was able to help the other uninjured passengers in caring for those poor creatures who were scalded or torn by the explosion. Every house is like a hospital. Ah! it was a shocking business. But though unhurt, you see, I had lost my luggage and money in the crash, and this honest farmer here has taken care of me these last weeks. So I came to help him to get back his stolen nags, little thinking whom I should find on Island Number Ten."

Flint and I kept our word with Mary Stone.

THE BEMOANED PAST.

We have gone back in the world. The pre-Raphaelites say so. Antiquarians say so. The men who rank Gothic architecture among the moralities, and class a well-carved finial with a well fulfilled virtue, say so. So say the grumblers and the fault-finders, the pessimists and the unbelievers: the times of the San Graal and Sir Launcelot, of abbots of Crowland and monks of Hereford, were better than they are now, and humanity has slipped two steps back for every one taken in advance. Happening to think that the infallibility of the grumblers and the pre-Raphaelites just a trifle doubtful, and that the doctrine of Progress seems to me a hair's breadth nearer the truth, I will count up on my fingers the blessings which the past days had and those which they had not; and then we can strike the balance, and say which is best off, the San Gralites or ourselves.

To begin with, they had no books—no Subscription Circulating Libraries with rapid supply; no London Library, with graver reserve fund of acknowledged authorities; no British Museum, leviathan of its kind—nothing but a few manuscripts, hidden away in the conventional libraries, where dirty old monks, in horsehair shirts, passed their lives in transcribing volumes which we should run through in a week. To be sure, they put in some lovely bits of scroll-work down the sides and across the top, with impossible flowers and very often immodest adjuncts among the tracery; and they made little pictures as headings, very bright, and with the gold standing up well embossed—pictures where the heads were set on awry, and the hands held up in dislocation, with all the fingers glued together, and the palms as big as faces; and they dressed the apostles in the cloaks and jerkins of the period, and spoke of the Roman soldier who pierced the august side at the Crucifixion as "the knight who jousted with Jesus;" besides other pleasant

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little anachronisms of the same kind, which were only rather stupid and ignorant. Then they despised the classics; not because they were written by men less advanced than themselves in the true knowledge of human life, but because they were written by dogs of unbelievers; and Disraeli tells a pleasant story of certain silent monks, who, when they went to the librarian to demand the loan of one of these heathen authors, made first the conventional sign that expressed a book, then scratched under the left ear like a dog, meaning thereby a book written by a dog of an unbeliever—as the dog Virgil or the hound Cicero; which was a modest manner with men who did not know the first elements of art or nature. It is often said by the lovers of the old time, that we owe to the monks all we have had preserved to us of the ancient authors, and that, had it not been for these same dirty old fellows in horsehair shirts, we should have lost every trace of the divines of heathendom. That may be, but on the other hand, owing to their superstition or ignorance, or, in some cases, dishonesty, we have lost much most valuable matter, for they knew the worth of books about as much as the Armenian monks of the present day, who put priceless tomes under their feet to protect them from the damp of the chapel floors, and have thus destroyed no end of literary treasure, because Eastern drainage is defective, and a set of lazy old fellows will not make footstools for themselves. So with the monks of former days here in England. If they preserved with the one hand, they ruined with the other; and had they had more books of their own they would have saved fewer of the heathens. I think, then, we have gone ahead in the matter of respect for literature.

Also in certain matters of religious taste and common sense. For instance, we have gone a step beyond the Gesta Romanorum. Even our Apocalyptic divines can do better than that; a step beyond Saint Francis of Assissi and his stigmata, at least among the educated and clear-headed; a step beyond Saint Ignatius and his dirt, his clotted hair and unpaired nails; beyond Thomas à Becket and his hair shirt swarming with vermin beneath his costly pontifical robes; indeed beyond all phases of dirt-deification under whatever saintly garb appearing; a step beyond Saint Philip Neri, whose ardent admiration of poverty was such, that he used to pray God he might be brought to want a penny and find no one to give it him. We have stepped, too, beyond belief in the value of ordeals and the likelihood of getting moral justice out of a hand-to-hand fight between two unequally matched combatants, the champion and the accuser; thinking that one or two solicitors, and half a dozen Q.C.s, with a jury of twelve sane men, and a bench of law lords, more likely machinery for eliminating the truth, than walking blindfold over burning ploughshares, or holding red-hot bars of iron in the naked hand, or thrusting the arms into a vessel of boiling oil, or the bleeding of the murdered body at the touch of the murderer—all of which methods our dear old ancestors held of divine appointment to the ruling of justice. We have gone a step beyond the feudal suit and service of beating the waters round the castle all through the night to prevent the croaking of the frogs, that the lord might have undisturbed sleep and pleasant dreams; and beyond the tyrannous power which the law allowed to lord and lady over their servants or rather slaves. It was no unusual thing for these female slaves to be scourged to death by the order of their mistresses; and for offences which we should pass over in silence, or which the shrillest shrew among us would at most visit with only a moderate rebuke, they were scourged and fettered and tortured, with no more pity than is shown now by the Southern chivalry to the accursed sons of Ham. Wright, in his excellent History of Domestic Manners and Sentiments, tells the story of the servant of Teothic, the bell-maker of Winchester, who, for a "slight offence," was put in irons and chained up by the hands and feet all night. In the morning she was taken out and scourged, then fettered again as before; but the next night she escaped and took sanctuary at the tomb of Saint Swithen—the law affording her no other protection, and only the sanctuary of the church open to her, together with thieves and murderers and any other kind of malefactor. Another girl was half murdered by her master because, while washing linen at the river, she had been set on by thieves and robbed of her master's clothes. As he could not get at the thieves he punished the maid: which did quite as well. These are the knights and ladies whom it is the present fashion to speak of as just, true, and merciful.

Neither should we suffer now the once honoured institution of the feudal guardians, those "other fathers" who might marry off their wards when mere babes and sucklings—marry them, as they listed, to other babes and sucklings, or to old grey-bearded dotards tottering into the grave. If the poor wards did not take kindly to these arrangements when they grew up and had feelings and predilections of their own, then the guardians were allowed to exact from them the full value of the marriage forfeited. This was a rich source of speculation to many of those early guardians, and the source, too, of many of the deepest tragedies of the olden time. But women in those days of chivalry and knight-errantry were held no better than goods and chattels of rather a superior kind, and the feudal lord who was their husband was always more lord than husband, and could do with them as he liked.

But the banquets! Oh! those "feasts in hall and bower," where the chaste and loyal knights sit in their plumed helmets and glaring coats of mail, while blushing maidens hand round the wine-cup, and fair, pure, dove-like women sit meekly, scarce venturing to raise their drooping lids. Alas, they were rather different to what the illustrators of silly ballads and the mock worshippers of the olden

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times would have us think. In the first place, no man ever left them sober. The drinking-horns and stemless cups which would not stand, and which had to be emptied, therefore, as soon as filled, were of themselves occasions sufficient for any amount of drunkenness, not to speak of the fashions of the time, which held it to be a mark of disrespect and effeminacy if a man did not drink himself into a beast, or if he withdrew from the table while he could stand. The worst crime charged against poor young Edwy was, that having a slight perception of refinement in his soul, and loving his wife better than his wine-cup, he used to leave his knights to brutalise themselves at their pleasure, while he went off to his young bride in her bower not yet quite unmanned.

From these vilely drunken orgies we have got the cant word "supernaculum." It was the fashion to turn up the glass after drinking, and drain it on the thumb—supernagulum—when, if the wine beaded into a drop of such size that it could not rest on the thumb but must fall off, the unhappy laggard was obliged to fill his cup again, and drink and drink till he had drained it so dry that he left nothing more than what could form a little bead supernagulum. These banquets usually ended in some outburst of violence, more or less brutal according to the stage of intoxication into which the guests had passed, and the amount of muscular force left in them, but rarely, if ever, passing off without a broken head or two, or a dagger sheathed in human flesh, if not some fouler murder, more treacherous and bloody than usual, and therefore attracting a little more historic notice. But no one cared much about a mischance of the kind, or, indeed, thought it worth notice, save in the case of some favourite of the chieftain, or the chieftain himself. Thus, when the outlaw Fulk Fitz-Warine sent his friend and servant, John de Raunpaygne, disguised as a jongleur, to his great enemy Moris Fitz-Roger, to spy how things were going, and John de Raunpaygne struck a "wretched ribald on the head, so that his brain flew into the middle of the place," because, being very ill-favoured, he and other ribalds had plucked at the mock jongleur and scoffed at him, Moris Fitz-Roger took the thing very much as a matter of course, only swearing a great oath that, but for the news John had brought—which, by-the-by, was all false—he should have shared the same fate. Hard words break no bones, and John de Raunpaygne was quit with a scolding for the crime of having committed murder in the very presence of the lord and owner of that ribald chattel, only because he had been made game of for his natural as well as artificial ugliness. And how many stories are there of princes in the olden times being slain, either for hate or háste, at banquets where the general drunkenness allowed an enemy to steal in unperceived, or strike a blow unwarded? Those gay and festive halls were anything but gay and festive before the last dish was cleared away; only, indeed, the indifference to human life was such that a murder more or less did not make much matter, provided no one of special consequence was slain. Minstrels singing obscene songs, jongleurs performing unseemly tricks, the grosser the better liked; glee maidens turning summersaults, heels over head, and no small thankfulness needed, if nothing worse, do not add much fascination to the picture, or give one a very favourable idea of the moral delicacy of the guests; while as for the rules of polite behaviour, "grammercy, fair sirs," they show little proficiency in that direction! I am almost ashamed to transcribe them, but that I wish the philo-chivalrists to learn what the Sir Launcelots and the Elaines actually were, and how they lived; leaving to them the task of measuring the distance between them, and the modern Otaheitans or North American Indians.

As they had no forks, but only their own knives or whingers, which they cleaned by passing under their thighs, one of the rules of good breeding enjoined on the guest was the necessity of cleaning his own knife under his own thigh, and not sticking it—or his knee—under his neighbour's. Also to the carver was delivered the golden rule, "Set never on fyshe, flesche, beeff, ne fowle, more than two fyngers and a thombe"—even the strong stomachs of the knights and ladies of the period not relishing the idea of eating their meat hot from the horny palm of the carver. They had no plates, save thick trenchers or slices of bread; therefore they ate what they wanted with their fingers, and threw the remainder on the floor—a convenient army of "ribalds," "letchers," and cats and dogs ever at hand to pick up the pieces. It was held bad breeding to play with the cats and dogs, and the guests were commanded to keep their hands clear of all contact under pain of being considered too Gorilla-like for good society (Wright quoting the Boke of Curtasye).

> Whereso thou sitt at mete in borde (at table)
> Avoide the cat at on bare worde,
> For yf thou stroke cat other dogge,
> Thou art lyke an ape teyghed with a clogge.

Also, the guest is advised to have clean hands and nails, and cautioned against spitting on the table, and against picking his teeth with a knife, a straw, a stick, or the tablecloth. But especially is he cautioned against using as his pocket handkerchief that hand with which he holds and tears his meat; and urgently advised, when he performs that sometimes necessary office, to wipe his hand immediately thereafter on his skirt or his cape:

> Yf thy nose thou clense, as may befalle,
> Loke thy honde thou clense withalle,
> Prively with skyrt do hit away,
> Or ellis thurgh thi tepet that is so gay.

Will the next illustrator of the Idyls take this point of manners as one of the special marks of good breeding in the favourite knight, and show how it was his graceful method of manipulation with his skirt or his tippet that won Elaine's tender heart, and kept captive so long that of

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stately Guinevre? contrasting, perhaps, an opposing coarseness of King Arthur's, who, as the elder man, could scarcely be expected to have come up to the degree of polish of the other, and who besides, as is often the case with the graver hero, might be considered as too thoughtful and preoccupied for the observance of such mere nothings as this. Oh, the truth of the past times, and the false colouring of romance, how different they are!

After the banquet, then, was finished, the fragments given to the beggars, the obscenity of the jongleurs brought to an end, the murdered men removed to be buried and no questions asked, and the wounded to be tended with such skill as the time afforded, the fair knights and ladies went to games. They were fond of chess and "tables" in those early days, but they could not play even at those quiet unexciting pastimes, in an ordinary Christian manner, but must needs make them occasions of quarrel and bloodshed —as indeed they made everything, no matter what. It is said that the feud between Charlemagne and Ogier le Danois began about a game of chess; and the story is this: During one of the Easter festivities at the court of Charlemagne, the Prince Charles, his son, and young Bauduin, an illegitimate son of Ogier the Dane, sat down to play at chess. Bauduin was the better player of the two, and after a time pressed young Charles up into a corner and gave him a comfortable mate. Charles was furious at his defeat, and "not content with treating the son of Ogier with the most insulting language, he seized the chess-board in his two hands, and struck him so violent a blow on the forehead that he split his head and scattered his brains over the floor." Whence ensued, says the romance, the famous quarrel between Charlemagne and Ogier: and whether that authority is true or not true, the anecdote at least proves the thing possible. The cause, too, of the long-continued feud between King John and our old friend Fulk Fitz-Warine, if not brought about, was partly caused and much aggravated by a game of chess. Fulk was brought up at the court of Henry II., bred with his four sons, and much beloved by them all save John; and he and John were ever at deadly war, with only the ends and tags of a hollow truce to keep them straight. Now, "it happened that John and Fulk were sitting all alone in a chamber playing at chess; John took the chess-board and struck Fulk a great blow. Fulk felt himself hurt, raised his foot, and struck John in the middle of the stomach, that his head went against the wall, and he became all weak and fainted. Fulk was in consternation, but he was glad that there was nobody in the chamber but they two, and he rubbed John's ears, who recovered from his fainting-fit, and went to the king his father, and made a great complaint. 'Hold your tongue, wretch,' said the king, 'you are always quarrelling. If Fulk did anything but good to you, it must have been by your own desert;' and he called his master, and made him beat him finely and well for complaining." So cowardly John took nothing by his move then; but when he came to the throne, he remembered his old grudge and the chess-table, and Fitz-Warine was an outlaw for many a long year in revenge of that day.

Another pleasant habit they had, was sleeping without night-clothes; half a dozen or more in the same room without regard to sex. Very little privacy was there in those crowded bed-chambers; in hostelries, in homes, in palaces, strange people seem to have walked in and out those big menageries, inspecting the naked human animals beneath their coverlets, the hawks on the perches over head, and the clothes of the company dangling from long poles thrust in the wall, pretty much as they liked. Even in the king's chamber Dunstan, unbidden, walked up to the bed where lay Edgar and his too lovely wife—the Mrs. Bathsheba of the chronicles—and scolded them both in full prelatical style for their sins; the guilty monarch and his frail wife having to bear it as they best might. In those same bedrooms, too, were helpless new-born babes delivered over to the tender mercies of a set of ignorant women, who swathed and swaddled them out of all likeness to anything human, often making them mere crooked abortions, hump-backed and crippled; sometimes, indeed, swaddling them out of life altogether, because they were afraid to trust to nature, and thought their own stupid superstitions the better guide.

Then to think of what other parts of the life were like—to run over the filth, and coarseness, and discomfort, and ignorance that pervaded society from end to end—from the king on his throne to the churl in his sty—and to hear those times idealised, and their braver lessons regretted! The undrained houses, so badly built that they kept out neither foe nor weather; excepting, indeed, the big lord's castles, which were massive enough, but which were fortresses rather than dwelling-houses; and so poorly furnished, for fear of thieves and plunderers, that nothing movable of any value was to be seen in them; and the floors—the rush-covered floors!— "Strew, oh strew my bed with rushes, here I'll stay till morning blushes," sounding very well in rhyme and set to music, but the reality of the most filthy and indescribable nastiness. No wonder that the plague, and the black death, and half a hundred other frightful diseases, decimated Christendom every summer, and attested the need of cleanliness by the majesty of natural laws! no wonder that, with a perpetual diet of salt meat and bacon, with black bread and no fresh vegetables, no salads, no potatoes, no green peas, no early Brussels sprouts, no spinage, no asparagus, nothing but salt meat and bacon, just like the savages' "biltongue" and "pemmican," no wonder that scrofula and madness broke out in every possible form, and that strong men and women were hurried to their graves by scores, where now they drop leisurely by units. And when we come to their medicines—the arts they employed to counteract all this abomination—

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their incessant bleedings for all ailments, with the more solemn remedy of charms and sacred words written on holy scraps of paper in the room of our pretty little globules, or more majestic and material rhubarb pills—what chance did there seem for the ultimate salvation of those benighted children of the past? Talk of the decay of the present—yes, about as much decay as goes to ripen an orchard or to make a man out of a child!

There were no inns of any decent character or behaviour, and the man who set forth on a journey must expect to be robbed half a dozen times and killed at least twice before he got to the end of his pilgrimage. Then, too, though there were no fashion-books and no crinoline, the modes were just as preposterous as at the present time, with the disadvantage of clerical interference perpetually occurring. And as the clergy made a good thing by moral crimes—the more crimes the better the trade for them—they contrived that everything should be a crime, for the compromising of which they would get compensation. Long dresses in men were moral crimes; and long sleeves, long trains—on which one enthusiastic preacher declared he saw a little imp, all black and sooty, sit, as on a cushion—and long liripipes in women were moral crimes. It was a moral crime to know a little more than one's neighbour, and a crime, too, that often brought one to the scaffold, or the stake; a crime to be fond of certain animals, and a greater crime to be skilful in taming them; a crime to be hysterical, epileptic, or "sensitive;" a crime to think for oneself, to act for oneself, or to question the absolute and irresponsible power of the feudal lord; a crime to love science, or to know one single event of nature not patent to the wits of the gentlemen who drank on the nail and broke "cockcombs" in the hall: it was a crime to love where forbidden by the lord or suzerain, and a crime to refuse to love when commanded by the lord or suzerain; it was a crime to think white white, or black black, if told to call them blue or grey, and if acting therefore on one's own unlicensed and independent judgment; a crime to assert one's own manhood, to defend one's honour, to deny one's person to the strongest hand, to declare the equality of all men by any practical proof on one's own side, or to make independent use of any gift of reason or perception which God had given one.

Yet though we have risen, slowly, painfully, and with many a hard struggle, out of all this social degradation and ignorance, though we have set our feet steadily, and ever advancing, on the heights of the better places, there are yet men so ungrateful to their blessings, or so ignorant of truth, who look back to all this blind and brutal past with an admiration they will not grant to the present, and regret even its brutality for sake of the fuller flavour of animal life about it. The false glitter of romance has gilded many a falsehood in this world; it has created none greater than that which ascribes more virtues to the past than to the present, and which denies the truth of the glorious doctrine of the infinite and enduring progress of humanity.

ITALIAN NIGHTMARES.

Sharp-sighted naturalists have discovered a family of creatures, the constitution of whose members is peculiar. The several and sundry species of Actinophrys, Arcella, and Gnomia, are furnished with arms—or "pseudopodia," to show our learning—which are not invested by any limiting membrane like our skin, but which coalesce with each other and completely unite, whenever they put themselves into actual contact. If two or more limbs happen to come together, a thorough fusion of their substance takes place. Many little limbs will make one stout limb; several limbs will drop their individuality and agglutinate their mass into one simple body. The remarkable fact has likewise been noticed, that two perfectly distinct individuals became gradually fused so as to form one large single animal. Moreover, in most of these creatures, there is visible, somewhere towards the centre, an uncertain-shaped empty space, also learnedly called a "vacuole" (likewise a "contractile resicle"), whose use is undemonstrated, except it be to serve as a paunch for the reception of heterogeneous matters.

A race of men, known as Italians, are of similar habits. The family is distinct enough, with natural characteristics and boundaries; it has considerable talent, great personal advantages, a language derived from a common Latin root; a country walled in by enormous mountains at top, bathed by the sea throughout the rest of its boundary, and planted within a ring fence such as few landowners can emulate. In spite of which, for ages past, it has been dismembered and chopped up into portions, each moved by a separate directing power and groping in the dark after whims of its own. The oldest member of Europe as a civilised country, it is the youngest as an united community. Towards its centre, there has long existed, and still exists, a large vacuole, called Rome, full of mysteries and monstrosities, a receptacle for things cast out from other bodies politic, in which all sorts of scum and offal undergo the fermentation of putrefaction, not unfrequently running over. Of late, however, the "vacuole" has assumed the character of a "contracting vesicle;" and the race of men to whom we allude are even hoping that, as far as its present constitution is concerned, it may speedily contract into nothingness.

An eminent experimentalist in govermental science (whom we refrain from naming), who is not afraid of a severe operation if need be, recently tried the effect of raising the barrier between two contiguous members of this disunited body. The result surpassed his expectation, perhaps even exceeded his wish. Not only did a portion of Lombardy amalgamate at once with Piedmont, but Parma, Modena,

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and Tuscany, spontaneously melted into one, like kindred drops, in spite of diplomatic mountains interposed, that had been artificially raised at Villafranca and Zurich. It was a decisive experiment, which there was no gainsaying. No Talicotian junction of parts, no horticultural cleft-grafting, or cunning inarching, ever effected an union like this. The example spread; the size of the pontifical vacuole was considerably diminished; its outskirts melted away to join the rest; every cupful of surplus water took one direction towards the river. The contracting vesicle, maintained in existence by the great practitioner's perseverance, and also by his purse, pulsated and palpitated, as it palpitates still, to little (temporarily) except mischievous purposes.

When once a powerful action has set in, no practitioner can say where it will end. As electrical disturbances of the atmosphere *will* display their freaks of repulsion and attraction, so will agitations of the ether or fluid which pervades the whole popular body of a nation. Insulated Sicily shot forth sparks which manifested not merely its sympathetic adhesion to Italy, but which set light to and kindled a pervading fire throughout the whole Neapolitan continent. Naples would no longer remain a portion of a non-existent theoretical Italy; it would be one with it actually, for weal or woe, for war or peace, for commercial prosperity or necessary taxation. Naples, after incomprehensible difficulties, raised by the policy of the friendly experimentalist, at last got rid of the wretched Bourbon who wanted the Two Sicilies for himself alone.

For Naples at least there seemed to be hope. Immediately on leaving the Papal States a difference is visible in the face of the country, and in the appearance and habits of the people. The land is drained and cultivated, producing corn and wine. The inhabitants are industrious, and all employed in some little handiwork: in making mats or coarse pottery, in spinning and weaving. Even children and old folk are brought into play; nor are their faces discoloured by malaria, like that which broods over the Pontine Marshes, over the patrimony of the Piuses, Innocents, and Benedicts. The titles of the pontiffs promise well, for when a new pope chooses a name after his election he may as well choose a good one. A Pope Maledict may be an acknowledged fact, but a foreign garrison prevents its being a public title.

Poor Naples! On regarding her closely, one pities her as one would pity a beautiful human form from which some magician had stolen the soul for his own egotistical purposes. What the few may be, is of little import; the people, the great bulk of the nation, have been practically taught, both by their priests and rulers, that moral and intellectual qualities are of little value. "Eat and drink, for to-morrow you die. Steal and lie; be immoral, and trade in immorality; but taste no meat (except otter and wild-fowl, which are not meat, but only coagulated water) on Fridays and fast days; and doubt not the liquefaction of dead St. Januarius's blood, nor the miraculous effects of saintly relics. The former peccadilloes may be wiped away by the sponge of absolution and plenary indulgence; the latter sins you shall expiate in the fire of Vesuvius ten times heated during a purgatory of a thousand years. Do you doubt it? Look at the pictures of souls in torment painted on the walls of your village. Lead as pleasant a life as you can; in other respects, if you are obedient to us, we undertake to conduct you to heaven. But dare to think and reason, and use your own judgment, and you see *there* depicted, what punishment awaits you."

The rulers of the vacuole and their friends the former rulers of Naples would keep all men's minds empty of all lay and mundane knowledge, filling them instead with superstitions, animal appetences, and outward devotional forms. The lights which direct fishermen to steer home by night, must be suspended from a cross, and not from a vulgar pillar or post. It is a good work, during Lent, to dress up little dolls of the Virgin in mourning, and hang them about the streets. In one village, you will see, painted on *every* house, a little tablet containing the words "Viva il Sangue di Gesù Cristo." Any individual who should neglect or refuse to affix this talisman to his habitation, would be expelled the community as an atheist ripe for volcanic fires.

Of course, to a populace so misinstructed, money is the greatest earthly good. The propensity to grasp, is manifested in a way calculated to give the traveller a very unfavourable impression of the national honour and integrity. A French peasant may be avaricious, but he is not offensively grasping and greedy; he pinches *himself*, and saves and hoards. The great majority of French beggars beg to get bread and nothing else. There is a proverb, "No money, no Swiss," which is just as true of the Swiss, and no more, as it is of any other European nation; and for your money, you have the service of your Swiss, honestly and pleasantly rendered. True; a Swiss loves money, but not dishonourably, inordinately, nor offensively; he will fulfil his bargain thoroughly and cheerfully, and receive the payment agreed upon, with contented acknowledgments. He is frugal of his own indulgences, and economises against a rainy day, or to found a little capital which will help him to establish himself in life. The Italian of the humbler class is often spendthrift and self-indulgent, while, at the same time, he begs open-mouthed and open-handed for every little coin he can get. Certainly, he is often very poor; but it is a great defect (to be cured only by increasing his self-respect and the sense of his own dignity as a man) that, in his intercourse with strangers, he is apt to be *never* satisfied. Give him his just due, he will entreat for more; pay him more than his due, treat him with generosity, he will still assume an air of discontent and ask for more. "Why more? You are handsomely remunerated as it is." "Just a little more, eccellenza—only per

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la grazia;" which can hardly be translated by words that have meaning. Give a beggar-boy a Paul; by way of thanks, he will pester you for just one bajocco more.

The truth is, that an Italian, and more especially a Neapolitan, needs cash more for his indulgences than for his necessities. Even among the higher classes, it would be difficult to restrain the passion for the opera—often, really, so second rate that it is a hard task to sit it out; and it seems likewise that there are certain pleasures which a Neapolitan of the lower orders will not do without. He *must* play cards; he *must* see Punch; he *must* idle and lounge about; he *must* squeeze into one or several of the numberless "teatri di giorno" or day theatres; he *must* hear story-tellers and reciters; he *must* eat ices and drink iced-water; he *must* occasionally drive in a calash; and, though he may be in a position to procure with ease the necessaries of life, these luxuries cost money. As to the means of obtaining the required supply, his conscience is very accommodating. Perhaps those are the honester set who take to mendicancy to increase their revenues. The very act of beggary serves to display the great capabilities of this curious and interesting people.

The beggars of Naples, both the really necessitous and those who beg for the sake of pocket-money, are very ingenious as well as persevering. They have plenty of talk and argument. With some, it is a favourite plan to pretend to be dumb, and to make all sorts of hideous inarticulate noises. Others, acting the idiot, will throw a beautiful vacancy into their countenances, use unmeaning gestures, and talk nonsense. They are not without occasional touches of eloquence. If you give nothing, and walk away, you will perhaps hear a long-drawn sigh, followed by an audible half-aside ejaculation, "Che cuore duro!" ("What a hard heart!") Or, "Santa Maria, sono abbandonato da tutti." ("Holy Maria, I am deserted by all.") Another will plead, "Sono poverello miserabile; bisogna appoggiarmi. Ecco il pane; andiamo, compriamo." ("I am a poor dear miserable man, and I must be supported. There is bread; let us go and buy some.") If you are followed more closely than is pleasant, try the experiment of accosting a soldier under the pretence of asking your way; your attendant will vanish speedily, probably through the force of police recollections. In the Villa Reale there used to be an old fisherman with his son, who picked up a good many little coins by exhibiting in a bottle of sea-water the small fish (Pipefish, syngnathus) which they call "cavallo di mare," or sea-horse. If you declined looking, or did not give, the old man would present the boy, and say, "Almexo che il piccolo vi bacia la mano." ("At least let the little one kiss your hand.")

A certain force and aptness of expression seem innate with the Neapolitans. A hackney-coachman, instead of calling your attention by the cold method of "Cab, sir; cab!" or its equivalent, says boldly "Andiamo!" ("Let us be off!") and suits the action to the word, by making his carriage advance a yard or two, as if there were no means of avoiding the bargain. As maccaroni is a principal article of food at Naples, the word maccaroni, by the process of metonymy, is made to signify wages or drink money. Thus a handsome present is called *a good maccaroni*, and men expecting to be well paid for a day's work would say, "We shall eat long maccaroni to-night." However light your luggage may be, a facchino, or porter, will groan on shouldering it, as if it were extremely heavy, in the hope of increasing his reward.

Poor Naples! With a soil and climate ready to produce almost anything, from utilitarian wheat and hemp to luxurious fruit and luscious wines; with inexhaustible mineral treasures; with fine harbours, and with water carriage around seven-eighths of its circumference; it obtains for itself only a fraction of what it might, and forgets that, while enriching the world, it would increase its own store of riches. But how should there be commercial enterprise or road-making, when thousands of monks give the practical lesson that it is better to beg than to work? How should population be as numerous as it ought, when ten thousands of persons of both sexes are shut up in enforced celibacy? How should there be advanced agriculture or skilful pasturage, when the countryman is taught that sufficient for the day is the food thereof? To do a short task that will buy a meal, to sleep in the sun, to fight for the odious Bourbon if there be a row in the city, has long been considered the whole duty of Neapolitan man. To learn to read, is to expose one's soul to danger, besides being an unnecessary toil and vexation; to learn to write is needless, while you can get a letter written for you on payment of a few small copper coins.

And yet, in spite of all this, Naples has been electrified into life. She would fain realise a resurrection from ignorance and indolence; she would gladly blend with the people of the north and follow the guidance of Victor Emmanuel. But the scarlet spiders nestled in the vacuole, demur. They are too fond of cobwebs that catch human prey, to let their nets be swept away without resistance. No better means occur to them than to recruit bands of butchers to murder the sheep who refuse the Bourbon as their shepherd.

Cardinal Antonelli's speech: "We don't look at things from the same point of view as you do," fully explains the condition of things in the Roman and the Neapolitan States. A child is more easily governed than a man; therefore men are to be kept intellectually children for the whole term of their lives. A priest teaches all they need to know; therefore, one of the rarest creatures in Italy is a good and capable schoolmaster. A schoolmaster would be an instigator of inquiry, of private judgment, of heresy, of rebellion against the Church. A series of "object lessons," followed by popular lectures on physical science, would put an end to the shedding of

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tears and blood by wooden Madonnas, and to all the rest of the modern miracles necessary to good government. Self-government, representative government, constitutional government, education, are things unseen, and not wished to be seen, from the pontifical point of view. Highways and railroads would increase communication, communication would be sure to introduce inconvenient untoward insubordinate ideas. Commerce might raise up a laity of shipowners and merchant princes; improved agriculture might found a landed lay aristocracy, and a middle class of farmers, with views diametrically opposed to those of their clerical governors. Therefore the governments of the cardinals and the Bourbon want neither highways, nor railroads, nor shipping, nor intercourse with foreign ports, nor the draining of the Pontine Marshes, nor the cultivation of the desert Campagna.

The reasons put forth to prove that Italy can never become a national unity, are amusing; because they are equally valid to prove that France, in her present state, is a paradox, and the United Kingdom an impossibility. For the same reasons the kings of Navarre and the dukes of Burgundy ought now to be holding divided sway with the hero of the second Empire; and even if the heptarchy be regarded as obsolete, at least Scotland ought to retain a reigning dynasty, and Wales to be governed by a prince bound by no duty to Queen Victoria. Italy cannot be one, we are told, because the Sicilies are jealous of Piedmont, because Florence and Genoa are ancient rivals, because Tuscans will never give the hand of fellowship to Lombards, Romans, and Modenese. Ergo, the strife between Highlander and Lowlander, the sneers at Taffy and his cheeses, at Caledonia and her cremona, at Irish bulls and Irish brogue, are imaginary episodes of British history.

Again: Italy can never become a whole, we are told, because distinct dialects are spoken in her different provinces. The Italian of Piedmont is far from pure, so is the Italian of Naples; moreover, the two impurities are unintelligible the one to the other. Then, Venice liquefies everything into vowels, substituting "Siora mare" and "Fia mia" for "Signora madre" and "Figlia mia." Tuscany delights to roughen with guttural aspirates, changing "acqua calda" into "achcqua halda." Genoa chooses to call her self "Zenna" (as English babies prefer Totsy and Mopsy to the names given by their godfathers and godmothers), and alters the village Cocoletto (the birthplace of Columbus) into the more mellifluous "Coco-oio." All the principal streets of Milan are "Corsi," the second-rate "Contrade;" the word "Strada" is nowhere to be heard or seen. For—further reason for disunion—the Italians introduce the peculiarities of their dialect into the orthography of their language; the Italian dialects are not reckoned vulgar; they have their glossaries and their literature; they are perpetuated in print and recognised in good society.

But what are the discrepancies of the Italian dialects, compared with the distinctness of the English and the Gaelic languages: including in the latter its branches, Irish, Cornish, and Welsh? Or of the Breton, Alsacian, and French? Drop a Northumberland peasant, with his "burr" in his throat, into the lanes of Norfolk or Suffolk, and he will be as unintelligible to his fellow-subjects there, as a Venetian suddenly transferred to a Tuscan village. Introduce a Marseillois to a native Picard, and they will mutually deride each other's patois with a contempt equal to that which a Milanese would bestow on a Sicilian. But the proverb, "Lingua Toscana nella bocca Romana," "Tuscan language with the Roman pronunciation," proves the existence of a strong connecting link; and it is neither domestic internal jealousy, nor the differences of dialects, which will prevent Italian unity, any more than exactly like facts were able to prevent British unity or Gallic unity. If Italy can set about her unification with the same energy, scorn of superstition, and self-respect, which made France a grande nation and Great Britain rather far from a little one, she may achieve the same result.

Also, there is a unity of faults and failings that must be got rid of—idleness, ignorance, religious bigotry, mean importunity, discontent with fair remuneration for small services rendered to strangers. In most of these points, Italy may learn a good lesson from her neighbour Switzerland. Whenever anything like a Reformation can be prepared in Italy, it will be a day of bright promise for the whole peninsula. The general instruction of the people is a matter of primary necessity, rivalling in its importance the material improvement of the country. Prizes might be advantageously offered for the importation, or rearing, of a race of schoolmasters. Lay teachers endowed with common sense, are the beings whose acclimatation would render an enormous service. For, in the words of her great champion, "Had Italy been better instructed, she would, long before this, have known that her boundary was not the wall of a town or the hedge of a garden, but the high Alps and the broad sea."

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

THE SECOND SCENE.

Skeldergate, York.

CHAPTER I.

In that part of the city of York, which is situated on the western bank of the Ouse, there is a narrow street, called Skeldergate, which runs nearly north and south, parallel with the course of the river. The postern by which Skeldergate was formerly approached, no longer exists; and the few old houses left in the street, are disguised in melancholy modern costume of whitewash and cement. Shops of the smaller and poorer order, intermixed here and there with dingy warehouses and joyless private residences of red brick, compose the present aspect of Skeldergate. On the river side the houses are separated, at intervals, by lanes running down to the water, and disclosing lonely little plots of open ground, with the masts of sailing barges rising beyond. At its southward extremity, the street ceases on a sudden, and the broad flow of the Ouse, the trees, the meadows, the public-walk on one bank and the towing-path on the other, open to view.

Here, where the street ends, and on the side of it farthest from the river, a narrow little lane leads up to the paved footway surmounting the ancient Walls of York. The one small row of buildings, which is all that the lane possesses, is composed of cheap lodging-houses, with an opposite view, at the distance of a few feet, of a portion of the massive city wall. This place is called Rosemary-lane. Very little light enters it; very few people live in it; the floating population of Skeldergate passes it by; and visitors to the Walk on the Walls, who use it as the way up or the way down, get out of the dreary little passage as fast as they can.

The door of one of the houses in this lost corner of York, opened softly on the evening of the twenty-third of September, eighteen hundred and forty-six; and a solitary individual of the male sex sauntered into Skeldergate from the seclusion of Rosemary-lane.

Turning northward, this person directed his steps towards the bridge over the Ouse and the busy centre of the city. He bore the external appearance of respectable poverty; he carried a gingham umbrella, preserved in an oilskin case, he picked his steps, with the neatest avoidance of all dirty places on the pavement; and he surveyed the scene around him with eyes of two different colours—a bilious brown eye on the look out for employment, and a bilious green eye in a similar predicament. In plainer terms, the stranger from Rosemary-lane was no other than—Captain Wragge.

Outwardly speaking, the captain had not altered for the better, since the memorable spring day when he had presented himself to Miss Garth at the lodge-gate of Combe-Raven. The railway mania of that famous year had attacked even the wary Wragge; had withdrawn him from his customary pursuits; and had left him prostrate in the end, like many a better man. He had lost his clerical appearance—he had faded with the autumn leaves. His crape hatband had put itself in brown mourning for its own bereavement of black. His dingy white collar and cravat had died the death of old linen, and had gone to their long home at the paper-maker's, to live again one day in quires at a stationer's shop. A grey shooting-jacket in the last stage of woollen atrophy, replaced the black frock-coat of former times, and, like a faithful servant, kept the dark secret of its master's linen from the eyes of a prying world. From top to toe, every square inch of the captain's clothing was altered for the worse; but the man himself remained unchanged—superior to all forms of moral mildew, impervious to the action of social rust. He was as courteous, as persuasive, as blandly dignified as ever. He carried his head as high without a shirt collar as ever he had carried it with one. The threadbare black handkerchief round his neck, was perfectly tied; his rotten old shoes were neatly blacked; he might have compared chins, in the matter of smooth shaving, with the highest Church dignitary in York. Time, change, and poverty, had all attacked the captain together; and had all failed alike to get him down on the ground. He paced the streets of York, a man superior to clothes and circumstances; his vagabond varnish as bright on him as ever.

Arrived at the bridge, Captain Wragge stopped, and looked idly over the parapet at the barges in the river. It was plainly evident that he had no particular destination to reach, and nothing whatever to do. While he was still loitering, the

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clock of York Minster chimed the half-hour past five. Cabs rattled by him over the bridge, on their way to meet the train from London, at twenty minutes to six. After a moment's hesitation, the captain sauntered after the cabs. When it is one of a man's regular habits to live upon his fellow-creatures, that man is always more or less fond of haunting large railway stations. Captain Wragge gleaned the human field; and on that unoccupied afternoon, the York terminus was as likely a corner to look about in as any other.

He reached the platform a few minutes after the train had arrived. That entire incapability of devising administrative measures for the management of large crowds, which is one of the national characteristics of Englishmen in authority, is nowhere more strikingly exemplified than at York. Three different lines of railway assemble three passenger mobs, from morning to night, under one roof; and leave them to raise a travellers' riot, with all the assistance which the bewildered servants of the company can render to increase the confusion. The customary disturbance was rising to its climax as Captain Wragge approached the platform. Dozens of different people were trying to attain dozens of different objects, in dozens of different directions, all starting from the same common point, and all equally deprived of the means of information. A sudden parting of the crowd, near the second-class carriages, attracted the captain's curiosity. He pushed his way in; and found a decently-dressed man—assisted by a porter and a policeman—attempting to pick up some printed bills scattered from a paper parcel, which his frenzied fellow-passengers had knocked out of his hand.

Offering his assistance in this emergency, with the polite alacrity which marked his character, Captain Wragge observed the three startling words, "Fifty Pounds Reward," printed in capital letters on the bills which he assisted in recovering; and instantly secreted one of them, to be more closely examined at the first convenient opportunity. As he crumpled up the bill in the palm of his hand, his parti-coloured eyes fixed with hungry interest on the proprietor of the unlucky parcel. When a man happens not to be possessed of fifty pence in his own pocket, if his heart is in the right place, it bounds, if his mouth is properly constituted, it waters, at the sight of another man who carries about with him a printed offer of fifty pounds sterling, addressed to his fellow-creatures.

The unfortunate traveller wrapped up his parcel as he best might, and made his way off the platform; after addressing an inquiry to the first official victim of the day's passenger-traffic, who was sufficiently in possession of his senses to listen to it. Leaving the station for the river-side, which was close at hand, the stranger entered the ferry-boat at the North-street Postern. The captain, who had carefully dogged his steps thus far, entered the boat also; and employed the short interval of transit to the opposite bank, in a perusal of the handbill which he had kept for his own private enlightenment. With his back carefully turned on the traveller, Captain Wragge now possessed his mind of the following lines:—

FIFTY POUNDS REWARD.

Left her home, in London, early on the morning of September 23rd, 1846, A YOUNG LADY. Age—eighteen. Dress—deep mourning. Personal appearance—hair of a very light brown; eyebrows and eyelashes darker; eyes light grey; complexion strikingly pale; lower part of her face large and full; tall upright figure; walks with remarkable grace and ease; speaks with openness and resolution; has the manners and habits of a refined, cultivated lady. Personal marks—two little moles, close together, on the left side of the neck. Mark on the under clothing—"Magdalen Vanstone." Is supposed to have joined, or attempted to join, under an assumed name, a theatrical company now performing at York. Had, when she left London, one black box, and no other luggage. Whoever will give such information as will restore her to her friends, will receive the above Reward. Apply at the office of Mr. Harkness, solicitor, Coney-street, York. Or to Messrs. Wyatt, Pendril, and Gwilt, Searle-street, Lincoln's Inn, London.

Accustomed as Captain Wragge was to keep the completest possession of himself, in all human emergencies, his own profound astonishment, when the course of his reading brought him to the mark on the linen of the missing young lady, betrayed him into an exclamation of surprise which even startled the ferryman. The traveller was less observant; his whole attention was fixed on the opposite bank of the river, and he left the boat hastily, the moment it touched the landing-place. Captain Wragge recovered himself, pocketed the handbill, and followed his leader for the second time.

The stranger directed his steps to the nearest street which ran down to the river; compared a note in his pocket-book with the numbers of the houses on the left-hand side, stopped at one of them, and rang the bell. The captain went on to the next house; affected to ring the bell, in his turn; and stood with his back to the traveller—in appearance, waiting to be let in; in reality, listening with all his might for any scraps of dialogue which might reach his ears on the opening of the door behind him.

The door was answered with all due alacrity, and a sufficiently instructive interchange of question and answer on the threshold, rewarded the dexterity of Captain Wragge.

"Does Mr. Huxtable live here?" asked the traveller.

"Yes, sir," was the answer, in a woman's voice.

"Is he at home?"

"Not at home now, sir; but he will be in again at eight to-night."

"I think a young lady called here early in the day, did she not?"

"Yes; a young lady came this afternoon."

"Exactly; I come on the same business. Did she see Mr. Huxtable?"

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"No, sir; he has been away all day. The young lady told me she would come back at eight o'clock."

"Just so. I will call and see Mr. Huxtable at the same time."

"Any name, sir?"

"No; say a gentleman called on theatrical business—that will be enough. Wait one minute, if you please. I am a stranger in York; will you kindly tell me which is the way to Coney-street?"

The woman gave the required information; the door closed, and the stranger hastened away in the direction of Coney-street.

On this occasion, Captain Wragge made no attempt to follow him. The handbill revealed plainly enough that the man's next object was to complete the necessary arrangements with the local solicitor, on the subject of the promised reward.

Having seen and heard enough for his immediate purpose, the captain retraced his steps down the street, turned to the right, and entered on the Esplanade, which, in that quarter of the city, borders the river-side between the swimming-baths and Lendal Tower. "This is a family matter," said Captain Wragge to himself, persisting, from sheer force of habit, in the old assertion of his relationship to Magdalen's mother; "I must consider it in all its bearings." He tucked the umbrella under his arm, crossed his hands behind him, and lowered himself gently into the abyss of his own reflections. The order and propriety observable in the captain's shabby garments, accurately typified the order and propriety which distinguished the operations of the captain's mind. It was his habit always to see his way before him through a neat succession of alternatives—and so he saw it now.

Three courses were open to him in connexion with the remarkable discovery which he had just made. The first course was to do nothing in the matter at all. Inadmissible, on family grounds: equally inadmissible on pecuniary grounds; rejected accordingly. The second course was to deserve the gratitude of the young lady's friends, rated at fifty pounds. The third course was by a timely warning, to deserve the gratitude of the young lady herself, rated—at an unknown figure. Between these two last alternatives, the wary Wragge hesitated; not from doubt of Magdalen's pecuniary resources, for he was totally ignorant of the circumstances which had deprived the sisters of their inheritance—but from doubt whether an obstacle, in the shape of an undiscovered gentleman, might not be privately connected with her disappearance from home. After mature reflection, he determined to pause, and be guided by circumstances. In the mean time, the first consideration was to be beforehand with the messenger from London, and to lay hands securely on the young lady herself.

"I feel for this misguided girl," mused the captain, solemnly strutting backwards and forwards by the lonely river-side. "I always have looked upon her—I always shall look upon her—in the light of a niece."

Where was the adopted relative at that moment? In other words, how was a young lady, in Magdalen's critical position, likely to while away the hours until Mr. Huxtable's return? If there was an obstructive gentleman in the background, it would be mere waste of time to pursue the question. But if the inference which the handbill suggested was correct—if she was really alone, at that moment, in the city of York—where was she likely to be?

Not in the crowded thoroughfares, to begin with. Not viewing the objects of interest in the Minster, for it was now past the hour at which the cathedral could be seen. Was she in the waiting-room at the railway? She would hardly run that risk. Was she in one of the hotels? Doubtful, considering that she was entirely by herself. In a pastrycook's shop? Far more likely. Driving about in a cab? Possible, certainly; but no more. Loitering away the time in some quiet locality, out of doors? Likely enough, again, on that fine autumn evening. The captain paused, weighed the relative claims on his attention of the quiet locality and the pastrycook's shop; and decided for the first of the two. There was time enough to find her at the pastrycook's, to inquire after her at the principal hotels, or, finally, to intercept her in Mr. Huxtable's immediate neighbourhood, from seven to eight. While the light lasted, the wise course was to use it in looking for her out of doors. Where? The Esplanade was a quiet locality; but she was not there—not on the lonely road beyond, which ran back by the Abbey Wall. Where, next? The captain stopped, looked across the river, brightened under the influence of a new idea, and suddenly hastened back to the ferry.

"The Walk on the Walls," thought this judicious man, with a twinkle of his parti-coloured eyes. "The quietest place in York: and the place that every stranger goes to see."

In ten minutes more, Captain Wragge was exploring the new field of search. He mounted to the walls (which enclose the whole western portion of the city) by the North-street Postern, from which the walk winds round, until it ends again at its southernly extremity, in the narrow passage of Rosemary-lane. It was then twenty minutes to seven. The sun had set more than half an hour since; the red light lay broad and low in the cloudless western heaven; all visible objects were softening in the tender twilight, but were not darkening yet. The first few lamps lit in the street below, looked like faint little specks of yellow light, as the captain started on his walk through one of the most striking scenes which England can show.

On his right hand, as he set forth, stretched the open country beyond the walls—the rich green meadows, the boundary trees dividing them, the broad windings of the river in the distance, the scattered buildings nearer to view; all wrapped

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in the evening stillness, all made beautiful by the evening peace. On his left hand, the majestic west front of York Minster soared over the city, and caught the last brightest light of heaven on the summits of its lofty towers. Had this noble prospect tempted the lost girl to linger and look at it? No; thus far, not a sign of her. The captain looked round him attentively, and walked on.

He reached the spot where the iron course of the railroad strikes its way through arches in the old wall. He paused at this place—where the central activity of a great railway enterprise beats with all the pulses of its loud-clanging life, side by side with the dead majesty of the past, deep under the old historic stones which tell of fortified York and the sieges of two centuries since—he stood on this spot, and searched for her again, and searched in vain. Others were looking idly down at the desolate activity on the wilderness of the iron rails; but she was not among them. The captain glanced doubtfully at the darkening sky, and walked on.

He stopped again, where the postern of Micklegate still stands, and still strengthens the city wall as of old. Here the paved walk descends a few steps, passes through the dark stone guard-room of the ancient gate, ascends again, and continues its course southward until the walls reach the river once more. He paused, and peered anxiously into the dim inner corners of the old guard-room. Was she waiting there for the darkness to come, and hide her from prying eyes? No: a solitary workman loitered through the stone chamber; but no other living creature stirred in the place. The captain mounted the steps which led out from the postern, and walked on.

He advanced some fifty or sixty yards along the paved footway; the outlying suburbs of York on one side of him, a rope walk and some patches of kitchen garden occupying a vacant strip of ground, on the other. He advanced with eager eyes and quickened step—for he saw before him the lonely figure of a woman, standing by the parapet of the wall, with her face set towards the westward view. He approached cautiously, to make sure of her before she turned and observed him. There was no mistaking that tall dark figure, as it rested against the parapet with a listless grace. There she stood, in her long black cloak and gown, the last dim light of evening falling tenderly on her pale resolute young face. There she stood—not three months since the spoilt darling of her parents; the priceless treasure of the household, never left unprotected, never trusted alone—there she stood in the lovely dawn of her womanhood, a castaway in a strange city, wrecked on the world!

Vagabond as he was, the first sight of her staggered even the dauntless assurance of Captain Wragge. As she slowly turned her face and looked at him, he raised his hat, with the nearest approach to respect which a long life of unblushing audacity had left him capable of making.

"I think I have the honour of addressing the younger Miss Vanstone?" he began. "Deeply gratified, I am sure—for more reasons than one."

She looked at him with a cold surprise. No recollection of the day when he had followed her sister and herself on their way home with Miss Garth, rose in her memory, while he now confronted her, with his altered manner and his altered dress.

"I think you are mistaken," she said, quietly. "You are a perfect stranger to me."

"Pardon me," replied the captain; "I am a species of relation. I had the pleasure of seeing you in the spring of the present year. I presented myself on that memorable occasion to an honoured preceptress in your late father's family. Permit me, under equally agreeable circumstances to present myself to *you*. My name is Wragge."

By this time he had recovered complete possession of his own impudence; his parti-coloured eyes twinkled cheerfully, and he accompanied his modest announcement of himself with a dancing-master's bow.

Magdalen frowned, and drew back a step. The captain was not a man to be daunted by a cold reception. He tucked his umbrella under his arm, and jocosely spelt his name for her further enlightenment. "W, R, A, double G, E—Wragge," said the captain, ticking off the letters persuasively on his fingers.

"I remember your name," said Magdalen. "Excuse me for leaving you abruptly. I have an engagement."

She tried to pass him, and walk on northwards towards the railway. He instantly met the attempt by raising both hands, and displaying a pair of darned black gloves outspread in polite protest.

"Not that way," he said; "not that way, Miss Vanstone, I beg and entreat!"

"Why not?" she asked haughtily.

"Because," answered the captain, "that is the way which leads to Mr. Huxtable's."

In the ungovernable astonishment of hearing his reply, she suddenly bent forward, and, for the first time, looked him close in the face. He sustained her suspicious scrutiny, with every appearance of feeling highly gratified by it. "H, U, X—Hux," said the captain, playfully returning to the old joke; "T, A—ta, Huxta; B, L, E—ble; Huxtable."

"What do you know about Mr. Huxtable?" she asked. "What do you mean by mentioning him to me?"

The captain's curly lips took a new twist upwards. He immediately replied, to the best practical purpose, by producing the handbill from his pocket.

"There is just light enough left," he said, "for young (and lovely) eyes to read by. Before I enter upon the personal statement which your flattering inquiry claims from me, pray bestow a moment's attention on this Document."

She took the handbill from him. By the last gleam of twilight, she read the lines which set a

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price on her recovery—which published the description of her in pitiless print, like the description of a strayed dog. No tender consideration had prepared her for the shock, no kind words softened it to her when it came. The vagabond whose cunning eyes watched her eagerly while she read, knew no more that the handbill which he had stolen, had only been prepared in anticipation of the worst, and was only to be publicly used in the event of all more considerate means of tracing her being tried in vain—than she knew it. The bill dropped from her hand; her face flushed deeply. She turned away from Captain Wragge, as if all idea of his existence had passed out of her mind.

"Oh, Norah, Norah!" she said to herself, sorrowfully. "After the letter I wrote you—after the hard struggle I had to go away! Oh, Norah! Norah!"

"How is Norah?" inquired the captain, with the utmost politeness.

She turned upon him with an angry brightness in her large grey eyes. "Is this thing shown publicly?" she asked, stamping her foot on it. "Is the mark on my neck described all over York?"

"Pray compose yourself," pleaded the persuasive Wragge. "At present I have every reason to believe that you have just perused the only copy in circulation. Allow me to pick it up."

Before he could touch the bill, she snatched it from the pavement, tore it into fragments, and threw them over the wall.

"Bravo!" cried the captain. "You remind me of your poor dear mother. The family spirit, Miss Vanstone. We all inherit our hot blood from my maternal grandfather."

"How did you come by it?" she asked, suddenly.

"My dear creature, I have just told you," remonstrated the captain. "We all come by it from my maternal grandfather."

"How did you come by that handbill?" she repeated, passionately.

"I beg ten thousand pardons! My head was running on the family spirit.—How did I come by it? Briefly thus." Here Captain Wragge entered on his personal statement; taking his customary vocal exercise through the longest words in the English language, with the highest elocutionary relish. Having on this rare occasion nothing to gain by concealment, he departed from his ordinary habits; and with the utmost amazement at the novelty of his own situation, permitted himself to tell the unmitigated truth.

The effect of the narrative on Magdalen by no means fulfilled Captain Wragge's anticipations in relating it. She was not startled; she was not irritated; she showed no disposition to cast herself on his mercy, and to seek his advice. She looked him steadily in the face; and all she said when he had neatly rounded his last sentence, was—"Go on."

"Go on?" repeated the captain. "Shocked to disappoint you, I am sure—but, the fact is, I have done."

"No you have not," she rejoined; "you have left out the end of your story. The end of it is:—You came here to look for me; and you mean to earn the fifty pounds reward."

Those plain words so completely staggered Captain Wragge, that for the moment he stood speechless. But he had faced awkward truths of all sorts far too often to be permanently disconcerted by them. Before Magdalen could pursue her advantage, the vagabond had recovered his balance: Wragge was himself again.

"Smart," said the captain, laughing indulgently, and drumming with his umbrella on the pavement. "Some men might take it seriously. I'm not easily offended. Try again."

Magdalen looked at him through the gathering darkness, in mute perplexity. All her little experience of society, had been experience among people who possessed a common sense of honour, and a common responsibility of social position. She had hitherto seen nothing but the successful human product from the great manufactory of Civilisation. Here was one of the failures—and, with all her quickness, she was puzzled how to deal with it.

"Pardon me for returning to the subject," pursued the captain. "It has just occurred to my mind that you might actually have spoken in earnest. My poor child! how can I earn the fifty pounds before the reward is offered to me? Those handbills may not be publicly posted for a week to come. Precious as you are to all your relatives (myself included), take my word for it, the lawyers who are managing this case will not pay fifty pounds for you if they can possibly help it. Are you still persuaded that my needy pockets are gaping for the money? Very good. Button them up, in spite of me, with your own fair fingers. There is a train to London at nine-forty-five to-night. Submit yourself to your friend's wishes; and go back by it."

"Never!" said Magdalen, firing at the bare suggestion, exactly as the captain had intended she should. "If my mind had not been made up before, that vile handbill would have decided me. I forgive Norah," she added, turning away, and speaking to herself, "but not Mr. Pendril, and not Miss Garth."

"Quite right!" observed Captain Wragge. "The family spirit. I should have done the same myself at your age: it runs in the blood. Hark! there goes the clock again—half-past seven. Miss Vanstone! pardon this seasonable abruptness. If you are to carry out your resolution—if you are to be your own mistress much longer, you must take a course of some kind before eight o'clock. You are young, you are inexperienced, you are in imminent danger. Here is a position of emergency on one side—and here am I, on the other, with an uncle's interest in you, full of advice. Tap me."

"Suppose I choose to depend on nobody, and to act for myself?" said Magdalen. "What then?"

"Then," replied the captain, "you will

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walk straight into one of the four traps which are set to catch you in the ancient and interesting city of York. Trap the first, at Mr. Huxtable's house; trap the second, at all the hotels; trap the third, at the railway station; trap the fourth, at the theatre. That man with the handbills has had an hour at his disposal. If he has not set those four traps (with the assistance of the local solicitor) by this time, he is not the competent lawyer's clerk I take him for. Come, come, my dear girl! if there is somebody else in the background, whose advice you prefer to mine——"

"You see that I am alone," she interposed, proudly. "If you knew me better, you would know that I depend on nobody but myself."

Those words decided the only doubt which now remained in the captain's mind—the doubt whether the course was clear before him. The motive of her flight from home was evidently what the handbills assumed it to be—a reckless fancy for going on the stage. "One of two things," thought Wragge to himself in his logical way. "She's worth more than fifty pounds to me in her present situation, or she isn't. If she is, her friends may whistle for her. If she isn't, I have only to keep her till the bills are posted." Fortified by this simple plan of action, the captain returned to the charge; and politely placed Magdalen between the two inevitable alternatives of trusting herself to him, on the one hand, or of returning to her friends, on the other.

"I respect independence of character, wherever I find it," he said, with an air of virtuous severity. "In a young and lovely relative, I more than respect—I admire it. But (excuse the bold assertion), to walk on a way of your own, you must first have a way to walk on. Under existing circumstances, where is *your* way? Mr. Huxtable is out of the question, to begin with."

"Out of the question for to-night," said Magdalen; "but what hinders me from writing to Mr. Huxtable, and making my own private arrangements with him for to-morrow?"

"Granted, with all my heart—a hit, a palpable hit. Now, for my turn. To get to to-morrow (excuse the bold assertion, once more), you must first pass through to-night. Where are you to sleep?"

"Are there no hotels in York?"

"Excellent hotels, for large families; excellent hotels, for single gentlemen. The very worst hotels in the world for handsome young ladies, who present themselves alone at the door, without male escort, without a maid in attendance, and without a single article of luggage. Dark as it is, I think I could see a lady's box, if there was anything of the sort in our immediate neighbourhood."

"My box is at the cloak-room. What is to prevent my sending the ticket for it?"

"Nothing—if you want to communicate your address by means of your box—nothing whatever. Think; pray think! Do you really suppose that the people who are looking for you, are such fools as not to have an eye on the cloak-room? Do you think they are such fools—when they find you don't come to Mr. Huxtable's at eight to-night—as not to inquire at all the hotels? Do you think a young lady of your striking appearance (even if they consented to receive you) could take up her abode at an inn, without becoming the subject of universal curiosity and remark? Here is night coming on as fast as it can. Don't let me bore you: only let me ask once more—Where are you to sleep?"

There was no answer to that question: in Magdalen's position, there was literally no answer to it, on her side. She was silent.

"Where are you to sleep?" repeated the captain. "The reply is obvious—under my roof. Mrs. Wragge will be charmed to see you. Look upon her as your aunt; pray look upon her as your aunt. The landlady is a widow, the house is close by, there are no other lodgers, and there is a bedroom to let. Can anything be more satisfactory, under all the circumstances? Pray observe, I say nothing about to-morrow—I leave to-morrow to you, and confine myself exclusively to the night. I may, or may not, command theatrical facilities, which I am in a position to offer you. Sympathy and admiration may, or may not, be strong within me, when I contemplate the dash and independence of your character. Hosts of examples of bright stars of the British drama, who have begun their apprenticeship to the stage as you are beginning yours, may, or may not, crowd on my memory. These are topics for the future. For the present, I confine myself within my strict range of duty. We are within five minutes' walk of my present address. Allow me to offer you my arm. No? You hesitate? You distrust me? Good Heavens! is it possible you can have heard anything to my disadvantage?"

"Quite possible," said Magdalen, without a moment's flinching from the answer.

"May I inquire the particulars?" asked the captain, with the politest composure. "Don't spare my feelings; oblige me by speaking out. In the plainest terms, now, what have you heard?"

She answered him with a woman's desperate disregard of consequences, when she is driven to bay—she answered him instantly:

"I have heard you are a Rogue."

"Have you, indeed?" said the impenetrable Wragge. "A Rogue? Well! I waive my privilege of setting you right on that point for a fitter time. For the sake of argument, let us say I am Rogue. What is Mr. Huxtable?"

"A respectable man, or I should not have seen him in the house where we first met."

"Very good. Now observe! You talked of writing to Mr. Huxtable, a minute ago. What do you think a respectable man is likely to do with a young lady, who openly acknowledges that she has run away from her home and her

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friends to go on the stage? My dear girl, on your own showing, it's not a respectable man you want in your present predicament. It's a Rogue—like me."

Magdalen laughed bitterly.

"There is some truth in that," she said. "Thank you for recalling me to myself and my circumstances. I have my end to gain—and who am I, to pick and choose the way of getting to it? It is my turn to beg pardon now. I have been talking as if I was a young lady of family and position. Absurd! We know better than that, don't we, Captain Wragge? You are quite right. Nobody's child must sleep under Somebody's roof—and why not yours?"

"This way," said the captain, dexterously profiting by the sudden change in her humour, and cunningly refraining from exasperating it by saying more himself. "This way."

She followed him a few steps, and suddenly stopped.

"Suppose I *am* discovered?" she broke out, abruptly. "Who has any authority over me? Who can take me back, if I don't choose to go? If they all find me to-morrow, what then? Can't I say No, to Mr. Pendril? Can't I trust my own courage with Miss Garth?"

"Can you trust your courage with your sister?" whispered the captain, who had not forgotten the references to Norah which had twice escaped her already.

Her head drooped. She shivered, as if the cold night air had struck her, and leaned back wearily against the parapet of the wall.

"Not with Norah," she said, sadly. "I could trust myself with the others. Not with Norah."

"This way," repeated Captain Wragge. She roused herself; looked up at the darkening heaven, looked round at the darkening view. "What must be, must," she said—and followed him.

The Minster clock struck the quarter to eight as they left the Walk on the Wall, and descended the steps into Rosemary-lane. Almost at the same moment, the lawyer's clerk from London gave the last instructions to his subordinates, and took up his own position, on the opposite side of the river, within easy view of Mr. Huxtable's door.

THE JAPANESE AT HOME.

To every one who has seen or heard of our adventurous Asiatic visitors, the question will naturally occur, "What will they think of their own countrymen when they get back again, on comparing the state of things Japanese with what they have witnessed in Europe? How will they, at first, reconcile themselves to the absence of railways, gas, telegraphs, postage-stamps, carriages, and operatic spectacles? What impression are they likely themselves to receive, on returning to give an account of their mission to the authorities who sent them hither?"

For, experience teaches the traveller that not until he revisits his native land can he fully appreciate what he has seen elsewhere in relation to what he left at home. The Dutchman has no idea how wonderfully flat Holland is, until he takes his rest, after a tour in Switzerland, in his own country-house on the banks of a currentless canal. The varied beauties of landscape scenery are never so thoroughly felt, as after the monotony of a long sea voyage. How heartily do Arctic discoverers enjoy the luxurious influence of a temperate climate! How couriers, who have been posting night after night, revel in the comfort of a pair of sheets in an unjolting sleeping-place! The rustic who returns to his village, after a first visit to London town, never before knew how small was that village: how noiseless, grass-grown, and thinly-populated. And it is likely that the Japanese ambassadors, until they set foot once more in Japan, will hardly suspect what a singular place is Japan, and what a singular people are the Japanese.

Authentic accounts of those curious islands, situated at the uttermost ends of the earth, are not too common. A late and valuable contribution has been furnished by the Marquis de Moges, who accompanied Baron Gros to China, and who gives us some idea of the contrasts to their European experience which our Oriental guests will meet with, as soon as they set foot on their native shores. Their return voyage, made on board a French ship of war, will keep them in the midst of Frankish habits to the last. They will not, like poor Baron Gros and his suite, be obliged to put up with a hired merchant steamer, be half eaten up by rats, red and white ants, and cockroaches, on their way homeward. And it must be confessed, however they may regret and envy many of our accidental wonders, they will find much at home to be contented with, and even to be proud of. Above all, they will meet with people willing to be instructed, and not too conceited to profit by the results of distant enterprise.

Simoda, the first Japanese port touched at by M. de Moges, is small and narrow, but safe and sheltered, except towards the south-west, where it is a little exposed. Broken peaks, luxuriant vegetation reaching down to the sea, pine-trees scattered amidst the rocks, rice-fields in terraces one above the other, delicious valleys each with its brook, bursts of sunshine at different points of the distance lighting up rugged and volcanic mountains, lend enchantment to the view. The peasantry look cheerful and happy; the cottages are exquisitely clean, with an air of ease and comfort about them.

If with nations, as with individuals, cleanliness is to be regarded as a test of welfare, the Japanese must be considered a happy people. They were smiling and merry in their mein, welcoming their visitors; the women did not run away at the sight of Europeans, as in China; nor were you surrounded with a crowd of ragged coolies. The costume of the common people is extremely simple—a sort of wide robe with a girdle; but the principal feature is their exqui-

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site personal cleanliness. The contrast was especially agreeable to persons who had been spending six months at Shanghai, in the midst of that disgusting human ant-hill which is called a Chinese town, and on the flat and wearisome banks of the Whampou.

Simoda was the scene of the famous shipwreck of the Russian frigate, the Diana: a rare instance of a ship at sea being destroyed by the effects of an earthquake. At one minute, the frigate had sixty feet of water beneath her; at another, she could see her anchors. Then, an immense wave, rolling in all at once from the open sea, suddenly filled the roadstead, upset the town, and inundated the valley. The admiral and his men swam on shore; only fourteen of the crew were lost.

The Japanese authorities gave a cordial welcome to the French embassy, paying the first visit. When it was returned, the governor, Namorano Nedanwano Kami, received his visitors with perfect grace beneath the portico of his palace, surrounded by his principal officers. A splendid collation was served in a vast audience-chamber. The strangers took their places to the left, on seats; the governor and six of his officers squatted on their heels, on the other side, opposite to their guests. The Japanese interpreter, kneeling, transmitted to the governor the sentences uttered by the Abbé Mermet. Shortly, tea and saki (a spirit made from rice, lukewarm, and frightfully strong) were sent round. Fish, pork, and eggs in forty different shapes, were successively served in dishes and cups, made of red, brown, and black lacquer. Generally speaking, Japanese cookery appeared analogous to that of China, but was infinitely superior in style of serving, in tempting appearance, and in cleanliness. The persons who waited, wore each two sabres; and at each fresh course there was a "surprise"—a little refinement of luxury and elegance, which is not to be found at the tables of Chinese mandarins. At first, there were dwarf trees, trained into the form of flowers or animals; then, came an enormous fish in a dish representing the sea and seaweeds, followed by groups of charming flowers made with crawfish and cut turnips. The governor boasted with a smile of satisfaction that the flowers were the handiwork of his officers: imparting thereby a high idea of those gentlemen's skill, but also a diminished estimate of the importance and gravity of their occupations. In the midst of these strange novelties, the greatest marvel was to behold a real gâteau de Savoie, or sponge-cake, admirably sliced and perfect in flavour. This importation dates from the time of the Spaniards—that is, two centuries ago—and still retains in Japan its Castilian name.

The bazaar of Simoda deserves special mention. To this very day the Japanese are forbidden, on pain of death, to sell anything whatever to strangers; the government reserves to itself the monopoly of selling to foreigners. The authorities, therefore, expecting the arrival of the vessels of the four nations, had got together in an immense shed, every product of the country likely to attract attention. Japanese lacquer-work appeared in every possible form; there were long rows of inkstands, boxes, trunks, and tables of all sizes and colours. Every object was ticketed with its price in "itchibous," written in Arabic numerals; and a little wooden packing-case, made expressly to fit each article, was ready to receive it, and be sent on board. Everybody was bitten with the mania of buying, from the ambassador and his secretaries, to the naval officers and common sailors. It was computed that the French spent some thirty thousand francs in lacquer-work at Simoda.

Their intercourse with the inhabitants was as familiar as could be; they went on shore at all hours of the day and night. Everywhere they were well received. During the day, they visited the pagodas, which are very curious; they went into different houses to drink tea; and in the evening they joined the choruses and dances in honour of the moon. Frequently they were accommodated with boats to return on board, gratuitously; but they were told with a smile that they must not expect the same civility and attention at Jeddo, which turned out to be the case. To the last minute before their departure, the decks of the vessels were crowded with Japanese come to drink champagne and liqueurs, to inspect the steam-engines and the different parts of the ship, and to write upon their fans long notes of what they saw. In the Celestial Empire it was quite different; not a single Chinaman came on board except for the purpose of selling his wares. The Japanese endeavour to obtain information; the Chinaman disdains everything which does not appertain to the ways and customs of the black-haired race.

The day before the embassy set sail, they were informed of the death, or rather of the publication of the death, of the Taïcoun, who had been carried off three weeks previously by gout in the stomach, at the early age of thirty-five. The government, following the traditional policy of the court of Jeddo, judged it prudent to conceal his decease for a while. His successor, an adopted son, was only thirteen years old, and not yet recognised. A council of regency conducted the government. For forty days the Japanese were obliged to let their beards grow, in token of mourning. It was whispered, very confidentially, that the new Taïcoun was terribly ill-tempered. He was commencing his "grand studies," and had little taste for Confucius and his commentators. Etiquette required that he should be acquainted with them. His tutor could only speak to him on his knees, but in that deferential posture he spoke pretty severely.

On their arrival at Jeddo they were besieged for eight-and-forty hours by a crowd of Japanese officers, clad in rich silks, with a tail of double-sabred followers, coming and going, and circulating throughout the vessel. Seven governors of Jeddo came on board at once. But the cold politeness of these fine officials raised sincere regrets for the hearty good nature of the people of Simoda. Baron Gros's decided determination to go on shore, to reside in the city of

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Jeddo, and to negotiate his treaty there, excited the strongest objections on the part of these high functionaries, and gave rise to interminable negotiations. Among other excuses, it was urged that "an intense cholera was raging at Jeddo, three thousand persons had died of it, and three hundred per day were still dying; it was impossible for visitors to risk their lives by entering the town at such a time." Baron Gros answered that the cholera was nothing new to him, that he had seen plenty of it in France, and that he was not a bit afraid of it.

They found in Jeddo, a population of two millions and a half, and also a multitude of little wooded heights, covered with bonzeries, from which there is a charming view over the rest of the city. Every instant you pass large gardens, in which the Japanese walk with their families; for they never go out, except on business. In Japan, as in China, the magistrates rarely show themselves to the people, and then in state costume, and attended by a suite. The Japanese could hardly trust their ears, when they were told that Napoleon III. went out in a phaeton almost daily, alone and unattended, driving the carriage himself; or perhaps on horseback, with a single aide-de-camp; and that the rest of his time was devoted to business. The idea of a prince showing himself familiarly to subjects, shocked all their prejudices; but the fact of a sovereign attending to the administration of his dominions, confounded their reason. Consequently they remarked, with an air of deep conviction, that it must be very wearisome work to be the Taïcoun of the French. They were not far from the truth, perhaps.

When the Emperor of Japan goes out, the streets must be completely empty; every one must keep within doors; the city must be silent and motionless. Any stray individual who may happen to be abroad, must remain fixed and stationary, with his forehead bowed towards the ground; the least infraction of this rule would be punished with death. However, the inhabitants of Jeddo are rarely troubled by their sovereign's presence; he does not leave his palace more than five or six times a year.

In Japan, horses are not shod with iron; they wear straw shoes like the men. Moreover, they are honourably treated, being reserved solely for the saddle. Carts, at Jeddo, are dragged by bulls; in all Nipon, there does not exist a single carriage. Nor is any one who chooses, at liberty to ride on horseback in the capital of the Taïcoun; that privilege is reserved for great functionaries. Jeddo possesses five hundred wrestlers, of herculean proportions, who wrestle for hire, at private entertainments. The embassy had an idea of sending for them one evening: but, on consideration, it was set down as an undignified exhibition, and the project was consequently given up.

Espionage throughout Japan is open, habitual, legal, and official. It rises to the height of a political principle; it is part of the government machinery. One half of the people of Japan are spies over the other half. During the conferences with Baron Gros, one of the Japanese plenipotentiaries, named Kamaï Sakio Kami, was taciturn, never uttering a word, not even in the midst of the most earnest discussions. His business seemed to be to listen, and not to talk; and no favourable idea of his intellect was formed. One day the embassy was astonished at learning the real nature and importance of his functions. They beheld on his visiting-card the noble title, Imperial Spy.

A fanciful legend attributes the first colonisation of the Japanese Archipelago, to a Chinese emigration. A sovereign of the Middle Empire, by his violence and cruelty, made every one around him tremble. Feeling that his strength began to fail, he consoled himself by the popular belief that the elixir of immortality was a possibility, and unconsciously forestalled a portion of "A Strange Story." One of his doctors, hoping to save his own head by getting out of his master's way, undertook to discover the elixir. "The herb of long life," he said, "really exists. It grows beyond the seas, in the valleys of Kiousiou: but its nature is so subtle and delicate, that its virtues cannot be retained unless it be gathered by the purest and the chastest of hands. Give me three hundred young boys and as many girls, robust and healthy in constitution, selected from the first families of the empire. We will cross the sea, and in a few weeks' time will bring back the precious plant which will infallibly prolong your majesty's life."

The cunning doctor went his way, and settled with his companions in the emerald isle of the far East; in verdant Kiousiou; founding thus the fine race of men who have peopled the Japanese Archipelago for ages past.

Unfortunately, there are several facts which contradict this romantic origin. The Japanese, as white as many Europeans, can hardly be the descendants of the yellow sons of Ham. They themselves repudiate all community of origin with the Chinese. As a race, the inhabitants of Nipon are unquestionably superior to the population of China. We may reasonably suppose the Japanese to belong to the great Mongolian family, and to have originated in an ancient emigration which came by the way of the Corea.

The Japanese call their country, Nipon, in common conversation, and in poetical language the Empire of the Rising Sun. Their Archipelago consists of four large islands and a multitude of little islands. The four large are Yeso, Nipon, Sikok, and Kiousiou. In Nipon, the most considerable, are situated the three great political religious and commercial capitals of Japan: namely, Ye'do or Jeddo, the residence of the Taïcoun, or civil sovereign; Meako, the residence of the Mikado, or religious sovereign; and Oosaka, the commercial metropolis. The Taïcoun's empire extends over more than three thousand eight hundred isles and islets. Every year the Archipelago is the scene of violent earthquakes, for which reason the houses are only one story high, and are built

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of wood. Several volcanoes are still in eruption. There is no eternal snow in Japan. The neighbouring seas are the most stormy in the world, ravaged by redoutable typhoons. The equinoctial gales are of unusual strength. St. Francis Xavier said that, in his time, out of three ships that sailed to Japan, it was a rare event for one to come back. The climate of Japan, cold in the north and hot in the south, but always dry, is very healthy. The Dutch say that, during the heats, it is almost as warm in the island of Kiousiou as in Java; but in winter, snow falls.

In favourable weather, the voyage from Shanghai to Nangasaki takes only three days; that from the Chinese coast to Jeddo, a week. Nevertheless, the trade between the Celestial Empire and Japan is almost null, owing to the jealous exclusion of all foreigners by Japan. Not more than four or five trading junks, at the outside, pay an annual visit to Nangasaki. The Japanese silk is very plentiful, but not so fine as the Chinese; the tea in Japan is of inferior flavour, and even slightly acrid; but the national vanity pronounces it far superior to that of the continent. It is but sparingly imported. On the other hand, medicines are excessively dear throughout the whole of Nipon, and it is asserted that the cargoes of the few junks which do arrive, consist principally of Chinese drugs.

The Japanese women receive a certain amount of education; they have schools; and, unlike the Chinese ladies, they do not regard foreigners as *devils*. Married women distinguish themselves from single women by plucking out their eyebrows and staining their teeth black, with a mixture of iron filings and saki. They walk about the streets at complete liberty, and are not shut up in yamouns, like the female inhabitants of the Celestial Empire.

There does not exist the least scrap of a newspaper, in Japan: the publication of news being strictly forbidden. It is worse even than in China, where at least the official journal, the Pekin Gazette, with its numerous columns, appears every day, and is spread throughout the empire. Japanese history is the most wearisome in the world; it is almost a daily record of the acts and deeds of the Taïcoun: "The emperor went out, the emperor has been ill, the emperor went to look at the flowers."

The Japanese of all classes are passionately fond of the hot bath. Hot baths are a national institution. They are held to be preferable to sleep itself, for cooling the blood and reposing the members. The attendants of the embassy at Jeddo bathed so boisterously as to prevent their guests from sleeping during half the night. It is said that in summer the entire operation is completed in the streets, and that ladies do not hesitate to perform their ablutions in front of their doors. But the approach of winter prevented the Europeans from witnessing that singular spectacle.

When the Japanese want to designate their "I," their own self, their personality, they point to their nose; with them, the tip of the nose is the seat of individuality. In this there is nothing so very absurb; a Frenchman, for the same purpose, will indicate his stomach.

The monetary unit of Japan is the itchibou: a pretty piece of silver, shaped like a domino. Three itchibous are worth a Mexican piastre. The kobang, a gold coin, is worth four itchibous. The Dutch at Nangasaki employ, besides, paper taëls; the common people use sapeks, a copper coin, for small transactions.

China is the country of equality; every one there, except the sons of tankaderes or boat-women, may, on passing a good examination, become a mandarin, and aspire to honours. Japan, on the contrary, is a feudal empire, governed by a military aristocracy. There are nine classes of Japanese; with very rare exceptions, no one can rise above the class in which he was born. Every attempt of the kind is unfavourably regarded, and is adverse to public opinion. The absence of ambition and of luxury is the probable cause of the quiet air, the complete satisfaction, the expansive gaiety, which mark the Japanese character. Nowhere else, do you meet with people so contented, and so devoid of anxious thought.

The princes or daïmio, the nobles, the priests, and the military, constitute the four first classes of the nation, and enjoy the privilege of wearing two sabres. The subaltern officials and the medical men form the fifth class, and may wear one sabre. The merchants and wholesale dealers, the retail dealers and artisans, the peasants and the coolies, the tanners and the leather curriers, make the four last classes of the population, and may not, in any case, wear any sabre. All who deal in skins are reckoned impure; they are not allowed to reside in towns, but dwell in villages especially allotted to them in the open country. They supply the state with executioners, who do not lead an idle life; for the penal laws of Japan are exceedingly rigorous, and inflict the punishment of death for very trifling offences. Whosoever causes his neighbour's death through imprudence, or conceals a criminal, is immediately beheaded. It is to be hoped that further intercourse with Europe may temper the severity of Japanese legislation.

The only sciences cultivated in the empire are medicine and astronomy. There are two observatories in the island of Nipon; one at Jeddo, the other at Meako. The great comet of October, 1858, did not cause the slightest signs of astonishment or uneasiness in the natives' countenances. At Shanghai, during an eclipse of the moon, very different manifestations were made. The military mandarins shot their arrows, to kill the dragon who was devouring the moon; from every junk and every pagoda there resounded a deafening din of gongs, intended to frighten the monster away. The Japanese physicians read Dutch medical books and seriously studied their art. Two of them assiduously frequented the embassy, for the sake of consulting the navy surgeons respecting the cholera.

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In religious matters, the Japanese are tolerant, or rather very indifferent. In the Archipelago, for ages past, several worships have co-existed in peace; Buddhism and the religion of Confucius, foreign importations, share the public favour with the Sinto or worship of the Kamis, the primitive religion of the country. Thanks to this tolerance, the Spanish and Portuguese missionaries had not been many years in Japan before two hundred thousand natives of the highest classes had received baptism and become Christian converts. Such a religious movement was unexampled. But times are changed. For the last two hundred years, there has not been a single Christian in Japan. They were all exterminated by the Emperors Taïko and Yeyas.

Lately, three or four French missionaries have made attempts in the Loo-Choo Islands; but their zeal has been productive of little effect. An army of satellites are occupied day and night in preventing them from holding any communication with the islanders. Their servants are incessantly changed. All the houses which look towards their dwelling have had their doors and windows bricked up, and an outlet made on the other side. Whenever they go out for a walk in the country, every one is ordered to retire; and the only and invariable reply to all their questions is, "I do not understand." In this respect the Japanese entertain at the present day the ideas of two hundred years ago. They have not made the slightest progress. They reminded the French embassy of the famous reply of the Spanish captain to the emperor, which brought about the great persecution. Taïko, one day, expressing to the captain his astonishment at the vast possessions of the king his master, inquired how a kingdom comparatively so small had succeeded in acquiring such enormous domains? "In a very simple way," the Spaniard inconsiderately replied. And, thereupon, he explained how Spanish priests had settled in newly-discovered countries, and converted the idolatrous inhabitants by their virtues and their eloquence; and how the court of Madrid, finding the ground ready prepared and the converts to Roman Catholicism favourably disposed, had sent a few troops into the country, and had annexed it to its own dominions. The imprudent hint was not thrown away upon the sharp-witted sovereign of Japan. He immediately resolved on the ruin of Christianity, and carried out his resolve with unswerving perseverance. The Spanish and Portuguese priests were expelled from his realm. The Japanese Christians were compelled to choose between abjuration or death. In a few years, nothing remained of the wonderful edifice rapidly raised by St. Francis Xavier. But it will be evident that the revolution which crushed Christianity in Japan, was purely political, and in no degree religious.

There is no standing army in Japan. All the two-sabred gentry, who form the suite of the princes and governors in time of peace, act as soldiers in time of war. Individually, they are very brave; but their swords and spears will hardly enable them to resist European tactics. It is asserted, however, that, conscious of their weakness, they carefully read strategical works. Japan feels that Europe has made the first breach in her exclusiveness, and is tormented just now by a touch of anxious uncertainty respecting the future. She understands fully that, with bows and arrows, she can make no head against Minié rifles, and she endeavours to acquire a knowledge of the actual state of naval science and military art. To have soldiers worthy of the name, she must at once renounce sandals, puffy trousers, and long robes trailing behind; but she is ready to make the sacrifice. The Japanese have not, like the Chinese, the stupid prejudice to believe and to boast themselves superior to every other people. They set themselves above the Chinese and the Coreans, but they estimate the Western Powers at their real value.

In Japan, in case of necessity, people now only perform the pantomime of ripping open their own abdomen; they cut the carotid artery, or get a friendly hand to cut it for them. Evidently, the Happy Despatch is an ancient custom fast going out of fashion. Many anecdotes relating thereto, which have widely circulated, belong to quite bygone times.

The government of Japan, like that of the kingdom of Siam, presents the singular fact of two sovereigns reigning simultaneously, in a regular and normal way, in virtue of the constitution of the country. In Siam, there is a first and a second king, who exercise the supreme power at the same time; in Japan, there are the civil emperor and the ecclesiastical emperor, the Taïcoun and the Mikado. The Taïcoun, whom Europeans wrongly style the Emperor of Japan, is only the delegate, the lieutenant of the Mikado, who is the real sovereign of Nipon. This illustrious personage is the representative of the ancient dynasties, the descendant of the gods, and too elevated to busy himself with things of this world and to attend to the administration of affairs, he turns over that duty to his subordinate. Originally, the Taïcouns were only mayors of the palace, the chief officers of a degenerate dynasty declined from its native vigour. Instead of confining in a cloister the last Japanese Merovingian, they have shaved his head, have shut him up in a sumptuous temple, and converted him into a living idol; both the demigod himself and the nation at large being firmly persuaded that such a condition is most in conformity with his divine origin. The new dynasty took its seat on the throne, and usurped the power thereto appertaining, protesting all the while its great respect for its old masters, and continuing to acknowledge them as the absolute sovereigns of the Archipelago. On this fiction does the whole edifice of the Japanese political constitution depend. The Mikado continues to reside at Meako, the ancient capital of the Children of the Sun, surrounded by a sumptuous court, the

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object of the outward respect of his all-powerful vassal. His indolent existence is passed within the enclosure of his vast palace, from which an inflexible policy forbids him to stir. His court is the rendezvous of poets, musicians, artists, and astronomers. The rice he eats, is carefully selected grain by grain. He never puts on the same garments twice; he never drinks twice from the same cup; it is instantly broken, lest profane lips should dare to touch it. Formerly, he had to remain hours and hours upon his throne, establishing and securing by his own immobility the stability of the empire in general. Were he to stir and turn his head, the portion of Japan lying in that direction would be threatened by terrific misfortunes. But no earthy Mikado being found capable of sitting perfectly motionless, and many provinces of Nipon having suffered evils in plenty, a compromise was hit upon. At present, the crown, placed upon the throne, suffices to ensure the stability of the empire, and to spread tranquillity throughout all Nipon. For two hundred years, Japan has been at peace, untroubled by any war, external or civil.

But everything in this world has its day, dynasties as well as dogs. This haughty lieutenant of the Mikado, this potent Taïcoun, chief of the armies and moderator of the Archipelago, has allowed himself to be circumvented in the inextricable meshes of etiquette and vanity. He has been persuaded that the government of the empire is a heavy burden, and that an idle and luxurious life is more suitable to the dignity of his race. Now, he is relieved of the administration of his dominions by the Gotaïro, the hereditary first minister, who for several generations has planted himself beside the throne. His time is spent in the empty observance of ceremonies and frequent audiences; he only leaves his palace at Jeddo a few times a year, to go and adore the images of his ancestors; perhaps he will never in his life behold the yacht, a model of lightness and elegance, which the English, ignorant of the actual state of Japanese politics, sent him as a present. Who knows whether the Gotaïro be not destined in turn to found a third dynasty at Oosaka, to the exclusion of the other two?

The central government of Japan possesses rare energy, and exercises an absolute authority in every part of the empire. Information respecting it, has been necessarily incomplete, as every inquiry made about it excited suspicion. Ever beside the civil emperor, who reigns and does not govern, there is the hereditary first minister or Gotaïro, who really governs. He is assisted by a grand council composed of six members, and by another council of fifteen members whose duty is to prepare laws. There are, moreover, four other ministers, the last of whom is the minister of police, but who must be the busiest of all, if he be obliged to read the innumerable reports sent in by the army of spies spread all over the empire. The French embassy alone gave him no little trouble, if his agents forwarded all their fans, crammed full of notes, relating every trifling action performed by the embassy from the rising to the setting of the sun.

DROPPINGS.

The leaves that fall on the grassy wall,
And the rain dropping out of the apple tree!
And is it only a passing dream?
For, I know not why, but these things seem,
Just now worth more than the world to me.

Fast the leaves fall on the grassy wall;
Fast drops the rain from the apple tree;
And, if I could feel what I feel now
But a moment longer, I think I should know
More than ever was known, or known will be.

Wherefore? Leaves fall all day on the wall,
All day drops rain from the apple tree.
But never before did the leaves and the rain,
And they doubtless will never, never again,
Seem about to impart such a secret to me.

Mere leaves that fall on yonder wall!
Mere rain dropping down out of yonder tree!
What matter? If Nature has something to say,
Let her take her own time, let her choose her own way,
So long as at last she will say it to me.

Ah! but leaves will fall, as now, on the wall,
And rain, as now, drop from out of the tree
Many, many a day, while the chance, I know
Is lost! I have missed what, a moment ago,
The leaves and the rain had confided to me.

A YARN FROM A RUSSIAN SAILOR.

I have been an officer in a marching regiment until very lately; I hope I did my duty in that capacity. The kindness of my superiors, the good will of my comrades, induces me to hope that I served with credit. But owing to the large reductions in the army which have characterised the reign of the present Emperor of Russia, I found myself at the age of thirty entirely without employment. I had no special reason to complain. I was merely one of that large number of persons dismissed from many callings and professions who have lately, I fear, produced much mischief by their discontents. Yet the reasons which induced the government to discharge us from our employments appeared just. A few years ago Russia was strangled by the immense number of persons who fed upon the public purse. The number of the army was almost incredible; the navy was very large; the civil service, still amazingly numerous, was then much more so; but the present Czar at once determined upon reform. The close of the Crimean war enabled him to reduce the army very considerably. The destruction of the Black Sea fleet, necessarily caused a large reduction in the navy. The reforms in the civil service were made voluntarily, but they were much needed, and they will probably soon be followed by still greater changes in that department.

The question, however, which perplexed everybody was this: "What was to be done with all the people thus deprived of their daily bread?" Many

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of those persons were unfitted by their previous habits for any other callings than those from which they had been ejected. Yet no nation has ever offered to wisdom and valour such speedy, and such splendid rewards. By her wise magnanimity she has attracted to her land, much of the wit and nerve of foreign countries. Youngest among the sisterhood of nations, she has borrowed the best jewels of the rest.

Even the imperial family are foreigners rather than Russians. Every soldier who had a brave heart and a stout arm has been sure of a right royal welcome here. To the artist and to the man of science, Russia has awarded admiration, respect, wealth; to the mechanic or the labourer, she has given that which has raised him far higher than he could ever have hoped to rise in other countries. This is the policy to which England owes, not only much of her commercial prosperity, but much of her fame in arts and arms. The gain of Russia has been equally large. The bravest of the brave chiefs who kept the walls of Sebastopol against the united strength of four great nations, was a German also. The first ambassador whom England sent to the court of Russia, was an Englishman who had won renown and fortune in the Russian service. Some of her largest landowners are French, but one of the finest estates in the south was given to a General Cobley, an Englishman, and has now passed by inheritance to an Italian. The docks at Sebastopol were built by an Englishman. The lucrative wool trade of the south, is chiefly in the hands of Frenchmen. The largest mercantile house in the Azoff, is English. The corn trade is in the hands of Greeks. The chief bankers in Russia are Jews. The retail shopkeepers are chiefly French and Germans; but the best retail trade in Russia has been for many years the property of an English firm, Messrs. Nicholls and Plinkie. I live in one of a row of fourteen of the stateliest palaces in Europe: four belong to Italians, four belong to Jews, two belong to Frenchmen, one belongs to a German, and the remaining three are public offices. In no country has even second and third-rate ability been so handsomely and universally acknowledged.

Therefore, when I, with many others, was first cast upon the world, we were much dispirited; many of us were not disposed, and are not yet disposed, to do full justice to the motives which dictated our dismissal. Hence the present discontents. Those discontents are very serious, for they are very widely spread. It is hard to do good, without doing evil also. God send the emperor safely through the noble and arduous task he has undertaken! It is unfortunately too true that at this moment no class in the vast Russian empire can be called contented. A powerful and wealthy nobility have lost much of their authority, and as they fear, though groundlessly, much of their wealth. Commercial restrictions have only partially been removed. The peasantry feel that they have been duped by half measures. The very students, carrying angry thoughts away from their homes, have broken out into insubordination, and are now wandering by hundreds, filled with the restless thoughts of youth half taught, and quite undisciplined.

I was never one of those dangerous malcontents who now swarm over the country. If a little sad at my dismissal, I was at least resigned to it. I come of a peaceful family. My father was an old servant of the state, and the emperor rewarded him with a royal hand. His large experience taught me both the wisdom and the reasons which lead to hope. Soon, also, my good character in the regiment, and, what my superiors were good enough to call my former services, singled me out for further employment; and one day our little family were much pleased and rather startled to find that I had been appointed captain of a fine steamer, belonging to the Imperial Steam Navigation and Trading Company. It was the only place that could be found for me, I suppose; anyhow, I accepted it with thanks, and set about to render myself fit for it. But I remember the first time we lit our fires, and I stood on the paddle-box shouting out my orders, that the sailing-vessels and small tugs in the offing showed rather a nervous alacrity to get out of my way, and that I steamed out of the harbour, having a very wide berth indeed.

My new masters have about fifty vessels of various tonnage. They are liberal, and my place is a pleasant one—well paid, honourable, easy. The company have given employment to many of the officers of the late Black Sea fleet, and numerous other persons similarly circumstanced have found good pay and good quarters under its protection. But the truth is, we are not sailors. Our navigation is distinguished by courage rather than by seamanship. We go out in all weathers, but we more often come to grief than otherwise. We are terrible fellows for running into small colliers, and merchantmen generally. Not unfrequently we lose our reckoning and don't exactly know where we are: so we now and then—in fact rather oftener than otherwise—get ashore. We are not ashamed of it. We have no need to be so; for if we have not much of the knowledge and experience of Cooks and Franklins, we have warm hearts under our smart military-looking uniforms, and have more than once rendered kind and gratuitous services, even to British men-of-war, in distress from chance or circumstance. I do not say this boastingly as of myself; I say it in the name of my countrymen and comrades. I have never had the good fortune to be of much use to others; but I hope, if occasion offered, I would try to do my best.

At all events, though I, like many of my brother-officers, have not been brought up to sailoring, we cannot do much harm. Our ships are mostly English built, and are stout and seaworthy. We have English stokers and pokers, and a good many English hands on board; for we pay handsomely, and our own sailors are

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a good harmless set of fellows, and I have remarked that Britons generally seem to know when they are pretty well off. So do our passengers, for now and then a spirited sort of fellow does not mind trying his fortune with us for a short voyage. And whenever we meet such a bold adventurer we give him the welcome due to the bold; and as we have a French cook on board we give him a very good dinner to keep his spirits up. Most of us have our wives on board; most of our wives play the piano, some of them sing; so we are merry, and, if the boiler bursts, as it will sometimes, we have our sails; and, after all, the Mediterranean is not a very dangerous sea, and there are always plenty of ships about, so whatever mischief may befal us, we are pretty sure to be able to hail another vessel in time to get out of the scrape. And now, suppose you, good-humoured English passenger, sing us "God save the Queen." My wife shall play the accompaniment, and if you ever get home, which I am not rash enough to promise, tell your countrymen that we Russians are not such terrible fellows after all, and certainly wish no harm to you or to any one else.

PUTTING ON THE SCREW.

Everybody puts the screw upon some one else; in fact, human life is a series of screws, where it all depends on chance who turns the handle, and who is underneath the press. Everything can be resolved into this; not only in trade or business, instances of which we all know of, but in every relation of life, and under every circumstance whatever. What a screw temper is, for instance, and how it keeps all the household underlying in mashed and mangled subjection! Take a family of sisters. Who puts the screw on to all the rest: the good-natured sisters, or that little fiery-eyed "party" whose characteristic it is to be ever hungry for a quarrel? Who studies the good-natured sisters? Who caters for the fulfilment of their fancies, or attends to their likes or dislikes? No one. They know nothing of moral dynamics, these white-souled creatures; they turn no screw-handle, and put no living heart under the press; but, whether opposed or humoured, screwed down or left free, are just the same placid contented amiable beings they ever were, perilously tempting to tyrants. Not so the fiery-eyed sister. She puts on the screw heavily, sweeping every one of the household under the worm, and grinding them down into pulp and compost. No one is rash enough to oppose her: for who cares to thrust himself into the path of a storm, when half an hour's walk across a bleak moor would set him on the outer edge, clear of the wrath of the angry lightning and the passion of the driving rain? The safety of peace is well bought by a little extra trouble and self-sacrifice, and only fools object to a trifling loss for the sake of a greater gain. And surely it is better to succumb to the fiery-eyed, and submit to be pressed flat under her screw, than to live in a perpetual whirlwind of contention, ever struggling who shall clutch the handle. Wherefore fiery-eyes gets her own way in the house, as a matter of course, by screw pressure; and all the home amiabilities submit to her, and allow her to manipulate them at her pleasure.

In married life the screw is generally in great request: the handle for the most part turning by an endless band, which only needs the faintest touch to guide it. And here again, as in the case of fiery-eyes, it is who has the highest temper that gives the strongest turn, and who is least to be feared that gets the hardest driven. Sometimes it is the wife who is put under the screw of her husband's peculiarities: sometimes it is the husband who is martyred by his wife's extravagances. I know a little woman whose life is a perpetual sacrifice to blinds and boots, and another who will surely never rest in her grave because of the creases in the tablecloths, and a certain silver tankard which never is clean, never was clean, and never will be clean, yet which the maid polishes twice a-week with rouge, and rubs up every day with "chamoy leather." My little friend who is under the screw in the matter of blinds, has long ago been squeezed flat and shapeless; but then her husband wields a very formidable machine, and knows how to give the extra turn scientifically. A third is under the screw of her husband's disorder and irregularity, having to subdue her own instincts of order and organisation and clear methodical punctuality, in obedience to his demand for muddle, and being obliged to neglect her own life in the vain attempt to stitch up the rags and rents of his. In point of fact she is held in the tightest vice of all, her whole life being passed in a state of uncomfortable pressure and inharmonious servitude, where she has not even the wages of service—the pleasure of accomplishing the work she undertakes to fulfil. As a rule, I should say that wives are more frequently under the screw than husbands, and with a larger proportion of smashed vitality: but sometimes they take their revenge: and a woman's revenge, like most things feminine, is apt to be excessive, and by no means well considered. When they once get hold of the screw-handle, pray how much nerve and muscle do you think is left entire? And do they ever leave off turning until their victim is a mere superficies—a flattened bit of cardboard bearing but a remote resemblance to a man? The screw of old maiden primness, which squeezes down all exuberance and individuality and naturalness and moral richness, as if all men ought to be pulped into one homogeneous whole, and then run off into moulds like so many jellies of the same shape: the screw of housekeeping meanness, where there are barbed points and salt to rub into the wounds, over and above the lawful amount of pressure: the screw of feminine gadding, which cannot rest quietly at home and will not gad abroad alone, but must have a companion to fly in the same concentric circles: the screw of

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sullen taciturnity, which will not open its own lips to speak, and forbids you to open yours; contrariwise, the screw of chattering, which cannot let you keep silent, not if it went with your life or reputation; are not all these screws of hundred horse-power, whence no human soul can issue in rightful form, or with due proportion of numbers? The screw takes the life-blood out of them.

I have seen a great deal of screw pressure, in life; and felt it too. It works with marvellous force in the schoolroom and nursery, where tiny tyrants try their hands at miniature coercion, and act small dramas like the larger ones of outside life, with none of the elements of oppression wanting. We can all, I am sure, look back to days of childhood when we suffered martyrdom under the screw of the elder and stronger: or, if we were those elder and stronger ourselves, when we tyrannously inflicted an amount of pain and suffering, the remembrance of which makes us incline to the theory of incarnate demonhood, and the innate depravity of the human heart. Oh! that screw of the childish tormentors! It is not a thing to be despised by the authorities, seeing that it often crushes the soul out of all shape and substance, and leaves the mark of mutilation for ever on the mind. Then again, our very affections put the screw on us, and force us into ways and walks uncongenial to every inner impulse. So does the love of others, which is a mighty tyrannical matter, generally, though the victim is wreathed with flowers, and the screw-handle works noiselessly, being well oiled. That love of others is such an unanswerable power! It binds us down with links lighter than silk and stronger than steel. Love is a mighty screw on the world, and few escape whole from under its vice; it makes the proud humble, the mean generous, the merciful unjust, and the patient cruel; it changes all thoughts, all complexions, all hopes, all minds; it is a screw press, an alembic, a crucible, a dyeing vat; it is the Proteus of the moral world, and transmutes all things, like the philosopher's stone or the universal solvent. Because of this, because we are loved and it is expected of us, we will cast our skins like renewing snakes; we will forswear the nature which our mothers gave us, and deny the instincts inherited like the three per cents. from our fathers; we will do all and be all that is most foreign to our original selves; and when we have done all this, perhaps the screw breaks, and we are mangled and smashed and discarded like damaged goods, by the screw turner.

Sickness, too, puts on the screw pretty tightly. We do all sorts of things for a patient, which it would be utterly impossible to us to do for one sane and well. We run up and down stairs twenty times a day, and never count the steps, even though we be fat, plethoric, gouty, or indolent; we accept peevish tempers, though ourselves constitutionally irritable and intolerant of foolishness; we are patient when naturally arbitrary; we soothe the wayward child to whom, by uncoerced force of instinct, we should apply the small ends of a bunch of birch; we tenderly persuade the wilful girl whom else, but for this screw, we should shake by the two shoulders, and perhaps box soundly on her ears—all this we do for sickness, sacrificing ourselves for the good of others: and I should like to know if this is not being under the screw? A baby is a notorious screw-press; the moral nature of every one that handles long clothes, being more or less coerced. It is a marvellous sight to see the giddy woman become the thoughtful mother, and the selfish man transformed into the tender nurse: all because of a certain little bit of humanity, which does not know its right hand from its left, and has neither consciousness nor gratitude for the trouble it gives.

Pity in any shape is also a screw-press of exceeding power. Those of us who have much sympathy, or whose compassionateness is keen and active, are always being worked up into foreign shapes, with a big screw-press. Indeed, are not all our emotions and affections, screws, which strain and squeeze and press us as they like, and force us to the right or left, into square moulds or round, as is most convenient to the occasion? I know one pitiful loving-hearted woman, who has never been her true self since she was born, because she has always been under the screw of some other person's distresses and afflictions—always worked upon by her pity and sympathies, and never by any chance left to stand upright on her two feet, to assert her own rights, and live up to her natural claims. If she wants to go one way, a friend's need drags her another; if she desires cold mutton, some one else demands roast beef; if she asks for sherry, it is absolutely necessary to some foreign salvation that she have port instead. And, because she does not like to give pain, she lets herself be manipulated at the pleasure of every amateur mould-maker, and is always ready to sacrifice herself, in order that any one else may be the gainer. Gentle, sympathetic, self-bestowing, she is a notable example of the screw under which the affectionate constantly live. I often wonder what she would be like, if left to herself, without any pressure put upon her, and if her real nature were suffered to expand or grow in the direction best suited to it. Her nearest friends would not know her.

On all men in high places, the screw is put with tremendous force; clerical fathers and dignitaries turn it with extra pressure on their curates and subordinates—in fact, the clerical screw is one of the largest power known, the Court of Arches being worked with supplementary donkey engines, warranted to crush anything. Public opinion, too, turns a tolerably-sized screw, and the "tyrannous majority" works the handle: the twist nowhere driven tighter than in the localised form of vestry resolutions, where half a dozen men vote away the pence of a parish, as arbitrarily as so many Olympians disposing of a few demigods and their properties. The tax-gatherer carries a screw

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made of iron and turned without remorse. The executive is a screw that occasionally crunches a whole nation. Poverty has a screw as big as human life—a screw which presses down the entire body from head to heel, leaving not a hair in the crown, or a line of the foot, untouched. It is a power that makes a man a mere slave, and deprives him of every kind of manhood and independence. Of all screws, the hardest, the closest, and the most pitiless! The tallyman's screw, the baker's screw, the screw of the loan office, and the pawnbrokers—ah me! the broken hearts and crushed lives that lie therein like broken boulders, good for nothing but for mending the highways! Riches, again, work their own screw—a pretty stiff one in the main; but loose in the thole, and of a wider latitude than many. At all events, we generally prefer the screw of wealth to the screw of poverty, and seldom cry out under it. Friends are screws, so are foes; so are chairs and tables, for the matter of that—stationary screws, that pin us to localities, as butterflies are pinned to corks, with their wings outspread and held down by paper wedges. Indeed, I should be glad to know what is not a screw in this arbitrary old world of ours, and where is the corner where there is real freedom of space, real latitude of movement, real independence of action, without the screw-press and its terrible handle intervening.

A FRENCH WOLF.

In March of the present year, the chance of continental travel brought under the writer's personal notice the consummation of a history of horror not perhaps to be surpassed in the most carefully elaborated page of French romance. The narrative of facts so frightful, would indeed be a barren as well as painful task, did not the case in question present certain novel aspects worthy of attention.

The neighbourhood of Montluel—a small town about twelve miles from Lyons, on the road to Geneva—enjoys a traditionary ill repute. Across the plain of Valbonne, on which it stands, may be seen the glimmer of two white houses—the Great and Little Dangerous—so called from having been in former days the scene of many deeds of lawless violence. The country around is broken, sparsely inhabited, and dotted with patches of dense and sombre woodland, sometimes reaching almost to the dimensions of forests. A better locality no robber could desire.

Now, for six years, dating from February, 'fifty-five, the ancient bad reputation of this precinct had been resuscitated. On the twenty-eighth of February, 'fifty-five, some sportsmen, threading the thickets of Montaverne, came upon the corpse of a young female, covered with blood, which had proceeded from six terrible wounds in the head and face. The body was stripped, and had been subjected to gross outrage. A handkerchief, collar, black-lace cap, and a pair of shoes, were picked up close at hand. By the aid of these things, the deceased was soon identified as Marie Baday, late a servant at Lyons, which city she had quitted three days before. She had stated as the reason for her departure, that a man from the country had offered her a good situation in the neighbourhood, provided she could take it at once. Precisely similar proposals had been made on the very same day, to another servant girl, Marie Cart: the agent being a country-looking man, aged about fifty, and having a noticeable scar or swelling on the upper lip. Marie Cart postponed her answer until the fourth of March: a circumstance which probably induced the suspected person to address himself, in the interim, to Marie Baday.

On the fourth of March, the same man called again upon Marie Cart, who finally declined his offer, but introduced him to a friend of hers, Olympe Alabert—also a servant—who, tempted with what she considered an advantageous proposal, closed with it, and left Lyons under the guidance of the supposed countryman. Night was falling as they entered the wood of Montaverne, in which, a few days before, the body of Marie Baday had been found. Acting on a sudden impulse, induced, perhaps, by the gloomy solitude of the place, the girl quitted her conductor, and sought refuge in a neighbouring farm.

At this point—strange as it seems, considering on what a stratum of crime they had touched—the discoveries of the police ended for that time.

In the month of September following, a man, answering in every point to the former description, induced a girl, named Josephte Charlety, to accompany him to a pretended situation as a domestic servant, and both left the city together. Their way led through cross roads; until, night coming on, the girl—like Olympe Alabert—oppressed with a nameless terror, fled to the nearest house.

On the thirty-first of October, the wolf again visited the fold, and selected Jeanne Bourgeois, another servant girl. But once more an opportune misgiving saved the intended prey. In the succeeding month, the wolf made choice of one Victorine Perrin; but, on this occasion, being crossed by some travellers, it was the wolf who took to flight, carrying with him the girl's trunk, containing all her clothes and money. None of these incidents seem to have provoked much attention from the authorities; and the horrible deeds actually in course of commission were only brought to light by the almost miraculous escape of another proposed victim, Marie Pichon.

On the twenty-sixth of May, 'sixty-one, at eleven o'clock at night, a woman knocked wildly at the door of a farm, in the village of Balan, demanding help against an assassin. Her bruised and wounded face, torn garments, shoeless feet, all bore testimony to the imminence of the danger from which she had escaped. Conducted to the brigade of gendarmerie at Montlael, she made the following statement: listened to at the subsequent trial with breathless inte-

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rest: "To-day, at two o'clock, I was crossing the bridge La Guillotière, at Lyons, when a man I had not before observed, but who must have been following me, plucked my dress and asked if I could tell him in what street the Servants' Office was situated? I mentioned two, adding that I was myself about to visit the latter. He asked if I were in search of a place? 'Yes.' 'Then,' said he, 'I have exactly the thing to suit you. I am gardener at a château near Montlael, and my mistress has sent me to Lyons with positive orders to bring back a house-servant, cost what it may.' He enumerated the advantages I should enjoy, and said that the work would be very light, and the wages two hundred and fifty francs, besides many Christmas-boxes. A married daughter of his mistress paid her frequent visits, and always left five francs on the mantelpiece for the maid. He added, that I should be expected to attend mass regularly.

"The appearance, language, and manner of the man gave me so strong an impression of good faith, that, without a minute's hesitation, I accepted his offer, and we accordingly left by the train, which arrived at Montlael about nightfall—half-past seven. Placing my trunk upon his shoulder he desired me to follow, saying we had now a walk of an hour and a half, but that, by taking cross paths, we should quickly reach our destination. I carried, in one hand, a little box: in the other, my basket and umbrella. We crossed the railway and walked for some distance along the parallel road, when the man turned suddenly to the left and led me down a steep descent, skirted on both sides by thick bushes. Presently he faced round, saying that my trunk fatigued him, that he would conceal it in a thicket and come back for it with a carriage on the morrow. We then abandoned the path altogether, crossed several fields, and came to a coppice, in which he hid the trunk, saying we should presently see the château. After this, we traversed other fields, twice crossing over places that looked like dried-up water-courses, and, finally, through very difficult ways, rather scrambling than walking, arrived at the summit of a little hill.

"I must mention something that had attracted my attention. Throughout the walk my guide seemed remarkably attentive, constantly cautioning me to mind my steps, and assisting me carefully over every obstacle. Immediately after crossing the hill I spoke of, his movements began to give me uneasiness. In passing some vines he tried to pull up a large stake. It, however, resisted his efforts, and, as I was following close on his heels, he did not persevere. A little farther, he stooped down and seemed to be endeavouring to pick up one of the large stones that lay about. Though now seriously alarmed, I asked, with all the indifference I could command, what he was looking for? He made an unintelligible reply, and presently repeated the manœuvre. Again I inquired what he was looking for,—Had he lost anything? 'Nothing, nothing,' he replied; 'it was only a plant I meant to pick for my garden.' Other singular movements kept me in a state of feverish alarm. I observed that he several times lagged behind, and, whenever he did so, moved his hands about under his blouse as though in search of a weapon. I was frozen with terror. Run away I durst not, for I felt he would pursue me; but I constantly urged him to lead the way, assuring him I would follow.

"In this way we reached the top of another small hill, on which stood a half-built cottage. There was a cabbage-garden, and a good wheel-road. My very fear now gave me the necessary courage. I resolved to go no farther, and at once said, 'I see you have led me wrong. I shall stop here.' Hardly had the words left my mouth, when he turned sharply round, stretched his arms above my head, and let fall a cord with a running noose. We were at this moment almost in contact. Instinctively, I let fall everything I carried, and with both hands seized the man's two arms, pushing him from me with all my strength. This movement saved me. The cord, which was already round my head, only caught and pulled off my cap. I shrieked out, 'My God! my God! I am lost!'

"I was too much agitated to observe why the assassin did not repeat his attack. All I recollect is, that the cord was still in his hand. I caught up my box and umbrella, and flew down the hill. In crossing a little ditch, I fell and bruised myself severely, losing my umbrella. Fear, however, gave me strength. I heard the heavy steps of the murderer in pursuit, and was on my legs again in an instant, running for life. At that moment, the moon rose above the trees on my left, and I saw the glimmer of a white house on the plain. Towards this I flew, crossing the railway, and falling repeatedly in my headlong course. Soon I saw lights. It was Balan. I stopped at the first house. A man ran out, and I was saved."

Such was Marie Pichon's narrative. The authorities, now fully aroused, at once commenced a searching inquiry. Ultimately, the eye of justice rested on a certain small house in the little hamlet of Du Mollard. Village-gossip spoke unreservedly of the skulking nocturnal habits of its master—the stern, unsocial manners of his wife. Their name was the same as the village, Dumollard: a very common name in that district. The man had a peculiar scar or tumour on his upper lip.

The magistrates at once waited upon Dumollard, and requested an explanation of the employment of his time, on the day and night of the twenty-sixth of May. The answers being evasive, and certain articles in the house wearing a very suspicious look, Dumollard was given into custody, conveyed to Trevoux, and instantly identified by Marie Pichon as her assailant. Meanwhile, a search in his house resulted in the discovery of an immense accumulation of articles, evidently the produce of plunder — clothes, linen, pieces of lace, ribbons, gowns, handkerchiefs, shoes—in a word, every species of article that might have belonged to girls of the servant class. Very many of

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these bore traces of blood: others had been roughly washed and wrung out. These objects amounted in all to twelve hundred and fifty. "The man must have a charnel somewhere," said one of the searchers.

It was next ascertained that, in November, 'fifty-eight, Dumollard was seen to alight one evening at the station of Montlael, accompanied by a young woman, whose luggage he deposited in the office, saying that he would call for it next day. It was never claimed.

"On the night you mean," said the wife of Dumollard—who, after the search in the house, had been likewise taken into custody, and now showed a disposition to confess—"Dumollard came home very late, bringing a silver watch and some blood-stained clothes. He gave me the latter to wash, only saying, in his short way, 'I have killed a girl in Montmain wood, and I am going back to bury her.' He took his pickaxe, and went out. The next day he wanted to claim the girl's luggage, but I dissuaded him from doing so."

In order to verify this statement, the magistrates, on the thirty-first of July, 'sixty-one, repaired to Montmain wood, taking with them the two accused. For some hours all their searches proved fruitless, the woman declaring her inability to point out the precise spot, and the man preserving a stolid silence. At length, some appearance of a tumulus was detected among the bushes, and a few strokes of the pickaxe made visible some bones. A circular trench was then carefully dug, and a perfect female skeleton uncovered. The skull presented a frightful fracture. Under it, was found some brown hair and a large double hair-pin.

The prisoners were now brought forward, and confronted with the silent witness.

The woman having volunteered further confession, the party now proceeded to the wood Communes, also near Montlael; but, night coming on, investigation was deferred till the next day. A great part of the next day was passed in fruitless search, when, just as the party prepared to return to Montlael with the view of organising explorations on a larger scale, Dumollard suddenly declared that he would himself point out the place they sought.

He thereupon guided them to a spot about fifty yards deep in the wood. Here, they laboured for another hour with no better success, until one of the officers noticed a slight displacement of the soil, presenting some small fissures, from whence flies were issuing. Above this spot, two little shrubs, evidently planted by design, had taken feeble root.

A stroke of the spade laid visible the back of a human hand. Presently, the body of a young female, in complete preservation (owing to the character of the soil), was exposed to view. The corpse lay on its back, the left hand on the bosom, the fingers clutching a clod of earth. Appearances favoured the frightful conclusion that the victim had been buried while yet alive and conscious.

The bearing of Dumollard in the presence of this new and terrible accuser, was as calm as ever. Not the slightest trace of emotion was perceptible on his stolid features. It was observed, nevertheless, that he studiously avoided looking, as it were, on the face of his victim. The magistrates seized the moment to impress upon him the inutility of any further attempt to evade justice, and invited him to make a full confession. After a few moments of seeming irresolution, he commenced the following recital:

"One day in December, 'fifty-three, I was accosted in Lyons by two individuals of the farmer class, whose manner and appearance won my unlimited confidence. After treating me to wine at a neighbouring tavern, they invited me to stroll on the quay, asked me a multitude of questions, and finally proposed to me to enter their service. I inquired the nature of the work required of me? 'The abduction of young women,' was the reply. 'You shall have forty francs for every "prize," and if you remain with us twenty years, we will guarantee you a hundred thousand francs.'

"Such a proposal seemed far too advantageous to be treated lightly," continued Dumollard. "They gave me the necessary instructions, which were simple enough. I was merely to look out for young females in search of situations, offer them first-rate wages, and conduct them beyond the town.

"A week later, we commenced operations on the Place de la Charité. My first attempt failed; but the second woman I accosted listened to my story, accepted the pretended situation, and accompanied me from the town. At the end of the suburb, my two employers met me. I pretended to have forgotten something, and, telling the girl these gentlemen were friends of mine, requested her to go on with them, promising to overtake them at Neyron. I lingered about the spot for three hours, when the men returned, and handed me a parcel, saying it was a present for my wife. Opening it, I found a gown and chemise, both stained with blood. I recognised the dress of the woman I had brought, and demanded what had become of her? 'You will not see her again,' was the only reply.

"On the way home, I washed the clothes in the fountain at Neyron, and gave them to my wife, saying I had purchased them at Lyons.

"I never knew the exact place in which they murdered the girl, but I think it must have been near the bridge Du Barre, and that they flung the body into the Rhône. I think so, because, one day in the ensuing summer, while crossing that bridge in their company, one of them remarked: 'We have sent two bodies under this bridge already.' And this I understood to imply two other murders, anterior to that I have mentioned.

"Nothing remarkable happened until February, 'fifty-five, when my two friends met me by appointment at a wine-shop, and brought with them a young female of dark complexion,

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with whom, and the men, I set forth, and proceeded as far as the road leading from Miribel to Romaneche, which passes through the wood. Here I sat down, declaring I would go no farther. They tried to persuade me to proceed, but finding me determined, presently pursued their way, taking with them the girl.

"I waited two hours. No cry reached my ears. Still I had a presentiment of something wrong. The men returned alone, saying they had left the girl at a farm. As they brought no clothes with them, I was inclined to believe their story. We then parted, and I returned home."

[This was, no doubt, the unfortunate Marie Baday.]

"Nothing occurred for two years, during which I had occasional interviews with my two friends; at length, in December, 'fifty-eight, I fell in with them on the Quai de Perrache. They told me they had something on hand, would I come? I consented, and they left me; presently returning with a young girl, with whom we started by the rail for Montlael. It was dark when we arrived, and the men, taking me aside, requested me to guide them to some secluded spot, indicating the wood of Choisey. I told them it was too close to the high road; it would be better to go on farther. Presently we reached the edge of Montmain wood. *That*, I told them, would do.

"They left me seated by the roadside. Soon I heard one loud scream, about three hundred yards distant; then profound silence. In a few minutes the men returned, bringing a silver watch and some clothes. I told them I had heard a scream, and asked if she had suffered much? 'No,' they answered; 'we gave her one blow on the head, and another in the side, and that did the business.'

"We knew that the body of Marie Baday had been found, and it was judged prudent to bury this new corpse. I therefore ran to my house for the tools, and at the same time gave my wife the watch, and the clothes, which were stained with blood. She asked me whence they came? Thinking that if I accused others she would not believe me, and relying, like a fool, on her discretion, I replied that they had belonged to a girl I had killed, and was about to bury, in Montmain wood. I then went back to my friends, who dug a shallow grave, and concealed the body, while I sat by."

[This was the victim—never identified—whose skeleton was exhumed, as before mentioned, on the thirty-first July, 'sixty-one.]

Dumollard referred to certain other attempts, which had failed, owing to the suspicions of the intended victims, and continued:

"I must speak now of this girl, Marie Eulalie Bussod, whose body lies before us. I accosted her, one day, on the bridge La Guillotière, and asked her if she would accept a good place in the country, offering two hundred francs. She required two hundred and ten, and we went to the residence of her sister, to discuss the matter, where I agreed to her terms. At the end of a week, I returned and escorted her to the station at Brotteaux, where I had, in the interim, desired my two employers to meet me. They came, and I introduced them to Marie Bussod as friends and neighbours of mine, who would accompany us some little distance after quitting the rail.

"It was dark when we reached Montlael, and I had to act as guide, carrying the girl's trunk. 'What a lovely creature!' whispered one of my friends to me as we set out.

"I led the way towards the wood Communes—a wild, retired spot—following a path, almost obliterated, towards Croix-Martel. Here I hid the trunk among some bushes, assuring the girl I would return for it in the morning.

"Somehow, at this point, my courage failed me. I told my friends I could go no farther: at the same time, however, pointing out to them Communes wood, which lay but a few hundred paces distant. In two hours, the men returned, bringing some clothes and a pair of gold earrings, which they gave me for my wife. I inquired what they had done with the girl? 'Oh,' said one, 'she got two blows on the head, and one in the stomach. She made no great outcry.' I then went home for a spade, and the men buried her here, as you see.

"Marie Pichon would inevitably have suffered the same fate, had not my two employers failed me at the appointed place. I did not wish to do her any harm. On the contrary, finding the men absent, I wished to get rid of her, and, to frighten her, threw my arms (not a cord, as she affirms) round her neck. I was glad to see her run away. 'At least,' I thought, 'they'll not get *this* one!'

"Some days later, finding an inquiry on foot, I judged it prudent to destroy the effects of the girl Bussod, and those of Pichon, and, assisted by my wife, buried them accordingly in the wood des Rouillonnes.

"Now I have told all. I have nothing more to add."

It is almost needless to mention that the two mysterious persons on whom he affected to lay the burden of these atrocious crimes, had no real existence. Unable to resist the proof of his own complicity, Dumollard, as Rush did before him, saw no hope of escape, save in conjuring up some individual more guilty than himself.

The account against him, now stood as follows:

Three women, unknown, murdered and flung into the Rhône.

Murder of Marie Baday; body found in Montaverne.

Murder of a girl unknown; skeleton found in Montmain wood.

Murder of Marie Bassod; body found in Communes wood.

Attempts at robbery and assassination on the persons of the women Charlety, Alabert, Bourgeois, Perrin, Fargat, Michel, Pichon, and three others, unidentified.

Nor is it to be supposed that he confessed to *all* the victims. Without dwelling

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on opinions which carried the number of those actually murdered, to twelve, sixteen, eighteen, it may be gathered from hints let fall at intervals by the female prisoner, as well as from the vast accumulation of clothes and the like (among which were numerous articles which must have belonged to children of nine or ten years old), that these intermediate periods described by Dumollard as presenting "nothing remarkable," were stained with deeds as horrible as those confessed to: deeds, perhaps, never to be revealed on earth.

The trial commenced on the twenty-ninth of January of the present year, at the assizes of the Ain, sitting at Bourg: the woman Dumollard being included in the act of accusation. It lasted four days. Through the politeness of the officials it was not difficult for a stranger to obtain an excellent place in the crowded hall, and the temptation of witnessing an important French criminal trial was too great to be resisted by the passing traveller who writes this account of it.

The proceedings commenced at ten o'clock, under the presidency of M. Marilbat, of the Imperial Court of Lyons: the procureur-general on his right, the procureur-imperial on his left: and the magistrates of Bourg, Trevoux, and Montlael on the bench behind.

A short pause, and the prisoner appeared, escorted by four gendarmes, his wife following.

"There he is! There he is!" murmured the assembly.

"Yes, here I am!" retorted the prisoner, waving his hat, as a popular candidate might at an election.

He was placed on a bench at a little distance from his wife, and had the appearance of a hale rustic of fifty, or thereabouts; his hair, beard, and moustache, thick and dark; his nose aquiline; eyes blue, round, and very prominent; his whole expression singularly calm and self-possessed. The swelling on his upper lip, by which he had been more than once identified, was very apparent. He had told the jailer that it was occasioned by the sting of a poisonous fly.

The phrenological development of this man presented some extraordinary traits. The skull, enormously large at the base, sloped upward and backward, until it terminated almost in a cone—a point too acute to be appreciated without passing the hand through his thick hair. The organs of destructiveness, circumspection, and self-reliance, exhibited the most marked development. In front, the skull rapidly receding, presented, indeed, a "forehead villanous low." From the root of the nose to the root of the hair, it did not exceed three inches. The organs of comparison, causality, ideality, &c., were all but imperceptible; nay, in some instances, presented an actual depression. In a word, the cruel, brute-like character of this head was due rather to the absence of almost *every* good feature than to the extreme development of the bad. It was a type of skull commonly found among nations yet beyond the pale of civilisation.

The jury having been empannelled, and two supplementary jurors having been chosen by lot, to supply the places of any who might, from illness or other cause, be disqualified from sitting out the trial, the indictment was read.

Scarcely had the last word dropped from the officer's lips, than Dumollard rose, and beckoned eagerly to his counsel, M. Lardière. The latter approached:

"There is a draught of air somewhere," said the prisoner, "which really annoys me excessively. Can nothing be done to remedy it?"

This important matter arranged to the prisoner's satisfaction, the list of witnesses—seventy in number—was read aloud—all (save one, deceased) answering to their names.

Next came the interrogatory; that doubtful feature in the otherwise excellent system of French criminal procedure. It was conducted, however, in the present instance, with dignity and fairness. Dumollard was questioned on his domestic relations.

"Your father was a Hungarian?"

"Yes."

"What became of him?"

"I cannot say. (Then, hesitatingly:) If you insist upon my explaining, I will."

"Certainly. You are here to explain."

"My father was well-to-do in his own land. My mother told me that, in eighteen hundred and fourteen, we went into Italy—to Padua. There my father was taken prisoner by the Austrians. We never saw him again."

[A horrible story, but resting on very substantial proof, and fully credited at Trevoux, held that Dumollard's father had been implicated in a plot against the life of the Emperor of Austria. On being recognised at Padua, the unhappy man was hastily tried, and subjected to the punishment of "écartelément," *i.e.* the culprit being attached to four horses, and dismembered.]

"It is said you have been accustomed to ill-treat your wife?"

"Never. Well, sometimes, when she has plagued me very much, I may have forgotten myself for a moment."

"You have been convicted of many offences?"

"Once, only."

"How, once only? We have here the record of two convictions, at least. You have no means, yet you do no work. You have borne the character of a vagabond at war with society."

"Since I became the associate of those two wretches (the fictitious persons), it has, indeed, been as you say."

"You live in singular privacy, forbidding your wife to know her neighbours:—a rule so well observed that, before your arrest, the mayor of your commune knew nothing of you. You returned to your house at unusual hours, using a pass-word, 'Hardi,' as one of your neighbours will prove."

"I may have done so, but not in the sense you mean."

Questioned as to Marie Pichon, the prisoner's account corroborated hers, except that he reite-

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rated his assertion that his only object was to frighten her.

"But she declares you strove to strangle her with a cord."

"That is false. If I had had such a purpose, I should not have led her to a place where any alarm might be heard."

"But why lead her thither at all?"

"My employers said to me, 'Eyes are upon you of which you know nothing. If you betray us, you are lost.' That alarmed me."

"You have destroyed many of the effects of your several victims. Why have you allowed so many to remain?"

"I preserved those articles," replied the prisoner, with perfect gravity, "for the sake of the relations of the deceased."

Dumollard being removed, his wife was brought forward. There was nothing noticeable in her appearance or demeanour.

She stated, in reply to various questions, that her husband had twice brought her, articles of dress which he described as having been the property of women murdered by him. She had noticed the blood-marks, but said nothing to her husband, with whom she lived on indifferent terms. He was frequently absent at night, returning before dawn and using a watchword, as stated. Though cognisant of his guilty practices, she continued to live with him, being completely cowed by his menaces.

The production in court of the stolen effects was the next scene of the legal drama. These were brought forward in two immense chests bound with iron clasps, and sealed.

"Ah, tiens!" murmured the assembly. "Now for the wardrobe of M. Dumollard!"

The articles were sorted, and placed, "chronologically," in heaps. There were seventy handkerchiefs, fifty-seven pairs of stockings, twenty-eight scarfs, thirty-eight caps, ten corsets, nine gowns, and a multitude of miscellaneous objects.

Witness after witness then entered the box, and delivered their testimony with surprising terseness and lucidity. Until the evidence of each was complete, no interruption was offered, unless when the president, observing that the witness was merely corroborating matters already amply deposed to, recalled the speaker to facts bearing more immediately on the case.

Owing to this, and perhaps in some degree to the French facilities of expression, the trial proceeded with great rapidity.

The sixth witness, Louis Cochet, was an odd-looking little man, with a very excited manner. He was Dumollard's next-door neighbour. He stated that he had seen the prisoner come home at two in the morning, carrying a trunk.

"He muttered 'Hardi! hardi!' at the door, and was let in. The next day, he said to Madame (the female prisoner), 'Aha! I have got the watchword! I avail myself of Monsieur's absence to call when it suits me!' Then I asked what he did abroad so late? She grew red, and said dryly, 'He has his own affairs.' Oh, messieurs!" said the impressionable little witness, bursting into tears. "I'm fifty-one, I never was in a court of justice before. Now, indeed, I know what frightful 'affairs' this neighbour of mine dealt in!"

The seventeenth witness, Dr. Montvenoux, detailed the autopsy of the body of Marie Bussod, stating his belief that she had been buried alive.

Hereupon, the prisoner's counsel rose for the first time.

"I desire," he said, "to know the witness's precise reasons for this presumption. We have horrors enough to contend with, without this crowning atrocity. The opinion of the medical witnesses has already created a most painful sensation."

Dr. Montvenoux alleged, as his chief reasons, that the wound was not mortal, nor even severe; that a clod of the outer earth—not that which formed the subsoil—was grasped in the hand; and that the teeth were set, as if in agony.

The court now adjourned for a few minutes. Dumollard took a huge lump of bread-and-cheese from his pocket, and began devouring it with the appetite of an ogre. At this moment his eye happened to fall on Marie Pichon, who was moving through the court. Faithful to his plan of defence, he called out to her:

"Ah, malheureuse! But for *me*, you would not have been here now. Come and thank me for rescuing you from those villains."

The girl made no reply; but her sister, who accompanied her, retorted with such warmth and volubility, that the dialogue was checked by the officer of the court. A curious little episode occurred in the waiting-room. Marie Pichon, who was evidently regarded as the heroine of the hour, and was distinguished by a very pleasing countenance and ingenuous manner, had been prevailed upon by a photographer sent from Paris to sit for her picture. Just as she had taken her position, a respectably-dressed woman forced her way through the crowd, and, running up to Pichon, implored her to forbear, reminding her, in accordance with a popular belief which, it seems, existed, that all women who have become associated in a marked manner with great criminal processes—such as Nina Lassave, Fieschi's mistress, "Madame" Lacenaire, and others—came to some melancholy end.

Marie Pichon started: "Ah, mon Dieu! monsieur, spare me. Do not put me beside that wretch!" she exclaimed, and was instantly lost in the crowd.

The examination of the fifty-third witness produced a most painful scene. This was Josephte Bussod, sister of the murdered girl, who, with two other sisters, appeared in deep mourning, and testified the most profound grief. It was necessary that she should identify the clothes of the deceased; and, as each familiar garment, stained with her blood, was in turn held up, the tears and sobs of the witnesses redoubled, and deeply affected the auditory. The prisoners, alone, preserved their calmness.

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"Do you recollect this dress?" asked the president, of Dumollard.

"Oh, perfectly."

"And you, Marianne Dumollard?"

"Of course, I have worn it."

"Have you not also worn a cap with marks of blood?"

"Certainly not. I should have *washed* it," said the woman.

"You fully recognise the prisoner?" asked the president of the weeping witness.

"Recognise him!" shrieked the poor girl, wringing her hands with wild passion. "The miscreant! the monster! He killed my sister—my poor Eulalie! But it is I, too—*I*, that am guilty. O, mon Dieu! mon Dieu! I believed him. I trusted him. I made her go with him—to death—to death—and *what* a death!"

She was carried out fainting. A gentleman, sitting near, stated that, since the discovery of her sister's fate, she had never ceased to accuse herself in this manner, as a sort of accomplice.

The procureur-general gave a brief summary of the case, claiming the extreme penalty of the law against both the prisoners.

"*One*," he concluded, "as the participator in all the robberies, the confederate of all the horrors that had preceded them. The other, as a habitual professed assassin, whose life has been one long outrage and defiance of all laws, divine and human. Steeped in infamy—enemy alike of the living and of the dead—he has made no single pause in his career of crime, nor can any penalty of man's enactment attain the standard of his desert."

Dumollard's advocate, M. Lardière, followed, and commenced his address in a manner decidedly French.

"In the secluded village of Dagneux, lately so obscure, to-day so notorious, there stands, fronting the church, a modest tomb wherein repose all that is mortal of those I loved best on earth—my father and my mother. Since the period that the exigencies of my professional career have forbidden me to kneel at that cherished shrine, memory has daily pictured to me those happy shades, that simple, quiet community, among whom the soft joys of earlier youth were tasted."

The excellent advocate, in less euphonious phrase, proceeded to explain that Dumollard, recollecting his name in connexion with the place, had written to him, entreating him to undertake his defence.

"Perhaps it is a first expiation, on the part of this unhappy man," remarked Monsieur L. with almost overweening modesty, "that he should have selected *my* weak aid, instead of that of some more distinguished member of that bar whose hospitality I am now enjoying."

Monsieur L. made no effort to rebut the evidence, resting his defence on the ground of those social defects which cast men like Dumollard, unheeded, unreclaimed, loose upon the world, from their cradles: while, at the same time, the growing aversion to capital punishment, weakens the sole barrier by which the passions of such men are restrained. Shall, then, society wreak mortal vengeance upon a deed for which it is itself, in some measure, responsible?

The counsel of the female prisoner, M. Villeneuve, delivered a long and very eloquent address, and, having better materials to work with, made a decided impression on the court and jury.

The president gave an impartial summing up, and concluded by submitting to the jury twenty-eight distinct questions, bearing upon the various acts of murder, robbery, &c., charged in the indictment.

It was four o'clock, on the fourth day, when the jury withdrew to their consultations. The prisoners were removed, and groups, forming in every part of the court, eagerly discussed the case. No doubt was felt as to Dumollard. The strongest opponents of capital punishment seemed on this occasion to have laid aside their prejudices. As an illustration of this, a gentleman who had been summoned among the jury, but was not one of those on whom the lot fell, observed:

"I have never been able to condemn a man to death, but, in spite of the scruples I have always felt and expressed as to the inviolability of human life, I would, in *this* instance, have signed *with both hands* for the guillotine."

In the mean time the individual most nearly concerned was taking refreshment, and chatting easily with those around him; but he neither addressed nor even looked at his wife, who sat at a little distance, weeping bitterly.

Two hours and a half had elapsed, when the door leading to the jury-chamber swung open, and the twelve re-entered: the foreman carrying a large scroll, which he handed to the president. There was no need to proclaim silence, when, placing his hand on his heart, the foreman began:

"On my honour and my conscience, before God and men, our verdict is——"

"Stay, gentlemen," said the president; "here is something irregular. You have not only to pronounce upon the principal charges, but also to answer 'Yes' or 'No' to each of the aggravating circumstances. Have the goodness to retire and do this."

It took some little time to rectify this informality, and then the jury once more made their appearance. The twenty-eight chief questions were, for the most part, supplemented by other questions, each requiring a separate answer, such as:

"With violence?"

"During the night?"

"With premeditation?"

"On the public highway?" And like questions.

In all, there proved to be sixty-seven affirmative, and seventeen negative, answers—the former embracing all the material charges.

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The effect of this complicated verdict was the conviction of both prisoners, with (by a majority) extenuating circumstances in favour of the woman.

For the first time during the proceedings, Dumollard's coolness seemed to desert him. His countenance became perfectly livid; his eyes glared wildly round. At this moment, perhaps, the full horror of his position first revealed itself to his stubborn intelligence. There occurred, too, one of those dramatic pauses which give time for a scene of peculiar interest and solemnity to impress itself ineffaceably on the memory. Throughout the dimly-lighted court nothing was to be seen but bowed heads, or stern still faces, waiting for the word of doom: not without a sense of that humiliation which even in the very act of justice confesses with reluctance the possibility of guilt so monstrous, in the human form. Hunger makes the wolf savage, "yet with his kind he gently doth consort." Here was a man who, to pamper the lowest passions of which nature is susceptible, had literally waded in the blood of the most helpless and innocent of his kind.

It was the voice of the procureur-general that broke the hush, praying the court to grant the application of certain articles of the penal code. The prisoners, called upon to add what they pleased to their defence, made no reply.

Then, the president, after reading the articles applicable to the case, pronounced the fatal judgment. Martin Dumollard to the pain of death, the execution to take place at Montlael; Marianne Dumollard to twenty years' imprisonment and hard labour.

That night, the condemned murderer slept tranquilly: though for the preceding four his rest had been broken by convulsive tossings to and fro.

"Well, Dumollard, how goes it?" said his advocate, entering his cell next morning.

"As one who expects to die," was the answer.

"It remains then to make a good end; let that be the first expiation of your crimes."

Neither to such exhortations, nor to the earnest counsels of the excellent Abbé Beroud, vicar of Bourg, who paid him many visits, did the unhappy wretch give any heed.

"I shall do nothing with him," said the good priest, mournfully. "The mind is too coarse and brutified. It is not with him as with others, where darkness and light are at least mingled in the soul. Here, it is one profound obscurity."

Nevertheless, he did not relax his efforts; and, as Dumollard exercised his right of appeal to the Court of Cassation, opportunity was not wanting.

Dumollard's cell was shared by four or five others, condemned to different terms of imprisonment. These sometimes flattered him with hopes of success in his appeal.

"In twenty days," he answered, "I shall either lose my head, or be set at liberty; but I would rather die than be sent to Cayenne or even kept in prison."

This speech betrayed two misapprehensions on the criminal's part. One, that a certain time must elapse before the execution of a capital sentence, whereas the law assigns none; the other, that a favourable decision of the appeal court ends all proceedings, and sets a prisoner free. Whereas it merely remits the case to a new jury.

On the twenty-seventh of February his appeal was rejected; the report being accompanied by that recommendation to mercy without which no capital sentence in France is carried into execution.

The report was then submitted to the minister and to the Emperor, who wrote upon it, "Il n'y a lieu" — there is no room (*i.e.* for pardon)—and the magistrates and officials of Montlael received orders to execute the sentence within twenty-four hours. The executioner of Grenoble was directed to assist his colleague of Lyons.

On Friday evening, the seventh of March, the guillotine was taken from the vaults below the Palais de Justice, placed upon an immense car, and transported to Montlael: whither a large detachment of Lancers had already proceeded, to preserve order among the immense multitudes that came flocking from every part of the country. At four o'clock that same evening, the criminal received intimation that he was to die on the morrow. He turned deadly pale; but soon recovered his habitual indifference, and only replied that it was what he had expected. His confessor was then introduced, and remained with him half an hour. About to leave, he suggested to the condemned man that the time had arrived when, if ever, he should exchange forgiveness and reconciliation with his wife, offering at the same time to obtain permission for his release from irons.

Dumollard assented, and the interview took place immediately—the male prisoner remaining calm and unmoved as ever—the woman deeply agitated. After this, the two sat down to partake of their last meal together: an abundant supper, provided at the cost of the good priest, who, though it was fast-day, permitted them, "in the present conjuncture of circumstances," to eat what they pleased. Of this license, Dumollard (again like Rush) availed himself to the utmost limit of human appetite. Beef, pork, cutlets, and especially puddings, disappeared under his efforts with a rapidity that struck with amazement the spectators of that gloomy feast. He seemed to consider the time too precious to be wasted in conversation; but, nevertheless, found opportunity now and then to address a word of comfort to his wife, whose sobs interrupted the repast.

"Patience, patience; you are fretting about me; but it is a waste of grief; you see *I* don't care. As for you, you have to remain twenty years in prison. Be careful of the little money I shall leave you. Take some wine now and then. But mind! On your liberation,

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do not go back to Dagneux, where your family would not welcome you. Remain at Dijon. By-the-by," he added, as if an important idea had struck him, "don't forget to reckon with Berthet—she owes you for so many days' work; that will be seventeen francs, less five sous."

At half-past ten at night, the vehicle which was to convey Dumollard to Montlael arrived at the prison. Embracing his wife for the last time, he quietly mounted, accompanied by his confessor, and escorted by two gendarmes.

"Ho là!" said the criminal, who seemed to have a peculiar aversion to cold air. "This is very annoying. I am chilled to death."

"Here, père Dumollard," said a good-natured gendarme, "by a lucky foresight I brought my blanket."

Once made comfortable, the prisoner seemed to desire nothing more. Through the whole length of that ghastly journey, his was the only unruffled spirit of the party. He conversed incessantly, but without effort or bravado, describing the localities, the distance from point to point of places mentioned at the trial, &c. &c., with a cool minuteness which, under the circumstances, and with the accompaniment of sickly moon-gleams, the howling March wind, and the dull rumble of the carriage that bore the culprit nearer and nearer to his doom, struck his companions with awe.

It was half-past one in the morning as they entered Chalamont, a mile or two short of Montlael, and here the crowd had become so dense as to create some difficulty in passing. Yells and execrations resounded on every side. Some women forced their way up to the vehicle, flashing their lanterns into the face of the criminal. The Abbé Beroud warmly remonstrated, rebuking their indecent curiosity, and exhorting them to be satisfied with the act of justice about to be done. Thus, through masses of living beings, miles in length, the cortége approached Montlael.

The scaffold had been erected during the night in the widest piece of public ground—the Place Bourgeat—and now stood ready, in the centre of a perfect forest of bayonets and drawn sabres. Beyond the military square, every visible inch, from ground to chimney-top, was packed with living beings. How some of these points of vantage were gained at all, or how descended from, were questions only to be resolved by those who saw the process. We were informed that thousands had been content to pass the long chill night in these positions.

Dumollard had alighted at the town-hall, and was warming himself comfortably at the fire in the council-chamber. A magistrate present, exhorted him to confess whatever remained upon his mind in reference to the crimes for which he was to suffer. The criminal made no other reply than:

"I am innocent. It is unlucky, but I am sacrificed for the guilt of others."

M. Carrel, the curé of Montlael, entered.

"Ah, good morning, M. Carrel!" said Dumollard. "I have heard much good of you. It was from your hands that, at sixteen, I received my first communion."

Some further futile efforts were made to induce him to confess. One singular answer was noted:

"If others have buried bodies in my vineyard, I am not responsible for that."

He was offered some refreshment, and took some coffee and Madeira; after which the executioners were introduced, and the "toilette" commenced. The prisoner himself took off his blouse, and sat down. His feet were tied, but not sufficiently to prevent his walking, and his arms secured. They then cut off his hair and the neck of his shirt. As the steel of the shears touched him, he gave a convulsive shudder, but quickly regained his self-command. One final effort to obtain confession, or at least admission of his guilt, met with the former result, and this extraordinary offender, persevering to the last in his war with justice and society, marched forth to his doom.

The shout that rent the air, as he appeared, might have been heard for miles. The silence that succeeded was the more appalling. Dumollard's lips moved, as though in prayer. The priests bent forward, caught, and earnestly re-echoed the solitary accents:

"Jésus! Marie! Pray for me!"

He knelt for a moment on the lower steps of the scaffold, and the Abbé Beroud offered to his white lips the symbol of divine mercy. Then, the executioners helped him up the remaining steps, tied him to the plank, pushed the latter to its place. Quick as lightning, the axe descended, and, in a few seconds, head and body lay together in a rude coffin; the body to be interred in an obscure nook of the cemetery at Montlael; the head to be sent to the phrenological professors at Lyons. There was scarcely time for a trace of blood to become visible. Never was the merciful death of the guillotine more skilfully administered. Never was death punishment more richly deserved, than by the French wolf, Dumollard.

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER II.

CAPTAIN WRAGGE stopped nearly midway in the one little row of houses composing Rosemary-lane, and let himself and his guest in at the door of his lodgings, with his own key. As they entered the passage, a careworn woman, in a widow's cap, made her appearance with a candle. "My niece," said the captain, presenting Magdalen; "my niece on a visit to York. She has kindly consented to occupy your empty bedroom. Consider it let, if you please, to my niece—and be very particular in airing the sheets. Is Mrs. Wragge up-stairs? Very good. You may lend me your candle. My dear girl, Mrs. Wragge's boudoir is on the first floor; Mrs. Wragge is visible. Allow me to show you the way up."

As he ascended the stairs first, the careworn widow whispered piteously to Magdalen: "I hope you'll pay me, miss. Your uncle doesn't."

The captain threw open the door of the front room on the first floor; and disclosed a female figure, arrayed in a gown of tarnished amber-coloured satin, seated solitary on a small chair, with dingy old gloves on its hands, with a tattered old book on its knees, and with one little bedroom candle by its side. The figure terminated at its upper extremity, in a large, smooth, white round face, like a moon—encircled by a cap and green ribbons; and dimly irradiated by eyes of mild and faded blue, which looked straightforward into vacancy, and took not the smallest notice of Magdalen's appearance, on the opening of the door.

"Mrs. Wragge!" cried the captain, shouting at her, as if she was fast asleep. "Mrs. Wragge!"

The lady of the faded blue eyes slowly rose, to an apparently interminable height. When she had at last attained an upright position, she towered to a stature of two or three inches over six feet. Giants of both sexes are, by a wise dispensation of Providence, created for the most part gentle. If Mrs. Wragge and a lamb had been placed side by side—comparison, under those circumstances, would have exposed the lamb as a rank impostor.

"Tea, dear?" inquired Mrs. Wragge; looking submissively down at her husband, whose head when he stood on tiptoe barely reached her shoulder.

"Miss Vanstone, the younger," said the captain, presenting Magdalen. "Our fair relative, whom I have met by a fortunate accident. Our guest for the night. Our guest!" reiterated the captain, shouting once more, as if the tall lady was still fast asleep, in spite of the plain testimony of her own eyes to the contrary.

A smile expressed itself (in faint outline) on the large vacant space of Mrs. Wragge's countenance. "Oh?" she said, interrogatively. "Oh, indeed? Please, miss, will you sit down? I'm sorry—no, I don't mean I'm sorry; I mean I'm glad——" She stopped, and consulted her husband by a helpless look.

"Glad, of course!" shouted the captain.

"Glad, of course," echoed the giantess of the amber satin, more meekly than ever.

"Mrs. Wragge is not deaf," explained the captain. "She's only a little slow. Constitutionally torpid—if I may use the expression. I am merely loud with her (and I beg you will honour me by being loud, too) as a necessary stimulant to her ideas. Shout at her—and her mind comes up to time. Speak to her—and she drifts miles away from you directly. Mrs. Wragge!"

Mrs. Wragge instantly acknowledged the stimulant. "Tea, dear?" she inquired, for the second time.

"Put your cap straight!" shouted her husband. "I beg ten thousand pardons," he resumed, again addressing himself to Magdalen. "The sad truth is, I am a martyr to my own sense of order. All untidiness, all want of system and regularity, causes me the acutest irritation. My attention is distracted, my composure is upset; I can't rest till things are set straight again. Externally speaking, Mrs. Wragge is, to my infinite regret, the crookedest woman I ever met with. More to the right!" shouted the captain, as Mrs. Wragge, like a well-trained child, presented herself with her revised head-dress for her husband's inspection.

Mrs. Wragge immediately pulled the cap to the left. Magdalen rose, and set it right for her. The moon-face of the giantess brightened for the first time. She looked admiringly at Magdalen's cloak and bonnet. "Do you like dress, miss?"

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she asked suddenly, in a confidential whisper. "I do."

"Show Miss Vanstone her room," said the captain, looking as if the whole house belonged to him. "The spare room, the landlady's spare room, on the third floor front. Offer Miss Vanstone all articles connected with the toilet of which she may stand in need. She has no luggage with her. Supply the deficiency; and then come back and make tea."

Mrs. Wragge acknowledged the receipt of these lofty directions by a look of placid bewilderment, and led the way out of the room; Magdalen following her, with a candle presented by the attentive captain. As soon as they were alone on the landing outside, Mrs. Wragge raised the tattered old book which she had been reading when Magdalen was first presented to her, and which she had never let out of her hand since; and slowly tapped herself on the forehead with it. "Oh, my poor head," said the tall lady, in meek soliloquy; "it's Buzzing again worse than ever!"

"Buzzing?" repeated Magdalen, in the utmost astonishment.

Mrs. Wragge ascended the stairs, without offering any explanation; stopped at one of the rooms on the second floor; and led the way in.

"This is not the third floor," said Magdalen. "This is not my room surely?"

"Wait a bit," pleaded Mrs. Wragge. "Wait a bit, miss, before we go up any higher. I've got the Buzzing in my head worse than ever. Please wait for me till I'm a little better again."

"Shall I ask for help?" inquired Magdalen. "Shall I call the landlady?"

"Help?" echoed Mrs. Wragge. "Bless you, I don't want help! I'm used to it. I've had the Buzzing in my head, off and on—how many years?" She stopped, reflected, lost herself, and suddenly tried a question in despair. "Have you ever been at Darch's Dining-Rooms in London?" she asked, with an appearance of the deepest interest.

"No," replied Magdalen, wondering at the strange inquiry.

"That's where the Buzzing in my head first begun," said Mrs. Wragge, following the new clue, with the deepest attention and anxiety. "I was employed to wait on the gentlemen at Darch's Dining-Rooms—I was. The gentlemen all came together; the gentlemen were all hungry together; the gentlemen all gave their orders together——" She stopped, and tapped her head again despondently, with the tattered old book.

"And you had to keep all their orders in your memory, separate one from the other?" suggested Magdalen, helping her out. "And the trying to do that, confused you?"

"That's it!" said Mrs. Wragge, becoming violently excited in a moment. "Boiled pork and greens and peas-pudding, for Number One. Stewed beef and carrots and gooseberry tart, for Number Two. Cut of mutton, and quick about it, well done, and plenty of fat, for Number Three. Codfish and parsnips, two chops to follow, hot-and-hot, or I'll be the death of you, for Number Four. Five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten. Carrots and gooseberry tart—peas-pudding and plenty of fat—pork and beef and mutton, and cut 'em all, and quick about it—stout for one, and ale for t'other—and stale bread here, and new bread there—and this gentleman likes cheese, and that gentleman doesn't—Matilda, Tilda, Tilda, Tilda, fifty times over, till I didn't know my own name again—oh lord! oh lord!! oh lord!!! all together, all at the same time, all out of temper, all buzzing in my poor head like forty thousand million bees—don't tell the captain! don't tell the captain!" The unfortunate creature dropped the tattered old book, and beat both hands on her head, with a look of blank terror fixed on the door.

"Hush! hush!" said Magdalen. "The captain hasn't heard you. I know what is the matter with your head now. Let me cool it."

She dipped a towel in water, and pressed it on the hot and helpless head which Mrs. Wragge submitted to her with the docility of a sick child.

"What a pretty hand you've got," said the poor creature, feeling the relief of the coolness, and taking Magdalen's hand admiringly in her own. "How soft and white it is! I try to be a lady; I always keep my gloves on—but I can't get my hands like yours. I'm nicely dressed, though, ain't I? I like dress: it's a comfort to me. I'm always happy when I'm looking at my things. I say—you won't be angry with me?—I should so like to try your bonnet on."

Magdalen humoured her, with the ready compassion of the young. She stood smiling and nodding at herself in the glass, with the bonnet perched on the top of her head. "I had one, as pretty as this, once," she said—"only it was white, not black. I wore it when the captain married me."

"Where did you meet with him?" asked Magdalen, putting the question as a chance means of increasing her scanty stock of information on the subject of Captain Wragge.

"At the Dining-Rooms," said Mrs. Wragge. "He was the hungriest and the loudest to wait upon of the lot of 'em. I made more mistakes with him, than I did with all the rest of them put together. He used to swear—oh, didn't he use to swear! When he left off swearing at me, he married me. There was others wanted me, besides him. Bless you, I had my pick. Why not? When you have a trifle of money left you, that you didn't expect, if that don't make a lady of you, what does? Isn't a lady to have her pick? I had my trifle of money, and I had my pick, and I picked the captain—I did. He was the smartest and the shortest of them all. He took care of me and my money. I'm here, the money's gone. Don't you put that towel down on the table—he won't have that! Don't move his razors—don't please, or I shall forget which

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is which. I've got to remember which is which to-morrow morning. Bless you, the captain don't shave himself! He had me taught. I shave him. I do his hair, and cut his nails—he's awfully particular about his nails. So he is about his trousers. And his shoes. And his newspaper in the morning. And his breakfasts, and lunches, and dinners, and teas——" She stopped, struck by a sudden recollection, looked about her, observed the tattered old book on the floor, and clasped her hands in despair. "I've lost the place!" she exclaimed, helplessly. "Oh, mercy, what will become of me! I've lost the place."

"Never mind," said Magdalen; "I'll soon find the place for you again."

She picked up the book, looked into the pages, and found that the object of Mrs. Wragge's anxiety was nothing more important than an old-fashioned Treatise on the Art of Cookery, reduced under the usual heads of Fish, Flesh, and Fowl, and containing the customary series of receipts. Turning over the leaves, Magdalen came to one particular page, thickly studded with little drops of moisture, half dry. "Curious!" she said. "If this was anything but a cookery-book, I should say somebody had been crying over it."

"Somebody?" echoed Mrs. Wragge, with a stare of amazement. "It isn't somebody—it's Me. Thank you kindly, that's the place sure enough. Bless you, I'm used to crying over it! You'd cry too, if you had to get the captain's dinners out of it. As sure as ever I sit down to this book, the Buzzing in my head begins again. Who's to make it out? Sometimes, I think I've got it, and it all goes away from me. Sometimes, I think I haven't got it, and it all comes back in a heap. Look here! Here's what he's ordered for his breakfast to-morrow:—'Omelette with Herbs. Beat up two eggs with a little water or milk, salt, pepper, chives, and parsley. Mince small.'—There! mince small! How am I to mince small, when it's all mixed up and running? 'Put a piece of butter the size of your thumb into the frying-pan.'—Look at my thumb, and look at yours! whose size does she mean? 'Boil, but not brown.'—If it mustn't be brown, what colour must it be? She won't tell me; she expects me to know, and I don't. 'Pour in the omelette.'—There! I can do that. 'Allow it to set, raise it round the edge; when done, turn it over to double it.'—Oh, the numbers of times I turned it over and doubled it in my head, before you came in to-night! 'Keep it soft; put the dish on the frying-pan, and turn it over.' Which am I to turn over—oh mercy, try the cold towel again, and tell me which—the dish or the frying-pan?"

"Put the dish on the frying-pan," said Magdalen; "and then turn the frying-pan over. That is what it means, I think."

"Thank you kindly," said Mrs. Wragge. "I want to get it into my head; please say it again."

Magdalen said it again.

"And then turn the frying-pan over," repeated Mrs. Wragge, with a sudden burst of energy. "I've got it now! Oh, the lots of omelettes all frying together in my head; and all frying wrong. Much obliged, I'm sure. You've put me all right again: I'm only a little tired with talking. And then turn the frying-pan, then turn the frying-pan, then turn the frying-pan over. It sounds like poetry, don't it?"

Her voice sank, and she drowsily closed her eyes. At the same moment, the door of the room below opened, and the captain's mellifluous bass notes floated up stairs, charged with the customary stimulant to his wife's faculties.

"Mrs. Wragge!" cried the captain. "Mrs. Wragge!"

She started to her feet at that terrible summons. "Oh, what did he tell me to do?" she asked distractedly. "Lots of things, and I've forgotten them all!"

"Say you have done them, when he asks you," suggested Magdalen. "They were things for me—things I don't want. I remember all that is necessary. My room is the front room, on the third floor. Go down stairs, and say I am coming directly."

She took up the candle, and pushed Mrs. Wragge out on the landing. "Say I am coming directly," she whispered again—and went up-stairs by herself to the third story.

The room was small, close, and very poorly furnished. In former days, Miss Garth would have hesitated to offer such a room to one of the servants, at Combe-Raven. But it was quiet; it gave her a few minutes alone; and it was endurable, even welcome, on that account. She locked herself in; and walked mechanically, with a woman's first impulse in a strange bedroom, to the rickety little table, and the dingy little looking-glass. She waited there for a moment, and then turned away again with weary contempt. "What does it matter how pale I am?" she thought to herself, "Frank can't see me—what does it matter now!"

She laid aside her cloak and bonnet, and sat down to collect herself. But the events of the day had worn her out. The past, when she tried to remember it, only made her heart ache. The future, when she tried to penetrate it, was a black void. She rose again, and stood by the uncurtained window—stood looking out, as if there were some hidden sympathy for her own desolation in the desolate night.

"Norah!" she said to herself, tenderly; "I wonder if Norah is thinking of me? Oh, if I could be as patient as she is! If I could only forget the debt we owe to Michael Vanstone!"

Her face darkened with a vindictive despair, and she paced the little cage of a room backwards and forwards, softly. "No: never till the debt is paid!" Her thoughts veered back again to Frank. "Still at sea, poor fellow; farther and farther away from me; sailing through the

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day, sailing through the night. Oh, Frank, love me!"

Her eyes filled with tears. She dashed them away, made for the door, and laughed with a desperate levity, as she unlocked it again.

"Any company is better than my own thoughts," she burst out recklessly, as she left the room. "I'm forgetting my ready-made relations—my half-witted aunt, and my uncle the rogue." She descended the stairs to the landing on the first floor, and paused there in momentary hesitation. "How will it end?" she asked herself. "Where is my blindfold journey taking me to now? Who knows, and who cares?"

She entered the room.

Captain Wragge was presiding at the tea-tray, with the air of a prince in his own banqueting-hall. At one side of the table sat Mrs. Wragge, watching her husband's eye, like an animal waiting to be fed. At the other side was an empty chair, towards which the captain waved his persuasive hand, when Magdalen came in. "How do you like your room?" he inquired; "I trust Mrs. Wragge has made herself useful? You take milk and sugar? Try the local bread, honour the York butter, test the freshness of a new and neighbouring egg. I offer my little all. A pauper's meal, my dear girl—seasoned with a gentleman's welcome."

"Seasoned with salt, pepper, chives, and parsley," murmured Mrs. Wragge, catching instantly at a word in connexion with cookery, and harnessing her head to the omelette for the rest of the evening.

"Sit straight at the table!" shouted the captain. "More to the left, more still—that will do. During your absence up-stairs," he continued, addressing himself to Magdalen, "my mind has not been unemployed. I have been considering your position, with a view exclusively to your own benefit. If you decide on being guided to-morrow by the light of my experience, that light is unreservedly at your service. You may naturally say, 'I know but little of you, captain, and that little is unfavourable.' Granted, on one condition—that you permit me to make myself and my character quite familiar to you, when tea is over. False shame is foreign to my nature. You see my wife, my house, my bread, my butter, and my eggs, all exactly as they are. See me, too, my dear girl, while you are about it."

When tea was over, Mrs. Wragge, at a signal from her husband, retired to a corner of the room, with the eternal cookery-book still in her hand. "Mince small," she whispered confidentially, as she passed Magdalen. "That's a Teazer, isn't it?"

"Down at heel again!" shouted the captain, pointing to his wife's heavy flat feet as they shuffled across the room. "The right shoe. Pull it up at heel, Mrs. Wragge—pull it up at heel! Pray allow me," he continued, offering his arm to Magdalen, and escorting her to a dirty little horsehair sofa. "You want repose—after your long journey, you really want repose." He drew his chair to the sofa, and surveyed her with a bland look of investigation—as if he had been her medical attendant, with a diagnosis on his mind.

"Very pleasant! very pleasant!" said the captain, when he had seen his guest comfortable on the sofa. "I feel quite in the bosom of my family. Shall we return to our subject—the subject of my rascally self? No! no! No apologies, no protestations, pray. Don't mince the matter on your side—and depend on me not to mince it on mine. Now come to facts; pray come to facts. Who, and what, am I? Carry your mind back to our conversation on the Walls of this interesting city, and let us start once more from your point of view. I am a Rogue; and, in that capacity (as I have already pointed out), the most useful man you could possibly have met with. Now observe! There are many varieties of Rogue; let me tell you my variety to begin with. I am a Swindler."

His entire shamelessness was really superhuman. Not the vestige of a blush varied the sallow monotony of his complexion; the smile wreathed his curly lips, as pleasantly as ever; his parti-coloured eyes twinkled at Magdalen, with the self-enjoying frankness of a naturally harmless man. Had his wife heard him? Magdalen looked over his shoulder to the corner of the room in which she was sitting behind him. No: the self-taught student of cookery was absorbed in her subject. She had advanced her imaginary omelette to the critical stage at which the butter was to be thrown in—that vaguely-measured morsel of butter, the size of your thumb. Mrs. Wragge sat lost in contemplation of one of her own thumbs, and shook her head over it, as if it failed to satisfy her.

"Don't be shocked," proceeded the captain; "don't be astonished. Swindler is nothing but a word of two syllables. S, W, I, N, D—swind; L, E, R—ler: Swindler. Definition: A moral agriculturist; a man who cultivates the field of human sympathy. I am that moral agriculturist, that cultivating man. Narrow-minded mediocrity, envious of my success in my profession, calls me a Swindler. What of that? The same low tone of mind assails men in other professions in a similar manner—calls great writers, scribblers—great generals, butchers—and so on. It entirely depends on the point of view. Adopting your point, I announce myself intelligibly as a Swindler. Now return the obligation, and adopt mine. Hear what I have to say for myself, in the exercise of my profession.—Shall I continue to put it frankly?"

"Yes," said Magdalen; "and I'll tell you frankly afterwards what I think of it."

The captain cleared his throat; mentally assembled his entire army of words—horse, foot, artillery, and reserves; put himself at the head; and dashed into action, to carry the moral entrenchments of Society by a general charge.

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"Now, observe," he began. "Here am I, a needy object. Very good. Without complicating the question by asking how I come to be in that condition, I will merely inquire whether it is, or is not, the duty of a Christian community to help the needy. If you say, No, you simply shock me; and there is an end of it. If you say, Yes—then I beg to ask, Why am I to blame for making a Christian community do its duty? You may say, Is a careful man who has saved money, bound to spend it again on a careless stranger who has saved none? Why, of course he is! And on what ground, pray? Good Heavens! on the ground that he has *got* the money, to be sure. All the world over, the man who has *not* got the thing, obtains it, on one pretence or another, of the man who has—and in nine cases out of ten, the pretence is a false one. What! your pockets are full, and my pockets are empty; and you refuse to help me? Sordid wretch! do you think I will allow you to violate the sacred obligations of charity in my person? I won't allow you—I say distinctly, I won't allow you. Those are my principles as a moral agriculturist. Principles which admit of trickery? Certainly. Am I to blame if the field of human sympathy can't be cultivated in any other way? Consult my brother agriculturists in the mere farming line—do they get their crops for the asking? No! they must circumvent arid Nature, exactly as I circumvent sordid Man. They must plough, and sow, and top-dress, and bottom-dress, and deep-drain, and surface-drain, and all the rest of it. Why am I to be checked in the vast occupation of deep-draining mankind? Why am I to be persecuted for habitually exciting the noblest feelings of our common nature? Infamous!—I can characterise it by no other word—infamous! If I hadn't confidence in the future, I should despair of humanity—but I have confidence in the future. Yes! one of these days (when I am dead and gone), as ideas enlarge and enlightenment progresses, the abstract merits of the profession now called swindling, will be recognised. When that day comes, don't drag me out of my grave and give me a public funeral; don't take advantage of my having no voice to raise in my own defence, and insult me by a national statue. No! do me justice on my tombstone; dash me off, in one masterly sentence, on my epitaph. Here lies Wragge, Embalmed in the tardy recognition of his species: he ploughed, sowed, and reaped his fellow-creatures; and enlightened posterity congratulates him on the uniform excellence of his crops."

He stopped; not from want of confidence, not from want of words—purely from want of breath. "I put it frankly, with a dash of humour," he said, pleasantly. "I don't shock you—do I?" Weary and heartsick as she was—suspicious of others, doubtful of herself—the extravagant impudence of Captain Wragge's defence of swindling, touched Magdalen's natural sense of humour, and forced a smile to her lips. "Is the Yorkshire crop a particularly rich one, just at present?" she inquired, meeting him, in her neatly feminine way, with his own weapons.

"A hit—a palpable hit," said the captain, jocosely exhibiting the tails of his threadbare shooting-jacket, as a practical commentary on Magdalen's remark. "My dear girl, here or elsewhere, the crop never fails—but one man can't always gather it in. The assistance of intelligent co-operation is, I regret to say, denied me. I have nothing in common with the clumsy rank and file of my profession, who convict themselves before recorders and magistrates, of the worst of all offences—incurable stupidity in the exercise of their own vocation. Such as you see me, I stand entirely alone. After years of successful self-dependence, the penalties of celebrity are beginning to attach to me. On my way from the North, I pause at this interesting city for the third time; I consult my Books for the customary references to past local experience; I find under the heading, 'Personal position in York,' the initials, T. W. K., signifying Too Well Known. I refer to my Index, and turn to the surrounding neighbourhood. The same brief remarks meet my eye. 'Leeds. T. W. K.—Scarborough. T. W. K.—Harrowgate. T. W. K. —and so on. What is the inevitable consequence? I suspend my proceedings; my resources evaporate; and my fair relative finds me at a crisis in my career."

"Your books?" said Magdalen. "What books do you mean?"

"You shall see," replied the captain. "Trust me, or not, as you like—I trust *you* implicitly. You shall see."

With those words he retired into the back room. While he was gone, Magdalen stole another look at Mrs. Wragge. Was she still self-isolated from her husband's deluge of words? Perfectly self-isolated. She had advanced the imaginary omelette to the last stage of culinary progress; and she was now rehearsing the final operation of turning it over—with the palm of her hand to represent the dish, and the cookery-book to impersonate the frying-pan. "I've got it," said Mrs. Wragge, nodding across the room at Magdalen. "First put the frying-pan on the dish, and then tumble both of them over."

Captain Wragge returned, carrying a neat black despatch-box, adorned with a bright brass lock. He produced from the box five or six plump little books, bound in commercial calf and vellum, and each fitted comfortably with its own little lock.

"Mind!" said the moral agriculturist: "I take no credit to myself for this: it is my nature to be orderly, and orderly I am. I must have everything down in black and white, or I should go mad! Here is my commercial library:—Day Book, Ledger, Book of Districts, Book of Letters, Book of Remarks, and so on. Kindly throw your eye over any one of them. I flatter myself there is no such thing as a blot or a careless entry in it from the first page to the last. Look

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at this room—is there a chair out of place? Not if I know it! Look at *me*. Am I dusty? am I dirty? am I half shaved? Am I, in brief, a speckless pauper, or am I not? Mind! I take no credit to myself; the nature of the man, my dear girl—the nature of the man!"

He opened one of the books. Magdalen was no judge of the admirable correctness with which the accounts inside were all kept; but she could estimate the neatness of the handwriting, the regularity in the rows of figures, the mathematical exactness of the ruled lines in red and black ink, the cleanly absence of blots, stains, or erasures. Although Captain Wragge's inborn sense of order was, in him—as it is in others—a sense too inveterately mechanical to exercise any elevated moral influence over his actions, it had produced its legitimate effect on his habits, and had reduced his rogueries as strictly to method and system as if they had been the commercial transactions of an honest man.

"In appearance, my system looks complicacated?" pursued the captain. "In reality, it is simplicity itself. I merely avoid the errors of inferior practitioners. That is to say, I never plead for myself; and I never apply to rich people —both fatal mistakes which the inferior practitioner perpetually commits. People with small means sometimes have generous impulses in connexion with money—rich people, *never*. My lord, with forty thousand a year; Sir John, with property in half a dozen counties—those are the men who never forgive the genteel beggar for swindling them out of a sovereign; those are the men who send for the mendicity officers; those are the men who take care of their money. Who are the people who lose shillings and sixpences, by sheer thoughtlessness? Servants and small clerks, to whom shillings and sixpences are of consequence. Did you ever hear of Rothschild or Baring dropping a fourpenny-piece down a gutter-hole. Fourpence in Rothschild's pocket is safer than fourpence in the pocket of that woman who is crying stale shrimps in Skeldergate at this moment. Fortified by these sound principles, enlightened by the stores of written information in my commercial library, I have ranged through the population for years past, and have raised my charitable crops with the most cheering success. Here, in book Number One are all my Districts mapped out, with the prevalent public feeling to appeal to in each:—Military District, Clerical District, Agricultural District; Etcetera, Etcetera. Here, in Number Two, are my cases that I plead:—Family of an officer who fell at Waterloo; Wife of a poor curate stricken down by nervous debility; Widow of a grazier in difficulties gored to death by a mad bull; Etcetera, Etcetera. Here, in Number Three, are the people who have heard of the officer's family, the curate's wife, the grazier's widow, and the people who haven't; the people who have said Yes, and the people who have said No; the people to try again, the people who want a fresh case to stir them up, the people who are doubtful, the people to beware of; Etcetera, Etcetera. Here, in Number Four, are my Adopted Handwritings of public characters; my testimonials to my own worth and integrity; my Heartrending Statements of the officer's family, the curate's wife, and the grazier's widow, stained with tears, blotted with emotion; Etcetera, Etcetera. Here, in Numbers Five and Six, are my own personal subscriptions to local charities, actually paid in remunerative neighbourhoods, on the principle of throwing a sprat to catch a herring; also, my diary of each day's proceedings, my personal reflections and remarks, my statement of existing difficulties (such as the difficulty of finding myself T. W. K., in this interesting city); my out-goings and in-comings; wind and weather; politics and public events; fluctuations in my own health; fluctuations in Mrs. Wragge's head; fluctuations in our means and meals, our payments, prospects, and principles; Etcetera, Etcetera. So, my dear girl, the Swindler's Mill goes. So you see me, exactly as I am. You knew, before I met you, that I lived on my wits. Well! have I, or have I not, shown you that I have wits to live on?"

"I have no doubt you have done yourself full justice," said Magdalen, quietly.

"I am not at all exhausted," continued the captain. "I can go on, if necessary, for the rest of the evening.—However, if I have done myself full justice, perhaps I may leave the remaining points in my character to develop themselves at future opportunities. For the present, I withdraw myself from notice. Exit Wragge. And now to business! Permit me to inquire what effect I have produced on your own mind? Do you still believe that the Rogue who has trusted you with all his secrets, is a Rogue who is bent on taking a mean advantage of a fair relative?"

"I will wait a little," Magdalen rejoined, "before I answer that question. When I came down to tea, you told me you had been employing your mind for my benefit. May I ask how?"

"By all means," said Captain Wragge. "You shall have the net result of the whole mental process. Said process ranges over the present and future proceedings of your disconsolate friends, and of the lawyers who are helping them to find you. Their present proceedings are, in all probability, assuming the following form:—The lawyer's clerk has given you up at Mr. Huxtable's, and has also, by this time, given you up after careful inquiry at all the hotels. His last chance is, that you may send for your box to the cloak-room—you don't send for it—and there the clerk is tonight (thanks to Captain Wragge and Rosemary-lane) at the end of his resources. He will forthwith communicate that fact to his employers in London; and those employers (don't be alarmed!) will apply for help to the detective police. Allowing for inevitable delays, a professional spy, with all his wits about him, and with those handbills to help him privately in identifying you, will be here, certainly not

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later than the day after to-morrow—possibly earlier. If you remain in York, if you attempt to communicate with Mr. Huxtable, that spy will find you out. If, on the other hand, you leave the city before he comes (taking your departure by other means than the railway, of course), you put him in the same predicament as the clerk—you defy him to find a fresh trace of you. There is my brief abstract of your present position. What do you think of it?"

"I think it has one defect," said Magdalen. "It ends in nothing."

"Pardon me," retorted the captain. "It ends in an arrangement for your safe departure, and in a plan for the entire gratification of your wishes in the direction of the stage. Both drawn from the resources of my own experience; and both waiting a word from you, to be poured forth immediately, in the fullest detail."

"I think I know what that word is," replied Magdalen, looking at him attentively.

"Charmed to hear it, I am sure. You have only to say, 'Captain Wragge, take charge of me'—and my plans are yours from that moment."

'I will take to-night to consider your proposal," she said, after an instant's reflection. "You shall have my answer to-morrow morning."

Captain Wragge looked a little disappointed. He had not expected the reservation on his side to be met so composedly by a reservation on hers.

"Why not decide at once?" he remonstrated, in his most persuasive tones. "You have only to consider——"

"I have more to consider than you think for," she answered. "I have another object in view, besides the object you know of."

"May I ask——?"

"Excuse me, Captain Wragge—you may *not* ask. Allow me to thank you for your hospitality, and to wish you good night. I am worn out. I want rest."

Once more, the captain wisely adapted himself to her humour, with the ready self-control of an experienced man.

"Worn-out, of course!" he said, sympathetically. "Unpardonable on my part not to have thought of it before. We will resume our conversation to-morrow. Permit me to give you a candle. Mrs. Wragge!"

Prostrated by mental exertion, Mrs. Wragge was pursuing the course of the omelette in dreams. Her head was twisted one way, and her body the other. She snored meekly. At intervals, one of her hands raised itself in the air, shook an imaginary frying-pan, and dropped again with a faint thump on the cookery-book in her lap. At the sound of her husband's voice, she started to her feet; and confronted him with her mind fast asleep, and her eyes wide open.

"Assist Miss Vanstone," said the captain. "And the next time you forget yourself in your chair, fall asleep straight—don't annoy me by falling asleep crooked."

Mrs. Wragge opened her eyes a little wider, and looked at Magdalen, in helpless amazement.

"Is the captain breakfasting by candlelight?" she inquired, meekly. "And haven't I done the omelette?"

Before her husband's corrective voice could apply a fresh stimulant, Magdalen took her compassionately by the arm, and led her out of the room.

"Another object besides the object I know of?" repeated Captain Wragge, when he was left by himself. "*Is* there a gentleman in the background, after all? Is there mischief brewing in the dark, that I don't bargain for?"

RUSSIAN TRAVEL.

A PRIEST PLAYING HIS CARDS.

On leaving the church* I happened to fall in beside Sanderson, and as we proceeded to the count's residence I asked him what he knew of the morals of these Russians priests. "Is card-playing a very common thing with them?"

"Common! Why all Russia is ready to play cards morning, noon, and night. Shuffle, shuffle, shuffle, and deal. The emperor's whole court plays; the aristocracy play to a man; the ladies, of all grades, fill up their time at cards—Fool, Your-own-Trump, Three-Leaves, Kings, Windmill, and a hundred other games. The shopkeepers sit playing cards for hours at their shop-doors. The bargeman in his boat, the peasant in his hut, children, young men, girls, all play cards. Many an estate changes hands in an evening. I have known three hundred men, women, and children, and a large property, staked on a single game. But these long-haired, long-bearded, broadbrims of lazy priests are, of all such gamblers, the most incessant. I will tell you an instance of my own knowledge."

And this is what Sanderson told:

You saw that fat, tall priest, with the large brown beard, who sprinkled the holy water on the bairns. Weel, he is the head pope of this church, and lives beside it; in fact, there is a covered passage leading from the church to his house direct. One evening before a saint's day I was on a visit to Mr. Pins, who lives in that wooden house beside yon cotton-mill in the hollow, and we were enjoying ourselves as we best could, when a message came from the priest to ask us all to supper. He had a few friends with him, and would be glad to see us. As nothing of this kind is to be refused we went—I, and Pins, and his wife and daughter. The priest's friends were two beardys like himself who were to assist next day in church; his wife, also, of course, was there. Supper over, cards were introduced, and down sat Pins and the three holy men to the game, while I was left to entertain the leddies as well as I could. The four gamblers gradually forgot everything else in the room, the head priest being the most intent of the four. The game went on. Now Pins swept the table of roubles, and anon one or

* See A Look Round the Church, in No. 156.

other of the priests—the head man evidently losing fast, and Pins winning.

Tempers got lost, and scarcely civil words were exchanged amongst the party. I could see Pins's red face, glowing like a nor'-west moon, under the flush of excitement and brandy. As we had supped late, Sunday morning was on us before I was aware. Two o'clock struck, and Mrs. Pins and I jumped to our feet. Two o'clock on a Sunday morning, in a minister's house, playing cards, the gamblers, priests of the Holy Greek Church! It was against the conscience of a Scot to assist at such on-goings, not that I am strait-laced to an hour or two, considering the difference of clocks. I therefore energetically backed Mrs. Pins, who was requesting her husband to go home. Pins rose; but reluctantly, as it seemed to me, and was about to accompany us. The priests had no mind to let him go off so easily. He and his partner had won two hundred roubles, and it was clearly against all rules to run away so soon. The others must have their revenge—it was only two o'clock. So he sat down again, saying, "Go, my dear, with Mr. Sanderson. I'll play the old fellows till daylight, if they like. It shall never be said that an Englishman shirked off because his pocket was full of other people's money."

As our host politely showed us to the door, he said to me, "Do you attend the church at eight?"

"Yes, it is my intention; but I don't think you will be there in a fit state, if you play much longer. It is a shame."

"No fear," he said; "but your friend has won much money, and I must have my turn. It is nothing."

At seven o'clock I was awoke by a servant with information that his master had not returned, and that madame desired me to walk to the priest's house, and see how matters stood. I dressed hastily, and went to the parsonage, rectory, or what shall I call it? As I passed the church I saw that it was in course of preparation for the morning performances; but my business was not with the church, it was with the priests. Just as I reached the door a clerk (decchock) was entering. He was a dirty, yellow, sickly fellow, with a flavouring of stale tobacco.

"Where is the pope, Vassillia?" I said.

"Yonder," pointing to the room I had so lately left.

"Playing still? It is too bad."

"To be sure; it is nothing. I have known master play two days and nights at a stretch. But it is now time for service, and I must tell him."

I pushed past him into the room. It was Sabbath morn, half an hour before service, and the men who were to officiate sat round a table with flushed faces, eager looks, dishevelled hair, and ruffled attire. Candles were burnt down in their sockets, daylight streamed in through the shutterless windows. The brandy and wine bottles were empty. A great jug of "ghuass" was on a side-table, old cards littered the painted floor, and the atmosphere was reeking with the fumes of the "papeross;" for smoking was still going on. I saw at a glance that the tide of luck had left the Englishman. The priest was buoyant; he was flat.

"They are winning it back," he said to me as I entered; "I have had three hundred, now have but fifty."

"Ay," said the tall priest, "and this game will get that back also; it is for fifty—is it not?"

Then the clerk entered, and advanced with as little show of concern as if the exhibition was a fit and usual preparation to the church rites, and after reverentially crossing himself, intimated to the priest in chief that, in half an hour, it would be his time to go on to commence the services.

"Very good, Vassillia, my son. Don't disturb me now, but listen;—come back exactly three minutes before eight."

"I hear, and obey," said Vassillia, and vanished.

I cannot say these men were drunk; on the contrary, they seemed more sober than they had been when I left them at two o'clock; but the demon of play held them in his grip; they were as fresh for it, and as absorbed as if they had only played two or three hours. My remonstrances and expostulations were thrown away, and in indignant curiosity, I sat down to watch the end.

The priest and his partner lost. Pins and his partner won another fifty. The next game was to be double or quits, the deal made with a fresh pack; and, as I sat in full view of the tall priest, I could see his face brighten up, and a look of intelligence pass between him and his partner. At this moment the decchock again entered. "Three minutes to eight o'clock."

All but the tall priest threw their cards on the table and rose, saying "A fresh deal after service."

"No, no," he said, "keep your hand, partner; I shall keep mine, it is a good one, and we shall play the game after our return; here Vassillia, give me a towel, wet: that will do. Now my robes—there—that comb, and now go every one to your posts. I shall be there presently." Thus saying he proceeded with a firm step to the church by the private entrance already mentioned. As he left the room I saw him place his good hand of cards within his sacred robes, under the inside fastening. He was evidently determined not to lose sight of his trumps, and carried them off on his person into the church. I ran round to the front entrance, and was just in time to witness the commencement of the service. It is a wonder judgment did not fall on the chief priest. And it did in a way. At one part of the service, just as he was stepping on the platform, he put his hand inside his robe to pull out his handkerchief, and, as he drew it out, the cards came also unbidden, and fell scattered over the altar floor. This would have paralysed any ordinary man; but that priest never winced for a moment. He looked coolly at the cards, then steadily at the people, as much as to say, "You all see that; take notice of it. I shall tell you about that by-and-by." He then continued

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the services. At the close, he pointed to the cards—then beckoned a little peasant boy, with a shock head of white flaxen hair, dressed in a shirt of coarse linen and trousers to match, not very clean, who had been crossing and bending beside a poor peasant woman, his mother:

"Come here, boy!" The boy went. Turning to the congregation, he said: "I shall give you a lesson you will not forget for some time. You see these cards lying on the floor. Do you think I put them there for nothing? We shall see! What is your name, my boy?"

"Peter Petrovitch."

"Well, Peter Petrovitch, go and pick up one of those cards you see on the floor, and bring it to me. There, that will do. Now tell me, Peter Petrovitch, what card is this?"

"The ace of spades!" said the boy, with ready knowledge.

"Very good, Peter Petrovitch—bring me another, that's a good boy. What card is that?"

"The queen of spades," said Peter.

"How well you know them, Peter Petrovitch; bring another. And what may that one be?"

"The ten of hearts."

"That will do, Peter, the son of Peter. Now turn round and look at this picture. Can you tell me what saint it represents?"

The boy scratched his head, then shrugged his little shoulders, lifting them up to his ears, then scratched his head again, and said: "Ya naes nigh." (I don't know.)

"Now look at this one. Who is this?"

The same answer.

"And this?"

"I cannot tell."

"That will do, Peter, the son of Peter. You may go to your mother."

Turning to the people, he continued:

"Do you know now for what purpose I put these cards on the floor? Do you not think shame of yourselves, tell me—say, is it not disgraceful and scandalous, that that nice white-haired boy can tell me in a moment the name of every card in the pack, and yet he does not know the name of one of the blessed saints? Oh, shame, shame on ye, so to bring up the young, after all the good teaching I have given ye! Go away and learn the lesson I have given you this blessed day. Don't forget it, and don't force me to bring cards into this holy place again. Vassillia, pick the other cards up, and keep them for me."

So with solemn step he left the church to play out his interrupted game for a hundred roubles.

I have given this sketch of a Russian card-playing priest, simply as I got it, and nearly in the narrator's own words, omitting Scotticisms, but retaining the train of thought. Of its literal truth my own experience of the priests, and my later knowledge of the friend whom I call Sanderson, as well as Mr. Pins, entirely assures me.

A WARM RECEPTION.

Count Pomerin's residence was on a slight rise, sloping down among gardens and trees to the valley. We entered his grounds by a large wooden gateway, and passing through a short avenue of trees over a broad well-kept gravelled path, bordered with flowers and shrubs, a turn to the left with a short curve brought us in sight of the count's birthplace and principal country seat. It was a very long and large wooden building; but I afterwards found it to be only of wood. It seemed to be of brick and plastered. Three parts of it were of one story, but very high, and the other part, which formed the servants' establishment, of two stories. The principal end had large broad windows looking out on a flat lawn, intersected here and there with gravelled walks, and I could see gymnastic poles, swinging trees, &c., at the farther corner. In the middle of the lawn (which might cover three acres), and all about it, in confused disorder, were a great many temporary structures, for what purpose I was soon to learn.

The large windows were all brilliantly lighted up, as if for an illumination. About twenty serfs with blazing pine torches met us as we turned the corner, and preceded us to the main entrance. This was surrounded by men and women of various degrees, all in the holiday costume of the country, who raised a sort of uncouth cheer as we advanced. Across the threshold of the door there lay stretched out the grisly carcases of the two old bears. Around these very material mementoes of the Englishman's skill in rifle-practice, the twenty pine-torch bearers assembled, flaring and waving their torches.

The vestibule, or hall, or lobby, was one blaze of light. In the centre was a table on which was erected a very handsome oberis, image, or joss; in front, on the table, lay a large silver salver containing pieces of black bread, and stands of the same material for salt. A lady stood on each side of the table, one old, the other much younger; these were the mother and grandmother of the count, countesses both. As he leapt from his horse and jumped into the hall over the bears the younger lady ran into his arms and embraced him. All this—with the twenty or thirty horsemen dismounting, grooms in red shirts and wide black velvet trousers stuck into their boots and falling in folds over the sides, and a crowd of stolid staring peasants in the background—gave the scene a lively and uncommon character.

"What does it mean?" I said to the talkative Scotchman.

"That's mair than I know," said he, "but I suspect it is some kindly nonsense of my lady countess, some old custom."

As he spoke, the count, who had been talking to his mother, came out and said to us:

"It seems we are to have a little mummery. My lady mother kindly insists on receiving my guests, and more particularly the Englishman who saved her wild boy's life, in a true old Russian style. The ceremony is simple, over in a moment, but let me tell you for your comfort that after it has been gone through, feudal fashion, my guests are peculiarly sacred in my

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house and on my property, and are to be defended from injury with all the means I possess. Now therefore, my friend, advance, and as you cross this bear trample him under your feet."

Harry stepped forward, swinging his great arms about as if he did not know where to put them, crossed the barrier, was received at the table by the two ladies, and warmly greeted by the countess in good English as the preserver of her son; the black bread and salt (previously blessed by the priest) were offered to him, and then he was hurried off to the bath by two attendants in red shirts. Sanderson followed as the second bear-killer, and went through the same process, with the exception of the bath. It was my turn next, and, as I accepted the bread and salt, the countess said, with a sweet smile, "You are very welcome; I cannot tell you how much. Your family is all gone to rest till morning. There, Constantine, show the baron the bath."

THE RUSSIAN BATH.

I was conducted to the rear of the building, and introduced into a very comfortable room, where two strong fellows were waiting to commence operations upon my poor wearied body. This outer room was very well furnished. It might measure about five yards by eight. The floor was covered with some kind of soft matting, on which a clean canvas cloth was spread. There were two excellent large luxurious sofas, a wardrobe, tables, chairs, looking-glass, towels, and all the necessaries for the toilet. I perceived also a suit of my own clothes spread out on one of the tables. I threw myself on a sofa, exhausted, and from that moment became a passive lump of human material in the hands of my two attendants. My fur boots were dragged off and tossed into the wardrobe; fur coat and under-clothes shared the same fate. As each article was removed I felt relief inexpressible. These garments had not left my body for nine days and nights, and, as the last was taken from me, my sense of enjoyment reached its climax. But the relief was too much. I felt a total prostration of body. The energies so long kept on the stretch, the nerves so long braced to the perils of the journey, gave way, and I swooned for the first and only time in my life.

I think I may be forgiven this weakness when it is remembered through what roads we had come, the fatigue being enhanced in my case a hundredfold by the care and responsibility attaching to the party of women and children accompanying me, and more especially by the fact that being chancellor of the exchequer, and having to pay the yeamshick money at every station, besides other small matters, I had not enjoyed two hours' consecutive sleep for nine days and nights. This is the paymaster's grief on a long Russian journey.

But I am lying naked and insensible in the outer room of a Russian bath. The two moosheeks had emptied a bottle of eau-de-Cologne from my lady's repository over my head and face, and were applying a brandy stimulant when I recovered.

"You are tired, baron. But we will soon mend you. Don't stir." Without more ado they lifted me up like an infant, and carried me into the inner room, where the atmosphere was considerably warmer. Into a bath lined with lead, and nearly filled with water, I was then plunged without ceremony. At first the water felt so hot that I thought I must be scalded, but after a time it became so delicious that I felt willing to remain, so bathed, for ever. But my present possessors were of another mind. I was lifted out and placed on a bench like a flat trough beside the bath. There I was rolled and turned, and firmly rubbed all over with handfuls of mat fibres and soap dipped every second or two into the hot water. I was scrubbed remorselessly by my determined nurses; I might kick and struggle, but it was all one. They grinned, held me down, and scrubbed on for a mortal quarter of an hour. I thought the skin would be peeled off my body, and felt sharp prickly shooting needle-point pains at every pore. Then I was plunged into the bath again in hotter water, and forcibly held there for five minutes. I was in hope this might end the process, and signified a determination to get back to the outer room—but no.

"We have received orders to make you clean and well. Heaven help us, how angry you are! Our orders must be obeyed. You must now go into the 'stove-room.'" It was of no use to resist. I resigned myself to my fate, was lifted out of the bath and carried into the vapour den, the essential part of a Russian bath.

What I had gone through had been only preparatory. This place might be twelve feet high, lined with closely-fitting boards on the roof and all round, so that no steam might escape. In the centre of the floor there rose broad steps of wood, commencing from two sides, and terminating in a large flat board on the top. This board crowning the edifice was about two feet below the roof. The steam or vapour was raised in this manner: A large stove of brick, like a baker's oven, stood in a corner and nearly filled one-fourth of the apartment. It had been heated almost red-hot, the red charred embers of the burnt wood remaining in it. One of the men seized an iron ladle and with it cast water into the fiery gulf. The steam or vapour thus generated rushed out, rising to the roof for vent, and finding none it filled the place. I was laid at first on the bottom step of the centre erection as being the coolest, the vapour increasing in density and power the higher it rose. Even here I felt nearly suffocated with the steam. The rubbing recommenced with fresh vigour, and now buckets of cold water were poured over me, each bucketful having the effect of a shock from a powerful galvanic battery.

Step by step was I lifted up, while the rubbing and dashing of cold water went on alternately, and additional water was thrown into the oven, increasing the density of the steam at

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every application. At last they got me on the flat step at the very top, with my nose nearly touching the roof. There I lay in a dense body of hot vapour, hot enough to scald me had my body not been previously tempered for it. I did not know when it was all to end.

I had observed on my admission to this den of steam, several instruments of torture, of the use of which I had a vague presentiment. There were bundles of birch twigs about half or three-quarters of a yard long, the leaves still remaining on one end, but bare where they were tied together, and about two inches in diameter. My tormentors armed themselves with these weapons, and made an onslaught in no tender manner upon my defenceless body, flagellating me back, front, and on both sides, turning me round and round, to get at every corner. More steam was raised during the process, until I felt as if I were in a steam-boiler without a safety-valve, with a pressure of a hundred pounds to the square inch, and ready to be blown out through the roof at any moment. Still every few minutes a pail of cold water streamed hissing from my poor scalded flesh. My man with the mighty arms was, I understood, undergoing the same process in another place. There was no help for me but in myself. All my lost energies had returned in fresh vigour; I felt ready to grapple with a bear, and was by this time as elastic and buoyant as I had before been nerveless. Watching an opportunity, as one of my executioners was fetching a fresh pail of cold water as a prelude to another flagellation, I discharged my foot at his stomach. He rolled down the steps, taking the legs from the other, and they both lay sprawling together on the floor. This was my time. Rolling myself carefully but speedily down the steps, I jumped to my feet, and rushed into the middle room. The men followed me, laughing.

"Ah! Heaven be thanked. Your honour is strong now."

"And clean," I said.

"Yes; clean as new milk."

At any rate, I was as red as a boiled lobster. I felt capable of beginning my whole journey over again. A short time spent in drying with towels, cooling, and dressing, in the outer room, completed the performance. It had lasted one hour, and I left the bath strong, fresh, and vigorous, with a delightfully happy and soothing sensation creeping over me, as the blood danced and coursed with a pleasurable swiftness through my veins.

The Russian bath is a great fact. The whole people, rich and poor, are continually undergoing a process more or less similar to what I have described. The Russian people are said to be dirty and filthy, yet the bath is religiously attended to. This is one of the great Russian questions: How *can* people who plunge and steam themselves in the bath, as they do, be dirty? But "give a dog a bad name," &c. If the Russians are so dirty as some books tell us they are, it must be that their bodies contain clay in the raw; so, the more they rub the dirtier they are. But the truth is that the higher ranks are scrupulously clean in clothes and person, and the persons of the lower classes are cleaner than those of the inhabitants of some favoured lands, where baths are almost unknown. Yet the Russian has too much of a good thing, or rather spoils a good thing by his own way of using it.

The constant broiling, steaming, and flagellating gives a pale sickly yellow hue to the complexion of the young, and ultimately enfeebles the whole constitution. On the other hand, considering the description of food used by the great bulk of the Russian poor, but for these baths the stench from their bodies would be as unbearable as that from the African negro. As it is, it is anything but pleasant (especially in fasting-time). But for these baths, one could not with a settled stomach sit behind a drosky-driver. The great mass of the Russian poor never touch soap nor water except at the bath. Workmen, artisans, peasants, shopkeepers, and even merchants, with their wives and families, use very little intermediate cleansing. They eat, work, and sleep, without washing hands or face until the regular bath time. But, at this time, you may see an entire population on the move, going to bath with small bundles of clean clothes, soap, towel, and birch-broom. Large public and smaller private baths are in the cities and towns. Every village—even the smallest hamlet—has its bath for the people. The great mass in towns are accommodated in monster establishments erected by private individuals. They have steam-engines for pumping water, and a host of attendants. One large part is devoted to the poor, and is separated for the sexes. This part can accommodate three hundred or four hundred at once in each establishment, and the charge is a penny for each person. Other parts are suitable for select parties; and luxurious family or private rooms can be had at proportionate prices, from eighteenpence to six shillings. From these baths, where they are born, thousands of illegitimate children are transferred to the foundling hospitals. Other infants are taken there by their mothers as soon as possible after birth. On the evening before marriage the bride is taken to the bath by a band of her maiden companions, each armed with such a birch as I have described, and there she is forced to certain confessions under a torrent of light blows. After a death, all the remaining household must go to the bath. After and before taking a journey, the bath. Before every holiday festival and Sunday, the bath. For rheumatisms, fevers, colds, and diseases of all kinds, the bath. Take from a Russian his children, his wife, anything, but leave him his bath, and there is consolation. If Emperor Alexander were to publish a ukase to shut up the baths he would fall in a month. Paul's crusade against beards was bad enough, but a bath abolition bill would smash the empire.

THE HORSE THAT CAME IN WITH THE DESSERT.

After my bath I found a party assembled in

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the grand dining saloon waiting dinner for me. The guests consisted of six Russian gentlemen who had been in the hunt; the card-playing priest and a fellow broadbrim; Monsieur Defour, a French gentleman who rented the count's sugar works; Pins, Sanderson, Harry, and four ladies, besides the countess and her mother.

A genuine Russian dinner on a great occasion is not quite copied by the English dîner à la Russe. On a side-table were placed decanters containing doppel, keppel, cognac, and other spirits, and beside these lay plates of raw herrings, caviare, sardines, and small hard pieces of black bread and white. Those who desired an appetiser swallowed one or two small glasses of spirits and ate herring, caviare, or sardine. The ladies do this as well as the gentlemen. After this necessary and important preliminary, which was executed standing, fork in hand, we were all seated, and the real business commenced. Smart lacqueys in drab liveries and blue facings, with white cravats and gloves, served in successive dishes a dinner, of which, for the sake of those interested in such matters, I will give the *menu:*

Isschee, a soup made from sour cabbage, and very good when well made; beef-tea; mushroom pie, cut in slices; teegee, a fish nearly equal to salmon; cold veal, with sauce; roast beef; venison; deviled turkey; chickens; all these meats with sauces; wild fowl-game; iced cream, strawberries and cream, confectionary of many kinds, kissell (a sort of jelly), in various colours; apples and jargonelle pears (these pears are in Russia three shillings apiece), raisins, nuts, sweets, coffee, and cigars. The wines were numerous and superb. Black bread and white, baked and roasted potatoes, Dublin and Allsopp's ales, and the favourite London porter at six shillings a bottle. The silver plate was profuse, the crockery fine china; the cookery faultless. The conversation was kept up with spirit, but only between the courses, and each course appeared ready cut up, to be served by the footmen carrying it round.

After dinner there were toasts, accompanied by speeches of a few words each, all but one from the Scotchman, a yard long, in proposing the Count and Countess Pomerin. When the company was in a good humour for anything, the count rose, and said:

"My friends, I have designed a little performance, which I shall now introduce. It is the settlement of a small affair between me and my good friend and tenant Monsieur Defour, now present. I bet him, certain terms, that I should in six weeks tame a wild horse of his. This is the last day of the time specified, and we are within a few hours of its entire expiration. You shall judge between us. Ladies, I beg you will be so kind as to keep your seats, and let no one be in the smallest degree alarmed at what will now take place. Timossy, tell John we are all ready."

We were all sitting in the centre of the hall, with a clear space round us of considerable extent. The door opened, and a magnificent jet-black charger, of the Arabian breed, bounced into the room, blowing clouds of smoke from his nostrils. He had no bridle nor saddle, nor any attendant. His flowing mane waved in rich masses half way down, and his tail swept the floor.

Some of the gentlemen sprang up from their seats, and the ladies screamed.

"I implore you all to sit quiet; there is no danger in the least," cried the count. "Do sit down." When we were all seated again, he said, "Come here, Nereckta, and kiss me;" and he held his arms out. The horse went straight to the head of the table and held up his great lips to be kissed. "There, now," and the count stamped on the floor twice, "go round the room and make your bow to the ladies." The horse immediately obeyed, and approaching the ladies (who all sat together), bowed four times. But there were six ladies. The count said "Again;" but the horse refused. "In the rehearsal," said the count, "we had only four lady dummies. I must pass that part." He then gave him some sweet cake, and stamping three times, told him to go down on his knees and beg pardon for intruding on the company. The animal went gently down on one knee, and bent his head twice to the ground, in great humility.

"Now, then, get up and drink to the health of all here." A tin can was handed to the count, who emptied two bottles of champagne into it, close to the horse's head. He held up his head before drinking, gave a polite neigh to the company, and leisurely drank off the champagne. The count then jumped on his back, and was carried quietly twice round the room.

"The remaining part of the play," said the count, coming off the horse, and laughing, "must be seen elsewhere. Those who have the curiosity, will follow." He passed out by the door, the horse following him. We were all led through a passage to the other end of the building, where there was a broad flight of steps leading to the servants' rooms.

The count pointed to the steps, clapped the horse on the head, and said, "Go, Nereckta." Nereckta obeyed at once, climbed about fifteen steps, turned on the landing, and came down again, carefully picking his way.

"Are you satisfied, my friend," said the count, turning to the Frenchman, "or must I appeal to the judges?"

"There is no occasion; I am satisfied. It is wonderful! I have lost. Take the papers." And he pulled out a bundle of papers and handed them to the count.

No sooner had the count received them, then he tore them up into shreds and scattered them in the lobby. Then, taking from his pocket a sealed packet, he handed it to the Frenchman, saying:

"Here is a new contract on more just and equitable terms. Do you take it, or must I destroy it also?"

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"Certainly, count, I will take it; and I say you are generous—very kind."

"That is finished, then," said Pomerin. "Here, John" (he spoke now in English). "Where are you?"

"All right, count," said a voice from the crowd of lookers-on, in the genuine London cabby tone; and a smartly-dressed groom, in racing trim, stepped forward. He was, as to size, a boy of ten, but when you looked into his face you could read five-and-thirty. A neater, more trimly-made little fellow I never saw. He approached and patted the horse, who seemed to welcome him as a dear friend.

"Now, John, just show them what he can do in the other way," said the count. "We have seen the lamb, now we will see the lion. Only once over and back, John."

"All right, count."

We followed to the lawn in front of the house, which was lighted up by pine-torches, and found for what purpose the hurdles and various other structures had been put up in the lawn. The little groom (who was master of the count's stud of best horses) put a racing saddle and bridle on Nereckta, and sprang on his back. Then commenced a scene of galloping and leaping, the horse flitting round the park like a swift bird. This ended the performance, and when we returned to the house to finish the evening, the ladies had retired.

It appeared that Defour had obtained a renewal of his lease or contract, on ridiculously low terms, from the count's German steward, who very likely pocketed a nice thing by the transaction. Sanderson opened the count's eyes to this, as well as many other tricks of the steward. He endeavoured to get the Frenchman to give up his lease, but in vain. Defour, civilly obdurate, refused—until one day the count found him and some of his men cruelly lashing and training an obdurate young black horse. He had been trying to tame this horse for some time, and was only making the animal worse. The count told him so, and said it was his want of skill, not the fault of the horse, that caused the failure. Now the Frenchman's weak point was an overweening opinion of his own skill in horse-flesh. The count, intentionally or not, touched this point so hard, that a bet was made, the end of which we have seen. The count knew the horse, and admired him—and, in conjunction with his English groom, he had soon conquered the temper, and gained the affections of the animal, which was then found to be peculiarly tractable and gentle. Training commenced; many mock dinner-parties had been held, and the horse gradually taught the various movements we had seen. The result was, two hundred roubles to the groom, the horse became the property of the count, and the Frenchman got a new lease on more equitable terms. I saw another exhibition of the same nature in a gentleman's house near St. Petersburg, but it was somewhat less successful. There is nothing that a young Russian noble enjoys more than an affair of this kind, when horses are, as they commonly are, his peculiar and passionate delight.

RELIQUES.

A wild, wet night: the driving sleet
  Blurs all the lamps along the quay;
The windows shake; the busy street
Is still alive with hurrying feet;
  The wind raves from the sea.

So let it rave! My lamp burns bright;
  My long day's work is almost done;
I curtain out each sound and sight—
Of all nights in the year, to-night
  I choose to be alone.

Alone, with doors and windows fast,
  Before my open desk I stand. . . .
Alas! can twelve long months be past,
My hidden, hidden wealth! since last
  I held thee in my hand?

So, there it lies! From year to year
  I see the ribbon change; the page
Turn yellower; and the very tear
That blots the writing, disappear
  And fade away with age.

Mine eyes grow dim when they behold
  The precious trifles hoarded there—
A ring of battered Indian gold,
A withered bluebell, and a fold
  Of sunny chesnut hair.

Not all the riches of the earth,
  Not all the treasures of the sea,
Could buy these house-gods from my hearth;
But yet, the secret of their worth
  Must live and die with me.

HAIL COLUMBIA——SQUARE!

It would be a curious thing to enter into an examination of the various changes of condition to which a man may be subjected in a single day. He may get up in the morning strong and well, and be put to bed at night a cripple. He may get up rich and lie down poor, or in the morning be a beggar and in the evening a millionnaire. At six o'clock in the forenoon he may be a father, and before the clock has made its round he may be childless. To take less exceptional cases, we know that it is possible for any individual who feels so disposed, to breakfast in Paris and dine in London, or to stand in the morning in Cheapside or the Strand, and in the evening by the dark waters of a Westmoreland lake. The clergyman is called away from the wedding-feast, to the death-bed of a pauper; the doctor is in the middle of a good story at his own dinner-table when he is summoned to a garret, where good stories and good dinners are equally unknown.

But surely one of the most extraordinary and rapid changes of condition, is that experienced by the traveller who shall journey, as fast as wheels can carry him, from the western to the eastern extremity of the metropolis at this most brilliant moment of the great London season. He starts at South Kensington. He passes rows and rows of palaces. The open windows are full

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of flowers. There is such store of perfume in them that they are reckless, and, besides making the rooms within delicious, scatter largesse of rich scent to the passer-by; sun-blinds gaily striped are drawn down, but still through the laced curtains glimpses may be seen of splendid decoration in the interior of the house; something may be observed, too, through the open door, for the servants have discovered that it is of no use shutting it, the callers being so frequent. So they stand in groups in the hall and on the threshold. The small broughams drawn by ponies as the moment's fashion decrees that they must be, the barouches in which ladies recline at their ease, and all sorts of other equipages which I would name if I had the luck to be a coachmaker, flash about this wonderful neighbourhood with a swift precision which does equal credit to the hand and the eye of the driver. The diplomatist jogs by on a quiet ugly horse, which he looks upon as a liver-shaking machine, and which costs far more than the fiery animal bestridden by the groom behind. The diplomatist sits very far back in his saddle, does not rise in his stirrups, rides with a loose rein and a seat to match, and would certainly tumble off if his horse were to shy. From the great high-mounted chariot with the armorial panels, with the two footmen behind, and the inevitable old lady with a wig inside, to the buggy drawn by a high stepper and driven by a minor with expectations, all is brilliant and imposing; even the Hansom cabs which frequent these regions have a brighter look than other Hansom cabs, and affect tartan panels and varnish, after a singular and vainglorious sort. Nor have we done with the different kinds of vehicles even yet, for, about this neighbourhood, ladies will drive themselves in little basket carriages: while the curricle and the fogy are not unknown. Is it a fashionable watering-place or a brilliant capital? Are care, illness, sorrow, death, known in such a place? Who are all these people, and how are all these palaces maintained? Where do the inhabitants—where does the money—come from?

Bright awnings quivering in the summer breeze, echoes of gay voices, rollings of light wheels, quick stepping of untamed horses, distant echoings of military bands—pleasure, luxury, extravagance, have it all their own way here, and a jovial way it is.

But the sun, which brings out the perfumes of Belgravian flower-vases, glances on the striped awnings, twinkles on the silvered harness, casts bright gleams here, and broad and luminous shadows there, this same sun has in another neighbourhood (about which we have something to say) other and dirtier work to do. In a certain other region of this town it has to illuminate streets and lanes so narrow and so tortuous, that it is a wonder its straight beams can ever get to the ground. Strange it is that they are not stifled, to begin with, among the stacks of gnarled and ponderous chimneys, for if the fire is a purifying agent and sends the noxious vapours of a room up the chimney with the smoke, it is certain that such chimney-produce must present some obstacle to the downward progress of those already sickening rays, and taint them heavily as they descend. From the roof where the foul rags wrung out in foul water, hang to dry, the sunbeams shorn of their glory somewhat, but in no wise of their heat, pass down the dangling bit of rotten clothes-line to the garret window. This chamber being fireless, may be supposed to vomit out its impurities quite unalloyed by the adulteration of smoke. The dead child, the other and younger child sickening of the fever which released the first, the horrible clothing saturated with humanity, the mounting odours of the whole ill-drained house coming up to this undrained room—all these things are let out to taint the sunbeam whose course we are following, as it passes on its way. Luckily it has not much farther to go. These houses in Bethnal-green are not of lofty stature, and the garret windows are seldom more than three stories from the street; sometimes the houses are only two, or even one story above the pavement.

Each of these rooms, let and under-let, tenanted by from four to eight times the number of persons that could live in it with a common regard to health or decency—each of them casts forth its great volume of impurities for the sunbeams to suck in, as they pass on to the ground that lies parched and defiled beneath them. Of the particular horrors, either moral or physical, which those dusty rays reveal as they pass from one story to another, it would be useless, if it were practicable, to speak in detail. Violence, cruelty, immodesty, uncleanness, are here unmitigated and almost unconcealed. Everything is perverted. Childhood is old and careful. Infants, imitating the violence they have seen about them from their earliest recollection, are shrill and shrewish with the smaller infants placed under their care. The home is perverted from being a haven of rest, which the man longs to get to, and is become an earthly hell which he has cause to dread. The women are perverted to be unwomanly, and the men, for the most part, to be like the brute creation, with just enough humanity to make them more elaborate in brutishness than beasts can by their nature be. The air is perverted to carry from window to window the monstrous vapours encircled in a compound interest of pollution as it passes on. The sun's rays are perverted, and instead of bringing wholesomeness and purity with them, draw up new wealth of nastiness from every nook and corner, and, heating it to fever-pitch, breed Death far and near.

Of a certainty this is a strong contrast to the region first described, and he who passes swiftly from the one neighbourhood to the other may fairly ask himself whether he be still in the same world, instead of the same town.

How terrible the change. The sights and sounds how cruelly different. The awnings here, are represented by some streaming scrap of rag drying at a window, or by the patched

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umbrella at the street stall. The flowers are the morsels of vegetables cast out as too bad for even Shoreditch nutriment. The carriages are costermongers' trucks; for music here are the cries of suffering children, or curses and vituperation—which the echoes are charged with night and day. Are these slouching sulky distorted creatures, who lurk and lower along the sordid thoroughfares, the same animals as the gallants of the other part of the town, the men of upright carriage and free and open looks, cantering in Rotten-row, or lounging in faultless clothes at the entrance to that luxurious place? Are the ladies who lie back in their open carriages, as if their sofas were put upon wheels, or who rein with powerful curb their hardly restrained horses, flesh and blood like to the masculine and bony hags who scream at their children as they drag them from the gutter, and provoke their husbands to increased wrath as they stagger from the public-house?

Yet it does not take an hour to get from the sight of the first condition to the sight of the second. At one o'clock in the afternoon you may be listening to pleasant and prosperous sounds, inhaling sweet odours, and seeing around you only suggestions of wealth and happiness, and at two you may plant yourself before a rag and bone shop, with a print in the window of Justice tightly bandaged, weighing a pound of dripping in her scales, and giving the highest price for it compatible with a reasonable profit. In less than one short hour, you can pass into the regions of intensest squalor, where every sense is offended, just as in the other neighbourhood every one of the five senses was comforted and pleased.

Is this great contrast one to which many persons subject themselves? Are there those who, of their own free will, pass from the first scene to the second? Nay, are there those whose lot is cast in the pleasant land, and who leave it to go into the land of pain and horror? There *are* those who make the pilgrimage who make it from choice, who cannot enjoy their own comforts while they know of such unutterable misery, who start on a great mission from the west to the east, and who come back leaving behind them goodly work accomplished.

To record what has been done by one such person is the main object of this paper.

Most people in this town know something of the wretchedness that prevails in those great outlying districts which border the city of London on its eastern side. Some of us have been obliged to go into one of these neighbourhoods on some business matter; some of us have gone to see what such places are like. In these days of railway travelling, many travellers starting on a pleasure-trip have an Asmodeus glimpse of courts and alleys, and houses and rooms, which they would otherwise never see, and, as the train drags slowly along at starting, get opportunities of beholding a little garret-life the memory of which miles of steaming among meadows and trees will not dispel. Now to all those who have passed through, or journeyed above, a poor neighbourhood, and who have thought sorrowfully of the misery around them, it will be a great comfort to know that such misery may be alleviated in a substantial and enduring manner, and that the frightful condition in which the poor exist is not an inevitable and irremediable evil, but, on the contrary, one to which it is perfectly simple and easy to apply a remedy, if we will but exert ourselves in the right direction.

In one of the remotest and most impoverished parts of the remote and impoverished district known generically as Bethnal-green, there exists a certain piece of ground, which, together with the buildings that stand upon it, goes by the name of Columbia-square. I believe it used to be called Nova Scotia Gardens. Columbia-square is very little known. The pedestrian who would find it out must keep his eyes about him, and ask his way of all sorts of people, while he who would approach it in a cab had best hire the vehicle by the hour, as the driver will get through a considerable amount of distance in wandering up and down and round and round the Bethnal-green streets before he discovers Columbia-square.

The place is distinct enough from all the surrounding neighbourhood when you *do* get within range of it, and would infallibly attract your notice at once, even if you had previously heard nothing about it, and were *not* in search of it.

The surrounding neighbourhood is very dwarfish in height; Columbia-square is composed of houses of a considerable elevation. The surrounding neighbourhood is very dirty; Columbia-square is spotlessly clean. The surrounding neighbourhood is stuffy and close; Columbia-square is airy and open. The surrounding neighbourhood is highly flavoured as to odour; Columbia-square is as sweet (as the saying goes) as a nut.

It was a happy day for that miserable district of Bethnal-green, and indirectly, no doubt, for other of the poorer London neighbourhoods, when the abject wretchedness of the inhabitants became known to one whose profound sympathy with human suffering is united to a rare ability to relieve it, and a wonderful discretion in the manner of relief. We are used to find the name of Miss Burdett Coutts associated with acts of mercy. Her praise is sung in every apartment of these Bethnal-green houses which she has built, and no written panegyric, be it ever so strongly expressed, could equal the silent testimony borne by the neat convenient rooms, by the bearing of the inhabitants whose lives are altered by the self-respect which the place engenders, by the wholesome faces of the children living in good air and in clean and decent human habitations.

Columbia-square is a four-sided enclosure of considerable size. The houses are arranged in four blocks, each of which is so large as to contain on an average about five-and-forty sets of apartments, or complete tenements. There is an open court-yard in the middle of the parallelogram which these houses form, and free ac-

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cess by an opening at each corner. The effect of the whole is extremely pleasant, and the design of the buildings reflects great credit on the architect. It is very remarkable to see how much may be done with little expense, by a judicious architect, to make the poorest domestic architecture agreeable to the eye.

To plan such a range of buildings, intended for such a purpose as these are meant to fulfil, is by no means so easy a thing as some people might imagine. It must be remembered that the very object of building these houses was to bring together an enormous number of very poor people, never accustomed to live where any amount of cleanliness was so much as possible. It was necessary to render it almost impracticable for those of the inhabitants who had not previously been able to form any habits of cleanliness, to make the place unbearable to those who had. Accumulation of dirt, foul air, dark corners, stuffed-up passages, these and the like dangers must be carefully guarded against, and light and air must be everywhere.

Are the dangers indicated above, guarded against in all our dwelling-houses at the West-end? Do air and light pervade all the nooks and corners of a modern residence? More so than they did, no doubt. The new neighbourhoods are generally better planned as to these matters than the old parts of Bloomsbury, or even May-fair; but there is still enough folly and ignorance shown in the construction of modern houses to make many a West-end tenant wish that Columbia-square were in a fashionable neighbourhood, and that he had the happy chance of getting lodgings there.

Nothing could be better than the arrangement of these buildings, which is due to the thoughtful skill of Mr. H. A. Darbishire, the architect who planned them. It has been said that the square is open at each of the four corners. The corridors on every floor receive light and air from windows opening upon these free spaces. As they communicate also with a staircase, open to the air and carried up the entire central portion of each building, a complete system of ventilation is established. Into these long corridors the different suites of apartments open.

These are of various sizes and rents, but each is complete in itself. The commonest arrangement, and that for which probably there is the greatest demand, is one of two rooms. The first of these is the living-room of the family, and is fitted with a good kitchen range with a boiler and oven, and an enclosed place by the side of the fireplace for coals. This room will measure ordinarily, twelve feet by ten; the bedroom, opening into it, about twelve feet by eight. The rooms are lighted and aired by large windows, and are further ventilated by apertures in the external wall, and in the wall which communicates with the main corridor.

In addition to these tenements there are others of three rooms, adapted to larger families; there are single rooms to let, as well; sometimes these single rooms are occupied by additional members of families living in the two-roomed suites; sometimes, but very rarely, by single people. It is for the use of families chiefly, that these blocks are intended, and by families they are chiefly tenanted.

Some discretion is exercised, and most rightly, in deciding how many members of a family the rooms will hold: though the utmost license consistent with common decency and propriety is allowed. Combinations of families are entirely discouraged. In the event of a family, composed say of a man and his wife, being in possession of one of the *three*-roomed suites, it would consist with the regulations of the place that a relative of either the husband or the wife should sleep in one of the rooms: sharing with his relations the common living-room. In a two-roomed suite, however, no such thing would be allowed: the father and mother being the only adult persons permitted in so small a tenement. If there be a brother, a father, or mother, who wishes to live with the family, he or she must pay for an additional single room. Under-letting is entirely prohibited.

To compensate for this loss of emolument, the rents of these clean and delightful residences are arranged on the lowest scale possible. Single rooms range, according to size, from two shillings to two and ninepence per week; suites of two rooms are to be had at three and sixpence, three and eightpence (these with additional conveniences), and four and sixpence: the last being of extra size. The three-roomed suites are four shillings, four and sixpence, and five and sixpence per week, according to size and convenience.

It should be mentioned that between the suites of apartments, dividing them in most cases from each other, are double arrangements of lavatories, baths, and other conveniences, communicating directly with the open air, and with the corridors as well. The drainage connected with these parts of the building is excellent. A trap opens in the floor of each corridor, down which the inhabitants of the different rooms shoot their dust and refuse, into a great dust-hole underneath. Surely, every one who lives in a house where the dust-bin is so placed as that the dustmen have to carry its contents through the house to get to their carts, has to envy the inhabitants of this Columbia-square. And, indeed, they look enviable. There is a prosperous appearance about the whole place; and the children who play in the open ground in the middle of the square, are as superior in neatness and cleanliness to the children who live in the neighbouring gutters, as the rooms in Columbia-square are, to the rooms in Virginia-row close by.

It gives one new hope and courage to observe the success of this undertaking, and the good effect of the place upon its inhabitants. Those children playing in the open space, are clean, because it is possible, and even easy, to make them so. At the top of each of the four blocks of which the square is composed, under the roof, occupying nearly the whole length of the building, is a great laundry and drying space,

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where the linen is aired as completely as it is dried. Here is accommodation for eight or ten women at once. Each has her copper, with a little fireplace underneath, each has two tubs provided, and each is screened by a partition from her next neighbour. For the common use, stands, in the middle of the laundry, a machine which, by mere force of rapid revolution, wrings the linen completely, and saves a wonderful deal of hard labour and wear and tear of clothing. For these great conveniences the mother of the family has not got even to cross the threshold of the house.

Yet though gas is provided to light the corridors and staircases, though these are kept clean by two resident porters under a resident superintendent—though there is all this appearance of supply of gratuitous comfort and help, this place is not an almshouse nor a charitable institution. The independence of the tenants has been borne in mind. The undertaking pays.

This is one of the most remarkable and important things connected with the matter. Valuable and attractive as the institution is, as a monument of a benevolent purpose humanely carried out, it is almost more valuable in the proof it affords that even an undertaking on this magnificent scale—for, comparatively speaking, on a magnificent scale it is —will yet bring in a profit of nearly three per cent. This profit is not enough for general enterprise; it will never in these days tempt the speculator; but it is a profit, and a solid and secure one.

And so—having rendered our poor tribute of deep admiration to this achievement of the most nobly generous and most experienced philanthropist of our age—we come next to the important question: Is it possible to render the building of decent houses for the poor, a speculation which shall be sufficiently promising, to engage the attention of the purely commercial man? Individual benevolence has its limits. It cannot rebuild the poor districts of London. To carry out effectually the project so nobly initiated, the "concern" must be made to pay better.

To put this idea upon a sound basis, the capitalist must be convinced that he is investing his money safely, and to advantage, in erecting dwellings for the poor. It is not unreasonable to suppose that even Columbia-square might have been brought more temptingly within this condition. Some money was expended in ornament; more in separate baths, of which there are several; more in a handsome reading-room, made at the sacrifice of space that might have been devoted to two additional sets of apartments. As to the first, it was an indulgence of taste which the foundress allowed herself; the second are special luxuries which the poor man hardly needs in his own dwelling; and thirdly, it is found that the reading-room is very little used; for the sufficient reason that the inmates choose rather to spend their spare time in their own comfortable rooms with their families. But for these items of expense there would have been a slight reduction of the scale of rents, or a higher interest realised on the capital sunk.

Economical enterprise would save under all the foregoing heads, and would probably purpose to achieve less at first. But whatever it might do, it would, if well directed to the object in hand, do for the poor in the main, what the benevolent foundress of Columbia-square has done. It would supply the poor man —at a profit—with the advantages derivable from Capital. With these advantages he cannot supply himself, because he has no Capital. But he thankfully and readily pays for the good domestic results which Capital can ensure him. Tell the very poor man indeed that Cleanliness is next to Godliness, and that he must set up a good supply of water, a copper, and a washing-tub; and he will show you his small and varying week's wages, and ask you where on earth the purchase money is to come from? But let Capital supply those things for him on a greater scale, making his washing-tub a laundry, and his copper a furnace, and giving *itself*, as well as him, the advantages derivable from combination,—that is to say, from the things being used not by him alone in a corner, but in common by many people; and he will cheerfully pay Capital a handsome interest, and be an immeasurably better and happier creature. Capital can build any number of Columbia-squares, with any number of departures and deductions from the now existing Columbia-square; but it will, for instance, light its corridors and staircases with gas, because, there being a combination of people to provide with artificial light at night, to lay on gas is to take the easiest, cheapest, and most practicable way of lighting them. Alone and without Capital the poor man pays for his wretched candle and his own discomfort and degradation at least as much as this gas will cost him. He has nothing but income, and what Capital wants is income, and it will be a blessed day that brings the two to the advantage of both, to go hand in hand together through the humblest ways and details of life.

Let, for instance, a portion at least of the munificent gift lately made by Mr. Peabody to the London poor be regarded as for benevolent, yet profitable, investment, not to benefit a few fortunate individuals, but the whole mass of the London poor. To raise buildings for the poor on the surest foundation, they must be self-supporting. And to make them self-supporting, two things only must be considered—the barest, commonest decency, and the preservation of health. We must think of the miles and miles of town we have got to reclaim from worse horrors than one dares to write of, and we must not be contented to furnish luxurious accommodation for a favoured few—and those not the poorest of all—but simple brick and mortar structures, which shall afford decent and wholesome house-room to chimney-sweepers and dustmen. We must provide shelter for the

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costermonger and the coalheaver, and leave the case of the small clerk and the well-to-do journeyman for future consideration.

EXAMINE THE PRISONER!

When Mr. Jonathan Wild and Monsieur Robert Macaire are placed in the dock in their respective countries, on trial—the one, say for downright "murder," or for "burglariously breaking and entering certain premises;" the other, for murder too—there is a very remarkable difference in the manner in which the two gentlemen are dealt with during the investigation. Mr. Wild, though actually present, is, practically, no more than a mere stock or stone, or caput mortuum; and for any assistance that his presence affords to the inquiry, he might as well be in the prison-yard or condemned cell. He is stolidly ignored; he is spoken of persistently, as though he were absent; motives are assigned for his actions; his course of conduct is derived from pure speculation, as though he were a hundred miles away; efforts are made to reason out what was passing in his mind at a particular moment. In short, an unaccountable fiction is kept up that he who is present, is absent.

M. Macaire, on the contrary, placed between two gendarmes, is the very essence of vitality. He is the centre actor of the whole piece. M. le Premier Président is always asking him questions, and he himself is always answering those questions, or making little speeches, or interrupting witnesses, or being interrupted. Sometimes, indeed, he grows hot and violent, and gets into personal altercation with M. le Premier Président, with the result of being dragged a little roughly from the room by his two gendarmes. But, on the whole, it is certain that M. Macaire is regularly tried as M. Macaire, and that he has such a trial as could not take place in the absence of M. Macaire; whereas, the other gentleman, his fellow-creature in misfortune, Mr. Wild, is merely a puppet on trial, ornamenting the vacuity of the dock.

This is rather a curious difference, and the result is no less curious. This opposite treatment in our country arises from a certain sacredness with which the character of criminal is invested. That every man is presumed innocent until proved to be guilty, is the grand maxim: which is yet developed further, into Every guilty man is presumed innocent, until his neighbour shall prove him guilty. The law watches over him tenderly and affectionately, checks him if he would speak, pretends not to hear him if he *has* spoken, sets him free if he has been adroit enough to commit his crime in the absence of witnesses, or what may be called the dumb testimony of circumstances.

With M. Macaire, on the contrary, there is no such tenderness. At every damning piece of evidence the president asks him, "Accused, what do you say to that?" If accused be innocent, he will thankfully accept the opportunity, and will probably give a satisfactory explanation. If he be guilty, and the statement be really embarrassing, he will invent a lie on the spot, which will be inconsistent with some other part of his statement, and will have the effect of entangling him still further. He will be allowed, eventually, to explain whatever share he took in the transaction. On the supposition of M. Macaire's being innocent, such a statement, however unsupported, will be satisfactory so far as it goes; and, if it be fair and candid and straightforward, will be very welcome to a jury. If he be guilty, such a statement must necessarily be an artificial view of the case, and being sure to be full of contradiction, will only become a further proof of guilt.

It being notorious that a large per-centage of criminals escape justice through the working of this too lenient rule, thinking men have latterly turned their attention to the question, and it has been seriously discussed whether the French system might not be introduced into England with advantage. The objections are, of course, old platitudes, based on the maxim just given, that The law presumes every man innocent until proved guilty: that it is better that ninety-nine guilty men should escape than that one innocent man should be punished; with a final appeal to that spirit of British fair play and liberty of subject which is imperishably planted in every Briton's heart. Finally, it would be subversive of the grand spirit and practice of British law, bequeathed to us by our forefathers, and imperishably, &c. &c.

Without controverting these noble sentiments, it may be said, in the first place, that so perfect are the arrangements, so accurate the investigations, which precede a trial, that, practically speaking, an innocent person is very rarely placed in the dock. Or, if he be so placed, he is still more rarely found guilty. We must, therefore, amend the noble sentiment given above. No guilty person is presumed to be guilty until he be proved to be so by the testimony of others.

The "perfection of human wisdom" is, however, full of inconsistency. It will shut its ears carefully to any verbal explanation Mr. Wild may wish to offer, and yet, at the same time, will send policemen to rifle Mr. Wild's trunks, drawers, letters, and written diaries. These private memorials of Mr. Wild, as strictly personal to Mr. Wild as any parole statement he might make, there is no scruple of using against him. Also, the police-officer who arrests Mr. Wild, will caution him in an unintelligible formula, that any statement he may make will be used in evidence against him. Thus, if Mr. Wild in a fit of honest indignation blurt out some admission damaging to his interest, that is carefully registered and reproduced on his trial.

Formerly the self-same objections were made against the introduction of personal evidence in civil trials: until eighteen hundred and fifty no plaintiff or defendant could be examined,

It was considered that the personal interest involved would so colour such testimony, as to make it valueless; that the temptation to perjury would be almost irresistible. However, it was felt that it was a perfect absurdity to exclude the evidence of the two leading agents in the transaction, and to shut out the stories of the injured and injuring parties — perhaps the only two persons who could really throw any light on the transaction. Even going back to the primitive Rousseau state of nature principle, it was felt that the wise mystery-man, or chief, sitting under his tree, or even Solomon in his temple, would first call the complaining party before him, and hear his narrative, and then hear the defending party; and then listen to neighbours and accept statements in corroboration or refutation. As to danger of perjury, a personal statement would need to be fortified from other sources: and there was always the danger before false swearing, of contradiction arising out of the truth, and of severe and searching cross-examination. If no moral sense restrain, there are the pains and penalties of an indictment for perjury suspended like a Damocles' sword over the witness-box.

The real inconsistency of the law, in having gone thus far and no farther, will be evident from the fact that many civil trials become virtually criminal trials, and that a plaintiff or defendant may be changed into an accused, and examined, as it were, in the dock, on charges involving his liberty and life. Thus, an ejectment may have been brought against some family to try the title to the estates—an ejectment founded on a concocted case, on forged deeds, wills, or parish registers. The plaintiff in such an action may be cross-examined on these criminal acts, and on *his own testimony* subjected to penalties and punishment. The case of the Reverend Mr. Hatch is fresh in the public memory. He himself was in the dock, and his mouth was therefore closed. But afterwards he indicted the prosecutrix for perjury; and with a change of positions, he going into the witness-box and she into the dock, he was enabled *by his own testimony*, which he was before prevented from offering, to convict her of perjury. The getting at justice by such accidents as these, should surely not be part of a system which boasts itself the perfection of human reason. Appealing, again, to the elementary stages of society, it will be found that the conduct of the master of a family, on any heinous dereliction in such family, is based on a more obvious and rational plan. He sends forthwith for the culprit, servant or offspring, to his study, and asks him boldly what he can say for himself? He does not call Jeames, or Tummus, or Charley, or Jack, before him and sternly refuse to accept any but direct proof from third parties concerning the alleged delinquency of Jeames, Tummus, Charley, or Jack. He examines Jeames, Tummus, Charley, or Jack. If the supposed culprit make fair, open, candid statements, and bear a little cross-examination without being shaken, he will be dismissed "without a stain on his character." If, on the contrary, Mary Anne has been out "without leave," and bolsters up her case with a falsehood, the terrible engine of cross-examination will break Mary Anne down.

The advantage of such a change in our criminal procedure may be looked at in two ways, namely, in confounding the guilty, and in aiding the innocent to clear themselves. What would be the great yearning in the heart of an innocent man charged with a criminal offence? It would be a hungering after speech, a sense of bursting with suppressed vindication, a longing to be allowed to speak out, and explain how all occurred. When a witness mentions a fact apparently damaging, how easily could a word from *him* explain it away. But his lips are sealed.

Where the accused is really guilty, what an inestimable advantage and swift short cut to justice would arise from a severe raking cross-examination. How would those artfully-concocted defences which prisoners on trial for murder put forward, through the mouths of others, be utterly crumbled away under this efficacious test of truth. The grand system of manufactured alibis would melt away; for these being now presented to counsel through the medium of witnesses whose antecedents they are mostly unacquainted with, and whose preceding and concomitant actions they know little of, are very difficult to expose. But a false alibi is after all but an artificial system of facts, and which must of necessity be at variance with the *real* system. So that, if the points at variance can be discovered and proved, it must break down.

It will be felt as to the cases of Palmer and Smethurst what a valuable auxiliary this would have been to the prosecution. But it will be said again that, in the case of a person on trial for his life, the temptation to perjury will be irresistible, and that at all risks he will try to "swear himself" out of his horrible position. To this the simple answer is, that such a statement would not be made to depend on the *credit* of the prisoner, which would be sadly impeached by his situation, and that, therefore, no oath would be received from him. Any force to be derived from his statement would rest on its own natural probability, and on proper and reasonable appearance of corroboration. Many innocent persons, it will be said, may be unfairly dealt with in a severe cross-examination, and may, from nervousness and timidity, conduct themselves so as to have all the exterior deportment of guilt. But the same objection will apply to civil investigations, where the practice is not found to work such mischief; and the judge is at hand, in case of any such misapprehension, to restore the proper tone and appreciation. There is never any fear, in an English trial, of the process of the court pressing too severely on an accused. It deals with him too tenderly. After all, even in the case of an innocent man finding himself in the dock, there must be present, if not guilt, a certain laches or carelessness, or indirect culpability of some sort, which has brought him there; and for this he must pay a little penalty. Thus, if

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he complains of severe cross-examination, it is his own act in some degree that has brought it on him.

They manage this matter, like many other matters, far better in France. The French imperial judges *must* assign counsel to *every* prisoner, no matter what his offence. This is a substantial benefit, far more useful to the innocently-accused person than the questionable tenderness we have been discussing. And, above all, there is, in France, a Court of Criminal Appeal, wherein wrongs done by inflamed and excited juries may be set right, and a new trial ordered.

The venerable Lord Brougham, Mr. Stuart Wortley, Sir Erskine Perry, and a host of legal authorities, are in favour of such a change as has been here discussed. There is little doubt but it will receive a fresh indorsement from the great law reformers, at the coming Social Science Congress.

CAT STORIES.

Herodotus tells us that "on every occasion of a fire in Egypt, the strangest prodigy occurs with the cats. The inhabitants allow the fire to rage as it pleases, while they stand about at intervals, and watch these animals, which, slipping by the men, or else leaping over them, rush headlong into the flames. When this happens, the Egyptians are in deep affliction. If a cat dies in a private house by a natural death, all the inmates of the house shave their eyebrows; on the death of a dog, they shave the head and the whole of the body. The cats are taken on their decease to the city of Bubastis, where they are embalmed, after which they are buried in certain sacred repositories." Sir J. G. Wilkinson, in his notes on the above, and on the capital punishment inflicted on those who wilfully killed any sacred animal, says: "The law was, as Herodotus says, against a person killing them on purpose, but the prejudiced populace in after times did not always keep within the law, and Diodorus declares that if any person killed an ibis or a cat, even unintentionally, it infallibly cost him his life, the multitude collecting and tearing him to pieces. For fear of which calamity, if anybody found one of them dead, he stood at a distance, and calling with a loud voice, made every demonstration of grief, and protested that it was found lifeless. And to such an extent did they carry this custom, that they could not be deterred by any representation from their own magistrates, from killing a Roman who had accidentally killed a cat.

Herodotus also relates that the number of domestic animals in Egypt was very great, and would be still greater were it not for what befals the cats. When the females have kittened, he says, the toms, provoked by the exclusive attention paid by the mothers to their offspring, are in the habit of seizing the kittens, carrying them off, and killing them, but they do not eat them afterwards. This curious artifice is attended with success.

The city of Bubastis was the chief seat of the worship of the Egyptian divinity of that name, called *Pasht*. The cat was sacred to this goddess, who herself was represented in the form of a cat, or of a female with the head of a cat, some specimens of which representations are still extant. The ancients identified Bubastis with the Greek Artemis (or Diana). Each was regarded as the goddess of the moon. "The cat, also, was believed by the ancients to stand in some relation to the moon, for Plutarch says that the cat was the symbol of the moon on account of her different colours, her busy ways at night, and her giving birth to twenty-eight young ones during the course of her life, which is exactly the number of the phases of the moon." (Smith's Dictionary.) In another place, however, Plutarch gives a different account of the symbolic meaning of the cat. In the Egyptian figures the cat is not always clearly distinguishable from the lion. It appears as the type of the coins of Bubastis. Cats do certainly enjoy themselves on moonlight nights; and there appears something appropriate in their ancient consecration to the moon. They certainly do make an awful noise, sometimes, on moonlight nights; who has not been startled on some such night by a sudden burst of squalling of cats under his window? How they must have revelled under a bright Egyptian moon in the streets and porticos of Bubastis!

It might occur to some that "puss" is derived from that Egyptian name Pasht; but perhaps it is best to acquiesce in the derivation from the Latin *pusus* (a little boy), or *pusa* (a little girl).

Now, for a short reference to the natural history of the cat. Most persons are aware that the feline tribe comprises, besides cats—lions, tigers, leopards, and lynxes. Most persons have heard of the beautiful contrivance by which the claws of these animals are preserved constantly sharp: being drawn, when not used, by certain tendons, within a sheath or integument, while only the soft parts of the foot come in contact with the ground, thus enabling the animal to tread noiselessly. The roughness of the cat's tongue is due to a multitude of horny papillæ (much stronger, of course, in lions and tigers), by which it is materially helped to keep itself clean: a most important point, for cleanness is a necessity to cats, inasmuch as if they had the slightest smell about them, their prey would detect their presence, and never come within their reach. As it is, the cat is so free from smell, that she may sit close to the holes of mice without their being aware of it, although they possess a fine sense of smell. A cat never eats a morsel of anything, whatever it is, without afterwards sitting down to clean and wipe its face and lips. The caution for which it is so remarkable is likewise evinced in its choice of secluded spots for bringing up its offspring; very often some hole or corner little thought of by the inmates of the house; if the young be removed and placed elsewhere, the mother will frequently take them again and again to the place chosen by herself. Another characteristic

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of the domestic cat is an instinctive knowledge of the presence of danger. Even a chimney on fire, or the presence of strange workmen in the house, will make it very restless and uneasy, and on such occasions it will sometimes not go to rest even during the night. Every animal is endowed with peculiar means of self-defence; and as the cat cannot trust, like the hare, to speed, on the approach of danger it watches its enemy, occasionally taking side glances, or looking round for a place of refuge. On these occasions, notwithstanding its natural nervousness, it maintains great coolness. If a hole or shelter be near, it waits for an opportunity, or until its enemy looks away, and then rushes under cover, or runs up a tree or a wall, and immediately sits down and watches its enemy. If driven to an actual encounter, the smallness of its mouth and jaws preclude the use of its teeth to any great extent, but it can inflict considerable injury, and acute pain, with its sharp claws, which perhaps no dog except a bull-dog can bear; indeed, few dogs like to attack a cat at bay, though they all run after them. It is curious, too, that once in a place of safety it never seeks to leave it, or loses sight of its enemy. A cat on the safe side of an area railing will sit down and coolly watch a dog barking furiously at it.

Its care and solicitude for its offspring are excessive and touching. If attacked while rearing them it will not run away, but stands and defends them against any odds; like the hare in similar circumstances, the cat evinces immense power and courage, no matter how formidable the enemy may be. Of course, the females of all animals possess more or less of this quality. The domestic cat is always proud of its captured prey, and seldom fails to bring and show it to the inmates of the family it lives with, announcing its success by a plaintive sort of mewing. A relative to whom the writer is indebted for these remarks on the characteristics and habits of the cat, wrote lately: "Some nights ago my cat, who has lately caught eleven mice, awoke me in the middle of the night. It sat down by the bedside and mewed, while it rubbed itself backwards and forwards against the bedposts. I had no idea what was the matter, but felt sure something was. I lighted the candle, and found a dead mouse quite close to me. Satisfied that I had examined its capture, it took it off, and, after playing with it for an hour, ate it up, leaving, as usual, the tail and paws." In country or farm-houses, a cat never fails to bring home birds, mice, and in southern climes, lizards, and even snakes. She does this, however, very much in proportion to the amount of kindness bestowed upon her at home, and, if this be altogether lacking, the prey is only shown to other cats living in the same house, or to her own young, if she happens to have any; often, indeed, she brings her trophy immediately and only to her young.

The cat will play with her young up to a certain age, and allow them to pull her about all day. When they are old enough to shift for themselves, she not only ceases to care for them, but any attempt on their part to play with her is immediately put a stop to. The senses of smelling, hearing, and sight, are acute in cats, of which it is said there are thirty distinct species. Being an animal which hunts both by day and night, the structure of its visual organs is adjusted for both. The retina, or expansion of the optic nerve, is most sensitive to the stimulus of light; hence, a well-marked ciliary muscle contracts the pupil to a mere vertical fissure during the day, while in the dark the pupil dilates enormously, and lets in as much light as possible. But even this would be insufficient, for cats have to look for their prey in holes, cellars, and other places where little or no light can penetrate. Hence, the cat is furnished with a bright, metal-like, lustrous membrane called the Tapetum, which lines part of the hollow globe of the eye, and sheds considerable light on the image of an object thrown on the retina. This membrane is, I believe, common to all vertebrated animals, but is especially beautiful and lustrous in nocturnal animals. The herbivora, such as the ox and sheep, have the Tapetum of the finest enamelled green colour, provided probably to suit the nature of their food, which is green. The subject, however, of the various colours of the Tapetum in different animals is not yet understood. The sensibility of the retina in cats is so great that neither the contraction of the pupil nor the closing of the eyelids would alone afford them sufficient protection from the action of the light. Hence, in common with most animals, the cat is furnished with a *nictilating* membrane, which is, in fact, a third eyelid, sliding over the transparent cornea, beneath the common eyelids. This membrane is not altogether opaque, but translucent, allowing light to fall on the retina, and acting as it were like a shade. The nictilating membrane is often seen in the cat when she slowly opens her eyes from a calm and prolonged sleep. It is well developed in the eagle, and enables him to gaze steadfastly on the sun's unclouded disk.

The lateral movements of the head in cats are not so extensive as in the owl, but are nevertheless considerable. A cat can look round, pretty far behind it, without moving its body: which might be apt to startle its prey. The skin of the cat is very full and loose, in order that all its movements in all possible directions and circumstances may be free and unrestrained. For this purpose, too, all the joints which connect its bones together are extremely loose and free. Thus the cat is enabled to get through small apertures, to leap from great heights, and even to fall in an unfavourable posture with little or no injury to itself. Its ears are not so movable as those of some other animals, but are more so than in very many animals. The shape of the external ear, or rather cartilaginous portion, is admirably adapted to intercept sounds. The natural posture is forward and outward, so as to catch sounds proceeding from the front and sides. The upper half, however, is movable, and by means of a

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thin layer of muscular fibres it is made to curve backward, and receive sounds from the rear. Although a cat cannot lick its face and head, it nevertheless cleans these parts thoroughly. In fact, as we often observe, a cat licks its right paw for a long time, and then brushes down the corresponding side of the head and face, and when this is accomplished it does the same with the other paw and corresponding side. Grass is very needful to cats. The food and prey they eat, often disorder the stomach. On such occasions it eats a little grass, which, however, goes no further than the fauces and commencement of the œsophagus; these are irritated by the jagged and saw-like margins of the blades of grass; and this irritation is, by a reflex action, communicated to the stomach, which by a spasmodic action rejects its vitiated secretion.

The cat, like all other animals, is most sensitive to the great talisman we call kindness, and expresses its wants, confidence, and gratitude, equally as much as, if not more than, the dog. It will fawn, rub itself against, and mew to, any member of the family it lives with, and will indicate its comfort and contentment by purring. If ill-used, however, it becomes exceedingly shy and diffident, and if once it has had cause to mistrust a person it rarely and with difficulty regains confidence in that person.

The origin of the domestic cat is considered by some, to be the wild cat of the European forests, but some zoologists still hold that the parent stock is undiscovered. Others think it came to us from Egypt, and afterwards occasionally bred with the native wild cat. This last is the opinion of that high authority Sir William Jardine, who thinks we are indebted to the superstition of the ancient Egyptians for having domesticated the species. "The wild cat is now rarely found in the south of England, and even in Cumberland and Westmoreland its numbers are very much reduced. In the north of Scotland, and in Ireland, it is still abundant." (English Cyclop., Art Felidæ.) As to fossil cats, it is stated that the first traces of large fossil cats have been hitherto found in the second, or verioscene period of the tertiary formations. There are no less than four species of these great cats, some as large as a lion. Fossil remains of a feline animal about the size of a wild cat have also been found. One of the oldest specimens found in this country is part of a lower jaw, from the Cave of Kent's Hole, Torquay, now in the British Museum.

It is pleasant to cat-fanciers to meet their favourites all over the world, north and south, and to find their memorials in the literature of many nations. In Mr. Dasent's Popular Tales from the Norse, there are two stories, entitled, The Cat on the Doorefell, and Lord Peter: the latter the original from which our well-known Puss in Boots is derived. Not a few celebrated men have been fond of cats, though only an instance or two can be given here. It is related of Mohammed that once when his cat was asleep on a part of his dress, he cut the part off when he wanted to get up, rather than disturb her. Fine old Samuel Johnson used to go out and buy oysters for his pet cat, thinking that the feelings of his servant might be hurt if sent on such an errand. It is difficult to explain, with the doctor's fondness for cats, how it was that he omitted to mention them expressly amongst the inmates of the Happy Valley, and did not enumerate a liking for them as being among the good qualities of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia.

Regarding the attachment of cats to places, the following remarks of the late Rev. Cæsar Otway, in his lecture on the Intellectuality of Domestic Animals, before the Royal Zoological Society of Ireland, some years ago, deserve attention. "Of cats," he says, "time does not allow me to say much, but this I must affirm, that they are misrepresented, and often the victims of prejudice. It is strictly maintained that they have little or no affection for *persons*, and that their partialities are confined to *places*. I have known many instances of the reverse. When leaving, about fifteen years ago, a glebe-house to remove into Dublin, the cat, that was a favourite with me and with my children, was left behind in our hurry; on seeing strange faces come into the house, she instantly left it, and took up her abode in the top of a large cabbage-stalk, whose head had been cut off, but which retained a sufficient number of leaves to protect poor puss from the weather; in this position she remained, and nothing could induce her to leave it, until I sent a special messenger to bring her to my house in town. At present I have a cat that follows my housekeeper up and down like a dog; every morning she comes up at daybreak in winter to the door of the room in which the maid-servants sleep, and there she mews until they get up." It must be remarked here that the way in which some people, when removing, leave their cats behind to shift for themselves, is shameful. It is cruel to throw an animal upon its own resources which has always been accustomed to be provided for.

Those who are interested in anecdotes of the instinct, sagacity, mind, and affections of animals, may be referred, amongst the various books written on this subject, to one lately published by the Rev. F. O. Morris, called Anecdotes in Natural History; also, to the same writer's Records of Animal Sagacity and Character; with a Preface on the Future Existence of the Animal Creation.

Bewick, in his chapter on cats, says: "Frequent instances are in our recollection, of cats having returned to the place from whence they had been carried, though at many miles' distance, and even across rivers, when they could not possibly have any knowledge of the road or situation that would apparently lead them to it. This extraordinary faculty is, however, possessed in a much greater degree by dogs; yet it is in both animals equally wonderful and unaccountable. In the time of Hoel the Good, King of Wales, who died in the year nine hundred and forty-eight, laws were made as well to preserve as to fix the different prices of

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animals; among these the cat was included, as being at that period of great importance, on account of its scarceness and utility. The price of a kitten before it could see, was fixed at one penny; until proof could be given of its having caught a mouse, twopence; after such proof, fourpence: which was a great sum in those days, when the value of specie was extremely high. It was likewise required that it should be perfect in its senses of hearing and seeing, should be a good mouser, should have its claws whole, and, if a female, be a careful nurse. If it failed in any of these qualities, the seller was to forfeit to the buyer the third of its value. If any one should steal or kill the cat that guarded the prince's granary, he was either to forfeit a milch ewe, her fleece and lamb, or as much wheat as, when poured on the cat suspended by its tail (its head touching the floor), would form a heap high enough to cover the tip of the tail. Hence we may conclude that cats were not originally natives of these islands; and from the great care taken to improve and preserve the breed of the prolific creature, we may suppose cats were but little known at that period. Whatever credence we may give to the circumstances of the well-known story of Whittington and his Cat, it is another proof of the great value set upon this animal in former times. Cats have been the means of enriching our own and other languages, with various proverbs. For instance: "To make a cat's-paw" of a person; "To live like cat and dog;" "A cat may look at a king;" "To let the cat out of the bag," might be compared with similar sayings used in France and Italy. In Persia, they have one parallel with the last mentioned: "Gurbah az baghal afgandan," to throw the cat from under the arm—meaning, to discover the secret. Gurbah is Persian for cat, and it may be noticed that Saadi, the celebrated Persian poet, alludes to the cat, in his Gulisthán, or Rose-Garden. To tumble or fall on one's feet like a cat, is also said in Italy. One of the numerous Italian cat proverbs is "Tenere un occhio alla padella, e uno alla gatta"—(Keep one eye on the frying-pan, and the other on the cat), that is, be on your guard against every possible accident. Besides thus contributing to the expressiveness of language, cats can also illustrate a lesson, and rather an important one, in grammar. This odd assertion is explained as follows: "The vowel sounds are usually placed in the order a, e, i, o, u, such being their succession in the various alphabets of Europe and Western Asia; but if we wish to place them in that order which marks their relation to one another, we should unite i, e, a, o, u, or in the opposite order, u, o, a, e, i. It has been shown by experiments, that the different vowel sounds may be produced artificially, by throwing a current of air upon a reed in a pipe, and that, as the pipe is lengthened or shortened, the vowels are successively produced in the order above given. When a door creaks, or a cat mews, we have experiments of the same nature, at least as regards the result, for in both cases we may often detect the due series of the vowels. Indeed, the word *mew* would be more expressively written *mieaou*. In all these remarks we speak of the vowels as possessing those sounds which are common on the Continent; namely, i like ee, e like ay, a as in father, o as in bone, u as oo, in fool." (English Cyclop., Art. Alphabet.) The reader may try it, and say *mi, e, a, o, u*, according to the right way of pronouncing. A little practice, with the help of a cat, will soon make the student perfect; but let the student not overdo it, for it is related that a nun in a convent was once seized with a sort of monomaniacal fancy for mewing like a cat, and that in a short time the mania took hold of the other nuns, who went mewing about like cats for some time afterwards.

People lose much by not studying animals, and some have strange antipathies to cats. And it may be noticed that cats are apt to revenge themselves by haunting such persons. A lady who used to visit at the writer's house when he was a boy, had a great aversion to cats, and the beautiful cat belonging to the house generally contrived to be in the way when she called. One day we could not account for the poor lady's extreme uneasiness, until we discovered the cat on an elevation near her, looking full in her face. By way of a set off to this, let us record the opposite taste of an Archbishop of Taranto, who kept many cats, gave them fine names, had their dinners prepared according to their individual predilections, kept servants to attend upon them, and finally wrote a book about them. Cats sometimes purr in their sleep, probably dreaming of their friends, or of some pleasant circumstance of their waking hours. Many must have noticed the sparks and crackling noise which sometimes proceed from cats when they are stroked, and there is much electricity in the air. There is even a way of handling a cat by which a slight electric shock may be obtained. Some think that when cats repeatedly rub their paws over their ears, it is a sign of change of weather, and possibly some tickling sensation may be experienced by them from approaching atmospheric changes unappreciable by ourselves. One or two common errors about cats may be noticed. Many persons will destroy them when anything is the matter with them, whereas, in many cases, they would recover with a little care. Some think they do not drink much, which is a mistake. Water should always be placed within their reach. As to their want of attachment, there is no doubt that it is generally owing to the neglect (if not worse treatment) they often experience. Every animal will ordinarily return kindness for kindness, and if persons will only try, they will not find cats an exception. But to knock an animal about, or hardly ever to notice it, and to punish severely any fault it may commit, are not ways to attach it to you. The writer has heard of more than one instance in which, on its master's death, a favourite cat has gone away, and not been seen again. There is a great diversity of character in cats, as indeed in all animals. As to their colours, they are not of such

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importance as their shape. They should be well rounded, compactly formed, with small ears, and fur of fine texture. It sometimes happens that ordinary-looking cats have some very good qualities. Cats are very much afraid of each other; two of them will often look at one another over a plate for a long time; neither venturing to move, or to take anything. At other times they are great bullies. One will get close up to another, and scream into his ear, until the other gradually shrinks back, and runs off when he has got clear.

We may learn some useful lessons from cats, as indeed from all animals. Agur, in the book of Proverbs, refers to some, and all through Scripture we find animals used as types of human character. Cats may teach us patience and perseverance, and earnest concentration of mind on a desired object, as they watch for hours together by a mouse-hole, or in ambush for a bird. In their nicely-calculated springs, we are taught neither to come short through want of energy, or go beyond the mark in its excess. In their delicate walking amidst the fragile articles on a table or mantelpiece, is illustrated the tact and discrimination by which we should thread rather than force our way, and, in pursuit of our own ends, avoid the injuring of others. In their noiseless tread and stealthy movements, we are reminded of the frequent importance of secresy and caution prior to action, while their promptitude at the right moment warns us on the other hand against the evils of irresolution and delay. The curiosity with which they spy into all places, and the thorough smelling which any new object invariably receives from them, commends to us the pursuit of knowledge even "under difficulties." Cats, however, will never smell the same thing twice over, thereby showing a *retentive* as well as an *acquiring* faculty. Then to speak of what may be learned from their mere form and ordinary motions, so full of beauty and gracefulness! What cat was ever awkward or clumsy? Whether in play or in earnest, cats are the very embodiment of elegance. As your cat rubs her head against something you offer her, which she either does not fancy, or does not want, she instructs you that there is a gracious mode of refusing a thing, and as she sits up, like a bear, on her hind legs, to ask for something (which cats will often do for a long time together), you may see the advantage of a winning and engaging way, as well when you are seeking a favour as when you think fit to decline one. If true courtesy and considerateness should prevent you not merely from positively hurting another, but also from purposely clashing—say with another's fancies, peculiarities, or predilections, this too may be learned from the cat, who does not like to be rubbed the wrong way (who *does* like to be rubbed the wrong way?), and who objects to your treading on her tail. Nor is the soft foot, with its skilfully sheathed and ever sharp claws, without a moral too. For whilst there is nothing commendable in anything approaching to spite, passion, or revenge, a character that is *all* softness is certainly defective. The velvety paw is very well, but it will be the better appreciated when it is known that it carries within it something that is not soft, and which can make itself felt, and sharply felt, on occasion. A cat rolled up into a ball, or crouched with its paws folded underneath it, seems an emblem of repose and contentment. There is something soothing in the mere sight of it. It may remind one of the placid countenance and calm repose with which the Sphynx seems to look forth from the shadow of the Pyramids on the changes and troubles of the world. This leads to the remark that cats, after all, are very enigmatical creatures. You never get to the bottom of cats. You will never find any two, well known to you, that do not offer marked diversities in ways and dispositions; and, in general, the combination they exhibit of activity and repose, and the rapidity with which they pass from the one to the other, their gentle aspect and fragile form united with strength and pliancy, their sudden appearances and disappearances, their tenacity of life, and many escapes from dangers ("as many lives as a cat"), their silent and rapid movements, their sometimes unaccountable gatherings, and strange noises at night—all contribute to invest them with a mysterious fascination, which reaches its culminating point in the (not very frequent) case of a *completely black* cat.

The superstitions that formerly used to connect cats so much with witches, and that too in countries wide apart, attest the prevalence of a feeling that there is something in cats out of the common way.

There is unquestionably more in the minds of all animals than they ordinarily get credit for. Don't you believe, we say to the owner of some favourite dog, cat, or horse, that there was once a time when that bright and expressive eye would have conveyed still more emotion and meaning than it does now? And is not Mr. Ruskin right when he says: "There is in every animal's eye a dim image and gleam of humanity, a flash of strange life through which their life looks at and up to our great mystery of command over them, and claims the fellowship of the creature, if not of the soul"?

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER III.

TOWARDS six o'clock the next morning, the light pouring in on her face awoke Magdalen in the bedroom in Rosemary-lane.

She started from her deep dreamless repose of the past night, with that painful sense of bewilderment on first waking which is familiar to all sleepers in strange beds. "Norah!" she called out mechanically, when she opened her eyes. The next instant, her mind roused itself, and her senses told her the truth. She looked round the miserable room with a loathing recognition of it. The sordid contrast which the place presented to all that she had been accustomed to see in her own bedchamber—the practical abandonment implied in its scanty furniture of those elegant purities of personal habit to which she had been accustomed from her childhood—shocked that sense of bodily self-respect in Magdalen, which is a refined woman's second nature. Contemptible as the influence seemed when compared with her situation at that moment, the bare sight of the jug and basin in a corner of the room, decided her first resolution when she woke. She determined, then and there, to leave Rosemary-lane.

How was she to leave it? With Captain Wragge, or without him?

She dressed herself, with a dainty shrinking from everything in the room which her hands or her clothes touched in the process; and then opened the window. The autumn air felt keen and sweet; and the little patch of sky that she could see, was warmly bright already with the new sunlight. Distant voices of bargemen on the river, and the chirping of birds among the weeds which topped the old city wall, were the only sounds that broke the morning silence. She sat down by the window; and searched her mind for the thoughts which she had lost, when weariness overcame her on the night before.

The first subject to which she returned, was the vagabond subject of Captain Wragge.

The "moral agriculturist" had failed to remove her personal distrust of him, cunningly as he had tried to plead against it by openly confessing the impostures that he had practised on others. He had raised her opinion of his abilities; he had amused her by his humour; he had astonished her by his assurance—but he had left her original conviction that he was a Rogue, exactly where it was when he first met with her. If the one design then in her mind had been the design of going on the stage, she would, at all hazards, have rejected the more than doubtful assistance of Captain Wragge, on the spot.

But the perilous journey on which she had now adventured herself, had another end in view—an end, dark and distant—an end, with pitfals hidden on the way to it, far other than the shallow pitfals on the way to the stage. In the mysterious stillness of the morning, her mind looked on to its second and its deeper design; and the despicable figure of the swindler rose before her in a new view.

She tried to shut him out—to feel above him and beyond him again, as she had felt up to this time.

After a little trifling with her dress, she took from her bosom the white silk bag which her own hands had made on the farewell night at Combe-Raven. It drew together at the mouth with delicate silken strings. The first thing she took out, on opening it, was a lock of Frank's hair, tied with a morsel of silver thread; the next was a sheet of paper containing the extracts which she had copied from her father's will and her father's letter; the last was a closely folded packet of bank-notes, to the value of nearly two hundred pounds—the produce (as Miss Garth had rightly conjectured) of the sale of her jewellery and her dresses, in which the servant at the boarding-school had privately assisted her. She put back the notes at once, without a second glance at them; and then sat looking thoughtfully at the lock of hair, as it lay on her lap. "You are better than nothing," she said, speaking to it with a girl's fanciful tenderness. "I can sit and look at you sometimes, till I almost think I am looking at Frank. Oh, my darling! my darling!" Her voice faltered softly, and she put the lock of hair, with a languid gentleness, to her lips. It fell from her fingers into her bosom. A lovely tinge of colour rose on her cheeks, and spread downward to her neck, as if it followed the falling hair. She closed her eyes, and let her fair head droop softly. The world passed from her; and, for one enchanted moment, Love opened the gates of Paradise to the daughter of Eve.

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The trivial noises in the neighbouring street, gathering in number as the morning advanced, forced her back to the hard realities of the passing time. She raised her head with a heavy sigh, and opened her eyes once more on the mean and miserable little room.

The extracts from the will and the letter—those last memorials of her father, now so closely associated with the purpose which had possession of her mind—still lay before her. The transient colour faded from her face, as she spread the little manuscript open on her lap. The extracts from the will stood highest on the page; they were limited to those few touching words, in which the dead father begged his children's forgiveness for the stain on their birth, and implored them to remember the untiring love and care by which he had striven to atone for it. The extract from the letter to Mr. Pendril came next. She read the last melancholy sentences aloud to herself:—"For God's sake, come on the day when you receive this—come and relieve me from the dreadful thought that my two darling girls are at this moment unprovided for. If anything happened to me, and if my desire to do their mother justice, ended (through my miserable ignorance of the law) in leaving Norah and Magdalen disinherited, I should not rest in my grave!" Under these lines again, and close at the bottom of the page, was written the terrible commentary on that letter which had fallen from Mr. Pendril's lips:—"Mr. Vanstone's daughters are Nobody's Children, and the law leaves them helpless at their uncle's mercy."

Helpless when those words were spoken—helpless still, after all that she had resolved, after all that she had sacrificed. The assertion of her natural rights, and her sister's, sanctioned by the direct expression of her father's last wishes; the recal of Frank from China; the justification of her desertion of Norah—all hung on her desperate purpose of recovering the lost inheritance, at any risk, from the man who had beggared and insulted his brother's children. And that man was still a shadow to her! So little did she know of him that she was even ignorant, at that moment, of his place of abode.

She rose and paced the room, with the noiseless, negligent grace of a wild creature of the forest in its cage. "How can I reach him, in the dark?" she said to herself. "How can I find out——?" She stopped suddenly. Before the question had shaped itself to an end in her thoughts, Captain Wragge was back in her mind again.

A man well used to working in the dark; a man with endless resources of audacity and cunning; a man who would hesitate at no mean employment that could be offered to him, if it was employment that filled his pockets—was this the instrument for which, in its present need, her hand was waiting? Two of the necessities to be met, before she could take a single step in advance, were plainly present to her—the necessity of knowing more of her father's brother than she knew now; and the necessity of throwing him off his guard by concealing herself personally, during the process of inquiry. Resolutely self-dependent as she was, the inevitable spy's work at the outset must be work delegated to another. In her position, was there any ready human creature within reach, but the vagabond down stairs? Not one. She thought of it anxiously, she thought of it long. Not one! There the choice was, steadily confronting her: the choice of taking the Rogue, or of turning her back on the Purpose.

She paused in the middle of the room. "What can he do at his worst?" she said to herself. "Cheat me. Well! if my money governs him for me, what then? Let him have my money!" She returned mechanically to her place by the window. A moment more decided her. A moment more, and she took the first fatal step downwards—she determined to face the risk, and try Captain Wragge.

At nine o'clock the landlady knocked at Magdalen's door, and informed her (with the captain's kind compliments) that breakfast was ready.

She found Mrs. Wragge alone; attired in a voluminous brown holland wrapper, with a limp cape, and a trimming of dingy pink ribbon. The ex-waitress at Darch's Dining Rooms was absorbed in the contemplation of a large dish, containing a leathery-looking substance of a mottled yellow colour, profusely sprinked with little black spots.

"There it is!" said Mrs. Wragge. "Omelette with herbs. The landlady helped me. And that's what we've made of it. Don't you ask the captain for any when he comes in—don't, there's a good soul. It isn't nice. We had some accidents with it. It's been under the grate. It's been spilt on the stairs. It's scalded the landlady's youngest boy—he went and sat on it. Bless you, it isn't half as nice as it looks! Don't you ask for any. Perhaps he won't notice if you say nothing about it. What do you think of my wrapper? I should so like to have a white one. Have you got a white one? How is it trimmed? Do tell me!"

The formidable entrance of the captain suspended the next question on her lips. Fortunately for Mrs. Wragge, her husband was far too anxious for the promised expression of Magdalen's decision, to pay his customary attention to questions of cookery. When breakfast was over, he dismissed Mrs. Wragge, and merely referred to the omelette by telling her that she had his full permission to "give it to the dog."

"How does my little proposal look by daylight?" he asked, placing chairs for Magdalen and himself. "Which is it to be: 'Captain Wragge, take charge of me?' or, 'Captain Wragge, good morning?'"

"You shall hear directly," replied Magdalen. "I have something to say first. I told you, last night, that I had another object in view, besides the object of earning my living on the stage——"

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"I beg your pardon," interposed Captain Wragge. "Did you say, earning your living?"

"Certainly. Both my sister and myself must depend on our own exertions to gain our daily bread."

"What!!!" cried the captain, starting to his feet, with a blank stare of dismay. "The daughters of my wealthy and lamented relative by marriage, reduced to earn their own living? Impossible—wildly, extravagantly impossible!" He sat down again, and looked at Magdalen as if she had inflicted a personal injury on him.

"You are not acquainted with the full extent of our misfortune," she said, quietly. "I will tell you what has happened before I go any farther." She told him at once, in the plainest terms she could find, and with as few details as possible.

Captain Wragge's profound bewilderment left him conscious of but one distinct result, produced by the narrative on his own mind. The lawyer's offer of Fifty Pounds Reward for the missing young lady, ascended instantly to a place in his estimation which it had never occupied until that moment.

"Do I understand," he inquired, "that you are entirely deprived of present resources?"

"I have sold my jewellery and my dresses," said Magdalen, impatient of his mean harping on the pecuniary string. "If my want of experience keeps me back in a theatre, I can afford to wait till the stage can afford to pay me."

Captain Wragge mentally appraised the rings, bracelets, and necklaces, the silks, satins, and laces of the daughter of a gentleman of fortune, at—say, a third of their real value. In a moment more, the Fifty Pounds Reward suddenly sank again to the lowest depths in the deep estimation of this judicious man.

"Just so," he said, in his most business-like manner. "There is not the least fear, my dear girl, of your being kept back in a theatre, if you possess present resources, and if you profit by my assistance."

"I must accept more assistance than you have already offered—or none," said Magdalen. "I have more serious difficulties before me than the difficulty of leaving York, and the difficulty of finding my way to the stage."

"You don't say so! I am all attention; pray explain yourself."

She considered her next words carefully before they passed her lips.

"There are certain inquiries," she said, "which I am interested in making. If I undertook them myself, I should excite the suspicion of the person inquired after, and should learn little or nothing of what I wish to know. If the inquiries could be made by a stranger, without my being seen in the matter, a service would be rendered me of much greater importance than the service you offered last night."

Captain Wragge's vagabond face became gravely and deeply attentive.

"May I ask," he said, "what the nature of the inquiries is likely to be?"

Magdalen hesitated. She had necessarily mentioned Michael Vanstone's name, in informing the captain of the loss of her inheritance. She must inevitably mention it to him again, if she employed his services. He would doubtless discover it for himself, by a plain process of inference, before she said many words more, frame them as carefully as she might. Under these circumstances was there any intelligible reason for shrinking from direct reference to Michael Vanstone? No intelligible reason—and yet, she shrank.

"For instance," pursued Captain Wragge, "are they inquiries about a man or a woman; inquiries about an enemy or a friend——"

"An enemy," she answered quickly.

Her reply might still have kept the captain in the dark—but her eyes enlightened him. "Michael Vanstone!" thought the wary Wragge. "She looks dangerous; I'll feel my way a little farther."

"With regard, now, to the person who is the object of these inquiries," he resumed. "Are you thoroughly clear, in your own mind, about what you want to know?"

"Perfectly clear," replied Magdalen. "I want to know where he lives, to begin with?"

"Yes? And after that?"

"I want to know about his habits; about who the people are whom he associates with; about what he does with his money——" She considered a little. "And one thing more," she said; "I want to know whether there is any woman about his house—a relation, or a housekeeper—who has an influence over him."

"Harmless enough, so far," said the captain. "What next?"

"Nothing. The rest is my secret."

The clouds on Captain Wragge's countenance began to clear away again. He reverted with his customary precision to his customary choice of alternatives. "These inquiries of hers," he thought, "mean one of two things—Mischief, or Money! If it's Mischief, I'll slip through her fingers. If it's Money, I'll make myself useful, with a view to the future."

Magdalen's vigilant eyes watched the progress of his reflections suspiciously. "Captain Wragge," she said, "if you want time to consider, say so plainly."

"I don't want a moment," replied the captain. "Place your departure from York, your dramatic career, and your private inquiries under my care. Here I am, unreservedly at your disposal. Say the word—do you take me?"

Her heart beat fast; her lips turned dry—but she said the word.

"I do."

There was a pause. Magdalen sat silent, struggling with the vague dread of the future which had been roused in her mind by her own reply. Captain Wragge, on his side, was apparently absorbed in the consideration of a new set of alternatives. His hands descended into his

empty pockets, and prophetically tested their capacity as receptacles for gold and silver. The brightness of the precious metals was in his face, the smoothness of the precious metals was in his voice, as he provided himself with a new supply of words, and resumed the conversation.

"The next question," he said, "is the question of time. Do these confidential investigations of ours require immediate attention—or can they wait?"

"For the present they can wait," replied Magdalen. "I wish to secure my freedom from all interference on the part of my friends, before the inquiries are made."

"Very good. The first step towards accomplishing that object is to beat our retreat—excuse a professional metaphor from a military man—to beat our retreat from York to-morrow. I see my way plainly so far; but I am all abroad, as we used to say in the militia, about my marching orders afterwards. The next direction we take, ought to be chosen with an eye to advancing your dramatic views. I am all ready, when I know what your views are. How came you to think of the theatre at all? I see the sacred fire burning in you; tell me, who lit it?"

Magdalen could only answer him in one way. She could only look back at the days that were gone for ever; and tell him the story of her first step towards the stage, at Evergreen Lodge. Captain Wragge listened with his usual politeness; but he evidently derived no satisfactory impression from what he heard. Audiences of friends, were audiences whom he privately declined to trust; and the opinion of the stage-manager, was the opinion of a man who spoke with his fee in his pocket, and his eye on a future engagement.

"Interesting, deeply interesting," he said, when Magdalen had done. "But not conclusive to a practical man. A specimen of your abilities is necessary to enlighten me. I have been on the stage myself; the comedy of The Rivals is familiar to me from beginning to end. A sample is all I want, if you have not forgotten the words—a sample of 'Lucy,' and a sample of 'Julia.'"

"I have not forgotten the words," said Magdalen, sorrowfully; "and I have the little books with me, in which my dialogue was written out. I have never parted with them: they remind me of a time——" Her lip trembled; and a pang of the heartache silenced her.

"Nervous," remarked the captain, indulgently. "Not at all a bad sign. The greatest actresses on the stage are nervous. Follow their example, and get over it. Where are the parts? Oh, here they are! Very nicely written, and remarkably clean. I'll give you the cues—it will all be over (as the dentists say) in no time. Take the back drawing-room for the stage, and take me for the audience. Tingle goes the bell; up runs the curtain; order in the gallery, silence in the pit—enter Lucy!"

She tried hard to control herself; she forced back the sorrow—the innocent, natural, human sorrow for the absent and the dead—pleading hard with her for the tears that she refused. Resolutely, with cold clenched hands, she tried to begin. As the first familiar words passed her lips, Frank came back to her from the sea; and the face of her dead father looked at her with the smile of happy old times. The voices of her mother and her sister talked gently in the fragrant country stillness; and the garden-walks at Combe-Raven opened once more on her view. With a faint wailing cry, she dropped into a chair: her head fell forward on the table, and she burst passionately into tears.

Captain Wragge was on his feet in a moment. She shuddered as he came near her; and waved him back vehemently with her hand. "Leave me!" she said; "leave me a minute by myself!" The compliant Wragge retired to the front room; looked out of window; and whistled under his breath. "The family spirit again!" he said. "Complicated by hysterics."

After waiting a minute or two, he returned to make inquiries.

"Is there anything I can offer you?" he asked. "Cold water? burnt feathers? smelling salts? medical assistance? Shall I summon Mrs. Wragge? Shall we put it off till to-morrow?"

She started up, wild and flushed, with a desperate self-command in her face, with an angry resolution in her manner.

"No!" she said. "I must harden myself—and I will! Sit down again, and see me act."

"Bravo!" cried the captain. "Dash at it, my beauty—and it's done!"

She dashed at it, with a mad defiance of herself—with a raised voice, and a glow like fever in her cheeks. All the artless, girlish charm of the performance in happier and better days, was gone. The native dramatic capacity that was in her, came, hard and bold, to the surface, stripped of every softening allurement which had once adorned it. She would have saddened and disappointed a man with any delicacy of feeling. She absolutely electrified Captain Wragge. He forgot his politeness; he forgot his long words. The essential spirit of the man's whole vagabond life, burst out of him irresistibly in his first exclamation. "Who the devil would have thought it? She *can* act, after all!" The instant the words escaped his lips, he recovered himself, and glided off into his ordinary colloquial channels. Magdalen stopped him in the middle of his first compliment. "No," she said; "I have forced the truth out of you, for once. I want no more."

"Pardon me," replied the incorrigible Wragge. "You want a little instruction; and I am the man to give it you."

With that answer, he placed a chair for her, and proceeded to explain himself.

She sat down in silence. A sullen indifference began to show itself in her manner; her cheeks turned pale again; and her eyes looked wearily vacant at the wall before her. Captain Wragge noted these signs of heart-sickness and discontent with herself, after the effort she had made, and saw the importance of rousing her by speak-

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ing, for once, plainly and directly to the point. She had set a new value on herself in his mercenary eyes. She had suggested to him a speculation in her youth, her beauty, and her marked ability for the stage, which had never entered his mind, until he saw her act. The old militia-man was quick at his shifts. He and his plans had both turned right about together, when Magdalen sat down to hear what he had to say.

"Mr. Huxtable's opinion is my opinion," he began. "You are a born actress. But you must be trained before you can do anything on the stage. I am disengaged—I am competent—I have trained others—I can train you. Don't trust my word: trust my eye to my own interests. I'll make it my interest to take pains with you, and to be quick about it. You shall pay me for my instructions from your profits on the stage. Half your salary, for the first year; a third of your salary for the second year; and half the sum you clear by your first benefit in a London theatre. What do you say to that? Have I made it my interest to push you, or have I not?"

So far as appearances went, and so far as the stage went, it was plain that he had linked his interests and Magdalen's together. She briefly told him so, and waited to hear more.

"A month or six weeks' study," continued the captain, "will give me a reasonable idea of what you can do best. All ability runs in grooves; and your groove remains to be found. We can't find it here—for we can't keep you a close prisoner for weeks together in Rosemary-lane. A quiet country place, secure from all interference and interruption, is the place we want for a month certain. Trust my knowledge of Yorkshire; and consider the place found. I see no difficulties anywhere, except the difficulty of beating our retreat to-morrow."

"I thought your arrangements were made last night?" said Magdalen.

"Quite right," rejoined the captain. "They were made last night; and here they are. We can't leave by railway, because the lawyer's clerk is sure to be on the look-out for you at the York terminus. Very good; we take to the road instead, and leave in our own carriage. Where the deuce do we get it? We get it from the landlady's brother, who has a horse and chaise which he lets out for hire. That chaise comes to the end of Rosemary-lane at an early hour to-morrow morning. I take my wife and my niece out to show them the beauties of the neighbourhood. We have a pic-nic hamper with us which marks our purpose in the public eye. You disfigure yourself in a shawl, bonnet, and veil of Mrs. Wragge's; we turn our backs on York; and away we drive on a pleasure-trip for the day—you and I on the front seat, Mrs. Wragge and the hamper behind. Good again. Once on the high road what do we do? Drive to the first station beyond York, northward, southward, or eastward, as may be hereafter determined. No lawyer's clerk is waiting for you there. You and Mrs. Wragge get out—first opening the hamper at a convenient opportunity. Instead of containing chickens and champagne, it contains a carpet-bag with the things you want for the night. You take your tickets for a place previously determined on; and I take the chaise back to York. Arrived once more in this house, I collect the luggage left behind, and send for the woman down stairs. 'Ladies so charmed with such-and-such-a-place (wrong place of course) that they have determined to stop there. Pray accept the customary week's rent, in place of a week's warning. Good day.' Is the clerk looking for *me* at the York terminus? Not he. I take my ticket, under his very nose; I follow you with the luggage along your line of railway—and where is the trace left of your departure? Nowhere. The fairy has vanished; and the legal authorities are left in the lurch."

"Why do you talk of difficulties?" asked Magdalen. "The difficulties seem to be provided for."

"All but ONE," said Captain Wragge, with an ominous emphasis on the last word. "The Grand Difficulty of humanity from the cradle to the grave—Money." He slowly winked his green eye; sighed with deep feeling; and buried his insolvent hands in his unproductive pockets.

"What is the money wanted for?" inquired Magdalen.

"To pay my bills," replied the captain, with a touching simplicity. "Pray understand! I never was—and never shall be—personally desirous of paying a single farthing to any human creature on the habitable globe. I am speaking in your interests, not in mine."

"My interests?"

"Certainly. You can't get safely away from York to-morrow, without the chaise. And I can't get the chaise without money. The landlady's brother will lend it, if he sees his sister's bill receipted, and if he gets his day's hire beforehand—not otherwise. Allow me to put the transaction in a business light. We have agreed that I am to be remunerated for my course of dramatic instruction out of your future earnings on the stage. Very good. I merely draw on my future prospects; and you, on whom those prospects depend, are naturally my banker. For mere argument's sake, estimate my share in your first year's salary at the totally inadequate value of a hundred pounds. Halve that sum; quarter that sum——"

"How much do you want?' said Magdalen, impatiently.

Captain Wragge was sorely tempted to take the Reward at the top of the handbills as his basis of calculation. But he felt the vast future importance of present moderation; and, actually wanting some twelve or thirteen pounds, he merely doubled the amount, and said, "Five-and twenty."

Magdalen took the little bag from her bosom, and gave him the money, with a contemptuous wonder at the number of words which he had wasted on her for the purpose of cheating on so small a scale. In the old days at Combe-Raven,

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five-and-twenty pounds flowed from a stroke of her father's pen into the hands of any one in the house who chose to ask for it.

Captain Wragge's eyes dwelt on the little bag, as the eyes of lovers dwell on their mistresses. "Happy bag!" he murmured, as she put it back in her bosom. He rose; dived into a corner of the room; produced his neat despatch-box; and solemnly unlocked it on the table between Magdalen and himself.

"The nature of the man, my dear girl—the nature of the man," he said, opening one of his plump little books, bound in calf and vellum. "A transaction has taken place between us. I must have it down in black and white." He opened the book at a blank page, and wrote at the top, in a fine mercantile hand:—"*Miss Vanstone the Younger: In account with Horatio Wragge, late of the Royal Militia. Dr.—Cr. Sept. 24th*, 1846. *Dr.: To estimated value of H. Wragge's interest in Miss V.'s first year's salary—say £200. Cr. By paid on account £25.*" Having completed the entry—and having also shown, by doubling his original estimate on the Debtor side, that Magdalen's easy compliance with his demand on her had not been thrown away on him—the captain pressed his blotting-paper over the wet ink, and put away the book with the air of a man who had done a virtuous action, and who was above boasting about it.

"Excuse me for leaving you abruptly," he said. "Time is of importance; I must make sure of the chaise. If Mrs. Wragge comes in, tell her nothing—she is not sharp enough to be trusted. If she presumes to ask questions, extinguish her immediately. You have only to be loud. Pray take my authority into your own hands, and be as loud with Mrs. Wragge as I am!" He snatched up his tall hat, bowed, smiled, and tripped out of the room.

Sensible of little else but of the relief of being alone; feeling no more distinct impression than the vague sense of some serious change having taken place in herself and her position, Magdalen let the events of the morning come and go like shadows on her mind, and waited wearily for what the day might bring forth. After the lapse of some time the door opened softly. The giant-figure of Mrs. Wragge stalked into the room; and stopped opposite Magdalen in solemn astonishment.

"Where are your Things?" asked Mrs. Wragge, with a burst of incontrollable anxiety. "I've been up-stairs, looking in your drawers. Where are your nightgowns and nightcaps? and your petticoats and stockings? and your hair-pins and bear's grease, and all the rest of it?"

"My luggage is left at the railway station," said Magdalen.

Mrs. Wragge's moon-face brightened dimly. The ineradicable female instinct of Curiosity tried to sparkle in her faded blue eyes—flickered piteously—and died out.

"How much luggage?" she asked, confidentially. "The captain's gone out. Let's go and get it!

"Mrs. Wragge!" cried a terrible voice at the door.

For the first time in Magdalen's experience Mrs. Wragge was deaf to the customary stimulant. She actually ventured on a feeble remonstrance, in the presence of her husband.

"Oh, do let her have her Things!" pleaded Mrs. Wragge. "Oh, poor soul, do let her have her Things!"

The captain's inexorable forefinger pointed to a corner of the room—dropped slowly as his wife retired before it—and suddenly stopped at the region of her shoes.

"Do I hear a clapping on the floor!" exclaimed Captain Wragge, with an expression of horror. "Yes; I do. Down at heel again! The left shoe, this time. Pull it up, Mrs. Wragge! pull it up! The chaise will be here to-morrow morning at nine o'clock," he continued, addressing Magdalen. "We can't possibly venture on claiming your box. There is note-paper. Write down a list of the necessaries you want. I will take it myself to the shop, pay the bill for you, and bring back the parcel. We must sacrifice the box—we must indeed."

While her husband was addressing Magdalen, Mrs. Wragge had stolen out again from her corner; and had ventured near enough to the captain to hear the words, "shop" and "parcel." She clapped her great hands together in ungovernable excitement, and lost all control over herself immediately.

"Oh, if it's shopping, let me do it!" cried Mrs. Wragge. "She's going out to buy her Things! Oh, let me go with her—please let me go with her!"

"Sit down!" shouted the captain. "Straight! more to the right—more still. Stop where you are!"

Mrs Wragge crossed her helpless hands on her lap, and melted meekly into tears.

"I do so like shopping," pleaded the poor creature; "and I get so little of it now!"

Magdalen completed her list; and Captain Wragge at once left the room with it. "Don't let my wife bore you," he said pleasantly, as he went out. "Cut her short, poor soul—cut her short!"

"Don't cry," said Magdalen, trying to comfort Mrs. Wragge by patting her on the shoulder. "When the parcel comes back you shall open it."

"Thank you, my dear," said Mrs. Wragge, meekly drying her eyes; "thank you kindly. Don't notice my handkerchief, please. It's such a very little one! I had a nice lot of 'em once, with lace borders. They're all gone now. Never mind! It will comfort me to unpack your Things. You're very good to me. I like you. I say—you won't be angry, will you? Give us a kiss."

Magdalen stooped over her with the frank grace and gentleness of past days, and touched her faded cheek. "Let me do something harmless!" she thought, with a pang at her heart—"oh,

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let me do something innocent and kind, for the sake of old times!"

She felt her eyes moistening, and silently turned away.

That night no rest came to her. That night the roused forces of Good and Evil fought their terrible fight for her soul—and left the strife between them still in suspense when morning came. As the clock of York Minster struck nine, she followed Mrs. Wragge to the chaise, and took her seat by the captain's side. In a quarter of an hour more, York was in the distance: and the high road lay bright and open before them in the morning sunlight.

THE END OF THE SECOND SCENE.

MY DUNGEONS.

MY FIRST DUNGEONS.

After ten years' burial in the dungeons of the Bourbon, deeply as I am filled with horror at the recollection of what I have seen and suffered, I know not by what words to make known my experience to those whose imagination is not helped by living, or by having lived, under the grip of a tyranny convulsed with its own death-throes. The throe of Italian tyranny is at an end, the prisons have been opened for those captives to whom that had been crime in Naples which was virtue in England, and is virtue also now in Italy. But what that tyranny was like when it claimed mastery over eight millions of us, I, who have worn its chains and borne its stripes, now wish to tell. In simple, unimpassioned words, as few as may suffice, I will relate faithfully what I myself know of the dark day my country has outlived.

Ferdinand the Second of Naples, during his reign—twenty-nine years—endeavoured to secure the fidelity of his people by beheading eight hundred and ninety-seven honest citizens, whose crime was that they did not like him, and by imprisoning eight thousand six hundred and twenty one victims: not always because of patriotism, but sometimes, also, because of a bare suspicion that they loved their country: sometimes, also, by reason of private hatred, which had no readier way of destroying an enemy than his denunciation as a patriot. Besides the men imprisoned, more than two hundred thousand of this king's subjects, all the good men left out of prison, moved about under the constant surveillance of a vast body of spies and policemen, and were in hourly danger of arrest and imprisonment at the discretion of irresponsible authority. For the forty-fourth time, a revolt broke out in Messina and Calabria, in September, eighteen 'forty-seven. How it failed; how the king swore to a constitution, and then perjuring himself, butchered his subjects in his capital; I need not tell. The province of Reggio took up arms for the betrayed constitution, but it contained no Garibaldi, and throve ill. The king offered free pardon to those who would lay down their arms, and it was broken up. But the rebels who went peaceably home on the faith of the king's promise, were marked and tracked and hunted down in detail. A long list of liberals and suspected liberals was made out, and an army of spies, mercenaries, and gendarmes was scattered abroad to secure the arrest and conviction of all persons whom that list condemned. It was the honour of my life as well as its danger that my name was written in that list. For two years I concealed myself from the enemy, but by so doing I caused incessant molestation to my friends; therefore I gave myself up—not to justice, but to the strong arm whereby justice had for the time been banished from the land. Every care was taken to make my trial look like a lawful trial. A special criminal court was assembled for the occasion. There had been many public trials of constitutionalists, of fair seeming to those outside the kingdom, ignorant of the operations of the camarilla.

The Neapolitan camarilla was the whole working absolutist party, from the king's titled supporters down to the scum of the land, obedient to bribe and bidding. It took its name after the fatal first of May, when that whole party organised itself into an active government conspiracy for the destruction of the liberals by death, exile, imprisonment, and a well-organised machinery of terror. What the chiefs planned, the intendentes of the different provinces executed by means of police machinery, ramifying into the remotest hamlet. During the short life of the Neapolitan constitution, a large body of officers who had been working out the absolutist system were dismissed, to be afterwards restored. They spent their vacation in marking the men who then made themselves prominent as workers of the constitution. Some Bourbonites had during that interval affected to be liberals, and had thus been admitted into the liberal clubs, where they made note of the members and of the degrees of their repugnance to a form of government that recognised no popular rights. From the reports of such men and others less respectable, the camarilla lists of condemned and suspected citizens were afterwards drawn up: names being distinguished as those of men who were to be arrested only, and of men who were to be particularly punished. Informers were appointed to secure in each case the desired character of conviction; the witnesses, members of the camarilla, whom they were to call, were named to them; and if in one district the requisite amount of testimony were not to be had, it was made up by testimony from afar. The same witness would appear in different cases, and swear that he had been in two or three different places at one time: nobody offering to compare a man's testimony given against one prisoner with his conflicting testimony against the victim of another trial. When no charge could be fastened on a man nevertheless known to desire the freedom of his country, the police concealed in his house when they searched it, damnatory papers which they found at their next visit. A member of the camarilla could, without himself appearing in the matter, sometimes

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while making professions of friendship, or even coming forward as a witness for the defence, contrive the condemnation of his enemy, his professional rival, or any person whom he might desire to see imprisoned. The greater number of the priests, bishops, and archbishops, were members of this camarilla, and they had in it unlimited power, which they sometimes used to procure the release of men heavily charged. The judges, though strong partisans of the king, often shrunk from conviction, but were forced to convict, or be dismissed.

Of my own trial, the result was my condemnation to death. Believing the sentence to be a form only, I smiled until my eyes fell on my father and my sister, who were weeping bitterly as they looked at me. Then a chill and a mortal paleness came over me, my lips were dry and my eyes downcast. "What ails you?" asked a fellow prisoner, shaking my arm, and I recovered courage. I looked at my father and sister with a gesture indicating that the capital sentence was but a form. They understood me and were relieved. But they were not allowed to accompany me to the prison, whither I went bound more tightly than before, with an additional cord fastened to my handcuffs. The number of gendarmes was doubled, and four men with four large lamps marched beside me. My companions were less cheerful than I when they saw me thus carried out among the sbirri.

I was set apart in a solitary condemned cell, furnished with a dim lamp and a small cross on the table, a little stool, and a straw mattress. Still I believed that all was form, but my heart sank when I overheard words spoken by one sentinel to another. I knew those sentinels, had gossiped with them, and given them almost daily the cigar or sweetmeat they enjoyed, but could not afford to buy out of their pay of twopence a day. Now they avoided me, allowed no one else to approach me, but frequently looked through the bars of my cell to see that I was safe. "Poor fellow," said one of them when so looking, "he is to be beheaded." I could not avoid an exclamation, which, being taken for a question, was replied to. "Yes, the scaffold is ordered, the religious societies are invited to the funeral, and the executioner is told to be ready at any moment." That was the removal of all hope as the night gathered about me. While I grieved, the dim light of the lamp flashed up, lighting the brass crucifix beside it, and was extinguished. Finding the room dark, and not seeing me, for I had withdrawn into a corner of my cell, a sentinel gave the alarm, and the silence of the night was broken by the hurried tramp of soldiers and turnkeys, coming—some from above, some from below, but all towards me. They found me safe, lighted my lamp again, and left me. I suffered the griefs of the condemned, for whom there is no more hope in this world, until a strong hope against hope took possession of me.

The next day, a soldier, probably the sentinel by whom I had been misled, slipped through my bars a paper to say that the scaffold had been erected to strike terror on the town, but that there would be no execution. Three days afterwards I was informed that my sentence had been commuted to nineteen years' imprisonment in the dungeons of Procida.

Hitherto, as I had given myself up to justice, I had been confined apart from common criminals in the fortress of Reggio. With my change of sentence, came an order for removal to the prison of St. Francis, before starting for Procida. This prison consisted of two stories. I was placed on the ground floor, nine feet under ground. It was paved with large flags that were never dry. When the south-east wind blew, this place became so clammy with wet that the soles of our boots or shoes stuck to the floor as we walked. The air was heavy and oppressive, and although the place was lighted by three large windows, guarded with a double row of bars, yet it was positively darkened with the damp mist raised by warmth of fire and crowded human bodies in so moist a place, and the whole mist was poisoned with a pestilential stench from a closet in one corner of the room. Prisoners hardened in dirt held their noses, but the stench then seemed to penetrate through the pores of the skin. It caused a constant and intolerable headache. Some prisoners spat blood, or bled at the nose. Among the crowd, were some who boasted of contempt of decency, and who kept their corners of the prison in a fearful state, attracting the rats, who on two occasions actually set upon three sleeping prisoners. A watch had to be established against them, as against an enemy. Against other vermin no watch could be set. The greater number of the prisoners had no shirts, but wore, next their bodies, foul rags of coarse woollen cloth. I offered some of my own clothes to a man whose rags seemed to be most horribly infested. He said he should be dull if he parted with his favourite hunting-ground. To another man, I offered, in vain, money if he would wash his face. Among our number were three common criminals: one, a parricide under sentence of death. Their fate was still doubtful, but their conduct was so reckless as to strike terror into the hearts of all. Under their influence were a dozen filthy wretches, who at night searched the wallets and boxes of their companions in misery, and in the day begged alms from us all. No one had safe possession of his property, or dared complain when he was robbed. During the night the keeper came to our cell at intervals, and tested the soundness of its iron grating, by strokes with a small iron ruler. The windows were kept open, day and night, with sentinels outside, doubled in dark or stormy weather, to prevent all approach from without. Games were forbidden by the prison rules, but card-playing was winked at by the turnkey when he had been bribed. Strong drink also was smuggled in, now and then leading to riots, blows, stabs, even murder. If a quiet prisoner strove to hold himself aloof from quarrels, his position was a dangerous one, since the first victims of both sides were the obnoxious neutrals; nor was the quiet prisoner discriminated from the noisy, when, to

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quell a riot, the gendarmes fired a random volley of musket-balls in at the window.

Though there were here and there some traces of compunction for the ill-treatment of men who sat silently on their bedsides, and did not refuse aid from their purses to the prisoners in sorest need, the animosity of the worst class of criminals against the political prisoners was beyond belief. This was fostered and encouraged by the turnkey, acting under the influence of the police. Only by incessant prudence did I avoid being miserably killed in the few months of my detention here. Meanwhile, my wretchedness was not quite unmitigated. I might see my friends, read, write, play the flute, speak to my fellow-prisoners, receive a dinner from my relatives. I improvised, also, a ragged school, and taught a class of fifteen of the common prisoners.

The public prosecutor, I think, had desired my death. When the order came for my removal from this common prison, it was ordained that I should proceed, bound and handcuffed, a month's journey, on foot. But I then feigned illness so well that I got lodgings in hospital till my friends had made interest to have me sent to the Bagnio of Nisida by sea. Heartrending was my old father's parting with me. He at least might not see the fulfilment of his hope, that I should outlive my great sorrow, and return to peace in the home of my childhood.

The gendarme who took me to Nisida was, without fee or reward from me, kind and indulgent. Had I abused his confidence I could have escaped at Messina, where he suffered me to go ashore, and likewise at Naples, where I was again free to go myself in search of the carriage that was to take us the rest of the way to the Bagnio. It was the twelfth of September, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-one, when I reached my new prison. The sky was bright, the trees in the gardens along the road were laden with fruit of all kinds, figs, apples, peaches, pears, and great black and yellow bunches of grapes hung from the tall poplars, while gay and pretty-looking girls were busily employed in gathering green French beans into baskets. Here, an idle fellow slept soundly under the shadow of a vine. There, another was torturing a poor ass, worn out with age and fatigue.

On our arrival at the sea-shore, a flag was hoisted, a boat was despatched for us, and we were soon landed on the island. There we had to journey by a steep stony path until we finally reached the Bagnio. The good-natured gendarme then left me, after giving me in charge to the captain of the galley slaves. On entering the office of the governor, a clerk asked me a great many questions, the answers to which he recorded in a large book bound in black. Then he entered his description of my person, repeating the words aloud, and glancing occasionally at the governor for his approval. On leaving the office I was again seized by the captain, who said, "Stay, I have a rosary to give you." A turnkey threw an iron chain on the ground, the captain commanded me to place my foot on an anvil, and I was soon decorated with the Neapolitan badge of honour—a chain weighing from thirty to thirty-four pounds, rusty, and roughly made. The chains were not all of the same weight; those of the common criminals were only of fifteen or twenty pounds; but the political prisoners were looked upon as untameable animals, whose ardour was to be kept down by heavy weights. Sometimes a good space was left between the ring and the flesh, but frequently the ring was so narrow that it pressed on the ankle and prevented the blood from circulating through the fettered limb. The foot and leg then became swollen and livid, and, when the governor refused to order a larger ring, the iron became imbedded between two large black lumps of flesh. When I was chained I could scarcely breathe for emotion, and I did not hear the captain tell me I might go. It was not until he had given me a blow which threw me on the ground, that I moved away; but I was stopped again, and told not to hurry myself, as they had a companion to give me.

The man came, but instead of the political prisoner I had imagined him to be, he was a criminal of the worst sort—a murderer—a dark fierce sinister-looking ruffian, with small eyes, a narrow forehead, and his left cheek branded. The political prisoner was bound thus to an assassin, in order to degrade him, and to make the common criminals look on themselves as his equal in offence. Of my new prison, where we dined, subject to the new infliction of a blinding smoke, this was the dietary:

Water, one pint in twenty-four hours; in summer, at discretion.

Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, from forty-five to fifty beans, containing insects, and one pound and a half of bad bran bread. This to serve for breakfast, lunch, dinner, tea, and supper.

Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday, a little shoemaker's paste, by way of variety, for the corresponding number of meals.

Five ounces of bad ill-smelling beef once a fortnight, except in Lent.

Each prisoner was supposed to receive sevenpence a year to pay for the washing of his linen, and this sum was very often paid with a reduction. The cases, besides, were not rare where some governors did not pay anything for the "lavanda," so the reader may imagine the condition as to cleanliness of those pent up in the Bagnio.

At my first day's dinner in the Bagnio I offered my companion my bread and soup, which he at once accepted; after swallowing my dinner with his own, he did not refuse to come out again into the open air. Scarcely, however, had we taken a few steps, when I was ordered down stairs again, to exchange my clothes for prison garments. These consisted of two shirts, made of the very coarsest linen, like canvas; two pairs of drawers of the same material; a pair of wretched brown cloth trousers; a red jacket; and a conical-shaped brown cloth cap. By way of bed I also received a mat rather than a mattress, stuffed with ass-hair or cow-hair. When I put on

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the shirt I felt as if I were indeed doing penance in sackcloth, but, without complaint, I left the room, and went up to the place appointed for me. It was a room large enough to contain about thirty persons, but it was made to serve for the accommodation of seventy; and it was black and smoky, like a forge. The floor was of flags, with here and there one missing. A large bench ran around the walls. This was for prisoners to sleep on; upon it, lay in one place a heap of rotten straw; in another, a miserable old mattress; in another, a sickening heap of rags. A dirty lamp hung from the centre of the ceiling, and four sinks, one in each corner of the room, uncovered, and exhaling a revolting odour, served as receptacles for the refuse of everything. The large gate opening into this den was of dark oak. Through a wicket in it, the prisoners passed in and out one by one, bending their bodies, and putting in, first the unchained foot and next the other—a mode of proceeding which occupied so much time that it took nearly an hour for all of us to enter or pass out. Opposite this entrance was the door to a closet, uncovered, and kept without care or decency, yet in which ten prisoners actually lived. All round our walls were driven numberless nails, from which hung everything belonging to the criminals—plates, porringers, saucepans, clothes—affording refuge to millions of bugs, which came down by night to suck our blood. In one corner of the room was a bed, far different from the rest, with a little cupboard beside it, within which were a few wine-glasses and a large bottle of wine. Above the head of the bed, hung some pictures of saints, before which a small lamp was at night kept burning. This spot belonged to the chamber-keeper; that is to say, to a prisoner notorious for his crimes, who was set in power and authority over his comrades. During the night, the atmosphere of this room was so utterly abominable and stifling, that the new inmates instinctively leaped out of bed and approached the windows; but even this relief could not always be indulged in where the prisoners were chained in couples. What rendered it still more difficult and dangerous to breathe the poisonous air, was the cloud of dust produced by the constant spinning of hemp—a dust which, penetrating into the lungs, caused incessant irritation, and often severe inflammation. I went out to walk a little in the yard, and met among the criminals some whom I knew to be chamber-keepers, and through whom I was enabled to obtain part of the money which had been taken from me. This was a great convenience to me. It was now about two hours before sunset, and a large number of turnkeys knocking furiously at the door, ordered the prisoners to muster and arrange themselves round the circular yard, to be counted. They obeyed at once, standing with their caps off; and this performance, called "la conta," being over, they again returned to their former walking, talking, and noise.

One hour after "la conta" the bell was rung several times, and the prisoners began to withdraw. A little while afterwards, the turnkeys again struck at the door, screaming aloud like peacocks; but the most horrible sound of all was the captain's voice, who cried, "In! In, rascals!" The orders of the "secondini" had small influence over the criminals, but those of the captain were very much respected and feared; for he was often in the habit of using his stick, and enforcing his commands with a blow on the head. Before sundown, all prisoners were in. There was some confusion at first, but the voice of the chamber-keeper soon made everything right. "The rosary! To the rosary!" he exclaimed, and then there was silence. The rosary (a form of Roman Catholic prayer) being over, cries, screams, laughter, songs, curses, oaths, whistling, noise of all kinds were freely indulged in, all blended with the horrid rattle of chains. My temples throbbed with pain as if they were beaten with hammers. Two or three hours passed before this dreadful din began to abate, when, by degrees, it lessened, and was succeeded by the silence of death. I cannot say how long I had been dozing, when I was aroused by a sense of being stung with stinging-nettle. I thought the suffering might be caused by the coarse shirt I had neglected or forgotten to change. I threw it off, and returned to bed again; but I was worse off than before. At length, unable to bear the torment any longer, I screamed aloud for a light, and, on its being brought, saw that the lesser vermin had been draining that blood which King Ferdinand had not himself sucked. For three days, able to buy food, I only ate a little bread soaked in wine, for I had become as ill in body as in mind. I could not force my thoughts away from home, where I had been so happy; where I had always enjoyed every comfort, been accustomed to see kind faces around me, and to hear the tender names of brother, son, friend, constantly sounding in my ears; where I had so often advised my patients, and given them comfort and hope. This thought of home was my chief torture. On the fourth day of my imprisonment I was seized with bronchitis. It was a very severe attack; and, added to the other usual symptoms, there was intolerable thirst. I had been for three days unable to drink the muddy water of the place, and now when, in my fever, I petitioned for a cooling drink, they brought me a jug filled with this same water, which I set down, shrinking from its smell as I put it to my mouth. I asked for a glass, into which I poured it, and found it to be green and teeming with insect life. In the mean while the doctor was sent for, and I was transferred to hospital, where, after some days, I recovered.

A month after I had been taken to hospital, an order reached the Bagnio that I and the other political prisoners should be removed to Procida, and we were accordingly desired to keep ourselves in readiness to start at any moment. Now the political prisoners were unchained from the others. No man can understand unless he has felt it in his own person how horrible is the condition of one prisoner chained to another. I have seen, under such circumstances, a son

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once good and obedient lift his hand and strike his father.

The captain divided us into two lots, each consisting of ten prisoners, chained together by a common ring. Dressed in our red jackets and conical caps, we resembled so many Punches, but instead of being amused by our appearance, the people appeared saddened and looked on in silence. Owing to the want of wind and a contrary tide, it was dark night when we reached Procida.

SIDE BY SIDE.

FRIEND AND FRIEND.

MAY we, then, never know each other?
Who love each other more, I dare
Affirm for both, than brother brother,
Aye, more, my friend, than they that are
The children of one mother.

A look—and lo, our natures meet!
A word—our minds make one reply!
A touch—our hearts have but one beat!
And, if we walk together—why
The same thought guides our feet

The self-same course! The flower that blows
A scent unguess'd in hedgerow green,
Slim spiders where the water throws
The starry-weeded stones between
Strange light that flits and flows,

Were charged by some sweet spirit, sure
(Loves' minister, and ours!) to strike
Our sense with one same joy, allure
Our hearts, and bless us both alike
With memories that endure.

True friend! I know you: and I know
You know me too. And this is well.
Yet something seems to lie below
All knowledge, which is hard to tell.
The world, where hands let go,

Slips in between. The morsels fine
That meet so fast and firm to-day,
Where, yesterday, your heart left mine,
When our hearts' converse broke away,
Ah, how will these combine.

When years have clad them coarse with rust,
And time hath blunted down the points,
And earth has dropp'd its daily dust
Into the sharp and tender joints
Where loitering swarms will thrust

Their pregnant eggs? The warmth yet stays,
Where, twelve safe hours ago, no more,
Your soul touched mine. But days and days
Make callous what one day leaves sore,
Ichoring the wound they graze.

Not ours the change, if change must fall,
Nor yours the fault, nor mine, my friend!
Life's love will last: but not love's small
Sweet hourly lives. That these should end
It grieves me. That is all.

This is time's curse. Since life began
It hath been losing love too fast.
And I would keep, while yet I can,
Man's faith in love, lest at the last
I lose love's faith in man.

But something sighs, "Be satisfied.
"Ye know no more than ye can know."
And walking, talking side by side,
It sometimes seems to me as tho'
Love did to love provide

(How shall I say?) a man, in fine,
A ghostly Third, who is, indeed,
Not you nor I, tho' yours and mine;
The creature of our mutual need,
The friend for whom we pine.

You call him Me: I call him You:
Who is not either you nor me?
This phantom friend! who, if we knew
What I divine, would prove to be
Mere product of us two.

The man that each in each hath sought,
And each within himself hath found:
The being of our separate thoughts
To each by his own nature bound,
From his own nature wrought,

Heed well our friend, while yet we may!
There are so many winds about,
And any wind may blow away
Love's airy child. O never doubt
He is the common prey

Of every chance, while love remains:
And every chance which he survives
Is something added to love's gains.
Comfort our friend whilst yet he lives!
Dead, what shall pay our pains?

If cold should kill his heart at last,
Regret will idly muse, and think
In at what window blew the blast?
Or how we might have stopp'd that chink.
What mends a moment past?

MAN AND WIFE.

Nay, Sweet! no thought, not any thought,
At least not any thought of you,
But what must thank dear love. Nor aught
Of love's mistrust between us two
Can ever creep. Thank God, we keep
Too close to let thin doubts slip thro'

And leave a scar where they divide
Hearts meant by Heaven to hold together.
So, soul by soul, as side by side,
We sit. Thought wanders hither, thither,
From star to star, yet not so far
But what, at end of all its tether,

It feels the beating of your heart,
To which mine bound it long ago.
Our love is perfect, every part,
Love's utmost, reach'd at last, must so
Henceforth abide. And, if I sigh'd
Just now, I scarcely wish to know

The reason why. Who feels love's best
Must feel love's best can be no more.
We see the bound, no longer guess'd,
But fix'd for ever. Lo, the shore!
On either hand, 'twixt sea and land,
How clear and fine does sight explore

That long-drawn self-determined line
Of difference traced! My Own, forgive
That, sitting thus, your hand in mine,
Glad that dear God doth let us live
So close, my Own, so almost one,
A thought that wrongs repose should strive

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With pure content. So much we are,
Who are no more . . . . could I explain!
Ah, the calm sea-coast! Think, how far
Across the world came land and main,
Endeavouring each to find and reach
The other,—well, and they attain

Here! And just here, where they unite,
The point of contact seems to be
The point of severance. Left and right,
Here lies the land, and there the sea.
They meet from far: they touch: yet are
Still one and one eternally,

With skill that touch between—that touch
That joins and yet divides—the shore.
Oh soul to soul, dear Love, 'tis much!
Loves utmost gain'd can give no more.
And yet . . : Well, no! 'tis better so.
Earth still (be glad!) holds Heaven in store.

THREE REFUGEES.

I HAVE known in my time three remarkable Refugees, all of whom are now gone to that "perpetuum exilium" mentioned by Horace, in the dismal black coach that we all ride in sooner or later.

At palace or at cottage gate,
The Postman Death knocks soon or late.

The histories of two of these refugees were pathetic, and need some infusion of human tears in my ink. Let me narrate in all simplicity and truth; and, first, let me briefly describe the sorrows and vicissitudes of my earliest Refugee friend, poor little Mein Herr Krumpholtz, once upon a time flourishing writing-master in the city of Berlin.

Mein Herr Krumpholtz was a very little refugee—a small unfortunate hump-backed writing-master—a mere sketch of a man. Nature seemed never to have finished him, but in a pet with her want of success, to have struck the modelling clay into a dumpy lump, and left only the brain and heart complete. Those two organs in the little writing-master, however, were of the finest construction, and could think and feel as well as the heart and brain of the biggest tyrannical Goliath of Gath that ever jostled his way through the world and bullied the human race into submission. Some small men are intolerably vain (how gracious are the compensations of nature!), wear stays, and scent themselves, are intolerable and insolent to bigger men, and affect excruciating boots; but so was not Krumpholtz; he was one of your abject, crushed little men; one of (as it were) Nature's younger sons—her male Cinderellas—born under an ill star, born to the sensitive misery of feeling forgotten and despised, so that early in life's battle they lose heart, and falling to the rear, turn mere sutlers and drudges to the great victorious army. The only instrument he played on was that much despised one "the second fiddle," and even on that he played "second fiddle B," not "second fiddle A." In fact, whether you met him in the streets, or at a party, or at the "Restaurant à la Cagmaggerie," or wherever it was, the little flaxen German seemed perpetually apologising to the universe for having had the audacity and presumption to exist at all. Now, as it is hard sometimes even to respect men who respect themselves, it is simply impossible to respect a man who does not respect himself. The result that might have been supposed to arise from this behaviour did arise, and poor little Herr Krumpholtz was jostled, shoved, elbowed, cuffed, and turned into the gutter, by every one who was richer, more clever, more pushing, or harder-hearted.

He was an amiable clever little man, too, wrote the finest Italian hand, and ciphered like an angel—a recording angel—but he could seldom get employment, and when he did get any, he lost it directly. He was a little dapper flaxen man, with short common-place legs, a snub nose, towy hair, large moony spectacles, and invisible flaxen eyebrows. His poor little chest was of a dish-cover shape, and he carried about him an undying odour of bad sardines and stale tobacco. Yet he was a poet and a scholar; had written sonnets to Upland; lines "To the memory of Körner;" finally a satire, signed "The Ghost of Blücher," which was much read—by the Berlin police—and in gratitude for which he obtained three years board and lodging from the King of Prussia, in the unpleasant fortress of Spandau.

Krumpholtz had been twice in love; once desperately, with blue-eyed Fräulein Goldstein, the pretty daughter of a Berlin wine-merchant, who eventually jilted him, and married a rich dyer in Lindenbaum-street.

Just before the revolution broke out, Krumpholtz was beginning to recover this blow, and to do pretty well as a thriving writing-master. Unfortunately, bad designing men flattered Krumpholtz, and persuaded him that he was a great revolutionary orator—a small Brutus, with the heart of Cato, and the brain of Danton. There was no doubt then among honest people, nor is there now, that Germany wants liberty, and freedom from effete aristocracy, and pipeclay martinetism; but true liberty is no child of murder or sin, nor did a rain of blood ever, since the world began, make two blades of corn grow where one only grew before.

Perched like a tomtit on an oak, Krumpholtz strutted on the tables of revolutionary clubs, and croaked out prophecies and rhapsodies against tyranny, slandered that very indifferent hero Frederick the Great, and, in fact, did all he could to bring himself under the executioner's swinging sword. One night the club he belonged to—"The Red Mountain"—was surprised by the police, and Krumpholtz escaped by putting on a woman's cloak and getting on the tiles.

The remembrance of this night, I suppose, rather soured him, for he was very fierce and cruel at the barricades of the ensuing week, and assisted in that terrible and ghastly procession by torchlight when the dead bodies, piled in carts, were driven by the mob under the balcony on which the king stood. Krumpholtz yelled with

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the best, but every drop of blood shed that night, threw back German liberty months, years. The reaction came, certain as the cold stage in fever that follows the hot. The rich men trembling at the mob confounded reform with destruction, and put down the riot. The leading revolutionists fled, and among them Krumpholtz—aided, let me mention for the sake of humanity, by some Napoleons secretly transmitted to him by the faithless Fräulein.

Safe out of Scylla, where should the poor little exile fall, but plump into Charybdis. Safe from the whirlpool of revolution, Krumpholtz fell into love. The tender grey-eyed daughter of his landlady in Queen Anne-street, Soho, pitied him, until pity turned to love. The little tender German heart, pining to love something, home and country lost, returned the affection that the bony dusty bailiff-faced mother could not check or hinder.

But even this reciprocated love proved unlucky to the ill-starred man. Mrs. MacCash finding her lodger devotedly attached to her daughter, and at the same time very intermittent in his financial arrangements, and being herself a "helpless widow," as she pleaded, determined to make a serf and drudge of the too willing lover. Krumpholtz, was doomed, like Ferdinand, to toil basely for his Miranda. He was sent out for milk, he got up the coals, he diplomatised with creditors, he negotiated with lodgers, he wrote letters, he ran errands. His only consolations were his love and his violin, and even on the last-named instrument he was compelled to play nightly, psalm tunes of the dismalest kind for his bony tyrant of a landlady, who was a Primitive Methodist of the severest tenets.

Yet this penal and degrading life the brave-hearted little man bore with Christian degradation rather than run into debt or desert the girl he loved. Yes! He bore it all without a murmur, and surrendered every farthing he earned to that dusty old Semiramis, Mrs. MacCash.

In this dismal atmosphere the little exile solaced by love and the stuggle of duty, spent three happy years. At the end of that time Fate dealt him her most cruel blow. Pretty little tender-eyed Maggy MacCash caught a low typhoid fever, and died, pressing her lover's hand.

Now the clouds darkened, and everything went wrong. His two schools gave him warning. The master of the second, with shrugs and rubbings of his hands, expressed his deep regret over a glass of sherry. Mr. Krumpholtz was a most careful and excellent master—there was but one objection to him—that was "his size." It seemed a trifling, he might almost say a ridiculous objection, but it was an insurmountable one. The boys did not respect him, they made fun of him, despised his commands, drew his caricature on the playground walls, made snow dwarfs to ridicule him, boldly set him at defiance. All this was true. One brave lad alone had the courage to respect him and to defend him from insult; on the sad day when, with tears in his eyes, the little writing-master, humbly and affectionately, amid derisive cheers, took leave of his pupils, that brave lad (afterwards a great man in India) followed him to the school bounds and pressed him kindly by the hand.

But these misfortunes might all have been borne—for there was still the greengrocer's family at the corner of the street, and there was still the baker's daughter over the way, to give writing lessons to—had not a trial still more terrible to a sensitive man fallen on his unhappy head.

Knowing his poverty the spies who infest London began to ply Krumpholtz with temptations. They intercepted him at the Café de la Cagmaggerie, and drew him slowly into their toils. They offered him a safe passage home, money, employment, what not, if he would only betray a few of the secrets of his revolutionary friends in London; if he would merely attend the German singing clubs, and report now and then what he heard. They wanted very little, and would pay very well for it. Or, he might leave his friends, and go and mix among the French Red Republicans, the Orsini men. The reward should still be the same.

At first, Krumpholtz, proud little man, of the most spotless and sensitive honour, turned from these wretches as he would have done from Apollyon. Gradually, as poverty pinched him harder and harder with her paralysing fingers, he felt, and shuddered to feel, that he began to listen to their advances. He fell on his knees by his miserable bedside, and prayed God to keep such temptations from his mind. He felt stronger as he prayed, but next day, he felt again that he wavered. The toils were narrowing round the poor man; one day when he met me in the street he told me how he dreaded lest poverty should tempt him to become a spy.

That very night, as I afterwards heard, he went home to his lodgings, and was warned that he must leave on the morrow. Mrs. MacCash, tired of solitude, had married a tall red-faced coarse fellow of a milkman, who had at once determined to oust his unprofitable lodger. The dirty little slut who opened the door that night to the unfortunate Herr Krumpholtz, afterwards remembered that he asked in a low and choked voice for his bedroom candle, and that he sighed as he tapped faintly at the front parlour door, and wished Mr. and Mrs. MacCash "good night." Nothing more was thought of the little German until eleven o'clock next day, when Mr. MacCash, going up to his lodger's bedroom to know at what time he intended to clear out, obtained no reply to his repeated knocking but a faint groan twice repeated. One bump of the brawny milkman's shoulder to the door, and it fell in splinters. He rushed into the room; and there, pale, shrunk, and fainting, on a bed soaked with blood, lay the poor little writing-master. One hand still clutched the razor, in the other was a letter in pencil:

Dear Mrs. MacCash,—Forgive me for putting an end to my wretched life in your house. I could

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no longer endure the ceaseless miseries nature on me, the unhappy one, heaped. I die thinking of my Mary.

Yours, with all heart's gratitude,
WILHELM KRUMPHOLTZ.

The temptation to suicide had probably come upon him as he was shaving; for half his beard was shaved, and half not. He lingered in the hospital a week. At the sad week's end, he died, and was buried by the parish. I placed a memorial stone over the humble grave of the ill-starred little writing-master.

Now far away from the quiet grave where the dandelions expand their transitory sunny disks, bear me, O my memory to noisier and gayer scenes! Conduct me quick to the Café Restaurant à la Cagmaggerie, where the black-spotted dominoes bustle, and the red and white billiard balls knock their heads together, on the green tables; where the omelette smokes and the chocolate froths; where the brown coffee seethes; and extraordinary soups flavour the smoky air!

There, aloft in that strange room, ascended to by corkscrew iron stairs, and where the German Singing Club of watchmakers and pianoforte-makers met weekly, I first saw thee, thou strange and dangerous Stanislas Polonsky. There, first I talked to thee of the chivalrous days of Sobieski, amid songs about "Father Rhine," and cries for the three colours and German independence.

The next time I met Polonsky (who I found to be a Polish artist) was at a French Revolutionary Debating Club that met over a Penny Reading Room in Windmill-street, opposite to a public-house bearing the suspicious name of the "Three Spies." It was about a month before Orsini's attempt, and that great conspirator was said to be present: though I could not identify his pale fixed face, and heavy black beard. The chairman, a Dr. Cæsar Chose, was a tall gaunt man, with the worn hollow face and long grey drooping moustachios of some old general of Cuirassiers. The debate was violent in the extreme, and, after a speech from a ruffianly Parisian mechanic, who had been wounded at the Barricades, and who supported himself while he spoke on crutches, up got Stanislas in a corner of the room and denounced the Russian Emperor as a cloven-footed monster who sent innocent women to perish in Siberia. He spoke of the struggle in Russia to emancipate the serfs, and of the efforts made by friends of liberty there to obtain a free press. After a long and fervid speech he sat down frothing at the mouth like a recovered epileptic, and staggered to the door and the fresh air.

I followed him, and he asked me to come home with him and have a chat about Poland. I did so. His home was a smoky dingy third floor back in Pulteney-street: a wainscoted low-roofed room in a house that had perhaps been a nobleman's in Queen Anne's time. His room was strewn with artists' properties, faded draperies, broken casts, foils, masks. The tables were crowded with sticky yellow bottles and squeezed-out tin tubes of paint; while against the walls leaned stacks of dusty sketches and studies.

We began talking of the great Russian artist Ivanoff, and then of Russian poetry, when who should come in but two of his Russian friends, both characteristic specimens of the refugee.

The one was a Russian colonel who had been dangerously wounded in the left temple at the battle of Inslensko, and who, having since been chased out of his country for the unpardonable crime of being a reformer, was now in his grand old age a poor compositor in a Holborn printing-office, maintaining his wife honourably on twenty shillings a week, hardly earned by late hours and a pestilent atmosphere. A truer gentleman I never saw, nor one more unostentatious of his misfortunes. His companion had been a frank young lieutenant in the Russian navy within two years. One day, while stationed at Kertch, he saw a German captain strike the waiter at a café for not bringing him his tea and lemon quickly enough. This fired the young man's blood.

"Why," he said, "you Germans come out here pretending to civilise us, and you are ten times the barbarians we are."

The German, heated with absinthe, replied with a blow. They fought at once, in that very room, with sabres; and at the third blow the Russian split his adversary's skull. That night he fled into exile; for the German interest was strong at court just then, and his homicide would have been punished as cruelly as a rank murder.

They recited to me some beautiful Russian poems. I had expected to find them poor imitations of Byron, mere mongrel French and German paraphrases. But I found them steeped in local feeling, aromatic with fir scent, and fragrant of the budding birch woods. The following simple poem of Tewtcheff touched me deeply, as preserving a singular local legend:

These poor villages!
This poor nature!
Mother country, long suffering country,
Dear country of the Russian people!

The foreigner with his scornful glance
Can not understand, can not perceive
What gleams under, what secretly shines
Through thy modest nakedness.

Yet the King of Heaven, in the attire of a slave,
Suffering under the burden of his cross,
Long ago passed to and fro through thee, blessing thee,
O, my mother country!

It is true as Tewtcheff sings, that the Russian peasants firmly believe, and have believed for ages, that our Saviour once passed through their country, blessing and pitying it, in the humble garb of a slave. Then after a short discussion on that strange sect who believe that our Saviour, the Emperor Napoleon, and the Emperor Paul, are all living in concealment in Urkutsk waiting for the millennium—a sect who believe in purification by fire, and who, after mutilating themselves, sometimes burn themselves on funeral piles—we fell again on poetry, and Colonel Stratotsky recited a beautiful poem written by I forget whom, and called I think "The Storm." It began:

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Thunder and storm! The ship is tossing—
The dark sea boils—
The wind tears the sail,
And whistles among the ropes.
The vault of heaven becomes dark,
But I, trusting in the brave ship,
Slumber in my narrow cabin
As we begin to toss—I sleep—
I dream that the nurse of my childhood
Tosses my cradle,
And, as of old, sings in a low sweet voice,
"Boiushke Boio—Boiushke Boio."

Presently the storm awakened the poet, and he heard the quicker trampling on deck—but again he slept, and this time he was a child swinging in a garden, and prattling to his future sweetheart—so through various artful changes the poet carried the idea of the motion of the ship affecting the dream of the traveller.

The next time we met—I and Stanislas—it was in his painting room again, two days after Orsini's execution. The London shops were full of photographs of Orsini, and when I first went in, Stanislas was very sombre and silent. He sat with his feet on the fender and his back to his easel, growling threats and menaces against tyranny. Suddenly he rose, and advancing to his easel, threw off a dark cloth that covered a large picture he was working on; he pointed to it; it was the portrait of the daring conspirator. I knew directly, the strong features, and the close crisp black beard. Stanislas kissed the picture as he exclaimed, "That man was a fanatic of patriotism; he would have leaped down the gulf like Curtius; he would have thrust himself on the spears with Winkelreid. O would to God I had died with thee, O infelice! O would to God I had died with thee."

I did my best to get poor chivalrous Stanislas work, but I did not obtain him much; for he was one of those men who, with considerable originality of genius, could not bind himself to the drudgery of portrait-painting. I often wondered, indeed, how he managed to put two ends together—but by a mere accident I discovered. Some business led me to call on a celebrated artist in a distant part of Kensington. When the servant answered the bell he informed me that his master was very busy, as it wanted only a week to the sending-in day of the Academy; but if I would walk into his studio I should find him at work. I followed into an ante-room, and there, from behind a curtain, I saw the artist and his model. It was a shipwreck picture, and the model—a fine man, stripped to the waist—stood with his back turned to me, holding on to a helm that had been rigged up in the studio for that purpose. Suddenly the man turned for a moment to rest himself, and I saw his face. It was Stanislas. He did not see me, so I instantly stole back, and telling the servant in a whisper that I would not disturb his master then, but would call later in the day, went away with my secret.

One week from that time, the most illustrious of the Russian refugees met me in Regent-street, and casually informed me that poor Stanislas was dead—carried off in three days by cholera—attributed to the bad drainage of the Soho region.

Stanislas was buried at Woking Cemetery, and I followed him to the grave. His coffin was borne by members of his own Republican Club—"the Polar Star" club. It was an April morning. The air was fragrant with the perfumes of spring. The flowers were opening, the birds singing. When the coffin was lowered into the grave, and a yellow wreath of immortelles had been laid upon its black surface, Monsieur Ledru Rollin advanced to pronounce the funeral oration, some passages of which I can still remember. The orator began thus:

"In a poor street of London, in the poor garret of a poor house, a holy existence has just terminated. Poland has one martyr the more—but she will not refuse to lend us her martyrology, for we need its pages to teach our French children.

"Stanislas Polonsky was a holy man. I emphasize the words—a holy man. His whole existence was devoted to abnegation of self, and to incessant labour. All that strikes us in the legends of the saints, was united in him, with more love, and with more of the human element.

"Born in opulence, nourished in the bosom of Polish grandeur, our Stanislas died a poor broken-hearted republican. He threw away his titles and abandoned his fortune when his country was dismembered by tyrants. But his was no religion of despair. With exile his great abnegation only began. Alone, in poverty, abandoned by his children and his wife, he toiled twenty-six years in exile, to organise the Polish democratic party, and to unite it with the Russian. Bowed down by age and misfortune, he gave his days and nights to this one work, with that calm serenity, that sweet resignation, that frank simplicity, which an immovable faith alone can give to a great heart.

"No one ever heard a word of complaint from his lips. He was sometimes sadder than usual, but he never let fall those cold and bitter words of doubt and despair by which the exile sometimes revenges himself for the anguish he has to suffer. He was one of those pure fanatic natures who, dominated by one grand thought, arrive at an unshakable tranquillity, a sweet calmness, an unbendable resolution.

"Some years ago Monsieur Lamartine received congratulations on the establishment of the Republic. Among the rest there was one group of faces, furrowed by misfortune and blanched by exile. Their spokesman was our Stanislas. He said to Lamartine, 'At every summons of the people, whether in war or misfortune, Poland has been the first to cry, I am here! for she saw in every struggle for liberty, a struggle for Poland; she cries now again, I am here!'

"Stanislas was the advanced sentinel of Poland, but the people slept. The faithful soldier fell

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at his post, and the brutal wheels of tyranny have passed over his bones."

Now, leaving poor Stanislas' grave, bear me, O Memory, back to the Café Restaurant à la Cagmaggerie, and fill my ears again with the shuffle of the dominoes and the rattle of the red and the white billiard balls. I would write of my third refugee friend: that stupendous and astounding rascal, the Prince Gargarelli, of Palermo.

Poor Stanislas first introduced me to him at the Café Restaurant à la Cagmaggerie, where the prince was intent on a carambole game of billiards. He looked very like a dandy billiard-marker. He was very short and dapper, and wore very high-heeled glistening little boots. His clothes were glossy new, and of the extremest cut. His pale fingers glistened with triple rings. In his scarf he wore an immense emerald. I left him, and thought no more of him until ten days after, when a dirty-looking man, very much like a Jew old clothesman, called on me at my office (I was then a solicitor in Gray's Inn), and introduced himself in broken English as the homme d'affaires, the man of business, of the Prince Gargarelli, of Palermo. The painful fact (after many rhetorical subterfuges) soon came out. The Prince, having got terribly into debt, was in the Bench. He wanted my aid to raise money to get him out of that stronghold. The chief characteristics of the prince's ambassador were thick black eyebrows, a red hook nose, greasy black clothes, and a voluminous umbrella with a hook handle.

The ambassador assumed a very high tone. The loan was a purely temporary one—a mere stop-gap for a week or so—the prince's family, in fact, rolling in riches. The prince's father, Prince Paul, had but to be written to, and would instantly freight a ship with Sicilian gold, and bear away his too prodigal son in triumph. The Bond-street jeweller, who wanted his money, was one "tamned dirty rascal, with no conscience, mon Dieu, no honour;" the prince was an accomplished gentleman, embarrassed by "tamned rascale tradesmen, horse-keeper and carriage-keeper, and your horrible jeweller of ole Bond-street."

The ambassador, flashing before me the glittering title of prince, took me, I could see, for an easy prey.

"But if the prince is so rich," said I, with merciless logic, "how is it he stops in the Bench?"

The ambassador laughed compassionately at my ignorance. "Ha! ha! He vait for von remittance, that all; for one remittance from Prince Paul, de fader."

"Is the father rich?"

The ambassador stamped his umbrella, and assumed a low and solemn tone of voice. "He is de richest man on the continent of Europe. He has vine-yard, olive-yard, orange-yard, citron-yard, court-yard; he has one million English pound a year."

I appeared overcome. "And the prince in the Bench is, I suppose, the eldest son, what we call in England the heir apparent?"

The dirty ambassador was all smiles. I had not only exactly caught his idea, but I had even anticipated his idea.

"Yase, yase. Ah! You have the esprit vif. Yase, de eldest son of de fader, Prince Paul—de son who vill vear de crown vid de bar on de head. Prince Paul, de fader, is richer than any von in Europe, barring de crown.

"Oh!" said I, trying to help his staggering English, "you mean the richest man barring crowned heads."

"Yase, yase" (delighted to catch at this expression, and evidently treasuring it up for future use, as he slowly repeated it). "Yase, barring crowned heads. The Prince vait for von remittance." (Here a sudden wheedling thought struck him.) "Do you—(aimez vouz)—do you like orange?"

I expressed my peculiar attachment to that fruit.

"De Prince have orange field enorme. He vill send you two chest of orange. Do you like feeg?"

I said I particularly esteemed the fig.

"Very vell; he has feeg tree, miles of feeg tree. He vill write to Prince Paul to send many boxes of feeg with remittance. Do you love citron?"

I said again, yes. And here also I was to be remembered.

"Ah! Do you like, then, Lachrymæ Christee, de vine of de tears?"

I said, "Indeed I do!" But the bribery and corruption was now growing a little too barefaced, and I said it with rather a distrustful and spiteful emphasis.

"All raite" (here the dirty German Jew tapped me on the arm and smiled horribly to express entire admiration and confidence). "The vine-yard of Lachrymæ Christeebelong to Prince Paul. He vill send you two cask, *vith* the remittance."

But why continue? Need I say that the loan was never raised, and that the remittance from the enormously rich noble of Palermo never came? I went to see the prince in the Bench, and found him playing at rackets in a flowered chintz dressing-gown, gay, and prodigal of promises as ever. He may be there now for anything I know.

I have written these lines, to draw attention to the pathetic rather than to the humorous side of an exile's life. We, at home happy, are apt to be distrustful of men whom we too often associate with runaway swindlers, foreign assassins, degraded officers, fugitive gamblers, and outlawed homicides. Some such there are, no doubt, among the motley crowds that throng Leicester-square and the dim regions of Soho; but I believe that the majority are honest brave sincere men, driven into misery merely by the sincerity and the earnest steadfastness with which they hold certain political opinions—horrible opinions in the home-land they have lost—embracing the wish for a free press, a free

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constitution, a popular parliament, and a responsible ministry.

Poor fellows, poor fellows! They roam about Hyde Park among the cast-iron trees, and, moping there on the benches, dream of the Prater, of Unter-den-Linden, of the Boulevards, of the square of the Duomo, of the Cascine, of the Pincian Hill. The little children play round them, but they heed them not; the stolid policeman stares at them ominously; they see him not; their minds are away to other climes and other days.

Then, as evening comes, and darkens over the dewy grass, and as the street lamps shine out, they awake from their dreams, and slink away to their poor meal and the everlasting dominoes at my old haunt—the Café Restaurant à la Cagmaggerie.

PURSUED BY P. W.

It was in a brief yachting ramble which I made in a small schooner lent me by a friend at Malta that I put in at Tangiers. The yacht needed some slight repairs, and I myself required a little exercise on shore, and the freshening influences of those land-breezes which are so dear to the landsman's heart.

I knew no one, nor—never contemplating such a visit—had I provided myself with even a letter of introduction But I did not repine at my isolation, devoting myself to see a number of new objects in a land totally strange to me. My practice was to mount my horse early, and, having sent forward my servant to an appointed spot, to breakfast under the palm-trees wherever any grand or striking panorama of the scenery presented itself. In this bivouac fashion I frequently passed days, and even nights; for in this climate, except in particular seasons, there is no fear of malaria.

While thus living my gipsy life, I strolled one evening along the bank of a dried-up torrent, whose massive stones and great trunks of trees plainly revealed what a volume of water must occasionally sweep down, fed by hundreds of mountain rivulets. The dreary desolation, combined with a certain beauty; the mingled richness and barrenness; the fresh tints of foliage contrasting with the bright-red soil, made up a picture thoroughly African. My astonishment was, however, great to perceive that the lonesome spot had been selected for a residence, and—to judge from the trim and graceful character of the little cottage—by one not deficient in taste. The building, which was singularly small, was of cane, but with deep shadowing eaves all around it; the pillars supporting which were covered with rich flowering creepers. The little garden, too, showed signs of tasteful culture, and glowed with a rich luxuriance of flowers that reminded one of Holland. As I drew near I saw a man, whom, at a glance, I knew to be an European, busily watering the plants. For a while he had not noticed my approach; but, on turning, he caught sight of me, and, as suddenly throwing down his watering-pot, fled towards the house, not only banging the door after him, but barring and bolting it inside.

I opened the little wicket and approached the house, desirous, at least, by a word of apology, to excuse my sudden intrusion; but though I addressed the inmate in French, English, Italian, and Spanish, the extent of my lingual attainments, he vouchsafed no reply. After a few more attempts, all unsuccessful, I turned my steps homeward, wondering not a little what the event might mean.

Three nights after this I went to the consulate to fetch away some letters which had been addressed there for me. I had given orders to heave short on the anchor, that I might get under weigh immediately on my arriving on board. The consul was from home, but an official of the consulate met me with my letters, and expressed the regret of his chief, that he had not had the pleasure of my acquaintance. As we chatted together thus passingly, I could not help reverting to my late excursion and the little incident I have just related.

"Oh, he's an Englishman—that fellow is English—but as to his name or his family, or what he has done, or why he came here, we have never found out. The consul made several advances to him, asked him repeatedly here, invited him to a Christmas dinner, and so on; but all in vain. His replies were, however, couched in the language of one accustomed to the courtesies of life. The only civility he will accept of is the loan of a newspaper; his Arab servant comes periodically for the Times. For a while we thought he must be insane, but that is evidently not the case. The secret most probably touches some of those disastrous bubble speculations—British Bank rascalities—which we read of, and my own impression is that he has been implicated in the rogueries——"

"Or ruined by their fraud?" interposed I.

"Perhaps so," said he, dryly; and thus the conversation closed.

When I got down to the wharf where my boat lay awaiting me, the coxswain told me that a strange-looking man, who wore a sort of haïk over his English dress, had left a sealed packet for me, having first asked my name, which he appended to the envelope in pencil. By the description, I at once recognised the recluse. I own that my first impression was to include him in that category which, as begging impostors, have almost reached the rank of professionals, but on reflecting how little benefit could accrue to the application made to one whose topsail-sheet was then "to the wind," I took the first quiet moment, after we got under weigh, to break the seal and read.

The manuscript was very clearly and cleanly written, not a blot nor an erasure throughout. A small slip of paper, meant specially for myself, dropped out as I opened it, but contained only this one line: "If you hear of P. W., pray drop me a line." The manuscript—manifestly an autobiography—began thus:

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I believe I am the best-tempered man that ever lived. I *know* I am the most patient and long-suffering. My inner consciousness reveals to me that any one less eminently endowed with amiable qualities would have given way, years ago, either to transports of anger, or settled down into a brooding or confirmed misanthrope, tried and tempted as I have been. I will state my case in the fewest words I can. My father was the younger son of a younger son, who never would—or, I believe, could—do anything for his own support. I was born to the family gift, and so thorough a gentleman that by no possible exertion could I have procured myself one day's sustenance. I inherited something under three hundred a year, which the world called eight, and my creditors believed to be two. I had some reasonably good connexions, none of whom cared to hear about, or recognise me; a tolerable share of good looks, and a disposition which, for gentleness and sweetness, I never knew matched. It was my impression that, with these gifts and graces, a man might float down the stream of life (I never wanted to breast the current) pleasantly, not giving himself any especial calling, nor taxing his energies for any peculiar craft. I could "live," in fact—and, if I only knew how, live pleasantly. Young as I was, and with no very wide experience of the world, I discovered that, though society has its especial caresses and favours for great celebrities, yet its most permanent favourites are, so to say, very ordinary, common-place people, with nothing brilliant or remarkable about them: just as, in our daily food, the staple should be something as devoid of taste as possible, so, in our daily intercourse, we ought to have certain persons without any flavour of a peculiar excellence, or any spice of special ability—people, in a word, who would be to our intellectual wants what the ordinary twopenny loaf is to our hunger. "I will be this," said I to myself; "I will be in that category of the useful things which outlive all caprice and survive all changes of fashion," and I did become so, and with a considerable success. When persons enumerated the twelve of a dinner-party, they stopped at the eleventh, every one knowing that it was I who made the complement. When they arranged places in a carriage for a drive, mine was reserved as rigidly as the coachman's. Weddings, christenings, and funerals, too, were ceremonials always graced by my presence, and though now and then I would overhear some rude bumpkin from the country, or some self-created swell, ask impertinently, "Who is that little fellow with the light whiskers? I see him everywhere;" or, "Do tell me who is that smart little party yonder, who seems to know everybody?" I could afford the taunt and not need to resent it—if resentment were, which it assuredly was not, any part of my policy. As I have said, I went on and prospered. I was asked to all the best houses in my own city, and to a wide circle of country mansions besides. Shall I own I was proud of this invention of mine? I felt, as the French say, that I had "created a part," and that, practically speaking, I was a poet, as to the daily incidents of life. Do not imagine that it was by a studious observance of petty attentions, a vast host of little services, that I attained this position. No, it was by a complete self-negation and an utter unobtrusiveness that I succeeded. I was of no actual use to any living being!

I couldn't accompany a singer on the piano, nor play a quadrille for the children, nor even tell them a fairy tale. I was of no account in the private theatricals; I could ride no man's horse; I was not considered safe to drive a pony-chaise. I sustained but one part in life. I stood in society as the standard measure stands in the barrack-yard, and to me came all in turn to measure their intellectual height against mine, and go away happy and rejoicing. There was not a creature so crushed by superciliousness or so trampled down by insolence that he could not recover some self-esteem by comparing himself to *me!* Feeble old tottering fellows felt athletic in my company, and schoolboys would engage me in argument with a conscious superiority that was really imposing. "Eh, Barnes?" I would hear across the breakfast-table, "you got the worst of that discussion with me;" or, "Barnes, old fellow, I rather put your classical knowledge to shame yesterday. You haven't your Horace so fresh as I have." I was a sort of human skittle, that every one bowled down; but, exactly for that reason, I was sure to be set up again. Had I been—if there could be such a thing—a self-adjusting nine-pin, they'd have made short work of me long ago. Sycophancy! not a bit of sycophancy in all this! I was no more a sycophant than is your hat when it suffers you to put it on, or your gloves. I was passive, nothing more. Nature had made me a gambler inversely, that is, I had a greater pleasure in losing than other men have in winning. The beaten man was my part, by predilection, and it had this advantage, I could always secure it.

I was dining one day at the mess of the 9—th. I was always a welcome guest at messes, where a great proportion of the talk is boastful and personal, and where a listener of my stamp has an especial value. I was intimate with all the officers, and consequently frequently heard my name quoted as evidence in fifty matters of which I knew nothing. Another guest, a thin, high-nosed man, with a glass fixed in his eye, continued to regard me fixedly, and whenever my name occurred, his glance invariably reverted to me, as though to say, "What will Barnes say to this," "How will he deal with that?" and, struck by the impenetrability of my manner, his interest in me seemed to increase, so that when we retired after dinner to our coffee, I was not surprised at the major saying to me, "Barnes, I have a friend here very desirous to make your acquaintance. Mr. Watkins—Mr. Barnes;" and then we bowed, and smirked, and looked foolishly pleased with each other. More Brittanico, all the world over.

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Watkins did not say anything very remarkable or striking, but he looked at me with a sort of inquisitive penetration, that I felt it in the marrow of my bones. I have seen a poor juggler at a fair displaying his tricks to an admiring audience of rustics, suddenly paralysed by perceiving a certain man in the crowd of his own profession, who knew how the pancakes were made in the hat, and how the chickens came out of the snuff-box, and who dreaded whether he might not, in a fit of jealousy, or mere levity, reveal all the secrets. I cannot find anything so much alike my terror as this. "Yes," thought I, "Watkins knows it;" and my heart sickened as I said it. Watkins sees how it is done! Oh, the bitterness of that moment! I felt as might Arkwright, or some other of these great mechanical geniuses, on finding that another had hit upon the invention he had deemed his own—had found out that little simple contrivance, that peg, or screw, or spring, or whatever it was, that worked the whole machinery, and for a moment—only for a moment though—my heart conceived very wicked and horrible designs.

Watkins watched me; his eye never quitted me throughout the day. It was on me as I sipped my curaçoa, as I smoked my cigar, as I sat at whist. I could not score the trick without feeling that Watkins remarked it, and when I marked the honours I mechanically turned round in my seat and recorded the fact to *him*. I was delighted when the time came that I could get away, and, observing him in close converse with the major, I seized the opportunity to say a hurried good night to my own friend, and departed. Scarcely, however, had I gained the street, when I heard a voice behind me:

"May I join you?"

It was Watkins. He hoped, or he knew, or he believed — I can't say which — that our roads lay together, and away we walked, side by side. I cannot in the least explain it. I have not the very vaguest clue to the reason, but I remember that, in presence of this man, I utterly abandoned the system I had adopted with the world at large, and to which I owed all my hitherto success in life. I neither played subordinate nor inferior; nay, I would not even concur with him in a single proposition he laid down, nor agree with him in the most common-place expression of a taste. He praised the army, and especially the regiment at whose mess we had just dined; I disparaged the service as a career, and ridiculed the 9—th as the most insupportable of "pipeclays." The claret he called good I declared undrinkable; and the cigars he protested were abominable I affirmed to be the best Cubans I ever smoked—in fact, the only recommendable thing in the regiment.

"You stop here?" said he, as I reached the door of my hotel; "an excellent house, too. If you will permit me, I'll take an early opportunity to pay my respects to you. You are occasionally at home of a morning?"

"Scarcely ever. I rise early, and go out immediately after breakfast."

"The afternoon, then. You have got into London habit, and like your gossip before dinner-hour."

"Never, by any chance," said I, curtly.

"Ah, I have it!—the evening is the time to catch you, sitting in slippered ease over your cigar. And for real enjoyment, there's nothing like it. 'Ce cher coin du feu!' as Béranger says. Good-by; you'll see me one of these nights, I promise you." And, before I could get over the choking sensation of my anger, he had moved away, and was strolling down the street, humming Bianca Luna.

"See you, indeed! no," I muttered, "if it cost me a voyage to New Zealand to avoid it. I'll go out with Garibaldi, or to Dr. Livingstone, or take a campaign with the Circassians, or——in short, I'll not live in the same hemisphere with that man." I passed a miserable night; wretchedness like that I never knew before. It was one terrible night, of which this wretch was the burden. He was everywhere, and crossed me in everything. When I awoke, the first thing which met my eye, on my breakfast table, was a card inscribed Mr. Price Watkins; and, in one corner, Limner's.

"Said he'd drop in about eleven or half-past, sir," said the waiter.

"What's the first train out?" cried I, eagerly.

"Where to, sir?"

"What do I care? I want to get away. North, south—anywhere. When can I start?"

"There's one for Belfast and Antrim at ten forty, sir. There's another for Athlone at ten. There's the express for Limerick at ten five."

"All changed, all altered, since the beginning of the month," said a harsh voice from the door, and Watkins entered the room. "Are you on the move?"

"No, only talking of it; mere talk, nothing more. Have you breakfasted? May I offer you a cutlet and a cup of tea?"

"Well—I don't care if I do take something. Not that I'm a breakfast man: dinner is my meal—a snug little dinner: not that great noisy thing we had yesterday, with riotous schoolboys in shell jackets; but a few men who know the world, Barnes—men who have seen life and can talk about it."

Though the familiar use of my name in this free and easy fashion startled me, I had no time for remonstrance, for Watkins was already at table, his napkin on his knee, and his impertinent eye scanning the objects before him with a searching scrutiny.

"I'm looking for the Worcester sauce," said he at last, "the slight garlic flavour it has improves one's cutlet. Don't rise, pray; Ford will bring it. Pay attention, Ford, and don't bring Harvey. That's a grouse, I take it, near you. What if we had it kept near the fire while we discuss the cutlet, and a few cold oysters?"

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"But I don't see the oysters," I rejoined, innocently.

"No, but you shall, I trust; they have them a few doors off—black fins, too. The very thought of them gives appetite. I saw your misery last night, Barnes," continued he, while he ate, "though I had never met you before. I knew what tortures you were undergoing with those sorry substitutes for society. Ah! here's the Worcester! I have your permission about the oysters. You'll bless me for the hint. Forty, Ford, only forty; and be sure you pick the round shell and deep cap ones. But you've done it before. Go!"

And with this he gave me a smile, so bland, so captivating, and so confidential, that I cannot attempt to render it in words.

"Yes, Barnes," he went on, "you and I, last night, were certainly not in our element. That vile mixture of pomposity and boyishness—that fearful mélange of the orderly-book and the practical joke. Well done, Ford! these are well chosen. Hand them to Mr. Barnes." As he said this he leaned back in his chair, and looked like a host doing the honours of a feast. "Am I not right? are not these luscious? Oh no, don't take pepper; leave them to restore the mucous membrane to its condition of freshness, just as the sea-breeze invigorates and braces the outer man. When I parted from you last night I was thinking over what you had said, and I felt you were right: 'It is a wretched career—repressing all the energy of the able, and developing into absurd proportions the puny efforts of the common-place.' Do you remember using those words? I'll swear you don't; but I do. I repeated them over and over, and when I got home I jotted them down in my diary, with the word Barnesiana at the head, for I thought, he who uttered these words has far more in him, and I said to myself, 'Watkins, don't lose sight of that man; waste no time, either, in stupid formalities, but go frankly to him and say——' Shall we have that delicious bird, eh, Ford? I must have a little—very little—cognac before I engage him. You said Madeira, did you?"

I had not uttered a word.

"Well, Ford, Mr. Barnes is right: Madeira be it. And they have such Madeira here! Not know it? You don't say that you never tasted their Madeira? May I give you this slice of the breast? Ah, I see! breakfast is not your meal either. As my poor father used to say, 'Breakfast is a cover hack; dinner is the strong-boned hunter.' Fill it up, Ford—up to the brim; Madeira must be a bumper. A German would call that Zum kissen."

"Very good wine indeed," I said, being the only words I had uttered for half an hour.

"I am half ashamed to offer you one of these, Barnes," said he, opening his cigar-case, and handing it towards me. "A Sybarite of your stamp is sure to import his own."

"I think I have got something better," I said, looking, I suppose, rather contemptuously over the sorry display he exhibited. "These are Havannahs."

"So they are," said he, smelling them. "Isn't it Homer who makes two warriors exchange armour as a pledge of eternal friendship? Let us imitate the glorious example!" With this he emptied out the vile trash of his own cigar-case on the table, and replaced it with my precious Cubans. "Grand old fellow was Homer, and how well he understood the majesty of a feast. There was that geniality about him—Homer might have been Lord Mayor of London; and when one only thinks of the fellows who have tried to render him in English—cold, ascetic creatures—hypochondriac like Cowper, irritable like Pope, or rigidly doctrinaire like Gladstone. What a mess they do make of it! Dryden might have done it, glorious John! who had the true epic spirit, with the heart of a bon-vivant! John would have got drunk over the battles, and made grand things of them!"

I was too much grieved about my cigars to feel any interest in this rhapsody.

"No Whig, still less a Radical, could translate Homer; there must be ingrained in a man's nature the veritable spirit of a Tory; a king-revering, port-loving Tory! You are a Tory, Barnes, or at least a Conservative; and a Conservative is to a Tory what a cutlet is to a mutton-chop."

"I am neither a mutton-chop nor a cutlet, sir," said I, gravely.

"You are surely not the uncooked thing they call a Radical? Am I unreasonable if I ask for half a glass more of that delicious Madeira? There, positively no more. It's your own fault if I commit an excess. Your talk, Barnes, has carried me away; so that to keep up with you, I have had to shake out all my canvas, royals, and studding-sails. You are fidgety—some appointment, some rendezvous, eh? Why ceremonious with me? Why not say frankly, Watkins, old fellow, I must leave you. But let us meet here at seven. There's just enough of that Madeira for a glass after the soup, and then Cliquot—nothing but Cliquot till the dessert. Hurried, are you? Well, leave the ordering of the dinner to me. Old Bob Surtees used to say that for the double event, meaning both dinner and wine, he'd back me against Europe."

I don't know what I muttered in answer to this speech. I believe I grinned, and tried to smile. I know that inwardly I cursed the man, but I hurried away out of the room, almost afraid that my anger might bring on a fit, while the wretch opened my newspaper, and, with a leg on each side of the fire, stretched himself out to read.

"There's a mid-day mail packet for Holyhead, isn't there, Ford?" I whispered to the waiter.

"At one forty, sir, it leaves Kingstown."

"Pack up my things with all speed, then, and say nothing whatever about my departure in the house, and particularly to the gentleman who breakfasted here, and here's a sovereign for you. If I get away quietly, you shall have another."

Ford earned his money; and, at two o'clock,

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I was looking from the deck of the packet at the fast receding shore, and thanking Heaven that some miles of blue water now separated me from Watkins, as I hoped, for ever.

I took the express to London, but bearing in mind the address of "Limner's" on his card. I knew I had no safety in remaining in town. I started, therefore, the same night for Ostend, resolving to shape my future course after a little reflection.

For my first day the mere sense of escape sufficed me. On the second I began to consider my present position and speculate on the future. I could not help feeling vexed at what had befallen me. I had planned out my life to suit a particular locality, where I understood the habits, and knew the people well, just as a fisherman might have devised a peculiar fly and an especial tackle for a certain river, and here was a fellow come down to trouble the water, and destroy all chance of sport for the future. To suppose that my system would apply elsewhere was absurd, and I felt very indignant at the man who had disturbed my daily life and marred my prospects; for, as to continuing to follow out my previous plan in his presence and under his scrutiny, I knew to be impossible.

The Hôtel des Bains, where I stopped, was comfortable, and the table d'hôte, like all Belgian tables d'hôte, good. To *me*, too, it possessed the unspeakable advantage of a company, not one individual of which I had ever met before. My heretofore life had been so completely passed amongst intimates and acquaintances, that I now felt as might a fashionable physician, who had quitted for a short while the toils and anxieties of practice to enjoy himself in a holiday. Not desirous of any acquaintanceship with my neighbours, I limited myself at table almost entirely to the part of listener. I need scarcely tell my reader what a dull occupation I had assigned myself. The travellers were nearly all taken from a very low-down stratum of middle-life English, and their criticisms on all that they saw and heard were little else than sarcastic admissions of their daily habits when at home. A few here and there would perhaps exhibit more breeding, but they, too, showed often a cloven hoof of another kind, and displayed the unmistakable signs of the "English leg" abroad, the loose-lying picket, who brings down raw subalterns and undergraduates from the universities. There was one of these there at this time, a high specimen of his order. He was written in the hotel list—and I suppose authentically—the Honourable Reginald Rokeby—a stout, well-whiskered, florid fellow, with a look half-insinuating, half-insolent—an address compounded of the fascinating and the stern, as a craft which might turn out to be a yacht or a privateer. He made some advances to me on my arrival; but, as I threw out a half hint that I was reading for orders, he gave me up, and turned to beat other preserves. Nor had he long to seek, two very unfledged young officers of a marching regiment having just then presented themselves. I saw the first greetings, I heard the usual admonitions from an old hand on the Continent, as the Honourable Reginald jocularly called himself, and all the well-known cautions against this, that, and t'other. I watched the exchanged cigars, the chairs set near each other at dinner, the little muttered drolleries about the rest of the company, facetiæ which almost convulsed the subs, and then I "assisted" at the party at billiards, where the honourable cut as poor a figure as could be desired, losing everything—everything but his temper.

Now Nokes and Vokes, of the Fifty-something, were as uninteresting a pair of white-eyelashed, long-eared youths as ever graced a Gazette. There was positively nothing about them in any way to attach a sympathy to their fortunes. Still I saw that they were going to be devoured, and I could not help watching the bloated old spider, who was preparing them for his meal. He saw that I had established myself in observation over him, and he gave me one or two significant intimations to mind "what I was at," and not burn my fingers at another man's candle. I was never gifted with that sort of heroic love of peril that sets a man off to search for danger. I was, so to say, more "nice" than Irish, and I hesitated whether I should incur the risk of saving these creatures. It was a knotty question, which one could argue successfully on either side, and day after day passed while I litigated with myself. At last—I believe it was under the influence of an extra glass of Medoc—I resolved on the brave course, and, determining thus valiantly, I walked into the smoking-room, where the Honourable Reginald and his victims usually adjourned before the accustomed little episode at the billiard-table.

There were no others present, and the three turned on me, as I came in, a look half-resentful of my intrusion. I took up Galignani, however, and began to read, without heeding them. One of the subs—it was Vokes, I believe—was indulging in a budget of "the best things you ever heard in your life." Such drolleries, such practical jokes, such witty rejoinders, such "stunning" replies as are rarely heard—out of the mess-room. His friend, too, though evidently familiar with these facetiæ, acted like a sort of flapper, reminding him of this or that he might have omitted; and, when a story was finished, bursting out in Greek chorus fashion into a sort of inspired rhapsody of innumerable hair-breadth escapes and perils, which might or might not be made narrative.

"I say, Bob," cried he, in one of these intervals, "tell him that capital thing about the dinner—the dinner, you know, that What's-his-name was going to give Thingumme. You remember, don't you, when the fellow bolted and the other chap dined by himself."

"Oh yes; that was a game!" exclaimed the story-teller. "I must tell you that. I heard it all from one of ours who was over in Ireland at the time, and can vouch for its truth. There's a great snob in Dublin, that goes everywhere and knows every one. I'll remember his name presently; and they had him to dinner one day

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at the 9—th mess, and they got Watkins—you've heard of Watkins?"

As he got thus far, my hand shook so that Galignani rustled in my grasp like an umbrella in a high wind; but I held it firmly in front of me, and hid my face. He went on:

"Watkins, they say, can surpass any one, no matter who he is; and when they told him that Barnes—that's the other fellow—was coming——"

I could hear no more. I jumped up, I fear with a cry, for I felt as if I was stung by a snake. I rushed to my room, huddled my clothes how I could into my trunk, and started for Brussels the next day. I reached the Rhine, and, crossing at Cologne, I set out for Central Germany, never halting till I reached Eisenach—a place so remote and unvisited that I knew none would molest me. Eisenach is a very lonesome spot. It was there, or at least in its immediate neighbourhood, that Luther sought refuge from persecution, and passed some years of his life in the grim old castle of Washburg. Well, I hope he liked it better than I did. Indeed, I am certain he bore his captivity as patiently. At last endurance reached its limits. I grew so wearied of the little grass-grown sheds, the half-open shops, the lazy little fountain that took half an hour to trickle a can full, and the dreary-looking inhabitants, whose sole intercourse seemed taking hats off to each other, that I emerged once more; saying to myself, better be sunk by a broadside than rot out in a dry dock. Besides, I thought, Watkins is but one man. The world is wide. Why should we even jostle each other?

I traversed Switzerland in safety, not seeking, it is true, the most travelled route, but taking the line of Zurich and Lucerne; from thence I took boat for Fflaellen. The day was cold and ungenial, and very few passengers cared to set out. I was glad to see but one, who looked like a countryman. He was a young fellow of about my own age, externally very new to the Continent, and far from accomplished as a linguist. He smiled good naturedly, however, at his own blunders—French or German—and looked good humouredly at everything. He was open and communicative about himself, and told me that having been appointed to a civil post at Ceylon, he was taking a rapid glance at the Continent before starting. He did not know—nor even care—which way he went—he had very vague notions as to geography generally, and seemed absolutely indifferent whether his course lay north or south.

"As you see," said he, "I am not strong in languages, and have no acquaintance abroad, the chances are that I shall not derive great advantage from my foreign tour."

"Have you letters, or introductions?" asked I.

"None. Nothing of the kind. Stay; I have one; but there's no place of address on it, and I forget even the name of the person it is meant for."

And we both laughed heartily at the thought of credentials so likely to prove of service.

Mr. Towers—this was his name—was not an entertaining companion. He was one of those young Bulls that every one has met, who see objects only on the outside, and see even that wrong, who, taking England as the invariable standard of excellence in everything, spend their time in laughing at whatever is not conformable to home notions, and regard the Continent generally as very backward in civilisation. But, as I said before, he was good humoured, and what is called jolly; he made the best of the little mishaps of the road, and laughed heartily at his own blunders, when he came to perceive them. He was so helpless, too, that I felt drawn towards him by actual compassion. We agreed, therefore, to travel together as far as Turin, where, not knowing how long the companionship might be endurable, I preferred to have a friend awaiting me.

At Arona, we were detained by a heavy fall of rain, which had swept away part of the road, and rendered one of the bridges unsafe to pass over. It was a dreary halt; for Towers was one of those who required movement and fresh objects of interest. He could not abide a book, and hated a newspaper, and so he kept walking in and out of the room all day, heaping wood on the fire, or making the chimney smoke, fighting with the landlord's terrier till it bit him, and then teasing me to the verge of despair to know whether hydrophobia showed itself instantaneously, and constantly calling for brandy-and-water, to test his powers of swallow. Then he took an active turn, and fetched down all his things to the sitting-room, began packing his trunk afresh, commenting on each article as he folded it, asking me what I thought this cost; how long, I supposed, he had been wearing that; if I could guess who it was that invented those shoes, and so on. This completed, he undertook the same task with his dressing-case, expatiating on the softness of his shaving-brush, and the especial merits of his tooth-powder. Then there were studs and wrist-buttons and watch trinkets. This order of being is always curious in such matters, and is certain to have a pin with a larger pearl or a finer emerald than Roskell could procure for money. He passed them all in review, and came down at last to the little looking-glass at the bottom, lifting up which he took out a sealed letter. "There it is," said he, "if any one could tell me where to find him."

"Why this is for me," cried I, snatching it out of his hand; "Thomas Rigby Barnes, that's my name;" and I broke the seal with impatience.

"Are you ill? are you faint? Shall I get you something?—brandy? gin? No one dead, I hope?" muttered he, as crushing the letter in my hands I pushed rudely past him, and gained the door; the minute after I was in my own room, and the door locked and bolted. The letter contained but half a dozen lines, and they were these:

"Limmer's, Bond-street.

"Dear Barnes,—Towers has asked me to introduce him to the best fellow in Europe, and I

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give him this in consequence. If he should get into scrapes, rescue him. If he fall into love, laugh at him; if into debt, lend him whatever he wants, and credit eternally your devoted friend,

"Price Watkins."

I rang my bell very, very gently, and to the waiter I said, in a whisper, "Tell the young gentleman in No. 5 not to wait dinner for me; that I am poorly, and have gone to bed; on no account am I to be disturbed!" A five-franc piece strengthened the force of the injunction, and I was alone.

About eight o'clock, indeed, a knock came to the door, and Towers cried out, "Are you better? do you feel all right again?" But I affected to snore deeply, and he stepped quietly away and left me. Towards midnight I put my trunk and carpet-bag into a little one-horse baroccio, and started for Como, leaving strict orders with the waiter to say that I had gone towards Turin.

My companion I never saw more. At Como, I rested for a day, and then set out for the Breariza, a little rural district south of the Lake, where I lodged with a steward's family in the most retired manner, picking up some execrable Italian, and learning the care and culture of silkworms. October came, and with the tenth of that month I knew Towers was to sail for India, and so I came forth again into the world, shaved off my three-months' beard, and arrived at Milan. I now made a vow to myself not to form any acquaintance, nor let any circumstance seduce me into a companionship. Resolving to put my theory of self-sufficiency to a severe test, I went to Nice for the winter, took up my quarters at Chauvein's, and dined every day with about a hundred and twenty others at table d'hôte, never uttering a syllable to man, woman, or child at table. They say that when a man has done anything sufficiently long to be notorious for it, he is sure to like it. I believe the theory. I know that I was as vain of my silent system as other men were of their agreeability. I loved to see the curiosity about me; to overhear the muttered questions to the waiter, "Was he always so? Was it a shock? Is it for a wager?" and so on. To such a point of perfection had I carried my practice, that no matter what turn of gay, lively, serious, or eventful the conversation around me took, I never by the slightest change of feature showed any passing interest in it. More than once it occurred to me to meet persons I had seen in society at home, but my dull, stolid, irresponsive look deterred them all, and none attempted to renew acquaintance with me. One day, just as I took my place at table and was unfolding my napkin, I felt a hand on my shoulder. I turned gravely, sternly around to learn the cause. "Don't you remember me, Barnes," said a very fat and very florid young man, with a scarlet neckcloth, "Tanby, of the Bays? You don't forget me?"

I shook my head in silence. "Not remember me!" cried he. "Why, you were constantly at our mess!" Another shake of my head, more doubtful than the former one. "And it was through *you* we got to know that precious fellow Watkins—Pierce Watkins."

I arose and left the room. I must have had something like a slight fit, for when I regained consciousness I was lying on my bed, and the waiter was placing wet towels on my forehead. I rallied, however, quickly, and, hastening down to the Post, took my place for Genoa, and quitted Nice by ten o'clock that night, I trust never to revisit it.

I will not dare to follow the uneventful days that succeeded. A morbid terror of being recognised, a fear I can only liken to a felon's dread of detection, haunted me. It was in vain I said to myself that I was guiltless; that neither shame nor reproach attached to me. I acquired no sense of courage through reason, for I had soared into a region where reason has little sway. In a word, I had begun to run away from a shadow, and very little imagination was needed to picture forth my pursuer.

I hasten to conclude.

It was about two years after my hurried departure from Nice that I found myself towards the close of autumn at Terracina. I was staying at that inn which certain guide-books tell us was once the seat of Cicero's villa, and which, true or not, is one of the most charming spots on the road southwards. The only other travellers there at the time were an old English general, a son seemingly far advanced in consumption, and a pretty girl, his daughter, who used to sit under the orange-trees and read aloud for her brother, a practice of which I derived my share of advantage, by affecting to sketch from the rocks that skirted the garden, but quite near enough to hear her voice.

The general, who was always poking about the strand after shells—he was a passionate conchologist—would touch his hat as he passed me, and I returned the salute; our acquaintance went no further, but I knew Bella well, that is to say, I heard her brother call her by that name a dozen times a day, and her sweet thrilling voice, as she read out Shelley or Keats, vibrated within me like a bell in a shrine. That poor fellow George coughed painfully—so painfully that the reading would cease at times, and her voice would subside to a low murmur, and then out of deference to them I would steal away, and not come back till the book was resumed. Thus glided on the days, almost dream-like in their shadowy form, when one morning, as I sat in my accustomed nook, I heard Bella say something about a book which she believed she had brought with her, but found to her great regret she had forgotten.

"And I am so sorry, George, for I wanted to read you Genevieve, and make it one of your favourites, as it is of mine."

Now, I had a copy of Coleridge in my room, but I had not the courage to offer it, the more since I had no pretext for knowing that they wanted it, and yet what a churlish thing it was to feel that the very book they wished for was

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so near them, and still denied them, and what a requital, too, was this for all the pleasure I had surreptitiously enjoyed from those same readings! I could write a note, it is true, saying that having by a mere accident overheard—overheard was a most unhappy word, and an ugly confession besides! One should not overhear, or if they did, should never avow it. What was then to be done? "Yes," cried I, "I have hit it; there is a way to do it! I'll leave the volume on the little marble table under the orange-tree, with a card for Miss Sewell on it, and set out at once for Naples. This would save me the awkwardness of presentation, and the embarrassment of any recognition they might accord to my attention."

I did this the next day, and was some miles on my road to Naples by the time they came to know it.

Three months later—almost to a day—I was standing on the shore at Palermo, when a young lady passed me, walking by the side of a wheeled chair, in which an invalid was seated. I paid little attention to this object, only too frequent in this land of convalescence, when I heard my name, or something like my name, uttered, and immediately afterwards, a courier coming up, saluted me respectfully, and said his master (pointing to the chair) would take it as a great favour if I would speak with him. I walked forward, and found myself in front of the Sewells. Long estrangement from society and intercourse had of course served to render me more bashful and awkward than ever, but such was the tact and delicacy of their address, so easy and unaffected the kindliness of their manner, as they thanked me for my book, and all the pleasure it had afforded them, that, poor hermit as I was, I felt half-choking with gratitude for even so slight a touch of interest.

I have promised to be brief, and I will keep my word. From that day I grew intimate with the Sewells. They lived in the same hotel with me, and I soon became one of them. I cannot trust myself to speak of the delight it gave me to be again reconciled to my species, and admitted into the human family. I took to shells, and sea-machines, and cough lozenges, and the "sensitive plant," and—there's no use blinking it—fell head over ears in love.

"And Barnes has consented to come with us, father," cried George, one day, after breakfast. "Barnes—who hates the sea, and detests a yacht—says that he will come to Corfu."

"Well done, Barnes! and we'll have a dredge, just like what the fellows use for the coral fishery, and you'll see what glorious things we'll rake up out of old ocean," said the general.

"And such sketches as we'll make, Mr. Barnes," said another and sweeter voice, "of those Albanian Alps, with the glow of sunset on them. That amber and opal blending you grew so poetical about t'other evening."

"But we can't leave this before the fourteenth," returned George. "Do what he will, he cannot reach this earlier than the tenth, and we must at least let him have four days' law."

"Who is it that he speaks of?" asked I, of Bella.

"A great friend of George's. Neither papa nor I know him; but George raves of him—of his tact and pleasantry, his temper, and his high spirits."

"And his name?"

"How is your Admirable Crichton called, George?" asked she, laughing; "for I as often style him Wilkins as Popkins."

"I think you might have learned his name by this time, Bella, not to say that every one on town has at least heard of Price Watkins."

"If I had not caught the chair in my hand, I should have fallen; but I trembled so violently that Bella noticed it, and in a gentle whisper said, "Could I have said anything to offend you? Is he a dear friend of yours?"

"Of mine—a friend of mine!" What a thought! "I have spasms of the heart sometimes; they take me suddenly. A friend of mine! Oh, Bella, if you but knew——"

I could not utter more, but rushed madly out of the room, and down to the quay. This time I never stopped to pack up my effects, but left them there, scattered and at large, all behind me. There was a steamer starting for Tunis. I jumped on board of her, and hurrying down below, gave free course to my sorrow.

It is now eighteen months and three weeks since that unhappy day, and I still live here, almost on the very spot where I landed. My daily occupation is to con over the deaths in the Times, which the consul is so kind as to let me see each afternoon, but no record of Price Watkins having gone to his audit has reached me, and till assured of such a consummation, I must live, perhaps die, an exile. To the sympathising reader I appeal, if by any chance he should learn that P. W. is no more, to address one line to Thomas B. Barnes, care of H.M. Consul, Tangiers, with the assurance that though the event may be matter of sorrow to some, it will make my heart the lightest heart in Africa.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S READINGS.

THE LAST READING THIS SEASON.

On Thursday Evening, June 19th, at St. James's Hall, at 8 o'clock precisely,

Mr. CHARLES DICKENS

Will read, in compliance with many requests, his

CHRISTMAS CAROL,

AND

THE TRIAL FROM PICKWICK.

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

BETWEEN THE SCENES.

CHRONICLE OF EVENTS: PRESERVED IN CAPTAIN WRAGGE'S DESPATCH BOX.

I.

[*Chronicle for October*, 1846.]

I HAVE retired into the bosom of my family. We are residing in the secluded village of Ruswarp, on the banks of the Esk, about two miles inland from Whitby. Our lodgings are comfortable, and we possess the additional blessing of a tidy landlady. Mrs. Wragge and Miss Vanstone preceded me here, in accordance with the plan I laid down for effecting our retreat from York. On the next day I followed them alone, with the luggage. On leaving the terminus, I had the satisfaction of seeing the lawyer's clerk in close confabulation with the detective officer whose advent I had prophesied. I left him in peaceable possession of the city of York, and the whole surrounding neighbourhood. He has returned the compliment; and has left us in peaceable possession of the valley of the Esk, thirty miles away from him.

Remarkable results have followed my first efforts at the cultivation of Miss Vanstone's dramatic abilities.

I have discovered that she possesses extraordinary talent as a mimic. She has the flexible face, the manageable voice, and the sharp dramatic perception which fit a woman for character-parts and disguises, on the stage. All she now wants is teaching and practice to make her sure of her own resources. The experience of her, thus gained, has revived an idea in my mind, which originally occurred to me, at one of the "At Homes" of the late inimitable Charles Mathews, comedian. I was in the Wine Trade at the time, I remember. We imitated the Vintage-processes of Nature, in a back kitchen at Brompton; and produced a dinner-sherry, pale and curious, tonic in character, round in the mouth, a favourite with the Court of Spain, at nineteen and sixpence a dozen, bottles included—*Vide* Prospectus of the period. The profits of myself and partners were small; we were in advance of the tastes of the age, and in debt to the bottle merchant. Being at my wits' end for want of money, and seeing what audiences Mathews drew, the idea occurred to me of starting an imitation of the great Imitator himself, in the shape of an "At Home," given by a woman. The one trifling obstacle in the way, was the difficulty of finding the woman. From that time to this, I have hitherto failed to overcome it. I have conquered it at last; I have found the woman now. Miss Vanstone possesses youth and beauty as well as talent. Train her in the art of dramatic disguise; provide her with appropriate dresses for different characters; develop her accomplishments in singing and playing; give her plenty of smart talk addressed to the audience; advertise her as A Young Lady at Home; astonish the public by a dramatic entertainment which depends from first to last on that young lady's own sole exertions; commit the entire management of the thing to my care—and what follows, as a necessary consequence? Fame for my fair relative, and a fortune for myself.

I put these considerations, as frankly as usual, to Miss Vanstone; offering to write the Entertainment, to manage all the business, and to share the profits. I did not forget to strengthen my case, by informing her of the jealousies she would encounter, and the obstacles she would meet, if she went on the stage. And I wound up by a neat reference to the private inquiries which she is interested in making, and to the personal independence which she is desirous of securing before she acts on her information. "If you go on the stage," I said, "your services will be bought by a manager, and he may insist on his claims just at the time when you want to get free from him. If, on the contrary, you adopt my views, you will be your own mistress and your own manager, and you can settle your course just as you like." This consideration appeared to strike her. She took a day to consider it; and when the day was over, gave her consent.

I had the whole transaction down in black and white immediately. Our arrangement is eminently satisfactory, except in one particular. She shows a morbid distrust of writing her name at the bottom of any document which I present to her; and roundly declares she will sign nothing. As long as it is her interest to provide herself with pecuniary resources for the future, she verbally engages to go on. When it ceases

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to be her interest, she plainly threatens to leave off at a week's notice. A difficult girl to deal with: she has found out her own value to me already. One comfort is, I have the cooking of the accounts; and my fair relative shall not fill her pockets too suddenly, if I can help it.

My exertions in training Miss Vanstone for the coming experiment, have been varied by the writing of two anonymous letters, in that young lady's interests. Finding her too fidgety about arranging matters with her friends to pay proper attention to my instructions, I wrote anonymously to the lawyer who is conducting the inquiry after her; recommending him in a friendly way to give it up. The letter was enclosed to a friend of mine in London, with instructions to post it at Charing-cross. A week later, I sent a second letter, through the same channel, requesting the lawyer to inform me, in writing, whether he and his clients had or had not decided on taking my advice. I directed him, with jocose reference to the collision of interests between us, to address his letter:—"Tit for Tat, Post Office, West Strand."

In a few days the answer arrived—privately forwarded, of course, to Post-office, Whitby, by arrangement with my friend in London.

The lawyer's reply was short and surly: "Sir—If my advice had been followed, you and your anonymous letter would both be treated with the contempt which they deserve. But the wishes of Miss Magdalen Vanstone's eldest sister have claims on my consideration which I cannot dispute; and at her entreaty I inform you that all further proceedings on my part are withdrawn—on the express understanding that this concession is to open facilities for written communication, at least, between the two sisters. A letter from the elder Miss Vanstone is enclosed in this. If I don't hear, in a week's time, that it has been received, I shall place the matter once more in the hands of the police.—WILLIAM PENDRIL." A sour man, this William Pendril. I can only say of him, what an eminent nobleman once said of his sulky servant—"I wouldn't have such a temper as that fellow has got, for any earthly consideration that could be offered me!"

As a matter of course, I looked into the letter which the lawyer enclosed, before delivering it. Miss Vanstone, the elder, described herself as distracted at not hearing from her sister; as suited with a governess's situation in a private family; as going into the situation in a week's time; and as longing for a letter to comfort her, before she faced the trial of undertaking her new duties. After closing the envelope again, I accompanied the delivery of the letter to Miss Vanstone, the younger, by a word of caution. "Are you more sure of your own courage now," I said, "than you were when I met you?" She was ready with her answer. "Captain Wragge, when you met me on the Walls of York, I had not gone too far to go back. I have gone too far now."

If she really feels this—and I think she does—her corresponding with her sister can do no harm. She wrote at great length the same day; cried profusely over her own epistolatory composition; and was remarkably ill-tempered and snappish towards me, when we met in the evening. She wants experience, poor girl—she sadly wants experience of the world. How consoling to know that I am just the man to give it her!

II.

[*Chronicle for November.*]

We are established at Derby. The Entertainment is written; and the rehearsals are in steady progress. All difficulties are provided for, but the one eternal difficulty of money. Miss Vanstone's resources stretch easily enough to the limits of our personal wants; including pianoforte hire for practice, and the purchase and making of the necessary dresses. But the expenses of starting the Entertainment are beyond the reach of any means we possess. A theatrical friend of mine here, whom I had hoped to interest in our undertaking, proves unhappily to be at a crisis in his career. The field of human sympathy, out of which I might have raised the needful pecuniary crop, is closed to me from want of time to cultivate it. I see no other resource left—if we are to be ready by Christmas—than to try one of the local music-sellers in this town, who is said to be a speculating man. A private rehearsal at these lodgings, and a bargain which will fill the pockets of a grasping stranger—such are the sacrifices which dire necessity imposes on me at starting. Well! there is only one consolation. I'll cheat the music-seller.

III.

[*Chronicle for December. First Fortnight.*]

The music-seller extorts my unwilling respect. He is one of the very few human beings I have met with in the course of my life who is not to be cheated. He has taken a masterly advantage of our helplessness; and has imposed terms on us, for performances at Derby and Nottingham, with such a business-like disregard of all interests but his own, that—fond as I am of putting things down in black and white—I really cannot prevail upon myself to record the bargain. It is needless to say, I have yielded with my best grace; sharing with my fair relative the wretched pecuniary prospects offered to us. Our turn will come. In the mean time, I cordially regret not having known the local music-seller in early life.

Personally speaking, I have no cause to complain of Miss Vanstone. We have arranged that she shall regularly forward her address (at the post-office) to her friends, as we move about from place to place. Besides communicating in this way with her sister, she also reports herself to a certain Mr. Clare, residing in Somersetshire, who is to forward all letters exchanged between herself and his son. Careful inquiry has informed me that this latter individual is now in China. Having suspected, from the first, that there was a gentleman in the background, it is highly satisfactory to know that he recedes

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into the remote perspective of Asia. Long may he remain there!

The trifling responsibility of finding a name for our talented Magdalen to perform under, has been cast on my shoulders. She feels no interest whatever in this part of the subject. "Give me any name you like," she said; "I have as much right to one as to another. Make it yourself." I have readily consented to gratify her wishes. The resources of my commercial library include a list of useful names to assume; and we can choose one at five minutes' notice, when the admirable man of business who now oppresses us is ready to issue his advertisements. On this point my mind is easy enough: all my anxieties centre in the fair performer. I have not the least doubt she will do wonders if she is only left to herself on the first night. But if the day's post is mischievous enough to upset her, by a letter from her sister, I tremble for the consequences.

IV.

[*Chronicle for December. Second Fortnight.*]

My gifted relative has made her first appearance in public, and has laid the foundation of our future fortunes.

On the first night, the attendance was larger than I had ventured to hope. The novelty of an evening's entertainment, conducted from beginning to end by the unaided exertions of a young lady (see advertisement) roused the public curiosity, and the seats were moderately well filled. As good luck would have it, no letter addressed to Miss Vanstone came that day. She was in full possession of herself, until she got the first dress on, and heard the bell ring for the music. At that critical moment she suddenly broke down. I found her alone in the waiting-room, sobbing, and talking like a child. "Oh, poor papa! poor papa! Oh, my God, if he saw me now!" My experience in such matters at once informed me that it was a case for sal-volatile, accompanied by sound advice. We strung her up, in no time, to concert pitch; set her eyes in a blaze; and made her out-blush her own rouge. The curtain rose when we had got her at a red heat. She dashed at it, exactly as she dashed at it in the back drawing-room at Rosemary-lane. Her personal appearance settled the question of her reception before she opened her lips. She rushed full gallop through her changes of character, her songs, and her dialogue; making mistakes by the dozen, and never stopping to set them right; carrying the people along with her in a perfect whirlwind, and never waiting for the applause. The whole thing was over twenty minutes sooner than the time we had calculated on. She carried it through to the end; and fainted on the waiting-room sofa, a minute after the curtain was down. The music-seller having taken leave of his senses from sheer astonishment; and I having no evening costume to appear in—we sent the doctor to make the necessary apology to the public, who were calling for her till the place rang again. I prompted our medical orator with a neat speech from behind the curtain; and I never heard such applause, from such a comparatively small audience, before in my life. I felt the tribute—I felt it deeply. Fourteen years ago I scraped together the wretched means of existence, in this very town, by reading the newspaper (with explanatory comments) to the company at a public-house. And now, here I am at the top of the tree.

It is needless to say that my first proceeding was to bowl out the music-seller on the spot. He called the next morning, no doubt with a liberal proposal for extending the engagement beyond Derby and Nottingham. My niece was described as not well enough to see him; and, when he asked for me, he was told I was not up. I happened to be, at that moment, engaged in putting the case pathetically to our gifted Magdalen. Her answer was in the highest degree satisfactory. She would permanently engage herself to nobody—least of all to a man who had taken sordid advantage of her position and mine. She would be her own mistress, and share the profits with me, while she wanted money, and while it suited her to go on. So far so good. But the reason she added next, for her flattering preference of myself, was less to my taste. "The music-seller is not the man whom I employ to make my inquiries," she said. "You are the man." I don't like her steadily remembering those inquiries, in the first bewilderment of her success. It looks ill for the future; it looks infernally ill for the future.

V.

[*Chronicle for January, 1847.*]

She has shown the cloven foot already. I begin to be a little afraid of her.

On the conclusion of the Nottingham engagement (the results of which more than equalled the results at Derby), I proposed taking the entertainment next—now we had got it into our own hands—to Newark. Miss Vanstone raised no objection, until we came to the question of time, when she amazed me by stipulating for a week's delay, before we appeared in public again.

"For what possible purpose?" I asked.

"For the purpose of making the inquiries which I mentioned to you at York," she answered.

I instantly enlarged on the danger of delay; putting all the considerations before her in every imaginable form. She remained perfectly immovable. I tried to shake her on the question of expenses. She answered by handing me over her share of the proceeds at Derby and Nottingham—and there were my expenses paid, at the rate of nearly two guineas a day. I wonder who first picked out a mule as the type of obstinacy? How little knowledge that man must have had of women!

There was no help for it. I took down my instructions in black and white, as usual. My first exertions were to be directed to the discovery of Mr. Michael Vanstone's address: I was also expected to find out how long he was likely to live there, and whether he had sold

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Combe-Raven or not. My next inquiries were to inform me of his ordinary habits of life; of what he did with his money; of who his intimate friends were; and of the sort of terms on which his son, Mr. Noel Vanstone, was now living with him. Lastly, the investigations were to end in discovering whether there was any female relative, or any woman exercising domestic authority in the house, who was known to have an influence over either father or son.

If my long practice in cultivating the field of human sympathy had not accustomed me to private investigations into the affairs of other people, I might have found some of these queries rather difficult to deal with in the course of a week. As it was, I gave myself all the benefit of my own experience; and brought the answers back to Nottingham, in a day less than the given time. Here they are, in regular order, for convenience of future reference:—

(1.) Mr. Michael Vanstone is now residing at German-place, Brighton, and likely to remain there, as he finds the air suit him. He reached London, from Switzerland, in September last; and sold the Combe-Raven property immediately on his arrival.

(2.) His ordinary habits of life are secret and retired; he seldom visits, or receives company. Part of his money is supposed to be in the funds, and part laid out in railway investments which have survived the panic of eighteen hundred and forty-six, and are rapidly rising in value. Since his arrival in England, he has also speculated with great judgment in house property. He has some houses in remote parts of London; and some houses in certain watering-places on the East coast, which are shown to be advancing in public repute. In all these cases, he is reported to have made remarkably good bargains.

(3.) It is not easy to discover who his intimate friends are. Two names only have been ascertained. The first is, Admiral Bartram; supposed to have been under friendly obligations, in past years, to Mr. Michael Vanstone. The second is Mr. George Bartram, nephew of the Admiral, and now staying on a short visit in the house at German-place. Mr. George Bartram is the son of the late Mr. Andrew Vanstone's sister, also deceased. He is therefore a cousin of Mr. Noel Vanstone's. This last—viz. Mr. Noel Vanstone—is in delicate health, and is living on excellent terms with his father, in German-place.

(4.) There is no female relative in Mr. Michael Vanstone's family circle. But there is a housekeeper, who has lived in his service ever since his wife's death, and who has acquired a strong influence over both father and son. She is a native of Switzerland, elderly, and a widow. Her name is Mrs. Lecount.

On placing these particulars in Miss Vanstone's hands, she made no remark, except to thank me. I endeavoured to invite her confidence. No results; nothing but a renewal of civility, and a sudden shifting to the subject of the Entertainment. Very good. If she won't give me the information I want, the conclusion is obvious—I must help myself.

Business considerations claim the remainder of this page. Let me return to business.

Financial Statement.	Third week in January.
Place Visited. Newark.	Performances. Two.
Net Receipts, In black and white. £25.	Net Receipts, Actually realised. £32 10s.
Apparent Division of Profits. Miss V. ....£12 10 Self £12 10	Actual Division of Profits. Miss V. ....£12 10 Self ....£20 —
Private Surplus on the Week, Or say, Self-presented Testimonial. £7 10s.	
Audited, H. Wragge.	Passed correct, H. Wragge.

The next stronghold of British sympathy which we take by storm is Sheffield. We open the first week in February.

VI.

[*Chronicle for February.*]

Practice has now given my fair relative the confidence which I predicted would come with time. Her knack of disguising her own identity, in the impersonation of different characters, so completely staggers her audiences, that the same people come twice over, to find out how she does it. It is the amiable defect of the English public never to know when they have had enough of a good thing. They actually try to encore one of her characters—an old north-country lady; modelled on that honoured preceptress in the late Mr. Vanstone's family, to whom I presented myself at Combe-Raven. This particular performance fairly amazes the people. I don't wonder at it. Such an extraordinary assumption of age by a girl of nineteen, has never been seen in public before, in the whole course of my theatrical experience.

I find myself writing in a lower tone than usual; I miss my own dash of humour. The fact is, I am depressed about the future. In the very height of our prosperity, my perverse pupil sticks to her trumpery family quarrel. I feel myself at the mercy of the first whim in the Vanstone direction which may come into her head—I, the architect of her fortunes. Too bad; upon my soul, too bad!

She has acted already on the inquiries which she forced me to make for her. She has written two letters to Mr. Michael Vanstone.

To the first letter no answer came. To the second a reply was received. Her infernal cleverness put an obstacle I had not expected in the way of my intercepting it. Later in the day, after she had herself opened and read the answer, I laid another trap for her. It just succeeded, and no more. I had half a minute to look into the envelope in her absence. It contained nothing but her own letter returned. She is not the girl to put up quietly with such an insult as this. Mischief will come of it. Mischief to

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Michael Vanstone—which is of no earthly consequence: mischief to me—which is a truly serious matter.

VII.

[*Chronicle for March.*]

After performing at Sheffield and Manchester, we have moved to Liverpool, Preston, and Lancaster. Another change in this weathercock of a girl! She has written no more letters to Michael Vanstone; and she has become as anxious to make money as I am myself. We are realising large profits, and we are worked to death. I don't like this change in her: she has a purpose to answer, or she would not show such extraordinary eagerness to fill her purse. Nothing I can do—no cooking of accounts; no self-presented testimonials—can keep that purse empty. The success of the Entertainment, and her own sharpness in looking after her interests, literally force me into a course of comparative honesty. She puts into her pocket more than a third of the profits, in defiance of my most arduous exertions to prevent her. And this at my age! this after my long and successful career as a moral agriculturist! Marks of admiration are very little things; but they express my feelings, and I put them in freely.

VIII.

[*Chronicle for April and May.*]

We have visited seven more large towns, and are now at Birmingham. Consulting my Books, I find that Miss Vanstone has realised by the Entertainment, up to this time, the enormous sum of nearly four hundred pounds. It is quite possible that my own profits may reach one or two miserable hundreds more. But I am the architect of her fortunes—the publisher, so to speak, of her book—and, if anything, I am underpaid.

I made the above discovery on the twenty-ninth of the month—anniversary of the Restoration of my royal predecessor in the field of human sympathy, Charles the Second. I had barely finished locking up my despatch box — when the ungrateful girl, whose reputation I have made, came into the room; and told me in so many words, that the business-connexion between us was for the present at an end.

I attempt no description of my own sensations: I merely record facts. She informed me, with an appearance of perfect composure, that she needed rest, and that she had "new objects in view." She might possibly want me to assist those objects; and she might possibly return to the Entertainment. In either case, it would be enough if we exchanged addresses, at which we could write to each other, in case of need. Having no desire to leave me too abruptly, she would remain the next day (which was Sunday); and would take her departure on Monday morning. Such was her explanation, in so many words.

Remonstrance, as I knew by experience, would be thrown away. Authority I had none to exert. My one sensible course to take in this emergency was to find out which way my own interests pointed—and to go that way without a moment's unnecessary hesitation.

A very little reflection has since convinced me that she has a deep-laid scheme against Michael Vanstone in view. She is young, handsome, clever, and unscrupulous; she has made money to live on, and has time at her disposal to find out the weak side of an old man; and she is going to attack Mr. Michael Vanstone unawares with the legitimate weapons of her sex. Is she likely to want *me* for such a purpose as this? Doubtful. Is she merely anxious to get rid of me on easy terms? Probable. Am I the sort of man to be treated in this way by my own pupil? Decidedly not: I am the man to see my way through a neat succession of alternatives; and here they are:—

First alternative. To announce my compliance with her proposal; to exchange addresses with her; and then to keep my eye privately on all her future movements. Second alternative. To express fond anxiety in a paternal capacity; and to threaten giving the alarm to her sister and the lawyer, if she persists in her design. Third alternative. To turn the information I already possess to the best account, by making it a marketable commodity between Mr. Michael Vanstone and myself. At present, I incline towards the last of these three courses. But my decision is far too important to be hurried. To-day is only the twenty-ninth. I will suspend my Chronicle of Events until Monday.

May 31st.—My alternatives and her plans are both overthrown together.

The newspaper came in, as usual, after breakfast. I looked it over, and discovered this memorable entry, among the obituary announcements of the day:—

"On the 29th inst., at Brighton, Michael Vanstone, Esq., formerly of Zurich, aged 77."

Miss Vanstone was present in the room, when I read those two startling lines. Her bonnet was on; her boxes were packed; she was waiting impatiently until it was time to go to the train. I handed the paper to her, without a word on my side. Without a word on hers, she looked where I pointed, and read the news of Michael Vanstone's death.

The paper dropped out of her hand; and she suddenly pulled down her veil. I caught one glance at her face before she hid it from me. The effect on my mind was startling in the extreme. To put it with my customary dash of humour—her face informed me that the most sensible action which Michael Vanstone, Esq., formerly of Zurich, had ever achieved in his life, was the action he performed at Brighton, on the the 29th instant.

Finding the dead silence in the room singularly unpleasant under existing circumstances, I thought I would make a remark. My regard for my own interests supplied me with a subject. I mentioned the Entertainment.

"After what has happened" I said, "I presume we go on with our performances as usual?"

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"No," she answered, behind the veil. "We go on with my inquiries."

"Inquiries after a dead man?"

"Inquiries after the dead man's son?"

"Mr. Noel Vanstone?"

"Yes; Mr. Noel Vanstone."

Not having a veil to let down over my own face, I stooped and picked up the newspaper. Her devilish determination quite upset me for the moment. I actually had to steady myself, before I could speak to her again.

"Are the new inquiries as harmless as the old ones?" I asked.

"Quite as harmless."

"What am I expected to find out?"

"I wish to know whether Mr. Noel Vanstone remains at Brighton after the funeral."

"And if not?"

"If not, I shall want to know his new address, wherever it may be."

"Yes. And what next?"

"I wish you to find out next, if all the father's money goes to the son."

I began to see her drift. The word money relieved me: I felt quite on my own ground again.

"Anything more?" I asked.

"Only one thing more," she answered. "Make sure, if you please, whether Mrs. Lecount, the housekeeper, remains or not in Mr. Noel Vanstone's service."

Her voice altered a little, as she mentioned Mrs. Lecount's name: she is evidently sharp enough to distrust the housekeeper already.

"My expenses are to be paid as usual?" I said.

"As usual."

"When am I expected to leave for Brighton?"

"As soon as you can."

She rose, and left the room. After a momentary doubt, I decided on executing the new commission. The more private inquiries I conduct for my fair relative, the harder she will find it to get rid of hers truly, Horatio Wragge.

There is nothing to prevent my starting for Brighton to-morrow. So to-morrow, I go. If Mr. Noel Vanstone succeeds to his father's property, he is the only human being possessed of pecuniary blessings, who fails to inspire me with a feeling of unmitigated envy.

SUMMER.

At twenty minutes past five, in the afternoon of this Saturday, June the twenty-first, the sun, this year, *apparently* intrudes into a portion of the sky ceded to the potentate who signs himself ♋; which signature, in conjunction with those of other celestials, has brought honour to many a handsome cheque in favour of astrologers and almanack-makers. He next takes the liberty of traversing, without passport or apology, the domain ruled over by that fierce and fiery potentate ♌, quitting it to invade the realm allotted to lady ♍, who, although a maiden, is still a hot-tempered and peppery sovereign. At twenty-eight minutes past seven in the morning of Tuesday, September the twenty-third, he evacuates her most vestal majesty's dominions, thereby leaving three signs of the Zodiac (namely, Cancer, Leo, Virgo—the Crab, the Lion, and the Virgin) at peace, as far as he, the Sun, is concerned, until about the same time twelve months.

But the Sun's intrusion is only apparent; he is innocent of any trespass. It is we who are the guilty parties. Stealing round a corner of our elliptic orbit, we put the unoffending sun between ourselves and those respected constellations. With regard to them, we make him stand in his own light. The interval of time which elapses between the first and last of the aforesaid minutes is called by mortals SUMMER—but only in the northern hemisphere.

Also; when, at any given place, the sun at noon attains the greatest height in the heavens which he ever reaches *at that place*, the summer of that place begins. When his noontide height is exactly the mean between his greatest and his lowest noontide heights, summer ends, and autumn begins. This second definition holds good for both the northern and the southern hemispheres—for our friends at Sydney, as well as our cousins in Scotland. According to either rule, it is clear that our Midsummer-day, falling at the opening instead of the middle of summer, is a popular misnomer.

The seasons being reversed in the southern hemisphere, the feast of John the Baptist, our Midsummer-day, the twenty-fourth of June, is for the south hemispherians the precursor of winter, just as Christmas-day, our beau-ideal of winter time, falls on their summer heat. Roast beef foaming from the spit, and rich plum-pudding blazing hot, must lose their charms with the thermometer at ninety degrees. It seems a perversity on the part of turkeys to be out of season on the twenty-fifth of December; yet they really are busy laying eggs and rearing their young, and cannot spare time to come to table. It is the opening of the Australian summer. While we are welcoming our friends with closed curtains and cannel-coal fires, they are treating theirs to a cool reception with the help of fans, ices, and cucumbers. Summer is summer all the world over, and besides arrives only once a year, answering everywhere to Spenser's portrait:

> Then came the jolly *Summer*, being dight
> In a thin silken cassock colour'd green,
> That was unlined all, to be more light:
> And on his Head a Girlond well beseen
> He wore, from which as he had chauffed been
> The Sweat did drop; and in his Hand he bore
> A Bow and Shafts, as he in Forest green
> Had hunted late the Libbard or the Boar,
> And now would bathe his Limbs, with Labour heated sore.

All summer long, the sun is going down hill; his noontide altitude is daily less. The days are longer than the nights, but each day is shorter than its predecessor. As soon as the length of the night equals that of the day, summer comes to a conclusion. But though, from the first, the length of the day decreases, the heat goes on increasing until about the middle of

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summer. The length of the days and the shortness of the nights allow the earth to retain a portion of yesterday's heat, which, added to that given by the sun to-day, accumulates to a maximum until the lengthening nights cause the scale to turn, and alter the balance of temperature.

Summer is a jolly time for people at their ease, but for people not living at their ease it is a hard and wearisome time. What kind of appreciation of summer has a restaurant's cook, a steam-engine stoker, a waiter in a Swiss hotel, a baker of small things three times a day, a butcher in a neighbourhood where customers are few, and blowflies plenty? Up north, where summer bursts upon you with a flash and blazes brightly and incessantly, with no real night for two or three months, how can the fisherman, the farmer, the wood-cutter, the dairyman, snatch any but the scantiest repose? The briefer the summer and the shorter the nights, the harder must they toil and the less may they sleep. They fag out their wretched summer lives, to secure a store of hay, butter, corn, cheese, fire-wood, salt cod, pickled herrings, timber, cranberries, and other necessaries, for all the year round, as well as for winter use. All must labour, irrespective of sex and age—cows, maidens, boys, and elders. When the long spell of sleepless worry is suddenly stopped by the advent of autumn, they thank the stars whose office it is to bring all seasons to an end, and cry:

> Now is the summer of our discontent
> Made glorious winter by the fall of snow.

And yet their health does not seem to have suffered; so true is it that men often rust up faster than they wear up. Besides, they have enjoyed the beneficial stimulus of light and heat without suffering the evils of their excess.

We fancy, here, that we know what summer heat is, because once or twice in the season, perhaps once or twice in three or four years, we have a brief and approximate sample of what heat can be or what heat can do. But the pungent pricking lancet-like radiation from the sun, entering into the flesh like needles, which inspired the Greeks with their "arrows of Phœbus," is hardly experienced in the British isles. Our summers, known as "three fine days and a thunder-storm," are not long enough nor settled enough, to allow heat to acquire the full intensity which it might acquire in our latitude. Its accumulation is checked by occasional showers and cloudy days.

Heat rays, everybody knows, are distinct from light rays, and are much more penetrating in quality. Fortunately for us, with our vaporous and cloudy firmament, heat rays have the power of radiating through a grey and misty sky, and so are able to warm the earth and ripen our fruits: which they could not do without that power. In proof whereof, on such a day lay out, in a place where the sun *ought* to shine, any heat-attracting object—a stone or a piece of iron—and you will find it heated. It is therefore no absurdity, during summer, for a lady to carry a parasol when the sun does *not* shine. In consequence of the sun's penetrating power, a lined parasol is better than an unlined one. A quilting even of wadding, under the lining, would do no harm. Idem, flounces and furbelows, outside the parasol, are not for show merely, but are useful as sun-screens.

With sufficient imprudence, and at the right time and place, you may get and rue a sun-stroke before you are aware of it. The head, or rather the brain inside the head, is the portion of the human frame which appears to suffer, almost exclusively, from exposure to the sun's fiercer and more projectile rays. Hence the various devices amongst southern nations for protecting the cranium and its contents from far-darting Apollo's shafts. In Italy postboys, carters, and men of the working class generally, wear a coloured cotton nightcap—sometimes two—under the hat, to keep off the heat. The superfluous tail of the gaudy cap, which is too long to be drawn upon the head, is not lost to view beneath the hat, but hangs down jauntily on one side. Turkish turbans, and high thick Persian caps, are still more effective contrivances for the same purpose. The more ardent the sunshine, the more dense and impenetrable must be the shield against it. Any non-conducting substance is good to wrap about the head; for whatever will keep out cold will also keep out heat; or, more accurately stated, whatever will keep warmth *in*, will keep it out. Blankets keep out heat, as well as cold. Ice, wrapped in three or four folds of flannel, bears transport tolerably for short distances.

Light, pervious, plaited, "ventilating" head-gear, such as straw-hats, with nothing but a flimsy semi-lining of calico inside, are useless, except for milk-and-water climates where the sun shoots only a feeble ray, and summer sets in "with its usual severity." Not a word, by the way, be breathed against such climates; they admit of much enjoyment, and engender few torments or tormentors! But take a walk along the Appian Way at two o'clock of an August afternoon (when nobody, according to Italian axiom, ventures to stir abroad except mad dogs and Englishmen), with a light straw hat upon your head, and you will soon wish for a velvet skull-cap, or a double lining of extra-thick felt. A wooden-bowl, even, as a helmet, would be accepted; in default of which, you might do worse than double your silk handkerchief into many folds, and place it within the crown, so as to extend from your organ of benevolence to a little beyond that of self-esteem. Stout brown paper is not to be despised as an anti-caloric. Should you ever emigrate to Vancouver's Island, or try a venture in sunny Queensland, the art of folding paper into a cap may prove something more than an amusing pastime.

With the cranium sufficiently protected, the rest of the human frame seems to derive benefit from exposure to the solar radiation, when not *too* suddenly and violently applied. Sudden exposure would blister or excoriate thin-skinned folk, and would also be apt to derange the health by modifying the insensible perspiration; but of

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gradual exposure and constant habit we witness the effects in soldiers, sailors, and Mediterranean tourists. What they lose in delicacy of complexion, they gain in corporeal robustness—a good exchange for men, though less desirable for our better halves.

The peasant women of France, who work harder than negroes in the fields, display, like the planet Venus, two phases of their facial disk, which are proverbial. Of two annual fairs, the spring one is called the fair for ugly cows and pretty girls, because the former have starved in their stables all the winter, while the latter are comparatively blanched; the second, in autumn, is the fair for handsome cows and ugly girls, because both manifest the results of summer pasturage and of summer sunshine. In point of health, and leaving skin-deep beauty out of the question, the girls have improved as much as the cows. They are hale, which means, in English, "strong, healthy, vigorous," both the idea and the word being derived from the French "hâle," sunburnt, swarthy. Dark, but comely, they might sit as models for Parnel's famous Nut-brown Maid.

Heat and light agree with us; when the former especially is deficient, we must increase it by artificial means, by fire and clothing. Arcadian savages who were "all face" might reside with comfort in the climate of Otaheite; but the primitive Red Indian, when frost set in, must have bemoaned his fate as a featherless biped, with no squire in his parish to distribute flannel to the poor. We see how want of sunlight tells on those who are hidden from day's garish eye — on miners, actors, night-housekeepers, and on Londoners generally. The true London complexion is scarcely mistakable; and the Londoner makes his escape into the circumjacent flood of light as often as his affairs allow him, returning proud of his sunburnt face and hands. On the other hand, the Mediterranean shores exhibit the wondrous effects of the solar beam, which admirably tempers the human race, conferring that dry and lean strength which offers the most obstinate resistance to fatigue. The Herculeses of the north are stronger perhaps for a single effort, but they are less robust, less generally acclimatable than Provençal, Genoese, or Greek sailors, who are bronzed and coppered until they seem almost turned into metal. Their rich colouring is not an accident of the epidermis, but a deep absorption of sunshine and life. A wise physician, lauded by Michelet, used to send his pale-faced patients from Paris and Lyons to take sun-baths on the Mediterranean coast. He supported precept by example, stretching himself on a rock for hours in the sunshine, with his head alone protected by clothing. At the end of the course, his skin acquired a fine deep-toned African tint. We ought to have been told how he managed to exorcise the flies.

Contrasting with this bronzing process is Dr. Johnson's Midsummer Wish, which, coming from so grave a philosopher, sounds luxurious and almost naughty:

Lay me where o'er the verdant ground
Her living carpet Nature spreads;
Where the green bower, with roses crown'd
In showers its fragrant foliage sheds.
Improve the peaceful hour with wine,
Let music die along the grove;
Around the bowl let myrtles twine,
And every strain be tun'd to love.

Suppose we interrupt the Doctor's reverie with a smart sprinkling of summer dust—of dust such as we have in England, shingley dust violently torn up by the mechanical force of the wind a quarter of an hour after a heavy shower, smiting you as though a handful of small-shot had been thrown in your face. For fine dust, for light inpalpable dust, which lies quietly reposing until some disturbing cause (as a footstep or a carriage-wheel) sets it flying, you must go to countries which have summers with two or three rainless months. The plains of Lombardy are able to supply specimens of finely-divided earth, which are by no means to be despised even by wearers of Epsom-race veils. Nor were gentlemen's veils invented on the Epsom road. The streets of Peking, an old geographer tells us, are not paved, and the inhabitants and others are obliged to wear veils during summer, or they would be blinded by the dust. The Touaregs, from the Great Sahara, now being entertained by our Gallic neighbours, habitually wear a black veil, which covers their eyes like a visor, and their nose and mouth like a mask. This veil is no article of fancy costume, but a matter of necessity to protect the eyes from the reverberation of the solar rays and the organs of respiration from immediate contact with hot dry air and burning desert dust.

Dust, nevertheless, has its uses as a fertiliser sprinkled over the land by the wind. The dust shot out by Vesuvius, and falling in considerable quantities over many a square league, is believed to be one of the causes of the great fertility of that luxuriant district. This, however, is not necessarily summer dust: volcanoes holding themselves independent of times and seasons. Summer dust has been most cleverly utilised by meteorologists, and made to betray where certain breezes come from. The red dust which falls abundantly out at sea, in the Mediterranean and in the vicinity of the Cape de Verd Islands, has been proved to belong to South America; placing hereby in the hands of naturalists a clue, which, attenuated and gossamer like though it be, is nevertheless palpable and strong enough to guide them, through the circuits of the winds, even unto the chambers of the south.

A prophet, who puts faith in falling stars, and has observed them for twenty years past, predicts that '62 will be warm and dry. Every weather-wise body has his own indicative symptoms to go by. When June sets in and continues, with showery weather and south-west winds, it is a bad sign for July and August. This was the case in 1860, when people travelled indefinitely southward, to discover where fine weather was to be found: defying the rigour of

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the season with a panoply of umbrellas and waterproof gear. While the almanack said it was the first week in August, the weather said it was April, and might be February. The almanack probably told the truth, because corn was to be seen in ear, and yellow, but tumbled and laid, as if by the storms of March. Winter came that year from the south, to spend the summer in the northern hemisphere. Places that ought to have been comfortably hot, were showery and shivery instead.

The very length of summer days renders a wet summer the more provoking. In the evening you can scarcely draw the curtains, light the candles, and chat or read with your feet to the fire. Balls are impossible when the morning sun breaks in immediately after supper, and disperses the ladies as you are beginning to spend the evening. How much more social near the equator, where it is pitch dark in summer at seven, or before! Nothing but habit or necessity could reconcile one to the midsummer nights at St. Petersburg, where, for tedious weeks and weeks, the lamps in the streets have no need to be lighted. Imagine the sufferings of a wet summer (if they ever have one) with that unceasing continuity of daylight.

IGNORAMUS AT THE INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION.

I AM an excessively ignorant person. I am not proud of the fact, but I think it best to acknowledge it frankly, for then I take the sting out of criticism, and prevent the better informed from pouncing down on me, to display my ignorance as a trophy. But though I am hopelessly ignorant myself, I have several scientific friends, who vainly seek to enlighten my benighted understanding on various points. One of these friends is an engineer, with a passion for machinery, and a profound belief in its future mission as the regenerator of a degraded society. He looks forward to the time when chains and wheels and cogs and lathes, will take the place of human labour, and supersede the necessity for all merely mindless handicraft, so that there shall be no more hewers of wood or drawers of water, but only clear-headed stokers and pokers, giving mind to matter and intelligent direction to unintelligent force. The other day, on his way to the International Exhibition, he called for me, and carried me off to the machinery department, to give me, for the twentieth time at least, a lesson on the steam-engine and its congeners; he being a man of large faith and indomitable hope, whereby he has never yet come to the perception of the hopelessness of his task. For, as I began by confessing my intellectual short-comings with out much reserve, I may as well state frankly, that never to this day, after one-and-twenty lessons, have I been able to fully understand a steam-engine.

With a courage worthy of a better cause, my engineering oracle made one last attempt to tear away the veil from before my clouded mind, and took me off to the International, to have a turn at the machinery again; and this is what I saw. I saw a quantity of cast-iron tires for railway wheels and others, as bright as silver and as finely finished as the minutest watchwork; I saw huge worms and spirals of the same cast-steel, and pyramids of coiled wire, and plaited ropes, and twisted cables, and enormous links, good for holding down the foundations of the earth, I should have said; and I saw cast-steel railway chairs—what an odd name! the things that the rails sit in, like blocks of black cream cheese; and steel saucepans, and cake moulds, and pie dishes, and small fairy rings, as small as the tiniest French charms, and thimbles, which would surely soon get rusted on the tops of certain fat fingers, porous and perspiring; and I saw large round saw-wheels and toothed bands, lithe and endless; and buffer-springs, which are pretty and ingenious both; and a cannon in the rough, bullying, black and fierce; and the finest steel pens; and ornamented tools—saws with views etched on them, and swords polished, virgin and trenchant; and grates that dazzled; and steel reflectors cut into facets and incomparably bright; and then I saw a Cyclopean machine for testing iron and steel, with weights for "breaking and tension, and crushing and torsion," some part of it painted grey, and some left bright, like frosted or polished silver; and all these various things were made out of some odd knubbly-looking stuff, which was called kidney ore. And then my friend explained the process by which cast-steel was made as strong as, and stronger than, anything else; but all I remember is, that something was burnt in the steel during the process—something that had been long a difficulty in the way of making cast-steel; only I don't feel quite clear as to what was burnt, or how it was done. Perhaps somebody else may know, for it is of BESSEMER's process that I am now speaking.

Passing by the lighthouse models with their various modes of erection, and those hideous creatures, like the nightmares of bad dreams, the divers in their diving-dresses, we came to the court of ships, where the fat old tubs of elder days, bedizened and adorned with all sorts of gilding and carving, clear gradually down to the clean-limbed vixenish-looking craft of modern times, with not a spar too many, or a rope too few, or an ounce of paint or gold-leaf beyond the needful covering up of naked timber. Here, too, were the new armoured ships; one, grim and shapeless, looking like a monster tortoise afflicted with bumps, and another, a queer pent-house bearing thing, built on scientific principles, which render it invulnerable, and a perfectly safe asylum under any amount of cannonading. For, by means of an open iron gallery with metal pillars set in acute angles so as to present no surface, the enemy's balls must glance off and fly clean through her, by the paths prepared, according to the laws of forces; doing no damage to man or metal. So at least says the inventor, and I, in my capacity of Fly-Swallower, believe everything I hear, with or without the salt. Here, too, are some pretty little models

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done up in glass tubes, lying like dolls in a cradle; and here is the "dioptric holophote"—how fond people are of hard names—which is a mass of class circles and circular bands, full of prismatic colours, and very beautiful to look upon. Close at hand is the case of mortars, where the monster mortar gradually lessens into the most dainty little creature, not larger than my little boy's ally-tor, and where there are sections of shells—things cut in halves to show what is in the inside—filled with coal-dust for powder, and some with bullets among the powder, in pretty geometrical patterns; and then we come to the iron hoops or trips, which have taken the place of the old calthrops, and are to fling down and lame the enemy's horse, as you see in the wooden toy-horse, with its cut legs besmeared with red ochre, and the staring-eyed doll on its back sitting in sublime indifference and contempt of danger; and we pass by the cases of streaked brown guns, and grand swords with their gilded scabbards and jewelled bands, decked out in all the foppery of war, but as yet innocent and undefiled; and so on through the nave to the western annexe, where the machinery lives.

Wheels whirling like mad, and endless bands quivering like tortured snakes; a sloppy floor; begrimed workmen of all nations; a prevailing smell of oil and steam, and a deafening noise of click and whirr, where nothing dominated and all distracted; daft engines pounding away at nothing, and the regulator balls flying wide and wild; cotton-spinning frames travelling backwards and forwards in a monotonous caged wild-beast sort of manner; a steam-engine with a howdah, in ludicrous confusion of Manchester and Tippoo Sahib; a big sand-crushing machine with stones like the most tremendous mill-hoppers,—mill-hoppers magnified, mill-hoppers that ground the corn for the ogre giants' bread; a sugar-mill monster, more finished and scientific-looking, and with a certain inner soul of intelligence shining through its complicated arrangements; a machine that patted a bit of rotten wood as gently as a baby, and more gently, then, becoming angry at some liberty which its keeper took with it, opened its iron jaws with a roar, and smashed the sticks to splinters; a fidgety machine, always dancing up and down, just like a person with St. Vitus's dance, or a circumscribed tarantula; an air-blowing leviathan, good for blowing up furnace fires—also one of the complications sought to be explained and taught me, which only stupified and left me in greater ignorance than before;—these were the things I noticed first of all, and these left the greatest impression on me, before I could sift my sudden influx of ideas.

Then there was a creature like a grey boa-constrictor, smooth and supple—but I forget its special uses; and a twisted cylinder of endless knives for shearing velvet; and a leathern band of the finest steel wires set in like bristles, used now instead of the old-fashioned teazle for carding wool, as soft to the touch as a baby's brush, or as a bit of elastic velvet itself; and a thing like an alchemist's table, all green and brass-work and mystic shapes and undefined purpose, which, however, turned out to be only a bit of harmless steam-engine mystery; and broken guns split up like rotten wood, and masses of broken metal everywhere, to show the strength and quality, and what strain it took before it parted; and a machine for weaving carpets—I think it was—with two angry and impetuous creatures at either side, which came forward with a rush and a hiss, and slapped vigorously at the cloth; but I believe they were only usefully employed in throwing the shuttle. And everywhere was the smell of oil, and everywhere were wet floors, and grimy workmen with their united Babel of tongues, and steam-engines passionately busy about nothing, and the undefined sense of danger, and a blow up somewhere.

Then there was the grand majestic centrifugal pumping machine with its foaming apron and lily-shaped jets, where one got fine effects of light and colour in the sunshine, and all the rest of the machinery around got perpetual showers of spray; and a huge hammer going lazily up and down, like a lion mumbling a bone—a huge sleepy thing, utterly destructive in its quiet power when fairly roused to work; and the model of the Austrian steam-ship the Franz Josef, moving its bright tin paddles that moved nothing else; and there was the model of the best wrought-iron bridge ever made, said my engineering friend, by Austria too—two hundred and seventy feet in span, and thirty-six in breadth, and without vibration; and a sledge railway, which, by machinery,—lifting up something or letting down something as occasion requires—is made either a wheeled carriage rolling easily, or a heavy sledge dragging its slow length, and scarce able to be moved at all—in fact, a new and capital kind of railway break; and this was French, which irritated my engineering friend to acknowledge, he being a Gallophobist (doesn't that mean a Gaul hater, and are not the Gauls the French?) of the deepest grade. And there was the French screw paddle, about which such a terrible story is told, and which indeed looks as much like a guillotine as anything else; and a New Brunswick steam-engine, with a cow-catcher and snow plough in front, so suggestive of the unhedged country and inclement climate of that place; a Yankee boiler, like a string of beads; and a railway waggon made in a day, wheels melted, forged, tired, and all; and a big blue plough, with a shark's teeth row of shares, worked by steam; and clod-crushing machines, very pretty and like fortification works; and several other agricultural implements which are to do away with Hodge and his heavy fingers, and inaugurate a new era down among the clay lands. And there are all manner of fire-engines; and a bottle-filling and corking machine; and a three-cornered paper bag-making machine; and Bray's traction engine that frightened the Hampstead omnibus; and a creature that puts down its own rails, or rather its own iron feet, and walks over the land where it lists, like a man; and a locomotive for walking on the ice; and a great

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leviathan with ten adhesive wheels for heavy land; and a machine for getting fresh water, aërated, out of salt; and there is some stone pasteboard for roofings; and a shoemaker's table and stand, designed by a clever man who has made it his special study how to help and how to cure the shoemaker's sunken chest and withered limbs; and there is a plan for a reversible window that can be cleaned in the inside, and so no more lives lost of giddy girls falling on to area spikes; and everywhere furious things doing nothing, and a mighty bustle over phantom labour.

Then we turned to look at the carriages, which are pleasanter to me than the machinery. First, there was the Prussian state coach, with its magnificent thick plate-glass windows, the golden eagle for its handle, and all as fine as carving and gilding and lake and maroon and the best japan varnish could make it, but gingerbready too, and not much better, if grander, than our own Lord Mayor's respected pumpkin; but yet wonderfully fine, and calculated to produce an immense effect on the good Berliners. And there was a carriage for all four seasons, open in summer, hooded in autumn, able to be opened in spring, but finally sealed and shut for winter. Indeed, it seems to be the great ambition of the coach-builders of the present day to make their vehicles capable of everything: becoming landaus, broughams, dog-carts, waggonettes, whatever the owner pleases, and the coachman has brains to work. Why, there is one reversible waggonette that can be made into five different carriages; and one that can be transformed into close or open, by means of cords, and weights, and pulleys at the coach-house ceiling, which gives me an oppressive feeling somehow. And there were spidery things, all legs, and lines, and big wheels like huge skeletons; and velocipedes; and perambulators, silver-mounted; and coal vans, not yet begrimed, but bright with varnish and gold lettering; and heavy carriages as big as Goliath's state coach; and close beside them little dainty things not larger than a lady's bonnet; and a one-horse van; and some country carts very blue and very red; and all this department smelling strongly of varnish, and rich in quilted satin and radiant colours.

After that refreshing little episode of the carriages we dived among the machinery again. And here let me give a specimen of one of my difficulties. I know that I am ignorant, but who, not a practical weaver or mechanic—and you are not all practical weavers or mechanics—can tell me the meaning of tappet, and temple, and dobby, and an underpick loom, and a heald-knitting machine, and slubbing, and spools? And is not a throstle a thrush? And what is a twiner's skewer, and what are spindle cop braids, and throstle top cleaners, and amule top, and a derrick crane? And has a slotting machine anything to do with dogs and deer, or the noble art of Venerie in any shape? I put these questions, humbly confessing my exceeding ignorance; but who knows much more than myself?

Then I looked at the machine for making braid and whips—a thing like the anatomised hammers of a piano, all wheels, which does everything in its way; and at a big monster for planing iron, as if it were cheese, or wood; and at another for drilling and punching iron, going through any number of inches as easily as through so much paper; and at a magnetic printing press; and a type-composing machine, where the compositor arranges the letters by playing on some organ, or pianoforte-looking keys—a very pleasant and ingenious contrivance, but I am not able to speak of its utility; nor can I describe it, save that it looks like a pianoforte with a network of brass channels at the back, which all meet in a long tube or trough, and that the compositor plays on the piano keys and the type falls down the channels and arranges itself, I can't tell how. Then a lady exhibits a miniature printing press, with cases of type; and gives lessons to ladies in presswork, besides taking orders; and there is an electrograph machine for engraving the copper cylinders used in calico printing, by means of a diamond point and a voltaic battery—another of the inexplicable mysteries to me, full of indefinite danger; and there are a boot and shoemaking machine; and heaps of sewing machines which do everything in the way of needlework possible to needles and threads. They make dresses and button-holes, they stitch, hem, sew, embroider, put on flounces, and pucker frills; they do all but cut out, and perhaps they will do that soon, without patterns. And, greatest boon of all, there is a stocking-darning machine! What do you say to that, patient little girl, you who have all the family stockings to darn every Saturday night—what do you say to a machine that just knits up the holes as quickly as you can thread the needles? But the household machines are becoming numerous, and infinitely intelligent. Is then my engineering friend a true prophet, and is the time at hand when we shall have done with human labour of the mindless school, in favour of steam and iron for servants, and man's wit for the directing power? There is a machine for sweeping carpets, which will give poor Betty an extra half hour of leisure; and there is a machine for kneading bread; there are dozens of machines for washing, drying, and mangling, with no greater trouble than the turning of a handle,—among them a "brush and dash" washing machine, with a considerable dash I should say; there are a printing press for marking house linen, cost twenty-five shillings, which is rather a large per-centage to pay for the saving of a little trouble; a "gem" knife-cleaner; and a boot-cleaning machine, for two brushes at once, and without putting in the hand; a self-basting roasting apparatus; and a machine that kneads dough, pots meat, grinds suet, chops and stones raisins, beats eggs, mixes biscuits and cakes and puddings—in short, does all that fork and pestle and whisk are used to do in barbarous households. Surely a priceless blessing in the epochs sacred to mince-pies and Christmas

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puddings! The Americans, stirred by necessity, have done much in the way of domestic machinery, finding metal more tractable than human nature, and a machine a more useful creation than a help. But they have not come out strong this time, and show nothing for the saving of Betty's hands or John's heels in all their court of nakedness. They have a few agricultural machines, and a few sewing machines, and some abominable petroleum oil, and a grand piano or two; but no new conceit or dainty device; in fact, they have gone behind even us, who are not nationally inventive. This is a pity; not now to be amended.

IMPERISHABLE.

The pure, the bright, the beautiful
That stirred our hearts in youth,
The impulse to a wordless prayer,
The dreams of love and truth.
The longings after something lost,
The spirits' yearning cry;
The strivings after better hopes,
These things can never die.

The timid hand stretched forth to aid
A brother in his need,
The kindly word in grief's dark hour
That proves the friend indeed.
The plea for mercy softly breath'd
When justice threatens nigh;
The sorrow of a contrite heart,
These things shall never die.

The memory of a clasping hand,
The pressure of a kiss,
And all the trifles sweet and frail
That make up love's first bliss.
If with a firm, unchanging faith,
And holy trust and high,
Those hands have clasp'd, those lips have met,
These things shall never die.

The cruel and the bitter word
That wounded as it fell,
The chilling want of sympathy
We feel, but never tell.
The hard repulse that chills the heart,
Whose hopes were bounding high,
In an unfading record kept,
These things shall never die.

Let nothing pass, for every hand
Must find some work to do;
Lose not a chance to waken love,
Be firm and just and true.
So shall a light that cannot fade
Beam on thee from on high,
And angel voices say to thee,
These things shall never die.

THE NORFOLK DELUGE.

"He who despises small things," says the Apocrypha, "shall fall by little and little;" and the words are true with regard to all sorts of matters: as well the unimportant as those of greater moment. Those miserable persons, for instance, whose poverty compels them to have their stockings darned will tell you that the inevitable fracture in the heel may be made good with only a stitch or two when it first appears, while a short neglect will render the damage irreparable. The holes in our constitutions, again, which are as common as those in our stockings—the first small indications of a loose screw in our health—these may quickly be set right by meeting the threatening evil vigorously; but if the plague-spot be allowed to spread, be neglected, or dealt feebly with, the remedies at last applied come too late.

Small things! A sand-crack in a horse's hoof, hardly visible to the eye, will not be long in rendering the animal wholly useless; a pin-hole in a gas-pipe may cause an explosion; a touch with a lancet in your arm may save you from death by small-pox.

Not far from Cirencester, in Gloucestershire, there is a little trickling streamlet which you may hop over; it does but trickle on a few miles, and at London-bridge it floats a fleet of merchantmen, and at Greenwich a three-decker.

Such were some few of the reflections which passed through my mind as I found myself standing on the bank of the river Ouse, with a great broken mass of brick, stone, and iron, split and rent to pieces, lying partly in and partly out of a raging muddy torrent and roaring waste of waters. Those waters had been sapping and mining away at that huge structure which I saw in ruins, for a prodigious length of time, and having, in a frantic insurrection, broken down the restraints which kept them in, rushed now triumphantly over their defeated master.

A few days before, the water, powerful as it was, had been kept back by a sluice which looked strong enough to hold in Niagara. Its massive brick and stone and iron were considered impregnable; it was thought a triumph of engineering, and it looked like a fortress that would stand against any siege. True, somebody noticed that by the side of one of the flood-gates there was a little leak through which a few drops of water were oozing—what was that? Not worth a moment's thought. It was as well to stop it up though. So it was stopped up. Some birds of ill-omen ventured, perhaps, to say that they were not quite satisfied with the look of things even then. Bah! Don't listen to the birds of ill-omen. Away with such croakers.

There is no siege which man can lay, that can compare with nature's attacks. The elements are patient, they are secret, they persist, they are in no hurry—a year or two more or less is of no consequence to them, only they never give up. They go on, an inch, an eighth of an inch, per month. And then in a moment the crash comes. The last nail, the last stick, the last grain of mortar, gives, and the enemy rushes in and lays the country waste.

So it was in this case of the Norfolk Fens. How long and how patiently the waters had worked outside the gates of that enormous sluice which kept the mouth of the Whittelsea Mere Drain! At last the reward of their labours came, and the strong tidal river tore the controlling fortress to pieces and whirled along upon its way.

The banks of the drain bore that tremendous strain for eight long days. Every one knew that

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they must break; every one was surprised that they held out so long. Those banks were raised to hold the drainage of a certain Fen country many miles away. They had easy work of it. They were strong enough for so light a place —a quiet sluggish ooze of water lying very low, with banks high above it, and higher still above the surrounding flat country. The banks of that straight long drain had quite a sinecure of it. Suddenly this weight and torrent of waters is borne in. It is as if a cutter were loaded with the cargo of a barque. A boy hired to open the door or carry physic-bottles, is to do the work of a coal-heaver. A basket-carriage is used for a brewer's-dray. How long can it go on? When will the break-down take place, and where?

For eight days the tide swept backwards and forwards, as it ebbed and flowed, and still the banks held on. Some said "they will go here," and some "they will fall there." The people interested in the matter, holding land on either side the drain, gathered together, with the labourers who worked on the soil, and watched the weaker places eagerly. And so at six o'clock one Monday morning as many as two hundred of them were gathered together near to one specially weak spot, waiting for what they knew must come, when, at a distance of some three feet from the top of the bank, a thin spout of water, such as would issue from a pump, burst through a hole in the side of the earthen wall, and poured in a clear water-spout straight out on to the surrounding land. It came through that hole like the water out of a fireman's hose, and some of the peasants who saw it told me that it described an arch in its course, and only touched the ground some twenty yards from where it started.

This was only the affair of an instant, and the ice once broken thus, mass after mass of the bank gave way. Soon a breach of a hundred yards was made, and the waters ran in upon the land.

The land here lies so low and is so extraordinarily flat, that it seems wonderful that those waters are stopped at all. The country intersected with drains, with pollard willows along its water-courses, with vegetation of a singular luxuriance, and its groups of cattle standing and lying about in the rich pastures, would remind one of Paul Potter, if it were not so much brighter and prettier than anything that monotonous old mechanic had in his heavy head.

The case of the landowners here, and, indeed, of all those persons whom the inundation has affected, is especially hard: the drain which has burst was not *their* drain. It was not constructed to relieve their land, but, on the contrary, the water-courses by which they are drained pass underneath the bed of this Middle Level Drain, which was brought through this part of the country against the wish of the proprietors of the soil. The Middle Level is some thirty miles away, in another part of the country; and the drain merely passes through the districts where the accident has happened on its way to the Ouse, into which, at certain states of the tide (for the Ouse is here a tidal river), it discharges its superfluous water.

The commissioners, then, of the Middle Level Drain, who were responsible for its construction and for its maintenance in a perfect condition of security, were bound to be especially vigilant in caring for the safety of the land through which they brought this dangerous water-course. To relieve their own Middle Level District, they made an opening in the great embankment of the tidal river. That opening they guarded with a sluice, and upon the soundness of that sluice the inhabitants of the neighbouring districts of Marshland and Magdalen Fen depended for the security of their possessions. As it has turned out, the sluice was not sound; the Marshland and surrounding districts are flooded.

It is always difficult to be impartial in making ex post facto comments. If no disaster had followed, the little attention paid by the authorities to certain signs of weakness exhibited by the sluice, would have escaped without censure. We are all influenced by results, and the results in this case have been lamentable.

Briefly, the case seems to stand thus: the proprietors of the land in the neighbourhood where this accident has happened, protested strongly, at the time when this drain was proposed, against its being brought through their property. Their protests were disregarded by the House of Commons' committee which sat in judgment on the project. This point strengthens the case of the injured inhabitants and proprietors of the land. Their protest put aside and permission granted for the works to proceed, the next question is, how those works were executed? In spite of certain weak points in the banks of the drain, which the commonest looker-on cannot fail to observe, there seems little doubt that these were strong enough for any pressure which there was a reasonable probability of their having to sustain; for it must be remembered that they were never intended to bear an irruption of the tidal river. The main structure of the drain being thus disposed of, we come to the far more important question as to the soundness of the sluice itself —the gate which kept out the tide from rushing into the drain, and virtually (for no drain could hold that great and powerful river) over the surrounding country.

Upon this point, of course all sorts of contrary opinions prevail. Some will tell you that the arches of the sluice should have reposed upon an invert, while others will affirm that the nature of the river's bed rendered this impossible, and that the foundation of piles, with a platform of four-inch planking, was the very best base on which the structure could be raised. You will hear again that the sluice was built too far out into the river, and so was needlessly exposed to the violence of the waters; that its position was ill chosen, as being too near the old bed of the river, now no longer used; that for its very great width it was inadequately thick and solid; that

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the piles which formed its defence were placed in front and behind it only, and not used to flank it at the sides. On all these matters it is obvious that no person who has not devoted himself to the study of such subjects is competent to give an opinion; but this much is certain, that if any possible measure, which could give additional strength to a structure placed in so critical a position were omitted, a great wrong was done.

As bearing on the general question of the manner in which this sluice was built, I may mention that I myself saw some bricks taken out of one of the great fissures made in the masonry when it was blown up, and that some of those bricks had never been touched with mortar.

The strength of the original structure of the sluice is, perhaps, even a more important subject of inquiry than the degree of watchfulness exercised over it after its completion, and the attention given to the symptoms of decay which appeared before the time of its fall. Yet this is important enough too. That many serious indications of the coming accident were given there seems no doubt, and one cannot help thinking that if, at the moment when the sluice first seemed in danger, a strong dam had been commenced some little way up the drain, the work would have been sufficiently advanced by the time the sluice fell, to have prevented much of the loss which has occurred. This seems to have been a case in which the diving apparatus might have been judiciously used, and it is difficult to see why there should not be a diver always employed to go down at regular intervals and report upon the condition of those parts of an important structure like this sluice, which are necessarily always out of sight. One is also inclined to wonder that all should be trusted to a single barrier, and that there should not be a second defence against the enemy, ready in the event of the first outworks being carried. The expense of a double structure would not be so great as that which this disaster has occasioned; and when once a great work has been pronounced important enough to be executed at all, there should be no undue economy in carrying it out. In such cases we should imitate the ancients, whose work stands well because of the astounding mass of material employed. I dare say that in the days when old Rochester-bridge was built (which it was found very difficult to pull down) contracts were unknown, and the architect himself saw to the security of every stone that was laid. Economy, not real, but most wickedly false, is the order of the day, and so it comes to pass that rows of houses tumble down before they are finished, and collieries are sunk with single shafts, and bricks (out of sight) are laid in their places without the previous formality of giving them a coat of mortar. Mr. A. undertakes a contract which so binds him down that he can hardly get a profit out of it if he does it properly. He takes no interest in it, but thinks of getting the money only; for is not Mrs. A. making the sovereigns spin in London? So he gets an estimate from Mr. B. as to what he will charge for doing the labour part of the undertaking, and then Mr. C. is left to look over the works, while Mr. A. himself is off after yet another contract of some other kind: the fulness of his hands already—if he did his work properly—being no obstacle to his opening them to grasp at more contracts to be executed after the manner of the first. And so we get abundant confirmations of the old adage that accidents will happen in the best regulated families; for is not this great British family declared on all sides to be in its perfection of management, a model and example to all others upon the earth's surface?

Since this particular accident in our well-regulated family *has* happened, and since it is devoutly to be hoped that it may be very long before any such thing occurs again, it may prove not uninteresting to note down some few of the more remarkable features connected with it before the memory of the whole affair has altogether passed away. And first I would call the attention of those who are interested in such matters to the curious watery etymology which characterises these lands. From a friend well read in such lore I have received the accompanying notes:

"The variety of forms in which the word *water* turns up in the Marshlands, suggest some interesting reflections as to the history of the tribes which have peopled that district:

"1. The modern English form: water, waters, as Westwater, Plautwater, and the waters generally.

"2. The old Danish or Jutish form: wash, at least so I imagine it to be. It is equivalent to the German *wasser*, and is used either as a singular or plural noun. Observe, Sutton Wash, or Welney Wash*es*. In the corporation records of Wisbech mention is made of the Washway, that is, the Waterway.

"3. French: Eau, as in Popham's Eau, St. John's Eau, Bourn Eau, and a number of others. This is but the French spelling of the following:

"4. Old Saxon Eu, which still survives in the English word ewer, a water-jug. The plural of Eu would be Eus, and we find this still surviving in the name of the Ouse, that is, the waters. Dugdale calls it the River Use. I am writing from memory, but I rather think that in ancient days the Ouse had two mouths, the one as at present at Lynn, the other at Wisbech, where the river Nene now flows. Wisbech means the water's mouth. A variety of Eu is Wye, precisely the same word, and the name of a river in the West of England. The plural of Wye is Wyse, and four hundred years ago the name of Wisbech was spelt Wyscbeche.

"The bech in Wisbech is sometimes spelt Wisbeach. This suggests a false etymology. In point of fact it means mouth, and is to be identified with the French *bouche*, with the modern English beak, and with the old Saxon forms bec and beche."

The lands in this particular part of Norfolk

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may well have watery names, being to so large an extent mere reclamations from the sea. Those reclamations have gone on through successive ages, and go on still. The sea recedes gradually from this part of Norfolk, and as it recedes the land becomes first of all covered with a growth of samphire. Vegetation succeeds to this; and when at length the roots of that vegetation have formed a kind of web or network over the soil, it becomes worth while to erect around the land so reclaimed, a sea-wall or dyke which shall protect the land behind it from the higher tides. For, it must be remembered that the land even while this vegetation is forming is free from the influence of the low tides only, and that until the sea-wall is erected, the spring-tides dash over it and make cultivation of the soil impossible. Doubtless, the sea relinquishes its hold on the earth reluctantly, and every now and then will make some mad grasp at its lost property, as in the present case.

It was a dull grey afternoon when I visited that extraordinary scene, and its peculiar dreariness mingled with something of grandeur were the more powerfully developed in consequence of that fact. It was difficult, looking over those miles of water (for at the time I visited it the sheet could not have been less than six miles long by about three wide), and to feel that underneath it were corn-fields and bright-looking meadows, and gravel-roads, and little orchards, and gardens, such as one saw on the other and dry side of the drain. As I looked longer, there were not wanting plenty of indications of the real state of the case. In one direction a row of telegraph-posts in a straight line showed that the railroad passed that way: a fact which was confirmed by the appearance at intervals of the halves of some wayside stations, the upper portions only showing.

Looking another way, I saw emerging from the water the parapet of the bridges erected over the water-courses by which (mockery that it seemed) the land was drained. The trees showed, too, here and there, and the upper stories of certain small farms and labourers' houses, and the straw-yards and outbuildings near them; while farther off still, was an alehouse standing in water enough to have satisfied a Temperance League; beyond that again was dimly discernible a church.

There was only, as far as I could see, one boat to be had, and that was engaged in some engineering operations connected with the safety of the bank of the drain, at the point opposite to the breach. I waited until this boat was disengaged, and then made an offer to its proprietor to take me out to visit the houses I had a mind to see, and, above all things, the church. My offer was accepted, and at about five o'clock in the afternoon we pushed off for a cruise over the meadows.

I looked round me again before starting, and was struck by the difference between the two sides of the narrow drain. Everything looked so prosperous on the one side! The gardens, the cottages, the barns, the comfortable meadows with the fat cattle grazing, all kinds of operations of husbandry going on, labourers singing at their work. And that other side—now all desolation—a few days ago had been gay and prosperous too, and there also the sheep had browsed and the cattle had chewed the cud, and the peasant had sung as he laboured hopefully in the furrow.

We made but slow progress through the waters. The tide was ebbing, and we had it against us. Sometimes as we passed along, the twigs of a submerged hedge would grate against the bottom of the boat; sometimes as we rowed across a little hillock, or a raised portion of one of the roads which divided the country, the boat would strike. Once we got aground, and once we had to get out, that our boat might be pushed over a dry bank which it was necessary to cross.

How dreary the few scattered and deserted houses looked as we approached them! It is true that the inhabitants might, if they had chosen, have continued to occupy the upper floors, which were high and dry, but there would have been risk in it. When the wind rose, the waters of this great inland sea became rough, and doubtless such a specimen as the neighbours had lately seen of the power of the tide made them mistrustful of the strength of their submerged foundations, continuously exposed to the action of the water. Most of the windows were blocked up with closed shutters, and some of the doors were carefully padlocked; for, disgraceful to relate, before the goods had all been removed from the houses, there had been wretches who took advantage of this miserable disaster to go out in boats in search of any plunder they could lay their hands upon. Here and there one would see some agricultural implement left upon the thatch of a shed or outhouse. Sometimes the handles of a wheelbarrow would appear sticking up out of the water; in one place the shafts of a cart that had been abandoned to its fate, rose up above the level of the flood.

At last we came to a cottage that seemed to have been less carefully secured than the rest, and, having found a gap in the fence of the little orchard that surrounded it, we rowed through the fence, the stakes of the hedge grating ever so little as we passed. The little apple-trees in the orchard were partly covered with blossom, and on some of the branches the fruit had even set. It was low water, as I have said, and we could see on the trees the brown mark left by the higher tides. All the portions of the foliage which had come in contact with the brackish water had turned brown. It gave one some idea of what the aspect of things would be when the land was drained after the flood was over. Passing through the orchard, and by the mockery of a *pump* which reared its head above the waters, we drew quite near to the cottage door, and paused. It was open, and the action of the water was slowly waving it backwards and forwards as if it were swayed by a ghostly hand. A noise, too, of a sucking kind came from the interior of the building, made by the water as it sucked

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and chopped against the walls of the little rooms within. Another stroke of the oars, and the prow of the boat was absolutely thrust in at the door of the cottage.

The boat stuck in the doorway, and I looked around me. Never was a more desolate place seen. The water was in occupation; it made the flooring of the rooms—for all the doors were open—and I could see glimpses of the different rooms on this lower story. A medicine bottle was left on the chimney-piece of the chief apartment, a yellow paper fly-catcher hung from the ceiling, and close to where I was perched was a coloured print of the Great Eastern! Surely the spirit of Hogarth himself must have risen in the night and hung it there!

After I had looked and listened long enough we pushed away from the cottage, and left it with the water still chopping up against the walls of its rooms, and the door still waving slowly backwards and forwards as the current chose to sway it.

By the position of a little bridge, part of which showed above the water, and by other indications, I could make out where the road lay by which the thirsty traveller used to approach the Wheatsheaf alehouse, which we next drew near. We struck as we were trying to get close up to it, and were constrained to be satisfied without a nearer view; and indeed the Wheatsheaf was so shut up and barred that there would have been nothing gained by a closer approach. A more unconvivial and tee-total aspect than that presented by this deserted public, I never witnessed. The iron by which the signboard had swung, projected like a gibbet. The bar-window was shut up with shutters, so was that of the parlour; the only sign of life about the place was in a sort of straw-yard at the back, which, having been either built of an extraordinary height, or, being so buoyant as to float bodily on the flood, was safe and dry; here a solitary hen, was scratching and picking in the straw, as if with the desperate hope of finding a stranded worm.

Leaving this feathered Crusoe to pursue her investigations, in which she was so occupied that she took no sort of notice of our approach, we started once more on our cruise: the church, which we could now see plainly, being the end of our journey.

The building comprised a small school-house as well as a church, and I could not help thinking as we drew near it, how glad the children must have been of the flood which gave them such a long holiday, and how they must have contemplated the engineers who were trying to shut out the waters, with intense disgust. Close to the school was a little drying-ground for linen, and the clothes-poles were still standing. So was the flag-staff, from which, in this primitive country, a flag floats when it is service-time. For, in that flat district, the flag can be seen much farther off than the sound of the bell could reach. I wish this excellent idea could be carried out in this metropolis.

We rowed through the gate (it was a tight fit for our boat) of the enclosure in which the church stood, and, as there was here some three or four feet of water, we managed to get close up to the building, so that we could see in at the windows. The water was not so high, though, as it had been a few days before, when one of the men in the boat with me had been to the church with other authorised persons to remove the communion-plate to some place of safety. The man who had unlocked the church door on that occasion had to plunge his hand deep under water to get at the keyhole, and, when the door was open, waded breast-high through the church to get to the spot where the plate was kept. There was water enough now to float the contents of the little chapel, and wonderful the interior of the building looked. The pulpit seemed to have been upset, to judge from the appearance of some large object which floated longwise in the water, and as to the benches, they were tumbled hither and thither in all conceivable ways, but all afloat. And there, in a place by itself, but floating too, on a bench which was piled up on the top of others, was a great white bundle, which the men in the boat told me was no other thing than the surplice.

I could have lingered around these insulated buildings for an hour, peering in at windows and looking out for all sorts of strange features connected with this strange scene. But the evening was advancing, and it was necessary to set out on the return voyage. The grey light was more subdued now, and the great lake and the objects which rose above its waters wore a look of mystery, which greatly added to their wild beauty. One felt that soon all would be shrouded in night, and the thought made one shudder, and look with desire towards the firm land on the other side of the Middle Level Cut.

"Why, some people, now, would make a history of this here," said one of the men who were with me in the boat.

Upon this hint, I have spoken.

A HOME AMONG THE TAMARACKS.

If I were to say that there exists a kind of fence, in which no tool whatever, except an axe and a beetle and wedges, is used from first to last, from the standing timber till completion; in which there is no nail nor particle of iron-work nor fastenings of any description; which is very quickly and easily put up, and as readily removed from one place and set up in another; which is efficient against a small pig, and would answer for a deer park; which can be opened at any spot that may be most convenient for the passage of a waggon or sleigh, and immediately closed up again precisely the same as before; which (as follows from all this) is not at all costly, and which neither throws any hurtful shadow nor harbours weeds or vermin—if I were to say all this I think I should not entirely escape his incredulity. Nevertheless, all this is strictly true of the snake fence of Canada, when well constructed. It is a remarkable instance of ingenuity, and of adaptation of the means of the country to the end required.

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The picture might be drawn differently. It is a hideous fence; it is very often ill made and allowed to fall into disorder and decay; to become inefficient and slovenly beyond description. And to this it is peculiarly liable.

When rail-stuff runs short, which from the reckless destruction of timber in Canada it is already doing in many places, various substitutes are resorted to. One is found in Tamarack poles. We lately made a little expedition to obtain some. We were a party of four; three axes, and the driver of the sleigh. We started as early as possible in the morning, to make the utmost of the short daylight. We had to cross a bay about three miles wide on the ice, already covered with deep snow, against a blinding snow-storm driving full in our faces. There was no tracked road at this point, and, if we had lost sight of both shores, as we did as nearly as possible, we might have been in a predicament. It is well on such occasions to be provided with a compass; I had one formerly, but some considerate person relieved me from the responsibility of it. On gaining the opposite shore, we got under the lee of some high ground, and made better weather, as we had anticipated. We were not long in reaching our destination, a neat rough-cut farm-house with a verandah (a verandah is the touchstone of your thriving Canadian farmer), standing back from the road the width of a small door-yard, as the Canadian's call it, with some little attempt at ornamental cultivation, as I knew, though now covered with snow, and enclosed within a neat white fence and gate. In this sort of thing there is a marked improvement of late.

We found Mr. Hindmarsh, the proprietor, astir and busy about the every morning's earliest occupation of foddering his cattle. He was at that moment giving pea-straw to his sheep with a large four-pronged wooden fork. Canadian farm-buildings are almost invariably good; enclosing a yard on three sides, affording complete shelter, and open to the south only. Here the whole live stock of the farm take refuge, and herd together during the severe winter; being, except the working horses, seldom housed, and doing very well with ordinary care.

Mr. Hindmarsh is a very good example of his class. It would be difficult to imagine a man in a more independent position. He is entirely his own master; he has no landlord, squire, nor rector to exact from him any deference or allegiance; his farm is his own, and he cultivates it with the labour of his own hands and of those of his sons; he has been accustomed and innured to this system from his boyhood, and he finds in it no hardship nor degradation.

After the usual preliminary greetings, I ventured to ask if Mrs. Hindmarsh were well.

"Well, no, sir, she ain't. One day last week, I disremember now which it was, we took tea with some friends, to Bolton. When we came hum in the evening it stormed considerable, and my wife she sot in her wet clothes, and got kind o' chilled. But I guess she's better."

"I am glad to hear that."

Our business was soon arranged. We are to be at liberty to go into the swamp and cut as many tamarack poles as we please at the rate of twelve and a half dollars per thousand. Small ones and tops, only fit for stakes, to be thrown into the bargain, together with as much dry wood for fuel (and incomparable for the purpose) as we think it worth while to take. Mr. Hindmarsh then asks us to come in to dinner at twelve o'clock, and offers to show us the way to the swamp.

Under his guidance we pass through four or five fields, laying down the snake fences wherever there is least drift, and making our own track through the snow. Descending a short "pitch," we are in the swamp, and Mr. Hindmarsh, pointing out to us a narrow track cut straight through it as far as the eye can reach, tells us to follow it as far as we like, and cut where we please, and returns to get his breakfast.

It was the first time I had been in a tamarack swamp, and its novelty interested me. Its dead level of two feet of muck over clay, as Mr. Hindmarsh described it, was now frozen hard, and covered with snow. There was no underbrush, nor any trees of any description whatever except the tamarack, which grew as thick as they could stand, straight as an arrow, and averaging about forty feet in height. There is a solemnity about a scene of this kind; the solitude and silence are unbroken; the weather, gusty outside, is here calm and still as death.

It is no time, however, for sentiment or meditation, and we set to work. The tamarack belongs to the coniferæ, but is deciduous, and is so like the larch in other respects that they would generally be held to be one and the same, though I do not think they are. It is soft and easy to chop, but excessively heavy to handle when green; sinking in water like lead. To lift the twelve-foot poles on to the sleigh, up to the knees in snow, and encumbered with the brush stripped from the tops, was most laborious work; and starting the load through such a depth of snow put the horses' pluck and mettle to the test. While three of us chopped, the fourth drew the poles out of the swamp and deposited them in a convenient spot for fetching away after work.

At twelve o'clock we go to Mr. Hindmarsh's house to dinner. We entered from a room which was formerly the kitchen, but which has been converted into a dining-room. The Canadian farmer used to be contented to dine in his kitchen. His house contained, besides the sleeping chambers, another apartment, which was called *the* room. This was a bare place, with whitewashed walls, painted floor, a few chairs and tables stuck up against the walls, and probably a bed in one corner. Such as it was this was his reception-room: but this is all altered now. The master of the ceremonies is abroad. Through a half-opened door we had a glimpse of Mr. Hindmarsh's drawing-room. It is not a bad travesty of an European drawing-room. It is carpeted, curtained, and supposed to be altogether ornamental,

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but there is very little in it that is either useful or comfortable. There are a few books, &c., assiduously arranged on a "centre-table," and some trumpery knick-knacks scattered about. There is the inevitable and abominable rocking-chair, which only looks worse when it has a woman in it swaying herself to and fro. I am told that these exotics have been acclimatised at Liverpool; I trust they may not make their way inland.

There is not only the door leading into the drawing-room, but there are other doors more than I can count. Several of these belong to sleeping rooms, which are about six feet square, which have no other access, and which, if they have any other means of ventilation, do not get it. A great stove is kept burning, perhaps with fiery tamarack, night and day, and the oxygen is dried up, to the heart's content of a Canadian housewife. This is a pernicious practice, from which you cannot dissuade them. To my remonstrances Mrs. Hindmarsh's reply is, "I like to sleep warm."

The dining-room is evidently intended for use and not to be looked at like the drawing-room: it is comfortable, and has a table of hospitable size. Our dinner is good, though not exactly "according to Cocker." In the first place, the principal dish is a tea-tray with all its appurtenances. A "dish" of tea is the standing dish at every Canadian meal; it is an insidious custom and grows upon one. In place of a glass of sherry or a tumbler of beer, which are not forthcoming, I never decline it. Next in rank and in frequency comes a beefsteak, about the colour of whity-brown paper. On this occasion it is better than it looks. Then are a cold ham, mashed potatoes, sour-krout, and pickles. When you have discussed what you please of them (and everything is pressed upon you), cheese and butter are handed round. Then, as a bonne bouche, succeeds a plate of rich mince-pie, flanked round the edges with some very luscious-looking preserves. The greater part of this remains untasted, but this is rather a point of good manners, and you must never, by any want of self-command, permit yourself to take the last piece remaining on a dish. I have declined a piece of bread, under those circumstances, and the plate has been immediately offered to me again replenished. I have omitted stewed apples, which I was expected to eat with the beef-steak.

There is one point, in which I am a hopeless delinquent. I cannot pour down the tea boiling hot, and I put the lady of the house into a fidget, waiting for my cup. I have continually to apologise.

In the mean time the horses were not forgotten. They were driven, sleigh and all, into the "driving house," where was a rack filled with hay for their benefit. This is a most convenient adjunct to a Canadian establishment; in all weathers, horses and vehicle are at once under cover. Having dined, we went to work again in the swamp.

We pursued our work till dusk; made a satisfactory beginning, and got safe back again across the ice before night set in.

No need of rocking-chairs after that.

MY DUNGEONS.

MY SECOND DUNGEONS.

The Bagnio at Procida was shut, and we were obliged to remain in the boat. Early next morning, however, we were conveyed to prison, where we were searched and given over in charge to a captain, who again had us chained in couples. But, as my companion was seized with ophthalmia almost immediately afterwards, he was taken to hospital, and I remained alone. Here the way to my dungeon was down three flights of stone steps,* which became, as I descended, more and more dark, more and more damp and slimy. At the foot of these stairs was a heavy iron gate, leading to a smaller one: the entrance to my tomb of expiation. It was large and high, but the walls were slimy, and exhaled, as in the last prison, a pestilential odour. If a hand were placed in contact with them, a green revolting substance stuck to it. Drops of green water dropped from the ceiling, which was at the same time concealed by volumes of thick smoke. The floor was damp, and covered with a filthy glutinous scum. The prison being situated about sixty feet beneath the surface of the earth, the two small windows, with a double row of iron grating before them, looked out on a sort of trench between walls, so that only a dim light could ever reach the prisoner; sunshine, never. A letter could not be read even at noon-day, close to the window. By candlelight, slugs were to be seen crawling everywhere, leaving after them a viscous track. There was a wooden bench to serve as a bed, but no straw or mattress. Yet there were thirty prisoners here whose existence was made known to me by their voices only, for I could not at first distinguish them in the dim light. The damp penetrated into the very marrow of my bones, from the sole of my foot to the crown of my head, chilling me with the iciness of death. One hour's stay in the horrid atmosphere sufficed to make the clothes wet through, and in twenty hours the face of the prisoner became swollen, and his complexion transparent, with a violet ring round the eyes. The air was thick, causing a painful oppression when inhaled. It was indeed a tomb; a tomb reserved for newly arrived political offenders, where they could obtain escape only on payment of a bribe. For three dollars to the captain, and thirty carlini to two ruffianly turnkeys with poniards in their trousers, I was removed to another place a little better. This change was a great blessing to me, especially as I was now among political prisoners, with whom I could exchange a few words, or from whom I could perhaps hear hopeful news.

The dungeon in which I was now placed had the appearance of a long narrow corridor,

* The number of steps from the corridor to the room was 117.

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black and dark, with a ceiling so low as to be easily touched with the hand. The prisoners were about sixty in number, the greater part of them being, like myself, confined for political offences. Six cesspools were placed along the passage, about three yards apart. There were three windows, but the rays of the sun could only be seen at noon, and then only for one hour, upon the frame of one window which was opposite the door. After having been assigned a place in the darkest corner of the room, I went in search of some friends whom I suspected to be here. In order to reach the upper floor, which was on a level with the surface of the island, I had to ascend about fifty steps. Scarcely had I ascended the last when I was arrested by the rattling of chains, the noise of irons grating, or doors clashing, screams, and the rushing about of prisoners. I remained fixed to the spot, when a man, after taking a few tottering steps forward, supported himself with his right hand against the wall, while he endeavoured with his left to stanch the blood which flowed from at least sixteen or seventeen wounds in different parts of his body; in a moment or two he sank dead in a pool of his own blood upon the floor. The prisoners who had not taken any part in this riot, stood, white and motionless, leaning against the wall, with their widely opened eyes fixed on the murdered man, and on the stream of blood which ran along the corridor; while about twenty-four ruffians stood by the corpse with long poniards in their hands, sneering contemptuously at the butchered wretch. In half an hour the prison door was opened, the body was removed to the hospital, and the murderer received fifty lashes, under the infliction of which he was uttering the most fearful cries, and after which he was removed to a cell, to await a court-martial. The final penalty for such a murder was, however, so light, that I myself know of wretches who have offered to assassinate a fellow-prisoner for the reward of two pounds weight of maccaroni.

When night approached, the captain and turnkeys went through the routine I had witnessed at Nisida. The political prisoners shut up with me here were almost all Neapolitan lazzaroni, who had no education, and who spoke loudly and sternly to every one. The noise among us was increased by a smith who, when the prison gate was shut and he felt sure that no superior officer was likely to watch him, drew a hammer out of a hiding-place, and kindling a large fire of charcoal, proceeded to make poniards out of some files, which he kept concealed. The floor, being a flagged one, was a sufficiently convenient anvil. A part of the painful sensation caused by this constant hammering of steel was the exhalation from the charcoal. This was sometimes so powerful as to make us feel as though we had running knots round our necks, and caused us to fly to the windows.

When I was at Nisida, the ring on my leg was so loose that, by a small effort, I could easily slip my foot through it; but, as it was difficult to replace it, I had never tried to free my limb from its manacle. But at Procida I availed myself of the opportunity which chance afforded me, and, slipping off the ring, found my foot free. I could not sleep for joy when I thought that I should now manage to rest without my fetters every night. But my triumph was short. Early in the morning, the drawbridge was lowered, but the Bagnio was not opened until later, when the captain and four secondini came straight to our room to search for poniards and inspect the chains. My chains were unfortunately still off. Being told the object of the captain's visit, I endeavoured in vain to replace the ring on my ankle. I was caught. The penalty for such an offence was fifty lashes. The captain coldly ordered me to be taken to the governor for punishment. The governor, when the captain spoke of the ring being slipped off without any attempt at tampering with the fetter itself, merely remarked that it was not I but the captain who deserved punishment, and dismissed me. The captain determined to incur no more blame of the same kind, placed a new ring on my ankle, which was so tight as scarcely to leave room for my sock between the iron and the flesh. In a few hours my leg became frightfully swollen and purple. Pain and indignation actually forced tears from my eyes. The companion whom I now had, was very kind; he could not bear to see me in such torture, and advised me to complain without delay to the governor. When I found I could not lay the sole of my fettered foot on the ground, I resolved to be guided by him, and found the governor merciful. He ordered the ring to be changed at once, and I got another, larger than that which I had had at Nisida. The captain bit his lips when I told him this, and from that hour he watched for, and never let slip, an opportunity of doing me an injury.

As I have said, the governor was a kind-hearted man. Although he was watched and could not do as he would, he passed over in silence many things that were in open contravention of the prison rules, and we consequently enjoyed some privileges which were calculated to render our moral position less oppressive than it hitherto had been. But among the political prisoners were some who were Bourbonists in heart and soul, and who had been thrown into prison either through mistake or through private enmity. These men, in order to give proofs of their loyalty, began to watch the others, and report to the officials at Naples. The consequence of these reports was, that a commissary of police was sent to search us in the prison, and seize everything we had. We had been scarcely three months in our present abode when this commissary (Signor Campagna) entered the Bagnio, attended by policemen, gendarmes, masons, soldiers, turnkey, the comiti, and the governor, who, poor man, looked very much as if he wished to warn us of our coming misfortune. We were in bed when they arrived, and they called for us to get up and go out, leaving the keys of our boxes that they might be searched. After some hours our visitors with-

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drew, taking with them not only our pens, ink, paper, and books, but also some of our other property. Not one of us had escaped being robbed of something. The fact of a few half sheets of newspaper being found, was sufficient to compromise the governor, who was at once recalled to Naples, and subsequently removed to another Bagnio, leaving us very grieved at the loss of so humane a keeper.

The highest story of the Bagnio was called the Reclusione, was pretty well lighted, and commanded a splendid view of the island. This story was inhabited by the common prisoners, but as it occasionally happened that one was removed to another prison, the vacancy was sold by the chamber-keepers to the highest bidder. Thus, the greater part of the political prisoners, who had the means, were, from time to time, enabled to change their tomb-like cells for a more comfortable dwelling place But the inconveniences of the Reclusione—sixteen rooms crowded with six hundred ruffians—were not trifling. This place, formerly inhabited by ladies and cavaliers, was now all black and sooty. During the week, the smoke was just bearable, but on Sunday, for at least six hours, clouds of smoke rose up from every corner; for, on this day the prisoners kindled fires in order to perform their cookery. Sometimes the wind was favourable to clear the rooms. At other times it only served to increase the horrors of them, and a shower of soot fell from the walls and ceiling, until the prisoners resembled sweeps. There was a plague of flies, too, and the usual swarm of other vermin. During some hours of the day, the prisoners were obliged to keep their faces veiled, to escape the detestable insects, which seemed to increase the more they were removed by the straw fan which we all used to keep them off. Our best friends in the place were the spiders, which entrapped the vermin in their webs occasionally. However, there was no comparison to be made as to comfort, between the Reclusione and the Cameroncino, where I dwelt. I had now become much swollen, and as cadaverous as a corpse. I could scarcely see or hear, and I tried every means in my power to get a place in the Reclusione. A chamber-keeper of whom I had some slight knowledge, but who had more respect for my purse than my person, undertook to procure a little room for me there, which he accordingly did. I paid about eighteen shillings for it, besides a fine of three shillings to the society of the chamber-keepers.

In this new cell, our jailer shut his eyes on the money sent us by our families, and we were enabled to bribe the officers in charge of us. Thus each contrived to get some favour; some sought lighter chains, others looser rings, others rings which slipped off at pleasure, and so on. These dearly bought indulgences lasted only as long as the money lasted. When the captain and turnkeys wanted to extort more from us they pretended that a superior was coming to the Bagnio, and, on pretence of preparing for him, took back all the privileges they had sold. Then, after a few days, they again offered us the same articles, on condition that we re-bought them at their former price. It was a system which wore us to death, and obliged us at length to come to the resolution of suffering everything rather than be so robbed. But the very favours denied us were freely granted to the chamber-keeper. When searches were made, as they frequently were, for poniards, they were never found in any place belonging to a chamber-keeper; he being always warned beforehand, that he might have time to conceal them. If he had no place of concealment for them, the turnkeys themselves contrived to hide them during the search, and then returned them. Our lives were in continual danger, and to be preserved only by extreme prudence and constant sacrifice of money. The least suspicion that a political prisoner was about to bring any accusation against a chamber-keeper was sufficient to cause a sentence of death to be passed upon him by this infamous society of blood-stained men. It was no wonder that terror penetrated all our hearts when the minister of public works himself increased the number of these wretches after we had recourse to him to remove them from our prison. It seemed to us that the government had planned our destruction by means of the chamber-keepers, without bringing odium on itself. We became very watchful, and anxious to form a party in our favour, even among these men themselves: a plan in which we ultimately succeeded. For five long years, we remained under the control of that infernal society.

It is said that habit is all powerful, and the remark is true; but the habit in which we were of witnessing scenes of horror and crime, instead of decreasing our apprehension, increased it. Noise, riots, stabbings and assassinations, were events of daily occurrence, yet we could not grow accustomed to them. We were often horrified at the news of a man's being killed, but still more so when we heard of the manner in which he was killed. I will not speak of the many hundreds of times that poniards were flashed before my eyes, nor of the prisoners treacherously murdered in their sleep; but I cannot pass over one particular deed of wanton barbarity.

It took place a few months after I went to live in the Reclusione. One evening, when I, with others, had sunk into a troubled sleep, we were aroused by a voice like the bellowing of a bull, which echoed through our dark gloomy rooms, striking terror into our hearts. We listened, but the voice grew more and more faint until it died away. The alarm was given, the drawbridge was lowered, the prison was opened, and a scene of confusion and uproar ensued. A room near mine was entered, and a corpse removed from it. The unhappy victim had been bound hand and foot, like a sheep, placed upon a bench, and slaughtered. It was a murder executed by the orders of the chamber-keepers. Morning came; but, though all the political prisoners and many of the common criminals looked at each other in dismay, none dared to speak, for it was well known that the crime had been

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planned by the members of the secret society. This murder was the commencement of the worst and most gloomy part of our imprisonment. A superior official came from Naples to inquire into all the circumstances, and, as his coming was unexpected, the political prisoners had not time to make any preparations to receive him, or to conceal what papers they possessed of a compromising character. Suddenly, the prison was entered by forty soldiers, who were placed as sentinels at our doors, in order to prevent us from moving from one place to another, or from concealing anything. The most rigorous search was then made, principally directed towards the political prisoners. Everything belonging to us was tossed about and destroyed, and our chains were rigorously examined. After this day, the first political prisoner found with his chain altered was flogged, which gave the rest to understand what was in reserve for them. Everything brought into the Bagnio was strictly searched, and it was not the fault of the governor if he did not succeed in carrying out his intention of depriving us of all indulgence and comfort. But the turnkeys, unable to live on the small pay allowed them by the government, did not hesitate to oblige us in a trifling way for money; it would also seem that they were inclined to favour us through a feeling of dislike to their superior, who had charged them with conniving with the political prisoners, in order that he might divert blame from himself. At length, through a bribe paid in Naples, aided by a very strong manifestation made against him by the common criminals, we obtained a change of governor, and came under the command of a certain De Francesco, who could scarcely sign his name, and who, besides being ignorant, was also rather silly and full of low vice, which he was unable to satisfy out of the small amount of pay allowed him by the government. We did not know by what special services he had earned the favour of Ferdinand, but it is certain that he had been sent to the Bagnio to wring as much money as he possibly could from the unfortunate political prisoners.

This new governor gave us very plainly to understand that he loved our money dearly. But though he would fain have appropriated it all to himself, he found that impossible. In spite of all other restrictions money was always allowed to enter the Bagnio, as it served to maintain the insatiable leeches who surrounded us. We had to pay the chamber-keepers that they might not butcher us, the comiti that they might not persecute us too much, and, finally, to give the largest share to the governor, for permitting the means of paying these bribes to reach our hands. Signor de Francesco had already begun to take a liking to some of the best of our small effects, and when we refused him, on his asking for them, he became much incensed, and watched the proceedings of the inferior officers closely: menacing them with severe punishment if they did us the smallest favour. These threats had at first some effect, but things soon cooled down, for the turnkeys and comiti came to an understanding with each other, and threatened in their turn to denounce the commander to a superior official at Naples. The dispute ended in a compact by which the commander and inferior officers agreed that every wolf had the right of killing whatever sheep came in his way. From that moment a shameless tax was levied on our purses; we had not only to give up the trifling sums we had kept from the money sent us by our families, but had also to submit to be robbed of our best linen. As the spoliation extended to the common prisoners also, a frightful state of insubordination resulted.

In spite of our strong resolve to live out our misfortunes, if we could, now and then one who sank under them was removed from among us to the hospital, never to return. At length we resolved on once more straining every effort to have our governor changed. One of our companions who had powerful friends in Naples, through them, and through the sacrifice of another large sum of money, succeeded in this, and we eagerly looked forward to the hour in which our new ruler was to take command. There had been among us at Procida favourites of fortune, those who got a letter from home, had a small foot, or got a polished chain. The arrival of Acuti at the prison, however, brought with it a terrible change. Were we all to be destroyed by disease, the natural consequences of damp, darkness, want of exercise, and general bad treatment, or by the bastinado, which usually resulted in consumption? Although this kind of punishment had been always designed by Ferdinand as a part of his revenge on us, it had hitherto been generally bought off. When, however, Ferdinand read Mr. Gladstone's letters on his prisons, and heard of the indignation which those letters excited, he sent to the different Bagnios men, to whom he could entrust the strict fulfilment of his order, which was, to seal the prisons up in silence of the grave. Of the result of this new state of things I do not speak now. I only mention, by the way, that at least one-half of my fellow-prisoners died in the hospital, chained to their beds, without the consolation of hearing one kind word addressed to them, or having one compassionate hand to wipe from their brows the cold damp of the death agony. In the hospital extreme measures were resorted to by the priests to induce the political prisoners to confess offences. Instead of speaking of God to the poor dying men, they spoke of the clemency and goodness of Ferdinand, and woe to the unhappy prisoners who displayed their disgust at these panegyrics upon Santa Bomba! Sometimes one was induced to confess, but at other times harsh means were used to force them to do so. To explain myself I will relate what occurred at the death-bed of a certain Vincenzo Sciarrone. This man had several times refused to make his confession, now under one pretext, now under another; but as he approached death the eagerness of the priest became so annoying to him, that he said: "I only confess to God in heaven. You will glean no information from me, spies as you all are of a monster of iniquity."

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These words, although spoken in a low tone, were overheard by the priest, who stood for a moment as if paralysed, but recovering immediately he cast an indignant glance upon the dying man, and said, "Confession is not an act of espionage. You labour under delusions now. Your mind is not as it should be. I shall leave you for a short time until you recover from your present madness." He then withdrew, but a moment afterwards the turnkey entered the room, and, approaching Sciarrone, told him he had scandalised all in the hospital, and he was consequently to be gagged, manacles being also placed on his wrists and a double chain on his feet; to this information he added that he should go now, but only to return in a few minutes. The man, indifferent to all these threats, as he was not yet gagged, told aloud all that had been said to him. The patients then began to remark on the fact that great trouble was taken to obtain the confession of a political prisioner, but little or none to get that of a common criminal. The chaplain, informed of what was passing, again entered the room, and, approaching Sciarrone, said, "If you die without the pale of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, you cannot receive Christian burial. Your body must be food for fishes." A friend of the dying man now asked the chaplain to retire for a moment that he might reason a little with his friend. The priest having withdrawn, after a long argument Vincenzo was prevailed on to make a confession, or rather to pretend to make one to save his family the suffering it would cause them to know that his soul had been cast out of the Church and his body after his death thrown into the sea.

Our new governor was an old and very ugly-looking man, thickly marked by small-pox, with a coarse voice, and a fierce stern aspect. Being bald, he wore a rudely made old wig, which added to the unsightliness of his appearance. He attended mass every morning, remaining on his knees the entire time, having in his hand a long rosary, his lips constantly moving as the beads slipped through his fingers. He also went to confession and received communion very regularly. On his arrival at the prison he proclaimed his orders from the king personally that we should wear the chain constantly by day and night, and that we were to be punished by the bastinado if we tampered with the chain itself. After this he entered the rooms attended by soldiers in order to examine our chains, but he was not satisfied with the close examination of the turnkeys until he himself looked with his hawk's eyes over and over again upon our irons. All the chains which were polished or had wide rings were exchanged for rusty fetters and narrow rings. Woe, then, to him who had the misfortune to get a very close ring fitting tightly on his ankle, as there was now no way to have it exchanged for a looser one. The examination of the chains being finished, he ordered our persons to be strictly and regularly searched. Thinking that the inferior officers might be bribed, he asked and received permission from Naples that some gendarmes should be sent to the Bagnio for the purpose of watching the prisoners as well as the turnkeys themselves. As he had been informed that we occasionally received intelligence, letters, or newspapers from without, he insisted on having everything that passed out or in at the prison searched rigorously. Every visitor went through the same ordeal, being obliged even to take off his boots or shoes. In spite of all this rigour we still found means to hear from our friends, as those officers who did not enjoy the confidence of Acuti did everything in their power to deceive him. But everything done on one day, no matter how privately, was sure to be known the next, through treachery of some false liberals who hoped to escape from prison as the reward of their baseness.

As Acuti, notwithstanding all his caution, was still persuaded that the turnkeys took bribes from us, in spite of his threats, he ordered that no money should reach our hands. This was a mortal blow, as it was money alone which enabled us to obtain some little comfort, moral and physical. We got two sheets of paper once a month, stamped with the prison seal, and had all to write, if we wished to communicate with our friends, on the same day. These letters were so long under official examination that they usually were not delivered within a month. Sometimes the lining of our clothes was removed. Water was measured to us, so that we had scarcely enough to quench our thirst, and could not wash our faces. No day passed on which a political prisoner was not either beaten or sent to Naples to undergo a new trial. A word, a smile, a look, was sufficient to draw down on us Acuti's vengeance. But there is no suffering without some little comfort. Acuti had two daughters, who were to us angels of pity. They did all in their power to baffle their father's plans against us. If he intended to surprise us, they took care to let us know. If he had taken a particular dislike to any one of us, one of those gentle girls warned him to be upon his guard. These little favours were most soothing, for they showed that our miseries were felt at least by some beings upon earth. Under the rigour of this reign of terror we all became afflicted with palpitation of the heart. The very appearance of Acuti seemed to check the heart's action. Our tyrant knew this, and was happy. Ferdinand also receiving information of it, encouraged his vile instrument to persevere in cruelty, and to give him a clear mark of his approbation, changed the commander of the town of Procida, who was not a very cruel man, for another of Acuti's stamp.

The common criminals shared all our indignation. Meanwhile the chamber-keepers, who could not, in consequence of Acuti's prohibiting the entrance of money into the prison, obtain anything from us, stirred up the minds of all against him; the comiti and turnkeys themselves, who were abused as much as we were, longed for his removal. The gendarmes were sick of torturing us, at the caprice of a wicked fool, and the inhabitants of Procida itself were moved at the

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amount of suffering we were compelled to undergo. Chance brought us relief in an odd way. Some chamber-keepers, who had been shut up and separated from their brethren, one day called Acuti to speak to him on their business, urging and entreating him to permit them to mingle again with the prisoners. Acuti not only refused to comply with their wishes, but abused them fiercely. The chamber-keepers, getting angry in their turn, suddenly began to answer him in his own style, calling him "Ugly old dog," "Fox, without tail or hair!" "Mad dog! mad dog! mad dog!" He, growing pale as death, left the place quickly, like a beaten hound. This evidence of our bully's cowardice did not escape the chamber-keepers, so that afterwards, whenever they heard his voice, they began whistling, as if they called a dog, and when he made his appearance the cry was at once raised, "The dog! the dog! out with the dog!" Acuti ceased to enter their rooms. We had thus found where to strike, and it would have been very foolish of us not to get up as we did a universal "Bow wow! bow wow! bow wow! wow! wow!" whenever he came near our part of the Bagnio. From that time many of us took off our chains, and though Acuti knew this he affected ignorance, and it seemed even that he offered us opportunities of freeing ourselves of the manacles. But one day, when almost all the prisoners, political and common, were assembled in the yard and corridor, our tyrant, accompanied by soldiers and gendarmes, entered the Bagnio, and, closing the doors, ordered the prisoners to remain where they were. We had now to pay for our barking.

The strictest examination of the chains having taken place, fifty-six prisoners were selected and set aside. The rest were desired to return to their rooms, while the wretched victims were marched to the slaughter-house, each to receive fifty strokes. The execution of this sentence lasted many hours. The blood of my poor comrades in misfortune was sprinkled around, their screams were incessant. All the women of the neighbourhood shed tears of grief and compassion. The inhabitants of Procida came to entreat the commander to have mercy on them, as the whole town was terrified at the continued cries. The tender-hearted daughters of the tyrant implored with tears his pity. The executioners themselves had neither strength nor inclination to continue the chastisement. But Acuti, remaining totally unmoved, smiled upon his work of blood, tossed his head, smoking a cigar, and placed with his own hand the poor wretches on the fatal frame called the "Cavalletti." It is also worthy of remark that during this entire scene the chaplain stood by the side of the commander. It would be impossible to describe how deeply we, who had escaped, sympathised with and compassionated our luckless friends. But it is certain that all ended in our utterly defying the monster who had tortured them. As they entered pale and bleeding, as if by common consent we all cried aloud: "The dog!" "The tiger!" And in a moment more all was confusion, noise, and the rattle of chains falling on the flags. In a few hours all our fetters were cast off. We then resolved on refusing our daily allowance until a superior officer was sent us from Naples to inquire into our treatment. We took no bread or soup for three days, although Acuti during that time made use of every means in his power to persuade us. When he saw that all was vain, he affected to connive at our escape, so that if we had been silly enough to attempt it, he would have had a fair excuse for butchering us all. He caused the doors of the prison to be left open, and ordered the turnkeys to leave us to ourselves. The soldiers were withdrawn from the interior of the Bagnio. Four boxes full of ball and other munitions of war were placed on the roof, and all was done to induce us to attempt an escape, and give excuse for our destruction. But we remained all silent in our rooms.

The prison was changed into a convent of mutes. At the end of three days, Colonel Flores arrived from Naples to inquire into the cause of the mutiny. Four of the prisoners, two common and two political, whom Acuti pointed out as ringleaders, received one hundred strokes each, and were left insensible on the spot where they had suffered. The two common prisoners, who were chamber-keepers, had been really the leaders of the whole affair. Without making the least inquiry into the truth or falsehood of the statements made by Acuti, the colonel ordered that all the political offenders should be enclosed in one place. It was late at night when our new place of confinement was ready for us, a sort of cellar, into which we were ordered at once to descend, while the common prisoners were directed to ascend by the same staircase. Being chained in couples, we stumbled and fell in all directions. One had his head broken, another his back injured, some hurt their legs, others had their feet crushed, while all were dragged along by their chains, the rattling of which mingled with cries, moans, and oaths. Each of us brought something with him, or endeavoured to do so—a table, a mattress, a jug, a saucepan, a chair, a bench, a basket, or some article of furniture. At this time we had nearly lost our reason. Flores walked up and down the room, smoking a cigar; while Acuti sometimes smiled at our sufferings, and sometimes looked at us threateningly. After about three hours we were got into our new place of suffering. A small greasy lamp cast its dull light upon this filthy den. The walls were broken down in different places, and many of the flags of which the floor was formed were taken up and heaped over each other. Benches were torn from the walls, everywhere were scattered dirty rags, rotten straw, broken jugs, plates, saucepans, or other cooking utensils; but more revolting than all was the pestiferous exhalation from the open cesspools, even worse than any we had hitherto experienced, and the large quantity of filth spread over all the floor upon which we had to arrange our beds. The dim light, the black walls, the smell, the turmoil, the weakness of long starva-

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tion—self-inflicted—changed us into maniacs, so that we fell upon and struck each other without knowing whom or why. But we had also yet to endure a plague, which, though experienced by us daily, had never seemed so horrible as it was during that night. The millions of bugs, which were our most intimate companions, assailed us as if they wished to revenge on our poor limbs their wrath at removal from old quarters.

One good had also arisen from this new evil, namely, that we were all once more reunited and apart from the common prisoners, whose company had always added to the misery of our position. The colonel who had been sent to inquire into the cause of our discontent having done everything he deemed necessary to quiet the excitement in the Bagnio, in order to make some show of doing us justice, announced that he was now ready to receive *in writing* the complaints of all those who had any to make against the commander. But if he was a fox we were not geese. On the news of the mutiny and bastinado reaching Naples, a great noise was made by all the Neapolitans who had relatives, friends, or acquaintances in the prison. Some even went so far as to call upon General Palumbo, who was the General-Inspector of Bagnios. He was himself responsible for all that had been done, but he said in reply that Acuti had bastinadoed the prisoners without knowledge of the superior authorities. A correspondence arose from this statement between the general and Acuti, but the latter, being sustained by Ferdinand himself, remained victorious.

When, therefore, our master found himself secure in his position, he revenged himself by immediately organising a new system of oppression. First, he caused a barrier to be placed about three feet within the grating, at which any of our friends were obliged to stand when they come to visit us, in order to compel us to speak in a loud voice, whatever we might have to say. Two gendarmes being placed beside the prisoner, and two turnkeys beside his relative, every word uttered could be reported. The wife might not embrace her husband nor the mother her son. It was a sad sight to see children stretching out their arms to clasp the necks of their fathers without having the power of doing so. We were not allowed to write more than ten words in our letters, and even then they were frequently torn up. The same rules were applied to the letters of our families, or, as a show of kindness, they were sometimes handed to us after a delay of two months with the principal parts effaced. Fearing that we might make ink, Acuti ordered that no colouring matter should enter the prison. The folds of our linen were opened, all the bottles sent to us uncorked, and the flasks broken lest anything should be concealed in their bottoms. The bastinado, double chains, and other tortures, were inflicted on the slightest excuse. Our wretched effects were upset and searched day and night, while reasons were found every now and then for sending one or other of us to undergo a trial before a court-martial at Naples.

We remained about three years under his control, and were always treated by him with the same barbarity, until some monks, who came to the prison to perform the spiritual exercises, laboured to make peace between us and our cruel jailer; and after much trouble and argument they succeeded in obtaining a promise from him that he would be less harsh, on condition that all the political prisoners should recite the rosary, hear mass, and attend the sacraments. But what really caused his change was an article in a Piedmontese journal, which described him as a monster of iniquity. On reading this he became furious, and cursing Ferdinand for a blind idiot, he made his conduct that of a man who wished to show that what he had heretofore done was not according to his own inclination, but the issue of superior instructions. Our wounds, however, were too new to be healed at once. We hated him utterly. At length, to our inexpressible joy, he was removed from Procida, and a successor full of pity and kindness came in his place. A good old man, named Captain Areta, next took the command, but he was in turn commanded by his secretary, who was not good. Our condition was, however, much improved, and had it not been for the chamber-keeper, who for refusal to give money threatened the lives of twelve of us, I might venture to say that we had a little rest. The captain was again changed for another, who, though severe, was by no means an Acuti. The Jesuits had entered into a compact with Ferdinand, in virtue of which some of the partition walls of our prison were to be repaired, and during the time these repairs lasted we were obliged to breathe dust, to eat dust, to drink dust, which, like a cloud, environed us, till many spat blood, and some eventually died of consumption.

Enough of the monotony of suffering. In such durance as this I remained until 1859, when, as a particular favour, I, with some others, had my sentence commuted into exile for life. But now that tyranny has reaped its own harvest now that Garibaldi has thrown open for ever those horrible political dungeons in which so many good men have been tortured, and "Il Re Galantuomo" has accomplished the work which the Hermit of Caprera had so gloriously begun, Italy is again my country—a country thankful for its children's love.

MR. CHARLES DICKENS'S READINGS.

THE LAST READING THIS SEASON.

On Thursday Evening, June 19th, at St. James's Hall, at 8 o'clock precisely,

Mr. CHARLES DICKENS

Will read, in compliance with many requests, his

CHRISTMAS CAROL,

AND

THE TRIAL FROM PICKWICK.

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHRONICLE OF EVENTS: PRESERVED IN CAPTAIN WRAGGE'S DESPATCH BOX.

IX.

[*Chronicle for June.*]

9th.—I RETURNED yesterday with my information. Here it is, privately noted down for convenience of future reference:

Mr. Noel Vanstone left Brighton yesterday; and removed, for the purpose of transacting business in London, to one of his late father's empty houses in Vauxhall Walk, Lambeth. This singularly mean selection of a place of residence, on the part of a gentleman of fortune, looks as if Mr. N. V. and his money were not easily parted.

Mr. Noel Vanstone has stepped into his father's shoes under the following circumstances. Mr. Michael Vanstone appears to have died, curiously enough, as Mr. Andrew Vanstone died—intestate. With this difference, however, in the two cases, that the younger brother left an informal will, and the elder brother left no will at all. The hardest men have their weaknesses; and Mr. Michael Vanstone's weakness seems to have been an insurmountable horror of contemplating the event of his own death. His son, his housekeeper, and his lawyer, had all three tried, over and over again, to get him to make a will; and had never shaken his obstinate resolution to put off performing the only business-duty he was ever known to neglect. Two doctors attended him, in his last illness; warned him that he was too old a man to hope to get over it; and warned him in vain. He announced his own positive determination not to die. His last words in this world (as I succeeded in discovering from the nurse, who assisted Mrs. Lecount) were, "I'm getting better every minute; send for the fly directly and take me out for a drive." The same night, Death proved to be the more obstinate of the two; and left his son (and only child) to take the property in due course of law. Nobody doubts that the result would have been the same if a will had been made. The father and son had every confidence in each other; and were known to have always lived together on the most friendly terms.

Mrs. Lecount remains with Mr. Noel Vanstone, in the same housekeeping capacity which she filled with his father; and has accompanied him to the new residence in Vauxhall Walk. She is acknowledged on all hands to have been a sufferer by the turn events have taken. If Mr. Michael Vanstone had made his will, there is no doubt she would have received a handsome legacy. She is now left dependent on Mr. Noel Vanstone's sense of gratitude; and she is not at all likely, I should imagine, to let that sense fall asleep for want of a little timely jogging. Whether my fair relative's future intentions in this quarter, point towards Mischief or Money, is more than I can yet say. In either case, I venture a prediction that she will find an awkward obstacle in Mrs. Lecount.

So much for my information to the present date. The manner in which it was received by Miss Vanstone showed the most ungrateful distrust of me. She confided nothing to my private ear, but the expression of her best thanks. A sharp girl—a devilish sharp girl. But there *is* such a thing as bowling a man out once too often; especially when the name of that man happens to be Wragge.

Not a word more about the Entertainment: not a word more about moving from our present quarters. Very good. My right hand lays my left hand a wager. Ten to one, on her opening communications, with the son, as she opened them with the father. Ten to one, on her writing to Noel Vanstone before the month is out.

23rd.—She has written by to-day's post. A long letter apparently—for she put two stamps on the envelope. (Private memorandum, addressed to myself. Wait for the answer.)

22nd, 23rd, 24th.—Private memorandum continued. Wait for the answer.

25th.—The answer has come. As an ex-military man, I have naturally employed stratagem to get at it. The success which rewards all genuine perseverance, has rewarded me—and I have got at it accordingly.

The letter is written, not by Mr. Noel Vanstone, but by Mrs. Lecount. She takes the highest moral ground, in a tone of spiteful politeness. Mr. Noel Vanstone's delicate health and recent bereavement, prevent him from writing himself. Any more letters from Miss Vanstone will be returned unopened. Any personal application, will produce an immediate appeal to the

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protection of the law. Mr. Noel Vanstone, having been expressly cautioned against Miss Magdalen Vanstone, by his late lamented father, has not yet forgotten his father's advice. Considers it a reflection cast on the honoured memory of the best of men to suppose that his course of action towards the Miss Vanstones can be other than the course of action which his father pursued. This is what he has himself instructed Mrs. Lecount to say. She has endeavoured to express herself in the most conciliatory language she could select; she has tried to avoid giving unnecessary pain, by addressing Miss Vanstone (as a matter of courtesy) by the family name; and she trusts these concessions, which speak for themselves, will not be thrown away.—[Such is the substance of the letter,—and so it ends.]

I draw two conclusions from this little document. First—that it will lead to serious mischief. Secondly—that Mrs. Lecount, with all her politeness, is a dangerous woman to deal with. I wish I saw my way safe before me. I don't see it yet.

29th.—Miss Vanstone has abandoned my protection; and the whole lucrative future of the dramatic entertainment has abandoned me with her. I am swindled—I, the last man under Heaven who could possibly have expected to write in those disgraceful terms of himself—I AM SWINDLED!

Let me chronicle the events. They exhibit me, for the time being, in a sadly helpless point of view. But the nature of the man prevails: I must have the events down in black and white.

The announcement of her approaching departure was intimated to me yesterday. After another civil speech about the information I had procured at Brighton, she hinted that there was a necessity for pushing our inquiries a little further. I immediately offered to undertake them, as before. "No," she said; "they are not in your way this time. They are inquiries relating to a woman; and I mean to make them myself!" Feeling privately convinced that this new resolution pointed straight at Mrs. Lecount, I tried a few innocent questions on the subject. She quietly declined to answer them. I asked next, when she proposed to leave. She would leave on the twenty-eighth. For what destination? London. For long? Probably not. By herself? No. With me? No. With whom then? With Mrs. Wragge, if I had no objection. Good Heavens! for what possible purpose? For the purpose of getting a respectable lodging, which she could hardly expect to accomplish unless she was accompanied by an elderly female friend. And was I, in the capacity of elderly male friend, to be left out of the business altogether? Impossible to say at present. Was I not even to forward any letters which might come for her at our present address? No: she would make the arrangement herself at the post-office; and she would ask me, at the same time, for an address, at which I could receive a letter from her, in case of necessity for future communication. Further inquiries, after this last answer, could lead to nothing but waste of time. I saved time by putting no more questions.

It was clear to me, that our present position towards each other was what our position had been, previously to the event of Michael Vanstone's death. I returned, as before, to my choice of alternatives. Which way did my private interests point? Towards trusting the chance of her wanting me again? Towards threatening her with the interference of her relatives and friends? Or towards making the information which I possessed a marketable commodity between the wealthy branch of the family and myself? The last of the three was the alternative I had chosen in the case of the father. I chose it once more in the case of the son.

The train started for London nearly four hours since, and took her away in it, accompanied by Mrs. Wragge. My wife is far too great a fool, poor soul, to be actively valuable in the present emergency; but she will be passively useful in keeping up Miss Vanstone's connexion with me—and, in consideration of that circumstance, I consent to brush my own trousers, shave my own chin, and submit to the other inconveniences of waiting on myself for a limited period. Any faint glimmerings of sense which Mrs. Wragge may have formerly possessed, appear to have now finally taken their leave of her. On receiving permission to go to London, she favoured us immediately with two inquiries. Might she do some shopping? and might she leave the cookery-book behind her? Miss Vanstone said, Yes, to one question; and I said, Yes, to the other—and from that moment, Mrs. Wragge has existed in a state of perpetual laughter. I am still hoarse with vainly-repeated applications of vocal stimulant; and I left her in the railway carriage, to my inexpressible disgust, with *both* shoes down at heel. Under ordinary circumstances, these absurd particulars would not have dwelt on my memory. But, as matters actually stand, my unfortunate wife's imbecility may, in her present position, lead to consequences which we none of us foresee. She is nothing more or less than a grown-up child; and I can plainly detect that Miss Vanstone trusts her, as she would not have trusted a sharper woman, on that very account. I know children, little and big, rather better than my fair relative does, and I say—beware of all forms of human innocence, when it happens to be your interest to keep a secret to yourself.

Let me return to business. Here I am, at two o'clock on a fine summer's afternoon, left entirely alone, to consider the safest means of approaching Mr. Noel Vanstone, on my own account. My private suspicions of his miserly character produce no discouraging effect on me. I have extracted cheering pecuniary results in my time from people quite as fond of their money as he can be. The real difficulty to contend with is the obstacle of Mrs. Lecount. If I am not mis-

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taken, this lady merits a little serious consideration on my part. I will close my chronicle for to-day, and give Mrs. Lecount her due.

Three o'clock.—I open these pages again, to record a discovery which has taken me entirely by surprise.

After completing the last entry, a circumstance revived in my memory, which I had noticed on escorting the ladies this morning to the railway. I then remarked that Miss Vanstone had only taken one of her three boxes with her—and it now occurred to me that a private investigation of the luggage she had left behind, might possibly be attended with beneficial results. Having, at certain periods of my life, been in the habit of cultivating friendly terms with strange locks, I found no difficulty in establishing myself on a familiar footing with Miss Vanstone's boxes. One of the two presented nothing to interest me. The other—devoted to the preservation of the costumes, articles of toilette, and other properties used in the dramatic Entertainment—proved to be better worth examining: for it led me straight to the discovery of one of its owner's secrets.

I found all the dresses in the box complete—with one remarkable exception. That exception was the dress of the old North-country lady; the character which I have already mentioned as the best of all my pupil's disguises, and as modelled in voice and manner on her old governess, Miss Garth. The wig; the eyebrows; the bonnet and veil; the cloak, padded inside to disfigure her back and shoulders; the paints and cosmetics used to age her face and alter her complexion—were all gone. Nothing but the gown remained; a gaudily flowered silk, useful enough for dramatic purposes, but too extravagant in colour and pattern to bear inspection by daylight. The other parts of the dress are sufficiently quiet to pass muster; the bonnet and veil are only old fashioned, and the cloak is of a sober grey colour. But one plain inference can be drawn from such a discovery as this. As certainly as I sit here, she is going to open the campaign against Noel Vanstone and Mrs. Lecount, in a character which neither of those two persons can have any possible reason for suspecting at the outset—the character of Miss Garth.

What course am I to take under these circumstances? Having got her secret, what am I to do with it? These are awkward considerations; I am rather puzzled how to deal with them.

It is something more than the mere fact of her choosing to disguise herself to forward her own private ends, that causes my present perplexity. Hundreds of girls take fancies for disguising themselves; and hundreds of instances of it are related, year after year, in the public journals. But my ex-pupil is not to be confounded, for one moment, with the average adventuress of the newspapers. She is capable of going a long way beyond the limit of dressing herself like a man, and imitating a man's voice and manner. She has a natural gift for assuming characters, which I have never seen equalled by a woman; and she has performed in public until she has felt her own power, and trained her talent for disguising herself to the highest pitch. A girl who takes the sharpest people unawares by using such a capacity as this to help her own objects in private life; and who sharpens that capacity by a determination to fight her way to her own purpose which has beaten down everything before it, up to this time—is a girl who tries an experiment in deception, new enough and dangerous enough to lead, one way or the other, to very serious results. This is my conviction, founded on a large experience in the art of imposing on my fellow-creatures. I say of my fair relative's enterprise what I never said or thought of it till I introduced myself to the inside of her box. The chances for and against her winning the fight for her lost fortune are now so evenly balanced, that I cannot for the life of me see on which side the scale inclines. All I can discern is, that it will, to a dead certainty, turn one way or the other, on the day when she passes Noel Vanstone's doors in disguise.

[Which way do my interests point now? Upon my honour, I don't know.]

Five o'clock.—I have effected a masterly compromise; I have decided on turning myself into a Jack-on-both-sides.

By to-day's post I have despatched to London an anonymous letter for Mr. Noel Vanstone. It will be forwarded to its destination by the same means which I successfully adopted to mystify Mr. Pendril; and it will reach Vauxhall Walk, Lambeth, by the afternoon of to-morrow, at the latest.

The letter is short, and to the purpose. It warns Mr. Noel Vanstone, in the most alarming language, that he is destined to become the victim of a conspiracy; and that the prime mover of it is a young lady who has already held written communication with his father and himself. It offers him the information necessary to secure his own safety, on condition that he makes it worth the writer's while to run the serious personal risk which such a disclosure will entail on him. And it ends by stipulating that the answer shall be advertised in the Times; shall be addressed to "An Unknown Friend;" and shall state plainly what remuneration Mr. Noel Vanstone offers for the priceless service which it is proposed to render him.

Unless some unexpected complication occurs, this letter places me exactly in the position which it is my present interest to occupy. If the advertisement appears, and if the remuneration offered is large enough to justify me in going over to the camp of the enemy, over I go. If no advertisement appears, or if Mr. Noel Vanstone rates my invaluable assistance at too low a figure, here I remain, biding my time till my fair relative wants me—or till I make her want me, which comes to the same thing. If the anonymous letter falls by any accident into her hands, she will find disparaging allusions in it to myself, purposely in-

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troduced to suggest that the writer must be one of the persons whom I addressed, while conducting her inquiries. If Mrs. Lecount takes the business in hand, and lays a trap for me—I decline her tempting invitation, by becoming totally ignorant of the whole affair the instant any second person appears in it. Let the end come as it may, here I am ready to profit by it: here I am, facing both ways, with perfect ease and security—a moral agriculturalist, with his eye on two crops at once, and his swindler's sickle ready for any emergency.

For the next week to come, the newspaper will be more interesting to me than ever. I wonder which side I shall eventually belong to?

THE THIRD SCENE.

Vauxhall Walk, Lambeth.

CHAPTER I.

The old Archiepiscopal Palace of Lambeth, on the southern bank of the Thames—with its Bishop's Walk and Garden, and its terrace fronting the river—is an architectural relic of the London of former times, precious to all lovers of the picturesque, in the utilitarian London of the present day. Southward of this venerable structure lies the street labyrinth of Lambeth; and nearly mid-way in that part of the maze of houses which is placed nearest to the river, runs the dingy double row of buildings, now, as in former days, known by the name of Vauxhall Walk.

The network of dismal streets stretching over the surrounding neighbourhood, contains a population, for the most part of the poorer order. In the thoroughfares where shops abound, the sordid struggle with poverty shows itself unreservedly on the filthy pavement; gathers its forces through the week; and, strengthening to a tumult on Saturday night, sees the Sunday morning dawn in murky gaslight. Miserable women, whose faces never smile, haunt the butchers' shops in such London localities as these, with relics of the men's wages saved from the public-house, clutched fast in their hands, with eyes that devour the meat they dare not buy, with eager fingers that touch it covetously, as the fingers of their richer sisters touch a precious stone. In this district, as in other districts remote from the wealthy quarters of the metropolis, the hideous London vagabond—with the filth of the street outmatched in his speech, with the mud of the street outdirtied in his clothes—lounges, lowering and brutal, at the street corner and the gin-shop door; the public disgrace of his country, the unheeded warning of social troubles that are yet to come. Here, the loud self-assertion of Modern Progress—which has reformed so much in manners, and altered so little in men—meets the flat contradiction that scatters its pretensions to the winds. Here, while the national prosperity feasts, like another Belshazzar, on the spectacle of its own magnificence, is the Writing on the Wall, which warns the monarch, Money, that his glory is weighed in the balance, and his power found wanting.

Situated in such a neighbourhood as this, Vauxhall Walk gains by comparison, and establishes claims to respectability which no impartial observation can fail to recognise. A large proportion of the Walk is still composed of private houses. In the scattered situations where shops appear, those shops are not besieged by the crowds of more populous thoroughfares. Commerce is not turbulent, nor is the public consumer besieged by loud invitations to "buy." Bird-fanciers have sought the congenial tranquillity of the scene; and pigeons coo, and canaries twitter, in Vauxhall Walk. Second-hand carts and cabs, bedsteads of a certain age, detached carriage-wheels for those who may want one to make up a set, are all to be found here in the same repository. One tributary stream in the great flood of gas which illuminates London, tracks its parent source to Works established in this locality. Here, the followers of John Wesley have set up a temple, built before the period of Methodist conversion to the principles of architectural religion. And here — most striking object of all—on the site where thousands of lights once sparkled; where sweet sounds of music made night tuneful till morning dawned; where the beauty and fashion of London feasted and danced through the summer seasons of a century—spreads, at this day, an awful wilderness of mud and rubbish; the deserted dead body of Vauxhall Gardens mouldering in the open air.

On the same day when Captain Wragge completed the last entry in his Chronicle of Events, a woman appeared at the window of one of the houses in Vauxhall Walk, and removed from the glass a printed paper which had been wafered to it, announcing that Apartments were to be let. The apartments consisted of two rooms on the first floor. They had just been taken for a week certain, by two ladies who had paid in advance—those two ladies being Magdalen and Mrs. Wragge.

As soon as the mistress of the house had left the room, Magdalen walked to the window, and cautiously looked out from it at the row of buildings opposite. They were of superior pretensions in size and appearance to the other houses in the Walk: the date at which they had been erected was inscribed on one of them, and was stated to be the year 1759. They stood back from the pavement, separated from it by little strips of garden-ground. This peculiarity of position, added to the breadth of the roadway interposing between them and the smaller houses opposite, made it impossible for Magdalen to see the numbers on the doors, or to observe more of any one who might come to the windows, than the bare general outline of dress and figure. Nevertheless, there she stood, anxiously fixing her eyes on one house in the row, nearly opposite to her—the house she had looked for before entering the lodgings; the house inhabited at that moment by Noel Vanstone and Mrs. Lecount.

After keeping watch at the window, in silence,

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for ten minutes or more, she suddenly looked back into the room, to observe the effect which her behaviour might have produced on her travelling companion.

Not the slightest cause appeared for any apprehension in that quarter. Mrs. Wragge was seated at the table, absorbed in the arrangement of a series of smart circulars and tempting price-lists, issued by advertising tradespeople, and flung in at the cab-windows as they left the London terminus. "I've often heard tell of light reading," said Mrs. Wragge, restlessly shifting the positions of the circulars, as a child restlessly shifts the positions of a new set of toys. "Here's light reading, printed in pretty colours. Here's all the Things I'm going to buy when I'm out shopping to-morrow. Lend us a pencil, please—you won't be angry, will you?—I do so want to mark 'em off." She looked up at Magdalen, chuckled joyfully over her own altered circumstances, and beat her great hands on the table in irrepressible delight. "No cookery-book!" cried Mrs. Wragge. "No Buzzing in my head! no Captain to shave to-morrow! I'm all down at heel; my cap's on one side; and nobody bawls at me. My heart alive, here *is* a holiday and no mistake!" Her hands began to drum again on the table louder than ever, until Magdalen quieted them by presenting her with a pencil. Mrs. Wragge instantly recovered her dignity, squared her elbows on the table, and plunged into imaginary shopping for the rest of the evening.

Magdalen returned to the window. She took a chair, seated herself behind the curtain, and steadily fixed her eyes once more on the house opposite.

The blinds were down over the windows of the first floor and the second. The window of the room on the ground floor was uncovered and partly open, but no living creature came near it. Doors opened, and people came and went, in the houses on either side; children by the dozen poured out on the pavement to play, and invaded the little strips of garden-ground to recover lost balls and shuttlecocks; streams of people passed backwards and forwards perpetually; heavy waggons piled high with goods, lumbered along the road, on their way to, or their way from, the railway station near; all the daily life of the district stirred with its ceaseless activity, in every direction but one. The hours passed—and there was the house opposite, still shut up, still void of any signs of human existence, inside or out. The one object which had decided Magdalen on personally venturing herself in Vauxhall Walk—the object of studying the looks, manners, and habits of Mrs. Lecount and her master from a post of observation known only to herself—was, thus far, utterly defeated. After three hours' watching at the window, she had not even discovered enough to show her that the house was inhabited at all.

Shortly after six o'clock, the landlady disturbed Mrs. Wragge's studies by spreading the cloth for dinner. Magdalen placed herself at the table, in a position which still enabled her to command the view from the window. Nothing happened. The dinner came to an end; Mrs. Wragge (lulled by the narcotic influences of annotating circulars and eating and drinking with an appetite sharpened by the captain's absence) withdrew to an arm-chair, and fell asleep in an attitude which would have caused her husband the acutest mental suffering; seven o'clock struck; the shadows of the summer evening lengthened stealthily on the grey pavement and the brown house-walls—and still the closed door opposite remained shut; still the one window open, showed nothing but the black blank of the room inside, lifeless and changeless as if that room had been a tomb.

Mrs. Wragge's meek snoring deepened in tone; the evening wore on drearily; it was close on eight o'clock—when an event happened at last. The street-door opposite opened for the first time, and a woman appeared on the threshold.

Was the woman Mrs. Lecount? No. As she came nearer, her dress showed her to be a servant. She had a large door-key in her hand, and was evidently going out to perform an errand. Roused, partly by curiosity—partly by the impulse of the moment, which urged her impetuous nature into action, after the passive endurance of many hours past—Magdalen snatched up her bonnet, and determined to follow the servant to her destination, wherever it might be.

The woman led her to the great thoroughfare of shops close at hand, called Lambeth Walk. After proceeding some little distance, and looking about her with the hesitation of a person not well acquainted with the neighbourhood, the servant crossed the road, and entered a stationer's shop. Magdalen crossed the road after her, and followed her in.

The inevitable delay in entering the shop, under these circumstances, made Magdalen too late to hear what the woman asked for. The first words spoken, however, by the man behind the counter, reached her ears, and informed her that the servant's object was to buy a railway Guide.

"Do you mean a Guide for this month? or a Guide for July?" asked the shopman, addressing his customer.

"Master didn't tell me which," answered the woman. "All I know is, he's going into the country the day after to-morrow."

"The day after to-morrow is the first of July," said the shopman. "The Guide your master wants, is the Guide for the new month. It won't be published till to-morrow."

Engaging to call again on the next day, the servant left the shop, and took the way that led back to Vauxhall Walk.

Magdalen purchased the first trifle she saw on the counter, and hastily returned in the same direction. The discovery she had just made was of very serious importance to her; and she felt the necessity of acting on it with as little delay as possible.

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On entering the front room at the lodgings, she found Mrs. Wragge just awake, lost in drowsy bewilderment, with her cap fallen off on her shoulders, and with one of her shoes missing altogether. Magdalen endeavoured to persuade her that she was tired after her journey, and that her wisest proceeding would be to go to bed. Mrs. Wragge was perfectly willing to profit by this suggestion, provided she could find her shoe first. In looking for the shoe, she unfortunately discovered the circulars, put by on a side-table; and forthwith recovered her recollection of the earlier proceedings of the evening.

"Give us the pencil," said Mrs. Wragge, shuffling the circulars in a violent hurry. "I can't go to bed yet—I haven't half done marking down the things I want. Let's see; where did I leave off? *Try Finch's feeding-bottle for Infants.* No! there's a cross against that: the cross means I don't want it. *Comfort in the Field. Buckler's Indestructible Hunting Breeches.* Oh dear, dear! I've lost the place. No, I haven't! Here it is; here's my mark against it. *Elegant Cashmere Robes; strictly oriental, very grand; reduced to one pound, nineteen, and sixpence. Be in time. Only three left.* Only three! Oh, do lend us the money, and let's go and get one!"

"Not to-night," said Magdalen. "Suppose you go to bed now, and finish the circulars to-morrow? I will put them by the bedside for you; and you can go on with them as soon as you wake, the first thing in the morning."

This suggestion met with Mrs. Wragge's immediate approval. Magdalen took her into the next room, and put her to bed like a child—with her toys by her side. The room was so narrow, and the bed was so small; and Mrs. Wragge, arrayed in the white apparel proper for the occasion—with her moon-face framed round by a spacious halo of nightcap—looked so hugely and disproportionately large, that Magdalen, anxious as she was, could not repress a smile on taking leave of her travelling companion for the night.

"Aha!" cried Mrs. Wragge, cheerfully; "we'll have that Cashmere Robe to-morrow. Come here! I want to whisper something to you. Just you look at me—I'm going to sleep crooked, and the captain's not here to bawl at me!"

The front room at the lodgings contained a sofa-bedstead, which the landlady arranged betimes for the night. This done, and the candles brought in, Magdalen was left alone to shape her future course as her own thoughts counselled her.

The questions and answers which had passed in her presence that evening, at the stationer's shop, led plainly to the conclusion that one day more would bring Noel Vanstone's present term of residence in Vauxhall Walk to an end. Her first cautious resolution to pass many days together in unsuspected observation of the house opposite, before she ventured herself inside, was entirely frustrated by the turn events had taken. She was placed in the dilemma of running all risks headlong on the next day—or of pausing for a future opportunity, which might never occur. There was no middle course open to her. Until she had seen Noel Vanstone with her own eyes, and had discovered the worst there was to fear from Mrs. Lecount—until she had achieved this double object, with the needful precaution of keeping her own identity carefully in the dark—not a step could she advance towards the accomplishment of the purpose which had brought her to London.

One after another, the minutes of the night passed away; one after another, the thronging thoughts followed each other over her mind—and still she reached no conclusion; still she faltered and doubted, with a hesitation new to her in her experience of herself. At last she crossed the room impatiently, to seek the trivial relief of unlocking her trunk, and taking from it the few things that she wanted for the night. Captain Wragge's suspicions had not misled him. There, hidden between two dresses, were the articles of costume which he had missed from her box at Birmingham. She turned them over one by one, to satisfy herself that nothing she wanted had been forgotten, and returned once more to her post of observation by the window.

The house opposite was dark down to the parlour. There, the blind, previously raised, was now drawn over the window: the light burning behind it, showed her for the first time that the room was inhabited. Her eyes brightened, and her colour rose as she looked at it.

"There he is!" she said to herself, in a low angry whisper. "There he lives on our money, in the house that his father's warning has closed against me!" She dropped the blind which she had raised to look out; returned to her trunk; and took from it the grey wig which was part of her dramatic costume, in the character of the North-country lady. The wig had been crumpled in packing: she put it on, and went to the toilette-table to comb it out. "His father has warned him against Magdalen Vanstone," she said, repeating the passage in Mrs. Lecount's letter, and laughing bitterly as she looked at herself in the glass. "I wonder whether his father has warned him against Miss Garth? To-morrow is sooner than I bargained for. No matter: to-morrow shall show."

THE ROYAL MARRIAGE ACT.

Long sunshine to the marriage between an English princess and the nephew of the Grand Duke of Hesse Darmstadt! Doubtless there is all reason why their union should be a happy one, true though it be that the married happiness of English princes and princesses must come in spite—not because of—the Royal Marriage Act: an act against which it is quite time that somebody should protest as a shackle on royalty that we can all—princes and people—very well afford to strike off.

Little more than a century has passed since

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George the Third came to the throne now graced by his granddaughter, whose territories have been acquired by the energy of England; not one acre of them do we derive from our German connexions. It was the boast of the young king, on his accession, that he was the first of his house who had been "born and bred a Briton." Educated by his mother, a princess of Saxe Gotha who had been trained in the belief, dominant still in one Prussian head, that a German potentate is the divine master of his people, he inherited his disposition to take more than a fair share of power. The great use of the Whig party in those days, was, that it distinctly fought, on behalf of the constitutional rights of the people, the most necessary battle against all undue stretching of the king's prerogatives. As Elector of Hanover, King George was a member of that confederation of princes forming the Germanic empire. The supremacy in this empire was not acquired by hereditary descent; it was elective; and its chosen head assumed to wear the diadem of the Cæsars, as successor to the Emperors of Ancient Rome. It was one of the rights—or wrongs—attached to that sovereignty, that when a prince of the empire married a lady of inferior rank, she was denied her husband's title, and her children also were denied the right of succession, if she married without the sanction of an imperial patent. That provision can be traced to the military policy of the northern conquerors, adopted from the barbarous code of their Teutonic ancestors; and it was submitted to by the Germanic sovereigns, because the reward of submission was a voice in the election of the emperor, and a personal right of elevation to the same high office. Still, we are assured by Gibbon that the first Duke of Brunswick and Lunenberg was rather degraded than adorned by his newly acquired title of Elector of Hanover, since it imposed the obligation of feudal service on his free and patrimonial estates. From the restraint on the laws of nature resulting from the exercise of that prerogative of patent-granting, arose what was called the Morganatic Marriage—a ceremonial in which a German prince took to his wife a woman of inferior rank by giving her his left hand instead of his right: in sign that she, while accepting that hand, should not rise to her husband's station, and that the children of the marriage, though legitimate by birth, were to be bastardised as to inheritance. Such a marriage was called morganatic because the morganatica or dowry paid on the wedding morning was held to be payment in lieu of all other property right.

It was one of the feudal wrongs which drove the Norman barons to revolt in the days of John, that the heir was forced to marry according to the choice of his lord. That restriction was modified by the great charter which the barons wrung from the dejected tyrant at Runnymede. A system of bondage originally perhaps derived from the Hebrews, was, nevertheless, by a forced construction of that title to our liberties, retained in the control exercised by the great lords over the villeins on their domains. It continued to be one of the distinctive badges of serfdom in the few despotic countries where serfdom prevailed. It is still a badge of slavery in the Southern American States, that the owner is entitled to exercise over his slave's marriage the same control that he has over the pairing of the inferior animals on his estates.

In the reign of Charles the Second, hereditary feuds were extinguished in England, and the last remnant ceased on the abolition of the Court of Wards. One of the earliest acts of our first Hanoverian sovereign, George the First, was to revive, in 1717, the claim of wardship over his grandchildren, to the exclusion of their father. Adopting that example, George the Third introduced into the laws of England a control to which he was himself subject only as an electoral prince within his Hanoverian states; this being, in fact, the only change in its law that England has ever derived from Germany. It is a control which, disregarding natural attachments and remote degrees of relationship, seeks to prohibit the marriages of *all* descendants of royal blood without the previous express assent of the sovereign, and, in the event of the solemnisation of such contract, empowers human prejudice and human passion to annul a rite, sanctified by divine authority, and brand with degradation the unborn. The admonition of ages was disregarded, that families with progenitors of aristocratic exclusiveness, "the tenth transmitters of a foolish face," first dwindling into sterility, have died out from exhaustion, and that the periodical infusion of new blood into alliances is an essential element in the vigorous perpetuation of the human race.

The project of the Royal Marriage Act was first announced by a message from the throne to parliament on the 20th of February, 1772, demanding some new provision more effectually to guard the descendants of George the Second, other than the issue of princesses who have married or may hereafter marry into *foreign* families, from marrying without the approbation of the crown. In a private letter of the 26th of that month to Lord North, then prime minister, the king—whose chief characteristic was unbending obstinacy—gave the following very distinct monitory intimation of his purpose: "I expect every nerve to be strained to carry the bill. It is not a question of administration, but personal to myself; and therefore I have a right to expect a hearty support from every one in my service, and I shall remember defaulters." He resolved to follow up this declaration; for, in a subsequent letter of the 14th of March to the same minister, he thus expressed himself: "I wish a list could be prepared of those that went away, and of those that deserted to the minority on division. That would be the rule of my conduct in the drawing-room to-morrow." The rule of conduct thus avowed was rigidly observed in hostility through life to Mr. Fox, who resisted the measure; and we are assured

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by Horace Walpole that "his implacability against those who opposed the Marriage Act proves it is his own act." Forced upon an obsequious minister, the measure was subsequently wrung out of a servile parliament.

The arbitrary instincts of the king had been excited and roused into action by the singular domestic relations of his royal brothers. Among other peculiarities, it is perhaps remarkable that widows have been in general preferred by princes of the house of Brunswick. Edward Augustus Duke of York, the eldest brother, died in 1767 at Monaco, then in Italy but now in France. It was believed by many that he had formed an attachment for, and was bound either by a secret marriage or a solemn pledge to, the Lady Mary Coke, one of the Campbell sisters, a daughter and co-heiress of John, the celebrated Duke of Argyll. The fair widow of Edward Viscount Coke, eldest son of the then Earl of Leicester, considered herself married to the eldest of the royal dukes, subscribed her name in the regal style, and on his death wore widow's weeds.

The marriage of the king's second brother, William Henry Duke of Gloucester, with Maria Countess Dowager of Waldegrave, had been secretly solemnised in 1766, and although suspected or perhaps known, had not been publicly avowed. In the position of the royal duke and his duchess there were some remarkable features. The title of Waldegrave was a creation of James the Second in the person of Sir Henry Waldegrave, Baronet, who, in 1686, became Baron Waldegrave. He had married Henrietta Fitz-James, a daughter of the king by Arabella Churchill, sister of the great Duke of Marlborough, and Henrietta was sister to the celebrated James Fitz-James Duke of Berwick. The young Lord Waldegrave, having embraced the religion of the exiled king, followed his fortunes to France, where he died in 1689, leaving his widow with an only son, James, who succeeded to his father's title. He attached himself to the rising fortunes of the house of Churchill, and abandoned the faith of the fallen Stuarts. Reproached in after-life for this abandonment by his uncle the Duke of Berwick—"Was it not from worldly motives that you conformed? Come, confess it?" The young lord replied, "It was to avoid confession, your grace, that I became a Protestant!" He was created Earl of Waldegrave in 1729, and it was his son James, the second earl, great-grandson of James the Second, who became by the changes and revenges brought about by time, the governor of George the Third during his minority as Prince of Wales, and, before that sovereign's accession to the throne, prime minister of England. When rather advanced in life, he married, in 1759, Maria Walpole, the illegitimate daughter of Sir Edward Walpole, Baronet, second son of the great minister Sir Robert. Maria Walpole was many years younger than her husband, and Horace Walpole, who invariably expresses for his niece the affection of a father, thus describes her: "Maria is beauty itself; her face, bloom, eyes, hair, teeth, are all perfect. You may imagine how charming she is, when her only fault, if one must find one, is, that her face is rather too round, and she has a great deal of wit and vivacity, with perfect modesty." The earl died in 1763, leaving three daughters by his widow; and although she dedicated to his memory a laudatory epitaph, in which she subscribed herself as "the once happy wife, and now the remembrancer of his virtues," the title of Duchess of Gloucester very naturally weaned her from her sorrows.

The third brother of the king, Henry Frederick Duke of Cumberland, was only remarkable for the profligacy of his career, and the libertinism of his amours, without any of those qualities which in some eyes render libertinism attractive. In 1820 the British public were startled by an announcement headed, "Discovery of a Royal Princess." A person of the name of Olive or Olivia Wilmot Serres pretended to be the offspring of a private marriage alleged to have taken place in 1767 between the Duke of Cumberland and Olivia Wilmot, who was said to have been the daughter of a clergyman of that name. As the date fixed for this union, if there were any foundation for the story, was prior to the Royal Marriage Act, the issue, if any, would have been legitimate. This impudent attempt to imitate the Perkin Warbeck imposition, was sought to be sustained by documents apparently bearing the signatures of eminent public characters, then dead. The entire deception and the fabrication of the papers were triumphantly exposed on the 18th of June, 1823, by the late Sir Robert Peel, in parliament. The pretender turned out to be the daughter of a house-painter in Warwick, and to have been baptised in the parish church of that borough on the 15th of April, 1772, as the daughter of Robert and Mary Ann Wilmot. This woman also put forward pretensions to be a Polish princess, alleging that her mother had been the legitimate daughter of Stanislaus, who had been placed by Charles the Twelfth on the throne of Poland, and consequently sister of Marie Leskinski, the queen of Louis the Fifteenth of France. There was of course as little reality in this claim as in the other. The Duke of Cumberland's chief reputation was earned as defendant in 1770 in an action for the seduction of the young wife of Richard Lord Grosvenor, in which the damages were assessed at ten thousand pounds. The infidelities of the lord were held to palliate the offence of the lady, and we are assured by Horace Walpole, that so far from the result being deemed a dishonour by either, it seemed uncertain which was the more proud of the distinction—the husband or the wife. The heartless abandonment of this victim for the wife of a rich city merchant, speedily followed. She also was in turn deserted, and the indignation of the king was aroused by public announcement of this brother's marriage on the 2nd of October, 1771: a step which was said to be the only virtuous act of his life. It was first announced in the Public Advertiser by a note from Junius, under the heading—"Intelligence

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extraordinary, though true." "This match, we are informed, was negotiated by a certain duke and his cream-coloured parasite by way of reward to Colonel Luttrell. It is now, happily for this country, within the limits of possibility that a Luttrell may be king of Great Britain." The lady thus elevated to the title of Her Royal Highness was the daughter of Simon Luttrell, and the widow of Colonel Christopher Horton, of Catton Hall, Derbyshire. Her father had been created, in 1768, Baron Irnham, in the peerage of Ireland, and was, after the alliance of his family with royalty, raised to the dignity of Earl Carhampton. Horace Walpole thus describes the royal bride: "The new princess of the blood is a young widow of twenty-four, extremely pretty, not handsome, very well made, with the most amorous eyes in the world, and eyelashes a yard long—coquette beyond measure, artful as Cleopatra, and completely mistress of all her passions and projects. Indeed, eyelashes three-quarters of a yard shorter would have served to conquer such a head as she has turned. I need not hint to you how unfortunate an event this is at the present moment, and how terribly it clashes with the situation of another person whom I most heartily pity, and whom I did all I could to preserve from falling into so cruel a position."

The family to which this new duchess belonged was in the worst repute. We have the authority of Sir Robert Heron, Baronet, in his published Notes, that "Lady Elizabeth Luttrell resided with her sister, the Duchess of Cumberland, played high, and cheated much. She was commonly called the Princess Elizabeth. On the death of her sister, in 1809, she was thrown into jail; there she gave a hairdresser fifty pounds to marry her; her debts then becoming his, she was discharged. She went abroad, where she descended still lower and lower, until being convicted of picking pockets at Augsburg, she was condemned to clean the streets, chained to a wheelbarrow. In that miserable state she terminated her existence by poison."

The king, then, had from his brothers strong provocation to the personal feeling with which he urged the passing of the Royal Marriage Act. But during the last ninety years great, indeed, have been the changes for the better in the tone of English society. In no class has the improvement been more marked than in the very highest, which the perpetuation of this measure tends peculiarly to degrade.

The king's anger did not deter the Duke of Gloucester from avowing as his consort the Countess Dowager of Waldegrave, whom he had previously espoused. That avowal was first made in a letter from the lady to her father, a letter worthy of an English wife:

St. Leonards, May 19th, 1772.

My dear and ever Honoured Sir,—You cannot easily imagine how much every past affliction has been increased to me, by not being at liberty to make you *quite* easy. The duty to a husband being superior to that we owe to a father, I hope will plead my pardon, and that instead of blaming my past reserve you will consider it commendable.

When the Duke of Gloucester married me (which was in September, 1766), I promised him on no consideration in the world to own it, *even to you*, without his permission, which permission I never had till yesterday, when he arrived here in much better health and looks than I ever saw him; yet, as you may suppose, much hurt at all that has passed in his absence; so much so, that I have had great difficulty to prevail upon him to let things as much as possible remain as they are. To secure *my* character, without injuring *his*, is the utmost of my wishes; and I dare say you and all my relations will agree with me, that I shall be much happier to be called Lady Waldegrave, and respected as the Duchess of Gloucester, than to feel myself the cause of his leading such a life as his brother does, in order for me to be called your royal highness. I am prepared for the sort of abuse the newspapers will be full of. Very few people will believe that a woman will refuse to be called princess, if in her power!

To have the power is my pride; and not using it in some measure pays the debt I owe the duke for the honour he has done me.

All I wish of my relations is, that they will show the world that they are satisfied with my conduct, yet *seem* to disguise their reasons.

If ever I am unfortunate enough to be called Duchess of Gloucester, there is an end of almost all the comforts which I now enjoy, which, if things go on as they now are, are many.

Your most affectionate and dutiful daughter,

M. G.

Her father, while enclosing a copy of it to Horace Walpole, characterised the letter, "as one of the sweetest samples of sense, language, and goodness of heart, that I ever saw." His brother avows that, until he read it, he had withheld his approval, being too much of a courtier to wound the pride of the king. He thus describes his sensations on its perusal: "I sent my brother word that I had been ready to kiss his daughter's hand, but that I was now ready to kiss her feet. It struck me with astonishment, admiration, and tenderness, and, I confess, with shame. How mean did my prudence appear compared with hers, which was void of all personal consideration, but her honour. What proper spirit, what amiable concern for and gratitude to her husband; what scorn of the Duke of Cumberland, of rank, of malice, and (at least implied) of the king and his power! What sense in her conduct! I have always thought that feeling bestows the most sublime eloquence!" On the public announcement of their nuptials, the two royal brothers and their consorts were summarily banished from the court.

The choice of Charlotte Sophia, a daughter of the house of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, as a consort for George the Third, did not exhibit a very refined sense of female loveliness in those to whom the selection had been confided. When the intended bride saw the Duchesses of Hamilton and Ancaster, two of the most brilliant beauties of the day, who had been sent to accompany her to England, conscious of the possession of no such attractions, and abashed by the contrast, she in-

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quired, "Are all the ladies of England as beautiful as you?" Court gossip had apprised her that her intended lord had already tendered his heart to a subject—the most beautiful girl of the day—the Lady Sarah Lennox, daughter of a ducal house, in whose veins flowed the blood of the Stuarts. The future mother of the Napiers would have been a consort worthy of a sovereign. Her son, Sir William Napier, the historian of the Peninsular wars of Wellington, in his memoirs of his brother Charles, the conqueror of Scinde, states that, "When scarcely eighteen years of age, George the Third offered her his hand. She refused; he persisted, and was finally accepted, partly because of his apparently sincere passion, partly from the influence of her brother-in-law, the first Lord Holland. But the politicians worked on royal pride, hurt by the first refusal, and the monarch fell back." Although the German precedent of a morganatic marriage would not have satisfied the purer delicacy of the English lady, still, probably with a view to tranquillise the apprehensions of the queen, Lady Sarah Lennox appeared as the first of the royal bridesmaids at the wedding. The rank of those of her own family who attended the bride would seem not to have entitled the queen to assume any very lofty airs; her brother, Charles Louis Frederick, who was present, being but a colonel in a regiment of Hanoverian foot guards. Educated in the prejudiced traditions of a German house, her majesty constantly boasted of purer blood than her lord, and often reproached him with the stain in his lineage by the union a hundred years before with the noble French family of D'Olbleuse. At a dinner given by her at Frogmore, there were present with her children some foreign members of the house of Brunswick. One of the guests having remarked that every person at the table was descended from the Electress Sophia, the Queen started, and haughtily pointing to her heart, exclaimed, "Il n'y a pas de D'Olbleuse ici!" Married herself, and surrounded by every earthly enjoyment, his German spouse was earnest and unceasing in pressing the king to enforce the most rigid restrictions on the natural rights and connubial happiness of future generations.

Under the pressure of those various influences, the Royal Marriage Act was forced with precipitation through parliament. Its preamble adopted the language of the message from the crown, and its first provision prohibited any descendants of George the Second, male or female, other than the issue of princesses, who have married or may hereafter marry into *foreign* families, from contracting matrimony without the consent of the crown signified under the great seal, and declared every such marriage null and void. Its second provision enabled any member of the royal family above the age of twenty-five, to contract a valid marriage, although dissented from by the crown, by giving twelve months' previous notice to the privy council, unless both Houses of Parliament should, before the expiration of that period, express their disapprobation. Its third and last provision declared that every person who should solemnise, assist, or be present at any royal marriage without such consent, should incur the penalties of a præmunire, as provided by the statute made in the sixteenth year of King Richard the Second. The second provision was introduced apparently to mitigate the severity of the first, but its absurdities were glaring. In the succession to the crown, a member of the royal family was competent to sway the sceptre at eighteen, to be regent at twenty-one, but not to choose a consort until over twenty-five. This preposterous innovation led at the time to the following epigram:

> Quoth Dick to Tom, this act appears
> Absurd, as I'm alive,
> To take the crown at eighteen years,
> The wife at twenty-five.
>
> The mystery how shall we explain?
> For sure as wise men said,
> Thus early if they're fit to reign,
> They must be fit to wed.
>
> Quoth Tom to Dick, thou art a fool!
> And little know'st of life—
> Alas, 'tis easier far to rule
> A kingdom than a wife!

The penalties of a præmunire—a corruption of the Latin word præmonere, to forewarn, originally devised to check papal interference in state affairs—were adopted from a barbaric age and the unfortunate reign of our feeblest monarch. Horace Walpole states that this silly provision was left by its devisers in the bill, "in order that nobody might be punished: a secret they probably did not tell the king!"

The bill was prepared by Henry Bathurst, who was raised to the peerage by the title of Lord Apsley. We learn from Lord Campbell that "although when attorney-general to Frederick Prince of Wales, his master being at variance with George the Second, he had seen great reason to doubt the asserted authority of the king respecting the marriage of his descendants, now, as chancellor to George the Third, he had all his doubts cleared up," and supported the measure in his maiden speech as a peer.

The bill was strongly opposed in the House of Lords. Amongst others by Lord Camden, who had been lord chancellor, and whose talents as a great lawyer and unprecedented popularity as a constitutional judge had elevated him to the peerage. Lord Campbell declares: "He was one of the brightest ornaments of my profession and my party, for I glory, like him, in the name of Whig." "When the Royal Marriage Act was brought forward," while "he admitted that some regulations were necessary to prevent the mésalliance of those near the throne," he strongly resisted the bill. "His manliness," observes his biographer, "deserves great credit, considering that the reigning sovereign was resolved to carry the bill as originally framed against the advice of several of his ministers, and had expressed himself personally offended with all who questioned its wisdom." The opposition was unavailing, for, according to Horace Walpole, "the king grew dictatorial, and all his creatures

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kissed his feet." Strong protests were left on record; one, from the pen of Burke, bears, together with ducal signatures, the name of Charles Wentworth Marquis of Rockingham, twice prime minister. In the House of Commons the measure was discussed with closed doors, the public being excluded from the galleries and the entrances being locked, as if the members were ashamed of the deed they were doing. The constitutional lore and splendid declamation of Burke, the manly eloquence of Fox, were unavailing. We quote again from Walpole: "Zeal, and money, and all influence went to work; the ears were closed in which golden infusion had been poured." Henry Lawes Luttrell affected to be indignant at the dishonour aimed at his sister, and even threatened to turn patriot. Gibbon, in a letter to Lord Sheffield, says: "The noise of Luttrell is subsided, but there was some foundation for it. The colonel's expenses in his bold enterprise, the Middlesex election, were yet unpaid by government. The hero threatened, assumed the patriot, received a sop, and again sunk into a courtier." In the language of Walpole, "Never was an act passed against which so much, and for which so little, was said." To its other claims upon the country was added this—it owed its existence to corruption.

The measure was hateful to the public; it rendered the title even of Cumberland, when its duke became the victim of court persecution, popular. Goldsmith thus alludes to it in his comedy of She Stoops to Conquer, which was first produced on the 13th of March, 1773. When her lover urges Miss Neville to elope, he exclaims, "If my dearest girl will trust in her faithful Hastings, we shall be soon landed in France, where even among slaves the laws of marriage are respected." The Duke of Gloucester was present on the night of the first performance, and such was the public sympathy excited, that the audience at once applied the allusion to his brother, and testified their feeling in a burst of applause. The Duke of Cumberland and his bride had proceeded to Italy, and were received by the Papal courts at Rome with royal honours; the dome of St. Peter's was illuminated with peculiar splendour to greet their arrival. This reception was designed to mark reprobation of a measure which was supposed to annul a religious rite. The honours so paid deeply mortified the surviving Stuarts, Charles Edward and Henry Benedict, Cardinal of York, then resident, as pensioners of the Pope, at Rome.

Horace Walpole, in a letter to Sir Horace Mann, of the 29th of May, 1773, thus alludes to the birth of the first child of the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, the Princess Sophia Matilda: "The Duchess of Gloucester was delivered of a princess this day; so even their holidays are taken from the Stuarts." It would seem from the same communication that the king had on that occasion relented: "The marriages of the two royal dukes, at the request of his Highness of Gloucester, have been authenticated this week. The king sent the archbishop, the chancellor, and Bishop of London, this day se'nnight, to examine the proofs and report them, with their opinions. They declared themselves fully satisfied with the validity of both marriages, made their report in full council before the king last Wednesday, and the depositions were entered in the council books. You will be surprised after this account that the good-natured part of the duchess's sex has opened its triple mouths to question the legality of the Duke of Gloucester's marriage, because there were no witnesses. The law of England requires none. The declaration of the parties is sufficient. . . . The duke was advised to be married again with the king's consent, but he had too much sense to take such silly counsel, though the king would have allowed it. The duke, however, submitted to the king's pleasure if it should be thought necessary, though fully satisfied himself of its validity. The king sent him word by the archbishop, that as his royal highness was satisfied, and as his majesty had heard no objection to the validity, he did not think any further steps necessary. In fact, the noise of those who repine at the duchess's exaltation is a proof that they are convinced her marriage is indissoluble." The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester subsequently visited the Continent, and their eldest son, William Frederick, the future Duke of Gloucester, was born on the 15th of January, 1776, at Rome. So marked was the attention which this royal couple also received there during their residence, that in the same year Calleteti, a bookseller, who had inscribed some dramatic works to the duke, was banished by the Papal court for the offence of having omitted "royal" in the dedication. They subsequently appeared at several foreign courts, and Horace Walpole, writing on the 14th of May, 1777, again to Sir Horace Mann, who was British envoy at the court of Tuscany, assures him, "She has not at all forgotten that she was not royally born. I am sure you found her as easy and natural as if she had not married even Lord Waldegrave. When she left England her beauty had lost no more than her good qualities. I am glad your court has behaved to her as they ought. I am glad the English see there is no nation so contemptibly servile as our own." The excellent but unpresuming qualities of the Duchess of Gloucester, although not a high-born subject, won the affections and admiration of all the royal family to which she had become allied.

We learn from the court gossip of Cornelia Knight, that George the Fourth, when Prince Regent, was not free from apprehensions that his daughter the Princess Charlotte of Wales would have selected her cousin of Gloucester as her future consort. Royal pride even afterwards descended to bestow the hand of his cousin the Princess Mary, fourth daughter of George the Third, with the required consent of the crown, on the son of Maria Walpole, and the grandson of Dorothy Clement, the milliner's apprentice from Durham, William Frederick, Duke of

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Gloucester. The marriage was solemnised on the 22nd of July, 1816, at Buckingham House, then the palace of Queen Charlotte. By a singular coincidence the two dukedoms, which furnished the pretext for the Royal Marriage Act, have both become extinct, and no descendants of George the Second can be traced through either of their matrimonial alliances.

Chatham was in retirement when the measure passed. In a letter to Lord Shelburne, he thus denounced it: "The doctrine of the Royal Marriage Bill is certainly new-fangled and impudent; the extent of the powers it gives the crown is wanton and tyrannical." Chatham, had he been minister then, might have shown the king that foreign princes do not always make the best of husbands, and recalling memorable examples in his majesty's own immediate family, might have pointed to that remarkable episode in Hanoverian history, the tragic fate of Dorothea Sophia of Zell, through whom he derived much of his German patrimony and his birth.

There was a still nearer and dearer connexion of the king, whose fate ought to have induced him to pause. Caroline Matilda, the favourite sister of George the Third, in one of those unions of consanguinity, which the strongest predilections of cousinship could not draw closer, had married with royal approval the Crown Prince, afterwards Christian the Seventh, son of Frederick the Fifth of Denmark and Louisa, daughter of George the Second. "She had been linked," in the language of Earl Stanhope, "with an abject wretch, destitute alike of sense and virtue;" but that wretch was first cousin of his bride. The fatal night of the 16th of January, 1772, little more than a month before the royal message to parliament, witnessed an English princess, the sister and wife of a king, the mother of a future king, subjected to indignities resembling those which eighty years before had been endured by her great grandmother, the injured Sophia of Zell. Queen Matilda, suddenly aroused from sleep in her own palace, was informed of her arrest. Neither her station nor her sex received respect. Attempting, in the frenzy of despair, to reach the chamber of her husband, she was rudely repelled by the bayonets of a brutal soldiery; and only half attired, with an infant in her arms, was hurried away to the castle of Croningsberg. There, in a land of strangers, and surrounded by spies, she endured a close captivity of four months, terminated by the manly intrepidity of Colonel Murray Keith, the British envoy at Copenhagen, and by the menacing attitude of England. This victim of a royal marriage with a foreign prince at last found refuge in a British ship of war. Fact might have been set against fact, and argument thus held that marriages of consanguinity with foreign princes were not necessary to secure the happiness of the princesses of England.

As the malady which in after times clouded the mind of the king cleared away, he saw some melancholy consequences of the measure he had forced upon this country. Scandals sullied the fair fame of one at least of his daughters. George Prince of Wales had been early fascinated by the charms of Mary Anne Smythe, better known as Mrs. FitzHerbert. His love was known to the ballad-monger:

> I'd crowns resign,
> To call thee mine,
> Sweet lass of Richmond Hill!

In kneeling at her feet he affected to emulate the most illustrious of his predecessors, Edward the Black Prince, who had given his hand in lawful wedlock to the celebrated Joan, the once fair maid of Kent, when, like Mrs. FitzHerbert, she too was in her second widowhood.

The Royal Marriage Act enabled the son of the king who imposed it on us, having married this lady, to violate his plighted faith, and gratify the German predilections of his father by his ill-assorted union with a foreign princess, Caroline Sophia of Brunswick, the wife, not of his choice, but of his aversion. In that union the ties of German consanguinity were again drawn as close as nature would endure. The eldest son of George the Third was married to the daughter of the eldest sister of the king.

Honest and binding marriage to the woman of his choice might have made almost a man even of George the Fourth. The Marriage Act helped largely to make him what he was. It would have saved the deliberations of the most august judicial assembly in the empire from odious disclosures; it would have saved the confidential advisers of the crown from the ignominy of discomfiture; and the nation from the sin and shame and sorrow of an example, which terminated in the degradation, and ultimately in the death, of the erring but persecuted Caroline of Brunswick.

Then we have had—all the immorality being in the operation of the Royal Marriage Act—the Sussex Peerage case. Augustus Frederick Duke of Sussex, the sixth son of George the Third, on the 21st of March, 1793, at Rome, entered into the most solemn matrimonial contract with the Lady Augusta Murray, second daughter of the Earl and Countess of Dunmore. That contract was still further consecrated by a marriage solemnised on the 3rd of April, in the Papal city, by a clergyman of the Church of England, and the ceremony was again repeated on the 5th of December following, in St. George's church, Hanover-square. On the event becoming known to the king, a suit was instituted by him in the royal name to annul the marriage. The prohibitory provision in the Act was alone relied on to defeat its validity, and in August, 1794, the king obtained a decree declaratory of its nullity. On the death of the royal duke his eldest son, Augustus Frederick d'Este, as heir, in 1843 claimed, in right of his mother's marriage, the honours and dignities of his father, the dukedom of Sussex, the earldom of Inverness, and the baronage of Arklow. The petition having been referred to the House of Lords, Cardinal Wiseman, then a Roman Catholic bishop, appeared at the bar of that assembly, as a witness to sustain the marriage as valid according to Roman law. The late

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Lord Chancellor of England, Lord Campbell, declared, "The evidence which has been given to us of the Roman law, uncontradicted as it is, would prove that a marriage at Rome of English Protestants, according to the rites of their own Church, would be recognised as a marriage by the Roman law, and therefore would be a marriage all over the world. But when we come to the Royal Marriage Act, it seems to me that there is an insuperable bar to the validity of the marriage." Such was the unanimous opinion and decision of the Peers; annulment, by this most immoral law, of a Protestant marriage between British-born subjects, which even the Romish Church would recognise.

The Duke of Sussex, long after the death of his first wife, entered into a second marriage with the Lady Cecilia Letitia Gore, the widow of Sir George Buggin, who, during her widowhood, had assumed her mother's name of Underwood. Her second marriage with the royal duke being also without the previous assent of the crown, she never claimed or assumed the title of royal highness. Her majesty, however, in 1840, during the lifetime of her royal husband, raised this lady to ducal rank as Duchess of Inverness, according to her husband's title. The restrictive measure which we have arraigned exceeds in the cruelty of its pressure on the innocent the marriage act of the most despotic of English sovereigns. Henry the Eighth imposed the penalties of treason upon any person contracting an unauthorised marriage with one of the king's children. One of the first acts of the promising reign of his young successor, Edward the Sixth, was to repeal that enactment. The clandestine marriage in 1560 of the Lady Catherine Gray of the royal blood—heir presumptive to the crown under the will of Henry the Eighth, if the Princess Elizabeth should die without issue—would accordingly have been valid. The Star Chamber did arbitrarily imprison the earl, but the children, if any, would have been legitimate. The same would have been the result with the issue of the secret marriage between the Lady Arabella Stuart and William Seymour, although it sent them both to the Tower. Until this German custom was engrafted upon English law, we find no edict which visits with perpetual degradation the innocent and unborn offspring of parents professing the same religious creed, whose hands had been solemnly joined by a rite recognised as sacred.

Before the days of the Royal German Marriage Act, a daughter of England was never thought unworthy to be the wife of an English prince. Three of the six sovereigns of the house of Stuart, and three of the four sovereigns of the house of Tudor, were born of royal marriages with subjects. William the Norman, from whom the long line of English royalty deduces its descent, was even proud of the plebeian birth of his mother Arlotta, the daughter of a tanner. Henry of Monmouth, the Fifth of England, the hero of Agincourt, was the son of a subject, Mary Bohun, daughter of the Earl of Hereford. John of Gaunt, "time-honoured Lancaster," son of Edward the Third, accepted Catherine Swinford, then a widow, as his third wife. Thus he and Chaucer married sisters. The founder of the royal line of Tudor was the son of Edmund Tudor, Earl of Richmond, and Margaret Beaufort, only child of John Duke of Somerset. Horace Walpole, in his Historic Doubts, describes the marriage of Henry Tudor with Elizabeth, the daughter of Henry the Fourth, as an alliance between an illegitimate branch of the house of Lancaster and an illegitimate branch of the house of York. Two negatives making an affirmative, a legitimate heir to the throne was thus obtained. Margaret, the eldest daughter of Henry the Seventh, had married first the King of Scotland, and secondly the Earl of Angus, and from these two marriages, James the First, the son of Henry Darnley, a subject, derived his title to the united crowns. Edward the Sixth was the son of Jane Seymour, an English lady. Elizabeth, whose reign is surrounded with glorious associations, contrasting so strikingly with that of her sister of foreign and royal birth, in the maternal line traced her lineage through her mother, Anna Boleyn, to a citizen of London.

The consorts of foreign birth and royal blood of the three succeeding sovereigns of the house of Stuart acquired only the hatred of the nation. To Henrietta Maria of France, the haughty and intolerant daughter of Henry of Navarre, may be traced many of the calamities of civil war, and perhaps the ultimate fate of her vacillating and treacherous husband Charles the First. His profligate son Charles the Second, expressed his readiness to wed an English wife, if one sufficiently wealthy could be found to satiate his avarice. Ultimately, his corrupt acceptance of age and ugliness was purchased by the rich dowry of a royal and foreign bride, Catherine of Braganza, a union without honour and without offspring. The first marriage of his brother, James the Second, when Duke of York, with Ann Hyde, an English girl, the daughter of a barrister, then in the Temple, although afterwards ennobled by the title of Clarendon, gave to the nation two queens, Mary, whose alliance with William of Orange made way for our happy revolution, and her sister Anne. The traditional name of the "good Queen Anne," is not yet forgotten in England, and while the comeliness of her person attested the homeliness of her birth, it was her constant boast that she was "entirely English." The weak and bigoted Mary Este, the second and foreign consort of the worthless father of Queen Anne, was the source of a long and unbroken series of calamities to the Stuarts and to the country. Strongly marked was the contrast between the worthless offspring of the foreign union with royal blood and the son of the English mother.

The dynastic difficulties which arose from the rival claims of remote or collateral lineals in the days of the Plantagenets are gone; the conspiracies which deluged England with blood in those of the Tudors, in our altered social and

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constitutional relations, cannot be repeated. Our repose is no longer startled by the phantom of a disputed succession. The race of the Stuarts has perished and passed away. The prerogative of assent once claimed as a fief by the elected head of the Germanic Empire on the marriage of an electoral prince ceased on the extinction of that dignity in 1806, and the creation of the inferior and limited title of Emperor of Austria. By his act of abdication, Francis the Second—the last Emperor of Germany—formally absolved all the princes of the confederation from the fealty which they owed to him as their chief. The reconstruction of the empire is expressly forbidden by the modern federation of the German states. What pretence can there be, then, for continuing in England a power of prohibition adopted from our Hanoverian connexion, from which even that German crown has been exempted? Even if it were in force there, we have long since sent back its crown jewels to Hanover.

There is no policy to justify, there is everything to make England despise and disdain, the pitiful support to be derived from matrimonial alliances with petty German princes. The Anglo-Saxon race asserts and sustains its supremacy in every country and in every clime. Shall the highest of our young nobility at home, alone remain subject to the Hindoo distinctions of caste? Why are we to exclude those ennobled by ancestral honours, pre-eminent for intellectual or acquired endowments, or illustrious by glorious achievements, if "born and bred Britons," from the more intimate and more affectionate relations of that domestic circle, within which the purest private virtues dignify a royal home? Why are we to limit so closely for our sovereigns the chances of domestic happiness, by a custom that leaves to an English princess only about a dozen men from among whom her husband must be sought?

THUGGEE IN IRELAND.

In Ireland a mysterious spirit of vindication seems to come equally from utter destitution, and from extreme comfort and prosperity. A sort of wantonness gets into a nation's veins as well from an over-richness of blood as from a thinness and poorness in that circulating fluid. The same acridity breaks out in either case.

The crime of murder, indeed, in various shapes, is growing fast to be a notorious and unenviable characteristic of the British isles. In Great Britain, the forefinger will grow weary, running down a tabulated column of the useful "judicial statistics," set apart for this horrid crime; and judges of assize find themselves, as in a recent Liverpool "jail delivery," almost broken down with the duty of investigating the revolting details of nearly one dozen and a half of murders. The poisoned bowl, the bludgeon, and the knife, are the popular instruments of the British assassin; the rusty single barrel and the heavy slug, those of the Irish. The guilty domestic mansion, or the retired suburb, is the favourite scenery of the one; the open country road, the hedge, and a starlight night, are the traditional accessories of the other.

Without rambling off into the eternal "tenant right," it may be said that one reason why this barbarity still endures in Ireland, must be placed to the account of the peculiar social position of the Irish peasant. With him his scrap of land, be it only the size of a small room, is a necessary of life, as much as bread and meat are to other men. He is not an agriculturist, and he does not spin, professionally. Once this support is taken from him (and he may be cut adrift at any moment), he becomes destitute and a pauper. There is too much competition for this precious commodity among those who are a shade better off than himself, to render it likely that he can obtain a rood in another quarter. So he borrows the old rusty firelock, and has the wild Indian satisfaction of going out and laying low his enemy. Much, too, must be placed to the account of that Corsican spirit which someway savours the blood of most Celtic nations; but until something is done to alter this serf-like relation to land, from one of pure life and death, to a natural commercial connexion, readily dissoluble without violence or fatal consequences, no very radical reform may be looked for.

Quite sixty-five years ago, in the present month, an outrage of this sort took place in the county of Clare, which was marked by some very painful yet very dramatic incidents. There was a certain Reverend Mr. Knipe, a clergyman of the Established Church, living in that part of the country, in a substantial house, known as Castle Richard. This gentleman had rendered himself obnoxious by various acts of lawful landlord sovereignty, which from time immemorial have been understood to be gross outrages and flagrant invasions of the tenants' rights and prerogatives. Latterly, intangible rumours had been abroad, low shapeless whispers of coming trouble—unreliable, and yet giving a certain sure warning. The Reverend Mr. Knipe did not wholly neglect them; but took some precautions as to less publicity in going abroad, and as to writing for police aid. Someway the times were very disturbed about this date; and possibly the Reverend Mr. Knipe did not half believe that any mischief was intended towards himself. Whatever was the reason, on the fatal Saturday night that followed, he had no additional protection.

On the fatal Saturday night, about the stroke of twelve, there was some curious doings in his immediate neighbourhood. In a retired place, by that hour, a force of no less than three hundred men had been silently collecting, all well armed with swords, blunderbusses, and pistols. They were all under the command of a person who enjoyed some lawless reputation, under the denomination of Captain Fearnought, but whose real name was Taite. This officer having mustered his force on a place called the Hill of Ballydrimna, then led them away silently, in the direction of Castle Richard, where the luckless clergyman was sleeping tran-

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quilly, little thinking of what was to come. All these men had been sworn to a very strange oath "to God and the world, to certify the truth;" also, "to dethrone all kings, plant the tree of liberty in Ireland, and *be* a republic like America." And their leader had further inflamed their animosity with a stirring and appropriate speech, in which he reminded them of the rumours then abroad, that the Reverend Mr. Knipe was shortly to be placed at the head of one hundred thousand men, whom he would lead in person, to exterminate the innocent Irish peasantry. Captain Fearnought displayed some knowledge of tactics in his arrangement for the attack. The main body was drawn up so as to carefully surround the house, and a picket of twenty men was then told off to act as scouts, and to give the alarm by firing six shots. Finally, Captain Fearnought himself advanced to the door, with huge sledge-hammers and crowbars, and then taking with him thirteen of his men, entered the house, just as the clock struck one.

In a few moments Captain Fearnought and his men emerged from the house, dragging with them the body of Mr. Knipe, apparently dead; having flung it down on the ground in front of the hall-door, the others gathered round it in a dense ring. Then Captain Fearnought, raising his pistol, discharged it full into Mr. Knipe's head, and two ruffians being called up from the ranks, fired their blunderbusses full into the body: which, as described by a witness of the scene, seemed to rise in the air through the force of the discharge. Their bloody work being thus accomplished, Captain Fearnought and his men dispersed and went to their homes.

It is the inevitable destiny of all who are concerned in deeds of this description, and under the patronage of a sworn secret society, to be brought to justice through the agency of an accomplice. In this instance, one of the party, John Coghlan by name, came forward to offer himself as king's evidence; and on his testimony Captain Fearnought was indicted as plain John Taite, and very nearly escaped. The jury could not, or would not, agree; and, according to the profound and enlightened practice of the times, were "carted" to the border of the county, and there shot out ignominiously into another jurisdiction. But Nemesis came surely, though a little late. At the next assizes Captain Fearnought was satisfactorily convicted, and was hung in chains in the usual way. The approver was taken care of in the Ordnance Office at eleven shillings a week, besides being employed in occasional spy duty by the notorious Major Sirr: for which he received a further sum of half a guinea per week, besides an annuity from a grateful country of twenty pounds a year for his natural life. This was the story of the Reverend Mr. Knipe. The only surprising part of the transaction is, that in an age so eminently bloody, only one offering was made to Moloch, and that a handsome percentage of the three hundred, or at least a decimation, was not sacrificed.

The well-known George Robert Fitz-Gerald, who bore the complimentary sobriquet of Fighting Fitz-Gerald, did not come by his death through one of the risks he had so often encountered without danger, but from a lawless attack of this description made in broad daylight. There was living at a place called Liberty Hall—a name that had been changed from Chancery Hall—a man called McDonnell, who had had the misfortune to offend the famous fire-eater; and the famous fire-eater, who now appears to have been anything but a desperate antagonist, but rather of a timid disposition, instead of choosing the doubtful issue of the customary cartel, preferred a surer and safer course. He collected a band of desperadoes, over a hundred in number, and led them to the assault of Liberty Hall, alias Chancery Hall. The victim got notice of these murderous designs, and, taking horse, fled; but, by various strategical movements on the part of "Colonel" Fitz-Gerald, he was eventually surrounded and taken prisoner. He was led away with others, treated with great barbarity, and placed under a strong guard, who had orders, on the slightest attempt at a rescue, to shoot him dead. This was so carefully impressed on the escort, that it is no wonder that when a few shots were heard in the rear the hint was at once taken, and the unfortunate prisoner killed on the spot. For this offence "Colonel" Fitz-Gerald (he bore this title by a sort of loose assumption, analogous to American brevet rank, and with an authority quite as sufficient) was tried, found guilty, and hanged in due course, to the great delight of all peaceably minded men. It was said, indeed, that so anxious were the community to be rid of this terrible plague, that the law was purposely strained a little, in order not to lose so advantageous an opportunity of getting rid of such a disturber of public peace and comfort.

What was known as the Holy Cross murder, which took place in 1827, scarcely thirty-five years ago, is full of dramatic horrors. The scene was in view of one of the most beautiful and best preserved of the old Irish ruins, which bore the picturesque name of Holy Cross Abbey; and the incidents have been very graphically given by the late Mr. Sheil, who was present at the trial. The centre figure is a Mr. Chadwick, a stern old rigorist landlord of the Cromwellian pattern, who gathered in his rents inflexibly, and where there was default put the law in force without an hour's delay. Low murmurings and suppressed mutterings gave sign of growing discontent, and he began to walk abroad amid ominous tokens of an accumulating hatred. He affected, however, a bitter contempt for those whom he oppressed, and to show how completely he despised even their power of doing him an injury exhibited himself very conspicuously among them. As he grew stout, he used to say to them contemptuously, "I am fattening on your curses." And they, with an artful disguise of their real feelings, which is one of the characteristics of the Irish peasant, would answer smoothly that his honour was mighty pleasant, and shure, God bless him, he was mighty fond of his joke! When,

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however, it came to be known that a neat dwelling which was rising near the old Abbey was to be a police-barrack—specially constructed, perhaps, with a view to second severer measures —it was determined that something should be done, and that speedily. And a singularly handsome youth, named Grace, who had acquired a sort of notoriety in the country for many acts of daring, came forward, and voluntarily offered to take on himself the duty of ridding the country of the oppressor. There was no mystery of midnight about the transaction. Mr. Chadwick was walking on the high road, near this fatal police-barrack, in broad daylight, when this Grace stepped out of a hedge, and shot him dead. Country people, carts, horses, were passing and repassing; but no one saw, and no one heard. The wild code of the place was being carried out, and every one had too much reverence for its injunctions to hinder its precepts from being enforced. The assassin walked away unmolested, with his gun.

But there happened to be a just man in those parts, who was passing at the time, and who saw the foul deed, and who, after some hesitation—for it was a deed of peril to do—gave information to the authorities. And on his testimony the murderer was tried and convicted. He attracted sympathy by his youth, his handsome face and figure, and his undaunted bearing in the dock. But in the vast body of the peasantry who attended, there was noticed a gloom, and fiercely compressed lips, and an ominous silence and attention. And the prisoner was heard to declare that he was indifferent about his death, but that he should be avenged before the year was out.

By way of a striking effect, it was determined that the execution should take place at the scene of the murder. Large bodies of troops attended, and not less than fifteen thousand persons were present: not from any relish for such spectacles, for which the Irish have always shown a remarkable distaste, but as a sort of stern manifestation of sympathy. As a last keepsake, the prisoner took off his gloves and handed them to an old man near him, who swore not to take them off until vengeance was obtained. With that, the prisoner was swung into the air, and died without a struggle.

Now sets in the dramatic portion. The denouncer's life, it was known to the authorities and every one in lower station, was not worth a day's purchase. This was reasonably assumed as a matter of course; and he was smuggled away at once, out of the country. Thus public vengeance was balked; but it was known that he had left relations behind him—three brothers, who, besides being guilty of the crime of consanguinity, had actually worked at the hated police-barrack. There was an open league entered into, and it was well known, far and near, that these men were doomed. The task was entrusted to eight picked men, who waited their opportunity, and fired upon the three brothers as they were leaving work. But their ancient muskets, through rust or other imperfections, missed their aim, and the three contrived to escape. One, however, was hunted down into a widow's house, where his brains were beaten out.

It was determined to check this terrible spirit, and government offered the unusually large reward of two thousand pounds "for such information as would lead to the conviction of the offender." Will it be credited, that notwithstanding this tremendous bribe, and though the men were known, and were seen every day moving about at their accustomed tasks for more than three months, not one person could be got to come forward and claim the tempting prize? It was only when one of the ringleaders was himself arrested and convicted on another capital charge, that he offered, if his life were spared, to give the necessary information. Even when giving his testimony, he was anxious to have it exactly understood that it was only from a feeling of personal safety that he was induced to play this odious part. For three weeks the bloody assize lasted, marked with the strangest incidents. It was a ghastly Rembrandtish effect when at the close, at four o'clock of an Easter Sunday morning, an aged woman was carried in to identify one of the prisoners, and when, on her reasonably objecting that his being pointed out to her would naturally assist her memory, all the other prisoners not on trial were huddled from their beds in the condemned cells, and crowded into the dock, with dazed faces and blinking eyes, not knowing but that they were wanted for judgment and instant execution. That Easter Sunday morning was long remembered in the district. The "rewards" offered for the discovery of these offences furnish keys to the serious view taken of them by the government of the country. The sum of five thousand pounds has often been given on such occasions.

There was a frightful night attack, known as the "Burning of the Sheas," which left a terrible impression. These people had turned out one Gorman, and were forthwith denounced. At the dead of night, a band of desperadoes came, strongly armed, and surrounded the cottage, secured the door outside, and set it on fire. Horrible to relate, no fewer than seventeen human beings were consumed in that conflagration!

Justice was very prompt, and almost as savage as prompt, in those days. For a murder of an old gentleman near Cork, nine out of a band of fourteen concerned (which were all, indeed, that could be captured) were hung, and their skulls fixed upon spikes at the top of the jail. Until a very few years back, they were kept there, grinning horribly, to the disgust of the passers-by. But the effect was wholesome. Some such terrorism was necessary.

In the province of Munster, and stretching into Leinster, there is a region popularly known by the title of "The Golden Vein." It runs through, I think, four counties. It is a long belt of territory, remarkable for the pastoral beauty of the scenery, and the prolific richness of the soil. In fact, this is the region which won from Cromwell the enthusiastic exclama-

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tion, as he looked down from the mountain-side upon its bounteous corn-fields and pastures: "Soldiers, this is a land worth fighting for!" Here might the stranger, who visited the land for the first time say: "Here, surely, might men live, prosperous, peaceful, contented, happy." Yet will I venture to say that, on this belt of land, more crimes of the species called agrarian, more bloody and daring deeds, have been done than in all Ireland besides. We frequently hear of what are called "the Tipperary murders"—a localisation of criminal repute which is, doubtless, due to the character which the Tipperary peasantry bear for reckless hardihood; but I believe that, if a careful examination of the criminal statistics were made, it would be found that the majority of these agrarian outrages during the last half century have been committed in the great pastoral county of Limerick. These outrages are purely "agrarian" and in no way "religious;" in fact, in that region, where the peasantry are nearly all of the same creed, the great majority of the victims of agrarian outrage have been Roman Catholics.

It is well known that the two persons recently murdered in Tipperary were both of the religion of the peasantry; and the mention of this fact calls to my memory a dreadful murder committed in the county of Limerick forty-one years ago, of which a Roman Catholic priest was the victim.

It was in the year 1821. The name of the priest was Mulqueen. At that time, secret combinations of the peasantry, bound by oaths, and bearing the most grotesque titles, were numerous in the country. They committed deeds of the most desperate daring, crimes of the most horrible ferocity, and none were safe from their vengeance. In one case, a wealthy yeoman, a tithe-proctor, but yet a Catholic (for the Protestant clergy were wont at that time to farm out their tithes to the highest bidder), was murdered on his own hearthstone; in another instance, an entire family were burned to death within the walls of their own home, while the yelling crowd surrounded the place to prevent the escape of any from the flames.

Father Mulqueen was riding homeward at midnight from a sick call. His reverence was an Irish priest of the old school — a race of men now quite extinct, of whose benevolence, piety, moderation, and tolerance, their Protestant contemporaries recorded their sincere admiration. The priest was riding home, easily jogging along upon his sleek mare, when at a turn of the road he encountered a gang of men, armed with various weapons, and wearing rude and grotesque disguises.

"God save you, boys!" was his salute.

"God save your reverence!" was the reply. They knew him well.

"Where are you all going at this hour?"

"Musha, to have a bit of sport."

"Ah, boys!" said the priest, solemnly, "*I* know where you are going."

"And might we be after asking your reverence where is that?"

"To the gallows-tree. I know the wicked mission you're upon, and I tell you that there is not one of you following out this course of crime who will not meet a violent death. Be warned in time."

A surly answer followed, and a hint that his wisest and safest course would be to mind his own business and go home.

"No, boys," said the pastor, "this is my business—to warn you against crime, for the sake of your poor souls, and to denounce God's vengeance against the criminal. In the name of God, I implore of you to give up your wicked purposes to-night, and return to your own homes. Poor foolish creatures, you fancy you are disguised! Why, there is not one of you before me that isn't as well known to me as if the noonday sun were shining this moment."

"Then!" (with an oath) exclaimed one ruffian, stepping forward, "your reverence knows too much to make it safe that you should live."

As he spoke, he deliberately raised his gun and shot the priest through the heart. The corpse of the murdered clergyman was found stretched upon the road next morning. It will be observed how little sectarian animosity had to do with this awful crime—how little that deep reverence for the priestly character, which signally characterises the Irish peasantry, availed to save this unfortunate gentleman from the consequences of his dangerous knowledge.

Let me recal one terrible example of the cruel vengeance which those peasant-assassins were sometimes known to execute. We know that in the county Limerick, the other day, Mr. Fitzgerald, a local landlord, a young man newly married, was, in the open day, and on the public highway, murdered in the arms of his young wife.

Well! In the year 1816 there lived in this same county, a certain Major Hoskins, agent to more than one absentee landlord. He was a stern and severe man, proud, harsh, and overbearing. With a peasantry like the Irish, kindliness of speech goes almost as far as generosity of deed. Now, Hoskins had none of the outer characteristics which conciliate public favour. He was cold and repellant; he was haughty, imperious, and exacting; he never tried to conceal the contempt he felt for the peasantry among whom his lot was cast. There was many a spendthrift landlord of that day whose extravagance was bringing ruin on himself and his tenantry, and yet who, by genial kindness of manner, won, and retained to the last, the rough admiration and affection of the very peasants whom he was dragging along to a common ruin: you read of such things in the history of the period. Hoskins may, possibly, have been rigorously just: you meet those dark and stern men not seldom, who sacrifice everything to what they call their sense of justice. Hoskins made no friends and earned no love amongst that impulsive peasantry.

This gentleman had an only son, who seemed born to bring out the dark and stern shades of his father's temper more strongly, by absolute contrast of character. He was a bright joyous loving and lovable boy, and everybody's fa-

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vourite. He mixed familiarly with the peasantry, strolled into their cottages, sat by their firesides, joined in their amusements, and was beloved by all, old and young. It was a singular contrast, this hatred of the father, this love for the child.

Hoskins had been very rigorous in the collection of rents for the absentee proprietors whose lands had been entrusted to his care, and he had evicted many defaulting tenants. At that time, if not now, eviction meant, for the Irish peasant, mendicancy and starvation; he had not then, even the workhouse to turn to. Threatening letters innumerable were sent to the stern agent, but he flung them into the fire with a laugh.

On a beautiful afternoon in summer, Major Hoskins was standing at the open window of his dining-room, with his wife and son. Some men, dressed in the ordinary garb of the peasantry, were seen coming up the gravelled carriage-way which led to the house. The boy, who had been in the habit of mixing so familiarly with the humbler population of the surrounding district, jumped out, and ran across the lawn to meet them. Imagine the horror and agony of either parent, when, as the boy hurried up to the approaching peasants, several guns were suddenly levelled at him, and their murderous contents discharged into his body! The father rushed down, and found his child lying dead on the lawn. Men wondered why, when the father was so abhorred, *his* life was not sought, in place of the life of the child who was so beloved. How could any of the peasantry have murdered that bright noble boy whom they had professed to love so much? It turned out afterwards that the murderers were strangers in the locality. They belonged to one of the secret organisations common at the time; and these men—doubtless chosen by lot—had come from a neighbouring county to execute vengeance for the alleged wrongs of those over whom Hoskins exercised so stern and rigorous a sway. They could have easily slain the father; they deemed it a more deadly punishment to murder before his eyes the child in whom all the love of his stern heart was centred.

BUTTONS.

What is the inherent quality in buttons that they should be everywhere symbolic of conditions and degrees? What hidden mystery lies in those round plates of metal that all nations should agree to accept them as emblems of a man's real worth and standing, from the great Pajan-aram, dancing till the gunpowder runs out at the heels of his boots, to the little footpage playing at pitch and toss with the baker's boy round the corner? Buttons rule the world; buttons are the timekeepers of the human omnibus, and set the stakes for which the great human family game and fight. Who has a soul above buttons? Who? A Cincinnatus, born as of rare chance, once in a thousand years or so; little groups of pious martyrs giving up life and buttons both to the edge of the axe or the fire of the stake; a few unseen, unknown philosophers—mute Miltons and inglorious Hampdens—smoking their pipes in village alehouses, and content to let all the buttons in the universe go undesired and unattained; one or two lowly women—only one or two—serving love and duty too fully to have leisure left for ambition; just a sprinkling, sparse and wide, in all the broad field of human nature, where every one else is down upon his knees grubbing for buttons and button-shanks as eagerly as the old alchemists grubbed for the philosopher's stone. Yes, buttons rule the world, and, save the few exceptions mentioned, all men and women bow down to buttons and worship them, and greatly desire them.

Does anybody remember Prince Esterhazy,

> All jewils, from jasey to his di'mund boots?

I am afraid to say now, though I knew the figures pretty accurately once, the worth of the diamond buttons of that royal prince—but they represented not only a weight of gold, but a weight of influence, a position of social leadership, a power of obtaining all such good things as he might desire, a modernised version of Aladdin's lamp, that placed him very high up in the scale of social demigods. Esterhazy's diamonds may be taken as the type of the power of wealth and position; buttons carried out to their ideal and perfected ultimate. Then there are the mandarin's glass buttons, as mighty in their way as the diamonds of the Austrian prince and as symbolic. How many heads have fallen at the nod of a stained glass button! how many tears have been shed at the dimming of its lustre, the flaws in its casting, or the scratches on its surface! How many men, Chinese men at least, have toiled and moiled, and mopped and mowed, for the beatified translation from white to red, and from red to blue! while the yellow button—the imperial yellow—the yellow which makes a man brother to the sun, and uncle to the moon—who could be found to disregard that? The Chinaman whose soul could soar above the worship of a glass button coloured with chrome might be caught and exhibited as a natural curiosity—a Cincinnatus or a Garibaldi with oblique eyes and a slanting brow.

Our button worship at home is of a more moderate character; and yet, are the buttons on the first-lieutenant's coat no matters of reverence and kowtowing to sleek-chinned little Jack just struggling into his middy's shell? And what are the captain's to the lieutenant, and the admiral's to the captain, nay, even sleek-chinned little Jack's himself to the brave boys left at school and destined to duller trades? So with the army; the young cornet aspires after the buttons of the rank above him, but holds his own chin high over the sergeant and the corporal below; while through all the grades there is a universal straining after the buttons above, unequalled in any profession whatever. Perhaps

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the result of the great attention paid to finery of all sorts, which is more characteristic of the army than of any other form of serving. Lower still, and meaner still, we come to button-worship in the glorified vanity of the greengrocer's son, whose highest ambition it is to die a butler, a gorgeous butler, redolent of port and master of some three per cents, and who takes his first step on that high ladder of future flunkey fame, in hiring himself out as your honour's Buttons—or your honour's honoured lady's page. Any how, he is Buttons; a greedy fat-faced shrewd-tongued boy, pimpled with shining knobs which to him are worth so many patents of nobility, every one of them. I doubt if he would care to exchange them, during the first week of his embryonic butlership, for my lord duke's strawberry leaves, or the baron's balls. He might exchange them for John's shoulder-knot and plush if you will; but for the most part he is thoroughly content with his degree, and envies no man his fuller honours. From the greedy little greengrocer's son, then, up to the Emperor of China sitting on his yellow throne between the backs of dragons, there is but one law regulating the human mass, and that is—Buttons.

Show me a man's buttons and I will tell you his life and character; and not only his, but his household's; and the life, character, and daily going of his wife and daughters—if he has any. And if he has not I can tell you this, too, and of what manner of womanhood is his laundress and room-keeper. First, there is the old-fashioned country gentleman, who will stick to his brass and blue, let the tailors say what they like. Cloth may come in, and cloth may go out, and the fashion may change as often as there are days in the year, but the fine old English gentleman cares nothing for that. Brass and blue, with a blue bird's-eye necktie and nankeen-coloured vest were his favourite wear when he was a buck, and the world was, oh! ever so much brighter and gayer than it is now, and do you think he is going to make a popinjay of himself now, and change his ways because a few young fools do not know when they are well off? I can read that man's heart like an open book, all in the mirror of his brass and blue. The rare old claret and generous port down in those cobwebbed bins of his; the high Tory prejudices—Church and State, and the Queen, God bless her! and every—blanked—radical to the treadmill, and the poor man to his daily labour, and be thankful he has any daily labour to go to; and mechanics' institutes, and night schools, and popular lectures to the devil, where they originally came from; a healthy breeze on an autumn morning, with Reynard running low and the scent lying well; and England, the finest country, sir, on the face of the earth, and Sussex the finest county in it; and one Englishman can beat three—blanked—Frenchmen, with their soup-maigre and their frog fricassées; and the worst day that ever dawned on English homes was when Johnny Crapaud came over as a friend, and by Heaven, sir, was not met at the point of the bayonet! This is what the fine old English gentleman is, when given up to brass and blue. Then there is the fashionable man, a little loud and flashy, whose buttons are always marked features in his attire, and who gets all the newest things that come out, whether they are deaths' heads or foxes', malachite or coral. This is the man who is independent of female aid in the matter of buttons; whose fronts are fastened with studs, and his sleeves with links; whose waistcoat-buttons are bolted from within, and who can go through the world with only a useful-handed "fellow," proudly indifferent to needles and thread, and all that these imply. This is the man of the clubs, and the omnibus-box at the opera; the man without a home, whose life passes in a round of dissipation, and who is independent of matrimony for pleasure or position; the man who has no thought of marrying, and about whom Belgravian mothers write their lamentations. But the real cause of the fall in the marriage market is the substitution of studs and bolted buttons for the mother-o'-pearl and thread kinds. Once on a time a wife was an absolute necessity with every gentleman for his buttons' sake, if for nothing else. Now he can do without them—he wears studs.

Then there is that other fashionable man, of a lower grade than the last—he who would be fashionable if he could, but who is only able to be a swell, and a third-rate imitator. He copies his more fortunate cousin in manner if not in quality, wearing bone, coloured pink or blue, against the other's coral and turquoise, and making paste and wash do the work of jewels and golden setting. I could run off a whole chapter of such a man's private life—of bad companions, late hours, fast amusements, and the Haymarket to finish with: of foolish pride, that must seem to be what it is not, with, perhaps, a poor mother on limited means somewhere down in the country, dreaming by night and praying by day for her darling son's innocency and advancement; or a young girl sitting watching for the return that does not come, pale with hope or faint with despair. I can see all this, with the end of manly reformation or of sunken sodden ruin, in the flashy buttons of that vulgar would-be's vest and front. Who does not know the sportsman by his buttons, full of dogs and deer and foxes? and of what countryman, for certain, is that sallow-looking individual who passes with a huge hooded cloak, braided and buttoned in such profusion? Would you, or would you not, incline to believe that young lady "fast" who wears a duffel coat, with big bone buttons about the size of a five-franc piece, and puts her hands in her pockets as she walks? and is not the strong-minded woman known by her buttons, which are not so much of the fast as of the masculine school? That strong-minded woman would scorn Laura Matilda's pretty little dainty trifles of aluminum and filigree gilt; she would have none of those charming blackberries or half-opened rosebuds which Lucy Angelina puts on as foils or emblems, as

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the case may be; no! uncompromising bone, or severe cloth, a plainness that is puritanism, and simplicity that is hardness, mark the buttons of the strong-minded woman; and by her buttons you may judge her.

The strong-minded woman's husband, too, may be known by his buttons—not for their beauty, but for their imperfectness. They are never as they should be: they are never fast, never whole, never regular; they lie at all sorts of uncertain distances; and some of them—the mother-o'-pearl—broken across the middle; others—those aggravating linen things—worn at the edges, ragged, frayed, and disreputable. Half of them are wanting altogether, and the other half are not fit to be seen. And these are the signs by which you may know the husband of the strong-minded woman and of the slattern alike; as well as the reckless bachelor not set up in studs, and living on the mercy of his laundress. The poor neglected bachelor and his buttons! But the theme is getting out of date now, for the mechanically fastened buttons have beaten the older kinds out of the field, and, woe the day for the spinsterhood of England! have made men independent of women, and no longer constrained by the power of shirt-buttons. Yet, there are still some few remaining—some of the more tenacious and conservative sort—who cling to the mother-o'-pearl and the art of sewing, and who thus bear about on their persons, strongly marked, the sign and seal of their position with respect to women. These are the men who are sure to marry on the first opportunity. Studs and patent bolts are shy, but linen and mother-o'-pearl safe. Yes, safe! even if there is a sister in the house; for a sister's button-sewing and a wife's are very different things. The first sews on her gross from honour, womanly pride, and the dignity of her sex; the other from duty, sweetened sometimes with love. It is all the difference between a machine and a human being; so at least said once to me a man who had both, and who therefore ought to know.

There are many odd circumstances connected with buttons, and perhaps no single article of commerce has been made more account of by the legislature. The button world has been ruled and regulated like a pampered child, and acts and bills by the dozen have been passed, ordering what kinds of buttons should be worn, and what kinds discarded, and on what false principles Birmingham buttons should be protected, and every other kind of button manufacture prohibited. In the reigns of Charles the Second, and William and Mary, foreign buttons were not to be imported under a penalty of one hundred pounds by the importer, and fifty pounds by the seller; William the Third fulminated against wooden buttons, also against buttons of cloth or stuff; Anne demanded that "no tailor, or other person, shall make, sell, set on, use, or bind, on any clothes any button or button-holes of cloth, &c., on pain of five pounds a dozen;" and George the First followed in the same track. Indeed, the thing got to be such a nuisance, that the Gentleman's Magazine took it up, and in the pretended minutes of the proceedings in the Senate of Lilliput, tried what ridicule would do, since common sense had failed. It was in seventeen hundred and twenty-one that the most stringent laws against cloth buttons were passed, for the encouragement of the metal trade, and these were carried to such a height that a tailor could not obtain payment of a coat which he had made with cloth buttons. The question was tried, and the tailor cast as a misdemeanant and law-breaker. In fact, all clothes with cloth buttons on them, exposed for sale, might be seized and forfeited; and even a private person, if he wore cloth buttons or bound button-holes, might be informed against and fined forty shillings a dozen: half of the money to go to the informer. So the metal button manufacturer lifted his head high as one of the privileged and protected of the land; while his poor little cloth rival was obliged to smuggle himself into political existence before he could be received and recognised. Those metal buttons had a certain currency value, too, for during the long war the shanks used to be cut off and the moulds passed as halfpence, to the confusion of a man's finances and the detriment of his wardrobe.

It would be difficult now-a-days to make any such use of the modern button, for there is scarcely a single article of manufacture which does not yield buttons among its list of articles. There are glass buttons, and porcelain buttons, linen buttons, thread and bone; there are mother-o'-pearl, bronze, steel, cast-iron, brass, wood, mock jewel and real, coral, coal, marble, and gutta-percha; there are silk, and cloth, and velvet, and lace; there are aluminum, and zinc, silver, gold, copper, and tin. There is scarcely a subject to be named, putting out the fatty materials, which cannot be transmuted into buttons, and after which the public does not run with frantic eagerness. This has always been true of the button trade; and this is how a clever man once put it: "This beautiful ornament appears with infinite variation; and though the original date is rather uncertain, yet we well remember the long coats of our grandfathers, covered with half a gross of high-tops, and the cloaks of our grandmothers, ornamented with a horn button, nearly the size of a crown-piece, a watch, or a john-apple, as having passed through the Birmingham press. Though the common round button keeps on with the steady pace of the day, yet we sometimes see the oval, the square, and the pea, the concave and the pyramid, start into existence. In some branches of traffic the wearer calls loudly for new fashions; but in this the fashions tread upon each other, and crowd upon the wearer." What would any one say now, if suddenly awakened from the contemplation of high-tops, and buttons like john-apples as the last perfection possible to the fashion, and transported before that shop-window in Regent-street, where every kind, form, colour, and size, appeal to some one's taste, and tempt some one's open purse? Flies,

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and frogs, and flowers, little enamelled swallows, and butterflies as gaudy as nature, are sure to find purchasers among the lovers of quaintness and gatherers of bric-à-brac; so are tiny ends of cable, imitation screws with the broad cleft in the middle for the screw-driver, Algerian sequins, and Roman mosaics (imitated), huge bosses of all colours, and black glass cut into facets, or moulded into raspberries and blackberries, purple with ripeness; these pearls will not hang long on hand, though they are nothing better than wax filming a thin glass shell; nor those translucent agates, banded and starred; those ornamented gold moulds will suit well with Maria's velvet, and those deep green jaspers, with the blood-drops on each, will look unanswerable on Henry's vest; Matilda chooses the opaline white; Laura the heavenly blue; simpler Jane takes those silken acorns, with a net-work cup; and that handsome young Israelite unhesitatingly adopts yonder set of purple enamel, starred with gold, which she thinks will look divine down her royal robe of blue. The only thing wanting is the money. Taste and the wealth of choice are here in full profusion.

What else is there about buttons? There are the buttons upon foils, which encourage skill and prevent bloodshed; very useful things those buttons upon foils, those railway buffers of life, that stand between two opposing forces and prevent unwholesome contact. I do not know how the world would go on if there were no buttons on the foils with which we constantly play. What terrible mangling of the human face! What long and earnest strife in the room of mere playful harmless fencing! Yes, we cannot part with the buttons on our foils, whatever else we lose. Then there are buttony mushrooms—do you know the flavour of buttony mushrooms fried in butter and duly peppered? mushrooms that you have gathered yourself out on the high sea downs, before the dirty little boys have had time to tramp across the close-cropped dewy grass, or the sheep have shaken off the last night's sea mist from their fleeces? Ah! those buttony mushrooms are worth something to the gatherer, and represent no little care and sorrow lost out on the downs, or drowned for the day beneath the waves. Then there are the bachelor's buttons of our cottage gardens, a pretty little flower with a fine flavour of rusticity about it, very eloquent of the country parsonage, and the trim gardens before the cottage doors; a pretty little miniature dahlia, gold-coloured and untidy, always shedding its leaves and making a litter at its green feet. And there is the man who is button-holed, or held, poor wretch! and must listen to half an hour's harangue about nothing interesting, while his friends are waiting dinner, or his wife is sitting in her diamonds and opera cloak, sullenly expecting his escort. The man who button-holes another is a ruffian, not fit for civilised society, and ought to go out to the long-winded savages who have not yet learnt that brevity is the soul of wit. There is the close-fisted curmudgeon who buttons up his pockets, and the open-handed lord who wears none at all on his; there are buttons on window-sashes, and buttons on drawer handles, buttons on Spanish bull-fighters, and those immortal "buttons upon blankets" which the old Scotch husband "saw never nane." And oh! there are many buttons which sadly need button-holes! Poor lone things standing unhooked and all apart, desolate and unappropriated; buttons—boutons or buds—living unfastened and ungathered, holding together no garment over a living heart, and doing no service in the world of men. Poor unfastened buttons!

THE GREAT SHOE QUESTION.

The Great Shoe Question is being agitated in India. The Great Shoe Question has been agitated in India before. Whenever it is agitated, the agitation is a cheering sign. There are certain luxuries in politics which are never resorted to but when the necessaries have ceased to cause anxiety. The Great Shoe Question is one of these. It was never heard of during the mutinies, when famine was pressing upon the people, or when the financial ends of the country were so shaped that they could not be made to meet. Even during the Nil Darpan discussion nobody troubled himself about the Great Shoe Question. But happier days have come upon us. Authority is restored; the people are fed; "equilibrium" is no name for the prosperous state of the balance-sheet; the Nil Darpan delusion has exploded. India has no longer need to trouble itself about important questions. Our countrymen can dress, drive, and dine, in peace, with nothing in particular to do but to multiply the number of beer-bottles, which satirists assure us are to be the only enduring monuments of their rule. The Golden Age is restored, and has nothing to trouble itself about but the rate of exchange. At such a time as this, active minds find that they can't stand it any longer. They cast about for a grievance, and happy is the community which finds nothing more distressing than the Great Shoe Question. It is to Indian politicians what the ruffled rose-leaf was to the Sybarite. It is a capital excuse, in short, for getting up a disturbance. They are an easy indolent community, the Anglo-Indians, spoiled children of fortune; but before we begin to moralise let us look at home. Are there no political Sybarites in this country—no ruffled rose-leaves of which we hear the discomforts daily discussed? Never mind. Our present business is with the Anglo-Indians. If we have any weaknesses of our own we may safely leave them to make the discovery.

In the mean time the reader may perhaps desire to know something more concerning the Great Shoe Question than is contained in the above flippant remarks.

The Great Shoe Question had its origin at a comparatively recent period, and arose out of the conflict of European with Asiatic manners, produced by the closer intercourse of the two races.

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The circumstances which led to the agitation may be briefly told.

In Europe we doff our hats upon entering a house; in Asia they doff their slippers. The arrangement in both cases is dictated by practical good sense. In Europe we wear a covering for the head which is light and easily removable, and which, in civil life at any rate, is so ugly that no sane man desires to wear it any longer than he is obliged. The latter may not be the original reason why we *cast* it as an expression of courtesy, but the reason might pass in the present day. It is most certainly of all articles of costume the most easily dispensed with. To take off one's coat, for instance, to a lady in the park, as an illustration to a bow, would be inconvenient; and to remove that garment upon entering a house would scarcely have a graceful effect, if it involved an appearance in the drawing-room in one's shirt-sleeves. As for taking off one's boots, considering that the process can seldom be effected without the aid of machinery, and even then is apt to involve an undignified struggle, I should like to see the man who would submit to such an infliction whenever he dined out, or made a morning call; to say nothing of the unpleasantness of walking about the house in his corns, and the battle to get the boots on again when he took his leave! The Asiatic is subjected to conditions precisely the reverse. Tell him to take off his turban, and if he be a man of any caste or consideration, he will feel simply insulted. The indignity of appearing anywhere but in his bath with a bare head would be revolting to his feelings. Moreover, he very frequently wears a turban comprised of from twenty to sixty yards of muslin, upon the folding of which he, or his servant, bestows more attention than Beau Brummel ever bestowed on his cravats. Fashion, as well as dignity, forbids its removal. His feet, on the other hand (if such an apparent confusion of terms be permissible), afford an admirable opportunity for the display of any amount of politeness. As his coat is all dressing gown, so his boots are all slippers. He walks but little, and when he is not walking his great comfort is to kick his boots off. Comfort and courtesy combined—could there be a happier combination? Thus it is that there is as good reason why the Asiatic should take off his slippers as that the European should take off his hat, upon entering a house.

The two customs, while dictated equally by practical convenience, have the additional advantage that they do not necessarily conflict. There is no reason whatever why an European gentleman should not hang up his hat in the hall because an Asiatic gentleman has left his slippers on the door-mat. One would fancy that West and East could not meet in greater harmony. But unfortunately the harmony has not always been unbroken. Other things being equal, all would be well; but other things never are equal, and circumstances have from time to time arisen which have caused not a little confusion in the international etiquette.

The Great Shoe Question arose through the rapid development of Young Bengal, of late years, in European education and ideas. The Bengalees, our readers scarcely need be told, are a very different race from the natives of the north of India. They are not fighting animals. They are an easy oily people, who never undergo physical exertion when they can avoid it; they get fat when they feed well, with the certainty of a pig or a goose; and they always feed in proportion to their income, so a rise in salary among them is almost immediately marked by an increase in size. Leanness, indeed, is a proclamation of poverty, and a Bengalee seldom sees his toes after he has made his fortune. But, contrary to the ordinary rule among Europeans, inactivity of body does not beget inactivity of mind. The Bengalees are wonderfully quick to learn and acute to comprehend; industrious to execute and facile to adapt. In cunning and craft they are more than a match for any European, and did not the latter throw honesty into the scale, he would have no chance against his Bengalee brother. As it is, "the best policy" gains the day in Asia as in Europe. The Bengalee considers that the European takes a mean advantage of him in this respect, because the weapon is one to which he is unaccustomed; but our countrymen, it is pleasant to think, are content to remain under the imputation, and have not yet consented to fight the Bengalees with the weapons of their choice. The ingenuity of these people has long since been distinguished in arts and manufactures. In their imitation of the productions of European industry, they almost equal the Chinese. Given an article to copy, and they will produce its exact counterpart, from a carriage to a coat. It is true that if they are not looked after, the carriage will be found weak as to the wheels, uncertain as to the springs, warped as to the panels, and that in a short time it will neither run nor hang, nor do anything (if it has been much in the sun) except tumble to pieces. It is true also that the coat, unless carefully superintended, will be reproduced with any patches or other disfigurements which may have belonged to the original model, and that the coat will come into as many pieces as Mr. Buckstone's in a farce. But these defects on the part of the workmen are moral; they do not imply want of skill. On the contrary, considering that he could make an effective article if he would, the deception must be considered a decided test of talent. These are instances of the many ways in which the Bengalee, if he condescended to be honest, could beat the European hollow. There is one business, by the way, in which trickery cannot be introduced, except at the almost certain risk of punishment—this is, book-keeping. The Bengalee has an instinctive turn for figures, and the class who cultivate it make the best accountants in the world. Being cut off in a great measure from producing a spurious article, they give us the result of their patience, order, and exactitude, in an unadulterated form. Thus it is that while, for most departments of manufacture, nobody will employ native workmen who can

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command European, most persons engage native accountants as a matter of choice.

The same facility possessed by the working classes in the imitation of European articles of manufacture, is marked in their educated countrymen by the reproduction of European manners and ideas. The result is about equally superficial in either case; but it is certain that the new generation of Bengalees — Young Bengal, as they are collectively called—display immense facility in the acquirement of both our language and our literature. Their knowledge is acquired mainly through their talent for imitation; but it is sufficient to make a very fair show either in conversation or writing. Its depth may be estimated from the fact that they learn the peculiarities of the language, almost before they learn the language itself. Young Bengal may blunder wofully in grammar, but he will make use of the current phrases of the day as if he had just stepped out of a London club. If a member of parliament or a journalist employs a phrase which catches the public, Young Bengal will have it at his fingers' ends before it has half gone the rounds of the press. Thus he would tell you gravely during the Crimean war that it was absolutely necessary that we should have "the right man in the right place;" also that a "dismounted dragoon is about as effective as a swan on a turnpike-road." An anticipated event he would describe as "looming in the future;" and in a very short time, I would lay a moderate wager, he will be informing his European friends that the "bloated armaments" which we maintain are more than the public purse can bear. His handwriting is another illustration of the imitative nature of his talent. He may be guilty of a hundred faults of orthography in a single letter, but that letter will have nothing of the schoolboy about it as far as appearance is concerned. The handwriting will display a determined character, such as he has observed in the caligraphy of official men, and it is always sure to be what people call "gentlemanlike" in its style. Some Bengalees are of course more proficient than others, both in conversation and in writing, but even the most ignorant student of English will be tolerably certain to have our mannerisms thoroughly at his command.

Young Bengal, besides writing letters, occasionally prints them. Nay, more. Besides letters, he prints articles—literary articles, political articles, articles upon every conceivable subject, from some question of Hindoo theology, to Lord Palmerston's last speech in the House, or the Emperor Napoleon's last move in Europe. Some of his prolusions are crude, others almost incomprehensible, but they never fail to exhibit a certain "knack" of falling in with English forms and conventionalities of expression, which indicate close if not acute observation. If the editors of the local journals chose, they could fill their columns with "leading articles" contributed by Young Bengal. These are generally written with due regard for journalistic observances, but occasionally the writer betrays himself as the lady did who undertook to edit a newspaper, in opposition to another lady who conducted a rival publication. The pair attacked one another for some time in a strictly parliamentary manner, contenting themselves with such modes of expression as, "we differ from our contemporary," "the writer is misinformed," &c. &c. Until at last one of the fair editors, stung by some severe sarcasm, put forth a rejoinder, in which she said, "This conceited puss should be aware that," &c. &c. The mystery hitherto observed was of course at an end; she proclaimed her own sex and that of her rival. In the same manner Young Bengal occasionally forgets himself, and comes out with some gross or grotesque image which marks the Asiatic origin of the composition; but for the most part he manages the disguise wonderfully well, and is not much more misty in his style than the British writer sometimes is himself.

Young Bengal, not content with talking and writing English, and reading Shakspeare and Milton in the original, has of late years taken to eat beef and drink champagne and brandy-panee, besides smoking Manilla cheroots. All these proceedings are strictly contrary to his religion, but he is not particular, and is fast becoming too philosophical to have any religion. For be it observed that although a bad Hindoo he never shows any sign of becoming a good Christian, or even a bad one—and the policy of our rule does not permit the smallest suggestion towards that object on the part of his European teachers. This is a delicate subject, however, and has nothing to do with the matter in hand. What I was coming to was this—that Young Bengal, from talking, reading, and writing English, has advanced so far as to eat beef, drink champagne and brandy-panee, and smoke Manilla cheroots, and further, that he has of late years made an additional stride towards Europe by wearing Wellington boots. It is thus that he has become connected with the "Great Shoe Question."

It is very likely that in his enthusiasm Young Bengal would have adopted European costume entirely, but for the inconvenience of the arrangement. One can scarcely fancy a native of India, who has been used to the perpetual déshabillé of Oriental costume, being fool enough to make a finished toilette. Young Bengal, if he tried the experiment, must have found it a failure; for it is certain that he has addicted himself to no article of European attire but the boots. In these same boots he used to go stamping about in public places, in a state of great pride; but when he presented himself thus equipped at Government House a difficulty arose. So very ordinary a piece of courtesy as the removal of the slippers in the verandah, had never been omitted, and the attendants saw no reason why the boots of Young Bengal should lead to a breach of etiquette. But how to get them off, was the difficulty. There were no boot-jacks at hand, and if there had been, it was felt that to produce them would have rather a ridiculous effect. So, as Young

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Bengal's boots could not be got off, he was allowed to keep them on, and the British power consented to pocket the affront. But the real difficulty was to come. Native gentlemen, seeing that the wearers of boots were privileged, saw no reason why the wearers of slippers should not be privileged also. They accordingly struck, and refused to go barefoot into the presence. The natural alternative was put to them—if they did not choose to uncover their feet, like Asiatics, they might have the option of uncovering their heads, like Europeans. But the latter idea was not to be thought of. The indignity was such as no native gentleman could survive. Considering that the shedding of the slippers is not an act of submission or of deference amounting to an admission of inferiority, but a mere form of courtesy founded upon convenience, meaning neither more nor less than the doffing of the hat in England, which a nobleman will do in a gamekeeper's cottage—it was a little too much to expect that the governor-general would submit to this settlement of the question.

In the East, where the luxuries of life rank among the necessities, social trifles become matters of serious political import. Lord Dalhousie well knew that any dignity which he neglected to maintain, would dwindle away, and leave him in the well-known position of majesty stripped of its externals. This was more than the British power could bear, with any number of bayonets. All the king's horses and all the king's men could never set up the proconsulate Humpty Dumpty, when it had once dropped from its dignity. The representative of Britain saw that the time had come to act. The course of action to be adopted was the next question. He had the giant's strength; he might use it like a giant; but was such a policy desirable? The representative of Britain thought not. He had the hand of steel; he drew on the velvet glove. He had the fortiter in re; he adopted the suaviter in modo. He issued an order that natives who dressed like natives, and wore slippers, should leave the latter on the threshold, according to native custom, on pain of not being admitted to his presence; but that natives who conformed, to a partial extent, to the fashion of European costume, might retain their boots if they chose to do so. If they wore hats they must doff them; but the turban, or pugree, not being meant for removal, it might in any case be retained. I believe that the article relating to the boots contained a stipulation to the effect that they could be retained only when surmounted by European pantaloons, strapped down; by which provision the privilege was placed in its true light—as a concession to convenience rather than an extraordinary favour. However this may have been, all parties appeared to be satisfied with the arrangement. The wearers of slippers resigned those articles as heretofore at the threshold; and the wearers of boots, finding that they gained no particular dignity or importance by parading them at Government House, ceased to do so to a considerable extent. The Wellington of Europe may still be heard to creak occasionally on native feet in the viceregal presence; but young Bengal, for the most part, meets the representative of the sovereign upon the old footing—that is to say, shoeless.

The question thus happily set at rest, was revived the other day at Bombay, in consequence of an order which may be considered just a little injudicious. It appears that the income-tax commissioners of that presidency took umbrage at the want of respect shown by many of the natives who appeared before them to make their returns. The said natives actually came into the presence of the high and mighty, with covered feet! The official dignity was roused, and an order issued rendering the doffing of the slippers compulsory. The result was, very determined resistance on the part of the natives, and very considerable confusion on the part of the commissioners—for they had imposed a rule which they evidently had no power to enforce. The income-tax commissioners represent neither majesty nor law; they are simply executive officials sitting in an office. If they have any complaint to wage against the persons who appear there on business, they can simply return the names of the offenders, who must be dealt with by other authority. They have no more right to make a complaint against a native of Bombay for not removing his slippers in their presence, than the officials at Somerset House have a right to make a complaint against a native of London for not removing his hat. The omission in either case is a piece of bad taste and bad manners, but it is nothing more. It is not analogous to the case of a man, either in Bombay or in London, who might refuse to doff his slippers or his hat in a court of law. How the dispute has been adjusted, or whether it has been adjusted at all, does not appear; but it is scarcely too much to suppose that an amount of respect which satisfies the governor-general in Calcutta should satisfy the income-tax commissioners in Bombay. That these gentlemen are not quite so easy to please, seems evident from the fact that they demand the attention in question at the hands—or rather at the feet—of the Parsees, who generally wear English shoes. The Parsees are the most loyal and respectable class in the presidency, and any resistance on their part to the demand is not likely to be dictated by bad feeling. To them, therefore, every consideration is due. With regard to other classes there is quite sufficient ground for forbearance, in the fact that the income-tax is already the most unpopular measure of finance ever imposed upon India.

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

THE THIRD SCENE.

CHAPTER II.

THE early morning, when Magdalen rose and looked out, was cloudy and overcast. But as time advanced to the breakfast-hour, the threatening of rain passed away; and she was free to provide, without hindrance from the weather, for the first necessity of the day—the necessity of securing the absence of her travelling companion from the house.

Mrs. Wragge was dressed, armed at all points with her collection of circulars, and eager to be away by ten o'clock. At an earlier hour Magdalen had provided for her being properly taken care of by the landlady's eldest daughter,—a quiet, well-conducted girl, whose interest in the shopping expedition was readily secured by a little present of money for the purchase, on her own account, of a parasol and a muslin dress. Shortly after ten o'clock, Magdalen dismissed Mrs. Wragge and her attendant in a cab. She then joined the landlady—who was occupied in setting the rooms in order up-stairs—with the object of ascertaining by a little well-timed gossip, what the daily habits might be of the inmates of the house.

She discovered that there were no other lodgers but Mrs. Wragge and herself. The landlady's husband was away all day, employed at a railway station. Her second daughter was charged with the care of the kitchen, in the elder sister's absence. The younger children were at school, and would be back at one o'clock to dinner. The landlady herself "got up fine linen for ladies," and expected to be occupied over her work all that morning, in a little room built out at the back of the premises. Thus, there was every facility for Magdalen's leaving the house in disguise, and leaving it unobserved; provided she went out before the children came back to dinner at one o'clock.

By eleven o'clock the apartments were set in order, and the landlady had retired to pursue her own employments. Magdalen softly locked the door of her room; drew the blind over the window; and entered at once on her preparations for the perilous experiment of the day.

The same quick perception of dangers to be avoided, and difficulties to be overcome, which had warned her to leave the extravagant part of her character-costume in the box at Birmingham, now kept her mind fully alive to the vast difference between a disguise worn by gaslight, for the amusement of an audience, and a disguise assumed by daylight to deceive the searching eyes of two strangers. The first article of dress which she put on was an old gown of her own (made of the material called "alpaca"), of a dark brown colour, with a neat pattern of little star-shaped spots in white. A double flounce running round the bottom of this dress was the only milliner's ornament which it presented—an ornament not at all out of character with the costume appropriate to an elderly lady. The disguise of her head and face was the next object of her attention. She fitted and arranged the grey wig with the dexterity which constant practice had given her; fixed the false eyebrows (made rather large, and of hair darker than the wig) carefully in their position, with the gum she had with her for the purpose; and stained her face, with the customary stage materials, so as to change the transparent fairness of her complexion, to the dull, faintly opaque colour of a woman in ill health. The lines and markings of age followed next; and here the first obstacles presented themselves. The art which succeeded by gaslight, failed by day: the difficulty of hiding the plainly artificial nature of the marks was almost insuperable. She turned to her trunk; took from it two veils; and putting on her old fashioned bonnet, tried the effect of them in succession. One of the veils (of black lace) was too thick to be worn over the face at that summer season, without exciting remark. The other, of plain net, allowed her features to be seen through it, just indistinctly enough to permit the safe introduction of certain lines (many fewer than she was accustomed to use in performing the character) on the forehead, and at the sides of the mouth. But the obstacle thus set aside, only opened the way to a new difficulty—the difficulty of keeping her veil down while she was speaking to other persons, without any obvious reason for doing so. An instant's consideration, and a chance look at her little china palette of stage colours, suggested to her ready invention the production of a visible excuse for wearing her veil. She deliberately disfigured

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herself by artificially reddening the insides of her eyelids, so as to produce an appearance of inflammation which no human creature but a doctor—and that doctor at close quarters—could have detected as false. She sprang to her feet and looked triumphantly at the hideous transformation of herself reflected in the glass. Who could think it strange now if she wore her veil down, and if she begged Mrs. Lecount's permission to sit with her back to the light?

Her last proceeding was to put on the quiet grey cloak, which she had brought from Birmingham, and which had been padded inside by Captain Wragge's own experienced hands, so as to hide the youthful grace and beauty of her back and shoulders. Her costume being now complete, she practised the walk which had been originally taught her as appropriate to the character—a walk, with a slight limp—and, returning to the glass, after a minute's trial, exercised herself next in the disguise of her voice and manner. This was the only part of the character in which it had been possible, with her physical peculiarities, to produce an imitation of Miss Garth; and here the resemblance was perfect. The harsh voice, the blunt manner, the habit of accompanying certain phrases by an emphatic nod of the head, the Northumbrian *burr* expressing itself in every word which contained the letter "r"—all these personal peculiarities of the old north country governess were reproduced to the life. The personal transformation thus completed, was literally what Captain Wragge had described it to be—a triumph in the art of self-disguise. Excepting the one case of seeing her face close, with a strong light on it, nobody who now looked at Magdalen could have suspected for an instant that she was other than an ailing, ill-made, unattractive woman of fifty years old at least.

Before unlocking the door she looked about her carefully, to make sure that none of her stage materials were exposed to view, in case the landlady entered the room in her absence. The only forgotten object belonging to her that she discovered was a little packet of Norah's letters, which she had been reading overnight, and which had been accidentally pushed under the looking-glass while she was engaged in dressing herself. As she took up the letters to put them away, the thought struck her for the first time—"Would Norah know me now if we met each other in the street?" She looked in the glass, and smiled sadly. "No," she said, "not even Norah."

She unlocked the door, after first looking at her watch. It was close on twelve o'clock. There was barely an hour left to try her desperate experiment, and to return to the lodging before the landlady's children came back from school.

An instant's listening on the landing assured her that all was quiet in the passage below She noiselessly descended the stairs, and gained the street without having met any living creature on her way out of the house. In another minute she had crossed the road, and had knocked at Noel Vanstone's door.

The door was opened by the same woman-servant whom she had followed on the previous evening to the stationer's shop. With a momentary tremor, which recalled the memorable first night of her appearance in public, Magdalen inquired (in Miss Garth's voice, and with Miss Garth's manner) for Mrs. Lecount.

"Mrs. Lecount has gone out, ma'am," said the servant.

"Is Mr. Vanstone at home?" asked Magdalen, her resolution asserting itself at once against the first obstacle that opposed it.

"My master is not up yet, ma'am."

Another check! A weaker nature would have accepted the warning. Magdalen's nature rose in revolt against it.

"What time will Mrs. Lecount be back?" she asked.

"About one o'clock, ma'am."

"Say, if you please, that I will call again, as soon after one o'clock as possible. I particularly wish to see Mrs. Lecount. My name is Miss Garth."

She turned and left the house. Going back to her own room was out of the question. The servant (as Magdalen knew by not hearing the door close) was looking after her; and, moreover, she would expose herself, if she went indoors, to the risk of going out again exactly at the time when the landlady's children were sure to be about the house. She turned mechanically to the right; walked on until she reached Vauxhall-bridge; and waited there, looking out over the river.

The interval of unemployed time now before her was nearly an hour. How should she occupy it?

As she asked herself the question, the thought which had struck her when she put away the packet of Norah's letters, rose in her mind once more. A sudden impulse to test the miserable completeness of her disguise, mixed with the higher and purer feeling at her heart; and strengthened her natural longing to see her sister's face again, though she dare not discover herself and speak. Norah's later letters had described, in the fullest detail, her life as a governess—her hours for teaching, her hours of leisure, her hours for walking out with her pupils. There was just time, if she could find a vehicle at once, for Magdalen to drive to the house of Norah's employer, with the chance of getting there a few minutes before the hour when her sister would be going out. "One look at her will tell me more than a hundred letters!" With that thought in her heart; with the one object of following Norah on her daily walk, under protection of the disguise, Magdalen hastened over the bridge, and made for the northern bank of the river.

So, at the turning-point of her life—so, in the interval before she took the irrevocable step, and passed the threshold of Noel Vanstone's door—

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the forces of Good triumphing in the strife for her over the forces of Evil, turned her back on the scene of her meditated deception, and hurried her mercifully farther and farther away from the fatal house.

She stopped the first empty cab that passed her; told the driver to go to New-street, Spring-gardens; and promised to double his fare if he reached his destination by a given time. The man earned the money—more than earned it, as the event proved. Magdalen had not taken ten steps in advance along New-street, walking towards St. James's Park, before the door of a house beyond her opened, and a lady in mourning came out, accompanied by two little girls. The lady also took the direction of the Park, without turning her head towards Magdalen, as she descended the house step. It mattered little; Magdalen's heart looked through her eyes, and told her that she saw Norah.

She followed them into St. James's Park, and thence (along the Mall) into the Green Park, venturing closer and closer as they reached the grass and ascended the rising ground in the direction of Hyde Park Corner. Her eager eyes devoured every detail in Norah's dress, and detected the slightest change that had taken place in her figure and her bearing. She had become thinner since the autumn—her head drooped a little; she walked wearily. Her mourning dress, worn with the modest grace and neatness which no misfortune could take from her, was suited to her altered station; her black gown was made of stuff; her black shawl and bonnet were of the plainest and cheapest kind. The two little girls, walking on either side of her, were dressed in silk. Magdalen instinctively hated them.

She made a wide circuit on the grass, so as to turn gradually and meet her sister, without exciting suspicion that the meeting was contrived. Her heart beat fast; a burning heat glowed in her as she thought of her false hair, her false colour, her false dress, and saw the dear familiar face coming nearer and nearer. They passed each other close. Norah's dark gentle eyes looked up, with a deeper light in them, with a sadder beauty, than of old—rested all unconscious of the truth on her sister's face—and looked away from it again, as from the face of a stranger. That glance of an instant struck Magdalen to the heart. She stood rooted to the ground, after Norah had passed by. A horror of the vile disguise that concealed her; a yearning to burst its trammels and hide her shameful painted face on Norah's bosom, took possession of her, body and soul. She turned, and looked back.

Norah and the two children had reached the higher ground, and were close to one of the gates in the iron railing which fenced the Park from the street. Drawn by an irresistible fascination, Magdalen followed them again, gained on them as they reached the gate, and heard the voices of the two children raised in angry dispute which way they wanted to walk next. She saw Norah take them through the gate, and then stoop and speak to them, while waiting for an opportunity to cross the road. They only grew the louder and the angrier for what she said. The youngest—a girl of eight or nine years old—flew into a child's vehement passion, cried, screamed, and even kicked at the governess. The people in the street stopped and laughed; some of them jestingly advised a little wholesome correction; one woman asked Norah if she was the child's mother; another pitied her audibly for being the child's governess. Before Magdalen could push her way through the crowd—before her all-mastering anxiety to help her sister had blinded her to every other consideration, and had brought her, self-betrayed, to Norah's side—an open carriage passed the pavement slowly, hindered in its progress by the press of vehicles before it. An old lady seated inside heard the child's cries, recognised Norah, and called to her immediately. The footman parted the crowd, and the children were put into the carriage. "It's lucky I happened to pass this way," said the old lady, beckoning contemptuously to Norah to take her place on the front seat; "you never could manage my daughter's children, and you never will." The footman put up the steps—the carriage drove on with the children and the governess—the crowd dispersed—and Magdalen was alone again.

"So be it!" she thought bitterly. "I should only have distressed her. We should only have had the misery of parting to suffer again."

She mechanically retraced her steps; she returned, as in a dream, to the open space of the Park. Arming itself treacherously with the strength of her love for her sister, with the vehemence of the indignation that she felt for her sister's sake, the terrible temptation of her life fastened its hold on her more firmly than ever. Through all the paint and disfigurement of the disguise, the fierce despair of that strong and passionate nature lowered haggard and horrible. Norah made an object of public curiosity and amusement; Norah reprimanded in the open street; Norah the hired victim of an old woman's insolence and a child's ill-temper—and the same man to thank for it who had sent Frank to China!—and that man's son to thank after him! The thought of her sister, which had turned her from the scene of her meditated deception, which had made the consciousness of her own disguise hateful to her—was now the thought which sanctioned that means, or any means, to compass her end; the thought which set wings to her feet, and hurried her back nearer and nearer to the fatal house.

She left the Park again; and found herself in the streets, without knowing where. Once more she hailed the first cab that passed her—and told the man to drive to Vauxhall Walk.

The change from walking to riding quieted her. She felt her attention returning to herself

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and her dress. The necessity of making sure that no accident had happened to her disguise, in the interval since she had left her own room, impressed itself immediately on her mind. She stopped the driver at the first pastrycook's shop which he passed, and there obtained the means of consulting a looking-glass before she ventured back to Vauxhall Walk.

Her grey head-dress was disordered, and the old-fashioned bonnet was a little on one side. Nothing else had suffered. She set right the few defects in her costume, and returned to the cab. It was half-past one when she approached the house, and knocked, for the second time, at Noel Vanstone's door. The woman-servant opened it, as before.

"Has Mrs. Lecount come back?"

"Yes, ma'am. Step this way, if you please."

The servant preceded Magdalen along an empty passage; and, leading her past an uncarpeted staircase, opened the door of a room at the back of the house. The room was lighted by one window looking out on a yard; the walls were bare; the boarded floor was uncovered. Two bedroom chairs stood against the wall, and a kitchen-table was placed under the window. On the table stood a glass tank filled with water; and ornamented in the middle by a miniature pyramid of rock-work interlaced with weeds. Snails clung to the sides of the tank; tadpoles and tiny fish swam swiftly in the green water; slippery efts and slimy frogs twined their noiseless way in and out of the weedy rock-work—and, on the top of the pyramid, there sat solitary, cold as the stone, brown as the stone, motionless as the stone, a little bright-eyed toad. The art of keeping fish and reptiles as domestic pets had not at that time been popularised in England; and Magdalen, on entering the room, started back in irrepressible astonishment and disgust, from the first specimen of an Aquarium that she had ever seen.

"Don't be alarmed," said a woman's voice behind her. "My pets hurt nobody."

Magdalen turned, and confronted Mrs. Lecount. She had expected—founding her anticipations on the letter which the housekeeper had written to her—to see a hard, wily, ill-favoured, insolent old woman. She found herself in the presence of a lady of mild ingratiating manners; whose dress was the perfection of neatness, taste, and matronly simplicity; whose personal appearance was little less than a triumph of physical resistance to the deteriorating influence of time. If Mrs. Lecount had struck some fifteen or sixteen years off her real age, and had asserted herself to be eight-and-thirty, there would not have been one man in a thousand, or one woman in a hundred, who would have hesitated to believe her. Her dark hair was just turning to grey, and no more. It was plainly parted under a spotless lace cap, sparingly ornamented with mourning ribbons. Not a wrinkle appeared on her smooth white forehead, or her plump white cheeks. Her double chin was dimpled, and her teeth were marvels of whiteness and regularity. Her lips might have been critically considered as too thin, if they had not been accustomed to make the best of their defects by means of a pleading and persuasive smile. Her large black eyes might have looked fierce if they had been set in the face of another woman: they were mild and melting in the face of Mrs. Lecount; they were tenderly interested in everything she looked at—in Magdalen, in the toad on the rock-work, in the back-yard view from the window; in her own plump fair hands, which she rubbed softly one over the other while she spoke; in her own pretty cambric chemisette—which she had a habit of looking at complacently while she listened to others. The elegant black gown in which she mourned the memory of Michael Vanstone, was not a mere dress—it was a well-made compliment paid to Death. Her innocent white muslin apron was a little domestic poem in itself. Her jet earrings were so modest in their pretensions, that a Quaker might have looked at them, and committed no sin. The comely plumpness of her face was matched by the comely plumpness of her figure: it glided smoothly over the ground; it flowed in sedate undulations when she walked. There are not many men who could have observed Mrs. Lecount entirely from the Platonic point of view—lads in their teens would have found her irresistible—women only could have hardened their hearts against her, and mercilessly forced their way inwards through that fair and smiling surface. Magdalen's first glance at this Venus of the autumn period of female life, more than satisfied her that she had done well to feel her ground in disguise, before she ventured on matching herself against Mrs. Lecount.

"Have I the pleasure of addressing the lady who called this morning?" inquired the housekeeper. "Am I speaking to Miss Garth?"

Something in the expression of her eyes, as she asked that question, warned Magdalen to turn her face farther inwards from the window than she had turned it yet. The bare doubt whether the housekeeper might not have seen her already under too strong a light, shook her self-possession for the moment. She gave herself time to recover it, and merely answered by a bow.

"Accept my excuses, ma'am, for the place in which I am compelled to receive you," proceeded Mrs. Lecount, in fluent English, spoken with a foreign accent. "Mr. Vanstone is only here for a temporary purpose. We leave for the sea-side to-morrow afternoon; and it has not been thought worth while to set the house in proper order. Will you take a seat, and oblige me by mentioning the object of your visit?"

She glided imperceptibly a step or two nearer to Magdalen, and placed a chair for her exactly opposite the light from the window. "Pray sit down," said Mrs. Lecount, looking with the tenderest interest at the visitor's inflamed eyes, through the visitor's net veil.

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"I am suffering, as you see, from a complaint in the eyes," replied Magdalen, steadily keeping her profile towards the window, and carefully pitching her voice to the tone of Miss Garth's. "I must beg your permission to wear my veil down, and to sit away from the light." She said those words, feeling mistress of herself again. With perfect composure she drew the chair back into the corner of the room beyond the window; and seated herself, keeping the shadow of her bonnet well over her face. Mrs. Lecount's persuasive lips murmured a polite expression of sympathy; Mrs. Lecount's amiable black eyes looked more interested in the strange lady than ever. She placed a chair for herself exactly on a line with Magdalen's, and sat so close to the wall as to force her visitor either to turn her head a little farther round towards the window, or to fail in politeness by not looking at the person whom she addressed. "Yes," said Mrs. Lecount, with a confidential little cough. "And to what circumstance am I indebted for the honour of this visit?"

"May I inquire, first, if my name happens to be familiar to you?" said Magdalen, turning towards her as a matter of necessity—but coolly holding up her handkerchief, at the same time, between her face and the light.

"No," answered Mrs. Lecount, with another little cough, rather harsher than the first. "The name of Miss Garth is not familiar to me."

"In that case," pursued Magdalen, "I shall best explain the object that causes me to intrude on you, by mentioning who I am. I lived for many years, as governess, in the family of the late Mr. Andrew Vanstone, of Combe-Raven; and I come here in the interest of his orphan daughters."

Mrs. Lecount's hands, which had been smoothly sliding one over the other, up to this time, suddenly stopped; and Mrs. Lecount's lips self-forgetfully shutting up, owned they were too thin at the very outset of the interview.

"I am surprised you can bear the light out of doors, without a green shade," she quietly remarked; leaving the false Miss Garth's announcement of herself as completely unnoticed as if she had not spoken at all.

"I find a shade over my eyes keeps them too hot at this time of the year," rejoined Magdalen, steadily matching the housekeeper's composure. "May I ask whether you heard what I said just now on the subject of my errand in this house?"

"May I inquire, on my side, ma'am, in what way that errand can possibly concern *me?*" retorted Mrs. Lecount.

"Certainly," said Magdalen. "I come to you, because Mr. Noel Vanstone's intentions towards the two young ladies, were made known to them in the form of a letter from yourself."

That plain answer had its effect. It warned Mrs. Lecount that the strange lady was better informed than she had at first suspected, and that it might hardly be wise, under the circumstances, to dismiss her unheard.

"Pray pardon me," said the housekeeper, "I scarcely understood before; I perfectly understand now. You are mistaken, ma'am, in supposing that I am of any importance, or that I exercise any influence, in this painful matter. I am the mouthpiece of Mr. Noel Vanstone; the pen he holds, if you will excuse the expression—nothing more. He is an invalid; and like other invalids, he has his bad days, and his good. It was his bad day, when that answer was written to the young person——, shall I call her Miss Vanstone? I will, with pleasure, poor girl; for who am I to make distinctions, and what is it to me whether her parents were married or not? As I was saying, it was one of Mr. Noel Vanstone's bad days, when that answer was sent, and therefore I had to write it; simply as his secretary, for want of a better. If you wish to speak on the subject of these young ladies——, shall I call them young ladies, as you did just now? no, poor things, I will call them the Miss Vanstones.—If you wish to speak on the subject of these Miss Vanstones, I will mention your name, and your object in favouring me with this call, to Mr. Noel Vanstone. He is alone in the parlour, and this is one of his good days. I have the influence of an old servant over him; and I will use that influence with pleasure in your behalf. Shall I go at once?" asked Mrs. Lecount, rising with the friendliest anxiety to make herself useful.

"If you please," said Magdalen, with grateful alacrity; "and if I am not taking any undue advantage of your kindness."

"On the contrary," rejoined Mrs. Lecount, "you are laying me under an obligation—you are permitting me, in my very limited way, to assist the performance of a benevolent action." She bowed, smiled, and glided out of the room.

Left by herself Magdalen allowed the anger which she had suppressed in Mrs. Lecount's presence to break free from her. For want of a nobler object of attack, it took the direction of the toad. The sight of the hideous little reptile sitting placid on his rock throne, with his bright eyes staring impenetrably into vacancy, irritated every nerve in her body. She looked at the creature with a shrinking intensity of hatred; she whispered at it maliciously through her set teeth. "I wonder whose blood runs coldest," she said, "yours, you little monster, or Mrs. Lecount's? I wonder which is the slimiest, her heart or your back? You hateful wretch, do you know what your mistress is? Your mistress is a devil!"

The speckled skin under the toad's mouth mysteriously wrinkled itself, then slowly expanded again, as if he had swallowed the words just addressed to him. Magdalen started back in disgust from the first perceptible movement in the creature's body, trifling as it was, and returned to her chair. She had not seated herself again a moment too soon. The door opened noiselessly, and Mrs. Lecount appeared once more.

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"Mr. Vanstone will see you," she said, "if you will kindly wait a few minutes. He will ring the parlour bell when his present occupation is at an end, and he is ready to receive you. Be careful, ma'am, not to depress his spirits, or to agitate him in any way. His heart has been a cause of serious anxiety to those about him from his earliest years. There is no positive disease; there is only a chronic feebleness—a fatty degeneration—a want of vital power in the organ itself. His heart will go on well enough if you don't give his heart too much to do—that is the advice of all the medical men who have seen him. You will not forget it, and you will keep a guard over your conversation accordingly. Talking of medical men, have you ever tried the Golden Ointment for that sad affliction in your eyes? It has been described to me as an excellent remedy."

"It has not succeeded in my case," replied Magdalen, sharply. "Before I see Mr. Noel Vanstone," she continued, "may I inquire——"

"I beg your pardon," interposed Mrs. Lecount. "Does your question refer in any way to those two poor girls?"

"It refers to the Miss Vanstones."

"Then I can't enter into it. Excuse me, I really can't discuss these poor girls (I am so glad to hear you call them the Miss Vanstones!) except in my master's presence, and by my master's express permission. Let us talk of something else while we are waiting here. Will you notice my glass Tank? I have every reason to believe that it is a perfect novelty in England."

"I looked at the Tank while you were out of the room," said Magdalen.

"Did you? You take no interest in the subject, I dare say? Quite natural. I took no interest either until I was married. My dear husband—dead many years since—formed my tastes, and elevated me to himself. You have heard of the late Professor Lecomte, the eminent Swiss naturalist? I am his widow. The English circle at Zurich (where I lived in my late master's service) Anglicised my name to Lecount. Your generous country people will have nothing foreign about them—not even a name, if they can help it. But I was speaking of my husband—my dear husband, who permitted me to assist him in his pursuits. I have had only one interest since his death—an interest in science. Eminent in many things, the Professor was great at reptiles. He left me his Subjects and his Tank. I had no other legacy. There is the Tank. All the Subjects died but this quiet little fellow—this nice little toad. Are you surprised at my liking him? There is nothing to be surprised at. The Professor lived long enough to elevate me above the common prejudice against the reptile creation. Properly understood, the reptile creation is beautiful. Properly dissected, the reptile creation is instructive in the last degree." She stretched out her little finger, and gently stroked the toad's back with the tip of it. "So refreshing to the touch," said Mrs. Lecount. "So nice and cool this summer weather!"

The bell from the parlour rang. Mrs. Lecount rose, bent fondly over the Aquarium, and chirruped to the toad at parting as if it had been a bird. "Mr. Vanstone is ready to receive you. Follow me, if you please, Miss Garth." With these words she opened the door, and led the way out of the room.

MR. LEECH'S GALLERY.

It would not be easy to over-estimate the importance of the exact position occupied in the world of art by Mr. John Leech. The greatest weight attaches to the labours of one who holds such a mirror up to the time as that gentleman does. It is a faithful mirror. It shows all our defects just as they are, and the monitor stands beside it, pointing relentlessly to every blemish. Yet, from this particular monitor we bear anything, because he is possessed of rare good nature and of extraordinary geniality and sympathy.

These qualities show themselves in Mr. Leech's work, as all the infinitesimal shades of a man's mind always will show themselves in what he does. How they appear it is difficult to say. The element in one man's character which disposes us to allow him to say things which we would not listen to from another, is subtle and undefinable. It affects everything he says, pervades all his deeds and words. We would even let him, if he were so minded, steal our favourite hobby-horse, while the man not gifted with these special and indescribable qualities must not look over our hedge, no, nor touch a twig of it.

He who has a license to tell us home truths on all sorts of subjects, exercises an important function, and is loaded with no small responsibility. To teach in this way is one of Mr. Leech's prerogatives, and one which we are disposed strongly to contend for, in claiming for him a position far above that of a simple caricaturist or a skilful draughtsman.

In his graver mood, which has the more weight from its holding him very rarely, John Leech has some sad things to say, and says them with immense power. Let us take an instance or two from some of his works not in the present Exhibition, but known to every one. What a miserable picture that is of the old man dressed like a child, building up, with a toy spade, a little heap of sand on the great sea-shore! The heap is labelled in the old creature's miserable play with the letters £ s. d. This sketch is a sermon preached on the text "all is vanity," which the artist has placed underneath it. There is another study of an old tottering wretch presenting a bouquet to a coryphée as she stands at the wing, which is almost equal to the first in its grim and terrible force.

The drawing of the swollen Jew clothier, who has fattened on the labours of a row of skeletons, busily at work on the tailor's board, is another fine instance of the same kind of power. The "settling day of the betting-office frequenter" again: how strongly the moral is enforced

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in that picture—what a waking up after the debauch which the objects left about the room tell of! And the poor little wretch rubbing his eyes as the policeman roughly wakes him, holding in his hand the cash-box which that unhappy sinner has stolen—what an abject little creature it is, and what a "settling day" has dawned for him at last!

Has the Sunday question ever been dealt with more admirably than in that double picture called the Garret and the Conservatory? The misery of that squalid room with the clothes hanging from the ceiling to dry, and knocking against the head of the wretched father of the family, who is further rendered miserable by finding himself in the way of all sorts of household operations in which his slatternly wife is engaged, and by a chorus of yells from half a dozen squalling children. And then the splendour of the conservatory, with the rich pluralist sitting in his easy-chair, and a servant approaching him with his after-dinner coffee. "What the people can want with a Crystal Palace on Sundays I can't think!" says the reverend gentleman in the full enjoyment of that crystal palace of his own. "Surely they ought to be contented with their church and their home afterwards." Pages of eloquence could not plead more strongly, nor protest more earnestly.

Does the reader remember the two Englishmen at the table d'hôte, with their wooden countenances and their desperate fiction of ignoring each other's presence? It would be impossible even at the hands of the ingenious M. Assolant for our insularities to receive rougher treatment, and yet how every one enjoys that study while acknowledging its entire truthfulness.

It is not difficult to recal more instances of serious power manifested in the works of John Leech. What a group that is, assembled in the neighbourhood of the Old Bailey on the morning of an execution! "Vere 'ave we been?" answers Ruffian Number Two to an inquiry from Ruffian Number One. "Why, to see the cove 'ung, to be sure."

These are grim subjects for a humorist to handle, but they are dealt with in a manner that leaves no doubt as to the strength of him who, when he lays aside the cap and bells, can speak very gravely and to the purpose. Nor is a jingle of the bells out of place even when some of the more serious subjects are being dealt with. When the footman is asked by his master why he insists on giving warning, and replies that Miss Wilkins has taken to read prayers lately, and that he (the footman) cannot "bemean himself to say amen to a governess," the hypocrisy of the flunkey is not rendered less loathsome by reason of the humorous way in which it is put before one.

And, while this particular development of the artist's strength is for a moment under our consideration, let us ask if there be any one who has noticed and forgotten that terrible Haymarket drama—that meeting of two of the race of "unfortunates," late on a miserable night, and that bitter question: "How long have you been GAY?"

Although none of the particular drawings here mentioned are included in the collection at the Egyptian Hall, one's thoughts will stray from the works actually shown there, to others by the same hand which live with extraordinary distinctness in the memory: and let us here consider, first, the number alone of Mr. Leech's works, and the extraordinary high pressure under which they have been produced. Consider that, week after week, for years and years, this gentleman has felt that he *must* be forthcoming with new and striking subjects, and that this terrible demand he has been able to meet week after week. Consider how such a labourer as this has no rest. His hours of relaxation are not his own even; for then, too, he must be always on the watch, lest a good thing should escape. If Mr. Leech goes out hunting, or makes an excursion to the Derby, or is off to the moors, he still can hardly be said to be making a holiday. He carries his task-master, the Public, with him, and though, doubtless, the complete fitness of his nature must sweeten such labour to him, though he must always have the satisfaction of feeling how entirely he has discovered the exact part he has to play in the world, and that he is playing it with all his might, still, labour is labour, and the wear and tear of a month of such work must be more than is spread over the whole lifetime of a large portion of those persons who turn over the pages of Mr. Leech's books, and think how easy it must have been to get them up.

We have spoken hitherto chiefly of the more serious labours of this artist. But Mr. Leech has other work to do besides "pointing a moral." He is possessed of a gift which belongs to so small a class that you may count its possessors at any one period upon the fingers of one hand, and very likely have a thumb to spare even then. The quality called humour is a very rare one. One has only to look back to any old collection of what are called caricatures, or funny sketches, to be convinced of this. Nor are there wanting plenty of evidences in this our own day that genuine humour is a most rare and unusual gift. In the illustrations which abound just at this time, this one quality of humour is not often seen. The comic art of the day is for the most part possessed of every element except comedy. Our caricatures now-a-days are drawn better than the cartoons. The light and shade are managed with a Rembrandt power. We have elaborate studies of magnificent men and women in clothes of the last new cut. The figures are perfectly drawn, and the engraver has done his work as well as the artist. But this is not what we want. Peg-top trousers may be very beautiful things, and worth the amount of study bestowed on them by some of our artists, but they are not funny. Comparison, therefore, gives us a higher appreciation of the works of the great humorist whose merits we are discussing.

It is extraordinary to observe how, with a few random touches, as they seem, and with a word or two, Mr. Leech produces a result

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which one returns to again and again, and always with renewed delight. The instances of such sketches from this artist's hand are so numerous that one hardly knows which to select. Who has not roared at the "Appalling result of taking too much soda"? Who can resist the terrible humour of "Not yet"? Yet one might almost count the touches which have produced these effects.

The injured housebreaker apostrophising the carelessness of the servant who has left the coal-scuttle where he has broken his shins over it; the reduced tradesman who, with a razor in one hand and a bludgeon in the other, offers the first for sale to a little gentleman who is crossing Westminster-bridge at two o'clock on a foggy morning; the pet child explaining that it cannot be for the want of *cleaning* that papa's watch will not go, as she and baby had been washing it that very morning; the fancy portrait of the individual who sends fifty pounds for income-tax (unclaimed) to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. All these, and fifty more might be named at random, are in the strongest sense of the word humorous, and never fail to give one pleasure, however often one may return to them.

Who is there, too, that is such a master of the *hopeless* as Mr. Leech? Who is there that can show such a scene that one actually feels uncomfortable in looking at it? "Here's t'other 'bus a coming" howls the conductor to the little fat old gentleman who is trotting along with an immense flower-pot under each arm. He is fat and elderly, he is loaded in the most inconvenient manner; he is hurried; he has the difficult task to perform of climbing to the roof of an omnibus, and one sees that that roof is crowded with passengers already. It is thus that Mr. Leech piles up the fun when in this pitiless mood. There is another drawing of an attentive husband bringing a bottle of porter which is very much "up," to his wife who is travelling by rail, which is something of this same kind. The bell is ringing, and everything is escaping from the wretched man's hands. One longs to help him.

It is one of the most remarkable features, too, of all the scenes which Mr. Leech portrays, that his performers have always the exact appearance which fits them to play their parts. In the drawing of the little man offering one of his great-coats to a perfect Daniel Lambert of a friend who is just going away in the rain, the artist has discovered by an almost inconceivable intuition that the little man must have a particular kind of coiffure. And how certainly it was part of that especial small personage that his hair should stick up on the top of his head no one can doubt who looks at him. There are hundreds of other instances throughout his works of the same fitness of the performer for the part which this excellent manager assigns to him.

Mr. Leech's oil sketches at the Egyptian Hall afford the public the first opportunity of being brought face to face with the actual work of Mr. Leech's hand. The drawings, as he executes them, are cut away as fast as they are finished, and it is only through the medium of the engraver's process and the printing press that the designs are known to most of us. At the Egyptian Hall, the actual work of the artist's hand is seen, and this gives the exhibition an especial interest.

In these sketches, too, some greater scope is given for the development of that strong feeling for the picturesque which those who have summed up Mr. Leech's claim to the title of artist must certainly (even from a study of his small drawings) have put to his credit. Though these oil sketches now exhibiting are small, it is extraordinary how largely they are drawn and how boldly composed. The best of them always tell well, even at a great distance, and seem expressly designed to do so. In the picture of the poor little gent affably greeting the great man on his reappearance in the hunting-field, this is particularly striking and observable. The shades in the landscape show to advantage even half across the exhibition room. This is so, again, in the admirable sketch of the old sailor coming to the rescue of the young lady who "carries too much sail" for a windy day. The slate-coloured sky merged in the horizon at one side is admirably broad in its effect; and, though you naturally go close to the picture to study the character-painting of the old sailor—with his board-like trousers, and his jolly, good-natured face—you will find, as you look back covetously at this masterly sketch, before you leave the room, that most of its greater points—such as the truth and gracefulness of the girl's figure leaning against the wind, the firmness of the sailor, not wholly at the mercy of the tempest, the hopeless immovability of the terrier, with his hair blown almost off his back—are as telling at a distance as they are near. In the "Cupid at Sea," the "best preventive against sea-sickness," and the "Bracing Day," we still find this quality of broad and powerful general effect, as also in the sketch of the little boy on the white pony talking to the ladies in Rotten Row.

How wonderful is that scene of desolation, the "Cupid at Sea;" how excellently composed with that bit of boat hanging from the davits, and the wet sloppy deck! The desperate egotism of sea-sickness is nobly given here, and there are a pair of legs in one corner with sickness in every line of them. The same subject is handled again, with a depth of feeling that speaks of many rough passages endured by the artist, in the other steam-boat scene mentioned above. The expression of the mouth in the principal figure, who is trying to counteract by his own movements those of the lively steam-packet, is almost too truthful. This scene is rendered additionally painful by a back view of a sturdy wretch who is not only not sick, but is actually so secure of himself as to be able to smoke. Who that has been troubled with the "mal de mer" does not know the disgust with which one looks upon an individual of this sort who may happen to be one's travelling companion?

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But Mr. Leech can enjoy himself in the close neighbourhood of salt water even when it is at its roughest, only he prefers, apparently, to do so on a pier-end or on the beach. There is the truest appreciation of all that is finest in cloud and wind and wave, in that superb study the "Bracing Day." The grand sweep of the green waves is very truthful, and the artist has not been too much blown about to fail of enjoying the fun of the scene, as keenly as the two delightful children who are vainly trying to make head against the hurricane. What a jolly time those two are having of it, and with what an appetite they will go back to dinner! The performance of the Female Blondin is another scene which the artist has evidently enjoyed from some very safe place. How truly the figure is drawn and how admirably studied are the sweeping lines that mark the effect of the wind on the skirts of the performer's dress.

Mr. Leech likes the hunting-field; he likes Rotten Row; he is fond of seeing people well dressed and prosperous; he has no propensity for the squalid, the terrible, nor what is almost worse, the uncomfortable — which is a much more prevalent taste than is supposed generally. Mr. Leech likes to see people enjoying themselves, and so he has dwelt with an especial relish on this specimen of a certain phase of life which is, perhaps, the most perfectly enjoyable that is to be found—namely, the life at an English country-house. Such a party as that here represented is often supposed in Mr. Leech's drawings, but generally the ladies and the gentlemen are shown separately. The men are hunting or shooting, and the ladies are writing letters or inspecting wardrobes. In the "Game of Croquet" they are brought together. Never was a better invention for summer weather, when shooting and hunting are not to be had, and when it would be too hot for such pastimes even were they otherwise practicable. This picture seems to have been one of the artist's favourites among his own productions, and is caressed, as the French phrase it, to a high degree of finish. Considered in the light of a pastime that lends itself to the looping up of petticoats, the revelation of symmetrical boots, and the displaying of all sorts of fancy dresses, the "Game of Croquet" may have had something to do with that increase of early marriages which the recent reports on such matters inform us of.

Sunny lawns, breezy downs with the sea below them, English pasture land with intersecting brooks, and pollard willows by the side of them, gleams of sunshine here, and the shadow of a cloud there—these are specialities of Mr. Leech's, almost as much as those effects of dark cloud and raging sea, to which we have before adverted.

Although it is natural that in turning his drawings into paintings Mr. Leech should select those which were most characterised by picturesque beauty, there are not wanting many selected simply for their humour and fun. The tact and knowledge with which, in these, the artist has seized the strong point, the thing which will *tell*, cannot be too highly praised. Consider, for instance, that marvellous sketch of the "Head of the Family" dining on the stairs. Consider how much that is foregone is implied in it. How evidently has the miserable little man been hunted out of every room in the house. He has never even had the chance of brushing his hair, and it seems probable that even his clean linen is locked up. The matrons are having it all their own way, and how fiercely they are gloating over the "real master of the house" up-stairs, who is being handled in such an intensely professional manner by the leading official, that not the most knowing of that terrible group can take exception against her style of treatment. In this sketch there is no exaggeration. The case is that this poor little man was miserably bandied about from pillar to post, and had no comfort in his life. This is what the sketch tells you, and less strongly put it would not have told it you at all. In all the arts much that is out of sight, much that is past, and sometimes what is future, has to be put before you in a small compass, and strong measures—some of them savouring of exaggeration—are needed to carry out this object effectively.

One is glad to find in this collection some of our particular favourites among Mr. Leech's works. There is the cannon-practice, for instance—the party enjoying a sail in a pleasure-boat, and suddenly alarmed by the descent of some heavy object into the water close astern. "It's only the artillery a practi-sing," they are told by the boatman, "and that's one of their cannon-balls." Here, too, is our delightful and irritable friend having his hair cut, and being greeted with the supererogatory information that his 'air is very thin on the top. By all that we have in our different ways endured in being told that our hair is thin or thick, or dry or harsh, when we wanted it simply cut by a silent operator, we greet this ferocious expression of indignation on the part of the injured individual thus insulted with a reminder of his personal defects. The satire entitled "Married for Money," and the cruel study of the poor lady who likes the hair turned back because "it shows so much of the face," are in this exhibition also, the sight of which only makes us want more, and sends us away grumbling because there are still wanting from the collection some of our pet drawings, which will appear here yet, let us hope, another day.

This gallery, in which we have made these reflections, is certainly a delightful lounge. One can look at Mr. Leech's drawings here, without even the trouble of holding up the book or turning over the leaves. You can take up your position on one of the ottomans before two or three of your especial favourites, and enjoy them either alone, or still better with a friend who thoroughly understands the merits of this admirable artist. For, one of Mr. Leech's most extraordinary qualities is that he appeals in turn

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to almost every class. Men of the keenest wit and of the highest intellectual attainments are delighted by his sketches, and so is the errand clerk who sees them (it is a merciful provision) through the shop windows.

Long may Mr. Leech's poorer admirers enjoy that gratuitous opportunity of enjoying his works. Long may those whose moderate means will enable them to do so, go in and buy. And often hereafter may we, who are ready to come down with our shillings, be able to get in exchange for them, a sight of more of those brilliant sketches fresh from the hand of one of the most fertile of our English humorists, and one of the most remarkable artists of our school and day!

COURT-MARTIAL FINDINGS.

A long train of courts-martial have been held at various times on offences that have relation to anything in the world but what is martial—harlequinades of official inquiry which, for more than a hundred years, have furnished the scandal and amusement of the times. A little groping and diligence will bring a few of the more notable together in a focus.

Any one who studies the catalogue of these curious tribunals will be struck by one very curious feature in their relation to the public—the full, steady, and indignant current of protest that has always waited on their proceedings. The contemporaneous journals are always overflowing with angry denunciations of these clumsy and arbitrary investigations. Another curious feature is the almost invariably mistaken conclusion such courts arrive at—so gross and monstrous as to require a tardy and reluctant rectification from higher authorities. There is scarcely a sentence or "finding" of any famous court-martial that has not gone astray in one direction or the other—sinning either in a wholesale or unexpected levity so ludicrously at variance with the evidence as to take away one's breath, or else in a tyrannous and crushing condemnation as utterly unwarranted by existing evidence. In a wholesome revision, on which public opinion has, happily, some direct pressure, is the only safeguard of innocence; and their functions being thus virtually abrogated through sheer incompetency, courts-martial are, fortunately, restricted to the bald and barren duties of mere note-takers and garnerers of facts for a higher tribunal. Over the portals of the Judge Advocate's office should surely be written—as over other Circumlocution Offices—"How *not* to do it."

There was a very fast, fine, and exquisite regiment of horse, a perfect squadron of dandies, the very pinks of ton and fashion, and who reflected the graces and elegancies, as they bore the name, of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent. This was the famous Tenth Hussars, whose airs and refinements, and cool insolence, were the talk and amusement of fifty years ago. The legends of their polite ill-breeding were numerous. How they went to balls on the express understanding that the "Tenth never dance," became a household word; and how the beau captain, who, in a moment of weakness, was seduced by a captivating hostess into a reluctant consent, signified his pleasure by inspecting the young person offered to his notice by a "Trot her out, then!" These and other vulgarities quite prepared the public for any symptoms of disorder in the economy of the regiment. Such symptoms showed themselves in the great Waterloo year, eighteen hundred and fifteen. The Prince Regent's Own had been of the army of occupation, under the command of Colonel Quentin, and, in reference to the poultry and kine of the inhabitants of the country, the troopers had not behaved with a soldierly abstinence. These excesses had been commented on in several general orders not certainly in any very special or invidious manner, but in company with many other corps. Plundering, in fact, was more or less common to every large army in a foreign country. However, on the return home of the regiment, the officers affected to resent bitterly the discredit which had been cast upon their regiment, and pretended to think that it was in some way connected with the conduct of Colonel Quentin, who was highly unpopular with them, possibly because he was some shades "finer" than his "fine" subalterns, and basked and blinked in the soft sunlight of Prince Regent favour. By-and-by it took the shape of a sort of round robin, precisely as in the instance of a late notorious case, and it was determined to hunt him from the regiment by means of an appeal, signed by some of the officers, and addressed to the highest authorities. Colonel Quentin at once prayed for a court-martial, which was granted; and a most tedious inquiry was then entered upon. It is to be seen published in a thick volume, and the result was a virtual acquittal on the charges. Some indiscretion was proved; for which the sentence was a slight reprimand. But, in a rather lengthy memorandum from head-quarters, it was pointed out that this sort of combination among officers against one of their number was very unworthy, and prejudicial to the interests of the service, and that therefore every one of twenty-two exquisites who had signed the memorial, should be forthwith obliged to leave the regiment, and drafted into other corps as opportunity and vacancies might occur. Here was a heavy blow and great discouragement, which should surely have acted as a warning to recent unlawful combinations of officers, and here is a wholesome precedent for those in authority as to the proper and suitable punishment to be inflicted. So was scattered that cohort of military Brummels. Its honours passed on to the regiment of the next succeeding number—the scarlet trousered—who, in the polite recrimination of social intercourse, hail each other as "stud groom," "dash-dashed cur," and other pleasant raillery.

The loose irregular notions of these wild courts where justice is dealt out on the uncertain twirl of a teetotum, are happily illustrated

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in an investigation of a hundred years back. It may be fairly termed a court-martial run mad. In the year seventeen hundred and forty-six there was a court sitting on Admiral Lestocq, presided over by Admiral Mayne. This officer had, it appeared, behaved in a very arbitrary and tyrannical manner out in some remote colony towards some one under his authority; trying him in the summary fashion common with the colonial despots of that era, and casting him into prison for a period of fifteen months. Coming home, this injured man took refuge in an action in the Common Pleas; the curious issue of which was, that the court which was about trying Admiral Lestocq found itself in the serious embarrassment of being suddenly deprived of Admiral Mayne, its president, by the process of the Court of Common Pleas. He was soon released from civil custody, but the indignation of the military court blazed out fiercely in a complaint to his majesty. The kings of England in those times were anything but rois fainéants, and an answer speedily came back through his Grace of Newcastle, begging of the court to proceed with its duties: assuring them that full satisfaction should be given them for "the late indignity," and that they might rely on "his majesty's protection." A few years later there was a party of what were called the king's friends: of whom these gentlemen seem to have been precursors.

Somewhat mollified, the tribunal agreed to resume its duties: yet not without drawing up a violent protest against the conduct of Sir John Willes, Knt., Lord Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas—conceived in very savage and personal terms. In this they allude to the rebellion of the preceding year, '45, and skilfully insinuate that Sir John Willes, Knt., was playing into the hands of disaffected persons, "and had no regard to the honour and safety of his majesty," with other gross hints and aspersions, very indecorous, and below the dignity of one court in its relation with another. However, later on, when his majesty's friends had finished with Admiral Lestocq, we are startled to light upon a full apology directed to the outraged Chief Justice, and conceived in terms almost as abject as the insult was offensive. It began by setting out that nothing was more becoming in a gentleman than to acknowledge himself wrong when he was conscious of having behaved so. That they were conscious that the reflections cast upon his lordship were *unjust, unwarrantable, and without any foundation* whatever: "and," this very handsome apology goes on, "we ask pardon of his lordship, and of the Court of Common Pleas for the indignity offered to his lordship and to the court."

The most notable court-martial within the last hundred years or so was the famous one on General Whitelocke, for cowardice, at Buenos Ayres. It fills a swollen volume of intricate evidence in solving nice points as to the conduct of an assault, and innumerable witnesses. Yet it lasted only thirty-one days, about the same time that a recent investigation took to find out whether a backboard was used on a particular day, or whether a visit was paid to a flower-show, or a challenge had been declined or accepted, with other valuable particulars.

There was another general's trial which had some notoriety: Lord George Sackeville, who commanded the English at the battle of Minden. Here, too, the insinuation was cowardice, and his majesty King George the Second was pleased to take so direct an interest in the inquiry, that he had it conveyed to Lord George before the investigation was concluded, that whatever the sentence might be, it should be put in force against him with the utmost rigour. He seems to have been hardly dealt with, this noble lord; for Sir Nathaniel Wraxall has proved from other sources that he was a man of real personal courage, and that the affair at Minden arose from pure misconception. To revenge himself on the king, and on all concerned with royalty, Lord George wrote—according to more than one ardent commentator on the most vexed of vexed questions—the Letters of Junius.

The trial of Admiral Byng, who, besides the memory of his unfortunate end, had the notoriety of being shot to death—not hanged, as Voltaire put it—"to encourage the others"—was more in the nature of political sacrifice. A disappointed public required a victim to be thrown to them, and this unlucky admiral was selected for the purpose.

But these investigations as to personal conduct in the field, or at sea, bear a very small proportion to the inquiries for violation of the laws of the interior economy of regiments which really make up the bulk of most courts-martial. The persons who titularly profess themselves "officers and gentlemen" are the parties above all others who are always on trial for outraging the ordinary decencies which those honoured designations comprise. And the military indictment generally casts itself, in the "common form," of some such little meanness, as this:

"York, 1764. At a court-martial held this day, Captain Dodd was found not guilty of unsoldier-like conduct in endeavouring to impede his prosecutor in his succession to the majority."

It is a curious feature, too, in these investigations, the numbers that break down for want of evidence—a significant hint of their being set on foot by malice and ill will, or professional jealousy. More curious still is the large number that have to be rectified by the interference of higher authority.

Lawyers laugh at the clumsy machinery for cross-examination, the minute and exact note-taking, during which all the force and pressure of severe questioning evaporates. So far back as a century ago we find the House of Commons, who had deputed two barristers to watch a military prosecution, protesting against this sort of procedure, and addressing a gentle remonstrance to the court. It entreated the adoption of the vivâ voce system, in force in the common law courts of the country. But the "Horse Guards," with the stolid impenetra-

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bility of the day, declined to make any alteration.

The affairs of Colonel Douglass, of another gallant cavalry colonel (an earl), and of Lieutenant Perry, are all fresh in the memory of this generation.

Any one who takes the trouble of winnowing and classifying the huge bulk of these investigations will be struck by one curious feature, that out of every hundred about seventy per cent are "for the unofficer-like and ungentlemanly" offence of "conversion," to use the technical legal term, in some shape of the regimental moneys or stores. It is curious that this species of default, so rare among other societies of gentlemen, should crop up so abundantly among individuals who are *titularly* supposed to be above such vices; unless, indeed, it be part of that pleasant ironical fiction which makes members of the guild of solicitors gentlemen by act of parliament. A certain per-centage, too, is for the offence—also "unofficer-like"—of purloining articles of personal property; and there is a most extraordinary finding on record, which deserves allusion here. An officer and gentleman was charged with "shameful and scandalous conduct in stealing a pocket-handkerchief, the property of another officer, and with also stealing a bottle of wine from the mess-room, and at the same time allowing it to be charged in the account of a captain." This gentleman is found guilty in a curious jumble of censure and extenuation, and is sentenced to be suspended from his rank and pay for six months. There surely could be no mitigated shape of stealing known even to martial law—a purloining "avec des circonstances atténuantes"—and if it were a genuine full-bodied theft, it was a ridiculously light sentence. Another offender was brought to trial for the "unofficer-like" (a compound clearly suggested to the military lawyers by no other word in the world than "unsportsmanlike") "and ungentlemanly conduct in quitting Hilsea barracks when in debt to *a poor widow woman that lets lodgings* one pound three shillings and fivepence, and to a soldier's wife for washing thirteen and eightpence halfpenny." This curious charge is only redeemed by the exquisite bit of ungrammatical bathos, the "poor widow that lets lodgings," whose case is so handsomely taken up by the authorities.

Another indictment charges a prisoner with having "*lifted* his clenched hand and struck the said lieutenant a blow on the face in a *most horrid manner*,"—such conduct, it adds, perhaps with a little superfluity, "being highly prejudicial to his majesty's service." Curiosity will, no doubt, have been excited as to the character of this specially "horrid manner" of inflicting a blow.

Another singular revision of a finding will cause astonishment. An officer had been charged with the offence of drawing regimental pay and allowances for a soldier who, it was proved, had left the army long before. Of which charge the court virtually acquitted the prisoner, admitting, indeed, that the money had been so drawn, but without any fraud or culpability whatsoever. However, "his Royal Highness the Prince Regent is much surprised at the inconsistency of this finding, &c., inasmuch as the court admits the prisoner to have committed the act described in the charge, &c., which is not only most incorrect in itself, but contrary to every principle of law, order, and regulation." It is well known that "every principle of law," as it is understood outside the barrack-room, requires a certain malice and intention to constitute a criminal offence, but because here the court had found the technical words of the charge proved, without this necessary purpose and malice, he was to be considered guilty!

Another sort of Dogberry decision is worth disentombing. A young subaltern being brought to trial for the old ding-dong charge of "unofficer-like and ungentlemanly conduct" in "making a noise" in a room, and further, "in continuing to do so after receiving orders to the contrary," was found guilty of those offences, but incomprehensibly and mysteriously acquitted of the "unofficer-like and ungentlemanly conduct;" as it appeared "that a certain degree of obedience was paid to the colonel's orders." The "unofficer-like conduct" would appear, to mere civilian eyes, to have been a description of the succeeding charges, and not a charge itself. But the principles of martial law are inscrutable.

Captain Scott was indicted for "not moving in the theatre to let the major pass, and then only putting his sword out of the way in the most ungracious way possible, and still persisting *not to* (*sic*) *move* his person, and then preventing the major *to* return (*sic*) to his place." Pure civilian minds are here again at a loss which to admire most, the curious offence itself, or the strangely elegant military Saxon in which it is shaped.

Among the heinous offences which these expansive terms "unofficer-like and ungentlemanly" cover, it would appear that writing to the public prints is the most enormous. It is the unpardonable sin. Some one brought forward in a morning journal an official censure of the Prince Regent's, in reference to a deceased officer, and a military friend of the latter addressed a letter to the Morning Chronicle with anonymous signature, in very calm and temperate remonstrance. Unluckily, at the end he happened to make the reasonable comment that the Prince Regent's opinion was not shared in by the twelve or thirteen other members of the court. This became military treason. The writer was hunted down and dragged from his concealment. He was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to be cashiered: but the court, in singularly earnest language, recommended him to mercy, on the very obvious ground that there was clearly no wilful intention of being disrespectful to his "Royal Highness the Prince Regent." But the First Gentleman in Europe, one of whose gentlemanly virtues was never to forget a free remark either on his person or his character, took not the slightest notice of the recommenda-

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tion: merely endorsing on the proceedings, "His Royal Highness approves the finding, and judgment, &c."

Another gentleman is brought to trial for "*falsely* asserting that he had pulled Major Mein by the nose, and taken his (the prisoner's) feet from the Hudibrastic seat of honour." This puerility was made the subject of serious investigation, and resulted in the "cashiering" of the officer who had so unluckily omitted to justify his Hudibrastic metaphors by any substantial foundation of truth.

There is a grandiloquence in some of the "Findings" beside which the periods of a common judge's charge sound humdrum enough. In the case of an officer mysteriously and wonderfully named "Sir Hungerford Hoskyns," "His majesty expressed his regret that Sir Hungerford Hoskyns should have so *lulled himself* into a conviction of the fairness of this transaction." Not even the distinguished officer who in a late investigation spoke of that wonderful building phenomenon—"foundations fading like mists before the sun," and who "marshalled" what he called his "troops of evidence," could equal this happy expression.

There are some more inscrutable findings up and down through the books, such as two cases where officers were tried for killing their opponents in a duel. There was no question that the victims were killed, and yet the others were "honourably acquitted." And yet, almost in the next page, is found the cashiering of a "Surgeon O'Meara" for merely "carrying" a challenge.

Apropos of this duelling question, there was a certain Major Armstrong who was brought to trial for some misconduct by the famous Sir Eyre Coote, the hero of Pondicherry, in the year eighteen hundred. He was "honourably acquitted;" on which, he instantly sold out of the army, to avoid any unpleasant restraint on his further proceedings, and sent a challenge to his accuser. The courage of the Indian general was above suspicion. It had been proved to be almost reckless in the famous siege, and his conduct on this occasion showed a discretion surprising in one of his cloth. He indicted the challenging major criminally, who was found guilty, sentenced to the old-fashioned fine of thirty merks, and, what was more serious still, to a year's imprisonment. "His majesty" was so gratified with this conduct, that he had a letter written to Sir Eyre Coote, which was afterwards directed to be read to every regiment in the service.

It points an excellent moral, not usually found in documents of this description. "His majesty," it runs, "has been pleased to direct that it should be signified to you in the strongest terms, *that by having had recourse to the laws of the country on this occasion*, you have betrayed a spirit truly commendable as a soldier, and peculiarly becoming the station you hold in his majesty's service, to which you have rendered a material benefit by furnishing an example which his majesty has ordered to be pointed out as worthy of the imitation of every officer under similar circumstances." In which monition is contained a wholesome "caution" not unprofitable at the present moment; and yet, by the curious fatality that waits on military composition, not undisguised by doubtful English. That signifying of approval "in the strongest terms" would suggest awkward associations of reproof, and "betraying" a spirit which is commendable, is unusual.

In the case of Major Ottley, "his majesty" also spoke out very distinctly, and in terms which even more directly suit the present times. The case was promoted by an officer named Ross, but was not established. Said his majesty: "To prefer accusations which cannot be maintained reflects much disgrace on those who bring them forward." And accordingly it was notified to no less than nine officers who had been concerned in "bringing forward" the accusations they could not "maintain" that "his majesty had no further occasion for their services." In Gordon's case, too, his majesty spoke out very candidly, and, indeed, with a freedom which it is a pity is not more common in our times. "Neither prosecutor nor prisoner have acquired any credit by the manner in which they have conducted themselves during this trial, each of them industriously pressing extraneous matter upon the court, to the extreme protraction of the proceedings, and each of them, as if urged by a rooted animosity, endeavouring to depreciate the character of the other."

THE SMALL HOURS.

Who knows the small hours as well as I do? —I, Hyson Nightstare, of Wakefield. Who knows so well the theory of unrest in all its ramifications? Whose eyes so often as mine have peered sleepless into the darkness, or watched unrefreshed the first glimmerings of the cheerless dawn?

Now, I hold that it is one of the first laws of philanthropy—with which quality, when I have had a good night, I am running over—to make known to one's suffering fellow-creatures the consolatory fact that there are others who suffer too. It is a great function to become the mouthpiece of a certain section of the world, to speak the sentiments which it feels, so that the members of that section may be able to say, "Yes, this have I felt too. I did not know that any others beside myself went through such experiences as these. Come, there are others as ill off as I am; lo! I will be patient."

Night is a terrible time. There are certain hours which one should know nothing about. Nature intended them to be passed over in unconsciousness. I am no medical authority—albeit there are medicaments whose uses, methinks, I understand as well as another—soda, for instance, and rhub—but no matter—I am ignorant, I say, of many things connected with the human frame, yet I fancy that at certain periods of the night or morning there are queer changes that the body is liable to, unhallowed

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revels held by intestinal demons of which the less we say the better, which should come off without our knowing anything about them—topsy-turvy moments, crises which the constitution pulls through with difficulty, and which seriously affect the mind and the spirits, if we happen to be awake while they are going on.

From two till five A.M. are of a surety hours of this sort. Small are they in the received meaning of the word, but far from small in duration; not small in their powers of oppression, not small in their influence on the following day. Those are, indeed, unhallowed hours, as all will surely admit who have had much experience of them. Why, to take their influence on furniture alone into consideration, will anybody affirm for a moment that the different articles of furniture in one's sleeping apartment are the same in their behaviour during those hours that they are at other times? I have a quiet and unassuming wardrobe in my bedroom, for instance. How does it happen that that wardrobe, as soon as two o'clock in the morning has fairly struck, begins to make unearthly and explosive sounds? I have known that wardrobe to go off like a gun at three in the morning, whilst, to crack and groan uneasily, is its constant practice at that time. It may be that the theory which I have ventured to put forth as to the changes and crises which take place during the small hours in the human frame may apply to wardrobes also. They have insides. Perhaps those insides are liable to indigestion and disorders which make the sufferer squeak for dear life. But even if this be so, how does it apply to your cane-bottom chair? That has no inside: yet, at three in the morning, it will crack, not so heavily, but quite as sharply, and as startlingly as the wardrobe itself. What dismal and death-watch clickings, too, go on in the grate. What is amiss there, I wonder?

I have known queer things to happen at such times also with clothing. It is the practice of some of the lords of the creation to deposit their garments in an accumulate heap upon the back of a chair, and it may be that, as the number of them increases, it becomes a matter of difficulty so to poise and balance them that some of them shall not slip off upon the floor. I have known an article of clothing, which shall be nameless, to slip its moorings exactly at three in the morning, and the whole pile of garments to slide slowly and softly, with a ghost-like rustle, on the carpet. Now, what I want to ask is, why this did not happen as soon as those unmentionables were placed in their hazardous position? Why did they wait till three A.M. to perform the exploit? Don't tell me that they had been gradually slipping ever since eleven, and took four hours to reach the edge of the precipice. I don't believe a word of it.

We have hitherto confined ourselves to the noises in our bedrooms which the small hours develop. Think of those which go on in the main body of the house, the creakings of staircases: mysterious sounds from the basement. Has it ever happened to any worthy gentleman who reads this page, to lie listening to some queer tapping noise kept up at intervals for half an hour and coming apparently from below, till he has at last—it takes some time, especially in cold weather—convinced himself that it is his duty to get up, ignite a lucifer, and descend to the lower regions? The tapping was entirely an affair got up between the wind and the outside blind, two desperate characters who thoroughly understand each other; but still in the interval, before you have discovered this, there is plenty of time for your nerves to get into a sadly discomforted condition. How queer the rooms down stairs look when you revisit them during the small hours! You feel as if you were the spectre of yourself, haunting your own house. What appalling shadows the furniture casts upon the walls, what strange things seem to be going on behind you! and, if it is sweeping-up-day to-morrow, what disastrous shapes appear before you, constructed by the housemaid with chairs and tables which show their more salient nobs through the great white coverings thrown over them to keep the dust off. Or, if you have been sitting up late, and one of your rooms is still as you left it, how ghastly it looks! What a dreadful appearance the extinguished candles present. The half-emptied glass of wine and water, the book left open, how weary it looks, as if it wanted rest and ought to have been put to bed in the bookcase. If you have been taking a cigar, what a sight is the stump of that deadly weed reposing in its own ashes like a sceptical Phœnix reluctant to expire. And the dirty hearth, and the sofa-cushions indented with your shape, and the two ghastly holes in the shutters which you disclose when you look behind the curtains; for it is of no use looking for burglars if you don't look everywhere.

Then the kitchen regions: when you descend to these, is it not a wonder that you can ever think of eating again? What revelations of cold potatoes, of amalgamated heaps of bone and grease, and frozen-in carrot that went to make up a succulent haricot. What wealth of fossil crusts, and loaves with smears of butter left where the last slice was cut off. It is a wonder that you do not fairly turn and fly too before the hosts of black-beetles which have possession below. Would it not be better to leave the housebreaker to do his worst, than to face those hideous reptiles, which stand about in meditative attitudes, slowly moving their feelers backwards and forwards? You can hardly step for these dreadful animals; the dresser, the table, the cooking utensils, the walls are covered with them and their great shadows, which your single candle casts but too clearly.

Let us own that we are glad when that search for burglars is over, when the flapping blind is found out, and we can creep to bed again. There are times and seasons when all our virtues are in better working order than at others, and two o'clock in the morning is not the exact moment when the courage of the human subject is in its

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highest state of development. Perhaps the gentleman was right, after all, who valued his night's rest so much that he used to pile up his whole collection of plate in the middle of his dining-table every night, in order that, if any thieves did come, they might leave *him* alone at any rate.

And between the periods when one's attention is occupied by all the creakings, and rustlings, and clickings, and explodings, and other night noises which the wakeful know of, what are the meditations that occupy our minds?—What are our night thoughts? They are less well-regulated, it is to be feared, than those of the late Dr. Young. Over what a vast field they range; but how strange it is that through, and above, and pervading them all, there is a certain under-current of sadness; yes, even when some ludicrous image comes up and takes its turn with the rest.

What wonderful and diverse things are going on in different parts of the world at this moment as I lie wakeful on my bed. It is two o'clock A.M. Five houses off they are giving a ball, and the dancing is still at its fiercest. A few doors further, and round the corner, there is a sick lady. I noted the straw in the street as I passed. Her husband is sitting up watching by her. At the same moment a legal friend of mine is writing at a table covered with papers, and his clerk, who has to get up early and work hard all day, is pacing up and down his small bedroom in the suburbs trying to soothe to sleep a squalling tooth-piercing baby. The dancers are absorbed in their small intrigues of partner-getting and partner-*for*getting. The sick lady's husband is absorbed in the thought of the last words and looks of the doctor when he came in the evening, a short four hours ago. The conveyancer is revelling in the intricacies of parliamentary law, and his clerk is fighting against certain whispers of "Dalby's Carminative" and "Daffy's Elixir," which will arise in his mind. All this is going on at the same moment, and none of those people are disturbed by the screams of that drunken woman whom the policeman is dragging off to the station in Worship-street.

Meanwhile, a thousand miles away, the Cretin sleeps in his hovel in the valley, and the black waters of the lake reflect, ever so dimly, the snow-covered peaks of the silent Alps. Further off still, the lions are roaring in the Great Sahara, and in a more distant region yet, behold it is daytime! and Australian men of business are engaged in all sorts of money-making or money-losing affairs, and tradesmen are cheating, and housewives are talking about their servants, and some people are idling and some are working, and many are doing wrong, and some are doing right.

Back fly the thoughts to home again. There is a man to be hanged to-morrow morning, and they have him shut up in Newgate. What is he doing now? It will not do to think of that. Let me get away to some more comfortable thoughts. I wonder how many people there are whose business it is to be up all night? Come, there is companionship and comfort in that speculation. How many people are there in London alone, whose distinct business it is to turn night into day?

It is a larger class, depend upon it, than one would imagine. First of all there are the night-policemen. There is some sense of companionship about them as they stand at the corner in the winter-time, beating their breasts and stamping to keep their blood in circulation. These night-policemen make a considerable item in the wakeful population in themselves. Then there are the watchmen at all sorts of public and private offices; just now, too, at the Great Exhibition, at the different banks, and at the park gates. At the railway stations, too, all round London, there must be a very large class of persons whose duty it is to be up all night, and at the hotels, the Hummums especially being a very comfortable place to think of in the dead of night. "A porter up all night" is spoken of in most of the hotel advertisements. The fire-escape men, the ordinary firemen, the watchers and other officials at our hospitals, the journeymen bakers, and many more, go to swell the ranks of the class we are considering; and then, are there not the telegraph-offices and the press? And what prodigious numbers of persons does that daily paper, without which we should feel so utterly lost, keep from their natural rest. What a host of labourers are busy throughout the small hours, preparing that sheet which we skim so carelessly—busy with their hands, busy with their eyes, busy with their heads. What a pity it seems that you, who lie there awake, and they, who would sleep so soundly if they had the chance, cannot change places for one night at any rate.

Out of this town, and far away on the high seas, how many more of one's fellow-men are awake and stirring. You almost envy the pilot at the wheel and the men who keep the watch, or the master, who has come on deck for a time. You think of the stars above them and of the phosphorus sparkling in the ship's wake. And what is that master thinking about? He is most likely speculating as to how much he will have to give for that hideous little villa on the outskirts of Hull, on which he has set his heart, and to which he is longing to retire. His imagination dwells on the vile stucco decorations, on its cockney garden, and its earwiggy summer-house, and he contemplates with his mind's eye the round mahogany table and the horsehair chairs with which he proposes to decorate his symposium. The stars, and the sky, and the sea, and the phosphorus are not much to him as he thinks of those other, and to him more unaccustomed objects.

Now, as you suffer all these things to drift at leisure through your mind, it is as likely as not that you will drop two or three times into a sort of half-slumber, and so your thoughts will be turned into dreams. Over those thoughts you have no control, or perhaps at times a half-control, as when it happens that you *see through* your own dream, and decline to be moved by

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its terrors, because, even in your sleep, you know that it *is* a dream, and that you need not trouble yourself about it, for that reason. A great many difficulties in connexion with dreams would disappear if this were more generally understood—that they are simply thoughts over which the reason has no control. When utterly impertinent thoughts come into the mind during our waking hours we at once get rid of them, but when they attack us in sleep we are powerless, and a strange kind of tyranny seems to insist that we should weave them into the main body of the dream with which we are engaged.

It is a question whether any transaction in which we engage ever utterly perishes. It is a question whether the memory of these transactions does not return at regular intervals in the cycles of thought. Supposing this to be so, we will say that on a certain day you have purchased for some particular purpose a lump of bees'-wax. On the particular day and at the particular moment, perhaps many months afterwards, when in its regular course that thought comes up to the surface, it may be that you are awake, and if so you dismiss the bees'-wax as an impertinence which has nothing to do with what you are thinking about. But, if you happen at that moment to be dreaming, this peculiar tyranny which I have spoken of insists that you shall weave this piece of bees'-wax in a coherent manner into your dream, whatever it may be. Then it is, and for this reason it is, that you find the ice that you are consuming at an evening party has turned into bees'-wax, or that a similar change has taken place in the fowl on which you have invited a chosen friend to dine.

I do not say that this *is* so, but it may be so. At all events, such speculations are allowable in the small hours, and may be comfortable; for at such times we are ready to attach all sorts of horrible interpretations to our dreams, just as, then, we are singularly credulous as to supernatural stories, and apt to repent that, in the course of the previous day, we stated openly that we didn't believe in ghosts.

It is two A.M. The distant church clock has just struck. The ball at No. 5 is flourishing still, and the music faintly reaches to where I lie.

At this solemn hour it is piteous to think of the poor fashionable slang which is being jabbered in that assembly. The monotonous clack still goes on; not indeed with the fierce energy which marked it some hours earlier, but still with some vitality. Boasting, direct or indirect; agonised apprehension of being left behind in the race whose goal is Belgrave-square; human souls convulsed with terror between the hearing of a contemplated festival and the reception of a card of admission to it; ghastly excuses made by those who were not at the right place at the right moment, the guilty wretches hiding behind the first subterfuge that comes to mouth, as if they had been convicted of a crime: "How late did you stay at Lady Swallowtail's?" "Oh, I was not there." "Thought I saw you." "No, I was obliged er, er—the fact is, some of my people, don't you know, are not quite au mieux there, don't you know; my cousin Lord Linkboy is related again to the Broadskirts, and there's been some dispute, don't you know, and that sort of thing, about some of the Swallowtail property, and that sort of thing." "Going to Mr. Drinkwater Dregg's fête on Thursday?" "No, I always go on Thursday to five-o'clock tea at Lady Hyson's. Pretty person—clever too, and that sort of thing." "Are the Hysons in society?" "Well, *some*. I believe Mrs. Dreggs has sworn that they *shall* be invited, and that sort of thing, don't you know, so I suppose she'll pull them through." "Dear Lady Jane, who are those wonderful people you have been talking to for the last half-hour?" "Oh, poor dear things, aren't they wonderful? The man's clever, I believe, an artist, or author, or something of that sort. His wife's distantly connected with Sir Paul Churchyard's family, or something of that sort, so dear Mary Churchyard tries to take notice of them." "I've been admiring you so for devoting yourself in such an exemplary manner, you looked agacée to death." "Oh yes, I was most dreadfully agacée, but one must be a good Christian sometimes, you know; they don't know a soul, and dear Mary entreated me to help her to entertain them. One's obliged to be civil to that sort of person, don't you know, or else they put you into a book, or a picture, or some dreadful thing of that sort. Thanks, Captain Bigg—a strawberry-water, thanks, very much." "There's Sir Thomas Breechload just come in; first time I've seen him since that marriage was broken off." "Do you think it was ever really on?" "Well, really I don't know. Dear Lady Susan spread it abroad in all directions, and the girl herself affichéed it everywhere." "Yes, very much affichéed, wasn't it. However, I must say I was staying there last autumn, and certainly Sir Thomas was always there, and that sort of thing, you know." "Extraordinary people here to-night—thanks, with some Seltzer water, if you please—thanks! Quantities of foreigners, are there not? distinguished foreigners, I suppose I ought to say; they seem all décorés, and that sort of thing. I saw such quantities at the Exhibition to-day, with such wonderful hats." "How d'ye do, Sir Thomas; I thought you were in the Highlands?" "No, I only went down about a shooting I have taken of Lord Blackcock." "Really! That's the next moor to us—Lord Blackcock's and Captain Biggs' and my husband's all join each other." "I'm delighted to hear it." "What becomes of Lord Blackcock, then?" "Oh, he's going abroad, I believe; they're very much abroad." "Ah! in consequence of that marriage. I suppose she's not visited, is she?" "Well, no, I think not. Have you ever seen her?" "Yes, once, I think, at the opera — interesting-looking person." "Yes—my carriage—thanks! I must go then; Mr. Currycomb is so very particular about the horses. A burnoose, if you please, yes—thanks, very much. Good night."

In the Caves of Ulysses, the Mediterranean

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as it washes in and out talks better than this. The nightingale talks better as she sings from the pomegranate-tree. The watch-dog bays the moon, but the sounds he utters are more to the purpose than these which his master speaks. And far, far off, the winds to which the Lebanon cedars bow their heads are singing an anthem which I will listen to awhile before I close my eyes in sleep.

CHERRIES.

Many places have given names both to things and to individuals. A duke of the ancient village of Smallborough is addressed by his intimates as Smallborough. Corinth bears the blame of conferring a misname on grocers' currants. The most pungent of peppers comes from, and is known as, Cayenne. Bayonne originated an article more difficult to digest—the bayonet. Sedan-chairs are borne in mind, and by porters, while the town of Sedan itself is forgotten. China, a word of very wide territorial historic and industrial significance, is familiarly limited to fragile porcelain. Ladies do not hesitate to ask for so many yards of Irish. From Tulle, towards the south of France, has gone forth a material of world-wide repute for female adornment. Which ideas are suggested by Morocco—bookbinding and slippers, or a geographical area inhabited by Moors? Cows, probably, were before Cowes was; but Worstead, in Norfolk, preceded worsted, yarn or wool. Had Polonius hidden behind the fortifications, instead of the tapestry of Arras, one incident in Shakespeare's Hamlet would have been as good as impossible.

About a hundred miles west of Trebizond, on the southern shore of the Black Sea, is a town now called Chirisonda, anciently Cerasus, whence, as near as may be eighteen hundred years ago, the Roman general Lucullus brought a garden fruit, which found great favour in Italy. The novelty was called after its place of growth, a *cerasus*, in the singular, and (not to make two bites of one cherry) *cerasi* in the plural and preferable number. Learned schoolboys have little difficulty in translating *cerasus*, and even *κερασος*, as "cherry," with comments (after tasting them) on the comparative merits of modern varieties. One hundred and twenty years afterwards, garden cherry-trees were sent to Great Britain. The hard *Ch* in Chirisonda might furnish German lips with Kirschen. Our English "cherry" is a likely abbreviation of the Italian ciriegia, pronounced chee-ree-ay-gi-a. France has garden cherries "cerises," and wild cherries, "merises," whence the merries or merry cherries of Cheshire. How the initial *c* became converted into *m*, or how the *m* was exchanged for *c*, is a question out of the writer's depth. Ameres cerises, bitter cherries, has been set up, but will not stand, as the derivation; for the order of the words should be "cerises ameres." Besides, most merises, although small, are not bitter, but sweet and sugary.

Granting that Lucullus first introduced cultivated cherries to the Roman gardens, it does not necessarily follow that those planted were the parents of the wild cherries now common in ancient European forests, such as those of Compiègne and Orleans, in France, and the Black Forest, in Germany.

The north has supplied us with a variety, the morello or morell cherry, which is quite distinct from the Asiatic races in quality and uses, as well as in origin. Wild and half-wild cherries, which are distilled into kirschenwasser, or cherry-spirit, may be called brandy-cherries; while morells are the cherries for cherry-brandy. Wild cherries, moreover, vary among themselves, some taking the type of the May Duke, some of the white heart, some of the black cherry. Still, it is quite possible (considering the lapse of time, the tendency of cherries raised from stones to degenerate, and the distributive agency of cherry-loving birds) that all the wild cherries of Central and Western Europe are seedlings from the imported Euxine stock. Owing to the small extent of self-sown woods in the United Kingdom, wild cherries are not plentiful with us, and the few we have are lightly esteemed. On the Continent they are regularly gathered, largely sold, much approved by the multitude, furnish material for the distilleries, and the main ingredient in the liqueur maraschino. It is also whispered that they are employed by unprejudiced wine merchants to give flavour and fruitiness to thin ill-conditioned wines.

Cherries on the table may be separated into two classes: the one with round; the other with heart-shaped fruit. Or, we may make them into four different groups: Soft-fleshed juicy cherries, often acidular, early like the May Duke, easy of digestion, popularly believed to enrich the blood; firm-fleshed cherries, less juicy, indigestible but sweet and pleasant, later in ripening; black cherries (one of the best of which is the black Tartarian, raised by Knight), fleshy, sweet, vinous-flavoured, and mostly rather late; and the Morells, juicy, acid at first, the latest of all, and hanging long on the tree when not gathered prematurely.

But, in truth, our word "cherry" is much too comprehensive. The French employ distinct substantives to denote various kinds of cherries (as if they were distinct species of fruit), while we are obliged to denote their difference by the use of adjectives. With them, a white-heart is not a cerise but a bigarreau; a morell is not a cherry, but a griotte—sometimes, however, a cerise du Nord. Nor can we speak of cherries horticulturally, without making use of the French nomenclature. There are also practical reasons for employing different names for the different sorts, which some botanists, as De Candolle, have regarded as distinct species. The merisiers and the cerisiers have a marked distinctive character, which is sure to strike gardeners. The blossoms of the merisier are produced on the wood of the year before last; those of the cerisier properly so called, on last year's wood. Moreover, the bunches in which they grow, are sessile in the one, and slightly pedunculated in the other. The leaves in the

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first case are downy beneath, and are completely smooth in the second. The merises and the varieties obtained from them by horticulturists are solid-fleshed, as the white-heart; the cerises have soft and juicy flesh.

Cherries comprise, then, first, wild cherries or merises; bigarreans, heart-shaped, sweet, and with hard crunching flesh; guignes, heart-shaped, with soft sweet juicy flesh. The black guigne has long been established in Scotland, both fruit and name. Cherries proper (the cerises of Paris and the griottes of the departments) are round, sourish, and juicy. The morello is regarded as a griotte du Nord, although its habit of growth and its season differ so much from other griottes. The cherry season may be considerably prolonged by a selection of sorts with that end in view. There are a dozen kinds of cherries, according to the probable succession of their ripening. Many an epicure would say to them, "Stand not upon the order of your coming, but come at once." Early May, Empress Eugenie, May Duke, Knight's Early Black, Royal Duke, Elton, Bigarreau (White Heart), Black Tartarian, Gross Guigne Noire, Guigne Cœur de Poule (Hen's Heart), Morello, Cerise de Toussaint (All Saints' Cherry.)

Cherry-trees are not very particular about soil; the best is good enough for them. They will do nothing in marshy swamps, and will bear little, except moss, in cold stiff undrained clays. The celebrity of the Kentish cherry orchards, the famous specimens grown at Montreuil-aux-Pêches, and the lip-inviting baskets-full beheld in the markets of Normandy, prove that certain combinations of lime, in the forms of marl, chalk, and gypsum, are grateful to the roots of the cherry plant, as to those of most other stone-fruit. But the good drainage on chalky bottoms may be also conducive to prosperity. On deep alluvial loamy strata, that have been brought down by the secular action of water, and which contain a little of almost everything, the best kinds of cherries will show what they are capable of producing.

As no dependence can be placed on the goodness of cherries raised from stones, and as it is almost certain they will differ from their parent, choice varieties must be propagated either by budding or grafting. Stocks, on which buds have failed in summer, may be grafted the following spring. But grafted trees are so apt to exude gum at the point of union that it is better to lose a year than not have budded trees. The budding is performed in the same way as for roses, and success is quite as easily obtained. In these days, when everybody collects everything, from valuable gems to used postage-stamps, a collection of cherry-trees affords considerable interest and amusement. Nor is the garden-space required, enormous, especially if the orchard-house system be adopted. By budding the plants yourself, you regard them as your own handiwork—your children almost; and it requires no more than three or four years' patience to taste fruit from buds you have yourself inserted. As stocks for dwarf pyramidal trees you may use the Malaheb (a species every part of which is odoriferous, the leaves being employed to flavour maraschino); or, in default of this, you may take wild seedlings, or plants raised from the stones of any common cherry. Stones to be sown must not be long kept dry, but should either be packed in moist sand, or put at once into the ground where they are to germinate.

Cherry-tree gum differs from gum arabic in not dissolving (only swelling) in water; to dissolve it spirit must be used: otherwise, it is applicable to the same purposes, and is also in repute as a nutritive substance in cases of hard necessity. If flowing superabundantly it is a symptom of the sickness or approaching death of the tree. Wounds in the bark have the effect of causing the exudation of gum and its evil consequences. In some countries heavy fines are inflicted on those who injure the bark of their neighbours' cherry-trees.

Although we neither pick up money in the streets nor gather pine-apples on quickset hedges, we may meet with cherries when we little expect it. The Portugal laurel, Cerasus Lusitanica, and the common laurel of our gardens, Cerasus lauro-cerasus (whose leaves ought *not* to be used to flavour custards), are neither of them laurels but cherry-bushes.

Cherries have their curiosities. The loves of Prince Cherry and Fair Star afford a literary illustration. There are people who, after eating their cherry, engrave the stone with microscopic carvings, and convert it to some lilliputian use. We possess an elaborate basket with a handle to it, sculptured out of a single cherry-stone; another, emptied of its kernel and fitted with a tiny stopper, forms an elegant spirit-flask capable of holding perhaps a drop and a half of noyau liqueur in place of its own original almond. Cherries, dried in the sun or in a slow oven, deprived of their stalks and stones, are an elegant ingredient in sundry dulcet preparations. They are the indispensable outside ornament of cabinet pudding.

There is the peach-leaved cherry, with long narrow leaves, bitter fruit, but handsome wood; the variegated-leaved cherry; the double blossomed cherry, beautiful but barren, in varieties; the semi-double blossomed common cherry, occasionally productive; the All Saints' cherry, with weeping boughs, flowering for three successive months, and ripening its fruit in autumn, even later than the morell. There are short-stalked cherries and long-stalked cherries; yellow, waxy, red, amber, rosy-cheeked, pale-faced, crimson, purple, and black cherries. As to size, the hen's heart (guignier cœur de poule), grown principally in the south of France, is one of the largest, being a full inch in diameter, almost black outside, dark red within, and ripening in September. But when we see what has been done, and is doing, with strawberries, we may believe that cherries are still in their infancy, and that finer fruit is within the range of possibility than any which we yet possess. Years ago, that great

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practical horticulturist, Knight, observed that the cherry, when propagated by seed, sported more than any other fruit with which he had tried experiments. He concluded that cherries were capable of acquiring a higher state of perfection than they have yet attained. New varieties are much wanted. He succeeded in raising a few; but since his death, little has been done in improving the cherry.

The ruddy tints which the leaves of certain species of cherry assume in autumn, have suggested their employment in landscape gardening. Ornamental also is the tobacco-leaved cherry, a Dutch variety, with leaves nearly a foot long and six inches broad. It was likewise named "four to the pound," to give an idea of the size of its fruit, but which was far from answering to the title. The cherry itself is bright red, a trifle broader than long, less than an inch through, and somewhat insipid in flavour.

A sage who probably dwells not far from Sawbridgeworth reconciles his fondness for cherries with his love of birds, by contriving a cherry-orchard under glass. Some such reconciliation is needful, unless insects are to be the lords of creation. It is sad that ignorant people, some of them belonging to the gentler sex, should cause all the small birds around them to be poisoned, because they eat a few seeds and taste a little fruit; although nothing is more conceivable than the increase of insect life to such an extent as to render human life impossible. In Gloucestershire, the cherry-trees (and damson-trees also) are seriously injured by caterpillars, because the devourers of caterpillars, and of the fathers and mothers of caterpillars, are reduced to too small a minority to fulfil their natural office. The Moniteur warns the people of certain districts to wash their cherries before eating them, because they have been crawled over or touched by creatures which have left a poisonous slime or secretion.

The cherry-house, instituted (shall we say?) by Mr. Rivers, must be a pleasant edifice to visit, either when in blossom or in ripened fruit. It is a small span-roofed house, twenty-five feet by fourteen, nine feet high to the ridge, and five feet high at the sides. For economy, the sides and ends are made of boards, with a shutter on hinges a foot wide on each side. A path, three feet wide, along the centre, is planted on each side with a variety of pyramidal trees of compact growing sorts. Behind them, next the sides, are low pyramids and bushes of the bigarrean and heart cherries. These, being vigorous growers when planted out, are kept, to check them, in thirteen-inch pots, with plenty of manure on the top. Last summer, the success was quite refreshing. As soon as the cherries began to colour, *i.e.* when boys and blackbirds declare they are ripe, the shutters were opened to admit air, and some iron-wire netting, firmly nailed *inside*, was placed over the apertures occupied by the shutters when closed. Cherries, while ripening, delight in a dry warm atmosphere, such as they rarely have out-doors in England, but which in an orchard-house exists in perfection. They are also recommended to be grown in small houses appropriated to them alone, for the facility of destroying, by fumigation, the black aphides with which cherry-trees are apt to be infested.

Cherries under glass, whether planted out or in pots, must be subjected to one system of pruning, or rather of pinching. As soon as a young shoot has made five or six leaves, its top should be pinched off to three full-sized leaves, not counting two or three at the base, which are generally small and without buds in their axils. The pinching must be continued all summer long, until the trees cease to make young shoots.

A cherry-house is safe and certain; the fruit is secure from early frosts and late marauders. With a lock on the door and the key in your pocket, you have some hope of gathering the produce of what you planted. You ensure the gratification of the eye, as well as that of the taste and the social pleasures of dessert. For, a pair of small cherry-trees in pots, in full fruit, are ornaments at even a princely banquet. A morell cherry-tree, with its flexible branches weighed down by fruit of various deepening shades of red, is a most graceful and luxuriant object, bearing comparison even with an orange, and not half so costly nor so slow to obtain. Out-doors the morello has the unusual merit of flourishing and bearing abundantly when trained against a north wall; but to see it in all its beauty and richness, it should be grown as a standard in a sheltered situation.

RUSSIAN TRAVEL.

HOUSEKEEPING IN THE INTERIOR.

ALTHOUGH Count Pomerin* desired to entertain me for an indefinite time as his guest, the proposed length of my stay in his neighbourhood made it desirable that I and my family should rather establish ourselves as his neighbours in a house of our own. A sufficient dwelling-place we found close to the count's residence, and looking into a large sloping court-yard, at the bottom of which was the cotton mill, with other factory buildings. Pins's house and the steward's office flanked this yard, which was large enough for the exercising of some thousand soldiers. On the left of the factory, in the hollow, was an old primitive corn-mill, driven by a couple of water-wheels. More to the left lay the lake, and the road passing between the end of the lake and the corn mill ran northward, to join at the distance of thirty or forty miles the main highway.

My house was of brick, and originally built as a dwelling for the steward. It was of two stories, the under one being used as a general store or "econom" for the estate, a sort of "tommy-shop." No other store or shop was within many miles, and of this one the steward had entire control, buying, selling, and charging as he chose; an arrangement anything but profitable to the peasantry. A gateway led from the road to the court, and a broad flight of steps,

* See page 299 of No. 68.

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half in-doors and half out-of-doors, enabled us to reach my dormitory. The house was well situated for commanding a view of much that went on about the factory. An additional recommendation to me was the fact that the stanavoy, or district inspector and magistrate, lived in a wooden house next mine, and that from my gable windows I could see into his court-yard. It was there that he administered justice with "the stick," and there also was a rude prison or lock-up. As I wanted to see life in the interior, had heard so much of the "stick" by which Russia is said to be governed, and had seen so little of it—perhaps for want of opportunity—I felt rather glad that this short-coming in my experience was about to be supplied.

Although my goods and chattels had been sent off from Moscow before we left that city, they did not arrive till six weeks after us, our six rooms being in the mean time partially furnished from the count's own house. The things came, however, and for a wonder came unbroken, which is saying a good deal when it is understood that amongst them there was a set of Wedgewood's best dinner ware, besides two sets of imperial china and porcelain, and a lot of crystal. The count had ordered his steward to supply us with everything we might want in horses, provisions, and necessaries from the stables and "econom." The horses I accepted, the provisions I preferred to pay for; but I soon found that the count's orders were one thing, and the steward's fulfilment of them was another. For instance, when horses and conveyances were wanted, this gentleman picked us the worst cattle and the oldest carriages he had. For provisions he charged three hundred per cent more than it cost us to buy them from the peasants. The peasants he sent us as servants were the worst behaved and dirtiest he could discover. Clearly enough we were looked upon by this German as interlopers, spies, and what not, for which reason he took every means that he durst safely employ to annoy us. Some things, beyond our friend's control, were very cheap. As matter of curiosity, to illustrate the drawback to the poor of want of market for the articles of their own raising, here are some comparisons of price: A turkey cost in the interior tenpence, in the capital four-and-sixpence; a goose, in the interior, ninepence, in the capital, three shillings; a fowl, interior, fourpence halfpenny, capital, fourteen-pence; beef, three-halfpence a pound in the interior, fourpence-halfpenny in the capital. Of eggs, the price in the capital was five times our price here of a penny three-farthings for ten. Butter was in the country threepence-halfpenny, in the capital ninepence a pound; and a sucking-pig, that in the interior cost sevenpence, in the capital cost three shillings and sevenpence. The peasants, rearing all these, and many other articles, on their allotments, and having no near market for them, were glad to get anything in the shape of money. Wool, flax, feathers, they carried to the fairs, many miles distant, or sold to the natives who travel round in search of such articles. These men would then take them to the large fairs, and sell them to merchants, who again re-sell them to other and larger dealers, by whom the goods reach Moscow, Odessa, or St. Petersburg, after passing through four hands.

A main dependence of a household is upon the servants. An English mistress wants them "quiet, honest, clean, tidy, and respectful," but finds them of another sort in Russia. As a domestic servant, the Russian serf, particularly the woman, is noisy, impudent, dirty, slatternly, thievish. One good English servant is worth a whole regiment of them. If you choose, madam, to live up to the eyes in filth—if you submit to be plundered to your stay-laces—if you pay your maids ten times their rightful wages in presents—if you never look into the kitchen, and give the whole establishment entire command of the cellar and larder, you may live to be tolerated in your own house.

We began our housekeeping with four, a key-keeper (housekeeper), a cook, a room-girl (housemaid), and a footman. They came in a body, accompanied by the "starosta," and sent by the steward, who had the control of all the human chattels. My wife looked at them as she would have looked at doubtful meat, for she had much Russian experience in such affairs.

"Take them away, starosta; I must have better than these."

"But surely, madame," said the starosta, "you will try them. If they don't do well, tell me, and they shall be whipped; or beat them yourself, it is all the same."

"No, I will not have these. You have picked out the dregs of the village. Get me others directly, or must I speak to the count?"

"I hear and obey, madame. Get out, you pigs! I will bring younger ones, madame. Forgive me, but the steward sent these."

This batch was succeeded by another, and then by a third, which last was deemed admissible. When they had shaken themselves into their places, we found they had all some experience in the duties expected of them. But each stuck with amusing firmness to a single duty. When the cook had cooked she lay down on a bench in the kitchen, and slept out the rest of the day. When the room-girl had dusted the chairs and tables, she also squatted on the floor in a corner and slept. When the lad had waited at table, and carried the dirty dishes to the kitchen, he rolled himself up double in a corner of the lobby. When anything was wanted from any of them they had to be roused up with kicks or cold water; shaking was but a vain exercise. The key-keeper, not having any keys to manage (there was not yet a lock in the house except on my wife's drawers), slept placidly, and snored the sleep of the just all day and all night on one of our sofas, as rather a more dignified place than the floor for a key-keeper. Beds they had none, and beds they did not want, nor ever had wanted. The breakfast dishes were put on the table for tea just as they had been taken away dirty the evening before.

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"Cook, why did you not clean the tea-things?"

"Madame, I am cook. I cannot clean dishes."

"Polygaie, why did *you* not clean the dishes?"

"Madame, I am room-girl, and dust."

"Evan, why did you not do it?"

"Madame, I am lacquey, and wait."

Of course the key-keeper was miles above this. So they all went off to their lairs, and we sent for a dish-washer.

At the end of the week the floors wanted washing, and a question arose who was to do it. The cook cooked, the room-girl dusted, the lacquey waited, the scullery-maid washed dishes, and the key-keeper did nothing but sleep. My wife was making up her mind to be her own key-keeper, as she thought the sleeping on the sofa might be accomplished by herself if necessary, but she could not scrub the floors. The others, even on promise of an addition to their wages, refused in a body. "Too much work, madame. Cannot be done." They all evidently were working for the "stick," but we did not believe in the "stick." The upshot was, that four outsiders were hired to come once a week to wash the floors.

It was the same with washing clothes and getting up linen. A woman was engaged for the first, and the latter had to be done by my wife, because no one could be got who knew what it meant.

"Evan, why the deuce have my boots not been cleaned these three days?"

"If you please, baron, I am lacquey, not boot-cleaner," said Evan. So he rolled himself up again in his corner, and was snoring immediately.

A boot-cleaner was, of course, hired; then a man to cut and fetch wood, and another to cut it into small pieces and keep the fires up.

Thus had my establishment increased in one week to thirteen souls. The wages of these people were small, it is true, but higher wages had no charm to induce extra exertion. Let the ladies of England think much of Betty and Jane. Complain less, use them well, speak kindly to them, and one Betty will do more—and more faithful—work than all my thirteen Russians, with thirty thirteens to that. So says my wife, who remembers faithfulness and friendship in brisk English maids. Now all these Russian servants must be fed, and that means something; not that their nominal food is much, but that the real consumption in the way of theft is beyond calculation. Say that the nominal power of a Russian servant's capacity for victual is ten, the real indicated consumption will be two hundred and fifty.

At the end of the first week our key-keeper rolled off the sofa, rubbed her eyes, yawned, and then said,

"More money, madame, to get coffee and tea and sugar from the 'econom.'"

"Do you mean to tell me that those stores are all gone?"

"All gone, madame."

"What on earth have you done with them? Tell me."

"All eaten up, madame, by the baron and the children and yourself."

"What, twenty-eight pounds of sugar, three pounds of tea, and eight pounds of coffee consumed in a week by my family?"

"Yes, madame. No one has touched them. They cannot last for ever, you see. What's to be done?" And she shrugged her shoulders in the usual manner.

"I will tell you what's to be done. You are to take yourself off instantly." So key-keeper was bundled out. The next was no better, nor the next, and the alternative forced itself on madame, "I must be key-keeper myself."

This did not much mend the matter. The sugar, tea, and coffee continued to vanish, nobody could tell how, and we continued to spend for a few weeks at the rate of three pounds a week for these three articles. To have preserved them untouched it would have been necessary to place them in the centre of the big room, and station a guard of soldiers (not Russian soldiers, who are themselves the biggest thieves in the world), a file of Napoleon's old guard, to watch them night and day. Keys and cupboards were got, but these did not much help to abate the evil. The thieving still went on, and my wife was at her wits' end.

"Have you examined their boxes, my dear?"

"No; but it must come to that again. I thought when I left those experienced and incorrigible thieving Petersburg servants this would not be necessary. I did not mind emptying their boxes once a week, but these innocent country peasants—I cannot imagine them guilty. However, I must try them. Come and protect me, for the first time."

It was after dinner when we proceeded to the kitchen. The whole establishment was fast asleep, squatted and rolled up in various corners. The kitchen a picture of dirt and confusion. A little cold water roused our friends up.

"Titania, give me your key," said madam.

"It is lost, madam."

"Give it instantly. There it is hanging at your side. If you don't be quick, I shall send for the Starosta, and have you whipped."

The key was handed over, and the box opened. This innocent peasant girl's box contained a canvas bag filled with pieces of lump sugar, paper parcels of tea and coffee, needles, pins, buttons, hooks and eyes, pieces of tape, laces, bits of soap, candles half burnt, children's toys, sealing-wax, pens, note paper, and a host of other small articles, all of which my wife identified as hers, and coolly carried off, leaving me sentinel over the others, every one (except Titania, who had been found out) vociferating innocence, and taking Heaven to witness that hands and boxes were entirely clean. Titania was grovelling on the floor at my feet, begging pardon and mercy. The detective returned and opened at leisure every box in its turn, carrying away from each the stolen contents, as she had done with the first. Every box was found with as much in it, and some with more in them, than Titania's.

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When the whole mass of recovered property was spread on my large table it was a wonder to behold. I do not relate this as an extraordinary fact. The habit of stealing and pilfering is so constant and universal, that an honest house-servant in Russia is as one grain of wheat in a ton of chaff. They will nearly all steal while you are looking at them, and swear by the gods they are innocent as lambs. The peasant-women go from the interior to the capitals, speculating not so much on extra wages, but on opportunities of plunder when they get into service. At first they are content with small nibbling, but some of them can make a clean sweep too.

An Englishman in a government situation, a friend of mine, and as good fellow as can be, went to bed lately, and when he and his wife got up at seven o'clock his four rooms were peeled clean to the walls, his servants were all gone, and everything was gone: carpets and curtains, clothes and furs, plate, knives and forks, two watches, and money. He was left in an empty house, robbed to the value of three or four hundred pounds; and all this was done by a female servant or two. No man was connected with the robbery. The thing is so universal that no one either gives or asks for a recommendation with servants. You must take your chance, and to change servants where all are so much alike is utterly useless. My wife at first changed often; I have known her have a fresh set every week—sometimes twice a week. At last, however, she found it was better "to bear the ills we have than fly to others that we know not of," and she adopted the plan of frequently examining all the boxes at unexpected seasons, recovering her property, and putting it back into its right place without saying a word. She had become used to this in the capital, but had expected better things from unsophisticated peasants, and was much hurt at finding her mistake.

A Russian master or mistress would have sent every soul to be whipped, and we were next door to the yard, where each, without ceremony, trial, or delay, would have received fifty to one hundred lashes on the bare back, women and men alike. But an Englishman does not believe in "the stick."

It is possible to find instances of servants remaining for years in one place, being peculiarly adapted for its work, and managed necessarily with an enormous amount of forbearance. Even after they have been treated for years with the greatest kindness, and admitted to intimate familiarity as one of a family; a hasty word is spoken, they get an offer of a change of place, and off they go in a moment. Your child may be dying, your wife helpless—so much the better for them. All your years of kindness, forbearance, and generosity are gone with a breath, and you are left to feel, what many travellers have had to remark, the deficient power of gratitude in the raw Russian. The sentiment is, indeed, almost unknown. And is it not easy to account for this? Think of the treatment the masses are used to receive from those above them; the tyranny of every rank to its inferior step by step; the iniquitous system of forced labour or serfdom;—is this not enough to fix on the poor Russian's mind the idea that every act of kindness is done purely for the advantage of its doer, that there is some interested motive in it? Therefore, though they accept kindness greedily as much as you can bestow, they give few genuine thanks; they are not yet grateful even for the Emancipation Act. Thanks may be on the servile lips, the receiver of good may kiss your hand, go down on his knees and lick the dust off your feet, but not one spark of a true generous gratitude is in his heart.

A COOK OF "THE OLD FAITH."

There is one class, however, which can be fairly trusted for honesty in all things but bargaining. They are the adherents of the "old faith," the "starrie verra." I could wish to give a sketch of the history of this old sect and its creed, but having, as to its history, no certain sound by which to go, I will speak only from my own experience and observation. I know that though the sect is proscribed, the members of it are devotedly attached to their old system, and deem the present orthodox Russian Church an awful departure from the primitive faith and practices. They deny the emperor's claim to be Head of the Church; they believe to any extent in witches; fast and do penance; lacerate and scourge themselves in a most determined manner. They meet in secret—at night generally—and their numbers are greater than is supposed. Some high personages, they say, secretly belong to them, and submit to dreadful midnight penance for their sin of outward subserviency to the modern heresy. People of the Old Faith are distinguished by grim gravity and opposition to all dancing or light amusement. Above all, they do not directly steal, although I have heard it said that, as merchants, some of them are the greatest of all rogues. These fanatics remind me in some respects of the old rigid Cameronians, who thought that the killing of Archbishop Sharpe was not a murder. I should be sorry to place them on a level with these old enthusiasts in many things, but the emperor would stand a fair chance of a heavenly crown if the starrie verra had its will, and it hates the present religion of the empire as much as ever the Cameronians hated prelacy.

I had not been long in this place when I became acquainted with the fact that a community of this "old faith" existed in the neighbourhood. An old wooden building like a Druid temple, set in the side of a hill among trees and rocks, was pointed out to me as their midnight conventicle. This was said to be presided over by a woman, a priestess who never left the temple night nor day. Such an arrangement was clearly prohibited by law, which does not tolerate women priests; yet here she was, and from the perfect immunity which she and her associates seemed to enjoy I suspected that many of the gentry and people of the valley either shared or sympathised with their opinions.

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I had seen a roving fanatic in the village collecting peasants round him, and shouting to them like a street ranter. He never wore anything on his head or feet even in the coldest frost, and his other clothing was indecently scant. He was often drunk, and I have seen him in that state lying helpless on the ground. This fanatic was esteemed a prophet, and listened to as such. He carried a long pole, and danced some holy dance to words of high prophetic omen.

As neither I nor any of my family went to any church, old or new faith, we were suspected to be something dreadful. I had no images in my house, except one brought by the servants and hung up in the kitchen. I had refused to allow a band of priests to go through some mummery by way of blessing the house at my first going in. This was not at all satisfactory, and strange rumours and doubts of my Christianity went about, even to the length of suggestion that we were a household of Turks or Mahomedans, the abomination of abominations to a Russian, and more especially a "starrie verra." As I had no way of publicly exhibiting my faith but by my works, I was obliged to let them all talk as they liked. The tide, however, was soon to turn, and I was to get credit for more sanctity than I deserved.

After my household goods arrived from Moscow the crockery was cleaned and nicely put away in a handy place for particular occasions. For common service we used the base earthenware of the country. What crockery can have to do with the "starrie verra" may be a matter of astonishment, but it has much to do with it, as my poor wife found to her cost. She loves good Wedgewood, and I had been obliged to bring a capital set for twenty-four from England to St. Petersburg, never dreaming that it would have to travel yet another fourteen hundred miles. I had proposed to sell it, but she answered with decision, "Don't be foolish. It must be packed." So packed it was, and here it stood, as I have said, ready for use. One day she said to me, "Tell me, my dear, what 'starrie verra' means."

"Starrie, old; verra, faith—old faith. Why do you ask?"

"Because a woman has come for the cook's place, and she says she is a 'starrie verra,' who will not steal. Shall I take her?"

"Certainly, by all means; an honest cook is a gold mine."

The woman came. She was of a staid, stern, even gloomy expression, about thirty-five years old, was clean, and had a cowl on her head which hid every hair. All the time she remained with us I had no evidence that she was not entirely bald. From this maid's armpits to her heels were two straight lines, so that her waist was quite as mysterious as her hair. Except for the gloomy expression on her face her features were good, and her eye—or I was much mistaken—showed a kind heart, spite of her habitual grimness. She never smiled, jested, nor laughed, but we soon found that she was valuable. Her work was always done to the minute, and done well. We became rather attached to Anastasia, and while keeping her grim gravity unrelaxed she evidently softened to the younger members of the family. They, again, took amazingly to the stern old lass. Give me a child for finding out character covered up, whether in smiles or gloom. The children find it out; ay, and they bring it out. A terrific breaking of pots in the kitchen had taken place five minutes after Anastasia's first installation. Mugs, jugs, cans, brown pots, plates and dishes of various dimensions she smashed into atoms at once, saying, "Unclean! unclean!" As this was a very likely fact, and the things were of little value, she was rather encouraged than otherwise in this new work of reformation. "A new broom sweeps clean," seemed true enough of her. Every article in the kitchen, iron, wood, and earthenware, had been horribly defiled, was pooganie (unclean), was smashed and thrown out. She asked nobody's leave, nor did she stand on the manner of doing it, but did it. A new outfit was obtained from the "econom," and as her religion suffered her to eat with none of us, a complete set of dishes was got for her own individual use. No one durst lay a finger upon these on any pretence whatever. If touched, they were smashed the next moment. Nor would she for the world touch food out of any dish or vessel which had been used by another. If a dog got into the kitchen, and put his nose (as dogs generally do) into half a dozen pots and dishes, whether these were her own particular vessels or not, they were smashed.

The following conversation ensued one evening upon hearing one of these dreadful smashing bouts in the kitchen:

"What noise is that, my dear?"

"Oh, it is Anastasia breaking a few dishes. Never mind her."

"Never mind her! I wonder you allow that old fanatic to go on so; she will ruin us in pots alone." (And assuming a fierce look), "I shall go and turn her out this moment."

"No you won't. Listen: this woman is a jewel. She breaks a few dishes, it is true, but her religion seems to demand it. I suppose it also tells her to be honest, for she is so. You told me not to examine her box, but for all that I have done so many a time. She always leaves the key in it. It contained nothing but an old Bible, in the old church characters, which I could not read, and a few clothes. Not a vestige of my property could I ever find. That is not all: the other servants either don't, or cannot steal by a hundredth part as much as formerly. Her breakage does not amount to a tithe of the old robberies. Now say shall she be turned out?"

"Certainly I prefer the smasher to the thief."

"Now come to the kitchen, I hear she has gone out. I wish to show you something."

We went to the kitchen, and there my wife pointed out to me that all the utensils in which any food was left or kept had a cross made of chips laid across the top. Bread was in course

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of making, and the sponge was set. On the top of the dough a cross was also drawn with a blunt edge.

"Now," said madam, "all that is to keep the witches out of the food. Yesterday she told me that during the previous night the cat had been very uneasy, and had gone mewing about for a long time. She got out of bed, and drew the edge of a knife three times round the cat's head, after which it was quiet and went to sleep directly. She had cut the throats of the witches which were tormenting the cat, and had fastened themselves round her head." When we got back to our own room, my wife continued: "That is not all: she is absolutely a darling of a griffin. She has so established your character for sanctity that in fact you are now supposed to be a priest in your own country, and she defends the interests and the character of the family on all occasions. She does all my marketing now with the peasants, and that alone halves my expenses."

"But, my dear, how can she possibly have represented me as a priest, the last thing I wish to be thought?"

"Well, I was coming to that. Put up that book and listen patiently. I got it all from the countess to-day when I was there, and when I explained some things which puzzled her she laughed immoderately. You know what kind of a character we all got, because we did not go to church, nor have images to adore, nor cross ourselves. We were thought dogs, who worshipped no God at all, and you confirmed this impression by saying you worshipped, like the Athenians to whom Paul preached, an unknown God. I dare say our lives would not have been safe, but Anastasia has put it all right. I sent her amongst the peasants to buy provisions. They told her that we were dogs, and that it was a shame for her, a 'starrie verra,' to live with such dreadful people. 'Ah!' she said, 'you are a parcel of fools; you don't know them as I do. My master is a great priest in his own country. Don't I see him twice every week performing the services with robes, and dresses, and grand curtains in the large room? Don't I see him reading and praying out of five large books full of saints and pictures every day? Don't they all sing and chant every evening before going to bed? Did ever any of you see them dance like you fools? Don't I break as many unclean pots as I like, and madame is never angry, but says, "That's right, Anastasia, keep things clean."' This counter-blast has been going on some time, and now the countess says we are looked upon with different feelings; in fact, our cook has established you in the veneration and good opinion of the people. Besides, you know just dealings with them may have had some effect also."

"But what does it mean? How do I perform the services twice a week?"

"Have you not, like a captain at the North Pole, been setting the children to perform King Alfred, and recite pieces, and sing? Have I not got dresses made for them? Have you not painted a scene (oh, how dreadfully bad), and is not this our amusement every Tuesday and Friday?"

"And the five great books of saints from which I read and pray; can they be the four volumes of the Illustrated London News?"

"Yes, and the large Illustrated Family Bible. She has seen the pictures, and how carefully we handle them, not to spoil the grand binding. So what with the acting, reciting, singing, reading, and family prayers, it is all settled in Anastasia's mind that you are a great good man, but particularly the book of pictures has fixed this conclusion in her mind."

A great sacrifice had yet to be made to the starrie verra. Cooking-pots might be made of the coarsest earthenware, or porcelain, it mattered not; if they were defiled, either they must go, or the cook would go; that was the fixed alternative.

We had given a party. Sanderson was there, Defour was there, Pins was there, the count and many others were there. Each gentleman had brought his favourite four-footed companion and protector. Some had two. These dogs were, during supper, lying about the room. I thought, in common hospitality, it was but right that I should feed my friends' dogs, and I proposed to give them a great feast of broken victuals before they were taken from the room. No sooner said than done; plates, dishes, tureens—of our choice Wedgewood—were filled with what dogs like, and put before our expectant neighbours. It was delightful to see how the strong fellows wagged their tails, and lapped their jaws, and crunched the bones, and relished the dainty feast; but in the midst of all, to our great grief, the starrie verra opened the door, and looked in for some orders. She saw the defilement; her face assumed a more grim look than I had ever seen on it. In a moment I felt that my wife's pet crockery was tried and condemned past all reprieve. Dogs had defiled it. Madame looked at me with a What-Shall-I-Do expression; and I replied by another look of Take-It-Easy-And-Let-It-Go. It was a sore struggle, but prudence triumphed over crockery. The servant was invaluable. It was not she but the crockery that might be replaced. But oh! is there a lady in England who does not sympathise with my poor wife as, immediately after the removal of the cloth, she heard the smash of her Wedgewood going on in the kitchen? She sat still, and winced hard, and pressed her lips together at each smash. Meanwhile, however, I had told her grief to our guests, and each crash was provoking laughter, in which she at length, catching the infection, joined long and heartily. The starrie verra remained with us until we left that part of the country. Then her grim countenance relaxed, and she cried bitterly at parting. She was the only honest servant we ever had in Russia.

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

THE THIRD SCENE.

CHAPTER III.

"MISS GARTH, sir," said Mrs. Lecount, opening the parlour door, and announcing the visitor's appearance, with the tone and manner of a well-bred servant.

Magdalen found herself in a long, narrow room—consisting of a back parlour and a front parlour, which had been thrown into one by opening the folding-doors between them. Seated not far from the front window, with his back to the light, she saw a frail, flaxen-haired, self-satisfied little man, clothed in a fair white dressing-gown, many sizes too large for him, with a nosegay of violets drawn neatly through the button-hole over his breast. He looked from thirty to five-and-thirty years old. His complexion was as delicate as a young girl's, his eyes were of the lightest blue, his upper lip was adorned by a weak little white moustache, waxed and twisted at either end into a thin spiral curl. When any object specially attracted his attention, he half closed his eyelids to look at it. When he smiled, the skin at his temples crumpled itself up into a nest of wicked little wrinkles. He had a plate of strawberries on his lap, with a napkin under them to preserve the purity of his white dressing-gown. At his right hand stood a large round table, covered with a collection of foreign curiosities, which seemed to have been brought together from the four quarters of the globe. Stuffed birds from Africa, porcelain monsters from China, silver ornaments and utensils from India and Peru, mosaic work from Italy, and bronzes from France—were all heaped together, pell-mell, with the coarse deal boxes and dingy leather cases which served to pack them for travelling. The little man apologised, with a cheerful and simpering conceit, for his litter of curiosities, his dressing-gown, and his delicate health; and, waving his hand towards a chair, placed his attention, with pragmatical politeness, at the visitor's disposal. Magdalen looked at him with a momentary doubt whether Mrs. Lecount had not deceived her. Was this the man who mercilessly followed the path on which his merciless father had walked before him? She could hardly believe it. "Take a seat, Miss Garth," he repeated. Observing her hesitation, and announcing his own name, in a high, thin, fretfully-consequential voice: "I am Mr. Noel Vanstone. You wished to see me—here I am!"

"May I be permitted to retire, sir?" inquired Mrs. Lecount.

"Certainly not!" replied her master. "Stay here, Lecount, and keep us company. Mrs. Lecount has my fullest confidence," he continued, addressing Magdalen. "Whatever you say to me, ma'am, you say to her. She is a domestic treasure. There is not another house in England has such a treasure as Mrs. Lecount."

The housekeeper listened to the praise of her domestic virtues with eyes immovably fixed on her elegant chemisette. But Magdalen's quick penetration had previously detected a look that passed between Mrs. Lecount and her master, which suggested that Mr. Noel Vanstone had been instructed beforehand what to say and do in his visitor's presence. The suspicion of this—and the obstacles which the room presented to arranging her position in it so as to keep her face from the light—warned Magdalen to be on her guard.

She had taken her chair at first nearly midway in the room. An instant's after-reflection induced her to move her seat towards the left hand, so as to place herself just inside, and close against, the left post of the folding-door. In this position, she dexterously barred the only passage by which Mrs. Lecount could have skirted round the large table, and contrived to front Magdalen by taking a chair at her master's side. On the right hand of the table the empty space was well occupied by the fireplace and fender, by some travelling trunks and a large packing-case. There was no alternative left for Mrs. Lecount but to place herself on a line with Magdalen, against the opposite post of the folding-door—or to push rudely past the visitor, with the obvious intention of getting in front of her. With an expressive little cough, and with one steady look at her master, the housekeeper conceded the point, and took her seat against the right-hand door-post. "Wait a little," thought Mrs. Lecount; "my turn next!"

"Mind what you are about, ma'am!" cried Mr. Noel Vanstone, as Magdalen accidentally approached the table, in moving her chair. "Mind the

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sleeve of your cloak! Excuse me, you nearly knocked down that silver candlestick. Pray don't suppose it's a common candlestick. 'It's nothing of the sort—it's a Peruvian candlestick. There are only three of that pattern in the world. One is in the possession of the President of Peru; one is locked up in the Vatican; and one is on My table. It cost ten pounds; it's worth fifty. One of my father's bargains, ma'am. All these things are my father's bargains. There is not another house in England which has such curiosities as these. Sit down, Lecount; I beg you will make yourself comfortable. Mrs. Lecount is like the curiosities, Miss Garth—she is one of my father's bargains. You are one of my father's bargains, are you not, Lecount? My father was a remarkable man, ma'am. You will be reminded of him here, at every turn. I have got his dressing-gown on at this moment. No such linen as this is made now—you can't get it for love or money. Would you like to feel the texture? Perhaps you're no judge of texture? Perhaps you would prefer talking to me about these two pupils of yours? They are two, are they not? Are they fine girls? Plump, fresh, full-blown, English beauties?"

"Excuse me, sir," interposed Mrs. Lecount, sorrowfully. "I must really beg permission to retire if you speak of the poor things in that way. I can't sit by, sir, and hear them turned into ridicule. Consider their position; consider Miss Garth."

"You good creature!" said Mr. Noel Vanstone, surveying the housekeeper through his half-closed eyelids. "You excellent Lecount! I assure you, ma'am, Mrs. Lecount is a worthy creature. You will observe that she pities the two girls. I don't go so far as that myself—but I can make allowances for them. I am a large-minded man. I can make allowances for them and for you." He smiled with the most cordial politeness, and helped himself to a strawberry from the dish on his lap.

"You shock Miss Garth; indeed, sir, without meaning it, you shock Miss Garth," remonstrated Mrs. Lecount. "She is not accustomed to you as I am. Consider Miss Garth, sir. As a favour to *me*, consider Miss Garth."

Thus far, Magdalen had resolutely kept silence. The burning anger which would have betrayed her in an instant if she had let it flash its way to the surface, throbbed fast and fiercely at her heart, and warned her, while Noel Vanstone was speaking, to close her lips. She would have allowed him to talk on uninterruptedly for some minutes more, if Mrs. Lecount had not interfered for the second time. The refined insolence of the housekeeper's pity, was a woman's insolence; and it stung her into instantly controlling herself. She had never more admirably imitated Miss Garth's voice and manner, than when she spoke her next words.

"You are very good," she said to Mrs. Lecount. "I make no claim to be treated with any extraordinary consideration. I am a governess, and I don't expect it. I have only one favour to ask. I beg Mr. Noel Vanstone, for his own sake, to hear what I have to say to him."

"You understand, sir?" observed Mrs. Lecount. "It appears that Miss Garth has some serious warning to give you. She says you are to hear her, for your own sake."

Mr. Noel Vanstone's fair complexion suddenly turned white. He put away the plate of strawberries among his father's bargains. His hand shook, and his little figure twisted itself uneasily in the chair. Magdalen observed him attentively. "One discovery already," she thought; "he is a coward!"

"What do you mean, ma'am?" asked Mr. Noel Vanstone, with visible trepidation of look and manner. "What do you mean by telling me I must listen to you for my own sake? If you come here to intimidate me, you come to the wrong man. My strength of character was universally noticed in our circle at Zurich—wasn't it, Lecount?"

"Universally, sir," said Mrs. Lecount. "But let us hear Miss Garth. Perhaps I have misinterpreted her meaning?"

"On the contrary," replied Magdalen, "you have exactly expressed my meaning. My object in coming here is to warn Mr. Noel Vanstone against the course which he is now taking."

"Don't!" pleaded Mrs. Lecount. "Oh, if you want to help these poor girls, don't talk in that way! Soften his resolution, ma'am, by entreaties; don't strengthen it by threats!" She a little overstrained the tone of humility in which she spoke those words—a little overacted the look of apprehension which accompanied them. If Magdalen had not seen plainly enough already that it was Mrs. Lecount's habitual practice to decide everything for her master in the first instance, and then to persuade him that he was not acting under his housekeeper's resolution, but under his own—she would have seen it now.

"You hear what Lecount has just said?" remarked Mr. Noel Vanstone. "You hear the unsolicited testimony of a person who has known me from childhood? Take care, Miss Garth—take care!" He complacently arranged the tails of his white dressing-gown over his knees, and took the plate of strawberries back on his lap.

"I have no wish to offend you," said Magdalen. "I am only anxious to open your eyes to the truth. You are not acquainted with the characters of the two sisters whose fortunes have fallen into your possession. I have known them from childhood; and I come to give you the benefit of my experience in their interests and in yours. You have nothing to dread from the elder of the two; she patiently accepts the hard lot which you, and your father before you, have forced on her. The younger sister's conduct is the very opposite of this. She has already declined to submit to your father's decision; and she now refuses to be silenced by Mrs.

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Lecount's letter. Take my word for it, she is capable of giving you serious trouble if you persist in making an enemy of her."

Mr. Noel Vanstone changed colour once more, and began to fidget again in his chair. "Serious trouble," he repeated, with a blank look. "If you mean writing letters, ma'am, she has given trouble enough already. She has written once to me, and twice to my father. One of the letters to my father was a threatening letter—wasn't it, Lecount?"

"She expressed her feelings, poor child," said Mrs. Lecount. "I thought it hard to send her back her letter, but your dear father knew best. What I said at the time was, Why not let her express her feelings? What are a few threatening words, after all? In her position, poor creature, they are words, and nothing more."

"I advise you not to be too sure of that," said Magdalen. "I know her better than you do."

She paused at those words—paused in a momentary terror. The sting of Mrs. Lecount's pity had nearly irritated her into forgetting her assumed character, and speaking in her own voice.

"You have referred to the letters written by my pupil," she resumed, addressing Noel Vanstone, as soon as she felt sure of herself again. "We will say nothing about what she has written to your father; we will only speak of what she has written to you. Is there anything unbecoming in her letter, anything said in it that is false? Is it not true that these two sisters have been cruelly deprived of the provision which their father made for them? His will to this day speaks for him and for them; and it only speaks to no purpose, because he was not aware that his marriage obliged him to make it again, and because he died before he could remedy the error. Can you deny that?"

Mr. Noel Vanstone smiled, and helped himself to a strawberry. "I don't attempt to deny it," he said. "Go on, Miss Garth."

"Is it not true," persisted Magdalen, "that the law which has taken the money from these sisters, whose father made no second will, has now given that very money to you, whose father made no will at all? Surely, explain it how you may, this is hard on those orphan girls?"

"Very hard," replied Mr. Noel Vanstone. "It strikes you in that light, too—doesn't it, Lecount?"

Mrs. Lecount shook her head, and closed her handsome black eyes. "Harrowing," she said; "I can characterise it, Miss Garth, by no other word—harrowing. How the young person—no! how Miss Vanstone the younger—discovered that my late respected master made no will, I am at a loss to understand. Perhaps it was put in the papers? But I am interrupting you, Miss Garth. You have something more to say about your pupil's letter?" She noiselessly drew her chair forward as she said those words, a few inches beyond the line of the visitor's chair. The attempt was neatly made, but it proved useless. Magdalen only kept her head more to the left—and the packing-case on the floor prevented Mrs. Lecount from advancing any farther.

"I have only one more question to put," said Magdalen. "My pupil's letter addressed a proposal to Mr. Noel Vanstone. I beg him to inform me why he has refused to consider it."

"My good lady!" cried Mr. Noel Vanstone, arching his white eyebrows in satirical astonishment. "Are you really in earnest? Do you know what the proposal is? Have you seen the letter?"

"I am quite in earnest," said Magdalen, "and I have seen the letter. It entreats you to remember how Mr. Andrew Vanstone's fortune has come into your hands; it informs you that one-half of that fortune, divided between his daughters, was what his will intended them to have; and it asks of your sense of justice to do for his children, what he would have done for them himself if he had lived. In plainer words still, it asks you to give one-half of the money to the daughters, and it leaves you free to keep the other half yourself. That is the proposal. Why have you refused to consider it?"

"For the simplest possible reason, Miss Garth," said Mr. Noel Vanstone, in high good humour. "Allow me to remind you of a well-known proverb: A fool and his money are soon parted. Whatever else I may be, ma'am, I'm not a fool."

"Don't put it in that way, sir!" remonstrated Mrs. Lecount. "Be serious—pray be serious!"

"Quite impossible, Lecount," rejoined her master. "I can't be serious. My poor father, Miss Garth, took a high moral point of view in this matter. Lecount, there, takes a high moral point of view—don't you, Lecount? I do nothing of the sort. I have lived too long in the continental atmosphere to trouble myself about moral points of view. My course in this business is as plain as two and two make four. I have got the money, and I should be a born idiot if I parted with it. There is my point of view! Simple enough, isn't it? I don't stand on my dignity; I don't meet you with the law, which is all on my side; I don't blame your coming here, as a total stranger, to try and alter my resolution; I don't blame the two girls for wanting to dip their fingers into my purse. All I say is, I am not fool enough to open it. *Pas si bête*, as we used to say in the English circle at Zurich. You understand French, Miss Garth? *Pas si bête!*" He set aside his plate of strawberries once more, and daintily dried his fingers on his fine white napkin.

Magdalen kept her temper. If she could have struck him dead by lifting her hand at that moment—it is probable she would have lifted it. But she kept her temper.

"Am I to understand," she asked, "that the last words you have to say in this matter are the words said for you in Mrs. Lecount's letter?"

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"Precisely so," replied Mr. Noel Vanstone.

"You have inherited your own father's fortune, as well as the fortune of Mr. Andrew Vanstone, and yet you feel no obligation to act from motives of justice or generosity towards these two sisters? All you think it necessary to say to them is—you have got the money, and you refuse to part with a single farthing of it?"

"Most accurately stated! Miss Garth, you are a woman of business. Lecount, Miss Garth is a woman of business."

"Don't appeal to me, sir!" cried Mrs. Lecount, gracefully wringing her plump white hands. "I can't bear it! I must interfere! Let me suggest—oh, what do you call it in English?—a compromise. Dear Mr. Noel, you are perversely refusing to do yourself justice; you have better reasons than the reason you have given to Miss Garth. You follow your honoured father's example; you feel it due to his memory to act in this matter as he acted before you. That is his reason, Miss Garth—I implore you on my knees, take that as his reason. He will do what his dear father did; no more, no less. His dear father made a proposal, and he himself will now make that proposal over again. Yes, Mr. Noel, you will remember what this poor girl says in her letter to you. Her sister has been obliged to go out as a governess; and she herself, in losing her fortune, has lost the hope of her marriage for years and years to come. You will remember this—and you will give the hundred pounds to one, and the hundred pounds to the other, which your admirable father offered in the past time? If he does this, Miss Garth, will he do enough? If he gives a hundred pounds each to these unfortunate sisters——?"

"He will repent the insult to the last hour of his life," said Magdalen.

The instant that answer passed her lips, she would have given worlds to recal it. Mrs. Lecount had planted her sting in the right place at last. Those rash words of Magdalen's had burst from her passionately, in her own voice.

Nothing but the habit of public performance, saved her from making the serious error that she had committed more palpable still, by attempting to set it right. Here, her past practice in the entertainment came to her rescue, and urged her to go on instantly, in Miss Garth's voice, as if nothing had happened."

"You mean well, Mrs. Lecount," she continued; "but you are doing harm instead of good. My pupils will accept no such compromise as you propose. I am sorry to have spoken violently, just now; I beg you will excuse me." She looked hard for information in the housekeeper's face while she spoke those conciliatory words. Mrs. Lecount baffled the look, by putting her handkerchief to her eyes. Had she, or had she not, noticed the momentary change in Magdalen's voice from the tones that were assumed to the tones that were natural? Impossible to say.

"What more can I do!" murmured Mrs. Lecount, behind her handkerchief. "Give me time to think—give me time to recover myself. May I retire, sir, for a moment? My nerves are shaken by this sad scene. I must have a glass of water, or I think I shall faint. Don't go yet, Miss Garth. I beg you will give us time to set this sad matter right, if we can—I beg you will remain until I come back."

There were two doors of entrance to the room. One, the door into the front parlour, close at Magdalen's left hand. The other, the door into the back parlour, situated behind her. Mrs. Lecount politely retired—through the open folding-doors—by this latter means of exit, so as not to disturb the visitor by passing in front of her. Magdalen waited until she heard the door open and close again behind her; and then resolved to make the most of the opportunity which left her alone with Noel Vanstone. The utter hopelessness of rousing a generous impulse in that base nature, had now been proved by her own experience. The last chance left was to treat him like the craven creature he was, and to influence him through his fears.

Before she could speak, Mr. Noel Vanstone himself broke the silence. Cunningly as he strove to hide it, he was half-angry, half-alarmed at his housekeeper's desertion of him. He looked doubtingly at his visitor; he showed a nervous anxiety to conciliate her, until Mrs. Lecount's return.

"Pray remember, ma'am, I never denied that this case was a hard one," he began. "You said just now you had no wish to offend me—and I'm sure I don't want to offend you. May I offer you some strawberries? Would you like to look at my father's bargains? I assure you, ma'am, I am naturally a gallant man; and I feel for both these sisters—especially the younger one. Touch me on the subject of the tender passion, and you touch me on a weak place. Nothing would please me more than to hear that Miss Vanstone's lover (I'm sure I always call her Miss Vanstone, and so does Lecount)—I say, ma'am, nothing would please me more than to hear that Miss Vanstone's lover had come back, and married her. If a loan of money would be likely to bring him back, and if the security offered was good, and if my lawyer thought me justified——"

"Stop, Mr. Vanstone," said Magdalen. "You are entirely mistaken in your estimate of the person you have to deal with. You are seriously wrong in supposing that the marriage of the younger sister—if she could be married in a week's time—would make any difference in the convictions which induced her to write to your father and to you. I don't deny that she may act from a mixture of motives. I don't deny that she clings to the hope of hastening her marriage, and to the hope of rescuing her sister from a life of dependence. But, if both those objects were accomplished by other means, nothing would induce her to leave you in possession of the inheritance which her father meant his children to have. I know her, Mr. Vanstone!

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She is a nameless, homeless, friendless wretch. The law which takes care of you, the law which takes care of all legitimate children, casts her like carrion to the winds. It is your law—not hers. She only knows it as the instrument of a vile oppression, an insufferable wrong. The sense of that wrong haunts her, like a possession of the devil. The resolution to right that wrong burns in her like fire. If that miserable girl was married and rich with millions to-morrow, do you think she would move an inch from her purpose? I tell you, she would resist, to the last breath in her body, the vile injustice which has struck at the helpless children, through the calamity of their father's death! I tell you, she would shrink from no means which a desperate woman can employ, to force that closed hand of yours open, or die in the attempt!"

She stopped abruptly. Once more, her own indomitable earnestness had betrayed her. Once more, the natural nobility of that perverted nature, had risen superior to the deception which it had stooped to practise. The scheme of the moment vanished from her mind's view; and the resolution of her life burst its way outward in her own words, in her own tones, pouring hotly and more hotly from her heart. She saw the abject mannikin before her, cowering silent in his chair. Had his fears left him sense enough to perceive the change in her voice? No: *his* face spoke the truth—his fears had bewildered him. This time, the chance of the moment had befriended her. The door behind her chair had not opened again yet. "No ears but his have heard me," she thought, with a sense of unutterable relief. "I have escaped Mrs. Lecount."

She had done nothing of the kind. Mrs. Lecount had never left the room.

After opening the door and closing it again, without going out, the housekeeper had noiselessly knelt down behind Magdalen's chair. Steadying herself against the post of the folding-door, she took a pair of scissors from her pocket, waited until Noel Vanstone (from whose view she was entirely hidden) had attracted Magdalen's attention by speaking to her; and then bent forward with the scissors ready in her hand. The skirt of the false Miss Garth's gown—the brown alpaca dress, with the white spots on it—touched the floor, within the housekeeper's reach. Mrs. Lecount lifted the outer of the two flounces which ran round the bottom of the dress, one over the other; softly cut away a little irregular fragment of the stuff from the inner flounce; and neatly smoothed the outer one over it again, so as to hide the gap. By the time she had put the scissors back in her pocket, and had risen to her feet (sheltering herself behind the post of the folding-door), Magdalen had spoken her last words. Mrs. Lecount quietly repeated the ceremony of opening and shutting the back parlour door; and glided back to her place.

"What has happened, sir, in my absence?" she inquired, addressing her master with a look of alarm. "You are pale; you are agitated! Oh, Miss Garth, have you forgotten the caution I gave you in the other room?"

"Miss Garth has forgotten everything," cried Mr. Noel Vanstone, recovering his lost composure on the reappearance of Mrs. Lecount. "Miss Garth has threatened me in the most outrageous manner. I forbid you to pity either of those two girls any more, Lecount—especially the younger one. She is the most desperate wretch I ever heard of! If she can't get my money by fair means, she threatens to have it by foul. Miss Garth has told me that, to my face. To my face!" he repeated, folding his arms and looking mortally insulted.

"Compose yourself, sir," said Mrs. Lecount, "Pray compose yourself, and leave me to speak to Miss Garth.—I regret to hear, ma'am, that you have forgotten what I said to you in the next room. You have agitated Mr. Noel; you have compromised the interests you came here to plead; and you have only repeated what we knew before. The language you have allowed yourself to use in my absence, is the same language which your pupil was foolish enough to employ when she wrote for the second time, to my late master. How can a lady of your years and experience seriously repeat such nonsense? This girl boasts and threatens. She will do this; she will do that. You have her confidence, ma'am. Tell me, if you please, in plain words, what can she do?"

Sharply as the taunt was pointed, it glanced off harmless. Mrs. Lecount had planted her sting once too often. Magdalen rose, in complete possession of her assumed character, and composedly terminated the interview. Ignorant as she was of what had happened behind her chair, she saw a change in Mrs. Lecount's look and manner, which warned her to run no more risks, and to trust herself no longer in the house.

"I am not in my pupil's confidence," she said. "Her own acts will answer your question when the time comes. I can only tell you, from my own knowledge of her, that she is no boaster. What she wrote to Mr. Michael Vanstone, was what she was prepared to do—what, I have reason to think, she was actually on the point of doing, when her plans were overthrown by his death. Mr. Michael Vanstone's son has only to persist in following his father's course, to find before long, that I am not mistaken in my pupil, and that I have not come here to intimidate him by empty threats. My errand is done. I leave Mr. Noel Vanstone with two alternatives to choose from. I leave him to share Mr. Andrew Vanstone's fortune with Mr. Andrew Vanstone's daughters—or to persist in his present refusal, and face the consequences." She bowed, and walked to the door.

Mr. Noel Vanstone started to his feet, with anger and alarm struggling which should express itself first in his blank white face. Before he

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could open his lips, Mrs. Lecount's plump hands descended on his shoulders; put him softly back in his chair; and restored the plate of strawberries to its former position on his lap.

"Are you residing in London, ma'am?" asked Mrs. Lecount.

"No," replied Magdalen. "I reside in the country."

"If I want to write to you, where can I address my letter?"

"To the post-office, Birmingham," said Magdalen, mentioning the place which she had last left, and at which all letters were still addressed to her.

Mrs. Lecount repeated the direction to fix it in her memory—advanced two steps in the passage—and quietly laid her right hand on Magdalen's arm.

"A word of advice, ma'am," she said; "one word, at parting. You are a bold woman, and a clever woman. Don't be too bold; don't be too clever. You are risking more than you think for." She suddenly raised herself on tiptoe, and whispered the next words in Magdalen's ear. "*I hold you in the hollow of my hand!*" said Mrs. Lecount, with a fierce, hissing emphasis on every syllable. Her left hand clenched itself stealthily, as she spoke. It was the hand in which she had concealed the fragment of stuff from Magdalen's gown—the hand which held it fast at that moment.

"What do you mean?" asked Magdalen, pushing her back.

Mrs. Lecount glided away politely to open the house door.

"I mean nothing now," she said; "wait a little, and time may show. One last question, ma'am, before I bid you good-by. When your pupil was a little innocent child, did she ever amuse herself by building a house of cards?"

Magdalen impatiently answered by a gesture in the affirmative.

"Did you ever see her build up the house higher and higher," proceeded Mrs. Lecount, "till it was quite a pagoda of cards? Did you ever see her open her little child's eyes wide, and look at it, and feel so proud of what she had done already that she wanted to do more? Did you ever see her steady her pretty little hand, and hold her innocent breath, and put one other card on the top—and lay the whole house, the instant afterwards, a heap of ruins on the table? Ah, you have seen that! Give her, if you please, a friendly message from me. I venture to say she has built the house high enough already; and I recommend her to be careful before she puts on that other card."

"She shall have your message," said Magdalen, with Miss Garth's bluntness, and Miss Garth's emphatic nod of the head. "But I doubt her minding it. Her hand is rather steadier than you suppose; and I think she will put on the other card."

"And bring the house down," said Mrs. Lecount.

"And build it up again," rejoined Magdalen. "I wish you good morning."

"Good morning," said Mrs. Lecount, opening the door. "One last word, Miss Garth. Do think of what I said in the back room! Do try the Golden Ointment for that sad affliction in your eyes!"

As Magdalen crossed the threshold of the door, she was met by the postman, ascending the house steps, with a letter picked out from the bundle in his hand. "Noel Vanstone, Esquire?" she heard the man say interrogatively, as she made her way down the front garden to the street.

She passed through the garden gate, little thinking from what new difficulty and new danger her timely departure had saved her. The letter which the postman had just delivered into the housekeeper's hands, was no other than the anonymous letter addressed to Noel Vanstone by Captain Wragge.

A GOSSIP ABOUT FLOWERS.

Alphonse Karr, who discourses so pleasantly on all subjects, and whose charming "travels" round his own and other people's gardens are so well known, has lately produced a volume bearing the attractive title of Flowers. He first discourses of garden walls, which, he says, assist the purposes of Nature, plants being nowhere so fine, so luxuriant, so happy, as when they are supported by and stretched along them, and he covers them in this manner: Plant ivy against the barrier exposed to the north, it will soon be entirely covered, and in winter will afford food and shelter to the song-birds, where they can safely build. Let the climbing vine trail its branches on a wall that receives only the morning sun: its leaves will be green all the summer, and glow with a rich purple in autumn. Give a southern aspect to the Glycine Chinensis (or Wistaria), and it will flower twice a year, in April and in August; in the same situation the several varieties of Bignonia will flourish; and wherever you have room on your walls encourage climbing roses, white and yellow jasmines, passion-flowers, sweet-smelling clematis, violet-coloured, white, and pink Maurendiæ, every kind of creeper, in short, that opens its petals to the sun; the lowliest amongst them will conceal what the loftier-rising stems have left bare. Let your garden wall be as flat as you please on your neighbour's side, if it be a party-wall, and he likes it so; but, on your own, preserve as many angular forms and irregularities as possible, to give your garden the air of being enclosed by rocks. Is it indispensable, also, that the top of the wall should be an inexorably straight line? Here and there along the top leave spaces of different sizes, for letting in flower-pots containing wallflower, wild geranium, saxifrage, houseleek, valerian, and so forth; and let the trellis for the climbing plants be painted

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like dark-coloured wood, whose external hue alone harmonises properly with trees and flowers.

A garden where everything is in its place, apart even from the most beautiful and luxuriant vegetation, creates a sensation of perfect harmony, and formed on this principle does not produce the painful impression often felt on entering a garden after a walk in the country, where Nature alone has been at work. There are harmonies of plants, of forms, of colours, and like a painter constructing his picture, a red or yellow tone tells best in this or that particular spot. Space, for instance, may apparently be created in a garden by planting bluish-tinted willows, Bohemian olives, and Flemish poplars, the under part of the leaves of which are white; while colours are heightened by placing certain flowers in juxtaposition, the violet beside the yellow, and so forth. On the other hand, nothing offends the eye more than the attempted adaptation of mineral hues to those of Nature. There is an unhappy tradition, religiously preserved by cockney gardeners, which consists in painting seats, trellises, summer-houses, everything of that sort, green—the result of which is utter dissonance with the tints of vegetation, which invariably suffer by contrast with the hard, glaring, metallic colour.

Having walled himself in to his heart's content, M. Alphonse Karr describes the contents of his garden. "In the first place it is not large. Secondly, it is cultivated in a particular manner. This cultivation is not apparent. The turf, sprinkled with crocuses and violets in spring, and meadow saffron in autumn, seems in its natural state, and the briars and roses grow like the wild sorts in the hedges. The lily of the valley, the primrose, and the cyclamen flower beneath the trees without asking for the slightest care; so much so that they are forgotten and found again, every year. It is either the fault of the garden or of the dahlias, that these flowers produce a bad effect in it. Dahlias will *not* look as if they had been dropped there by a bird or cast by the wind. As they open out their rich corollas, they tell of the gardener; they show who are their tutors; they betray their connexions; they are formal, starched, high-cravated; we quarrel with each other, in fact, and they are gone. There was, perhaps, another reason for their banishment. The roses, violets, whitethorn, periwinkles, primroses, mingle in youth with our first sensations; we see in their yearly renewal all our early expectations, all our faded illusions; they tell us of the days which were past, and the dreams that are gone. The dahlia has nothing to relate to people of my age. I am forty-two years old, and there were no dahlias when I was a child,—in that garden where my soul expanded to the sun when I thought and loved. However this may be, I have proscribed the dahlias, yet without hating them. In my garden filled with friends, dahlias were intruders who bored me. But I do not object to see them now and then. A neighbour of mine has a fine collection, which he keeps in perfect order, and I sometimes pay him a visit for the purpose of pleasing my eye with magnificent colours. When the first frosts come next season I am going to make an experiment recommended by several gardeners. We know that heliotropes stand the winter badly, even in an orangery; we know, also, how they spread when planted out; the thing is, to make them pass the winter out of doors, and this is the way to set about it: The first frost blackens the branches of the heliotrope, and they must then be cut off level with the ground; then, with the débris of these branches, with sand and chaff, you make above the tuft a mound somewhat larger than a molehill, which keeps all humidity from the root of the plant. It is only in the middle of April" (we, in England, should say May) "that all fear of frost is over, and then the mound may be destroyed."

M. Alphonse Karr has a great dislike to the pedantic employment of botanic names in pretty little gardens filled with familiar flowers. There is a well-known book in France called the Bon Jardinier, intended for the use of great and small, and particularly of the latter; for it is the most elementary, the most complete, the cheapest, and the least voluminous of its kind. But, for some time past, the Bon Jardinier has been departing from the original simplicity of its style, and, instead of being merely a good, honest, plain-speaking little book, has set up for something scientific. As M. Alphonse Karr says, instead of resigning itself to the simple sabots of the gardener, it wants to wear the creaking, polished boots of the professor. The most convenient form for those who are not learned botanists would be to renounce the division of plants into botanical families, enter them alphabetically by their common names, and place the scientific ones after them in brackets, with any additional indication that may be thought desirable. But the Bon Jardinier declines to do this; it proceeds by double entry, referring the reader from the common name to the scientific. For example: "Oak" is wanted; see *Quercus*.—"Holly;" see *Ilex*.—"Beech;" see *Fagus*.—"Chesnut;" see *Castanea*. — "Lilac;" see *Syringa*, and so on. But this is not all. The Bon Jardinier has also adopted new scientific names, displacing the old ones, so that those who thought themselves botanically gifted are now all abroad again. The savants thought proper to call the sea-side wallflower Cheiranthus maritima. Very good; but stick to that designation! On the contrary, they have changed it to Malcomia. Then, again, the Bindweed, with its beautiful white, violet, and rose-coloured bells, received the name of Ipomea, but, for some arbitrary reason, it has been altered to Pharbites. "No!" exclaims M. Alphonse Karr, "never will I sow that in my garden! When I was twenty years of age I made some verses on the bindweeds that climbed over a hedge; who could be poetical on Pharbites?" That rich autumnal flower, the China-Aster,

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was Latinised into Aster Sinensis, but the botanists would not let it alone, and now it is metamorphosed into Callistephus. "Oh, shepherd!" exclaims our indignant floriculturist, "pluck the leaves off a callistephus to see whether your mistress loves you a little, passionately, or not at all. Rosina, send a message to Count Almaviva to tell him to wait for you this evening under the shade of the Æsculus! And the periwinkle! Oh, Rousseau, would you exclaim, 'I have found a Vesica major!' Do you imagine, oh ye botanists, that you can unbaptise the hawthorn? Call it Cratægus oxycantha, if you please, but don't think it was that with which I scratched my hands, when, at twenty, I plucked a branch of May and offered it to the lady of my affections! Even the innocent corn-flower cannot escape the Bon Jardinier. You ask him for it, and, with a disdainful air, he replies, I am not acquainted with it, but here is the Centaurea cyanus. Will you please my ear, do you suppose, and awaken the associations of my happiest days, by calling the sweet lily of the valley Convallaria? Names like these sound like insults to beautiful flowers!" It was only the other day that a French gardener, whose botanical education was incomplete, replied to an observation, in which a particular flower was named in Latin, "Ah, yes, sir; people *have* taken to calling these poor flowers by Latin names." And he seemed to think that a greater injury could hardly have been done to them. This remark of poor François was mentioned by me to an English resident in France of twenty-five years' standing, and the reply made was as follows: "Ah, but they call 'em by strange names themselves. Now, what do you think—you'll hardly believe it—you know the gherkin! Well, they call it Carnation"—a slight mistake for "Cornichon," the English resident's ear not being yet attuned to the nicest pronunciation.

There are many people to whom the sweetest odours are disagreeable. Hood's "poor Peggy" was one of these—she hated the smell of roses, it being her fate to hawk them through the streets. The violet, mignionette, honeysuckle, and other flowers are disliked by some, simply because their scent is common, and to gratify senses too delicate for "common things" a certain Parisian perfumer lately hit upon the idea of extracting essences from flowers almost without smell, or of a very faint and fleeting odour, which only the most refined noses could appreciate. He accordingly invented the Bouquet d'Azalia, and the Bouquet de Camellia, perfumes which have their existence only in imagination. On the other hand, odours and colours are now imparted to flowers at will.

A scientific Flemish journal, a short time since, contained the following paragraph: "There has recently been spoken of, as a novelty, the secret of tinting and perfuming flowers, and giving them a hue and odour which does not naturally belong to them. A learned botanist, M. Charles Morren, has reported that this process is of old date, and sets forth the following methods, which he has met with in some old treatises on horticulture: 'Black, green, and blue are three colours exceedingly rare amongst flowers, and amateurs eagerly endeavour to impart those hues—a result which is not of difficult attainment. To obtain the black colouring matter which is to be communicated to flowers, you gather the small fruit which grows on the alder, and when it is thoroughly dried you reduce it to powder. The juice of rue, dried, produces the green colour, and blue is procured from the corn-flower, reduced to a fine powder.' M. Morren recommends the following method for communicating either of these colours to flowers: 'You take the colour with which you wish to impregnate the plant, and mix it with sheep's dung, a pint of vinegar, and a little salt—the colouring matter being in the proportion of one-third. This composition, which should be of the consistency of a thick paste, is then placed at the root of a plant of which the flowers are white. It is then watered with water tinted of the desired colour, and very shortly you will have the pleasure of seeing pinks which were white become black. For green and blue you employ the same method. To ensure success, the soil must be prepared: it should be light and rich, well dried in the sun, and reduced to a fine powder by sifting. Fill a pot with this earth, and set in the midst a white stock or pink, for white flowers alone are subject to this kind of modification. Neither rain nor night dew should fall on the plant, and during the day it must be fully exposed to the sun. If you wish to give the white flower the hue of the Tyrian purple you must make use of pulverised Brazil-wood for the paste, and water it with the tinted water. By this means charming lilies may be produced. By watering the paste with three or four tints in three or four different places, lilies of different colours are obtained." Here is the complement of this curious process, viz. that of artificially communicating a sweet perfume to all kinds of plants, even to those which emit an insufferable odour. "You begin," says M. Morren, "by remedying the bad smell of a plant before its birth, that is to say, when the seed is sown, by soaking the seed for several days in vinegar impregnated with sheep's dung, to which is added a little musk or powdered amber. The flowers will have a very agreeable perfume, and to ensure it the plants should also be watered with the same liquid." By a similar process, using rose-water and musk, Father Ferrari succeeded in conquering the shocking odour of the African sunflower, to which he gave the perfume of roses and violets.

As a set-off to these discoveries, M. Alphonse Karr offers the following receipt: "Rub with garlic the spades which you make use of in digging the ground for a meadow, then sow, harrow, and water. The sheep that nibble the grass will have their gigots slightly perfumed with garlic. If you sprinkle a little madder

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over the soil, there will happen what took place in the time of Virgil: Sponte sua sandys pascentes vertiet agnos (the sheep that feed where madder is sown will have rose-coloured fleeces). A great economy and a lovely tint!" "So also," he goes on to say, "the Abbé Moigno recommended a black manure for grazing grounds, to give to the hides of the cattle an indestructible hue, which renders bleaching unnecessary for the boots afterwards made of the leather. A learned Spaniard is reported to have gone still further. His receipt, employed successfully (?) at Martinique, says: 'When coffee is planted they bury small coffee-mills in the soil, at distances of a hundred yards, and the result is coffee ready ground.'" M. Alphonse Karr, however, describes a mode of changing or modifying the colours of certain flowers, for which he vouches. "When, in the autumn, you are smoking a good cigar in your garden—a real Havannah—do not suffer the ash to fall on the ground, but press it lightly over the petals of the dahlia; the parts which you have touched will change colour. I have made the experiment upon two flowers only, a yellow and a pink dahlia. The points of the petals of the first, touched by the cigar-ash, became brick-red, those of the second green."

M. Karr is very sceptical about what are frequently called blue flowers. It is an epithet to be mistrusted, he says, when applied to a plant in a catalogue. "I ought long ago to have obtained admission into the language of horticulture of a colour which is not in the prism, and which painters are unacquainted with. To Prussian blue, ultramarine and royal blue, I have added gardener's blue: it is a colour which begins with amaranth, and ends with violet, and sometimes with brown. Apropos of blue flowers, I cultivate two which I never meet with in gardens, which are very pretty, and which have besides the merit of being really blue, a thing of very rare occurrence; one is the commalina tuberose, with sky-blue flowers, and the other the plumbago larpentæ, with umbels of flowers of a magnificent dark blue. These two plants grow in the open air, but must be covered up in winter, when the commeline disappears entirely, except a few dried leaves."

Almost all the old poets give to the month of May the name of "the month of roses." This error arises from their having taken their ideas ready made from Greece and Italy, and because the troubadours who sang of them came from the south of France. In reality, almost throughout France June is the month of roses, as July is in England. The Bengal and some other scentless varieties alone flourish in May, and Ronsard was quite wrong when he said of Mary Stuart: "In spring among the roses she was born;" though that, indeed, was an extreme poetic license, for her birthday was the 7th of December. One has often reason to be astonished that poets appear frequently to observe nature only in books, and some authors, speaking of flowers, commit errors of the most glaring nature. M. Alphonse Karr cites several popular names who have sinned in this way. Alexandre Dumas talks of peach-trees blossoming at the end of May; Madame Sand speaks of blue chrysanthemums; De Balzac describes azaleas climbing over a house; Jules Janin imagined he had seen blue pinks; and M. Rollé boasts of the intoxicating odour of the camellia. Before their time, Madame de Genlis prattled of green and black roses, but much may be pardoned her, for she was the first who conveyed the moss-rose from England to France. "It is not only of writers," adds M. Karr, "that the roses have a right to complain; certain gardeners and amateurs have, with respect to them, a good deal to reproach themselves with. In order to encourage new kinds they abandon the cultivation of the richest and most magnificent roses. The hundred-leaved rose, the finest of all, is now banished from almost every critical amateur's garden, and for this reason: because it only blooms once a year, fashion having decided that, like some other sorts, it ought to do so twice every summer. I can perfectly understand giving a better reception to roses that renew themselves, but before you proscribe our beautiful old favourites wait at least till you get new ones like them that bear twice. So far from this being the case, the only quality exacted from roses is the principle of renewal. However beautiful may be the colour or the perfume of a rose, unless it reappears the same season, it is passed by with contempt. Why not exact the same thing from lilacs? indeed, are not our gardens filled with plants that only blow once a year? But this is not all; the quality of reproduction being alone esteemed, every kind of license is permitted to the roses that possess it, the greater part of them are scentless, and many are far from having the beautiful shape and rich colour of the exiles they have replaced. For myself, I candidly confess I infinitely prefer a fine rose that blows only once a year, to an ordinary rose that makes a second appearance; I love better that which is rich in fragrance a single time to the rose that is scentless twice. If certain amateurs are allowed their own way we shall finish by having a collection of roses—in paper. The best way to meet these renewing roses is to pinch off the buds on their first appearance, and on the next occasion you will have fine flowers. Some catalogues contain lists of upwards of three thousand different kinds of roses. Many of them have received as many names as Spanish princesses. A gardener, or amateur, observes a rose in his bed which is unknown to him; he declares it to be a new sort, gives it a name, and forthwith it is established. And it sometimes happens that the same rose is discovered by two or three other gardeners. An accident, too, is often accepted as a variety. Such and such a rose flowering in the shade or in the sun, growing in a loamy or a sandy soil, presents apparent differences from the same rose placed under other circumstances. You sow, for example, seeds of the rose du roi; there springs up a paler rose, with less scent and fewer petals, one, in fact, of an inferior order; no

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matter, it is a new variety obtained,—a gain, and it takes its place in the market. Much in the same trading spirit the grocers began by adulterating coffee; then they sold chicory with it; after that they suppressed the coffee altogether and sold chicory only; finally, they adulterated the chicory."

It is singular to notice, and a proof of its universal fame, how little the name of the rose varies amongst different nations. The Greeks called it ῥόδον, the Arabs rod, the Latins rosa—a form which the Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese, and Russians adhere to,—the Germans, English, French, and Danes, rose; the Poles roza, the Swedes ros, and the Dutch roos. There are roses in all countries. Nature, wishing to make them the type of grace and beauty, has bestowed them on every climate, and thus they are raised in the worst gardens and in the most ungrateful soil; their cultivation, too, gives less trouble than that of any other flower. A curious custom formerly prevailed in France, which is related by Sauval. The dukes and peers, whether princes of the blood or "sons of France," were obliged in the spring that followed their nomination, to present roses to parliament. This was called the ceremony of roses. The peer or prince who presented these roses caused herbs and flowers to be strewn in the halls of parliament, and before it sat gave a magnificent breakfast. He then entered each chamber, having a large silver basin carried before him filled with bouquets of roses and pinks, which he distributed. As an indication of the custom, Sauval cites an ordinance of the parliament of the 17th of June, 1541, by which it was decreed that Louis de Bourbon Montpensier, who was created duke and peer in February, 1538, should present his roses before François de Clèves, created Duke of Nevers, and a peer in the month of January of the same year. Francis, Duke of Alençon, one of the sons of Henry the Second, performed the graceful ceremony in 1580; its origin is unknown, and the period of its abolition alike uncertain. The rose used also to have at Rome, during Lent, a Sunday of its own—dominica in rosa—and a golden rose is even now annually blessed by the Pope, and sent as a signal mark of pontifical favour to some sovereign or royal princess. The Academy of Floral Games at Toulouse, founded in 1322, re-established in 1500 by Clemence Isaure, and still in existence, gave a rose as a prize for the best poem. Poor L. E. L. recorded this custom in some of her sweetest verse.

Let us make a transition from the sweet to the useful: When Parmentier first endeavoured to propagate potatoes in France, in the reign of Louis the Sixteenth, they were recommended to public notice, not by their esculent properties, but by their flowers, which, on account of their novelty, immediately became the fashion, and all the court ladies wore potato-flowers in their hair. As to the potato itself, nobody would touch it, and Parmentier only succeeded in making people think it of value by setting up a notice in his potato-garden threatening to prosecute with the utmost rigour of the law whoever was caught stealing them. The grounds were robbed in consequence, and the merits of the root were recognised. Before Parmentier's time, the potato was considered a species of truffle, and in the Ecole du Potager, a work published in 1752, it is thus described: "Here is a plant of which no author has yet spoken, probably from contempt for it, as it has long been known. It would, however, be an act of injustice to omit a fruit which is eaten by many. I shall not speak better of it than it deserves, for I am aware of all its defects; but I think it ought to have a place with other fruits, because it has its utility, and some persons like it. Besides the common people and the peasants, I am able to state, from my own knowledge, that numbers are passionately fond of it. I set aside the question whether this be a legitimate liking or a depraved taste; it is sufficient for me that it has its partisans. There are two kinds of these truffles, one red, and the other white, inclining to yellow; the latter is preferred, as being the least acrid. This fruit is susceptible of different modes of dressing, but the common people simply roast it in the ashes, and eat it with salt. I acknowledge that it is tasteless and insipid, and lies heavy on the stomach, but it has a flavour which pleases those who take to it. One thing is certain; the fruit is nourishing, and does not disagree with those who are accustomed to it in early life. Moreover, it is a very economical dish, so its advantages may be said to balance its defects. It is not unknown in Paris, but is abandoned entirely to the poorer classes, and people above that rank would think it beneath them to let it appear at their tables. I do not wish to inspire them with a taste which I do not myself possess, but we ought not to condemn those whom it pleases, and to whom it is profitable."

After this profession of faith, full of impartiality and tolerance, the author of the Ecole du Potager details the manner of cultivating the potato, but in a lofty sort of tone, as if the subject were quite beneath his notice. "Do this or that," he says; "it is not of much consequence; the thing is scarcely worth the trouble." He concludes his remarks on the esculent by observing that he does not know that it possesses any medical property; in fact, the poor potato really cures no malady—excepting hunger! There was a notion at one time of turning the vegetable to account by converting it, during a period of scarcity of flour, into hair-powder. The attempt was made; the minister of finance took the potato under his protection, and the project was at first successful; but when the powder came to be used, it was found too heavy and would not stop on the hair, so the experiment failed, and instead of its decorating the heads of footmen and persons of fashion, the multitude made it their daily food, and the parfait cuisinier discovered a thousand ways of

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dressing that vegetable, which in France has since received the appropriate name of "petit pain tout fait"—the ready-made loaf.

OFFICIAL FLAGS.

I HAD once the honour of belonging to a branch of the famous Circumlocution-office. Of course, that was when there was a Circumlocution-office, and before administrative reform and competitive examinations had brought our public offices to that condition of alertness, economy, and simplicity, for which they are now so justly conspicuous. In those good old days, we went to work at 10.15 A.M., did our little business in our own very quiet and gentlemanly little way, and at 4 P.M. washed our white hands, and departed very little the worse for our day's exertions. We had not passed a very severe examination, and, being thus ignorant of our own worth, jogged happily on, even though promotion was not then the reward of merit, and it was only by regular and foreordained degrees that we mounted to the few comfortable little places, with four figures of salary, to which we looked forward, as we drew our not very heavy quarterly pay. It was, indeed, odd that with so little incentive to exertion we ever got through our work at all, and the little work we did, must have been badly done. Our Branch had, in much haste, to furnish to another Branch, a great many hundred miles away, an immense number of things on which their very lives depended, and, as these necessary things were not forthcoming, the death of an immense number of horses and men was the consequence. Then, of course, came the very proper question, "Whom shall we hang?" You couldn't hang a Board. So, as the whole failure was attributed to the slippery distribution of responsibility amongst a Board, the Board was abolished out of hand, and, instead thereof, we were to have over all the departments, one supreme head, who would be responsible for all. The advantages of this scheme were twofold. First, when anything went wrong there was at once somebody to hang; and, second, when he *was* hanged, nobody missed him. So far so good. We had got our suspendible chief, our go-to-prison editor, our whipping-boy, and, of course, everything must now go right; and this was the right way in which everything accordingly went.

It could not be expected that our whipping-boy—created though he was for the express purpose of being whipped—would have any taste for avoidable castigation. Obviously he would keep a sharp look-out after the departments under him; and, when he was whipped, take excellent care that the particular department which had occasioned the operation, should not itself sit down in comfort to rejoice over its own escape. Nor did this subsidiary whipping lose anything by being executed at second-hand. And it was precisely upon this principle of the official mind that the change had been made. It is wonderful how effectual it has been in sharpening our several faculties and teaching each to take care that whatever blunder may be committed, it shall not at any rate be traced home to him—obviously the desired result.

A case in point: One fine summer morning, some three or four years ago, Our Branch received a "Demand" from the Quartermaster-General's Department, Barbadoes, for certain signal flags. It ran thus:

Flags, Red . . .	12 ft. by 9 ft.	1
" Blue . . .	" " "	1
" Red, white cross	" " "	1
" White, red "	" " "	1
Pendants red . .	" " "	1

Simple enough, you will say, for all I had to do when the Head of my Room placed it in my hands was to write to the Tower and order the flags to be sent. Stop a moment! Here was a wrong article demanded, and, if I passed the order on, that wrong article might haply be supplied; and haply there the blunder might come to light, and our new Chief be therefore hanged. In that case the chances were pretty strong that, not only he who demanded the wrong article, and he who supplied the same, but poor intermediate I (through whom the order came), would be somewhat unpleasantly haunted by his ghost. The blunder was this: Our Barbadian colleague had demanded

Pendants red . . " " " 1

while, in fact, he wanted

Pendants red ———————— 1

You don't see the difference? Look again. Do you see those three little pairs of dots? They are the official symbol for a repetition of the figures under which they stand, so that it stood in extenso thus:

Pendants red . . 12 ft. by 9 ft. 1

But a Pendant cannot be "twelve feet by nine feet." A Pendant is essentially a long narrow strip of bunting. It has, like Euclid's line, "length without breadth." Herein lay the difficulty. Should I order a flag which could not possibly be right, or should I change the order to one which might—*possibly*—be wrong? In either alternative suspension stared me in the face, so I adopted a middle course, and laid the case before the Head of my Room. But Mr. Norris, like myself, had no fancy for being hanged. Officially, he knew no more than I, the proper description of this mysterious flag; and why should he commit himself upon his private belief or mine, that the pendant was in truth just a narrow strip of bunting, value half-a-crown? So, by his advice, I ascended to the uppermost story to take counsel of Mr. Traverse, who, as Head of the Military Branch, might be supposed to understand the wants of Quartermaster-Generals better, at all events, than ourselves.

"Mr. Traverse, here is a demand from the Q.M.G.'s Department, Barbadoes, for a red

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pendant twelve feet by nine. Now you know that is absurd. Can you give me authority to alter it—it's not worth half-a-crown?"

"No. I have nothing to do with flags. Mr. Scarce, perhaps, in the Naval Room, would know."

So off I trot to the Naval Room.

"Mr. Scarce, here is a demand from the Q.M.G., Barbadoes, for a red pendant twelve feet by nine. Now, you know, that's absurd. Can you give me authority to alter it?"

"No. I have nothing to do with the Q.M.G. You had better go over to the 'Household Gauds,' and ask there."

So I put on my hat, and away I posted across the Park to the Household Gauds. The Q.M.G. himself was absent, but I found my way to his second in command, and once more told my tale.

"Sorry to trouble you, Colonel Chevron, but we have a demand, &c. The thing is not worth half-a-crown."

"Really I am sorry I cannot assist you; but we have nothing to do with stores. Stay! Let me see. Flags! You had better go to the Admirable House. Give my compliments to the Secretary, and he will tell you, no doubt."

A very great man was the Secretary to the Admirable Board, and his minutes precious, but the "compliments of Colonel Chevron" admitted me to his presence at once, and I again unfolded my grief.

"Sorry to trouble you, sir, but I belong to the Circumlocution-office, and I have been sent on here from the Household Gauds. We have a demand, &c. &c. The thing is not worth half-a-crown."

"Sorry I cannot help you. We have only the political business here. You had better go to Somersault House. Here—take this card to the Storekeeper-General. He will give you every information."

Somersault House was already some distance off, and who could tell "by what by-paths and indirect crook'd ways" I might not there be handed on, perhaps, even to "Quartermaster-General's Department, Barbadoes" itself? So I fortified myself with a cigar, and trudged onwards along the Strand. Arrived at Somersault House, I found the Storekeeper-General engaged with a mutton-chop. No sooner was this necessary business transacted, than that official dignitary at once lent an attentive ear to my oft-repeated tale of woe. Then he stood for a moment pondering.

"I think I can help you." I looked at him with admiring eyes. Here was a man, indeed!

"Mr. Green!" shouts the S.G.

Mr. Green, bald-headed and responsible-looking, appears from the next room, bowing.

"Mr. Green, here is a gentleman from the Circumlocution-office wishes information as to a red pendant demanded for the Quartermaster-General's Department, Barbadoes. Now, I think, about five-and-twenty years ago, we had a demand from that station for some flags. If you just look back through our books, you will no doubt find the particulars required."

Five-and-twenty years! My heart sunk within me, and so doubtless did that of poor Mr. Green. But he was much too courteous and well-bred to let it appear.

"Certainly, sir," he replied, with the blandest of smiles; "but I fear we can hardly get the information immediately, for most of the books are in the cellar."

So it was settled that I should return whence I came, and that, so soon as search could be made, I should be informed of the result. Three days passed away, and I am afraid I had almost forgotten the important question I had left to the decision of Somersault House, when a large official letter "On Her Majesty's Service" was put into my hands. It ran thus:

"Dear Sir,—

"I am sorry I cannot give you the information required. We have looked carefully through our books as far as the year 1828, but can find no demand of the kind. I think you had better write to the station, and have the demand revised.

"Yours, faithfully,

"J. Green."

So to Barbadoes we accordingly wrote, and in the course of two or three months came the revised "demand"—the postage there and back did not cost above three or four shillings—and the obnoxious little dots being removed, we proceeded to order in due form the supply of this memorable little strip of red bunting, value half-a-crown.

Who, after this, will say that "individual responsibility" is not working well!

CASTLE CLARE.

From holly-bush and leafless larch,
From beech-tree rusty-red,
Now music comes to wake the flowers
That sleep on mossy bed.
For blackbirds pipe upon the elms
To the echoes hiding there;
And merry and strong the thrushes flute
All round stern Castle Clare.

The deer feed in the sloping dell,
The swans are on the wave,
The trout leap up for very joy
In silver armour brave;
The lark above the fallow sings,
Poised in the calm blue air,
Rejoicing every breeze that blows
Sweetly o'er Castle Clare.

It's towers stand grandly in the sun
That gild their circling vanes;
Soft clouds of billowing white roll by
Laden with gentle rains.
The birds upon a thousand trees,
Like children free from care,
Carol in the green spreading parks
Of leaf-clad Castle Clare.

Now foals in grassy paddocks pent
Leap, welcoming the spring;
I am the happiest creature born,
For Love has crowned me king.

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Nelly, to-day, with arm in mine,
Said "Yes" to my fond prayer;
And now the meadows seem all flowers
Around dear Castle Clare.

ENGLISH AND IRISH JURIES.

One or two remarkable verdicts returned to astonished courts lately in Ireland, may set us profitably inquiring into some of the peculiarities of what is correctly called the Palladium of British liberty; although that term does not, at the present time, appear to apply to Irish liberty.

The earliest record we have of a jury trial was in the reign of William the Norman, in the county court of Kent, when a question of right as to land having arisen between Gundulph, Bishop of Rochester, who claimed it for the Church, and Pichet, sheriff of the shire, representing the king, it was submitted to the judgment of twelve men on their oaths. Trial by jury is subsequently referred to in Magna Charta as one of the bulwarks of our liberties. In very early times the verdict of eleven in case of disagreement was taken, and the refractory juror sent to jail; but, in the reign of Edward the Third, it was settled that the verdict of less than twelve was a nullity, and the court declared that the judge of assize ought to carry the jury about with him in a cart until they agreed. As a means of accelerating unanimity, juries were, in later times, deprived of light, fire, food, and drink. Indeed, this practice, which we fear justified, in his day, the expression of Pope—

And wretches hang that jurymen may dine—

to a certain extent still prevails. Within a very few years a special jury at Salisbury, who were locked up in very cold weather, having succeeded in striking a light, sent a message to the court that they had already burned all the chairs, and that the tables in the jury-room would very soon follow if they were not liberated. Another jury similarly enclosed in very hot weather, sent to request a little water, when a modern judge considerately and facetiously determined that *water* was not *drink!*

Sir Thomas Smith, who wrote in the reign of Elizabeth, in his Commonwealth of England quaintly informs us that "the party with whom they have given their sentence giveth the inquest their dinner that day most commonly, and this is all they have for their labour." This practice was probably succeeded by paying the jury, and in the days of corruption, when jury-packing was the fashion in trials for what were deemed political libels and other crown prosecutions, it became a rather lucrative employment to serve regularly on special juries. The members were selected from a favoured and pliant class, and received a guinea each for every verdict they returned. So completely were they considered hirelings, that the body was well known in the courts as the guinea corps, and those composing it individually as being engaged in the guinea trade.

The barbarous severity of our criminal code often perplexed the humanity of juries in former days, when the death of the culprit was considered the only expiation of what would be now deemed a trifling offence. Down to the reign of Queen Anne a person convicted of stealing to the value of twelve pence was liable to be hanged; but such was the favour shown to the clerical orders, and their supposed acquisition of learning, that before the unhappy culprit was sentenced he was permitted to plead the benefit of clergy. A cleric, appointed by the bishop of the diocese, attended every assizes, and upon his announcement "Legit," or "Non Legit," depended the fate of the convicted culprit. A book containing what was termed the "neck verse" was handed to the prisoner, and he was required to read it; if he could, he was declared entitled to the benefit, and his life spared; if he could not, he was executed. The wisdom and justice, as well as the gallantry of our ancestors, were singularly displayed in their criminal regulations respecting the fair sex. Probably a female could not lawfully be a *clerk*—women, therefore, were not entitled to claim the benefit of clergy, and accordingly when convicted of larceny, were invariably hanged, whether they could read or not. When the standard of capital criminality was subsequently raised to forty shillings, the severity of the law still imposed on juries the necessity of reducing the value of the property stolen, and their consciences permitted of such latitude, that in the case of a woman indicted for stealing a ten-pound Bank of England note, the twelve men on their oaths found that the value of it was only thirty-nine shillings. This trifling with a solemn obligation may, perhaps, be pardoned as a pious and merciful fraud, but the labours of the late Sir Samuel Romilly and the legislation of the late Sir Robert Peel at length rescued our criminal jurisprudence from the scandal, sin, and shame of such examples.

A fearful responsibility at times attached to juries in convicting and consigning to premature graves persons who proved afterwards to be innocent. The case in the state trials of Joan Perry and her two sons, executed at Gloucester, for the murder of William Harrison, who subsequently returned from the Continent, is familiar to most readers; but there were many such, and the following very remarkable one, in which the circumstances would seem to have justified the jury, is but little known. A man of considerable property, in or near London, died, leaving an only child, a daughter, aged about eighteen, and by his will appointed his brother her guardian and sole executor. The will directed that if the daughter should die without having married, or if married without children, her fortune should go to the uncle, whose interest was therefore supposed to be incompatible with that of the niece. Several of the relatives, discontented with the father's ultimate disposition, threw out dark hints that they ought not to live together; notwithstanding which, the uncle removed the niece to his own residence, near Epping Forest.

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They were both seen one day walking together in the forest, but the young lady suddenly disappeared, and the uncle declared that he had sought her as soon as he had missed her, and knew not whither she had gone, or what had become of her. This account was considered improbable, and appearances being clearly suspicious, he was arrested and brought before a magistrate, where other circumstances, which were hourly coming to light, rendered his position serious. A young gentleman from the neighbourhood had been paying his addresses to her, and it was stated, and generally believed, that he had gone a few days before she had been missed on a journey to the north, she having declared that she would marry him on his return. The uncle had repeatedly expressed his disapprobation of the match, and she had loudly reproached him with unkindness and abuse of his authority over her as his ward. A woman was produced, who swore that about eleven o'clock in the forenoon of the day the niece was missed she was passing through the forest, and heard a young lady's voice earnestly expostulating with a gentleman, and, upon drawing nearer to the spot, distinctly heard the following expressions: "Don't kill me, uncle—don't kill me!" Being greatly terrified she hurried away from the scene, and immediately afterwards heard the report of fire-arms.

On this combination of circumstantial and positive evidence, coupled with the suspicion of interest, the uncle was tried, convicted of murder, and immediately after, according to the Draconic code then in force, executed.

About ten days after the execution the young lady reappeared, and, stranger still, all the evidence given on the trial proved to have been strictly true. The niece then declared that, having resolved to elope with her lover, they had given out that he had gone on a journey to the north, while he had merely waited near the skirts of the forest until the time appointed for the elopement, which was the very day she disappeared. He had horses ready saddled for them both, and two servants in attendance on horseback. While walking with her uncle, he had reproached her with her resolution to marry a man of whom he disapproved, and after some remonstrances she passionately exclaimed, "I have set my heart upon it. If I do not marry him it will be death to me; and don't kill me, uncle! don't kill me!" Just as she had pronounced those words she heard a gun fired, at which she started, and she afterwards saw a man come from amongst the trees with a wood-pigeon in his hand, which he had then shot. On approaching the spot appointed for the meeting with her lover, she formed a pretence to induce her uncle to go on before her, and having fled to the arms of her suitor, who had been waiting for her, they both mounted their horses and immediately rode off. Instead, however, of going to the north, they retired to the neighbourhood of Windsor, where they were married the same day, and in about a week after went on a tour of pleasure to France. There they passed some months so happily, that in those days, when newspapers were scarce, when there was no very regular postal communication, and no telegraphs, they never heard of the uncle's sad fate until their return to England.

Cases of this description, in which innocent parties suffered for supposed murders of persons who afterwards proved to be living, led to a determination not to permit the extreme penalty to be carried out in any case in which the body was not either found or its destruction fully proved.

The following extraordinary case occurred in the reign of Elizabeth, and while it revealed a singular secret of a jury-box, it is not perhaps the least remarkable of the circumstances which attended it, that the finding of the body led to much of the perplexity. The trial took place before Sir James Dyer, Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, a judge of high repute, of whom George Whetstones, the rhyming biographer, who celebrated the distinguished ornaments of that reign, in The Life and Death of the good Lord Dyer, playing upon the name according to the fashion of the day, quaintly observes:

> Alive—refūge of all whom wronge did paine;
> A Dyer such as *dy'de* without a *stayne.*

As the judge related the story himself in after years, it may be taken as authentic. A man was tried before him on circuit for the murder of a neighbour who resided in the same parish. Evidence was given by a witness that, as he was proceeding early one morning along a path through a farm which he described, he saw a man lying at some distance in a field, in a position denoting that he must be either dead or drunk. On going closer he found him actually dead, two deep wounds appearing in his breast, and his shirt and clothes being much stained with blood. He further deposed that the wounds appeared as if they had been inflicted by a hayfork, or some such instrument: looking about he discovered such a fork lying near the body, and, taking it up, observed it marked with the initial letters of the prisoner's name. The fork was produced in court; the prisoner acknowledged it to be his, and waived any questions to the witness. A second witness was then produced, who proved that having risen early on the same morning, intending to go to a neighbouring market-town, he saw the prisoner pass in the street while he was standing at his own door. He described his dress and identified his person. Having been prevented from going to market, the first witness brought to the town the account of the death-wounds and finding of the body of the deceased, upon which the accused was apprehended and carried before a justice of the peace. It was then perceived that the prisoner had changed his clothes since the last witness had seen him in the morning, and he was at the examination dressed in the same manner as he appeared in the dock. On being charged by the witness with having changed his clothes, he was alleged

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to have given shuffling and evasive answers. The presiding justice then issued a warrant to search the prisoner's house for the former clothes, as described by the witness, and after a rigid search of two hours and upwards they were found concealed in a straw bed, and on being produced were covered with blood. Another witness deposed that he had heard expressions menacing the deceased fall from the prisoner; but in order to rebut the proof of malice prepense, the prisoner proposed certain questions tending to show that the deceased had first threatened him. The same evidence was given in detail on the trial: the case would seem to have been a very conclusive one; and the prisoner having been called on for his defence, told the following story. He rented a farm adjoining that of the deceased, and they were constantly quarrelling in respect of their bounds, but on the morning in question, as he was proceeding to his work, he found the deceased lying as the first witness had described. On going up to him he perceived the two deep wounds in his chest, and in order to relieve him, raised, and with great difficulty set him up and supported him in his lap.

Apprehensive that a murder had been attempted, he implored the wounded man to state all the circumstances, who, still sensible, was apparently desirous to speak, but was prevented by the agony he suffered and his increasing debility. Being suddenly seized with a rattling in his throat, after a hard struggle, he uttered a deep groan and threw up a quantity of blood, some of which fell on the clothes of the prisoner, in whose arms he expired. He acknowledged that he felt so frightened and shocked, particularly remembering the bad terms on which they had been, that he suddenly quitted the body, and in the confusion brought away the fork of the deceased instead of his own. He further admitted that, being obliged to go to his work, he thought it prudent to change his clothes, and to conceal those on which the blood had fallen where they were found. He was conscious that appearances were against him, and while solemnly declaring his innocence, he concluded with the emphatic expression, "I have no witness but God and my own conscience!"

The judge, after pathetically enlarging on the heinousness and premeditated nature of the crime, and the conclusive character of the evidence, expressed his opinion that the jury could not hesitate a moment in a verdict of guilty. The foreman rose, and begged his lordship, as it was a case of life and death, to permit them to withdraw, and although the trial commenced first in the morning, nine o'clock at night saw them, after several hours' deliberation, still locked up. The Chief Justice, having caused an intimation to be conveyed to the jury that he could not remain longer, some of them returned an answer that eleven of them had made up their minds before they had left the court, but that it was their misfortune to have a foreman who was inveterately obstinate, and unalterably fixed in a different opinion. They were then informed that they must prepare to remain all night locked up. Being alarmed at the thought, and in despair of bringing round their dissenting brother, they agreed to concur with him, and returning into court, by their foreman delivered a verdict of acquittal. The judge expressed astonishment and indignation, and, after a severe admonition, refused to record their verdict, and sent them back to their room, where they remained in darkness and misery all night. The scene may be conceived. They passed that sad night loading their foreman with reproaches, and bewailing their unhappy fate in being associated with so hardened and inflexible a wretch; while he, on the other hand, declared that he would die rather than depart from the resolution he had formed. The next morning they appeared, in a sad plight, again in court, with their former verdict, which they pronounced unalterable. The judge dismissed them with disgrace, declaring that the blood of the murdered man lay at their door. The prisoner fell on his knees, and addressing the Chief Justice, exclaimed, "You see, my lord! that God and a clear conscience are the best of witnesses!"

The scene made a deep impression on the mind of Dyer, who inquired from the high sheriff the character of the foreman, and learned that he was a man of property and repute, universally esteemed in the county. The minister of his parish also gave a similar account of his parishioner, and added, that he was a constant churchman and a devout communicant. Perplexed still more by the information, his lordship—although, according to Whetstone,

> **He did not prie into his neighbour's state,**
> **Unless it were to sustaine his right—**

determined to have a private conference with the foreman, and requested the sheriff without delay to procure the desired interview. They met and retired into a private closet, where the judge, after expressing his uneasiness and explaining his reasons, conjured his visitor frankly to disclose the cause of having in so clear a case insisted on so perverse a verdict. The foreman answered that he had conclusive grounds to justify him—that he was neither ashamed nor afraid to reveal the facts, but as they were entirely within his own breast, and he was under no compulsion to disclose them, he expected that his lordship would pledge his honour to keep the circumstances he was about to unfold as secret as he had kept them himself—a pledge which was immediately and solemnly given. The explanation cleared up this singular mystery. The deceased had been the tything-man of the parish, and was very early that morning amongst the foreman's corn, where he acted most arbitrarily, taking more than was his due. On being quietly remonstrated with, he became scurrilous in his language, as well as outrageous in his conduct, and several times struck at the foreman with his fork, who, seeing that the other was bent on mischief, and being without a weapon to resist, in self-defence to preserve his own life, closed with the aggressor,

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and endeavoured to wrench the fork from him. In the scuffle and struggles of the men, the two wounds were inflicted, from which the homicide ensued. The assizes having but just closed, the survivor was unwilling to surrender himself, and, although he felt acutely for the suspected and innocent prisoner, he considered that, from the difference in their position, imprisonment would be less injurious to the accused, to whom, with the view to make his confinement easy, he had rendered every pecuniary assistance, besides supporting his family. In order to clear the prisoner of the charge, he could not devise any other expedient than that of causing himself to be summoned on his jury and placed at its head. This object he had accomplished with great labour and expense, having all along determined in his own breast rather to die himself than that an innocent man should be the victim. The detail satisfied the Chief Justice, and the juryman at parting made this further stipulation, that in case his lordship should happen to survive him, he should then be at liberty to relate the story, that it might reach posterity. The juryman lived fifteen years after, and the Chief Justice, having survived him, revealed the transaction.

A case presenting some features of resemblance, although very dissimilar in the motives, occurred in Ireland during the agrarian outrages which disgraced that country in the early part of the present century. A man was tried for the murder of a farmer in the county of Limerick, and the clearest and most convincing evidence given of his guilt; so much so, that the presiding judge and every person present felt assured of a conviction without the jury retiring to consider their verdict. One of the jury, however, urged that as the life of the prisoner was at stake, they ought, for the sake of appearances at least, to deliberate, and accordingly, to the surprise of all in court, they went into their jury-room. When the doors were closed they all naturally inquired of the cautious and conscientious juror, who was a resident gentleman of some property, well known in the country, whether he had any doubt of the prisoner's guilt? "Not the least," he promptly replied; "but we are all friends here, and I have a most serious question to put to you." They were of course all attention. "Is it," said he, "a reason because one ruffian chooses to shoot another ruffian, that I should lose three hundred a year by it? That ruffian in the dock is the last life in my lease of the fine farm on which I live, and if he's hanged I'll lose my farm. Now, I appeal to you all, would that be just or fair, and I had myself put on the jury to prevent myself from being robbed." This earnest expostulation was a poser, to which the code of Irish ethics regulating the tenure of land did not furnish a ready answer. Solemn deliberations immediately followed; some earnestly but vainly inquired, could the shadow of a doubt be suggested in order to justify a merciful consideration of the case, while others hinted at a strong recommendation to mercy, a proposal considered on reflection wholly inadmissible, as, in the event of a conviction, the fate of the murderer was inevitable. A boot-eater was a character almost as well known in Ireland in former days as a fire-eater, and this clement and disinterested juror swore that he would breakfast, dine, and sup upon his boots unless his colleagues gave in and concurred with him. The justice of preserving the farm in the end preponderated; the maxim, "Fiat justitia ruat celum," was forgotten, precisely as it was in two recent instances, and a verdict of "Not Guilty" was unblushingly returned. The murderer was absolved and his life saved for the benefit of landlord and juryman. In the hours of future conviviality, his liberator made no secret of the successful exploit.

The constitution of country juries is often very incongruous—farmers whose muscular systems are in constant exercise, but whose brains are rarely called into exertion, are mixed up with tradesmen who are quite as little in the habit of thinking or troubling themselves on any other business but their own. The motley materials are composed of men often from remote districts of large counties, who have never by any evolutions of chance probably met before, and may never meet again. As the wisdom of our law requires unanimity from this varied-coloured group, suddenly clubbed together, the effect of dovetailing into one mass such discordant elements must necessarily be that his ill-assorted associates generally bend to the shrewdest or most obstinate of the company. From the absence of capacity to separate evidence which is valuable from what is valueless, to weigh what is important against what is immaterial, and to reason on results, juries have frequently determined the rights of parties by tossing up for their verdict. The courts, however, refuse to listen to such exposures from repentant jurors, who must themselves have been participators. Perverse verdicts are not unfrequent. A jury empannelled in an action against a stakeholder, to decide which of two horses won a race, could arrive at no other conclusion than that they should run the race over again; and a Welsh jury, who tried a husband for beating his wife so brutally that she died, on being satisfied by the evidence that she was a scold, found a verdict, "Served her right"!

An extraordinarily perverse verdict was mentioned in parliament on the 16th of February, 1836, on the authority of Charles Kendal Bushe, then Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, and it was represented that the statement of the facts was from his own lips. After the rebellion of 1798 an amnesty was passed granting pardon for all crimes committed during that fearful period, murder alone excepted, and the distinguished judge then at the bar was engaged as counsel for a prisoner at the Wexford assizes. The man was indicted for the murder of a yeoman of the name of James White, and the case came on for trial before Sir Michael Smith, then a baron of the Exchequer. Two witnesses were examined

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to sustain the prosecution who proved that the prisoner had been engaged in the rebellion, and that they saw him kill White with a pike. When the case for the crown was closed, and a certain conviction anticipated, Mr. Bushe said he had one witness, and only *one*, but upon his evidence he should confidently look for an acquittal. He then placed James White, the yeoman, in the witness-box, who swore positively that he was alive, and had never been killed by a pike or otherwise. The judge very naturally considering the case at an end, left it to the jury to pronounce their verdict, and after due deliberation they returned one, finding the prisoner guilty. "Guilty!" exclaimed the astounded baron, "how can you convict a man of murder when the person alleged to have been killed is alive and in court looking at you?" "Oh! my lord," said the foreman, "the prisoner ruined a grey horse of mine, one of the finest in the kingdom, and as under the indemnity he will escape punishment for that, we are determined to hang him on the charge of murder!" It may be easily conceived that they were disappointed in their very merciful determination. The openness of jury trials and the facilities they afford to elicit the truth and encourage the talent for eloquence, are strong incitements to ambition and exertion on the part of the advocate. Grateful to the fearless independence of juries in past times for the preservation of our liberties, we hope to see the system improve and be perpetual.

ITALIAN SAILORS.

Among the many projects which agitate Italy at this present moment, one of the foremost is the creation of a navy, and of all the ambitions which derive their impulse from the past, there is not one more reasonable than this. Venice and Genoa have not lost the magic of their names to this people, and there is no reason why regenerated Italy should not be as great and powerful on sea as on land.

All conversant with the Mediterranean have long recognised the admirable qualities of the Sardinian sailors, and have remarked their ships as models of cleanliness and order. Small as the old navy of Sardinia was, it was an arm on which every succeeding government bestowed great care and attention. The Naval College at Genoa received a large subsidy from the state, and the educational course was both long and severe. Practically, also, the Sardinians, copying the English system, established a school-ship, which is put in commission every summer, and continues to cruise about the Mediterranean for four or five months. This vessel, a small gun-brig, is entirely manned and officered by naval cadets, excepting her commander and one subordinate officer. All on board are in the state of pupilage, and thus these cadets learn everything, even to the most minute detail of their profession, practically. We are all aware that continental nations lay a far greater stress than we do on this sort of acquirement. It is part and parcel of all their military discipline, and they cannot be brought to believe that a man can command a company with credit or efficiency who has not himself performed duty in the ranks, and passed through every office and every gradation in the life of a soldier.

Our yachting and boat-racing habits educate our young men with very different powers of bodily strength and endurance from those possessed by the lounging and dissolute youth of a continental city, just as our field-sports and Alpine clubs introduce a very different measure in sustaining fatigue and encountering peril. It is, therefore, very possible that the system of physical training is more of moment to them than to us, and of its success in Italy there cannot be a doubt.

When Alfieri said, the "plant—man, in Italy grew luxuriously and well," he did no more than justice to his country. For every quality of strength and activity the Italian has no superior in Europe. Without referring to the oft-quoted fact that a large majority of the professed athletes of the Continent are supplied by the peninsula, let any who vaunts himself for a peculiar gymnastic exercise compete with an Italian! Take swimming, for instance. We in England believe that this is an accomplishment we are strong in. We imagine that, pertaining as it does to the habits of a seafaring people, we ought naturally to be pre-eminent in it. If we indulge any such fancies in Italy we shall soon discover our mistake, and I would not advise even some of the best of our amateurs rashly to challenge an Italian, to a trial at this exercise. It is only a year ago I myself saw an old sea comrade of Lord Byron's—General Meneyaldo, the same mentioned in Moore's Life as swimming so often with Byron—spring from his boat into the blue Gulf of Genoa, and take a stretch of upwards of a mile, and this at above eighty years of age.

Of course the temperature of the water largely contributes to this. It would not be possible to remain in our colder Northern seas for the same length of time. One can stay in the Mediterranean without the slightest detriment, and there are few who could face a swim of three or four hours on an Atlantic swell, though such an exploit on the Mediterranean is an everyday occurrence.

With the exception of the Breton no Frenchman can rival the Italian in aptitude for the sea. The Italian is not only superior in strength and activity, but in quietness of decision and promptitude. None but men of great physical powers, bold, ready-witted, and energetic, could manage that "lateen sail" which every felucca carries—the most dangerous rig to all but the Italian—but which he handles with perfect safety and skill. Nor is the least of their qualities their sobriety. Drunkenness is almost unknown in the Italian navy. The liberty men of a Sardinian ship-of-war may be seen on shore, walking along hand in hand, singing, it may be, some popular national hymn—some glorious tribute to the King or Garibaldi (whose sailor origin is dear to the

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naval heart), but not a trace of inebriety will ever be detected amongst them. In their scrupulously white jackets and trousers, and in their smart straw hats, they look rather like the well-got-up crew of a yacht than the sailors of a royal navy.

Discipline, mainly dependent as it is on habits of temperance and sobriety, is easily maintained amongst them, and the severe rule so necessary on board our ships is scarcely known with them. How little does an Italian naval officer know of that peculiar slavery which attaches to every English lieutenant of watching after his men on shore! and how seldom is it that the return from leave is, as with us, the season of punishment.

For several years back the naval service has been popular among the aristocracy of Northern Italy. The great changes effected in the army after the unfortunate campaign of '48, and which led to the introduction of a very democratic element into the service, tended to make the navy more in request with persons of rank and station. The necessity of a special education—which entailed a distinct nomination to the naval college—and the possession of a certain fortune, was also a barrier against the indiscriminate admission of such men as now flooded the regiments of the land service.

It is gratifying to our national vanity to perceive that England is the model to the eyes of every Italian sailor. I have heard that one of the most distinguished, Admiral Albini, served originally in our navy, and I know that the present Minister of Marine, Admiral Persano, is the devoted admirer of England, and all that is English. The most cordial good feeling is certain to prevail between the officers of our respective ships when they meet, and many a social glass has been drained to the toast of that day when our flags shall float together, and free England and free Italy declare to the world that the Mediterranean is not a French Lake.

THE OHIO OIL WELL.

The mare swerved, dashing the high lightly built gig against a stump by the side of the narrow road; off flew the spidery wheel; down came the fast-trotting chesnut; and out like a brace of rockets were flung the driver and myself. There was a moment of scuffling, floundering, and general entanglement, while a thousand sparks of fire danced before my eyes, and then I was creeping away from the broken wreck, when I heard Ben, the driver, cry suddenly: "J'hoshaphat, mister, mind her heels, or you're a gone coon!" And I have an indistinct remembrance of receiving two or three stunning blows from what seemed to be a blacksmith's sledge-hammer, and of hearing a loud shout of human voices as I fainted.

When I again opened my eyes I found myself lying on a bank, a few yards from the spot where the accident had occurred. The smashed gig lay in the roadway, but the mare had long since kicked herself free, and was gone. Ben, my careless or unlucky charioteer, stood dolefully whistling, with the whip in his hand. His face was scratched, and his garments were muddy, but he seemed uninjured, though dismayed. Six or seven men in working clothes were lounging about, and apparently conversing on the subject of the recent upset, but only one seemed to concern himself about my personal condition. He was a tall muscular young fellow, with a fine handsome face, and a rich bronzed complexion. He was better dressed as well as better looking, than the others, though he wore homespun cloth, while the rest of the party were in patched and discoloured suits of black. Kneeling beside me on the bank, this young farmer—for it was easy to guess his rank in life—was supporting my head with a gentleness that seemed wonderful for one of his thews and sinews.

"Labour lost, Joe," observed one shabby smoker from his seat: which, by the way, was on the very stump that had occasioned the accident. "The Britisher, or Dutchman, or whatever he be, air as dead as Julep Cæsar."

Weak and ill as I was, there was something in this conversion of the Dictator's name into a Yankee idiom which tickled my risible nerves, and I gave a feeble chuckle.

"He's alive, I tell you," answered Joe; "though it does sicken a chap, a few, to git such a pounding as that. I'd like to see you, Zack Brown, after such a dose of cold iron. You'd sing a trifle less positive, or I ain't Joe Mallory."

There was a laugh, which Joe cut short by asking which of the bystanders had some "whisky medicine" about him? A bottle of this potent cordial having been produced, the farmer put it to my lips, and with arbitrary kindness forced me to swallow as much of the fiery liquor as I could imbibe without actual suffocation.

"I know'd," said Joe, in a dogmatic way, "what puts new life into a man in such a case as this, though I ain't overfond of the monongahela in gin'ral. Do ye feel to be stronger, sir, now?"

This was addressed to me, and I contrived to answer by some feeble acknowledgment of his Samaritan kindness.

"No bones bruk?" inquired Joe, adding, as I shook my head, "then mebbe you could make a shift to walk, leanin' on me? Sparta ain't above a big mile off."

I tried to rise, and with the help of the young farmer I did contrive to reach my feet, but I could not keep them. One ankle was smartly sprained, the foot having been awkwardly twisted under me as I fell; and I sank down with a groan, as helpless as a rag effigy of a man. It became incumbent to carry me; and the bystanders, now they were quite satisfied that I was alive, volunteered with a pretty good grace to assist in my removal. A light iron gate that gave admission into a field hard by, and which contrasted oddly with the rough worm fence of unbarked wood, was taken off its

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hinges to form a litter, and I was borne away on this impromptu palanquin.

Ben the driver had by this time set off in plodding pursuit of the truant mare; but, before starting, he halloed out a stentorian request to know "wheer they were takin' his stranger tew, because Major Staines might like to action him in county court for the gig."

I could hardly help laughing again, though my bones ached cruelly, at the suggestion of suing a man for the damage done in half killing him, but I felt a thrill of languid pleasure when my protector rejoined,

"Darn the major and his actions! He won't cl'ar many dollars that way, for 'tain't fust time that tearin' chesnut brute have made a smash of wood and iron, let alone humans. That mare's unpopular in the county, and no jury would give a red cent if her neck was bruk. Anyhow, if the major wants a dose of law, tell him the stranger's under Joe Mallory's roof."

The other men gave a growl of surprise.

"Why, Joe," said he who was called Zach Brown, "I reckoned we'd jest drop the chap at Dan Hunt's, the taverner's. You oughter hev more wrinkles by this than to lumber up your house with a critter that wants a deal of waitin' on, and mebbe hasn't shinplasters enough to pay for his board."

I made some answer to this, or rather I began to assure my hearers that I was better provided with money than they perhaps guessed from my scanty luggage and plain dress; but Joe Mallory pressed his broad hand on my mouth to silence me, and angrily told Zach that "when he sent in a bill for food and shelter to a hurt traveller, he hoped niggers would trample on him."

Zach said no more, and before long I was carried into the young farmer's house, and laid on a bed. The men were going at once, after taking a dram of whisky, but I insisted on remunerating each of them with a dollar, which, after some hesitation, they consented to receive for "loss of time." Very odd fellows they were —honest, I am sure; proud, in their way, as Hoosiers almost always are; and not wilfully unkind, but blunt of feelings themselves and coarsely indifferent to the feelings of others. Before they departed, I heard one of them ask Joe, in no smothered tone, "what whim made him have the stranger up there?" to which Joe made answer, in a more subdued tone, that "Dan's tavern was no place for a delicate town-raised critter to be ill in, and that it was plain I felt the banging more than I said."

When the men were gone, the master of the house called aloud the respective names of "Aunty!" "Phillis!" and "Terence!" but no answer was returned. Muttering that he would soon return, my new friend strode out into the yard, whence issued the familiar sounds produced by gobbling turkeys, lowing calves, and grumbling pigs. The house was a long low structure, mainly composed of timber, with chimneys of brick; but it was very substantial and roomy. The chamber in which I had been placed, was one of a nest of similar rooms, opening into a passage, at the end of which was the great kitchen, decorated with dangling hams, smoked venison, corn cobs, barrels of pickled pork, huge yellow pumpkins, and sundry shelves of pewter and New England crockery. At the other end was a door, seldom opened, leading into the best parlour: where stood the smart furniture, the china, fine linen, and so forth, never used but at wedding, funeral, or christening. The quilt on which I lay was of a coarse quality, but scrupulously clean; the brown rough sheets of the bed were very clean too; the pine planks of the floor, thanks to soap and water, were as white as the glaring walls on which hung a few cheap coloured prints of Bonaparte's battles, and the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon. The house was that of a tolerably well-to-do Western farmer: rather neater than the majority, but with no luxury or ostentation. While I was musing on the strange quarters in which I found myself, my host returned, accompanied by a negro girl and an old white woman, dressed pretty much alike in common cotton prints of Lowell make. There was a great difference in their behaviour, however, for while the negress, whom I shrewdly guessed to be the Phillis so often called in vain, merely grinned a salutation, the old woman bustled up to my bedside in a moment.

"You're welcome, stranger," said she, "but we can talk 'nother time, I guess. A nasty tumble! What a bruise that is on your temple —I'll jest fix that—Phillis, the bottle off the shelf in my room, third from the end—jump and get it, and be spry, do. That gal moves as if she'd lead in her shoes. All them darkies do. Sprained your foot, eh, mister? Let me turn it about—so, does that hurt you? then, run, Joe, and git the black box. I've got somethin' there, woundy good for sprains."

Joe good-humouredly hurried off to fetch the rude medicine-chest, saying with a pleasant laugh that "he knowed aunty be glad of the job. She *was* a nurse, if ever any woman was."

Certainly Miss Esther Mallory, Joe's aunt, was a born nurse as well as a born gossip. She could do anything and everything that was required in a sick-room, except hold her tongue. Talk she must, and while with real kindness and untiring skill she applied bandages and lotions to my bruised head and arm and my sprained ankle; while she brewed me tea and barley-water; while she adjusted the pillows under my head, and superintended Phillis in the boiling of a chicken for my supper; she never seemed to intermit the rapid flow of her discourse.

From this notable female, in the course of the evening, I heard all the family history. How the Mallorys had migrated West from their original abode in New Jersey, where they had been, my hostess rather boastfully said, since William and Mary. How she, Esther Mallory, had been induced, sorely against her will, to accompany her two brothers, Joe's uncle and

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father, to the then half-known wilds of Ohio. How she had been there a long time, and didn't half like it, and had seen great changes, and didn't half like them, and thought New Jersey the true Eden upon earth.

Further, the good old maid related how Joe's uncle had died of fever, and how Joe had succeeded his father in the property, two years before, while she had stayed to keep house for him till he got a wife, being fully determined to go back as soon as her nephew's marriage should take place, and live on her savings, or, as she called them, "money-scrapes," in her native village.

Miss Esther was about sixty: angular, raw-boned, with a hard-featured face puckered into as many wrinkles as a withered apple, with keen blue eyes, and brisk active movements. I had seen many women in New England who might have been her twin-sisters, and I knew the race well—thrifty clean bustling busy-bodies, with a supreme contempt for the dawdlers and slatterns down South. A good cook was Miss Esther, a good manager, a skilled sempstress, but a better nurse. If she could do any one thing better than another it was tending the sick, and I believe she felt personally grateful to me for giving her an occasion of exhibiting her knowledge and adroitness. At any rate she was very affable and chatty, and took the opportunity of Joe's absence to sing her nephew's praises, adding:

"Poor lad! poor lad! He's a heavy heart, for all he tries to keep up a smilin' face. Drat love and sentiment, sez I."

I started. Sure enough, my kind young host had a melancholy look, unaccountable in one in robust health, tolerably well off, and evidently respected by his neighbours. I had noticed it before, but my bruised limbs and throbbing temples had put the matter out of court, until Miss Esther's remark aroused my curiosity and sympathy. Little pressing was needed to elicit from the garrulous aunt what, after all, was no secret. Joe Mallory had been for some time the accepted lover of Susan Boone, only daughter of Deacon Gabriel Boone, one of the most comfortable farmers in the district, and who, as Miss Esther said, was "rather uppish" about family, being own cousin to the renowned General Daniel Boone, the explorer of Kentucky. The marriage had been unluckily postponed: a circumstance due, I fancy, to Miss Esther's own obstructiveness, since it was her desire that "a good chist full of linen web" should be spun at home previous to the establishment of the young bride as mistress of the house. In the interval, a new discovery had subverted the old order of things. This was no other than the discovery of the petroleum, or, as Miss Esther called it, the "ile." It had been found, its value had been greedily appreciated by a population not very apt to let any source of profit slip through their fingers, and the favoured tract of country, Ohio, New York, and Pennsylvania, as well as Canada West, had ever since been in a fever of speculation. Here were diggings, not indeed auriferous, but of a substance capable of transmutation into five-dollar notes, brought home to the very doors of the people. Of course property maintained its rights; there was no scramble; but some grew rich by finding wealth bubbling up at their very thresholds, and among this number was Deacon Boone, Susan's father.

One of the two "flowing wells" of rock oil which had come to light in the parish of Sparta was on Deacon Boone's land. Luckier than most of his neighbours, almost all of whom had oil beneath their fields, but oil only to be raised by expensive pumping, after the spade and mattock had done their work, the old deacon was proprietor of an absolute spring of the odoriferous fluid, which seemed inexhaustible. Thousands of gallons, every drop of which had its market value, daily spouted and splashed into the air, and an immense per-centage of the produce was lost for lack of barrels and labour. Under these circumstances it is not wonderful that Deacon Boone, always a weak vain man, lost his head, and grew, as Miss Esther quaintly said, "most too proud to dirty his shoes walkin'." This elation was accompanied by coldness of demeanour towards his old friends, whom he was loth any longer to regard in the light of equals, and by an ominous coldness of bearing towards his intended son-in-law. Besides this, he had dropped hints of the brilliant prospects in store for his family: hints that struck poor Joe with dismay, since his position was altered now. A little while before, Joe, with a tidy farm and a little sum in bank, had been a reasonably good match for the daughter of a corn and cattle factor; but he was become relatively poor when compared with the fortunate owner of a flowing well of wealth.

"And the young lady herself?" asked I, with some interest; "is she as mercenary as her father? As ready to give up a poor suitor, in hopes of a better match afterwards, I mean?"

Miss Esther answered rather slowly, as she plied her knitting needles over the fast growing stocking of unbleached wool,

"Wall! I hairdly know, sir. Young gals are that flighty and flim, they don't know the differ atween yes and no, sometimes. Susan likes our Joe well enough, but her father and mother are nouther of 'em over-stocked with sense, and they go clack! clack! about how she's to be a fine lady and that, and visit Europe, and keep cumpny with grand folks, and wear sat'n and lace, and mebbe the gal's little head's getting turned. But I bel've, I do believe, her heart air a good and tender one, as it had oughter, seein' Joe desarves a good wife."

Joe, I must observe, was out just then, looking after a "loping deer," which Terence, the old Irish hired man who helped on the farm, had caught a glimpse of in the corn: and therefore I had time to hear a great deal about the Boone family. Among other things was a story, the moral of which was that Deacon Boone owed Joe a debt of gratitude, which rendered his present conduct in giving him the cold shoulder

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peculiarly mean and contemptible. Years before, when the State of Ohio was more thinly settled, the deacon had joined a party of hunters who had brought a bear to bay. Old Boone was no experienced woodsman, but was vain and fond of applause, and perhaps had a notion that sylvan prowess ran in his blood as a kinsman of the great Nimrod, Daniel Boone; and he rashly approached the desperate animal, and was caught in its dangerous embrace.

"I've heerd tell," said Miss Esther, "that the sight wur horrid. There wur the b'ar, with red eyes glitrin' with rage, and a mouth full of blood and foam, and the deacon faintin' with fright and the hug he got, and never a man durst fire, for fear they'd miss the beast and hit the man. But our Joe—a mere boy then—what does he do but run in with his hunting-knife, and soon med the b'ar drop the deacon and tackle to *him*. That war a tussle, mister, for a b'ar takes a deal of killin', and when they brought back our Joe here, he war tore to bits and all blood. You may see the great scar on his forehead yet, whar the b'ar's claws scratched him, jest as he drove the knife to its heart. T'ain't every big man in the settlements, let alone a lad, cares to face a b'ar with on'y the knife; and no wonder the deacon allays petted Joe arterwards, and used to take a pleasure in seein' him and Susan together, and sayin' they'd make a handsome couple, and so they might, if 'twarn't for this weary ile."

At that moment in came Joe, moody and careworn. In answer to the question whether he had shot the deer, he rejoined bitterly that he had not, and did not care whether he never shot another.

"I know what's amiss," said his aunt, glancing up in her keen way. "You've seen Susan Boone, and she's vexed you."

"Hush, aunty!" said the young farmer, looking askance at me; but Miss Esther assured him that my presence need be no restraint, for she had told me all about it.

"You hev?" the young man exclaimed, with an angry stamp of his massive foot on the floor. But almost instantly his frank face relaxed into its usual good-humoured look, and he said, with a sad sort of laugh:

"I oughter remember she folks were born to chatter, special them that hail from down eastway. And, arter all, I'm noways ashamed o' my share in the bizniss."

"You have no cause to be, I am sure," said I, half apologetically, "and I hope I am not intrusive when I say that, quite apart from the kind service you have rendered me, my best wishes would go with you."

The young woodsman stretched out his mighty hand, grasped mine, and gave it a friendly squeeze that seemed to make every joint and sinew crack. It hurt me, rather, but there was no mistaking the kindly intention.

"Thank'ee, mister," said Joe; "but I reckon I'm an onlucky coon. I some fear I air. This ile that's a fortin to thousands, air jest perdition to me. Bad enough the deacon should be huffy and queer, but Susan! She hadn't oughter—she hadn't oughter sot more store on a pocketful of dollars than an honest man's heart. I met her, jest now, at the door of the schoolhouse where the children hev been larnin' hymn-singing, and she most scorned to give me a look—she, that I've known sin' we were both little trots of six year old!"

"War she alone?" asked Aunt Esther, in a quick snappish voice.

"Wall, no," said Joe, reluctantly; "her parents war followin', and she war walkin' along of a smart town chap, one I know by head mark, Mr. Peter Clovis Tapper, the lawyer to Lanesville. Such a dandy fellow, with rings and yaller gloves, and scent on his white cambric hankercher; no wonder she couldn't see *me*."

The manly young fellow cast a glance, half proud, half depreciating, on his plain working garb and brown muscular hands. Miss Esther thereupon expressed her fears that Mr. Tapper was a new suitor, favoured by Susan's parents, who were bent on throwing off the former engagement.

"If I re'cly thought so," said Joe, "that pretty dressed lawyer and me might hev words, we might."

As I saw the dark flush of wrath that crimsoned the backwoodsman's sun-browned face, making the scar of the bear's claw ominously white and clear on his broad honest brow; and as I noticed how the long rifle vibrated in the grasp of his strong fingers; I thought Peter Clovis Tapper, attorney-at-law, might wince a little at the prospect of "words" with the man he had supplanted.

Mallory, however, like most men of genuine bravery, was remarkably modest and quiet in his general demeanour, and his threatening mood passed away very quickly. He said that Susan was very young, that girls were apt to be fanciful, and that he should go on believing her true to him and her plight until he received his dismissal from her own lips. Then he broke away from the subject, talked of my health, and congratulated me on being in Miss Esther's care: declaring what I am sure was true, that the old lady had not her equal in the county for bone-setting and bandaging. Happily, I did not find it necessary to test her skill in the former branch of art; my bruises were gradually reduced, and, but for my sprained ankle, I could soon have proceeded on my journey well enough. As it was, my hurt progressed but slowly towards recovery: sprains are tedious things, and I found a slight imprudence undid the good work of days. However, thanks to Miss Esther's washes and drops, thanks to wet bandages and the healing force of nature, I was soon able to walk in a weak slow way, with assistance. Sometimes I had the aid of Joe's strong arm, sometimes of old Terence's, and now and then black Phillis was commissioned to help my progress through the village or across the yard where the turkeys and fowls, her especial charge, gobbled and clucked

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in vast squadrons. There had lately been, Phillis said, three more men employed on the farm at wages: one Irishman a nephew of Terence, and two "coloured gentlemen," but these had all been tempted away to work at a cooperage where the people were busy, day and night, in making vats, kegs, and casks, to catch the oil which would otherwise be wasted. Much labour had been withdrawn from tillage, I learned, for the same purpose, and in many places the crops were neglected, that the mineral treasures of the earth might be garnered up. Of the crude oil I saw enough, and smelt enough, to satiate an amateur for life, during the weeks I spent at Sparta. Although there were only two flowing wells in the parish, there were plenty of pump wells, where machinery more or less rude, from the chain of hand buckets to the small steam gin or Ericsson engine, were in almost constant employment. The streams had a film of oil on their surface, the carts dripped oil, the talk of the whole neighbourhood was saturated with oil.

But the two who profited most by this sudden outpouring of an oleaginous cornucopia were Deacon Boone and another farmer, with whom the deacon was on bad terms. This was Elder Hiram Rutherford, a middle-aged man, whose land at Wyandot Creek adjoined the Mallory property. He possessed the other flowing well: a still finer one than Mr. Boone's: and it was a sore alloy to Mr. Boone's triumph to know that the person he hated was getting rich at least as rapidly as he himself was. It matters little why these two men were foes. They had thwarted each other, I believe, about some affairs of bargain and sale; and since then, in church assemblies, sheriffs' courts, market, or merry-making, they never met but to bicker and oppose each other. Elder Hiram was a gaunt lean old sinner, with white hair, a leering bloodshot eye, and a wrinkled face, replete with cunning; whereas old Boone had a vacuous face, that expressed little beyond conceit and love of pelf. Mrs. Boone, whose acquaintance I also made, was a flighty silly woman, much over-dressed, and already looking forward to the time when her husband's wealth should buy her a place among the Upper Ten Thousand.

But in Susan, whom I had fancied a cold coquette, I found to my surprise a very charming girl, extremely pretty, gentle, and sweet-tempered; rather too much so, indeed, since she had been half-persuaded it was her duty to give up Joe. But she loved him still, and she detested Mr. Tapper, whose visits and attentions received every sanction and encouragement from her parents. It appeared that the wily young lawyer had found out the weakness of the old folks, and was dazzling them with pictures of New York grandeurs, and of the lofty position which his New York connexions would ensure to the Boone family. And at last old Boone actually found courage to tell Joe Mallory that he must give Susan up, unless, in a month's time, he could show that he had the means to "keep her as a lady."

Poor Joe was willing and able to keep her as became a farmer's wife and a farmer's daughter, and he did not ask for a cent of dowry; but the old man was inexorable, and gave Joe plainly to understand that he intended looking elsewhere for a son-in-law. It needed no conjuror to discover where the deacon intended to look. Mr. P. C. Tapper came over, at least twice a week, from Lanesville, driving his own tandem, and attended by a black groom in a sky-blue coat: that being the nearest permissible republican approach to livery. My young host was in despair, and but that Miss Esther and I seriously took the alarm, and used all our efforts to keep him and the legal dandy apart, I have no doubt that mischief would have ensued. In this time of trouble, Susan's conduct puzzled us all. She was sincerely attached to Joe, for her eyes brightened and her cheek flushed when they met, and she was evidently unfascinated by the Lanesville lawyer; but she seemed a mere puppet in her parents' hands. The probable explanation is, that she was too young, plastic, and docile, to offer any decided opposition to the ambitious projects of the old folks.

Joe did not resign himself to useless and idle murmuring at his fate. At my suggestion he availed himself of the services of Barney Leech, the old well-sinker, whose income had been greatly increased by the petroleum discoveries, and he made a bold push to find oil upon his land, which, as I have mentioned, was next to that of Elder Hiram. And very tantalising it was to see the thick jet of rock oil spirting from the soil at Wyandot Creek, hard by; to see men ladling it up with tubs and crocks, coopering it up in casks, stowing it in jars, old bottles, empty "breakers" of spirits, anything, and yet allowing hundreds of gallons to run to waste over the creek waters; while not a drop could Joe Mallory find.

"Sorry for it, for your sake, Mr. Mallory," said the old well-digger, when the excavation had been made, and deepened, and deepened, all in vain. "Sorry for it, but it would be robbing your pocket, I guess, to go on. A'ready you've spent dollars enough on the grope, and its plain you'll get no ile: not if you dig through the world, mister."

This was sad news for poor Joe, who had been informed that morning by Deacon Boone that the day of grace was nearly spent, that Susan and he had best forget one another, and that from Monday next his visits at the Boones' house must cease.

I could give the poor fellow no comfort. Indeed, I had been compelled to endorse the verdict of the experienced old well-digger, that the search was hopeless; and my opinion, as that of a professional engineer, had great weight with Joe. I have not previously mentioned my errand in Ohio, which was connected with this very oil. My business was, to conclude a contract between

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several well-proprietors and the commercial firm in whose behalf I was engaged, and who had purchased my patent of a new process for refining the crude petroleum. When able to walk tolerably, I had not neglected this duty, and had concluded a bargain with Elder Rutherford for the delivery of a certain quantity of coarse oil at specified periods. With Deacon Boone I was unable to come to terms, and I should have left Sparta but for my interest in Joe, and my wish to serve him if I could, were it only by keeping him from drubbing Mr. Tapper, and incurring the risk of crushing damages at law. Joe's position with respect to Deacon Boone and his daughter was, of course, well known throughout that small community, and much sympathy was expressed for the young woodsman.

On the evening of the day when the well-digger had ceased operations, I had taken a short stroll among the wooded spurs of the hills which belt in the rich alluvial meadows, with no other companion than a stout hickory walking-stick. Rather tired, I was glad to sit down under a giant black walnut, whose spreading boughs hummed pleasantly overhead as the wind waved them, and I lazily watched the wild pigeons winging their way home towards the forests.

Presently a dead branch crackled under a heavy listless tread, and Joe came striding down the path, with his rifle cast into the hollow of his left arm, his hat pulled over his eyes, and a sullen desperate look that it was painful to mark.

I was on the point of rising to accost him, when something rustled briskly through the scrubby ravine to my left, and a low voice called out,

"Joe! hist! Joe Mallory!"

"Who calls?" answered the young man, stopping short.

"A friend, I guess!" answered the same low hissing voice. And out from among the shrubs glided a lean figure, with a broad straw hat and a suit of yellowish jean—Elder Hiram Rutherford.

"I've no humour to talk much to-night, mister; I'm best by myself, jest now," said Joe, roughly. The elder laughed a little hoarse laugh, with malice and craft in the ring of it, but his voice was not unkindly toned as he said,

"Silly boy, don't you go blockin' your own light. You jest listen to me, on'y five minutes, and then cut up rough and shirk my cumpny, if ye like."

Without awaiting a reply, the shrewd old man caught Joe by the arm, and walked by his side, talking fast but low, with upraised forefinger, but evidently with earnest emphasis quite foreign to his usual sneering manner. Even had I been disposed to turn eavesdropper, not a word could I have caught. I got quietly up from my resting-place, and limped home.

Miss Esther was vexed that evening, for Joe was late, and the tea grew black and bitter, the cakes cold, and the spruce beer flat, with long waiting. But when her nephew *did* return, he wore a strangely flushed and excited aspect, and there was a glow on his cheek, and an elasticity in his step. And yet, though evidently in high spirits, there was something odd about Joe. He avoided meeting my gaze, or his aunt's gaze, whenever he could. He shuffled about, turning his shoulder on the company. He ate and drank and laughed in a boisterous way, but as if his thoughts were busy elsewhere.

That night, Joe's chamber being next to mine, I could have sworn I heard his window stealthily opened an hour after midnight, and a dull sound as of a big man squeezing himself through a casement almost too narrow to give him egress. Then followed the cautious tread of a heavy foot on the garden paths. Though why Joe, as master of the house and of himself, should choose to slip out like a truant schoolboy was beyond my comprehension. Next night the same sound was audible at the same hour. Nay more, I looked from my little window, and caught the gleam of a dark lantern in the garden, passing rapidly on.

But the morning after a surprise occurred which put these nocturnal sights and sounds out of my head.

A new flowing well of oil had been discovered, and, wonder of wonders, it was not only on Joe's land, but it had burst forth from the very excavation he had caused to be made! A cowboy passing with his herd along the lane had first seen the jet and heard the splash of the spouting petroleum, and the news had spread like wildfire over the village.

Before breakfast nine-tenths of the people of Sparta, men, women, and children, had gathered in a ring to gaze, open-mouthed and open-eyed, at the portent. There was no mistake about the matter. The tawny liquid, like thick dirty water, leaping up in a thick pillar of fluid, and arching over as it poured its spray into a little pool of oil, was genuine petroleum, and the quantity was considerable. Fortune had knocked at my host's door while he slept, or at any rate while he was supposed to sleep.

Bating a little not unnatural envy, the impulse of the neighbours was to be sincerely glad. Next to having such an outcrop of luck within his own bounds, every man present would have selected Joe as the best recipient for such a boon. In elder times and elder countries, the windfall might have been assigned to the bounty of the fairies; but, as it was, more than one man, and many women, loudly declared the appearance of the oil a "dispensatory" in Joe's favour.

"What will Deacon Boone say to 't?" was the general cry.

Meanwhile I was standing among the rest, sorely puzzled. My professional knowledge made me suspect that some subterranean flow of the petroleum had taken place, and that in all probability Elder Rutherford's well would be a loser by as much as Joe's gained. But, beyond the fence of partition, I could see the elder's

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well, flowing, to all appearance, as lustily as ever; and beside me stood the elder himself, with no sign of apprehension on his thin face, or visible in the twinkle of his piercing eyes. Indeed, Mr. Rutherford wore an odd look of stealthy satisfaction, and he was not the least loud in his congratulations of Joe.

"Very strange," thought I. "That old man must have a better heart than I gave him credit for. But the outbreak of this oil is one of those apparent caprices of nature which perplex men of science."

The last sentence had been uttered aloud, and the aged well-digger at my elbow answered it with:

"Solemn true, mister. We dug, and bored, and no signs of ile, and here it comes up, plenty as peaches in the latter end o' July. But here comes Deacon Boone, struck all of a heap like, at sight of the ile on the ground of the chap he choked off from coortin' his darter. May I never, but he's gwine to eat humble pie!"

Eat humble pie the deacon certainly did, for, after hovering about the oil like a moth round a candle, after listening to the bystanders' vague calculations as to how many hundred or thousand gallons a day the well would yield, Mr. Boone went up to Joe and held out his hand.

"Give you joy, my boy!" he said in a tremulous way, and, taking courage from Joe's hearty hand grasp, actually made a stammering apology for his late conduct, and more than hinted that his desire was that Susan and Joe should "come together."

It was curious to see the vain mean man wriggling out of the dilemma, to hear his clumsy phrases, and to observe his coarse greed and time-serving nature. Such things have been done before, in the politest circles, but here the mercenary character stood out transparent and stripped of artificial adornments. Joe seemed to feel the truth, as he made answer in a voice that was audible to many of those present:

"Deacon, we'll let bygones be bygones. I'm willin' to stick to our old 'greement, and I'll be proud of Susan for my wife, but I want nouthin' more. Keep your money and your settlements and stuff, or light your pipe with 'em if you like. I take your darter in the clothes she stands in, and no property—not a cent."

All the villagers were talking for the next three days of Joe's amazing luck, and Joe's no less amazing disinterestedness. It was known that the deacon, who had but one son and no other daughter, would have given Susan a large sum on her wedding-day, and would have prospectively settled a much larger sum upon her. And however productive Joe's well might be, a good balance at the bank was never a hindrance in business.

Some oil was collected at the new petroleum spring in the course of the next four days, but not as much as if the proprietor had not been absorbed in preparations for his wedding. That wedding was duly solemnised, with the full sanction of parents, minister, and magistrate; and a very pretty dark-eyed bride Susan was, and very lovingly she nestled by Joe's side. Hers was a soft nature, but she had found a strong prop to cling to. I was present at the wedding, and found much amusement in the spectacle of the feast and frolic, which wound up with an uproarious dance.

Deacon Boone publicly offered Joe a roll of notes, Susan's portion, which Joe as publicly declined.

Two days afterwards I was to leave Sparta. My sturdy host would, I knew, have been pained by the proffer of pecuniary compensation for my maintenance, but he did not refuse to accept a good German rifle, neatly mounted in silver, which formed part of my worldly goods, and which I had sent for from Philadelphia. This Joe promised to keep for my sake, and in memory of the eventful time we had passed together.

On the day of my departure a new excitement pervaded the village. Joe's flowing well had ceased to flow. The oil spring had vanished as abruptly as it had appeared. Before long a great crowd gathered, cries of wonder and condolence were heard, and Deacon Boone and his wife arrived in a state bordering on distraction. Joe alone seemed cool, though a little sheepish. In answer to the deacon's voluble inquiries, he referred him to Elder Rutherford. The deacon faced his enemy.

"What do you know about it, mister?"

"Know?" said Elder Hiram; "you've come to the right shop for knowledge. The well's dry; and why? Why, because the lease was for a week, and it's out to-day."

And so it turned out. Elder Hiram's malicious wish to play the deacon a trick, had suggested an expedient at which Joe, in his despair, had caught. A few yards of two-inch piping laid down under cover of night between the Wyandot Creek well and Joe's excavation, had sufficed to extemporise a flowing well on the latter's property, while it merely relieved the elder's petroleum spring of its superfluity. The pipe had now been removed.

Of course Susan's parents were very full of wrath and reproaches, but they were at last overborne by public opinion. The majority favoured Joe, probably considering all stratagems fair in love and war, while Susan took her husband's part, and the young farmer's remark was unanswerable:

"Deacon, I ain't ashamed. It's fust time I ever deceived anybody, but 'twar for Susan's sake, and I never took a dollar of your money, nor never will. Remember that!"

So the young folks moved West, and were thriving in Kansas when last I heard of them. Miss Esther was still with them.

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

THE THIRD SCENE.

CHAPTER IV.

MRS. LECOUNT returned to the parlour, with the fragment of Magdalen's dress in one hand, and with Captain Wragge's letter in the other.

"Have you got rid of her?" asked Mr. Noel Vanstone. "Have you shut the door at last on Miss Garth?"

"Don't call her Miss Garth, sir," said Mrs. Lecount, smiling contemptuously. "She is as much Miss Garth as you are. We have been favoured by the performance of a clever masquerade; and if we had taken the disguise off our visitor, I think we should have found under it, Miss Vanstone herself.—Here is a letter for you, sir, which the postman has just left."

She put the letter on the table, within her master's reach. Mr. Noel Vanstone's amazement, at the discovery just communicated to him, kept his whole attention concentrated on the housekeeper's face. He never so much as looked at the letter when she placed it before him.

"Take my word for it, sir," proceeded Mrs. Lecount, composedly taking a chair. "When our visitor gets home, she will put her grey hair away in a box, and will cure that sad affliction in her eyes with warm water and a sponge. If she had painted the marks on her face, as well as she painted the inflammation in her eyes, the light would have shown me nothing, and I should certainly have been deceived. But I saw the marks; I saw a young woman's skin under that dirty complexion of hers; I heard, in this room, a true voice in a passion, as well as a false voice talking with an accent,—and I don't believe in one morsel of that lady's personal appearance, from top to toe. The girl herself, in my opinion, Mr. Noel—and a bold girl too."

"Why didn't you lock the door, and send for the police?" asked Mr. Noel. "My father would have sent for the police. You know, as well as I do, Lecount, my father would have sent for the police?"

"Pardon me, sir," said Mrs. Lecount, "I think your father would have waited until he had got something more for the police to do than we have got for them yet. We shall see this lady again, sir. Perhaps, she will come here next time, with her own face and her own voice. I am curious to see what her own face is like; I am curious to know whether what I have heard of her voice in a passion, is enough to make me recognise her voice when she is calm. I possess a little memorial of her visit of which she is not aware; and she will not escape me so easily as she thinks. If it turns out a useful memorial, you shall know what it is. If not, I will abstain from troubling you on so trifling a subject.—Allow me to remind you, sir, of the letter under your hand. You have not looked at it yet."

Mr. Noel Vanstone opened the letter. He started as his eye fell on the first lines—hesitated—and then hurriedly read it through. The paper dropped from his hand, and he sank back in his chair. Mrs. Lecount sprang to her feet with the alacrity of a young woman, and picked up the letter.

"What has happened, sir?" she asked. Her face altered, as she put the question; and her large black eyes hardened fiercely, in genuine astonishment and alarm.

"Send for the police," exclaimed her master. "Lecount, I insist on being protected. Send for the police!"

"May I read the letter, sir?"

He feebly waved his hand. Mrs. Lecount read the letter attentively, and put it aside on the table, without a word, when she had done.

"Have you nothing to say to me?" asked Mr. Noel Vanstone, staring at his housekeeper in blank dismay. "Lecount, I'm to be robbed! The scoundrel who wrote that letter knows all about it, and won't tell me anything unless I pay him. I'm to be robbed! Here's property on this table worth thousands of pounds—property that can never be replaced—property that all the crowned heads in Europe could not produce if they tried. Lock me in, Lecount—and send for the police!"

Instead of sending for the police, Mrs. Lecount took a large green-paper fan from the chimney-piece, and seated herself opposite her master.

"You are agitated, Mr. Noel," she said; "you are heated. Let me cool you."

With her face as hard as ever—with less

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tenderness of look and manner than most women would have shown if they had been rescuing a half-drowned fly from a milk-jug—she silently and patiently fanned him for five minutes or more. No practised eye observing the peculiar bluish pallor of his complexion, and the marked difficulty with which he drew his breath, could have failed to perceive that the great organ of life was, in this man, what the housekeeper had stated it to be, too weak for the function which it was called on to perform. The heart laboured over its work, as if it had been the heart of a worn-out old man.

"Are you relieved, sir?" asked Mrs. Lecount. "Can you think a little? Can you exercise your better judgment?"

She rose, and put her hand over his heart, with as much mechanical attention and as little genuine interest, as if she had been feeling the plates at dinner to ascertain if they were properly warmed. "Yes," she went on, seating herself again, and resuming the exercise of the fan; "you are getting better already, Mr. Noel.—Don't ask me about this anonymous letter, until you have thought for yourself, and have given your own opinion first." She went on with the fanning, and looked him hard in the face all the time. "Think," she said; "think, sir, without troubling yourself to express your thoughts. Trust to my intimate sympathy with you to read them. Yes, Mr. Noel, this letter is a paltry attempt to frighten you. What does it say? It says you are the object of a conspiracy, directed by Miss Vanstone. We know that already—the lady of the inflamed eyes has told us. We snap our fingers at the conspiracy. What does the letter say next? It says the writer has valuable information to give you, if you will pay for it. What did you call this person yourself, just now, sir?"

"I called him a scoundrel," said Mr. Noel Vanstone, recovering his self-importance, and raising himself gradually in his chair.

"I agree with you in that, sir, as I agree in everything else," proceeded Mrs. Lecount. "He is a scoundrel who really has this information, and who means what he says—or, he is a mouthpiece of Miss Vanstone's; and she has caused this letter to be written for the purpose of puzzling us by another form of disguise. Whether the letter is true, or whether the letter is false—am I not reading your own wiser thoughts now, Mr. Noel?—you know better than to put your enemies on their guard by employing the police in this matter, too soon. I quite agree with you—no police just yet. You will allow this anonymous man, or anonymous woman, to suppose you are easily frightened; you will lay a trap for the information in return for the trap laid for your money; you will answer the letter, and see what comes of the answer; and you will only pay the expense of employing the police, when you know the expense is necessary. I agree with you again—no expense, if we can help it. In every particular, Mr. Noel, my mind and your mind in this matter, are one."

"It strikes you in that light, Lecount—does it?" said Mr. Noel Vanstone. "I think so, myself; I certainly think so. I won't pay the police a farthing if I can possibly help it." He took up the letter again, and became fretfully perplexed over a second reading of it. "But the man wants money!" he broke out, impatiently. "You seem to forget, Lecount, that the man wants money."

"Money which you offer him, sir," rejoined Mrs. Lecount; "but—as your thoughts have already anticipated—money which you don't give him. No! no! you say to this man, 'Hold out your hand, sir;' and, when he has held it you give him a smack for his pains, and put your own hand back in your pocket.—I am so glad to see you laughing, Mr. Noel! so glad to see you getting back your good spirits. We will answer the letter by advertisement, as the writer directs—advertisement is so cheap! Your poor hand is trembling a little—shall I hold the pen for you? I am not fit to do more; but I can always promise to hold the pen."

Without waiting for his reply, she went into the back parlour, and returned with pen, ink, and paper. Arranging a blotting-book on her knees, and looking a model of cheerful submission, she placed herself once more in front of her master's chair.

"Shall I write from your dictation, sir?" she inquired. "Or, shall I make a little sketch, and will you correct it afterwards? I will make a little sketch. Let me see the letter. We are to advertise in the Times, and we are to address, 'An Unknown Friend.' What shall I say, Mr. Noel? Stay; I will write it, and then you can see for yourself: 'An Unknown Friend is requested to mention (by advertisement) an address at which a letter can reach him. The receipt of the information which he offers will be acknowledged by a reward of——' What sum of money do you wish me to set down, sir?"

"Set down nothing," said Mr. Noel Vanstone, with a sudden outbreak of impatience. "Money-matters are my business—I say, money-matters are *my* business, Lecount. Leave it to me."

"Certainly, sir," replied Mrs. Lecount, handing her master the blotting-book. "You will not forget to be liberal in offering money, when you know beforehand you don't mean to part with it?"

"Don't dictate, Lecount! I won't submit to dictation!" said Mr. Noel Vanstone, asserting his own independence more and more impatiently. "I mean to conduct this business for myself. I am master, Lecount!"

"You are master, sir."

"My father was master before me. And I am my father's son. I tell you, Lecount, I am my father's son!"

Mrs. Lecount bowed submissively.

"I mean to set down any sum of money I think right," pursued Mr. Noel Vanstone, nodding his little flaxen head vehemently. "I

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mean to send this advertisement myself. The servant shall take it to the stationer's to be put into the Times. When I ring the bell twice, send the servant. You understand, Lecount? Send the servant."

Mrs. Lecount bowed again, and walked slowly to the door. She knew to a nicety when to lead her master, and when to let him go alone. Experience had taught her to govern him in all essential points, by giving way to him afterwards on all points of minor detail. It was a characteristic of his weak nature—as it is of all weak natures—to assert itself obstinately on trifles. The filling in of the blank in the advertisement, was the trifle in this case; and Mrs. Lecount quieted her master's suspicions that she was leading him, by instantly conceding it. "My mule has kicked," she thought to herself, in her own language, as she opened the door. "I can do no more with him to-day."

"Lecount!" cried her master, as she stepped into the passage. "Come back."

Mrs. Lecount came back.

"You're not offended with me, are you?" asked Mr. Noel Vanstone, uneasily.

"Certainly not, sir," replied Mrs. Lecount. "As you said just now—you are master."

"Good creature! Give me your hand." He kissed her hand, and smiled in high approval of his own affectionate proceeding. "Lecount, you are a worthy creature!"

"Thank you, sir," said Mrs. Lecount. She curtseyed and went out. "If he had any brains in that monkey-head of his," she said to herself in the passage, "what a rascal he would be!"

Left by himself, Mr. Noel Vanstone became absorbed in anxious reflection over the blank space in the advertisement. Mrs. Lecount's apparently superfluous hint to him, to be liberal in offering money when he knew he had no intention of parting with it, had been founded on an intimate knowledge of his character. He had inherited his father's sordid love of money, without inheriting his father's hard-headed capacity for seeing the uses to which money can be put. His one idea in connexion with his wealth, was the idea of keeping it. He was such an inborn miser, that the bare prospect of being liberal, in theory only, daunted him. He took up the pen; laid it down again; and read the anonymous letter for the third time, shaking his head over it suspiciously. "If I offer this man a large sum of money," he thought, on a sudden; "how do I know he may not find a means of making me actually pay it? Women are always in a hurry. Lecount is always in a hurry. I have got the afternoon before me—I'll take the afternoon to consider it."

He fretfully put away the blotting-book, and the sketch of the advertisement, on the chair which Mrs. Lecount had just left. As he returned to his own seat, he shook his little head solemnly, and arranged his white dressing-gown over his knees, with the air of a man absorbed in anxious thought. Minute after minute passed away; the quarters and the half-hours succeeded each other on the dial of Mrs. Lecount's watch—and still Mr. Noel Vanstone remained lost in doubt; still no summons for the servant disturbed the tranquillity of the parlour bell.

* * * * *

Meanwhile, after parting with Mrs. Lecount, Magdalen had cautiously abstained from crossing the road to her lodgings, and had only ventured to return after making a circuit in the neighbourhood. When she found herself once more in Vauxhall Walk, the first object which attracted her attention, was a cab drawn up before the door of the lodgings. A few steps more in advance showed her the landlady's daughter, standing at the cab-door, engaged in a dispute with the driver on the subject of his fare. Noticing that the girl's back was turned towards her, Magdalen instantly profited by that circumstance, and slipped unobserved into the house.

She glided along the passage; ascended the stairs; and found herself, on the first landing—face to face with her travelling companion! There stood Mrs. Wragge, with a pile of small parcels hugged up in her arms, anxiously waiting the issue of the dispute with the cabman in the street. To return was impossible—the sound of the angry voices below, was advancing into the passage. To hesitate was worse than useless. But one choice was left—the choice of going on—and Magdalen desperately took it. She pushed by Mrs. Wragge, without a word; ran into her own room; tore off her cloak, bonnet, and wig; and threw them down out of sight, in the blank space between the sofa-bedstead and the wall.

For the first few moments, astonishment bereft Mrs. Wragge of the power of speech, and rooted her to the spot where she stood. Two out of the collection of parcels in her arms fell from them on the stairs. The sight of that catastrophe roused her. "Thieves!" cried Mrs. Wragge, suddenly struck by an idea. "Thieves!"

Magdalen heard her through the room door, which she had not had time to close completely. "Is that you, Mrs. Wragge?" she called out in her own voice. "What is the matter?" She snatched up a towel, while she spoke; dipped it in water; and passed it rapidly over the lower part of her face. At the sound of the familiar voice, Mrs. Wragge turned round—dropped a third parcel—and, forgetting it in her astonishment, ascended the second flight of stairs. Magdalen stepped out on the first-floor landing, with the towel held over her forehead as if she was suffering from headache. Her false eyebrows required time for their removal, and a headache assumed for the occasion, suggested the most convenient pretext she could devise for hiding them as they were hidden now.

"What are you disturbing the house for?" she asked. "Pray be quiet. I am half blind with the headache."

"Anything wrong, ma'am?" inquired the landlady, from the passage.

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"Nothing whatever," replied Magdalen. "My friend is timid; and the dispute with the cabman has frightened her. Pay the man what he wants, and let him go."

"Where is She?" asked Mrs. Wragge, in a tremulous whisper. "Where's the woman who scuttled by me into your room?"

"Pooh!" said Magdalen. "No woman scuttled by you—as you call it. Look in and see for yourself."

She threw open the door. Mrs. Wragge walked into the room—looked all over it—saw nobody—and indicated her astonishment at the result, by dropping a fourth parcel, and trembling helplessly from head to foot.

"I saw her go in here," said Mrs. Wragge, in awe-struck accents. "A woman in a grey cloak and a poke bonnet. A rude woman. She scuttled by me, on the stairs—she did. Here's the room, and no woman in it. Give us a Prayer-Book!" cried Mrs. Wragge, turning deadly pale, and letting her whole remaining collection of parcels fall about her in a little cascade of commodities. "I want to read something Good. I want to think of my latter end. I've seen a Ghost!"

"Nonsense!" said Magdalen. "You're dreaming; the shopping has been too much for you. Go into your own room, and take your bonnet off."

"I've heard tell of ghosts in nightgowns; ghosts in sheets; and ghosts in chains," proceeded Mrs. Wragge, standing petrified in her own magic circle of linendraper's parcels. "Here's a worse ghost than any of 'em—a ghost in a grey cloak and a poke bonnet. I know what it is," continued Mrs. Wragge, melting into penitent tears. "It's a judgment on me for being so happy away from the captain. It's a judgment on me for having been down at heel in half the shops in London, first with one shoe and then with the other, all the time I've been out. I'm a sinful creature. Don't let go of me—whatever you do, my dear, don't let go of me!" She caught Magdalen fast by the arm, and fell into another trembling fit at the bare idea of being left by herself.

The one remaining chance, in such an emergency as this, was to submit to circumstances. Magdalen took Mrs. Wragge to a chair; having first placed it in such a position as might enable her to turn her back on her travelling-companion, while she removed the false eyebrows by the help of a little water. "Wait a minute there," she said; "and try if you can compose yourself, while I bathe my head."

"Compose myself?" repeated Mrs. Wragge. "How am I to compose myself when my head feels off my shoulders? The worst Buzzing I ever had with the Cookery-book, was nothing to the Buzzing I've got now with the Ghost. Here's a miserable end to a holiday! You may take me back again, my dear, whenever you like—I've had enough of it already!"

Having at last succeeded in removing the eyebrows, Magdalen was free to combat the unfortunate impression produced on her companion's mind, by every weapon of persuasion which her ingenuity could employ.

The attempt proved useless. Mrs. Wragge persisted—on evidence which, it may be remarked in parenthesis, would have satisfied many wiser ghost-seers than herself—in believing that she had been supernaturally favoured by a visitor from the world of spirits. All that Magdalen could do was to ascertain by cautious investigation, that Mrs. Wragge had not been quick enough to identify the supposed ghost, with the character of the old North country lady in the Entertainment. Having satisfied herself on this point, she had no resource but to leave the rest to the natural incapability of retaining impressions—unless those impressions were perpetually renewed—which was one of the characteristic infirmities of her companion's weak mind. After fortifying Mrs. Wragge by reiterated assurances that one appearance (according to all the laws and regulations of ghosts) meant nothing, unless it was immediately followed by two more—after patiently leading back her attention to the parcels dropped on the floor, and on the stairs—and after promising to keep the door of communication ajar between the two rooms, if Mrs. Wragge would engage on her side to retire to her own chamber, and to say no more on the terrible subject of the ghost—Magdalen at last secured the privilege of reflecting uninterruptedly on the events of that memorable day.

Two serious consequences had followed her first step forward. Mrs. Lecount had entrapped her into speaking in her own voice; and accident had confronted her with Mrs. Wragge, in disguise.

What advantage had she gained to set against these disasters? The advantage of knowing more of Noel Vanstone and of Mrs. Lecount, than she might have discovered in months, if she had trusted to inquiries made for her by others. One uncertainty which had hitherto perplexed her, was set at rest already. The scheme she had privately devised against Michael Vanstone—which Captain Wragge's sharp insight had partially penetrated, when she first warned him that their partnership must be dissolved—was a scheme which she could now plainly see must be abandoned as hopeless, in the case of Michael Vanstone's son. The father's habits of speculation had been the pivot on which the whole machinery of her meditated conspiracy had been constructed to turn. No such vantage-ground was discoverable in the doubly sordid character of the son. Mr. Noel Vanstone was invulnerable on the very point which had presented itself in his father as open to attack.

Having reached this conclusion, how was she to shape her future course? What new means could she discover, which would lead her secretly to her end, in defiance of Mrs. Lecount's malicious vigilance, and Noel Vanstone's miserly distrust?

She was seated before the looking-glass, me-

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chanically combing out her hair, while that all-important consideration occupied her mind. The agitation of the moment had raised a feverish colour in her cheeks, and had brightened the light in her large grey eyes. She was conscious of looking her best; conscious how her beauty gained by contrast, after the removal of the disguise. Her lovely light brown hair looked thicker and softer than ever, now that it had escaped from its imprisonment under the grey wig. She twisted it this way and that, with quick dexterous fingers; she laid it in masses on her shoulders; she threw it back from them in a heap, and turned sideways to see how it fell—to see her back and shoulders, freed from the artificial deformities of the padded cloak. After a moment, she faced the looking-glass once more; plunged both hands deep in her hair; and, resting her elbows on the table, looked closer and closer at the reflexion of herself, until her breath began to dim the glass. "I can twist any man alive round my finger," she thought, with a smile of superb triumph, "as long as I keep my looks! If that contemptible wretch saw me now——" She shrank from following the thought to its end, with a sudden horror of herself: she drew back from the glass, shuddering, and put her hands over her face. "Oh Frank!" she murmured, "but for you, what a wretch I might be!" Her eager fingers snatched the little white silk bag from its hiding-place in her bosom; her lips devoured it with silent kisses. "My darling! my angel! Oh, Frank, how I love you!" The tears gushed into her eyes. She passionately dried them, restored the bag to its place, and turned her back on the looking-glass. "No more of myself," she thought; "no more of my mad, miserable self for to-day!"

Shrinking from all further contemplation of her next step in advance—shrinking from the fast-darkening future, with which Noel Vanstone was now associated in her inmost thoughts—she looked impatiently about the room for some homely occupation which might take her out of herself. The disguise which she had flung down between the wall and the bed recurred to her memory. It was impossible to leave it there. Mrs. Wragge (now occupied in sorting her parcels) might weary of her employment, might come in again at a moment's notice, might pass near the bed and see the grey cloak. What was to be done?

Her first thought was to put the disguise back in her trunk. But, after what had happened, there was danger in trusting it so near to herself, while she and Mrs. Wragge were together under the same roof. She resolved to be rid of it that evening, and boldly determined on sending it back to Birmingham. Her bonnet-box fitted into her trunk. She took the box out, thrust in the wig and cloak; and remorselessly flattened down the bonnet at the top. The gown (which she had not yet taken off) was her own; Mrs. Wragge had been accustomed to see her in it—there was no need to send the gown back. Before closing the box, she hastily traced these lines on a sheet of paper: "I took the enclosed things away by mistake. Please keep them for me with the rest of my luggage in your possession, until you hear from me again." Putting the paper on the top of the bonnet, she directed the box to Captain Wragge, at Birmingham; took it down stairs immediately; and sent the landlady's daughter away with it to the nearest Receiving House. "That difficulty is disposed of," she thought, as she went back to her own room again.

Mrs. Wragge was still occupied in sorting her parcels, on her narrow little bed. She turned round with a faint scream, when Magdalen looked in at her. "I thought it was the ghost again," said Mrs. Wragge. "I'm trying to take warning, my dear, by what's happened to me. I've put all my parcels straight, just as the captain would like to see 'em. I'm up at heel with both shoes. If I close my eyes to-night—which I don't think I shall—I'll go to sleep as straight as my legs will let me. And I'll never have another holiday as long as I live. I hope I shall be forgiven," said Mrs. Wragge, mournfully shaking her head. "I humbly hope I shall be forgiven."

"Forgiven!" repeated Magdalen. "If other women wanted as little forgiving as you do——Well! well! Suppose you open some of these parcels. Come! I want to see what you have been buying to-day."

Mrs. Wragge hesitated, sighed penitently, considered a little, stretched out her hand timidly towards one of the parcels, thought of the supernatural warning, and shrank back from her own purchases with a desperate exertion of self-control.

"Open this one," said Magdalen, to encourage her: "What is it?"

Mrs. Wragge's faded blue eyes began to brighten dimly, in spite of her remorse; but she self-denyingly shook her head. The master passion of shopping might claim his own again—but the ghost was not laid yet.

"Did you get it a bargain?" asked Magdalen, confidentially.

"Dirt cheap," cried poor Mrs. Wragge, falling headlong into the snare, and darting at the parcel as eagerly as if nothing had happened.

Magdalen kept her gossiping over her purchases for an hour or more; and then wisely determined to distract her attention from all ghostly recollections, in another way, by taking her out for a walk.

As they left the lodgings, the door of Noel Vanstone's house opened, and the woman-servant appeared, bent on another errand. She was apparently charged with a letter on this occasion, which she carried carefully in her hand. Conscious of having formed no plan yet, either for attack or defence, Magdalen wondered, with a momentary dread, whether Mrs. Lecount had decided already on opening fresh communica-

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tions, and whether the letter was directed to "Miss Garth."

The letter bore no such address. Mr. Noel Vanstone had solved his pecuniary problem at last. The blank space in the advertisement was filled up; and Mrs. Lecount's acknowledgment of the captain's anonymous warning, was now on its way to insertion in the Times.

THE END OF THE THIRD SCENE.

THE NEGRO REPUBLIC.

There were not many noticeable things in the straggling procession which meandered through the International Exhibition, and then declared it "open;" but among the most noticeable were the negro Commissioners from Hayti and Liberia, walking shoulder to shoulder, and on terms of absolute quality with the representatives of the biggest and whitest communities in Christendom. We have nothing to do with Hayti in our present paper; so with a friendly nod of recognition, and a hearty God-speed, we will pass her by, and go over the way to that young republic, Liberia, to see how things get on there, and how the black blood works when uninfluenced by white example, and uncontrolled by white coercion.

Not many people know much about Liberia, save that it was originally a kind of philanthropic Botany Bay, where the Americans transported their manumitted slaves, leaving them to sink or swim as chance and circumstance might appoint; but how the experiment has succeeded, and whether the Liberians have sunk or swum has troubled the inquiring public very little. Indeed, not many people can even tell whereabouts it is, exactly: while of its climate, condition, trade, productions, or government, nothing is absolutely known, and but a very little hazily imagined. That it is on the west coast of Africa, is certain; and that it is the country of the freed American slaves is certain; but for the rest let us accept a blank.

If, then, you will take the map, you will see scooped out from Guinea, and on the same seaboard as Sierra Leone, the Grain, the Gold, the Ivory, and the Slave coasts—that is on the dreaded west,—the "white man's grave"—a little bit of land, extending only some six hundred miles along the shore, and no deeper than, on an average, a hundred miles inland (some lines are thirty, and some a hundred and twenty miles): a little bit of land bounded on the north-west by the river Shebar, and on the south-east by the San Pedro; the chief town of which is called Monrovia, from its great friend and patron, President Monroe, and the whole territory Liberia. Here lies the nucleus of what the poor fellows are pleased to call "the Anglo-Saxon Negro Nationality," to the establishment and consolidation of which many of the soundest thinkers and most sincere workers among the friends of the negro have given their best attention. It is now our turn to tell you what the country is like, and how the Liberians stand in the great commonwealth of nations.

A tropical land, full of rich shadowing palms and glorious forest trees, full of fruits and vegetables and flowers and many-coloured birds, with rivers rushing in rapids and widening into lakes, with capabilities of produce yet unattempted, ought to have a future if it has not a present or a past. A country that grows cotton, and coffee, and sugar, and rice, and palm oil, and dye-woods indigenously, as well as many other things of general value, ought to claim a share in the commerce of the world. And so Liberia will, in time, if she has but patience and fair play; for her destiny as the germ of the future African nationality is too manifest to be doubted. The river system of Liberia, if not important, is abundant, though not at present much available. First, there is the Shebar river, one hundred and twenty-five miles north-west of Monrovia, by the south-east boundary of which is the Shebar Island, where the first settlers from America landed, in 1821, but which was soon after abandoned, as too unhealthy for even negroes. The Shebar, like all the Liberian rivers, is obstructed at the mouth by shifting sand-bars, making navigation difficult, and entrance at times impossible; but once inside, you can go up for two hundred miles or so, and even sand-bars are not insurmountable obstacles to wealth and science. Then there is Grand Cape Mount river, in Montserrado county, which, after a course of two miles, opens into a lake fifteen feet broad, and reaching thirty miles inland, both river and lake navigable to vessels drawing six or seven feet of water. Little Cape Mount river, though above a hundred miles long, is navigable for only ten miles for ships of the same draught; but as there is a heavy surf at the bar it cannot always be entered, so its ten miles are often practically reduced to none. The Saint Paul river, in the north-west, from one hundred and twenty-five to three hundred yards wide, is navigable for sixteen, some say twenty-three miles, for ships drawing ten or twelve feet of water. It has its rise in the side of a mountain, say the natives, three hundred miles in the interior, and runs through the most beautiful and fertile district of all Liberia. Indeed, it is one of the most important rivers in the settlement, both for its power and the country through which it travels. An informant, who followed it along its banks for a hundred and twenty-five miles above tide water, reports it as obstructed by rapids from two to six miles apart, between which, however, the water was bold and placid, and from eight to ten feet deep. It is studded with small islands of twenty-five or thirty acres, some clothed with palm-trees, others with cam-wood, and the scenery is very rich and lovely. What mill power in those broad rapids, with the broad bold space of still water between! The entrance is four miles north of Monrovia, hence it is the principal way of communication between that city and the settlements along its banks. Six miles up, it is intersected by Stockton creek, the south-east branch of the Mesurado river, at the mouth of which lies Monrovia,

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which, however, like the Mesurado itself, is navigable only for boats and canoes. The Junk river during the rainy season has a very difficult bar, but that obstacle once passed, to the east is found a water-way four hundred yards broad, and navigable for twelve or fifteen miles; to the north another branch, running parallel with the sea-coast, and navigable for forty miles to vessels drawing eight feet of water. The head of this northern branch is within four miles of the source of the Mesurado, and that, too, by crossing an old "field," affords easy communication between Monrovia and Marshal. There is, also, the Saint John river, with shifting sandbars at the mouth, and sand-banks in its course, but still a noble sheet of water, which would carry for ten miles vessels drawing seven or eight feet, if channels could be cut through the banks, and navigable for boats and canoes much further. And there is the Sesters river, or River Cess, as people call it, with the most enchanting scenery in the world, and navigable for fifty miles to vessels drawing ten or twelve feet of water. It is difficult to enter, owing to a long barrier of sunken rocks, but the exquisite beauty on both sides would almost repay even a shipowner for the risk. And there is the Sanguin river, shallow and surfy at the bar, but clear and unobstructed for fifty miles; and the Sinou river, narrow and tortuous, but navigable, with six or seven feet of water, for fifteen miles to the falls, but above the falls covered with rocks, and impracticable. The entrance of the Sinou is sheltered by Blue Burry Point, and thus is safe at all seasons. It is a pity it is not a more important way when entered. Then there is the Cavally, the largest, and in the future the most valuable of all, navigable for eighty miles to vessels drawing fifteen feet of water, but then comes a ledge of rocks about half a mile wide. These passed the river is again open for ninety or a hundred miles more. The banks are high, rich, and thickly populated, but, unfortunately, the mouth is obstructed by sand-bars and sunken rocks, making the noble water-way beyond of very little use hitherto. The time will come when a channel will be cut through each of these rocky barriers, and then the river will be free and navigable for nearly a hundred and fifty miles—surely a highway for ships of great future importance in the world! There are twelve principal ports in Liberia, on two of which, Cape Palmas and Cape Mesurado, are lighthouses; and the kingdom is divided into four counties, with twenty towns and villages, besides smaller settlements, scattered through it.

The Americo-Liberian population is estimated at about sixteen thousand, the native at nearly five hundred thousand—four hundred and eighty-four thousand in stricter numbers—which makes an immense proportion of untilled savagery, against which the only half-civilised emigrants have enough to do to hold their own. Every now and then, to add to the proportion on the wrong side, a shipload of recaptured slaves is thrown on the country—savages to be fed, clothed, taught, and civilised in the speediest manner possible; as many, indeed, as four thousand eight hundred have been thus turned adrift on Liberian mercy during the last two years, but lately the United States Government have made arrangements to allow them one hundred dollars per head for all recaptured slaves over eight years of age, and fifty dollars for all under eight years of age; and every now and then comes over a batch of freed slaves from the American Colonisation Society, though not many of these—not above eleven thousand five hundred in all since the first. Liberia could receive more. She could now receive seven thousand or eight thousand American negroes per annum, and soon she calculates on her power to adopt twenty-five thousand or thirty thousand per annum; in fact, she calculates that, in twenty-five years from this date, she could receive, house, clothe, and give work to all the slaves of the United States. English is the recognised official and trade language, not only in Monrovia and other large towns, but all along the coast, and up into the interior; indeed, the native chiefs and head men usually place their sons at a very early age in the families of Americo-Liberians, expressly to learn English, which is regarded by the natives much as French used to be regarded in the days of Norman rule, here—as the first requisite towards making an African gentleman. Without this the savage remains a savage, and ineligible for any situation beyond that of day labourer, but with this, and the adoption of three years of civilised habits generally, he becomes entitled not only to a vote, but may also fill the higher offices and places of trust. By the constitution the native and the Americo-Liberian are ranked as equals; which is a pleasant instance of negro liberalism, and a contradiction to the old proverb. Some of the aborigines are industrious, at least for Africans, to whom a pumpkin and a palm thatch are all that Heaven has decreed necessary for their temporal well-being; but until they have been taught the artificial wants of civilisation—until they have learned ambition, discontent, the love of luxury, and the other evils attendant on material progress—they will still be satisfied with their pumpkin and their palm thatch, and think themselves rich on their three dollars a month, which, with rations, is the maximum rate of wages for a native. An Americo-Liberian gets six or eight. And, after all, should we like to work with the thermometer at ninety degrees, and forest fruits, sufficient for all our wants, lying ready at our feet, for only the trouble of picking up? Granting that the climate is equable and healthy (seldom ranging below sixty degrees or above ninety degrees), yet even that is heavy odds against exertion, and one does not want a variety of clothing, or nourishing food, or a very substantial house and furniture to keep oneself alive and well in the tropics and under the palm-trees. Nature has done so much that art and necessity are left without work.

In healthiness of climate Liberia offers a striking contrast to most of the other settle-

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ments along the West African coast. To be sure there is the acclimatising fever—a sort of bilious remittent fever—which proves fatal on an average to two or three out of every hundred American immigrants. But with proper precautions, such as sleeping the first few nights on board ship, or, if obliged to remain on shore, sleeping in a close room with a small fire to exclude the damp, not eating too much fruit, and not drinking too much rum, the acclimatising fever may be got over as mildly as measles here with us. Save this bilious remittent—to be gone through by all new colonisers—Liberia has no specific maladies in her air; and now that her forests are clearing and her swamps draining, is becoming singularly healthy. The best district of all is Carrysburg, situated twelve miles east of the White Plains—a hilly country, bracing and invigorating, and to be the future Montpellier of the low lands. This talk of the healthiness of the district is meant only for blacks—the negro emigrants from America. To the white Europeans it is still the "grave" which the west coast has always been.

It has been said in England that the Americo-Liberians, themselves escaped or manumitted slaves, hold the natives in the same bondage as that from which they have been set free; and the slander has been repeated again and again, till, as is the case with all slanders well asserted, it has taken the place of a proved and indubitable fact. Now, the truth of the matter is simply this: We all know that slavery is the African institution. There is not a kingdom, there is not a tribe, but makes slaves or sells them. Slavery is their own special form of human holding—indigenous to the soil, like cotton or sugar—and they themselves are virtually the authors of their own wretchedness. Whenever the Liberians have purchased their lands and territories from native tribes and chiefs, they have been able to do so only on condition that these tribes and chiefs may keep their "boys," as they call them, on the same terms as now, and that the new comers will make no forcible alteration in their peculiar tenure of domestic slaves. No persuasion has yet induced these outlying tribes to give up their "boys," who, however, stand more in the relation of our own apprentices, or the old Highland clansmen, or the Roman clients, than as slaves proper, being, for one thing, always relatives of the master, in a strange mingling of the patriarchal and slave-owning systems. But the Americo-Liberians do not countenance the system; and any of those slaves or boys escaping to their own towns and settlements are not given up. In the constitution, indeed, is this section, which ought to settle the question at once with all candid people: "There shall be no slavery within this republic, nor shall any citizen, or any person resident therein, deal in slaves either within or without its bounds, either directly or indirectly." The system among the aborigines is daily declining, and in a few years there will not be seen even this mild form of "boys" or clansmen to give weight to the rumour that the "Anglo-Saxon Liberian nationality" maintains a wrong against which its own very existence is a protest.

The government of Liberia is a republic founded on the model of the United States. There is a president elected for a term of two years, who must be thirty-five years of age, and who must be possessed of real property to the extent of six hundred dollars. The vice-president must also be thirty-five years of age, and possessed of real property to the extent of six hundred dollars; for the vice-president often becomes the president when the two years are out, and must therefore have all the more important qualifications for his post. There is a senate, the members of which must be twenty-five years old, and to which no state officers are admitted; and the judicial system is managed by magistrates, against the decisions of whom appeals may be carried to the quarterly court, and thence to the supreme court of the empire. The quarterly courts are managed by one paid judge and two assistants, but as yet they have had very little to do, and common law generally is rather out of place in a country where criminals are rare and the prisons empty. There are corporations, jurymen, counsel, solicitors, just as with any other civilised people; and they have probate business, and make wills, and leave their property to their heirs, all the same as if they had an Archbishop of Canterbury, and another of York, and proctors sitting in chambers about Doctors' Commons. They have a small capitation tax; and this, with customs dues, &c., makes up the state revenue. Their political jurisdiction extends further than their territorial—quite two hundred miles away into the interior; the native tribes generally looking on the Americo-Liberians as their chiefs, and disposed to acknowledge their superiority, nay, even disposed to acknowledge a kind of sovereignty, when not up in arms against them. But in general they are very troublesome, especially the Sassy Drews: an undersized, warlike, treacherous tribe, excessively hostile to foreigners. Fortunately, every Anglo-Liberian is a volunteer, and having plenty of arms, they can defend themselves pretty briskly. They have not made any territorial conquests, properly so called, therefore have not raised up any enemies on that account; for they have purchased and had ceded to them by treaties all that they have gained—buying up the Shebar river, for instance, in 1850, and annexing the San Pedro and all the Maryland country in 1857. By degrees they will get more, especially as they are in advance of all the natives on the coast in general civilisation and aptitude for trade; thus the Gold coast people are idle and will not work at all; those of Sierra Leone are only for selling, mere middlemen who produce nothing, and so on; but the Liberians are farmers, manufacturers, merchants, indifferently, and thus have more capacities for success than any of the others.

The chief produce of Liberia at the present time is coffee and sugar. Sugar, indeed, is the best thing yet made; coffee is indigenous, grows

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luxuriantly, even in the forests, and requires but little cultivation to make it perfect. It is considered equal to the finest Mocha, and has a peculiar flavour and aroma, not found in any other coffee. It is much prized in the United States, and fetches a good price in the market. Cotton, which might succeed perfectly—Sea Island cotton, too, which is of longer staple and more elastic fibre than the indigenous kind—has not yet been brought to any useful condition. It grows abundantly in Liberia, and the natives manufacture a large quantity of coarse cloth, but it is short in fibre, so would not do for the Manchester machinery. When we see, however, what has been done by the pedigree wheat in the International Exhibition, we cannot doubt of the ultimate success of any association, combining capital and brains, which would set itself to the task of creating a first-class Liberian cotton. Such an association is being organised, and is sure to succeed. The Saint Paul district grows the best rice and sugar—but, indeed, rice, and cotton, and palm oil, and sugar, are to be had everywhere; and Grand Bassa turns out the best coffee, and the best camwood for dyeing. Along the banks of Saint Paul you get the best clay for bricks; while maize, sweet potatoes, cassava, beans, peas, water melons, pine-apples, oranges, lemons, guavas, mangoes, plantains, bananas, pawpaws, tamarinds, pomegranates, ginger, pepper, indigo, ground-nuts, arrowroot, &c. &c., are to be had wherever there is an inch of earth for rooting, and the bright tropical sun over head. No minerals have been found yet; no copper, zinc, lead, antimony, quicksilver, tin, silver, or sulphur of brimstone. But there *are* minerals in the country, that is certain; there is iron ore in large quantities, and gold is often found at the base of the high hills, in the back country; and there are rumours of coal, not yet fully verified, but pretty certain to be true. The great want of Liberia is capital—capital, which would soon obtain one or two public desiderata, such as good roads, a breakwater at Monrovia, a canal between the Mesurado and Junk rivers, and a railroad, fifty or a hundred miles into the country, up to Millsburg or Carrysburg, to bring down the cotton, ivory, cattle, and other things in which such an immense trade might be made. These, also, will come in time, and by enterprise and patience.

The town of Monrovia is three miles square, and its population three thousand civilised people. It has straight streets, shops, a newspaper, called The Liberia Herald, dating as far back as 1826, markets, a college with professors black and scientific, churches and chapels, and all the other appurtenances of a well-conducted place. The houses are chiefly made of brick and stone, those of wood being infested with a little insect called a "bug-a-bug," while the large masses of grey and blue granite, and a close kind of sandstone, lying round Monrovia, are handy for building, and have no bug-a-bugs. Brick, though, is chiefly used, because it holds the damp less than any other material; and in the rainy season, the Liberians, like all tropical people, have enough moisture to try anything in the world. Their lime is got from snail-shells and oyster-shells, and some comes from Germany. There are four denominations of Christians, of which this is their comparative order: Methodists, Baptist, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians: no Roman Catholics, and no Quakers. There is no State Church, and there is universal toleration—which is not what all communities can say.

There is plenty of fish about: oysters from the Junk river in any conceivable quantities, selling at two cents the bushel when at their dearest; a few clams and fewer lobsters, crabs and turtle; there are mullet and mackerel, the "angel fish," and "white boys," the gripper, pike, barracouta, cavally snapper, and whitings; all to be had for the feeblest endeavour. And fish, when quite fresh, makes a better diet for hot countries than over-much meat. The Americo-Liberians rise early and work all day, having for their amusements pic-nics, concerts, singing parties, and—on the first of December, the anniversary of the establishment of their capital—a grand military and civil procession, with speechifying and games to conclude. They are very fond of music, like all negroes; and sing to their work all through the day, the habits acquired in the American plantations continuing out in the Liberian forests. At Monrovia they have one pianoforte player, and one guitar player, many accordion players, and very many amateur part-singers; part-singing being their chief social dissipation. They drink wine and ale got from England and Germany, and palm wine of their own manufacture; but they drink very sparingly, and are not sensual or licentious in any of their habits. They make their own clothes, beautifully embroidered, but they have also a trade in ready-made American clothing, which it is to be hoped will not flourish much or long. They dress in the United States fashion, and so do some of the more civilised natives now, though the original robe is a kind of toga as with all savages: meaning no disrespect though to the Ancients. They are great farmers, and their draught cattle are oxen only, which suit better to the climate than the more nervous and excitable horse. In every town there is a native suburb with mud houses thatched, not tiled, and without streets; in striking contrast to the straight streets, the brick or stone dwellings, and the general air of civilisation and advancement in the colonists' towns. Think, what an immense progress the American slave has made in the way of civilisation over his free brothers of the African wilds! Is slavery then to prove an ultimate blessing after all, by the mysterious ways in which good is so often made to proceed from evil? So often? so often? indeed how often does historic good spring from anything but oppression, tyranny, and the reaction of an evil rule? surely one of the most perplexing problems of human life! Now this very colony of Liberia—this triumphant instance of the educa-

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bility, and power of self-government, and political capacity of the negro would never have been obtained had there been no slavery in the United States for good men to war against, and* noble women to refuse all participation in its gain. Had there been no slavery, there would have been no negro education, and Dahomey and Ashantee would still have been the last result possible to African civilisation. As it is, we have seen what a black community managed by a black president (the first governors were whites; lately, since 1841, they have been negroes), officered by negroes, legislated for by negro lawyers, and peopled by men who but a few years ago were mere slaves in the plantations, working in fear of the lash, and under the power of an irresponsible authority—we have seen what such a community can do, left to itself, and in the possession of liberty. The lesson, if painfully taught, has been nobly learnt, and the success of the small colony of Liberia is one of the most convincing arguments that can be given, of the capacity of the negro for self-government, and of his right to a free man's heritage of political liberty and social equality.

SHEEP-WASHING.

The great annual sheep-washing at Chicklebury commences about the middle of May. I do not think the Downshire shepherds study the almanack very much, nor have much trust in Zadkiel, so I suppose they discover the proper time for the sheep-washing by such signs as the falling off of apple blossom, or the appearance of young birds in the hedges: much as they know when grass is ripe by its brown lustre, and by the floating up to its surface of those great white stars—the Cow daisies: much as they know the proper time of perch being in season by the opening of the elder-leaf.

There is a pretty simplicity in this ignoring of book-learning, and I would not disturb the innocence of these Downshire shepherds for all the solar systems "the small, but active brain" of our village schoolmaster could knock into their grizzled heads, after twenty years' hard labour. Let us hope that for generations to come our shepherds, learned in their country learning—but, as to books, children, may continue to date the events of their lives from such simple epochs as "last hay harvest:" let them remember that son Tom was married "twenty years agone last turmot sowing," or that "Fayther died five year come next Chicklebury fair."

A sheep-washing in a lowland county is not a great festival; there is a splash in a corner, a fuss at some pond, some shouting and some beer-tippling, and there an end. But, to see sheep-washing in its culminating glory, to see it as an institution, as a national ceremony, it must be seen in a real sheep-feeding county,—in fact, in Downshire and nowhere else.

To have a true festival there must be some great reaction. The Olympic games were of national importance, because they brought holiday amusement and society to the busy youth of a thinly-peopled country. The Derby day is a true carnival, because it is the outvent of a whole year of London labour. The Saturnalia was noisy, because it gave to slaves three days of liberty and licence. The Carnival is tumultuous and maddened because it gives to the Italians, who are priest-bound, a week of freedom. And to creep back to our very narrow slip of turf, the Downshire sheep-washing is a great time, because it brings together our shepherds in a pleasant, rejoicing, though hard-working way, and puts some money into their pockets.

The Downshire shepherd's life is a hard and solitary one. Let me briefly sketch it. He wrenches himself from his poor but warm bed at daybreak, and leads forth his flock of, say a thousand bleating sheep; and, with tinkling bells that rouse the lark from his nest in the clover, betakes him, with his pretendedly ferocious dog, to the high downs. There, if the day be wet, he crouches under a hedge in his old grey great-coat, and plays with his dog, wrapt in dreams of a warm fire and a hot supper with Sally and the children at night. If it be fine, he seats himself on a green turf-padded molehill, in a Robinson Crusoe sort of royalty, and watches over his flock, who sprinkle the down with spots of dull white for half a mile on either side. There, the swallows skim and sweep so near him, that he can see the glossy indigo blue of their backs, or the doleful plovers swirl round him, flickering white, uttering their strange regretful cries. He searches along the edge of the gilded furze for where the mushroom buttons bulb above the ground, watches the wheat-ear flit from mound to mound, or feels some dim pleasure when the lark rises quivering up above him, and flutters down its simple music.

There are (forgive the truism) three hundred and sixty-five days in most years, and in this wild solitary life do these days pass. Now and then that witch-like personage, the wool-gatherer, with her head bound up anti-rheumatically, and her apron full of the locks of wool she has gathered from the furze-tufts and the thorn-bushes, comes wandering by him, and stops for a moment to crack some nuts of country news. Now and then a rival shepherd, like a patriarch of old, arrives from some distance down, moving towards him with his flocks, and holds a royal conference with him on the state of the weather. After that short meeting, the silence and the dead monotony of the shepherd life must appear to be all the deeper. The singing of larks, the wild cry of plovers, are all very well for poets' diet, but they are scarcely substantial food for a long life—especially when the memory is dull, the perception not vivid, the intelligence not

* John McDonough, Miss Margaret Mercer, Mrs. Reed, and Miss Mattie Griffith, emancipated their slaves, and sent them out, free of all expense, to their best home—Liberia.

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keen, and there is little for the mind to ruminate on.

About the middle of May there is a great convergence of sheep towards a certain little brook, that bisects our parish of Chicklebury. It is a pleasant little rippling brook, dappled green with plots of watercresses, strewn in places with long waving tresses of weeds, and watched here and there by stiff rows of alders, that are drawn up like frightened soldiers—a little brook not unknown to the great mallard, with the green velvet neck, and not unpeopled by the shy bull-headed trout—a brook that loses itself in marshy snipy meadows, flowing eventually under the walls of an old ruined Jacobite manor-house, and thence out Heaven knows where, into some distant region of Downshire, far beyond Chicklebury knowledge. Just at the point where the great road from Churchton to Buyborough enters Chicklebury, the brook I have before mentioned flows under a little stone bridge of three arches, and enters the grounds of Colonel Hanger. At the foot of this bridge, just by the hedge that bounds the vicarage, is the scene of the annual sheep-washing, for here the water is kept in by a little stone dam, that at once deepens and restrains it.

The first indication of the festivity consists in the pitching of hurdles, some quiet afternoon in May, or driving in of stakes by dint of crowbars and mallets, and in the formation of square prison-like enclosures, which it needs no conjuror to know are intended for sheep. A nondescript sort of man, who all the year besides makes bee-hives and garden-nets, is the proprietor of these hurdles, is the manager of this sheep-washing, and the contractor in the undertaking.

The real sheep-washing was not at all the scene that I had pictured in my youth, in that time when the sun shone brighter and the days were longer and the flowers were sweeter than they are now. I had fancied that it was held under the spreading boughs of sun-proof elms and beside a stream, white with water-lilies or blue-bordered with forget-me-nots. I had pictured glossy-haired red-cheeked countrymen quaffing beer and shouting festive songs, while the white flocks lay pastured around, or were dragged into the clear stream by rejoicing boys. I added to this, broad meadows, where the calm-eyed kine fed knee-deep in the flowering grass; where a pensive angler sat and watched the little dragon-flies (whose bodies were like sapphire-threads) flit round the golden dandelion-flowers; or, with his tranquil and fishy-eye fixed movelessly upon his scarlet float. Such was my dream, and I found it about as much like the reality as the pictures of stage rustics in May-time are like the real rustics. The real sheep-washing began in quite another manner, and was conducted in quite a different way.

As I once slept in a house, the lawns of which borders on the Chicklebury brook, I have an exact knowledge of the hour at which the sheep-washing commences. In the curdling grey of a May morning I was awoke by the hoarse troubled bleating of multitudinous sheep, by the querulous anger and assumed ferocity of countless dogs, and by the cries and adjurations of numberless shepherds. Even at that early hour the whole road, far as you could see, was alive with sheep, who, in a smoke cloud of advancing dust, seemed to be steered by a brown-smocked shepherd, whose voice you could hear far in the rear, gesticulating, haranguing, and urging forward his fleecy care.

In the deepest part of the brook, with his back resting against a sort of stone dam that here deepens and pens in the water, and standing in a pulpit sort of box, is old Joe Macey, once a gamekeeper, and now a Jack-of-all-trades. Nearly opposite him, at some distance off in another pulpit-like deal box, is Jem Bowbridge, the manager of the whole speculation, and, on the brook side, there is a large ground-plan of hurdles with artful passages and little separate parishes of enclosure to admit, to lead, and to let out the unwashed sheep. In the uttermost of these, is already the first instalment of a flock come from the downs five miles off, with a well-known red brand on their woolly flanks. Here they huddle in stolid wonderment, coughing exactly like old shepherds, jangling their bruised bells or staring steadily and vacantly at their old tormentor, the dog, who is tied by a red handkerchief to an outside hurdle, and is now, in a most aggravating and uncalled-for way, making frantic and dislocating leaps forward, whining and yelping in the fretful assumption of an uncalled-for anger. His master's crook and can are near him, under a tree. The dog's pretence of zeal has a most wholesome effect on his patient and long-suffering congregation.

The farmer to whom the sheep belong, mounted on a strong-boned hunter, not backward when the hounds are out, is on the bridge shouting his orders; for sheep are worth two pounds each at least, and they are sometimes drowned by careless or drunken washers.

At the other side of the brook, attendant on the men in the little blue pulpits, stand two or three shepherds with long poles in their hands, to the bottom of which are fastened strong cross-pieces of wood, so that they resemble coarse hay-rakes in which the teeth have not yet been cut. These are used to stir up the sheep in the water, to keep them under till they are properly washed, and to steer them round from one washer's pulpit to another's.

Now the spectators, or audience, begin to assemble on the bridge, usually so quiet and still. They come at daybreak and remain there all day, as if fascinated at the gorgeousness and unparalleled nature of the ceremony. There is the butcher, in his light blue frock, that puffs out pompously in the wind. He is seated on the elastic swinging seat of his swift cart, and he stops on the crown of the bridge and eyes the sheep longingly, and with an almost pathetic interest. He shouts at intervals loud-voiced remarks on "its being good weather for the hai," or about "its beating up for another starm;" then suddenly, in a violent way, without wait-

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ing for any special answer, drives off at as tremendous a speed as if a customer at the next town were dying for want of food, and that loin of veal under the white cloth were intended to supply his necessity. Or it may be two farm servants arrive in a jolting cart, with a frightened calf caged in a net behind them, and they, too, stop and shout out inquiries as to "whose that lot of ship are?" and rough agricultural jokes that will not always bear repeating. It may be that Colonel Hanger's fourteen hunters pass, clothed and hooded, in a stately ambling procession, and the grooms and the washers bandy country "chaff" with great violence of lungs. Presently Farmer Stubbs charges by on his fiery little white pony, on his way to Buyborough market; and, as he passes, he too gives a greeting to the washers who are to be at work on his sheep to-morrow.

But the staple audience consists of every size of village child, who seem retained for the season. They wear those little linen bonnets with the huge curtains big as capes peculiar to English villages—bonnets which furnish at once clothing and shade. They kiss, fight, cry, and form alliances, barter commodities, and storm and laugh after the manner of their age and race, enjoying the whole ceremony "vastly," as the old fops would have said. Not that they altogether confine their attentions to that event, but from time to time sally and ramble into the adjacent fields, to collect the great flat elder-flowers, to pillage thrushes' nests, to pick, fondle, and squander blue and pink flowers, to make surgical experiments attended with great loss of blood with sword-grass, or to roll and scramble among the tall nodding plumes of the tossing "fox-tails."

June being emphatically "a shirt-sleeve" month, bands of haymakers, with wooden rakes on their shoulders, and little sodden-looking kegs at their backs, pass frequently on their way to Summer lees, and stop at the bridge for a minute to chat and laugh, and sing a scrap of a song; or perhaps the squire's brougham, brimming with his fair daughters, will halt a moment in its stately course to the county flower-show, and the pleasant laugh of children will be heard as the young squires watch the hopeless despondent struggles of the sheep.

And, lastly, towards evening, when the rose-colour is still lingering in a cloud or two, the old battered scarlet mail-cart, punctual as sunset, unerring as Destiny, goes by, and the stolid driver will shout a grave "good-night."

All this time, come sun, come rain, the washing proceeds. One by one the black-faced sheep are drafted off from the outer into the inner pens, guided by incessant thumps of sticks that sound hollow on their woolly backs, and tumbled into the water with the violence with which bathing-women execute their office on frightened children—one by one they wallow in the purgatorial clean green water, dipped under, and kept in circulation by the long poles of the shepherds. Here, like the unhappy ones in Dante's flood, they are perpetually pushed under when they attempt to rise, till they float, miserable sops, into the hands of the washers in the blue pulpits. Then commences a fresh phase of misery—for these inhuman men (as the sheep call them) rub them from top to toe, turn them on their backs, rub them anew, and then push them off to swim out as they can. One by one each goes through the ordeal, eventually flounders out at the tail end of the dam, and, half-drowned, scrambles to land and joins his drenched and shivering companions.

Now that the washers, about noon, emerge, like mermen, from the water and splash out of their blue pulpits, to come and sit under a tree and eat their luncheons, I go down and chat with them, and ask a few questions about the statistics of Downshire sheep-washing. They tell me that some years ago, before "The Plain" was so much cultivated, and when ponds were scarcer, as many as twenty thousand sheep would yearly come to this Chicklebury brook to be washed. Now, from May to the end of June, they had seldom more than twelve thousand. They charged two-and-sixpence a hundred, and two men could, by dint of great exertion, wash one thousand a day. The washing was necessary, although the sheep got knee-deep in mud after the washing, and the wet fleeces got powdered with road-dust as they went home, in order to clean the fleeces of the clotted dirt, and to render it lighter for the shears.

In about a month the Chicklebury sheep-washing ends. The brook, so long turbid and thickened, once more runs clear as crystal over the gravel and the weeds. A few showers wash the road-dust off the cresses and the water-plants. The ducks come back to their old dominion, and all goes on as before.

Then, just as the haymakers have taken down their rusty scythes, and the white-sleeved men begin to work in the grass-fields, where the clover is purple sweet, and the white butterflies are blown from flower to flower, the shearing commences. You can see sheep-shearing at any barn door, but don't go in and touch the shears, or you will have to pay your footing, and supply some dozen thirsty souls with beer. The sheep are patient victims in the hands of their persecutors, sitting up against their knees, or lying helpless on their backs or on their sides.

How nimbly, and like rough barbers, the men ply the shears, not cutting the wool off short, as if it was hair, but removing it in a continuous fleece, as if they were flaying the sheep!

The animal goes in a stupid ragged bolster of brown wool—a rough, hot, winterly-looking creature—it comes from the shearers a thin, trim, cleven-looking animal, striped with ridges of chalky white.

Not being in the wool trade, I can scarcely say much about the different sorts of wool. Down tegs and Down ewes, half-bred hogs and wethers are to me all alike. As to Kent fleeces and Leicester fleeces, I don't know them apart, and I scarcely know combing skins from flannel wool or blanket wool; but this I know, that our average price for wool is about sixteen-pence to seventeen-pence per pound, and that

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an average fleece is worth about seven shillings and sixpence.

The farmer who has got back all his sheep from the washing without losing one by drowning (an accident that sometimes happens in the confusion and inevitable haste), and has had them sheared without getting them much cut, and has lastly been to the wool-market, and got a good price for his wool, may then turn the sheep out of his mind for a time, and go on steadily to his hay-harvest.

And now the great annual Chicklebury sheep-washing is over. The little blue pulpits are unlashed, the hurdles pulled up and flapped together, the sousing-poles stacked and put away. The washers shoulder their brown beer jars, shake hands and congratulate each other. Again the shepherds seek their old haunts under the fir woods and in the furze patches; and I dare say their old companions the plovers and the wheat-ears rejoice to see them once more, and the rabbits gambol all the blither for their return.

MY NEPHEW'S COLLECTION.

Most manias, whether chronic or acute, fail to become cosmopolite; they rage within a limited area, beyond which they do not spread; or they are confined to certain classes of society, above or below which they do not rise or sink. The rows of Donnybrook Fair are a notoriously Irish mania; howling religious revivals are American manifestations. In one century, choice tulips hardly got out of the hands of merchant princes; in another, they became the exclusive delight of weavers. Auriculas, with their formal and powdery beauty, have been stigmatised, by those who cannot grow them, as shoemakers' flowers. Lancashire is the centre of the gooseberry mania. Bull-fighting is a mania, which, although fierce on the spot, we should be sorry to see gaining ground outside the Spanish dominions. Every country in Europe has its own special mania; and there are doubtless plenty of little localities, both within the pale of Christendom and without it, each with its own pet mania, which, as far as the rest of the world is concerned, is born to break out unseen and waste its weakness on the desert air.

My nephew is a victim of the last new mania.

Harry is not a bad sort of fellow, being neither rebellious, saucy, unsteady, nor priggish. For his age I thought him wonderfully quiet and studious, given to more serious pursuits than most other juveniles. He brought with him, from Dr. Trimmeboy's establishment, a thick square strong-bound manuscript, entirely filled with a series of sums, ranging from simple and compound addition (with the lines ruled with red ink), through cube-root extraction, tare and tret, interest for various terms and at various rates per cent, timber-measuring and land-surveying, and concluding with a mild foretaste of trigonometry: showing how to calculate the height of a steeple—all transcribed in his own handwriting, with corrections, passim, by the head usher. It was (for it is no longer) an autograph volume of which any ciphering-master in the land might boast.

His aunt Rebecca (my maiden sister) and myself, after close inspection of the manuscript, were duly edified—so duly, in fact, that I believe we never opened it afterwards, until the occasion I am about to relate. But what subsequently excited our approbation was the constant reference which Harry made to his model ciphering-book. He would lay down the Times to recur to its perusal. When I opened a light chat on the City article, he would take up his book, as a help to a clearer comprehension of the topic. If, alluding to the Court of the Vatican, I mentioned the intrigues of the ex-King of Naples, he replied perhaps, consulting the book again, "Ah, yes; I have it." If I wondered whether Hesse would make it up with Prussia, "Let me see; unluckily, no," was his answer, after a glance at the oracle. He never parted from the book. He thought more of the book than Abernethy did of *his*. It was his handy book, his vade mecum, his manual, his companion by day, and his bedfellow, I believe, by night. Beholding this strong attachment to figures, vague thoughts came over us of his being destined to succeed the astronomer-royal, or to rival the fame of Bidder and Babbage.

At the same time he seemed to become strangely and even unpleasantly inquisitive respecting our own private affairs. Neither Rebecca nor myself receive letters that contain deep secrets, political or family. We do not correspond with Garibaldi, Mazzini, or the Count de Chambord. We hold no communication, in cypher or otherwise, with any foreign government. Still, we like that the few letters we do receive should be regarded with respectful reverence—should be touch-me-nots, scarcely to be looked at, handed in on a waiter. We even thought of starting the fashion of having them covered with a napkin besides. Instead of which, Harry at once took to answering the postman's knock, although Mrs. Price, our housekeeper, always did so before his arrival. Not only that: we felt aware that the outside of every letter was scrupulously examined while he closed the hall-door as slowly as possible and returned to the breakfast-room at a funeral pace. Newspapers sent by absent friends—three distinguished families on our visiting list were then enjoying a continental tour—were subjected to the same inspection. Every cast-off envelope was carefully but silently secured, for the sake, as we thought, of studying and comparing the handwriting. We noticed also that, young as he was, more letters arrived for him than for us, the contents of which he never communicated. Strange, and slightly impertinent!

Yesterday, Rebecca's forbearance could hold out no longer. At the postman's rap, Harry jumped up as usual, before Mrs. Price—who is not so active as she was twenty years ago—could get to the door; and he returned with two letters, one half hidden in the cuff of his sleeve,

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while he devoured the direction of the other with his eyes. We had long been expecting that letter. It contained, we knew, an expression of thanks and safe arrival in Queensland from a penniless but hard-working young woman whom my sister believed she was really patriating, while ex-patriating her, at her own expense. In truth, the girl's sweetheart had purposely gone out before her, with an understanding, and was ready for the reception of his well-beloved. We wished this little romance, in which Rebecca was an accomplice, to be kept as snug as possible.

"That is *my* letter, sir," observed my sister, sternly; "and I should be glad to have it, and others for the future, brought in directly, without being quite so closely examined. In my time, young people did not take such liberties."

"Because in your time——" stammered Harry, not daring to finish.

"Because why, sir? I insist on knowing."

"Because in your very, *very* young time, aunt, there were no such things as postage stamps. They are a magnificent invention of modern times. Here is the letter; but pray do give me the envelope."

"For what? What interest or right, sir, can you possibly have to inspect the postmarks of my correspondence. And, now we talk of correspondence, I should like to be informed what is the nature of yours. It may be all right and proper, and I dare say it is; but, until you are one-and-twenty, and we are relieved of the responsibility of your guardianship, I may observe that your uncle and myself ought to be made acquainted with its nature, and to have some idea of the persons with whom it takes place."

Rebecca uttered this little lecture with all the dry decision she could muster, looking at me, at the close of her speech, to second the motion. Then, as she really loved her nephew, and was too kind-hearted to feel easy while administering reproof, she made a retreat and avoided further discussion by breaking the seal of her letter and becoming absorbed in its perusal. I said nothing. Harry blushed, not a guilty blush, but a blush as it were protesting against unjust treatment. He soon left the house—as he afterwards confessed, to make private arrangements with the postman.

During his absence, and while Rebecca was making out her multi-crossed epistle, breathing a satisfactory "Ah!" at intervals, I went upstairs to my room, to look out of window with my hands in my pockets, as my wont is when anything occurs to puzzle me. *His* room door stood ajar, suggesting the possibility of finding a clue to the correspondence of which Rebecca disapproved. In a snug corner of his bookcase was the well-worn ciphering-book, which would not have invited further attention but for its bloated appearance, so to speak. It had grown plethoric, abdominal, and fat. It seemed to have taken in more good things than it could well digest. It was filled to repletion, witness sundry cracks, in spite of the extra binding duly charged in the school bill. I took it down, really hoping to find a further triumph of my nephew's mathematical abilities, and supposing the additional thickness to arise from logarithmic calculations of excessive profundity. The sums, no doubt, would be overlaid with algebraic corollaries and commentaries. I opened the volume, half-fearing to behold an increase of figures, ascending vertically or descending transversely, and garnished with scales of red ruled lines.

Next the cover were loose letters, evidently not, as Rebecca dreaded they were, from any young person of the gentler sex. "Your last favour duly received," "on the 30th ult. we had the honour to forward," would hardly be the forms in which a fair one would avow her susceptibilities. There was mention of "France, 1848," "France, republic, presidence," "private offices," "scarce envelopes," and "local correspondence," which could have reference only to business or politics. Was my nephew in secret training for the foreign secretaryship? But on turning over the once arithmetical pages, a wonderful transformation met my eye, explaining the obese condition of the book. It was not exactly a palimpsest manuscript, but had been effaced by linings of paper mosaic. Each page was neatly ruled with blue ink into small square divisions quite irrespective of the sums upon it, and nearly each division was occupied by a postage stamp of some nation, colony, or community, whose name was hand-printed on a smart label pasted at the top of the page. A few old postage envelopes were honoured with a broad-margined page to themselves.

Beside the volume were three or four pamphlets, in French and in English, of Parisian, Belgian, and British publication, the happy authors of which could boast their second editions, revised, corrected and enlarged, with reproduction forbidden and every right reserved. I beheld Aids to Stamp Collectors; being a list of English and Foreign Postage Stamps in Circulation since 1840. I beheld Catalogue des Timbres-Poste créés dans les divers États du Globe. Further, I saw Manuel du Collectionneur de Timbres-Poste, ou Nomenclature générale de tous les timbres adoptés dans les divers pays de l'Univers; as if the author, Monsieur J. B. Moens, were on intimate terms with postmasters residing in the planets Venus and Jupiter. He assures us that the stamp-collector may apply to him in all confidence; for the correspondents whom he has with the stranger enable him continually to supply the generality of all the stamps (of the universe?). And then there was a severe libellus, of ninety-seven pages, Timbres-Poste, without preface, commentary, or peroration, but an index only, "on sale chez Laplante, Dealer in Postage Stamps for Collections, 1, Rue Christine, 1, Paris." This last looked about as light reading as a list of fixed stars, or the astronomical portions of Dietrichsen's Almanack. Besides, and on the same shelf, were ranged grammars and dictionaries of foreign tongues, picked up at book-stalls; tables of European

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coins, weights, and measures, and, backing and supporting all, like a substantial buttress, a solid tome, entitled Manuel du Négotiant, Traite, théorique et pratique des Sciences Commerciales. For this learned treatise the name of the author, L. Rothschild, inspired me with a certain awe. I left it untouched, and turned over with bewilderment the pages of the metamorphosed arithmetical record.

While so doing, a light step bounded upstairs. It was Harry, who thus caught me in his sanctum, rummaging his private shelves, and surrounded by his precious documents tossed about in disorder. The boy looked astonished, but not in the least abashed or ashamed. He stood his ground like a man. After the first surprise at seeing me there, he seemed flattered rather than otherwise by the curiosity I was manifesting.

"And how did you come by all this rubbish?" I asked.

"By exchanges with correspondents, uncle," was his reply, in justification, "and also with my pocket-money."

"You were at liberty, certainly, to spend it on this, as well as on any other harmless nonsense; still it is a pity to throw money into the street."

"I beg your pardon, uncle; it is not thrown away at all. I have made a good investment. My stamp album is worth twenty pounds, if it is worth a single shilling."

"When you have proved that it is worth a shilling, I will believe that it will fetch twenty pounds."

"That is easily done. You know, uncle, there are two sorts of collections of stamps, the maculate and the immaculate. Maculate stamps, or such as have passed through the post, are marked, to prevent their being used again. I do not claim any value for those, because you, perhaps, will not admit that they have any value."

I nodded my perfect assent to this.

"And yet I have a Neapolitan stamp—here it is—of the late King Bomba, which I would not part with, for five shillings. Besides, as each country has different postage-stamps, so has each a different mode of defacing them. Just look, uncle. England does it by black bars, Hesse Darmstadt by concentric circles, France by a number of little black spots. Now, as it is possible that the rarity of certain discontinued stamps will tempt forgers to imitate them, if they commit any error in the mode of defacement, they will be caught most assuredly. Therefore, an authentic postmark on a stamp confirms its genuineness and increases its worth——"

"Which I ignore."

"I must tell you a true story, which I heard at the lycée. A maid-servant, who made use of a postage-stamp for the first time in her life, had noticed that all the letters she took in for her master were dotted with black over the stamp, like this head of the Republic. She supposed it was done to make the stamps stick better, and imitated it as well as she could with a pen. At the post-office, it was at first suspected that some one had used an old stamp, to cheat the government. Inquiries were made, and learned 'experts' set to work, who proved the girl's innocence of intentional wrong. She got off with an admonition, lucky enough to escape further trouble."

"Is it possible she could have been so stupid?"

"There are more stupid things done than that. Among the curiosities found in letter-boxes are unstamped letters in considerable quantities, and mingled with them, though not exactly in the same proportion, single loose postage-stamps. There are people ignorant enough, after they have written and directed their letter, to buy a stamp at the office, and then, instead of sticking it on the letter, to throw it into the box at the same time with the letter, supposing *that* to be the mode of prepayment. The clerks do the best they can to distribute justice, in the shape of stamps, amongst the unprovided letters; but their utmost impartiality may not prevent some letter-writers from reaping what they have not sown."

"Beautiful simplicity! But you were to prove that your album is worth a shilling."

"Instantly, uncle. My collection is, for the most part, maculate, consisting of old stamps. I am not rich enough to procure unused stamps of all the countries in Europe—not to speak of the colonies—nevertheless I have a few. Now you must acknowledge, uncle, that unused stamps are worth their cost price. Here is a Würtemburg stamp for six kreuzers; here, a Swiss one for forty rappen, a Belgian one for forty centimes, a Norwegian one for eight skilling, and a Prussian one for four silbergroschen, all unused. Their joint value is more than a shilling English."

"I don't know," I demurred, speaking the truth.

"Again, here are French immaculates for eighty, forty, twenty, ten, five, and one centime respectively; that's more than a shilling. And here are English ones for sixpence, fourpence, threepence, twopence, and one penny. Do they make a shilling? Eh, uncle?"

"I suppose they do, and that you have the best of the argument."

"Yes. And I am in hopes, uncle, that I shall be able to make you entertain a higher opinion of postage stamps. They are a great discovery; and if so, their history is well worth studying. The man who invented them deserves as much honour as he who invented coin for cash transactions. By sticking a bit of paper, with a government mark, on a letter, you command its delivery, as soon as may be, at any place you choose to name. All the formalities and delays of money payments are avoided, including those connected with the money exchange of the foreign countries which a letter may have to traverse."

"That is, you mean to say that postage-stamps are a simple and convenient form of paper money?"

"I beg your pardon. Postage-stamps are

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not paper money; they are much more than, and superior to, paper money. Paper money supposes moneyed capital of the precious metals, and, to have any worth, must be backed by a bank with bullion in it sufficient to pay them off whenever required. The bullion may run short, be spent, or stolen; the bank may fail, and the paper be good for nothing but to light a cigar with. Postage-stamps represent not cash to be paid but a service to be rendered; the only capital they suppose is the existence of human limbs and brains and the continuance of civilised society. So long as European nations endure, and people have a mutual interest in knowing what is going on in other places, a postage-stamp can never fall to the level of a bank-note issued by a broken bank. Perhaps even, one of these days, we shall have stamps to prepay other services besides letter-carrying."

"Your imagination is running along, my boy, faster than I can follow it."

"Not at all, uncle; for the scheme is already put in practice to a limited extent. Did you ever hear of a ticket for soup?"

"I think, Harry, I have. But what has that to do with it?"

"A ticket for soup (about which so many jokes have been made) is a promise, by charitable persons, of a gift to be made. The soup received is the fulfilment of the promise, is it not? Applying the same principle to business, there are restaurants in Paris who sell you packets of tickets for dinners. Instead of paying for your board by the month (and paying for nothing whenever you are asked out to dinner), you keep the tickets in your pocket-book, and, whenever you want to dine, you present one; exactly as, when you want to send a letter, you stick upon it the proper stamp, and put it into the letter-box. The restaurant's ticket is a dinner stamp; it prepays the butcher, the cook, the wine-merchant, the rent of the dining-room, and the use of the dinner things, all through the agency of the head of the establishment, who is always there to supply the meal contracted for whenever called upon to do so. Subscription to the opera is something of the same kind. All I say is that we may carry the stamp system further, applying it perhaps to medical attendance."

"We will ask the Doctor what he has to say to it. Meanwhile, I begin to think that your time and money may not have been spent on mere unmeaning bits of coloured paper. To convince me thoroughly, can you stand an examination in the contents of your own stamp-book?"

"I believe so, uncle. Please begin wherever you like."

"How does a native Hanoverian spell the name of his country?"

"With two *n*s; *H*, *a*, double *n*."

"What does Sverige mean?"

"Sverige is Sweden."

"What is a Freimarke?"

"A Swedish Freimarke, an Austrian Post-stempel, a Hanoverian Bestellgeld-frei, a Dutch Post-zegel, a French Timbre-poste, an Italian Francobollo, a Hamburg or Lubeck Postmarke, are all and equally postage stamps."

"What is the shape of a Cape of Good Hope stamp?"

"Triangular. The French fellows at our lycée, when I showed them the beginning of my collection, were struck most of all with the number and extent of the British possessions. I told them they might have the same, if they only had the perseverance to go and settle in foreign lands. But they are a too stay-at-home people for that. Wherever they go, they are always thinking of their village steeple."

"What are the stamps with a crowned lion holding a shield, marked nine grazie and six grazie?"

"Ah! those are Tuscan, beginning to be rare and valuable. A collector sets a value on a postage stamp in inverse proportion to the stability and prosperity of the state by which it is issued. Those of the overthrown Italian Duchies, Tuscany, Parma, and Modena, never very numerous, are now scarce, and will soon be priceless. The stamps of transitional governments, like the last French Republic, are eagerly sought, for the same reason. I am thinking of investing a trifle in Roman Pontifical stamps. When the temporal power has come to an end, those stamps will command anything in the way of exchange."

"What are—I can't make them out myself—those very pretty stamps, with oval medallions, green, red, and blue, in the midst of drapery of a different colour?"

"Those are Russian, for thirty, twenty, and ten copecks each. I cannot read the legend or inscription, because I have not yet been able to set myself up with a Russian alphabet, and a grammar and dictionary to follow."

"Your aunt and myself will manage that between us. Let us now go and see whether she has finished her letter."

"You have been a long while up-stairs," observed Rebecca, as we entered, returning her spectacles to their case, and handing me her Australian epistle to read. "She is quite well and happy. She has had a little boy, and is expecting another. She sends her duty and some Queensland bird-skins by the next mail, hoping that you and I are the same."

"I am glad of it, though the news is a little confused. Harry has been showing me his correspondence. You may give him the envelope, or he will be content with the stamp alone."

AN ESCAPE FROM SIBERIA.

There is now living in Paris a quiet unassuming literary man, named Rufin Piotrowski, a professor at the Polish emigrant school at Les Batignolles, who, sixteen years ago, performed a feat of hardihood which, for energy, enterprise, and perseverance, is almost without a parallel. This worthy gentleman, arrested at Kamanieç, in Podolia, while on a patriotic mission from his brother exiles in Paris, and conveyed in

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chains to Siberia, effected his escape from the "Katorga," or convict prison of Ekaterininski-Zavod on the banks of the Irtisch. He has lately recorded his adventures in three octavo volumes, bearing the title of "Pamietniki Rufina Pietrowskiego" (Posen, 1861), and from this work the following narrative is compiled. The whole book is full of interest, but our limits compel us to confine ourselves to the facts of the courageous Pole's escape, which we give as nearly as possible in his own words:

The first point to be well considered was the direction of my dangerous journey. After abandoning many plans, I resolved to seek safety towards the north, across the Ural mountains, by the steppe of Petchora and Archangel. Having come to this decision, all my inquiries henceforward were directed towards obtaining information concerning the countries that border the White Sea, and, thanks to the cosmopolite character of our bagnio, and the number of merchants and travellers who came to Ekaterininski-Zavod from all quarters, I soon completed my education. More slowly and painfully I collected together the objects indispensable for my journey—the first and most important of which was a passport. There are two sorts of passports for the inhabitants of Siberia, who share in the Russian desire for travel—one of short date, for places near, and the other for long distances, delivered by the superior authorities, on stamped paper, which is called a plakatny. I succeeded in fabricating both. Certain trades and employments are carried on in the bagnio by those who have previously learnt and wish to pursue them, and a convict whom I knew, a skilful coiner, sold me for a few roubles an excellent die of the imperial arms; as to the indispensable stamped paper it was easy enough for me to secrete a sheet out of the many I used in the interest of the public. My next care was to transform myself, morally and physically, into a native of Siberia (Siberski tcheloviék). I had long suffered my beard to grow, and in time it reached to a respectable length; after some trouble I also became possessor of a Siberian headdress, made of sheepskin, and worn with the wool inside, and thus my external appearance was complete. Finally, deduction made of the sums which various purchases cost, there remained 180 roubles in assignats (about 8*l.* sterling), very little for so long a journey, and unfortunately greatly diminished by an accident at the very outset.

By the latter end of January 1846, all my preparations were made, and the period seemed highly favourable for my enterprise, in consequence of the proximity of the great fair of Irbit, at the foot of the Uralian mountains, whither the natives of eastern Russia flock in vast numbers, covering the roads with innumerable trains of merchandise and travellers. I flattered myself with the hope of being confounded with the crowd, and on the evening of the 8th of February I quitted the establishment of Ekaterininski-Zavod, and struck into a cross road. I wore three shirts, a coloured one above my trousers after the Russian fashion, a waistcoat and wide trousers of thick cloth, and over my coloured shirt an armiak or jacket of sheepskin well prepared with suet, which reached to my knees; a girdle of tri-coloured wool confined my waist, and surmounting my head-dress was a round cap of red velvet bordered with fur, worn by merchants' clerks and Siberian peasants on festivals. I was also wrapped in a large wide pelisse, the collar of which, turned up and fastened by a handkerchief knotted round it, not only preserved me from the cold, but also helped to conceal my face. High boots well tanned and large sheep-skin gloves completed my costume. A bag which I carried in my hand held a second pair of boots, a fourth shirt, a pair of blue trousers such as are worn in summer, some bread and some dried fish. In the leg of my right boot I concealed a large poniard; I placed my money inside my waistcoat in notes of five and ten roubles, and for support and defence I was armed with a thick knotted stick. It froze hard, and the rime glistened in the moonlight as I advanced towards the Irtisch, the frozen surface of which I quickly crossed and took the road to Tara, a small town about seven miles from my place of detention. I had scarcely crossed the river when I heard the sound of a sledge behind me. I trembled, but determined to let the nocturnal traveller pass, whoever he might be. It was a peasant going to Tara, who stopped, and after a short colloquy proposed to give me a lift for fifty copecks (about eightpence). I took my place beside him, and we set off at a gallop; my companion was pressed for time, the frozen road was smooth as glass, and cold lent the horses wings, so that in half an hour we arrived at Tara. The peasant set me down in the streets and pushed on. At the first house I saw, I approached the window and in a loud voice, after the Russian fashion, asked for horses to go to the fair of Irbit. A bargain was struck for eight copecks a verst, and in a few minutes the horses were harnessed to a sledge. Then came the question: "Where are you from?" "Tomsk," I replied; "I am clerk to N—— (the first name I thought of), my master has gone to Irbit; I remained to settle some matters, and am so much behind hand that I fear I shall get into a scrape. Drive quickly, and you shall have something to drink."

The driver whistled, and the horses darted away at full speed. Dark clouds now covered the sky, snow began to fall quickly, and my conductor lost his way. After turning, first this way, then that, he was obliged to come to a stand-still, and said we must pass the night in the forest. I cannot describe the anguish I experienced till daylight came, expecting every moment to hear the bells of the Kibitkas sent in pursuit of me from Ekaterininski-Zavod, from which we were not more than four leagues distant. I abused the driver, threatened him with the police, and ordered him to return to Tara where, I said, I should get another sledge. He obeyed, but had hardly gone a verst when

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he cried out that he saw the road he ought to have followed. From that moment he made every effort to make up for the time we had lost, and we soon arrived at the next post-house, where, after I had had some tea, I bargained for fresh horses and continued my journey. In this manner I got on chiefly, until late at night I arrived at the village of Soldatsakaia, where I became the victim of an audacious and distressing robbery. I had no change to pay the driver, and and entered with him into a small inn where there were a number of drunken people. I had taken some notes out of my waistcoat for the inn-keeper to change them, when, by a rush of the drunken crowd, either on purpose or by accident, I was thrust from the table where my money was spread out, and some quick hand immediately seized it. In vain I cried out, I could not discover the robber, and as to calling for the police, I took care not to do that. My stock was thus reduced by forty roubles, but worse than this was the loss of two precious papers, taken at the same seizure. One of them was a note I had carefully made of all the towns and villages which I had to pass through until I reached Archangel; the other was my stamped passport, my principal safeguard, my great resource for disarming suspicion.

My despair was agonising, but it was useless to give way to it. I could not abandon my enterprise: as well be captured in one place as another, and every step forward was nearer Archangel. So I continued my journey, and getting shortly upon the high road to Irbit, fell in with innumerable sledges, all bound for, or returning from, the fair. This raised my spirits, and I mingled with the vast cortége, consoling myself with the belief that it would be next to impossible to distinguish a political criminal in the midst of such a host. There is no country in which travelling on the high road is so rapid as in Siberia, and in proof of this I may state that at the close of the third day after my evasion, and notwithstanding the time lost in the forest of Tara, I found myself at the gates of Irbit, six hundred miles from Ekaterininski-Zavod. "Halt, and show your passport!" cried a sentinel: adding, luckily, in an under-tone, "Give me twenty copecks and get on with you." I slipped the money into his hand, and presently stopped at an hotel, where, at first, they would not receive me, saying there was no room. At last they consented to let me in, on my declaring that I only meant to stay one night: my master, with whom I should lodge, being in the town. I entered, but went out again directly, pretending to go to the police office, and when I returned I said I had left my passport there. The izba (common room) was full of yamstchiks (waggoners), and the smell of tar nearly made me sick. I talked a good deal about my principal and our affairs, and did my best to eat heartily of a Siberian supper of beet-root soup, dried fish, gruel prepared with oil, and pickled cabbage. The meal ended, each paid his score, and we lay down to rest—some stretched near the stove, some on straw, some upon the benches, and some under them; all the rest appeared to sleep soundly, but I never closed my eyes. At day-break I took care to say my prayers like my companions, making the three necessary salutations (poklony) before the sacred images which are to be found in every Russian interior, and then shouldering my bag, went out under the pretext of looking for my master. Early as it was, the place was all alive with the fair, but I looked at nothing, only stopping to buy some bread and salt, which I put into my bag. Hurrying through the town, I went out on the opposite side to that at which I had entered, and passed the sentinel at the gate unquestioned. Counting my money, I found I had only seventy-five roubles left, and to reach France with such a sum was impossible, unless I travelled all the way on foot. This, or as long as my strength lasted, I determined to do.

The winter of 1846 was one of the severest ever recollected in Siberia. The snow fell heavily as I left Irbit, and the difficulty I experienced in walking was excessive. I did not, however, lose my way, and about midday it cleared up and I got on better. I generally avoided the villages, and when I was obliged to pass through one, walked straight on as if I knew the place, never asking my way when in doubt till I came to the last house. When hungry I took out of my bag a morsel of frozen bread, and ate it as I walked, or sitting down at the foot of a tree in a remote part of the forest. To quench my thirst I sought for the holes which the peasants make in the ice, for their cattle, but was often obliged to content myself with melting snow in my mouth—a very poor substitute for drinking. What added to my fatigue was the weight of the clothes I was obliged to wear; my first day's journey from Irbite was a very distressing one.

At nightfall I plunged into the forest to make my bed. I knew the practice of the Ostiaks to shelter themselves while they sleep. They simply make a deep excavation in a mass of snow, and find a hard but perfectly warm couch. I did the same, and soon slumbered. But in the morning, when I awoke, I felt very uncomfortable—my feet were frozen. The reason was this: I had imprudently covered myself with my pelisse, the fur within instead of the reverse, and the warmth of my body had thawed the snow, and left my feet exposed to the low external temperature. I resolved to profit by this experience in future; and in the mean time, by dint of walking very fast, I succeeded in restoring the circulation. Unfortunately, about midday, a high wind got up—the dry, icy wind of Siberia—which, meeting you in the face, completely blinds you, and sweeps before it heaps of snow that soon cover the most beaten tracks. The inhabitants, at the beginning of winter, always mark the roads with branches of fir, placed very near each other; but the drifts were so heavy this year, that in many places they were quite covered.

After a time I perceived that I had lost my way. I kept sinking up to my waist in the

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snow, and now and then up to my neck, and began to fear I should perish either from cold or hunger. Nevertheless I struggled on, and before it got dark succeeded in hitting the right path, which led me to a hamlet, where I saw a young woman standing at a cottage door. The hope of finding a place of rest overcame all hesitation. She made no difficulty of admitting me, and I entered the izba where her mother was sitting. I made the usual salutation, and in reply to the question whence I came, said I belonged to the Government of Tobolsk, and that I was going to the iron foundries of Bohotole (to the north of Verkhoutourié in the Ural) in search of work. While the women were getting something ready for supper, I spread out my clothes and linen to dry; and, having appeased my hunger, lay down on a bench with an indescribable sense of enjoyment. I thought I had neglected no precaution, having said my prayers and ostentatiously performed the poklony; but I was mistaken. I had awakened the suspicions of these two women by allowing them to see that I had four shirts. Just as I was dropping off to sleep I heard some whispering, which disturbed me, and three peasants came in, one of whom asked in an undertone where I was. The young woman pointed to me, and one of the men, roughly shaking me, asked if I had a passport? Obliged to answer, I asked by what right he asked for it; was he a golova (a person charged with the local police)? No, none of them were; only inhabitants of the place. Then they had no business to act in that manner; but, to satisfy them my name was Lavrenti Konzmine, I was going to Bohotole, and it was not the first time I had passed that way. I finished by showing my pass; and as it bore a stamp, the peasants, who could not distinguish it from a passport, made their excuses, saying they thought I might have been a convict, as many passed that way. They then asked me news of the fair of Irbit, with many other questions, and at last took leave. The remainder of the night passed quietly, and in the morning I bade adieu to the women whose curiosity had so nearly been fatal to me.

The incident just related convinced me that henceforward I could no more rely upon the shelter of a house, that I must sleep after the Ostiak fashion, and that I should be obliged to do this throughout the whole of my journey to Veliki Oustioug: that is to say, from the middle of February to the beginning of April. Three or four times only did I venture to demand hospitality for the night in an isolated hut, worn out by fifteen or twenty days passed in the forest, and scarcely knowing what I did. On all other occasions I made a hole in the snow to sleep in, and practice made me skilful in this kind of work. I had remarked that in the thickest forests the snow does not form close to the foot of the tree, but leaves a space which soon becomes a deep hollow. Into this I used to glide as into a well, and afterwards block up the entrance with snow by means of my stick, thus making a kind of vault which sheltered me completely. Very often, however, the snow was too soft for my purpose, and sometimes the vault fell in; then, I passed the night sleeping as well as I could with my back to the tree. If the cold were too severe and my limbs became numbed, I rose and walked on, taking my chance of the road. But this sort of life was terrible: no human dwelling, no dressed food, nothing but frozen bread, and that frequently failing. These necessities set constantly before my eyes the prospect of dying of cold or famine. I dreaded, too, the sensation of drowsiness, well knowing how fatal it is to give way to it, and I resisted its approaches with all my might: even stronger was the temptation to stop at some hut and ask for something warm to eat, but this desire also I was forced to subdue.

After passing Verkhotourié, the last town on the eastern slope of the Ural, and where I took care not to stop, I met with six young Russians from whom I learnt a great deal of the country I was making for. By their dress and accent I knew they were not Siberians, and in answer to my questions they said they came from the district of Mezen on the borders of the White sea, and were going to Tobolsk to seek employment as farriers. Their own country, they said, was a miserable one; nothing grew there; neither wheat, oats, nor barley; the inhabitants lived entirely by fishing, and got their bread even from Archangel. I gave them all the information I could in return, and, fortified by the knowledge I had acquired, advanced with renewed courage. On one occasion, while crossing the mountains, hospitality was offered me at a place called Paouda by a peasant and his wife, who gave me a supper, which, meagre as it was, seemed quite a sumptuous banquet. I slept in their hut, and cannot tell the delight it gave me to take off my clothes. My kind hosts gave me some breakfast next morning, would accept of no payment, and told me that a little further on I should fall in with a military outpost, where I could learn all I wanted to know respecting my onward route. But this outpost was the very thing I was desirous of avoiding, and I gave it a wide berth till I felt sure I had left it far behind. Thus I went on, occasionally stopping at an izbouchka to buy bread, but then only when driven by hunger. The izbouchka is a rude construction built for the convenience of travellers, at long intervals on the road from the Ural to Veliki Oustioug. Bread, dried fish, roots, cabbages and kvass (a sort of cider) are to be obtained there, but brandy very seldom; in some of the largest, hay and straw are provided for horses. These inns are usually kept by solitary old men, or a wretched couple, but people are willing to keep them, for they find them profitable.

It was the beginning of March, when, having effected a passage across the Ural, I arrived at Solikamsk, on the western slope. Without stopping there I pursued my way across the steppe of Petchora, moving upon Veliki-Oustioug by Tcherdin, Kaï, Lalsk, and Rochel. Be-

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sides the mountainous character of the country there were still the same wide regions of snow, the same dense forests, the same icy winds and tempests. I had still the same toilsome efforts to make, was still obliged to buy my bread with caution at the izbouchka, and was still forced to sleep under the snow. A discovery, however, which I now made, procured me a great advantage. I had remarked that travellers surprised by night in these unpeopled districts were in the habit of lighting a fire in the woods, and sometimes I ventured to do so; but I only indulged in this luxury when I was buried in the deepest forests. One evening when, for the purpose of avoiding Tcherdin, as I avoided all the towns on my route, I had got into a thick wood, I entirely lost my way, and knew not in what direction to turn. A snow storm, a perfect hurricane, turned me literally round, and pierced me through and through. To add to my misfortunes, I had no bread. I threw myself on the snow and writhed convulsively, invoking death. Morning came, and with it fine weather; my pains subsided, but I could see no path, and my strength was quite exhausted. I tried to judge of the right direction by the sun and the moss on the trees, and dragged on, leaning on my stick, until the torments of hunger again seized me. Tired of struggling, with tears running down my cheeks, I sunk at the foot of a tree, drowsiness overcame me, a strange whizzing in my head confused every idea, and I should have fallen into a state of insensibility if it had not been for the internal pangs which made me conscious of life. How long this torpor lasted I know not, but I was roused from it by a loud voice asking me what I was doing there?

"I have lost my way," I replied, opening my eyes.

"Where do you come from?"

"Tcherdin. I am on a pilgrimage to the monastry of Solovetsk, but the storm overtook me, and I have eaten nothing for several days."

"That is not surprising; we, ourselves, who belong to this country, often lose our way. You were wrong to set out in such a storm. Come! Take a drop of this."

He put a wooden bottle to my lips, and I swallowed about a mouthful of brandy, which while it restored my senses, burnt me like fire, and made me dance with agony. The stranger desired me to be calm, and gave me some bread and dried fish, which I eagerly devoured. I then sat down at the foot of the tree, and my companion took his place beside me. He was by profession a trapper (promychlennik) and was returning home. After a short rest I rose, and, taking his arm, was led by him to the high road, where he left me, near an izbouchka, which I entered. I fainted before I could sit down, and rolled under a bench. When I recovered I asked for some warm victuals; they gave me some soup, but hungry as I was I could not get it down, and almost immediately fell asleep—fell into a kind of lethargy rather, which lasted four-and-twenty hours: so long, indeed, that my host began to be uneasy. He was a kind man, and when he learnt that I was on a pilgrimage to the holy island in the White Sea, he increased his kindness. At length I was able to resume my journey, after resisting his importunities to remain another day, and, having bought as much food as I could carry, I took leave, promising to visit him on my way back. I will not fatigue the reader with more of these details, the monotony of my painful march being only broken by my sometimes meeting with real pilgrims and occasional yamtschiks. I shall merely remark that I neither fell in with bears nor robbers, though encounters with both were to be dreaded. In the first fortnight of April—for I could not well specify the day—I found myself at last at the gates of Veliki Oustioug, after two months' travel through woods and snows, since the day on which I quitted Irbit.

It was necessary now to assume a third distinctive character, and appear as much like a bohomolets (literally, "adorer of God") as possible. The worship of miraculous images prevails greatly in Russia, and four places of pilgrimage are renowned—Kiev, Moskov, Veliki-Novgorod, and the convent of Solovotsk. Many Russians, even rich merchants, visit these sanctuaries one after the other, but the greater part are content with kneeling at the last-named shrine, and thousands of the faithful make the journey thither on foot from Siberia, chiefly in winter, the roads not being passable at any other season. These bohomolets, male and female, are well received wherever they appear, and the peasants in whose houses they rest not only give them alms and a cordial welcome, but entrust them with money to buy tapers for votive offerings, and purchase prayers for the senders. I, myself, was even obliged in my assumed quality of pilgrim to take charge of pious gifts for this purpose. The universal respect which attaches to the pilgrim's character, and the little probability of my being troubled for my passport, or being noticed if I joined a troop of bohomolets, counselled this transformation. I had studied their habits of devotion in casual meetings, and by the time I reached Veliki-Oustioug, thought myself sufficiently advanced to combine with them. I was doubtful how I should break ground, when, as I was standing in the market-place, a young man came up and asked me if I was a bohomolets going to Solovetsk? When I replied in the affirmative, he wished to know if I had a lodging, and offered to show me one, as he also was bound thither. By this means I obtained an introduction to a house where a large number of pilgrims were assembled, with whom I made acquaintance, and no question arose about my passport. There were two thousand of us altogether, all waiting until the waters of the Dvina should be open to proceed on rafts and in boats to Archangel, and thence to Solovetsk. It was necessary that I should accept all the consequences of my situation, my most irksome task being not only that of singing interminable canticles in the izba with my companions, but of going every day to matins and vespers, making a thousand signs of the

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cross, hundreds of poklony (bowings) holding tapers, and kissing the hand of the pope (priest). The sight of the latter always made me feel uncomfortable, for I was afraid he would ask me to repeat the Russian creed, of which I knew nothing. Happily he was content with my poklony, which I performed with equal zeal and dexterity, though it is hard work to touch the ground with one's head a hundred times consecutively without bending the knees, according to the orthodox Russian fashion. Confession I avoided, pretending to have performed that duty in full a few days before at Lalsk, and so I got safely through the holy week.

Oustioug is the great depôt of the produce of the provinces of Viatka, Perm, Vologda, and Siberia. It consists in corn of all kinds, flax, hemp, tallow, salted meat, resins, wood, furs, &c., and is transported by the Dvina to Archangel, and thence to all quarters of the globe. Numbers of sailors assemble at Oustioug to wait for the breaking up of the ice, and freight their countless vessels. The masters, called prikastehiki, give the bohomolets free passages, on condition that they find their own provisions; and such among the pilgrims as agree to work at the oar are paid fifteen roubles at the end of the voyage: hands being eagerly sought for. I had never rowed in a large boat, but I was glad of the opportunity of recruiting my finances. Since I left Irbit I had spent exactly fifteen roubles, and here were the means of replacing them. On the first day the Dvina became navigable, I accepted service with a number of others, and in the bustle of going on board my pass was scarcely looked at: the master being satisfied with the mere sight of the stamp on it.

On the 16th of May, then, I was installed in one of the vessels ready to start for Archangel. These Dvina boats are very curious constructions. Seen from a distance they resemble a floating barn—art having nothing to do with their form; everything is left to the muscular labour of the sailors, of whom there are from forty to sixty in each. The number of oars is between thirty and forty; they are merely slender fir-trees. Among the many strange objects on board, the cooking-place is the strangest. It is a great square wooden case, placed on the roof of the vessel, is supported on four posts, and is half filled with earth. The fire is always kept alive, and, from two large trees which are crossed above it, hang all the cooking utensils. We went on board with our baggage in the evening, and slept there. At daybreak the nosnik, or captain of the boat, cried with a loud voice, "Take your seats, and pray to God!" Every one chose a place on the roof, and, after crouching for a moment in a mussulman attitude, rose and performed the poklony, with numberless signs of the cross. The people now, every one on board, from the captain to the poorest pilgrim, threw a piece of copper money into the river—a ceremony always performed to render the waters of the Dvina propitious. These religious exercises, without the sacrifice of money, are constant throughout the voyage. Ours lasted a fortnight; and when the gilded domes of the churches of Archangel glittered before us in the sun, the crews uttered shouts of joy, heaved their cooking-chests overboard, and broke their oars—their last tribute to the river. On our arrival in the port we each received our passport, and the money we had earned.

I was now at the place I had so long looked upon as my haven of safety. My thanks to God for having protected me so far, were, I can affirm, no less sincere than those of my brother pilgrims, though our objects were not the same. I took care, however, to avoid acting with precipitation, and to sustain the character of a bohomolets I went with my companions to the station of Solovetsk (Solovetski dvorets), vast buildings erected for the convevenience of the shrine-worshippers by the monks of the holy island, where I deposited my light baggage—fortunate in no demand being made for my passport. For several days I continued to practise all the requisite religious ceremonies preparatory to visiting the convent; but this occupation did not prevent me from finding my way down to the quays, in the hope of finding a French vessel, on board of which I might obtain a passage. I wistfully examined every flag, but the tricolor was not among them. The greater part of the ships were from England; a few from Holland, Sweden, and Hamburg; but not one from France. Nor was I long in perceiving that on the deck of every vessel was a Russian sentinel, besides those who were stationed at intervals along the quays, so that to escape their vigilance was impossible. As I assumed to be a Russian peasant, to have spoken to any of the sailors in German or French would at once have attracted attention, and caused my immediate arrest. For three days I watched and waited for an opportunity, but none came, and I arrived at last at the sad conviction that I must not reckon on the port of Archangel. My delay in embarking for the holy island began to excite surprise among the bohomolets, and to linger in the city until a French ship arrived was too dangerous a step to hazard, so I resolved once more to try my fortune on land.

On the morning after I had taken this resolution I rose at daybreak and reclaimed my wallet from the porter at the station, telling him I was going to the shrine. I then purchased a few loaves and some salt, and crossed the Dvina, in the direction of the promontory which faces the island of Solovetsk. My way for several days lay through a marshy country sprinkled with stunted fir trees, and I slept chiefly in the open air. At last I reached the southern shore of the Bay of Archangel, which I skirted closely. One day I arrived at a small village where, amidst a multitude of bohomolets, were a number of my former companions from Veliki-Oustioug. They had set out before me from Archangel, embarking direct for the holy island in boats called karbasses, and had been driven into this place by a

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violent storm. They were waiting for calm weather, and invited me to join their party, but I said I preferred journeying to the promontory on foot, and making the shorter and less dangerous passage. I reached my destination the same evening, but without waiting for the ferry-boat, immediately turned southward and took the road that leads to Onega. It was the only road now open to me, and I toiled on through a desolate region of sandy heaths and marshes, with the sea on my right hand and a low range of downs on my left. The nature of the country may be inferred from the fact that in one possade, as these maritime villages are called, I could procure no bread: the inhabitants having been without any for a week, owing to the vessel which brings flour from Archangel being delayed by the storm. As a set-off to this privation I obtained fresh herrings from the White Sea, well flavoured and of good size. I was not tempted to make the experiment at Onega that I had tried at Archangel, but pushed through without stopping. Two routes here offered themselves for my choice. The first, to the north-west, would have led me by the marshes of Laponia to the Torneo river, near the Swedish frontier; the second, to the south, crossed the government of Olonets, by Vytiegra to the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic. The former was the more fatiguing route, the latter the more dangerous, yet the dread of encountering privations similar to those I had experienced after passing the Ural mountains, determined me to turn towards Vytiegra. Comparatively speaking my journey presented few difficulties; the season was no longer inclement, for it was now the month of June; and when I stopped for the night in the woods, the branches of the trees made me a fresh and comfortable bed. What surprised me was never being attacked by wild animals, though the forests were full of them; I was sometimes roused from my slumbers by hearing the distant howling of the wolves, but none ever came in sight. Occasional hardships I had, however, to undergo, and sometimes, in spite of my knowledge of the manners of the people, I fell into mistakes. One day, near Kargopol, I asked for food at a cottage, and was told they had nothing but tolokno to give me. "Tolokno let it be then!" said I, curious to make acquaintance with a national dish which I had often heard of but had never seen. Great was my confusion when the mistress of the hut placed before me a pitcher of water, a spoon, and a small pipkin half filled with a blackish flour. I did not know how to eat it, but was afraid to betray my ignorance, and began to talk about all sorts of things to distract the attention of my hostess: who, however, watched me attentively, and asked me why I did not begin, since I was so hungry?

"But perhaps you like," she said, "to mix it with kvass."

"Certainly," I answered. Whereupon she immediately fetched some cider, and, pouring it on the flour, began to stir it with the spoon. The dusky mass quickly expanded, quite filling the pipkin, and then all my doubts were removed, and I swallowed it greedily. The preparation is simply the flour of oats after they have been dried in the oven; when moistened with water or kvass, it is by no means disagreeable.

At the military posts and from the convoys, I experienced no interference, but I had scarcely reached Vytiegra, when a peasant, whom I had met in the harbour, asked me where I was going? I said I was a bohomolets, coming from the Monastry of Solovetz, and meant to complete my pilgrimage by kissing the holy relics at Novgorod and Kiev.

"I am your man, then," he said, "I will take you to St. Petersburg. My boat is a small one, I have a horse to take in it, and you will help me to row."

I asked him how much he would give me, and we were a long while bargaining; but at last we agreed that he should supply me with food throughout the voyage. The agreement to enter into the capital of Russia was a thing I had never contemplated, but though full of danger I eagerly seized on any opportunity of getting near any sea or frontier. In the evening, after we had drunk a glass together to make the bargain sure, I stepped on board, and we began our voyage, which led from Vytiegra by Lake Onega, the River Svir, Lake Ladoga, and the Neva, to the walls of St. Petersburg. Though the boatman's son was added to our crew, the navigation was toilsome, and not without danger; for, to make what money he could, the owner was in the habit of taking in passengers, for the most part drunken peasants, who gave us a great deal of trouble. On one occasion one of these fellows fell overboard, and I had to jump into the water to save him—not, I confess, out of pure compassion, but with a reference to my own safety, for had a fatal accident happened we should have been obliged to stop at the first police station, and then my passport would have been asked for.

Arrived at St. Petersburg I found a lodging in a poor habitation (dom postoïaly) in the quarter where the lowest class of workmen resided, in miserable rooms, where, if they were lucky, they had a truckle-bed to sleep on, but generally the bare floor was their place of repose, and they slept, as the Russians say, "on the plank, with a fist for their pillow." I obtained a better kind of room, with some furniture in it, for eight kopecks a day. As soon as the bargain was concluded, in order to be beforehand with my landlady, I asked her to show me the police-office, that I might regulate the affair of my passport. "Who are you?" she asked. "A bohomolets," I replied, "from beyond the Vologda, on my way now to Veliki-Novgorod, to adore the holy relics there." "You do right," she said. "May God preserve you! Show me your passport." I handed her my pass: not without an uneasy feeling; but it was evident she could not read, for she only looked at the stamp, and inquired how long I meant to stay?

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I told her "three or four days at most—just long enough to rest myself." "In that case," she said, "it is not worth while to go to the police." "As you please," I answered. "I know nothing of the custom here. But why is it not worth while?" "Because I should be obliged to go with you, and that is too much trouble, as you remain so short a time." She entered further into the matter, and it may be taken for granted that I did not endeavour to persuade her against her inclination. I then took possession of my room, and stayed in it all day, resisting the invitation of my landlady to go and see the illuminations, for it was the day on which the nuptials of the Grand Duchess Olga, the Emperor's daughter, with the Prince of Wurtemburg were celebrated.

Next day I walked through the city, devising the best means for making my escape from it. It was my object to find, if possible, a steamboat for Havre, but I was afraid to make inquiries. I took my way along the quays, furtively glancing at the inscriptions chalked in red or yellow on the black sides of the vessels, but it was long before I found anything that at all answered my purpose. At last I saw a steamer with a notice placed near the mast, which stated that the vessel would start on the following morning for Riga. It was with difficulty I could subdue my emotion, but how to get speech of the captain was the question. There was a man walking the deck—the pilot probably—with his red shirt over his trousers; I feared to address him, though I kept close watch upon his movements. Suddenly he perceived me, and called out, "Do you want to go to Riga? If so, step this way." "That certainly is my wish," I replied; "but how can such a poor fellow as I travel in a steam-boat? It costs too much for folks like me." "Oh, we shan't be too hard upon a moujik." I asked him the fare, and he named an astonishingly low sum; but perceiving that I still hesitated, desired to know the reason. I said I had only just arrived in St. Petersburg, and must get my passport visé. That, he observed, would make a delay of three days, and the boat sailed on the following morning. What was I to do, then? "Start without the visa," he said, telling me at the same time to show him my passport. I produced the paper which had done duty for one, carefully wrapped up in a handkerchief, after the custom of the Russian peasants. He hardly looked at it, but told me to come at seven in the morning, and look out for him on the quay. I was punctual to the time, and found him waiting for me. He merely said, "Give me the money," and handed me a yellow ticket, with an injunction to be silent. At that moment the bell rang, the passengers hurried on board, my friend gave me a push, I mingled with the crowd, and a few moments afterwards I was steaming away from St. Petersburg. We had a rough passage, but I met with no misadventure, landing at Riga unquestioned. I there laid aside my assumed character of a bohomolets, and called myself a stchetinnik, one of those persons who go from village to village buying hogs' bristles on commission for the Riga merchants. This pretended trade afforded me the opportunity of calling at different houses, and asking my way through Courland and Lithuania, which was the direction I took towards the frontier. I usually slept in the corn, or in the woods, and as it was now the middle of July I had the benefit of fine weather. I had cast aside my winter trousers for the summer trousers I brought from Siberia, renewed my linen and shoes, and exchanged my pelisse with an innkeeper for a long coat and a small cap, which I kept in my wallet, with an eye to Prussia. As to my sheepskin armiak (or burnous) I wore it like a regular rouski tcheloviek (or true "man of Russia") notwithstanding the heats of summer. My journey across Lithuania—across our holy Samogitia—was not unattended by emotion, or deprived of scenes that gave me pleasure. Often and often I was tempted to reveal my nationality to one or other of my countrymen, and ask for advice and assistance; but I struggled successfully against the desire, and kept up the character of a stchetinnik to the last.

I had resolved to enter Prussia between Polonga and Kurszany, and infinite trouble I took to gather information as to the manner in which the Russians guarded the frontier. It was from one of the soldiers employed at the custom-house that I learnt the most. He was bathing in the little bay of Polonga, where I joined him. Hearing him remark that he came from Pultava, I said I was a native of that place, and presently we began conversing. There is a very simple way of making a Russian soldier talk; you have only to allude to the hardship of his condition, and he opens his mouth directly. Once on this theme, my bathing companion related all the precautionary measures the custom-house officers are obliged to have recourse to, day and night, against smugglers and bonntoostchiki (or "rebels," as they call fugitives), and named the parts which were the least and the most closely guarded. From this conversation I concluded that it would be safest for me to attempt to pass the frontier by day: so, at two o'clock the same afternoon, after having recommended my soul to God, and armed myself with my poniard, I crept amongst some corn, and watching the moment when the two sentries posted on a rampart in front turned their backs on each other. I then leapt the parapet into the first of the three ditches that form the frontier. I did so without noise, crawled through the brushwood, and reached the second ditch; but there the sentries saw me and fired. I rushed on, scarcely knowing what I did, arrived at the third ditch, threw myself into it, scrambled up the opposite slope, and then ran as fast as I could towards a small wood.

I was in Prussia. But not yet thought myself safe, for I could not be sure that the neutrality of my place of refuge would be respected. My apprehensions were fortunately

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groundless; my enemies did not cross the frontier.

I arrived at Königsberg, on the twenty-seventh of July, and seeing a steamer in the harbour which was to start for Elbing on the morrow, I determined to wait for its departure, and take that cheap mode of conveyance. I spent the day in wandering through the streets, and, as evening drew in, sat down on a heap of stones, intending to pass the night in the corn fields; but I was so fatigued that I fell asleep on the spot. My slumbers were rudely broken by a watchman (nachtwächter), who shook me by the arm, wanting to know who I was, and where I came from? Half-stupified by sleep, and taken quite by surprise, I answered in bad German, in a manner by no means satisfactory to the inquirer, who called to his comrades for help, seized me and conducted me to the nearest military post. My first feeling was not so much despair as shame, to think that I had been able to escape from the Katorga, cross the Ural mountains, bury myself for weeks in snow, endure so many privations, and after all be arrested by a Prussian watchman!

At ten o'clock next morning I was taken to the police office, where I was closely interrogated. I said I was a French cotton spinner, and gave my place of residence both in Paris and St. Petersburg, but I was not believed; they took me for a criminal who had been guilty of some great offence, and I was sent to the Blauer Thurm (the "Blue Tower," the common prison. In vain I required to be sent back to France where, I said, I would answer any charge that would be brought against me; a month went by, before I was again examined, and then they told me that, having in the mean time made every necessary inquiry, they had discovered that the addresses I gave were false, and so my conduct excited the gravest suspicions. Tired of feigning any longer, I asked to speak privately to one of the principal officials, in the presence of M. Fleury, a naturalized Frenchman, the sworn interpreter of the office. When left alone with these two, I frankly told them who I was, and placed my fate in their hands. It would be impossible to describe their astonishment and consternation on finding that they had before them a political Polish prisoner, escaped from the Katorga and returning from Siberia. At first, the police officer could not speak, but when he found his voice he cried: "Unhappy man! Do you not know that we must give you up. The convention is formal. What in the world made you come here?" "Why" I asked in my turn, "did you not send me as I desired, to Paris?" They made me enter into all the details of my escape, and having listened to them the Prussian functionary went out, leaving me alone with M. Fleury, who said: "They cannot avoid giving you up to the Russians: the thing has been done in several recent instances. You have only one chance of safety. Try to see Count Eulenberg, or at any rate write to him. He is president of the regency (Regierungs Präsident) and all depends on him. He is a good-hearted generous man, write to him without a moment's loss of time!" As soon as I was taken back to prison I followed this advice, and wrote also to the Abbé Kajsiewicz, in Paris, to furnish a poof of my identity, for I learnt that I was suspected of being an emissary who had taken part in the affairs of Posen, where a Polish conspiracy had lately been discovered. Ten days elapsed, during which I was better treated than before; then I received a polite but vague letter from Count Eulenberg, in which, however, he recommended me to have patience. All this investigation turned on one point: had I participated in the conspiracies of Posen or not? On that head I was perfectly at ease, but still my anguish was great, and more than once the thought of suicide entered my mind. At last there came one day to the prison a certain M. Kamke, an incumbent of Königsberg, who wished to know if I were willing to accept him for my bail. Astonished and moved by this unexpected offer, I asked the reason why he made it, and then learnt that the news of the arrest of a Pole who had escaped from Siberia had caused a great sensation in the city, and that some of the principal inhabitants had taken up the question, and hoped to obtain my liberty by offering security for my appearance. The police held out for a time, but, finally, on the first of September, I was once more brought before the police, where I met the excellent M. Kamke who, embracing me affectionately, told me I was free: a declaration which the functionary confirmed.

I was asked if I were willing to remain for a time in Königsberg, and at once replied in the affirmative. M. Kamke took me home with him, and I passed a week of happiness in the bosom of his family which, as long as I live, I shall never forget. I was then again summoned to the police office, and told with expressions of kindness and regret that an order had been received from Berlin to deliver me up to Russia, and that nothing now was left in their power but to give me time to get away from Königsberg at my own risk, but they trusted God would protect me. I was profoundly touched by this generous proceeding, and said I would do all in my power to prevent causing them annoyance. I immediately informed M. Kamke of this new incident, and a plan of escape was organised. I took leave of my kind friends, and on the ninth of September I was already on the road to Dantzic, provided with letters for various persons in that town, and in others through which I should afterwards pass. Thanks to this assistance, I traversed the whole of Germany, and on the 22nd of September, 1846, I once more found myself a free man in the streets of Paris.

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL.

CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

No. 170.] SATURDAY, JULY 26, 1862. [PRICE 2d.

NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

BETWEEN THE SCENES.

I.

[*Extract from the Advertising Columns of The Times:—*]

"AN UNKNOWN FRIEND is requested to mention (by advertisement) an address at which a letter can reach him. The receipt of the information which he offers, will be acknowledged by a reward of Five Pounds."

II.

FROM CAPTAIN WRAGGE TO MAGDALEN.

"Birmingham, July 2nd, 1847.

"My dear Girl,

"The box containing the articles of costume which you took away by mistake, has come safely to hand. Consider it under my special protection, until I hear from you again.

"I embrace this opportunity to assure you, once more, of my unalterable fidelity to your interests. Without attempting to intrude myself into your confidence, may I inquire whether Mr. Noel Vanstone has consented to do you justice? I greatly fear he has declined—in which case, I can lay my hand on my heart, and solemnly declare that his meanness revolts me. Why do I feel a foreboding that you have appealed to him in vain? Why do I find myself viewing this fellow in the light of a noxious insect? We are total strangers to each other; I have no sort of knowledge of him, except the knowledge I picked up in making your inquiries. Has my intense sympathy with your interests made my perceptions prophetic? or, to put it fancifully, is there really such a thing as a former state of existence? and has Mr. Noel Vanstone mortally insulted me—say, in some other planet?

"I write, my dear Magdalen, as you see, with my customary dash of humour. But I am serious in placing my services at your disposal. Don't let the question of terms cause you an instant's hesitation. I accept, beforehand, any terms you like to mention. If your present plans point that way—I am ready to squeeze Mr. Noel Vanstone, in your interests, till the gold oozes out of him at every pore. Pardon the coarseness of this metaphor. My anxiety to be of service to you rushes into words; lays my meaning, in the rough, at your feet; and leaves your taste to polish it with the choicest ornaments of the English language.

"How is my unfortunate wife? I am afraid you find it quite impossible to keep her up at heel, or to mould her personal appearance into harmony with the eternal laws of symmetry and order. Does she attempt to be too familiar with you? I have always been accustomed to check her, in this respect. She has never been permitted to call me anything but Captain; and on the rare occasions, since our union, when circumstances may have obliged her to address me by letter, her opening form of salutation has been rigidly restricted to 'Dear Sir.' Accept these trifling domestic particulars as suggesting hints which may be useful to you in managing Mrs. Wragge; and believe me, in anxious expectation of hearing from you again,

"Devotedly yours,

"HORATIO WRAGGE."

III.

FROM NORAH TO MAGDALEN.

[*Forwarded, with the Two Letters that follow it, from the Post-office, Birmingham.*]

"Westmoreland House, Kensington,
"July 1st.

"My dearest Magdalen,

"When you write next (and pray write soon!) address your letter to me at Miss Garth's. I have left my situation; and some little time may elapse before I find another.

"Now it is all over, I may acknowledge to you, my darling, that I was not happy. I tried hard to win the affection of the two little girls I had to teach; but they seemed, I am sure I can't tell why, to dislike me from the first. Their mother I have no reason to complain of. But their grandmother, who was really the ruling power in the house, made my life very hard to me. My inexperience in teaching was a constant subject of remark with her; and my difficulties with the children were always visited on me as if they had been entirely of my own making. I tell you this, so that you may not suppose I regret having left my situation. Far from it, my love—I am glad to be out of the house.

"I have saved a little money, Magdalen; and I should so like to spend it in staying a few days with you. My heart aches for a sight of my sister; my ears are weary for the sound of

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her voice. A word from you, telling me where we can meet, is all I want. Think of it—pray think of it.

"Don't suppose I am discouraged by this first check. There are many kind people in the world; and some of them may employ me next time. The way to happiness is often very hard to find; harder, I almost think, for women than for men. But, if we only try patiently, and try long enough, we reach it at last—in Heaven, if not on earth. I think *my* way now, is the way which leads to seeing you again. Don't forget that, my love, the next time you think of

"NORAH."

IV.

FROM MISS GARTH TO MAGDALEN.

"Westmoreland House, July 1st.

"My dear Magdalen,

"You have no useless remonstrances to apprehend, at the sight of my handwriting. My only object in this letter is to tell you something, which I know your sister will not tell you of her own accord. She is entirely ignorant that I am writing to you. Keep her in ignorance, if you wish to spare her unnecessary anxiety—and me unnecessary distress.

"Norah's letter, no doubt, tells you that she has left her situation. I feel it my painful duty to add, that she has left it on your account.

"The matter occurred in this manner. Messrs. Wyatt, Pendril, and Gwilt are the solicitors of the gentleman in whose family Norah was employed. The life which you have chosen for yourself was known, as long ago as December last, to all the partners. You were discovered performing in public at Derby by the person who had been employed to trace you at York; and that discovery was communicated by Mr. Wyatt to Norah's employer, a few days since, in reply to direct inquiries about you on that gentleman's part. His wife and his mother (who lives with him) had expressly desired that he would make those inquiries; their doubts having been aroused by Norah's evasive answers when they questioned her about her sister. You know Norah too well to blame her for this. Evasion was the only escape your present life had left her from telling a downright falsehood.

"That same day, the two ladies of the family, the elder and the younger, sent for your sister; and told her they had discovered that you were a public performer, roaming from place to place in the country, under an assumed name. They were just enough not to blame Norah for this; they were just enough to acknowledge that her conduct had been as irreproachable, as I had guaranteed it should be when I got her the situation. But, at the same time, they made it a positive condition of her continuing in their employment, that she should never permit you to visit her at their house—or to meet her and walk out with her when she was in attendance on the children. Your sister—who has patiently borne all hardships that fell on herself—instantly resented the slur cast on *you*. She gave her employers warning on the spot. High words followed; and she left the house that evening.

"I have no wish to distress you by representing the loss of this situation in the light of a disaster. Norah was not so happy in it, as I had hoped and believed she would be. It was impossible for me to know beforehand that the children were sullen and intractable—or that the husband's mother was accustomed to make her domineering disposition felt by every one in the house. I will readily admit that Norah is well out of this situation. But the harm does not stop here. For all you and I know to the contrary, the harm may go on. What has happened in this situation, may happen in another. Your way of life, however pure your conduct may be—and I will do you the justice to believe it pure—is a suspicious way of life to all respectable people. I have lived long enough in this world to know, that the Sense of Propriety, in nine Englishwomen out of ten, makes no allowances and feels no pity. Norah's next employers may discover you; and Norah may throw up a situation next time, which we may never be able to find for her again.

"I leave you to consider this. My child! don't think I am hard on you. I am jealous for your sister's tranquillity. If you will forget the past, Magdalen, and come back—trust to your old governess to forget it too, and to give you the home which your father and mother once gave her.

"Your friend, my dear, always,

"HARRIET GARTH."

V.

FROM FRANCIS CLARE, JUNR., TO MAGDALEN.

"Shanghai, China,

"April, 23rd, 1847.

"My dear Magdalen,

"I have deferred answering your letter, in consequence of the distracted state of my mind, which made me unfit to write to you. I am still unfit—but I feel I ought to delay no longer. My sense of honour fortifies me; and I undergo the pain of writing this letter.

"My prospects in China are all at an end. The Firm, to which I was brutally consigned as if I was a bale of merchandise, has worn out my patience by a series of petty insults; and I have felt compelled, from motives of self-respect, to withdraw my services, which were undervalued from the first. My returning to England, under these circumstances, is out of the question. I have been too cruelly used in my own country to wish to go back to it—even if I could. I propose embarking on board a private trading vessel in these seas, in a mercantile capacity, to make my way, if I can, for myself. How it will end, or what will happen to me next, is more than I can say. It matters little what becomes of me. I am a wanderer and an exile, entirely through the fault of others. The unfeeling desire at home to get rid of me, has accomplished its object. I am got rid of for good.

"There is only one more sacrifice left for me

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to make—the sacrifice of my heart's dearest feelings. With no prospects before me, with no chance of coming home, what hope can I feel of performing my engagement to yourself? None! A more selfish man than I am, might hold you to that engagement; a less considerate man than I am, might keep you waiting for years—and to no purpose after all. Cruelly as they have been trampled on, my feelings are too sensitive to allow me to do this. I write it with the tears in my eyes—you shall not link your fate to an outcast. Accept these heart-broken lines as releasing you from your promise. Our engagement is at an end.

"The one consolation which supports me, in bidding you farewell, is—that neither of us is to blame. You may have acted weakly, under my father's influence, but I am sure you acted for the best. Nobody knew what the fatal consequences of driving me out of England would be, but myself—and I was not listened to. I yielded to my father, I yielded to you; and this is the end of it!

"I am suffering too acutely to write more. May you never know what my withdrawal from our engagement has cost me! I beg you will not blame yourself. It is not your fault that I have had all my energies misdirected by others—it is not your fault that I have never had a fair chance of getting on in life. Forget the deserted wretch, who breathes his heartfelt prayers for your happiness, and who will ever remain your friend and well-wisher,

"FRANCIS CLARE, JUN."

VI.

FROM FRANCIS CLARE, SEN., TO MAGDALEN.

(*Enclosing the Preceding Letter.*)

"I always told your poor father my son was a Fool; but I never knew he was a Scoundrel until the mail came in from China. I have every reason to believe that he has left his employers, under the most disgraceful circumstances. Forget him from this time forth, as I do. When you and I last set eyes on each other, you behaved well to me in this business. All I can now say in return, I do say. My girl, I am sorry for you.

'F. C."

VII.

FROM MRS. WRAGGE TO HER HUSBAND.

"dear sir for mercy's sake come here and help us She had a dreadful letter I don't know what yesterday but she read it in bed and when I went in with her breakfast I found her dead and if the doctor had not been two doors off nobody else could have brought her to life again and she sits and looks dreadful and wont speak a word her eyes frighten me so I shake from head to foot oh please do come I keep things as tidy as I can and I do like her so and she used to be so kind to me and the landlord says he's afraid she'll destroy herself I wish I could write straight but I do shake so your dutiful wife matilda wragge excuse faults and beg you on my knees come and help us the Doctor good man will put some of his own writing into this for fear you can't make out mine and remain once more your dutiful wife matilda wragge."

[*Added by the Doctor.*]

"Sir,—I beg to inform you that I was yesterday called in to a neighbour's, in Vauxhall Walk, to attend a young lady who had been suddenly taken ill. I recovered her with great difficulty from one of the most obstinate fainting fits I ever remember to have met with. Since that time she has had no relapse, but there is apparently some heavy distress weighing on her mind, which it has hitherto been found impossible to remove. She sits, as I am informed, perfectly silent and perfectly unconscious of what goes on about her, for hours together, with a letter in her hand, which she will allow nobody to take from her. If this state of depression continues, very distressing mental consequences may follow; and I only do my duty in suggesting that some relative or friend should interfere, who has influence enough to rouse her.

"Your obedient servant,

"RICHARD JARVIS, M.R.C.S."

VIII.

FROM NORAH TO MAGDALEN.

"July 5th.

"For God's sake, write me one line to say if you are still at Birmingham, and where I can find you there! I have just heard from old Mr. Clare. Oh, Magdalen, if you have no pity on yourself, have some pity on me! The thought of you alone among strangers, the thought of you heart-broken under this dreadful blow, never leaves me for an instant. No words can tell how I feel for you! My own love, remember the better days at home before that cowardly villain stole his way into your heart; remember the happy time at Combe-Raven, when we were always together. Oh, don't, don't treat me like a stranger! We are alone in the world now—let me come and comfort you—let me be more than a sister to you, if I can. One line—only one line to tell me where I can find you!"

IX.

FROM MAGDALEN TO NORAH.

"July 7th.

"My dearest Norah,

"All that your love for me can wish, your letter has done. You, and you alone, have found your way to my heart. I could think again, I could feel again, after reading what you have written to me. Let this assurance quiet your anxieties. My mind lives and breathes once more—it was dead until I got your letter.

"The shock I have suffered has left a strange quietness in me. I feel as if I had parted from my former self—as if the hopes, once so dear to me, had all gone back to some past time, from which I am now far removed. I can look at the wreck of my life more calmly, Norah, than you

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could look at it, if we were both together again. I can trust myself, already, to write of Frank.

"My darling, I think no woman ever knows how utterly she has given herself up to the man she loves—until that man has ill-treated her. Can you pity my weakness if I confess to having felt a pang at my heart, when I read that part of your letter which calls Frank a coward and a villain? Nobody can despise me for this, as I despise myself. I am like a dog who crawls back and licks the master's hand that has beaten him. But it is so—I would confess it to nobody but you—indeed, indeed it is so. He has deceived and deserted me; he has written me a cruel farewell—but don't call him a villain! If he repented, and came back to me, I would die rather than marry him now—but it grates on me to see that word coward written against him in your hand! If he is weak of purpose, who tried his weakness beyond what it could bear? Do you think this would have happened if Michael Vanstone had not robbed us of our own, and forced Frank away from me to China? In a week from to-day, the year of waiting would have come to an end; and I should have been Frank's wife, if my marriage portion had not been taken from me.

"You will say—after what has happened, it is well that I have escaped. My love! there is something perverse in my heart, which answers—No! Better have been Frank's wretched wife than the free woman I am now.

"I have not written to him. He sends me no address at which I could write even if I would. But I have not the wish. I will wait, before I send him *my* farewell. If a day ever comes when I have the fortune which my father once promised I should bring to him—do you know what I would do with it? I would send it all to Frank, as my revenge on him for his letter; as the last farewell word, on my side, to the man who has deserted me. Let me live for that day! Let me live, Norah, in the hope of better times for *you*, which is all the hope I have left. When I think of your hard life, I can almost feel the tears once more in my weary eyes. I can almost think I have come back again to my former self.

"You will not think me hard-hearted and ungrateful, if I say that we must wait a little yet, before we meet? I want to be more fit to see you than I am now. I want to put Frank farther away from me, and to bring you nearer still. Are these good reasons? I don't know—don't ask me for reasons. Take the kiss I have put for you here, where the little circle is drawn on the paper; and let that bring us together for the present, till I write again. Good-by, my love. My heart is true to you, Norah,—but I dare not see you yet.

"MAGDALEN."

X.

FROM MAGDALEN TO MISS GARTH.

"July 15th.

"My dear Miss Garth,

"I have been long in answering your letter; but you know what has happened, and you will forgive me.

"All that I have to say may be said in few words. You may depend on my never making the general Sense of Propriety my enemy again: I am getting knowledge enough of the world to make it my accomplice next time. Norah will never leave another situation on my account—my life, as a public performer, is at an end. It was harmless enough, God knows—I may live, and so may you, to mourn the day when I parted from it—but I shall never return to it again. It has left me, as Frank has left me, as all my better thoughts have left me—except my thoughts of Norah.

"Enough of myself! Shall I tell you some news to brighten this dull letter? Mr. Michael Vanstone is dead; and Mr. Noel Vanstone has succeeded to the possession of my fortune and Norah's. He is quite worthy of his inheritance. In his father's place, he would have ruined us as his father did.

"I have no more to say that you would care to know. Don't be distressed about me. I am trying to recover my spirits—I am trying to forget the poor deluded girl who was foolish enough to be fond of Frank, in the old days at Combe-Raven. Sometimes, a pang comes which tells me the girl won't be forgotten—but not often.

"It was very kind of you, when you wrote to such a lost creature as I am, to sign yourself—*always my friend?* 'Always' is a bold word, my dear old governess! I wonder whether you will ever want to recal it? It will make no difference, if you do, in the gratitude I shall always feel for the trouble you took with me, when I was a little girl. I have ill repaid that trouble—ill repaid your kindness to me in after life. I ask your pardon and your pity. The best thing you can do for both of us, is to forget me. Affectionately yours,

"MAGDALEN.

"P.S.—I open the envelope to add one line. For God's sake, don't show this letter to Norah!"

XI.

FROM MAGDALEN TO CAPTAIN WRAGGE.

"Vauxhall Walk, July 17th.

"If I am not mistaken, it was arranged that I should write to you at Birmingham, as soon as I felt myself composed enough to think of the future. My mind is settled at last; and I am now able to accept the services which you have unreservedly offered to me.

"I beg you will forgive the manner in which I received you, on your arrival in this house, after hearing the news of my sudden illness. I was quite incapable of controlling myself—I was suffering an agony of mind which for the time deprived me of my senses. It is only your due that I should now thank you for treating me with great forbearance, at a time when forbearance was mercy.

"I will mention what I wish you to do, as plainly and briefly as I can.

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"In the first place, I request you to dispose (as privately as possible) of every article of costume used in the dramatic Entertainment. I have done with our performances for ever; and I wish to be set free from everything which might accidentally connect me with them in the future. The key of my box is enclosed in this letter.

"The other box, which contains my own dresses, you will be kind enough to forward to this house. I do not ask you to bring it yourself, because I have a far more important commission to entrust to you.

"Referring to the note which you left for me at your departure, I conclude that you have, by this time, traced Mr. Noel Vanstone from Vauxhall Walk to the residence which he is now occupying. If you have made the discovery—and if you are quite sure of not having drawn the attention either of Mrs. Lecount or her master to yourself—I wish you to arrange immediately for my residing (with you and Mrs. Wragge) in the same town or village in which Mr. Noel Vanstone has taken up his abode. I write this, it is hardly necessary to say, under the impression that, wherever he may now be living, he is settled in the place for some little time.

"If you can find a small furnished house for me on these conditions, which is to be let by the month, take it for a month certain to begin with. Say that it is for your wife, your niece, and yourself; and use any assumed name you please, as long as it is a name which can be trusted to defeat the most suspicious inquiries. I leave this to your experience in such matters. The secret of who we really are, must be kept as strictly as if it was a secret on which our lives depend.

"Any expenses to which you may be put in carrying out my wishes, I will immediately repay. If you easily find the sort of house I want, there is no need for your returning to London to fetch us. We can join you as soon as we know where to go. The house must be perfectly respectable, and must be reasonably near to Mr. Noel Vanstone's present residence, wherever that is.

"You must allow me to be silent in this letter as to the object which I have now in view. I am unwilling to risk an explanation in writing. When all our preparations are made, you shall hear what I propose to do from my own lips; and I shall expect you to tell me plainly in return whether you will, or will not, give me the help I want, on the best terms which I am able to offer you.

"One word more before I seal up this letter.

"If any opportunity falls in your way, after you have taken the house, and before we join you, of exchanging a few civil words either with Mr. Noel Vanstone or Mrs. Lecount, take advantage of it. It is very important to my present object that we should become acquainted with each other—as the purely accidental result of our being near neighbours. I want you to smoothe the way towards this end, if you can, before Mrs. Wragge and I come to you. Pray throw away no chance of observing Mrs. Lecount, in particular, very carefully. Whatever help you can give me at the outset, in blindfolding that woman's sharp eyes, will be the most precious help I have ever received at your hands.

"There is no need to answer this letter immediately—unless I have written it under a mistaken impression of what you have accomplished since leaving London. I have taken our lodgings on for another week; and I can wait to hear from you, until you are able to send me such news as I wish to receive. You may be quite sure of my patience for the future, under all possible circumstances. My caprices are at an end; and my violent temper has tried your forbearance for the last time.

"MAGDALEN."

XII.

FROM CAPTAIN WRAGGE TO MAGDALEN.

"North Shingles Villa, Aldborough, Suffolk,
"July 22nd.

"My dear Girl,

"Your letter has charmed and touched me. Your excuses have gone straight to my heart; and your confidence in my humble abilities has followed in the same direction. The pulse of the old militiaman throbs with pride as he thinks of the trust you have placed in him, and vows to deserve it. Don't be surprised at this genial outburst. All enthusiastic natures must explode occasionally: and *my* form of explosion is—Words.

"Everything you wanted me to do, is done. The house is taken; the name is found; and I am personally acquainted with Mrs. Lecount. After reading this general statement, you will naturally be interested in possessing your mind next of the accompanying details. Here they are, at your service:

"The day after leaving you in London, I traced Mr. Noel Vanstone to this curious little sea-side snuggery. One of his father's innumerable bargains was a house at Aldborough—a rising watering-place, or Mr. Michael Vanstone would not have invested a farthing in it. In this house the despicable little miser who lived rent free in London, now lives rent free again, on the coast of Suffolk. He is settled in his present abode for the summer and autumn; and you and Mrs. Wragge have only to join me here, to be established five doors away from him in this elegant villa. I have got the whole house for three guineas a week, with the option of remaining through the autumn at the same price. In a fashionable watering-place, such a residence would have been cheap at double the money.

"Our new name, has been chosen with a wary eye to your suggestions. My Books—I hope you have not forgotten my Books?—contain, under the heading of ***Skins To Jump Into***, a list of individuals retired from this mortal scene, with whose names, families, and circum-

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stances I am well acquainted. Into some of those Skins I have been compelled to Jump, in the exercise of my profession, at former periods of my career. Others are still in the condition of new dresses, and remain to be tried on. The Skin which will exactly fit us, originally clothed the bodies of a family named Bygrave. I am in Mr. Bygrave's skin at this moment—and it fits without a wrinkle. If you will oblige me by slipping into Miss Bygrave (Christian name, Susan); and if you will afterwards push Mrs. Wragge—anyhow; head foremost if you like—into Mrs. Bygrave (Christian name, Julia), the transformation will be complete. Permit me to inform you that I am your paternal uncle. My worthy brother was established, twenty years ago, in the mahogany and logwood trade at Belize, Honduras. He died in that place; and is buried on the south-west side of the local cemetery, with a neat monument of native wood carved by a self-taught negro artist. Nineteen months afterwards, his wife died of apoplexy at a boarding-house in Cheltenham. She was supposed to be the most corpulent woman in England; and was accommodated on the ground floor of the house in consequence of the difficulty of getting her up and down stairs. You are her only child; you have been under my care since the sad event at Cheltenham; you are twenty years old on the second of August next; and, corpulence excepted, you are the living image of your mother. I trouble you with these specimens of my intimate knowledge of our new family Skin, to quiet your mind on the subject of future inquiries. Trust to me and my Books to satisfy any amount of inquiry. In the mean time, write down our new name and address, and see how they strike you:—'Mr. Bygrave, Mrs. Bygrave, Miss Bygrave; North Shingles Villa, Aldborough.' Upon my life, it reads remarkably well!

"The last detail I have to communicate refers to my acquaintance with Mrs. Lecount.

"We met yesterday, in the grocer's shop here. Keeping my ears open, I found that Mrs. Lecount wanted a particular kind of tea, which the man had not got, and which he believed could not be procured any nearer than Ipswich. I instantly saw my way to beginning an acquaintance, at the trifling expense of a journey to that flourishing city. 'I have business, to-day, in Ipswich,' I said, 'and I propose returning to Aldborough (if I can get back in time) this evening. Pray allow me to take your order for the tea, and to bring it back with my own parcels.' Mrs. Lecount politely declined giving me the trouble—I politely insisted on taking it. We fell into conversation. There is no need to trouble you with our talk. The result of it on my mind is—that Mrs. Lecount's one weak point, if she has such a thing at all, is a taste for science, implanted by her deceased husband the Professor. I think I see a chance here, of working my way into her good graces, and casting a little needful dust into those handsome black eyes of hers. Acting on this idea, when I purchased the lady's tea at Ipswich, I also bought on my own account that far-famed pocket manual of knowledge, 'Joyce's Scientific Dialogues.' Possessing, as I do, a quick memory and boundless confidence in myself, I propose privately inflating my new skin with as much ready-made science as it will hold, and presenting Mr. Bygrave to Mrs. Lecount's notice in the character of the most highly informed man she has met with since the Professor's death. The necessity of blindfolding that woman (to use your own admirable expression) is as clear to me as to you. If it is to be done in the way I propose, make your mind easy—Wragge, inflated by Joyce, is the man to do it.

"You now have my whole budget of news. Am I, or am I not, worthy of your confidence in me? I say nothing of my devouring anxiety to know what your objects really are—that anxiety will be satisfied when we meet. Never yet, my dear girl, did I long to administer a productive pecuniary Squeeze to any human creature, as I long to administer it to Mr. Noel Vanstone. I say no more. *Verbum sap.* Pardon the pedantry of a Latin quotation, and believe me,

"Entirely yours,

"HORATIO WRAGGE.

"P.S.—I await my instructions, as you requested. You have only to say whether I shall return to London for the purpose of escorting you to this place—or whether I shall wait here to receive you. The house is in perfect order—the weather is charming—and the sea is as smooth as Mrs. Lecount's apron. She has just passed the window; and we have exchanged bows. A sharp woman, my dear Magdalen—but Joyce and I together may prove a trifle too much for her."

XIII.

[*Extract from the East Suffolk Argus.*]

"ALDBOROUH.—We notice with pleasure the arrival of visitors to this healthful and far-famed watering-place, earlier in the season than usual during the present year. *Esto perpetua* is all we have to say.

"VISITORS' LIST.—Arrivals since our last. North Shingles Villa—Mrs. Bygrave; Miss Bygrave."

PUNCH IN INDIA.

PUNCH in India. The idea seems unpromising. A professed jester must surely be out of place among a people who have but little turn for comedy. The Asiatic temperament is solemn, and finds no enjoyment in fun for its own sake. A Bengalee or an Hindustanee can laugh at what is ridiculous; but his laughter is contemptuous, and it may be malignant. It knows nothing of the loving quality of humour. For such people, Punch must be libellous and cruel, to the outrage of all law and humanity. Look, too, at the incongruity of the thing. Fancy Punch among palm-trees and palaces all domes and minarets, and going about in a palanquin.

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Fancy him deep in the silent jungle or out on the arid plain. Fancy him scorched by a burning sun whenever abroad, and bored by inane enjoyments whenever at home—with hookahs of sickly scent, dancers of monotonous motion, fiddlers of soulless music. Fancy him—but there is no need to fancy anything of the kind. Not for the indolent Asiatic does Punch disport himself in India, but for the active European; not for dreamers and drivellers, inhalers of hookahs and patrons of zenanas; but for stickers of pigs, smokers of cheroots, drinkers of brandy-pauee. It is to our brave and fair compatriots in the East that Punch appeals, and it is in the jocose illustration of their manners and customs that he finds his principal sport. The natives are not forgotten; but when they are remembered, it is generally less for their own amusement than that of other people.

I have before me a volume of the Indian Punch, of the old series, which was published under the name of the Delhi Sketch Book. It appeared during the administration of the Marquis of Dalhousie, when mutinies and massacres were as yet undreamed of, and when Indian society retained most of the old characteristics, of which the last are now fast being effaced; when the policy of the government was to "respect the prejudices of the natives," and annex as much of their territory as possible; when white jackets were still admissible for evening dress, and black ladies were still presentable as wives; when the smoking of hookahs was not yet considered the practice of a barbarous age, and elderly gentlemen even ventured to take them out to dinner with them; when the divinity that did hedge the civil service was unprofaned by the system of competition; when the Company's officer was everywhere and the Queen's officer nowhere, in the race for appointments; when subaltern officers were supposed to be always in debt, and often in liquor; when a ball was necessarily followed by a supper, and the supper was frequently followed by a "row," and a duel next morning; when play was high and morals ——; but I will not venture on the antithesis. Suffice it that the period in question, though comparatively recent, still bore considerable relation to the good old times, when a great many things were different from a great many other things, and when very few things were exactly as they are in the present day: the later period being much the gainer in the majority of instances, sentimental prejudices to the contrary notwithstanding.

First impressions of publications as well as persons, are formed from outward appearance. The Delhi Sketch Book would scarcely command a favourable judgment at first sight. Its mechanical arrangements are decidedly weak. In form it resembles its English original; but its execution is not comparable. The typography is rude, and is sadly wanting in revision. The illustrations—even those interspersed with the letter-press—are drawn on stone, and make a very poor appearance beside well cut, or even ill cut, wood engravings. There are marks of haste and carelessness in almost every page. And well there may be; for we are continually informed by the editor (who addresses his readers upon the state and prospects of the journal whenever he feels inclined) that his appliances and means are of a most meagre description. He has never been able to get a good lithographer; his amateur contributors cannot draw on stone; and the transfer of their sketches from paper is no easy matter, considering the crude state in which they are sent. It is therefore no wonder that lines which should be soft, turn up hard; that some lines are scarcely produced at all; and that a shadow occasionally looks very like a smudge. The pictorial as well as the literary contributions are generally sent from long distances, and they have no advantage of correction from their authors; only those, therefore, which come from the pen or pencil of the editor himself have anything like a fair chance. On the whole, considering the many reasons why the work should not be produced, the result is by no means discreditable to the efforts employed to bring it into the world. This is usually the apologetic opinion expressed by the editor, and with considerable reason. It must be said, too, for the Delhi Sketch Book, that—too often expressed in a rude and even coarse manner—it includes a great deal of artistic and literary merit. Its range of subjects are, as may be supposed, rather circumscribed. The members of the services, in past times more than in the present, may be said to have monopolised society in India, and, being the principal purchasers of the publication, as well as the principal contributors to its pages—both with pen and pencil—it may be supposed that the topics treated were those mainly interesting to themselves. Accordingly the Delhi Sketch Book presents us with a nearer view of military and official life than any periodical published in this country, and exhibits a correctness of detail which we could not look for in London without a great chance of being disappointed:—except, indeed, in the drawings of Mr. Leech, who has a familiar hand for military subjects, and evinces an adjutant's accuracy in saddles, sabres, bits, and even buttons.

The satire of Punch in India is a reflexion of mess and club gossip, with a dash of the drawing-room and the field. We find no illustrations of precocious London youth, no scenes taken out of the streets and the parks. There are no cabmen or omnibus conductors to hang jokes upon. Servant-galism is rare, and flunkeyism almost unknown—for European female servants usually marry off as soon as they land, and I doubt if half a dozen private persons in the country have European men-servants, unless they be soldiers. Even the British swell—without whom the London caricaturist would languish and die—is not represented in his own element, but as a fish out of water, whose agonies are so intense as to excite sympathy rather than laughter. But, in revenge for these omissions, we find several new subjects for satire, and food for

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fun. The governor-general is of course a standing joke, and so is the commander-in-chief. Such profanity must be expected in a periodical inspired to so large a degree as the Delhi Sketch Book by the subaltern mind, civil or military. But I am bound to admit that both Lord Dalhousie and Sir Charles Napier are treated with all due respect, and that, although held up to nature in a humorous mirror, there is no attempt to insult them or bring them into contempt. The references to Sir William Gomm, Sir Charles Napier's successor, are not always so courteous.

The first sketch which catches the eye is entitled "Ye Manners and Customs of ye English Officers in Pegu." It occupies the whole page, and represents a ball at which there are no ladies present: their places being supplied by men, who are dancing away with one another on a toe which appears something more than light and fantastic. Two young officers who have been waltzing together have come down upon the big drum, under which the player is seen gasping for life. Other couples are reeling about, and it is evident that the mirth is of no methodistical character. Accompanying the illustration, is a descriptive letter, the writer of which, tempted apparently by the alliterative coincidence of "Polka" and "Pegu," has written his letter, with the exception of an occasional conjunction, in words beginning with the letter *p*. Thus he tells the editor that he is "perpetually putting polka parties into his periodical, and plaguing the poor Peguans with pictures of pretty girls pirouetting under punkahs, with precocious partners,"—insomuch that the Peguans are "pained and piqued to perceive that they cannot participate in the partiality which they prognosticate is purchased at their expense,"—and so on through the greater part of a page; the editor bringing the joke to a conclusion by remarking that "his valued correspondent must be a member of the *p*'s society." After this exhibition of cheerfulness, we are treated to a couple of pages of rather elaborate mystification, supposed to be put forth by a senior captain for the benefit of a cadet, or griffin, just arrived from England. The captain tries to frighten the griff with horrible stories of the country, and to lead him into scrapes such as were experienced by our young friend Peter Simple under similar circumstances. This is a favourite theme, and may be found illustrated passim. Overlooking several subjects of an incomprehensibly local character—to the English reader—I come to a large "page cut" of "An Indian Interior—the Subaltern's Quarters." This is very well depicted, and a great deal too true to life to represent a scene of great elegance or refinement. The apartment has the plain and evidently whitewashed walls common to bungalows in the mofussil. The only relief from their monotony are—first, a bookcase containing a very small allowance of books and a very large allowance of cheroot-boxes, racquet-bats, and other materials for unintellectual amusement; second, a pair of buck's-horns displayed in true sporting style, with a hunting-whip resting upon them; third, some movable pegs for hats; fourth, a shaving glass; fifth, a line on which are hung cravats in tempting variety; sixth, a pair of horse-pistols, surmounted by a pair of spurs; seventh, a travelling-bag and a forage-cap. Against the wall stand a couple of wild boar spears, a cricket-bat, a sword, a row of boots, and—apparently quite a matter of detail—there is a bed in one corner. In the middle of the room, seated at a rough camp table are the proprietor of the apartment and a friend who is apparently passing the morning with him. Both are half undressed and in a state of intense négligé, both are smoking, and both are playing at cards, notwithstanding that one has his feet upon the table. Above their heads the punkah is being swung with great motion; and the window, opening to the ground, is occupied by a khuskhus tattie—that is to say, a screen of a peculiar scented grass, watered assiduously from without, by which means the hot wind is made cool before it can reach the interior. In the vacant recess of the window, exposed to the full current of air, are some bottles of soda-water, and other bottles evidently containing some stronger liquid, with one of which, or a probable combination of the two, one of the youths is already refreshing himself. Under the table is crouched a bull-dog of hideous aspect—an animal which is the usual companion of the British subaltern in India, according to the authority of caricatures. In a drawing further on, in which we are favoured with another representation of a subaltern's quarters, a dozen dogs at least are represented as making a ferocious attack upon the sub's commanding officer, who has come to pay a visit of ceremony, and whom the sub receives lying on his bed, in a state of undress as usual, smoking a cheroot and reading a newspaper.

The junior ensign or griff, is a great character all through the volume, where he serves as a representative of the rising generation, and is continually astonishing the weak minds of senior officers of the old school by the audacity of his ideas and his vigorous views of life. We see him at a mess, or rather in the anteroom where that sherry is discussed which relieves waiting for dinner of half its horrors. He has the decanter in his hand, and addresses one of the senior captains of the regiment. The contrast between the slim figure of the youth, displayed by the shell-jacket, and the more full proportions of Captain Bumptious, also displayed by the shell-jacket, and reinforced by abundant whiskers, adds not a little to the effect:

"I say, Bumptious, is this to be a public night?"

Bumptious replies that he is not sure, but supposes so; to which the ensign rejoins:

"Well, only let's know before the lushing begins."

But the griff sometimes appears in a different light, and bewilders his seniors, not only by his

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worldly decision of character, but by his intellectual acquirements, which need to be of no common order in these days of examinations. Here is another scene at a mess-table after dinner:

"1st Griff (addressing his friend). No, really pardon me, the species you mention is a highly metamorphic hornblendic or sienitic gneiss, the hollows of which are filled up by a detritus proceeding from the simple disintegration in situ of the more felspathic surface.

"Old Major (labouring under the impression that objectionable language is going on on the other side of the table). Order, there! Young gentlemen, order!"

The griff is, of course, included under the general description of the subaltern, and the subaltern, when he ceases to be a griff, is always supposed to be sowing the wildest possible oats, and leading a life of such rapidity as to outstrip most of the forms and many of the proprieties of society. These characteristics furnish food for endless illustration, but as the satire upon the class usually comes from "one of themselves," it seldom passes the limits of becoming mirth. In fact, the subaltern is a decided favourite with Punch in India, and the source—in more ways than one—of some of his most amusing hits.

The class jealousies of the services, which are apt to be very strongly exhibited in India, are a favourite theme for the local satirist. These are founded upon divisions and sub-divisions; but the main difference is, of course, between civil and military. The civil service is the better paid of the two; it also monopolises most of the highest appointments of the State. The civilians are, therefore, the favoured section of the community. They have the most potent influence in public, and they take the lead in society, where the black coat is always held in greater respect than the red: especially by match-making mammas, who are often heard to say that their daughters shall never marry into the barracks. The civilians are naturally proud of their superior position, and are accused by severe censors of "giving themselves airs" on account thereof. Bitter are the sarcasms with which they are assailed in consequence; and these, it must be said in their favour, they bear with immense fortitude. But there are two sides to the picture. The civilians, though enjoying the lion's share of the loaves and fishes of the State, are not quite happy. They are unappreciated in Europe, where people cannot be made to understand the nature of the duties they have to perform. The British public can comprehend the office of a magistrate or a judge, but the office of a collector puzzles them, and they usually imagine that these administrators of the revenue department go about with a portable pen and ink, and leave slips of paper at people's houses, with "Last Application" printed in red letters. Nor are the duties even of the higher rank of "commissioner" much more comprehensible; except, indeed, by popular prejudice, which associates the office with a great deal of "grinding down" of the natives, and the exercise of arbitrary power. And it happens unfortunately for the civilians, that the legal posts are exactly those for which they have always been supposed least fit, and of which recent legislation has deprived them altogether. The military, on the other hand (I allude more especially to the old "Company's army"), exercise a vocation which cannot be mistaken. They are called captains, colonels, and so forth, like the military everywhere else. They have always done their work well, when there has been any fighting to do; some among them have made great names, not only in the field, but in the political arena—the latter being the only arena in which the civilians have had a chance of gaining their fair share of honour. The military having more leisure for the cultivation of literature and art, besides being the larger class, exercise a greater influence over the local Punch than the members of the sister service. Accordingly, we find scenes like the following not unfrequent in the pictorial department. The sketch represents two over-dressed young gentlemen, sucking their walking-canes:

"1st Haileybury Man (who has carried off fifteen gold medals and six silver). I say, fancy, that demmed ensign has gone and plucked me again!

"2nd Ditto. Dem him! He's plucked me, too.

"1st. But the best of it is, he says I can't speak intelligibly!

"2nd. Gad! Like his impudence.

"(Exeunt ye two Alumni in frantic haste to Mr. Spence, hys refreshment-room.)"

Another favourite hit at this much-badgered service is a ball-room scene. A mild-looking young civilian reminds a young lady of her engagement to him for a waltz, just as she is about to surrender her waist to a cavalry officer of imposing appearance. The young lady is a little confused, but the cavalry officer takes possession of her with great composure, carelessly assuring the civilian that "there must have been some mistake."

But there are wheels within wheels, as we have hinted, and the rivalry between cavalry and infantry gives great opportunity for satire. Here is a scene at an infantry mess, at which are two cavalry officers, belonging respectively to her Majesty's Light Dragoons and the East India Company's Light Cavalry:

"Dragoon. I say, Frank—aw—aw—it's—aw—dev—aw—lish gratifying to aw—remark—aw—the superiority—aw—in polish and ton—aw—of our service over—aw—the infantry.

"Light Cavalry Man. Yes—and—and there's a—ha—ah generally a—a—a—ha, there's eh—heh—a—ha, greater degree of eh—a what's—its—name—eh—intelligence you know—eh—ah that's—intelligence you know—ha—among our men."

The infantry officers are represented as looking on, highly amused at this modest opinion. A little further on (in the book) they take their

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revenge. A cornet, who has passed his riding school, has got a mount from an infantry friend; and after bragging a great deal about liking a horse with some "go" in him, is coming to awful grief, in consequence of a little good-natured "bucking" on the part of the animal. The infantry man, who has himself a first-rate seat, is slyly enjoying his friend's discomfiture. That the infantry are much better horsemen than the cavalry, is an assertion you hear frequently repeated among the members of the former arm of the service; and it appears to be thus far true—that the best officers of irregular cavalry have nearly always belonged to infantry regiments. Hodson and Jacob, for instance, were infantry officers, as are Beatson, Edwardes, and Chamberlain, and nearly all the beaux sabreurs of the Indian army. The native-regular cavalry has never been a good school. It made a handsome appearance on parade, and answered very well for guards and escorts; but it was fit for little more, and on two or three occasions (the mention of Kotah and Parwan Durrah are never calculated to put a regular cavalry officer in a good humour) it distinguished itself by something very like bad behaviour. It was a great mistake ever to have attempted to make a dragoon, all pipe-clay and precision, out of a native accustomed to easy costume, and an entirely different discipline. That the regular cavalry turned out no worse than it did, is highly creditable to its European officers, who made the best that could be made of a bad system.

The contests—vigorously carried on in newspapers and pamphlets—between the regulars and irregulars, supply a large proportion of jokes to "our facetious contemporary." These are mostly too professional to bear reproduction. There are, however, some social hits at the peculiarities of the irregulars, which are more comprehensible in this country. The irregulars are always famous for their fantastic uniforms, and usually present an appearance which has been summed up as "all beard and boots." They have a foreign rather than a British appearance, and, from serving in wild parts of the country where no ladies are to be met with, are supposed to have incurred savage habits. In one of the cuts before me an irregular officer, who has, it may be supposed, returned on leave to within the pale of civilisation, presents himself at his own house, bearded and braided in orthodox manner. His wife receives him with "Merci, Monsieur, nous n'avons pas besoin d'un maître de musique."

There was no little rivalry, as may be supposed, between the "Queen's" and "Company's" armies, and although they are now nominally united, a great deal of the old spirit still exists. "The Royals in India" form a standing heading in the pages of our friend Punch, and you may be sure they are represented in as ridiculous a light as is possible, even in a country where a man is always supposed to spend the first year of his residence in making a fool of himself. How the Royals get into trouble and fall into ridiculous mistakes through their ignorance of the native language, how they come to grief in horseflesh, and get imposed upon in every transaction with their servants, is recorded in countless caricatures, and comic verse and prose without end. The social superiority assumed by the Royals is one of the most popular themes for satire, whether of pencil or pen. An officer of this class is, to judge by the squibs let off upon him, supposed to look at all things Indian, through the eye-glass of superciliousness, and to speak of them with the haw-haw of contempt. As when, for instance, Captain Raker, in answer to an affable inquiry from the lady of the house whether he dances, responds with a superb air, "Why—ha!—not in India! You see, I have been so accustomed to the best society at London parties, that I cannot really fall into your semi-barbarous customs all at once." Or when Captain Swellington, in acknowledgment of the old-fashioned invitation from a cheerful Indian to take wine with him, replies, after a slight stare through his glass, "Ah, yes, I will—upon one condition—that you won't say 'Here's to you'—because I can't stand that."

While upon military rivalries I should not omit to mention the moustache. It was not until 1853 that this "boon" was given to the infantry regiments of the Indian army. They had hitherto been shaven, like their brethren of the Queen's; but it being considered all of a sudden, that the want of the manly appendage degraded both officers and men in the eyes of the natives, the order came out to leave the upper lip sacred from the touch of the razor. This entrenchment on their peculiar privilege is supposed to have disgusted the cavalry, who, according to the caricatures and poetical satirists, seriously desired to shave. The Queen's regiments remained untouched by the innovation until after the Crimean war, when they also were directed to grow the moustache. The Sketch Book of the period of course had jokes upon this subject also: the officers of her Majesty's service being displeased with an arrangement which, as they said, confounded them with those native infantry fellows! According to the same authority, even the non-commissioned officers and men partook of the prevalent prejudice against the Company's troops. Here is a specimen of the esprit de corps of the non-commissioned ranks, as recorded by one of the Delhi artists:

The wife of an Indian officer is represented as desirous of engaging one of the barrack ladies as a maid. Mrs. Corporal Flouncey accordingly offers herself; but, upon inquiring into the position of the lady's husband, pays a visit of apology. "Why you see, marm," says Mrs. Corporal Flouncey, "it isn't the wages—which is quite satisfactory—but I've been and spoke to my husband, and he have objections to my taking service with the lady of a sepoy officer."

Here, however, is a tribute to the British soldier, as distinguished from the sepoy, which

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everybody who has had an opportunity of comparing the two knows to be well deserved.

Among the social peculiarities which afford perennial food to the local Punch are those connected with marriage, which, it must be admitted, is rather a rapid process in India, where people have seldom time for long engagements, and where single ladies—in the provinces at any rate—are so scarce as to be caught up with celerity. In India, however, as elsewhere, it is not every spinster (or "spin," as she is called in that irreverent country) who can afford to tamper very long with her admirers, or rely too literally on the assertion of Mrs. Peachum in the Beggar's Opera, that by keeping men off you keep them on. One of the saddest satires in the collection before me is a series of drawings descriptive of "The Spinster—her Progress," from the time when she treats even "big civilians" with hauteur, down to that when she is compelled to put up with a penniless ensign. In illustration of the series, there is a song in imitation of a well-known original. It is called "The Song of the Spin," and the first stanza is as follows:

> With footstep weary and worn,
> With eyelids heavy and red,
> A lady was seen in a ball-room dress,
> Betaking herself to bed.
> Flirt—flirt—flirt!
> With beauty, but wanting in *tin*,
> This unfortunate damsel, half weeping, half pert,
> Thus sang the song of the Spin.

And so on, in a manner which may be imagined, until we come to—

> Flirt—flirt—flirt!
> My labour never ends;
> And with what reward? An Ensign raw,
> Without money, talent, or friends—
> A shabby buggy, a worn-out horse,
> A hovel, and that is all;
> For an ensign's pay, in the present day,
> Is unjustifiably small!

Parodies of the same immortal poem are very plentiful in this volume. It is made to do duty for all kinds of occasions. One of the best is "the Song of the Shirk," *i.e.* one who shams illness, and makes other excuses to evade duty. The next most popular poem for parody is "Locksley Hall." Some of the parodies are particularly neat, but they are too professional to be enjoyed by the general public, and they have sometimes a vigour about them which might be mistaken for coarseness—a fault which applies too frequently to Anglo-Indian comic literature. One of the best in the present volume describes a batch of cadets going before "the Board" after their appointments. It opens in the orthodox manner—

> See the youths all onward trooping, handsome, ugly, short, and tall,
> Pressing forward, pressing forward, to the street of Leadenhall.

As a general rule, I find that subjects popular in the London Punch are very punctually taken up and adapted to Indian manners. Thus we have "Mr. Pips, his Diary," drawings and descriptions both on the model of the original. Mr. Pips goes to a Nautch, Mr. Pips goes to a Barra Khana, Mr. Pips goes to a Review, and Mr. Pips goes everywhere else worth drawing or writing about. In the same manner we have the "Dramas of Every-day Life" reproduced upon the plan of the original papers, and made the vehicle for a great deal of local satire. Among the most popular subjects of ridicule in any form, are those connected with sick leave, the examination system, the purchase of steps, committees, the delays of the post-office, patronage, and courts-martial. In the present volume I see several bits of sick leave, both pictorial and literary. In one of the former a young officer is seated with his feet on the table, smoking cheroots and drinking brandy-panee. The doctor pays him a visit, in answer to a summons as we may presume, and the officer asks him to give him a certificate that he is too sick for duty, and must go for three months to the Hills. The doctor, however, is not so pliant as was expected. "What do you see in my face," he asks, "to make you suppose that I should sign a false document?" "Well, you can do as you please," is the answer; "but if you decline, I must change my medical attendant." A wicked sarcasm at the examination system is contained in the representation of an elderly officer all smiles and urbanity, described as "the president of the examining committee when he congratulated Ensign Green upon having passed so admirable an examination;" the same officer being portrayed in a companion portrait in a high state of disgust, excited by the discovery "that it wasn't *that* Green who was such a favourite with the governor-general."

A great many jokes are got out of the purchasing of steps: that is to say, the buying out of officers willing to retire for a consideration, in order that the rest may get promotion—which in a seniority service must follow as a matter of course. The practice has been prohibited from time to time, but it has been practically winked at by government, and existed for many years almost like a regulation of the service. It was not a little abused, as the younger officers, down to the junior ensign, were drawn into subscriptions for the purpose, which they could ill afford to pay, and from which they could derive no possible advantage for years; but in all "smart" regiments it was a rule that every officer must join in the arrangement, or be sent to Coventry. When an officer retired, it followed naturally that only one of his juniors obtained a positive elevation of rank, the remainder of them being content with getting higher on the list. In one sketch I find the officer who is obtaining the principal advantage arguing thus: "You see, gentlemen, that as I get the step this way I am shut out from getting it in any other; therefore it is plain that I should be called upon to pay a smaller proportion than anybody else."

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An ingenious argument, which is evidently having its effect upon the intelligent auditory.

The committee system has been a fertile source of laughter for years. It was in great force under the old Company, when officers, not less than three in number, were selected to transact garrison business of every description. At one time they would have to buy elephants or camels. They might never have seen an elephant or camel, but so that they agreed to pass or condemn them the authorities were satisfied. If a couple of tiles required to be put on the roof of a barrack, nobody had authority to give the order but through a committee. If beer had to be purchased for the troops, a committee must proceed at five o'clock in the morning to taste it; and as this process had frequently to be gone through with a great many varieties, the result was sometimes rather scandalous, especially in the case of the younger officers. But what can be expected from a "tasting committee" that has to transact its business before breakfast? These committees were held for the greatest as well as the most insignificant objects. Among the latter, I once heard of a committee upon an old pair of sepoy's pantaloons.

As for the post-office, the institution is one of the best-abused of the public establishments, even in this country. You may guess what it is in India, where its means are of a rough-and-ready description, where there are no railways to speak of, and where the distances to be traversed are immense. Pictures of the dâk wallahs sitting by the roadside smoking their pipes, one with a bag labelled "Express" being fast asleep, are in great profusion; and the postmaster-general is always represented as filling up the vans, to the exclusion of the public letters, with bonnets for his wife and cases of wine for himself. These are always popular satires, especially if the official is made to look sufficiently hideous.

Patronage! Well, you may guess the use which is made of that subject in a comic publication, the readers of which are nearly all composed of members of one service or the other, desperate for promotion, and comprising some fifty expectants for every place. Courts-martial! We know something about those tribunals in this country, and as "cases" are far more frequent in India, it may be supposed that there is more material for ridicule. Hard riding, generally indulged in by ladies in the Hills, is a theme that never ends; and the only advantage to be derived from it, to counterbalance all the danger to themselves and others which it involves, is, that it gives the artistic satirists subjects for very pretty pictures—affording a real relief from the sour old generals and ugly people generally, whom Indian artists delight to portray.

Among the most elaborate of the illustrations in the present volume are a pair of "page cuts," representing contrasts in Anglo-Indian life, under the name of "The Old School and the New."

Each picture contains several classifications. No. 1, "Domestic," shows us the father of a family smoking a hookah, and drinking brandy-pauee, in company with a very unfavourable specimen of the female sex, who can be neither a good wife (if she be a wife) nor a good mother; for the children who are sprawling about are evidently the reverse of "well brought up." In contrast to this representation of a home as it was, we are shown a home as it is. A lady of high mental acquirements is playing on the piano, while several visitors stand about in attitudes of intelligence. There is no refreshment of any kind to be seen, and the only perceptible cloud on the happiness of the party is the appearance of a native clerk in the distance, who presents to the husband a bond in favour of the Agra Bank, apparently for payment. But it may be that this little incident is only intended to show the flourishing state of the husband's credit, and not to point an unpleasant moral. No. 2, "Social," exhibits on the one side a drunken party of revellers, with bottles in their hands; on the other, an elegant drawing-room, where the same persons are seen under the refining influence of female society, indulging in a carpet dance. No. 3, "Commercial," shows us, on the one side, a British merchant in his shirt-sleeves, just risen from his brandy-pauee to kick out a native clerk who approaches him with a bill; on the other, a native merchant is suing an officer in a military court upon an I O U. No. 4 is "Professional," and the contrast here is more decided. The old school is represented as enforcing discipline on the soldiers by means of the "cat;" the new, as enforcing efficiency on the heads of departments by an almost equally severe system: the commander-in-chief (Sir Charles Napier) being represented as a tyrannical schoolmaster keeping his boys to their tasks by threats of condign punishment. No. 5, "Recreational," represents, in the first place, a nautch, at which native dancers are performing for the amusement of a party of officers; in the second place, the same officers are disporting themselves in a more vigorous manner in a dog-cart, with a tandem.

It will be seen that the new school is not considered by the satirist to be quite what it ought to be, but that it is still a considerable improvement upon the old school. He leads us to infer, that although the Anglo-Indians may still be fond of pleasure, it is pleasure of a purer kind than of yore; and that although they may incur debts which they can ill afford to pay, they do not kick the creditor for suggesting payment.

This slight attempt to forestal "the future Macaulay" in raking up out-of-the-way materials in illustration of history, must not be concluded without a glance at the impersonation of the Indian Punch as pictured in these pages. As far as face and figure—that is to say, nose and hump—are concerned, he bears a strong family likeness to his English brother; but the Indian Punch wears a turban, and has otherwise accommodated himself to "the prejudices of the natives."

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Instead of the dog Toby, his attendant is a monkey with a ring tail, and a remarkably intelligent cast of countenance.

TRAGIC CASE OF A COMIC WRITER.

The poet is born, not made. I am made, not born. All the world of editors and managers of theatres, has conspired to make me a comic writer, when Nature intended me for a serious one. I was made to write poems in blank verse and in cantos; editors have made me write crambo rhymes to fill up half pages. Nature designed that I should lucubrate for the high-heeled sock; managers have resolved that I shall scribble for the low-heeled buskin. Do what I will, I cannot escape from the thrall of these tyrants, who have leagued themselves together to pervert my genius to base uses. If I propose to a publisher to write him a three-volume novel, he smiles at me incredulously and says: "Not in your line; can't you give me a bundle of those light, comic, trifles which you know so well how to hit off?" Hit off, indeed! I hate hitting off. I never hit off. I ponder, I excogitate, I burn the midnight oil, I study; and this dull, unperceptive fellow asks me to "hit off" something. I should like to hit him off. I assure the reader, on my honour as a gentleman, and, let me add, a scholar, that my blank verse is of a very high order indeed. Friends have said "equal to Tennyson," and I am not disposed to accuse them of flattery. But what happens to my blank verse? Invariably and consistently "declined with thanks." Professing and practising various branches of the literary art, as is the custom, now-a-days, I contribute to the leading columns of the newspapers: my forte is politics. All, who have the pleasure of my acquaintance in the private circle, know that I could come out strong in party strife; but where is the editor who will allow me to write a political leader? Echo answers, where? When I go down to the office in the afternoon, fully expecting to be put on to Church-rates or Schleswig-Holstein, what do I find? Why, that Church-rates and Schleswig-Holstein have been served out to two of the greatest idiots in the universe; and I—I, forsooth, who could shake the whole bench of bishops in their square-toed shoes and crumple up Denmark with half a quire of note-paper—*I* am obliged to be content with the smallest crumbs that fall from the editorial table. "Crasher, you had better write about that police case—make it light and readable; or you may take up the nursemaid and perambulator question — smart, you know, smart."

The first of the month comes round, and there is reviewing to be done. I hasten to the office, in the hope of being entrusted with a history in fourteen volumes, or somebody's political life and times. Do I get them? Of course not. They are carried off by the two dullest bores in the universe, and the impenetrable editor hands me the monthly parts of the penny periodicals, concerning which I am expected to say that they sustain their reputation, and are fully up to their usual standard—which, I take this unfettered opportunity of declaring, is very low indeed. Why don't I remonstrate? I do. And what do I get by it? "Stick to your line, my good sir, and that is the light, the airy, the amusing." The light! the airy! the amusing! I, who have read Thucydides in the original, and waded to the last chapter of Alison!

I have the distinguished honour, also, to write for the monthly magazines. There is nothing of which I am more firmly convinced than that I am the man to write a sensation story to run through twenty numbers, and be published afterwards in three volumes, with a portrait of the author. But catch any editor letting me. *I* should like to catch one at it very much. "No, my dear sir; Spindler does those things—it's his line; yours, you know, is the touch-and-go sort of thing. Let me have one of your light sketches, something like 'Up a Tree,' or 'Down a Well,' or 'Over the Bender'—something sharp and *short*. Mind, not above five pages, for Spindler's story is long this month." Yes—confound him; it always is long—and dreary. I never could, never shall, understand, why Spindler is allowed to spin out so many pages of that dull trash every month. Everybody yawns over it. Nobody likes it. The editor doesn't like it. Still, he maintains the opinion that Spindler is the man for the continued story. It is acknowledged, that I am smart, readable, entertaining; yet Spindler is permitted to huddle me up into a corner. If Spindler takes a fancy to spin out, I must cut down. I must wait upon Spindler —fill in his hollow places. Pad him, in fact. And, between you and me, reader, I know Spindler to be an ass.

Then, again, there is my friend and patron, the manager of the Theatre Royal. Ask him what he thinks of Crasher? "Clever fellow, smart fellow; devilish smart and no mistake!" But let me propose a comedy or a drama to him. What then? Why he turns the subject, and asks me if I have thought about the Christmas burlesque? or if I could not do a little pièce de circonstance for him? "Hit off something of the day," he says; "the Exhibition; the Japanese Ambassadors—something that will play half an hour, and make the people roar." There it is again; I must always be hitting off something. And I must make the audience roar with laughter when I want to make them weep. Now I know that it is much more difficult to make people laugh than to make them cry; but then you don't get so much kudos for laughter as for tears. A bit of claptrap sentiment is "fine feeling," "exquisite pathos," and so forth, in the review; a side-splitting witticism, or a stroke of humour, is simply "an amusing absurdity." Besides, a little grief goes a great way. Melt your audience to tears twice in the course of three long acts, and your drama is a success. But in a farce, or a burlesque, you must produce incessant laughter, or you are voted dull. You must shake the walls; you must make the pit sway to and fro in convulsions; you must cause

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the genteel people in the boxes to roll themselves ungenteely on the red velvet cushions; you must cause ribs to ache, and the eyes overflow. In three acts you may venture to be respectable; but in a farce—a mere trifle, an absurdity. Nothing short of the great convulsion of human nature—that of making people laugh till they cry—will satisfy the public, and, let me add, the manager. I have found out what the manager of the Royal Screamer does on the first nights of my farces. For some time I flattered myself that he sat in a private box to enjoy my productions in common with the public. I have been cruelly undeceived. He sits up-stairs in his room, writing his letters—leaving the door open to hear whether the people laugh or not. If his critical ear should catch a prolonged roar every other second, he is satisfied that the piece is a good one, and pays without a murmur. But if there be anything like wide gaps of time between the roars—say a minute and a half—he will probably propose a reduction.

Now look at the cruelty and injustice of this proceeding! Supposing I were employed to write five-act comedies—for which high class of drama I am peculiarly fitted—would the manager then be able to judge of my productions from distant echoes? Certainly not. The test of a comedy is not laughter. A comedy does not require to be funny. Speaking of modern comedy, I am confirmed in the opinion that the one essential requisite of pieces of that class is a negative one. If they don't make the people absolutely hiss, they are a success, and their authors are dignified with the name of dramatists; while I, whose merits are of the most positive kind, am set down as a writer of "trifles." How do the critics notice Shakespeare Smith's comedy in five acts? Well, they don't say it is good—how should they? But they devote a column to it, and exalt it with the name of a "work;" while I am disposed of in a few hasty lines, though it is admitted that I sent the audience home with aching sides. Shakespeare Smith, who, I have no hesitation in saying, is imbecile, gets credit for "works." I—born a true poet—am dubbed a farceur. The taunt pursues me even to the domestic circle and the social board. Does not my friend M'Fling open upon me at our club suppers in the terrible accents of Clackmannan, and ask, in the intervals of shouting for mair toddy, why I don't write "worrks?" "Write worrks, sir," roars M'Fling; "worrrks, worrrrks"—and he snaps his fingers at me in contempt. Why, I ask, is Shakespeare Smith, who is known by every one of his acquaintance to be a dull dog—with some slight knowledge of the French language—why is this person to be exalted above me? Because of his superior talent? No; simply because he writes in five dull acts, instead of in one single lively act. He writes worrks.

And there is the sensation dramatist: that great man of this age of thunder, whose treasury is a golden mint, who resides in a palatial mansion and drives down to the dingy stage-door in a magnificent chariot. If you were to get at this illustrious man's opinion of himself (and it is not difficult to obtain), you would probably find that he places himself on the same pedestal with Shakespeare—I don't mean Shakespeare Smith, but Shakespeare of Avon. Now here am I occupying a Bloomsbury first floor and riding down to the Screamer on rehearsal days—only on wet ones—in the twopenny 'bus. Why is this? Do you mean to tell me that I could not write sensation dramas and coin my own money, if I had the chance? Could not I buy a shilling book at a stall—or, in default of the shilling, borrow one—and make a drama out of it? And would it be a work of superhuman genius in me, or, in the words of the classic orator, any other man, to write in at the end of the second act as a stage direction, "Here the villain carries the heroine off in a balloon; the lover arrives, fires a rifle at the villain, who tumbles to the earth, and the heroine descends in safety in a parachute, extemporised out of her crinoline"? I really must be allowed to say that my genius is equal to this. But where is the manager who will allow me to take so short and easy a road to fame and fortune? I pause for a reply. No response. Of course not. "Stick to your farces and burlesques, my boy. These big works are not in your line; leave them to Pouncer and Bouncer."

Now, look you, my friends, I am well acquainted with Pouncer. I have taken stock of his mental machinery, and know every spring and cog in it. In fact, he has taken the whole machine to pieces, and laid it before me repeatedly. What I say, then, of the case, Pouncer, is, that it encloses a very common movement. No escapement, no jewelled holes, no three-quarter plate—quite a common verge affair. Why do I not stand in the shoes — patent leather—of Pouncer? Be it understood I envy no man; but quite in an abstract way, and as a question of art: I repeat, Why do I not stand in the high-heeled patent leathers of Pouncer? Simply for this reason:—Pouncer and I went out one day without shoes, and it happened quite by accident that Pouncer stumbled upon that high-heeled patent leather pair, while I, less favoured by fate, or fortune, fell in with these low-heeled slippers. Perhaps you ask why, if I am so much stronger than Pouncer, I did not hustle him, and take the patent leathers from him? Not so easy a matter as you imagine. When the world catches you in a good pair of shoes it nails them to your feet; or, with the same even-handed injustice, let it catch you in down-at-heel slippers, and it nails, it clenches, them upon you. I am firmly persuaded that if I had had the good fortune to stumble upon the shoes, Pouncer would have worn out the slippers in treading the walks of Profound Obscurity.

One, with whom I have everything in common, has said, "All the world's a stage." Let me carry out the simile in my own way, and add, perforated with round and square holes—and all the men and women merely pegs. Now, I am thoroughly convinced that,

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with few exceptions, a perverse fate fills all the round holes with square pegs, and vice versâ. I am a square peg, and I fill a round hole; fill it well, certainly, and don't wobble about as some square pegs would do in the situation; but why am I not in the rectangular orifice designed for me? I know why. Happening to slip in here to see how I should fit, I was stamped into the place before I could get out again. All my enemies, the moment they caught me in the hole, came in a troop and hammered away at me, one after the other, until now my fine edges are worn off, and I am hopelessly jammed in. I see about me a great many pegs, round and square, all filling the wrong holes in a most inadequate manner. The majority of them, however, have reason to rejoice that they find themselves in any hole whatever. There is the peg Spindler. It is popularly supposed that he fits his hole neatly. I tell you he has been plugged in there. Take him up, pull him out—like a paving-stone or a brick—and throw him among a heap of his fellows. He may pass muster in a job-lot; but when the paviour or the mason comes to single him out, he will not be thought worth the re-dressing.

Then there are my friends, the two idiots. Why are they selected for the heavy business? Because the solemnity of their dulness was mistaken in early life for profundity. Because they were never seen to smile; because they were never known to make a joke; because they are ugly; because they have big heads; because they are old; because Time has rusted them in their holes. Pouncer, again. How is it that he fills so important a place? Because, without any special fitness for any hole whatever, he has always been a candidate for every hole vacant. Fortune is fickle; but a pertinacious man may bother her out of her life. Pouncer has bothered her out of her life. The greatest authority on Russian affairs of the present time is a man who once paid a visit of ten days to his aunt at Riga. He learned all about the serf question during those ten days at Riga. If a history of Russia were wanted, Jobbins would be sent for to do it. Why has Hornby acquired a reputation for the possession of profound scientific knowledge? Because, early in life, he wore the hair off the top of his head, mounted spectacles, dressed at all times in a swallow-tailed black coat, and constantly let people catch him perusing a scientific treatise. It was a good dodge of Hornby to turn his bald head and weak eyes to scientific account. It pays.

Viewing on all hands this ill-assorted array of pegs, I have come to a very grand and comprehensive conclusion. It is this: that the few cases throughout history in which the right man has been in the right place, have been the results of accident. Accident, which has put so many men in the wrong place, has put a few—a very few—in the right. Shakespeare found the right hole; so did Milton; so did Hampden; so did Newton; so did Watt; so did some others that are thinly dotted over the stage of time. In these latter days, however, there are more pins, and the stage has not extended its dimensions. We are crowded; we hustle each other; and in the scrimmage the wrong men drop into the holes, and, in the hurry and bustle of our life, are trodden into them until they seem to fit. I firmly believe that there are village Hampdens and mute inglorious Miltons in scores among us. All they want is an accident to slip them into the right holes. I am not sure whether I am a village Hampden, or a mute inglorious Milton; but I am satisfied I should have been somebody very big indeed, if I had not begun my career by writing that popular work—the "Romance of a Kidney Pudding." How solidly famous I might have been by this time had I started with a treatise on the Cosmogony, or something of that sort!

I hear a whole chorus of voices openly rebuking me. Do I not have my reward? Do I not get more for one of my trashy pieces than was paid to Goldsmith for his glorious Vicar, or to Milton for his immortal Paradise Lost? Are not my trumpery farces announced in the papers long before their production; are they not criticised next day in all the journals, as if they were works of the highest importance? There is my name blazing amid the record of imperial affairs. The eye of the reader cannons off Lord Palmerston on to the Pope, off the Pope on to Garibaldi, off Garibaldi on to Crasher, and there it rests in admiration.

Disappointed, rejected, and oppressed aspirants of high art tendencies, do not, I pray, heap coals of fire upon my head! Think you that I take pride in being glorified as a suckler of fools and a chronicler of small beer? Besides, I would ask you if this is more than my reward? What do you imagine are the feelings of a man with a soul like mine, who, in the course of a work, has to crush a new hat, cause a fellow-creature to be knocked into a bandbox, and smash a whole trayful of cups and saucers? Is there to be no compensation for injured feelings and outraged nature? At the same time I am willing to admit that you, my ten-canto poet—you, my grave and learned essayist—you, my high art dramatist, should be glorified in that column, not I. Go, persuade them to admit your claim to that consideration which you deserve, and I will stand aside. I am willing to contend with you for the high-heeled shoes, when the judge awards them to him who fills them best.

THE FARM-LABOURER'S INCOME.

A recent great international agricultural show has displayed the British farmer whom free trade was to have ruined as a thriving man learning to cultivate his mind as well as his acres better than of old, and who was developing with an intellectual energy, of which in the days of protection he never considered himself capable, the food resources of the country. Five-and-twenty years ago an eminent agriculturist was hissed down by his brother farmers for suggesting at one of their dinners that the condition of farm-labourers was not creditable

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either to the landlords of the tenants of the farms on which they worked. Whatever remains to be done, and it is much, there is a new spirit abroad; and the more educated English farmer has done his part towards getting rid of an old reproach to which not his class only was exposed. Parliamentary returns lately issued show the rate of wages for farm-labourers in England, Scotland, and Ireland. It is clear from them that as to that essential matter the improved systems of farming (from which the wiseacres prophesied especial ruin to the labourer competed with by the machine) bring improvement of means to all who work upon the soil. The average wages—best in Scotland, worst in Ireland—are, in Scotland, thirteen shillings a week: in England eleven and fourpence: in Ireland only seven and a penny. Within the last twenty years the average of farm wages in England has risen twelve per cent, in Scotland forty per cent, and in Ireland, partly by reason of the large emigration, partly by reason of the improved farming introduced by new proprietors of the old encumbered estates, low as the average is, it is nearly sixty per cent better than it was before the repeal of the corn-laws. In England the highest and the lowest rates of payment are both to be found in the county of Kent. The low rate of six and fourpence is entered as having been met with in Faversham. The highest rate paid in the same county is thirteen and fourpence a week; but a highest point of fifteen shillings a week is found to be reached sometimes in the north of England—Lancashire, Cheshire, Yorkshire, Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmoreland. In some parts of Westmoreland, the rate is even as high as sixteen and sixpence.

In the south of England, it appears that Hampshire and Berkshire farmers afford ten or eleven shillings; Sussex farmers, eleven or twelve; Surrey farmers, from twelve shillings to twelve and ninepence for the labour of men; men paid by the piece generally earn two to three shillings a week more than the men paid by time. Quicker work is equivalent to a lengthening of the fine season for haymaking or whatever other work has to be done while weather suits; but there are said to be practical difficulties in the way of a general adoption in farm labour of the principle called "paying for results." Women upon the farms in the southern English counties, earn from three and sixpence to six shillings a week; children, from three shillings to five and sixpence.

In Berkshire and Southampton there is an additional pay to carters, of three pints daily of small beer. So, in the east-midland district, there is food during the harvest month, there is breakfast on Sunday morning for horsekeepers, shepherds, and cattle-men, besides occasional pints of ale; and in the eastern districts two pints of beer a day are given to men employed at the thrashing-machine and corn-dressing. In all these eastern parts, wages of men vary from ten to thirteen shillings a week; of women, from five shillings to the shilling with which some Northampton farmers show their slight estimate of the value of a woman's work upon the farm.

The worst part of England for farm labourers is the south-western district, including Wilts, Dorset, Devon, Cornwall, and Somerset. In Dorset, the pay is oftener nine shillings than ten; in Devonshire, it falls even sometimes to eight, with—as in Somerset—often a daily quart of poor cider. Women in this part of England earn from three to four shillings a week. Wherever a district is purely agricultural, we may look for the lowest rate of payment for farm labour. Where the manufacturer in any sensible degree competes for the use of labour with the farmer, wages rise. Thus, in the west-midland district, where the rate for men is from ten to twelve shillings, it is highest in the neighbourhood of the great Burton brewers; and in Lancashire the demand for female labour in the factories raises in some places even as high as seven and sixpence a week the payment for woman's labour in the field. In Durham, Northumberland, Cumberland, and Westmoreland, the demand for work at the collieries raises the price of labour generally. In Durham it is from thirteen and sixpence to fifteen shillings; it does not fall anywhere below twelve shillings; it sometimes rises in Westmoreland to sixteen and sixpence: while a woman's labour will sometimes fetch eight shillings in the fields, and even a child's labour seven and sixpence. If the narrow areas of rating for poor relief did not act practically as a bar to the free movements of industry, these inequalities would in a great degree adjust themselves. To those places where the labouring population is thin, where the demand is greatest, and where wages are best, there would be migration of labourers from districts overstocked and yielding but small pay. In the districts thus thinned, the value of work would rise, while it would fall in those to which the required additional supply of labour had been brought: in each case, establishing the desirable approach to a just average.

THE SENTIMENTS OF MARTHA JONES.

We have just received the following communication from an old correspondent, whose existence, to say the truth, we had entirely forgotten. We lay this curiosity before our readers exactly as it came to hand.

506, Soane-street.

Sir,—I have had—ever since the opening of the International Exhibition—a resident in my house who has put me out a great deal, so I am just going to relieve myself by a few words written to your journal, which I must mention that I take in regularly and have done so ever since—nearly a year ago—you were so kind as to put in some observations of mine about my "Lodgers," at the sea-side establishment over which I then presided. That establishment I have now given up (worse luck), having been persuaded to come to London and take a house, with a view to letting lodgings during the pre-

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sent season. I cannot say that the speculation has answered particularly well hitherto, but that is neither here nor there. My old customer, Mr. Broadhead, the literary gentleman, has taken up his abode with me at any rate, and it is in consequence of that circumstance that I am able to concoct this letter at all.*

Before I go any further, by-the-by, I have a circumstance to mention of some importance, and which just at this present moment can hardly fail to be generally interesting. Since last I appeared before the gracious public which reads this periodical, I have taken a step towards which I was in a manner driven by necessity. I have changed my name. Not that I have got married again. No, one husband—and such an one as my poor departed sergeant-major—is enough for me. I have simply changed my name —which I hope, sir, you remember, was Beeflat —to Jones. I have done this because I found that my former name stood against me in my business. Somehow, people didn't like the name of Beeflat in connexion with lodgings; so as I have observed that a certain Mr. Jones has turned himself into Herbert, and a Mr. B—g into Norfolk Howard, I determined to take up one of those names that was cast loose, as one may say, on the world, and adopt the poor cast-off thing myself. Lor, it's all prejudice. If those nasty little insects were called Norfolk-Howards, I dare say anybody would take quite a loathing for that name, and be ready to change it into B—g at a moment's notice. Prejudice or not, however, it's too strong to resist. So here I am henceforth, Martha Jones, at your service.

(Signed) Martha Beeflat.

And that little matter disposed of, I must now get back to my lodger, about whom, as I said at the beginning of this letter, I want to say a few words. And, first of all, he is a Frenchman. Now, I don't know whether all Frenchmen are like this particular one, but if they are, then all I have got to say is that to talk about International feeling, and Cordial Intents, and the like of that, is to talk mere and sheer nonsense. To hear that man as I do—for he's always coming into my private room to air his English—to hear him abuse everything in this country; to hear him laugh at us, revile us, call us mercenary, stupid, sulky, barbarous, and every other bad thing he can give a name to, is really shocking. Nothing pleases that man. Send him up a nice little bit of mutton with the gravy in it, and he wants to know if I think he's a tiger. Try him with a comfortable cup of tea of an evening: "What sort of reasoners are these English?" he will say. "They bathe their outsides" (well, there's some people who don't do that much) "with cold water to make them strong, and then they bathe their insides with hot water to make them weak!" And so it is with everything. He doesn't like our omnibuses, because they are small, he says, and stuffy—difficult to get in and out of, and overcrowded. He doesn't like our cabs, because, he says, there's no distinct way of coming to an arrangement about the fare, as you can't know the distance you have travelled without measuring it; and he actually wants them arranged on the Paris plan, where, he tells me, you pay the same fare for whatever distance, short or long, you may happen to be going. He doesn't like our buildings, our monuments, our streets, our exhibitions—no, not the Great International itself, where, he says, the English have taken the best places themselves, and left their foreign guests to shift for themselves as well as they can.

Now, all this I can bear. As to the diet, why it's want of proper education and not being made as a child to eat his meat with the gravy in it, and take his cup of tea as a Christian ought to. As to the omnibuses again, they really are not very comfortable, and to see them raising their prices and cramming in additional passengers just because there's a demand for them is an aggravating thing, I must own to anybody. I must confess, too, that I never travel in a cab without expecting a row at the end of the journey, and thinking about the fare all the time, instead of enjoying the ride. But I don't see any way out of it, for nobody would go for to tell me that you should pay the same to go from Paddington to Bethnal-green as from Soane-street to Hyde Park-corner—which I am told is the French plan. It's ridiculous.

All this, then, I can bear, and I can even let him pitch into the Great Exhibition, for it's been the cause of my coming up to London and leaving my nice sea-side establishment, and the speculation, as I said before, hasn't answered over and above. All this, I say, I can put up with; but what I can*not* bear, and will not put up with, is to hear that grumbling Frenchman speak asparagusly (sic) and in a sneering tone of that most beautiful and lovely thing the Great Handel Festival at the Crystal Palace.

For—and only think what a chance for poor me—I've been to that blessed Festival myself; Mr. Broadhead having a couple of tickets sent to him from some of his newspapers, over and above what he wanted, gave the same to me, and many thanks I'm sure. So me and Charley —he's all I've got left, and the born image of the poor departed sergeant-major, his father— little Charley and me put on our best clothes, and off we set, travelling by the new railway—

* *Note.* My worthy landlady is a most respectable person, and I have the greatest pleasure in being of use to her in correcting any little errors of spelling and grammar, which might interfere with the effect of her very shrewd and interesting remarks. I hope, by the way, that I have performed my task in this respect as completely as I ought; but I am, unfortunately, a very absent man, and I am fearful lest I may have occasionally left in a word or expression of my landlady's which ought to have been corrected, and which I have written down mechanically as she dictated. If this should prove to be the case, I trust the reader will excuse it, as I have seldom time, owing to a great pressure of work, to look through my manuscript after having once written it.—John Broadhead.

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the Victoria station being so near to Soane-street, quite handy.

But what crowding, and pushing, and fighting, and scrambling, to get places there was; my best clothes were almost torn off my back. Then me and Charley got separated, and both pulled different ways, and the boy so delicate and easy frightened—it's along of being too much with me, no doubt, for the blessed sergeant was as bold as a lion—and there was I kept away from him tight jammed up in the crowd, for I don't know what length of time, not able to get a ticket or move one way or another, and it did seem to me uncommonly ill-managed to be sure, and as if the Railway Company didn't consider what crowds they would have to provide for. They might know how things are altered now to what they used to be, how everybody's always rushing here, there, and everywhere, and they might have provided more than one pay place, and not kept you waiting there ever so long before you got your ticket. Why not have given us our tickets first, and then found us some place to wait in, while the trains that were already full got off? But lor! they don't care, they get the money. The public can't strike, and refuse to travel till their convenience is better consulted—they can't do that, and nothing else is any use.

But if there was pushing and fighting as we went, what was there as we came back? The passengers were tearing and clawing at one another like wild beasts, some jumping into the third-class carriages over the doors which weren't yet opened, and some were thrown down on the floors of the carriages and trampled upon; and one train me and Charley were fairly pushed away from, and saw it go off without us, because we were not strong enough to hold our own. The fairest way would be surely to let down so many at a time as would fill a train, and no more; but lor! they don't care, as I said before.

But I'm getting on too fast, talking about returning home almost before we've got well there. "There," says Mr. Broadhead, "where?" Why, the Crystal Palace, to be sure. You see Mr. B. is trying to teach me to write grammatically, and he says that when you allude to a place as "there," you ought to have mentioned the name of the place first in the course of the paragraph. Mr. B. says its the more important that I should learn to express myself rightly, because his head is so full of his own work that he often writes down what I say quite mechanically. Well, I mean to take pains and profit by his instructions, for I *do* like literary pursuits, and so I tell you.

But I must go back to my Frenchman, for if I am going to correct my style it won't do for me to wander. That man—his name is Borgne—that M. Borgne goes to the Handel Festival and hears it, and comes back again, and it really doesn't seem to have touched or moved his heart—if he has one—a morsel. I wonder if all Frenchmen are so hard-hearted as he seems to be, and so (as it appears to me) matter-of-fact. A great greenhouse is not a good place for a concert, he says—and this, by-the-by, is a nice thing for *him* to say, for I'm sure I have heard him speak before now of a *Conservatory* at Paris which is the principal place they have for music. Well, be that as it may, he calls our lovely Crystal Palace a greenhouse, and then he says that no people but the English would think of giving a concert—a concert, indeed, why it's heavenly—in a greenhouse. "Let it be one thing," he says, "or the other, a concert-room or a garden." And then he complains that in trying to make their concert-room they have spoilt the place as a conservatory. "What a thing," he grumbles out, "is that gigantic half-umbrella of a sounding-board spread out over the singers; it is decorated with alcoves, too, just like the side-walks of a tea-garden.* Solos, too," he says, "in that enormous place! You might as well sing them in Hyde Park. But you English admire only things that can be tested by measurement and figures. 'Hark,' you say, 'it is a single voice and the building is so many yards long, and so many high, and so many broad, and yet I can hear it. I am so many hundred feet away and yet I can hear—can I hear? yes, yes, I can hear; oh, wonderful! How many performers did you say? Four thousand—really, four thousand—wonderful!' and then you go home and you say how large the building was and yet you heard your Sneeves Rims, or whatever is his name—and there were four thousand

* Without falling into the critical vein ascribed by my worthy landlady to M. Borgne, I must take this opportunity of confessing that I am myself half-disposed to regret the alteration in the transept of the Crystal Palace during the late Handel Festival. I cannot help thinking that the spectacle which used to be furnished by the orchestra was one of the greatest features of the celebration. The appeal made to the mind through the eye was as grand as that made through the ear. I remember well the festival of 1859, and, as a spectacle, that of 1862 was surely very inferior to it. For some time I could not conceive why it was that on this recent occasion I felt as I looked such a keen sense of disappointment at the scene before me. I remembered the look of that assembled multitude on the former occasion, as the blazing light poured down upon it from above. Had I, I asked myself, exaggerated *to* myself the beauty of the former spectacle? Was it really not so wonderful as I used to think it? The thousands of faces—the light clothing, the brilliant colour, the suggestion of some ancient picture of the last judgment—were all these seen and thought of by me under some strange hallucination? Was the chorus not so large a chorus now? Were the members of it differently dressed? All these questions I asked myself before arriving at the final conclusion that the change in the scene before me was attributable to the new sounding-board which had been erected over the orchestra, and which cast a heavy and unsightly shadow over all its occupants. To me, I own, the gain in volume of sound was a poor compensation for the loss of that extraordinary and beautiful sight, and I even went so far as to think that there was a certain airy delicacy about the tone of the voices floating in that vast space, which I missed as much as the coup-d'œil of which I had been disappointed.—J. B.

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performers making music at one time, wasn't it wonderful to get so many together at one time? My goodness! what a nation! In the roast-beef and fowl department of this same Crystal Palace, I listen and overhear a conversation: 'Waiter, you must consume an immense number of fowls here every day?' 'Yes, sir, great number, sir.' 'How many, now?' 'About two thousand, sir.' 'Two thousand! Two thousand fowls and four thousand performers! Wonderful! Something like a holiday this!'"

And so this wicked, wicked Frenchman will go on sneering and snarling, and telling fibs, as I firmly believe, into the bargain, till I am obliged at last to cut him short. But oh dear, oh dear, I'm a poor ignorant woman, and I can't convince him. I wish, though, that somebody who could do so would once for all come forward and tell these Frenchmen that we are not so barbarous as they imagine, that mountebanks do not kick poor defenceless women about our streets, that we do not bury Mr. James Watt or anybody else in the Green Park, and that it is quite possible for a foreigner to come over and spend a week or even a fortnight in London, walking about its streets and visiting its public places, and inhabiting its vilest quarters, and go back without having quite got to the bottom of the English character, or having a perfect knowledge of all our habits and ways.

I should like these Frenchmen to be instructed about our life in England whether they like it or not, and if I did but know how to speak their horrid conceited language, which they think everybody ought to know—though there's such much larger tracts of the world where English is spoken than French—I say, if I knew their language, I would go over myself and preach to them and cram a little knowledge of us down their throats, that I would. I should like them to know what English life is as I have seen it when I was in service, and before I married my poor dear sergeant—the life in a pure innocent country-house, well kept and liberally conducted and with plenty of gaiety going on, and good done as well; where self-interest wasn't the only thing considered from morning till night, and where there were other things thought of than making money and overreaching each other amongst the gentlemen, and falling in love with all the wrong people among the ladies.

Now what a curious thing it is that all this that I am venturing to say, should have come out of my having gone to the rehearsal of the Handel Festival. And yet so it is. If I had not gone to that very performance and so had the opportunity of comparing my own impressions of it with that Frenchman's sneers—for they were nothing better—I should never have got so angry with him as to be obliged to relieve myself in this literary fashion.

But when I remember this performance, then I do feel both angry and surprised that any one should go away from it with the heart to find fault and sneer. And how me and Charley did enjoy it, as we sat there all alone in that great crowd. The boy is quick, and notices more than I do, and many a thing would have escaped me if he hadn't called my attention to it.

"What a lot of ladies in spectacles, mother," he whispers to me, soon after we had got into our places. And sure enough I never did in my life see so many ladies, and gentlemen too, if you come to that, in spectacles. Look where you would, there were the glasses gleaming and shining again. It did seem to me that they were mostly clergymen, and their wives and sisters that wore spectacles, and there they would sit with their books of the music and words, following each little bit and pointing it out to each other, and beating time with their hands, and then looking at one another and smiling and nodding softly when the music came to the quieter parts. And good and innocent and happy they looked, and I don't think that spiteful Frenchman could find many such in *his* country for all his boasting. Lots and lots of Frenchmen I saw all mixed about with such people as I have mentioned, and sharper and more worldly-wise they looked perhaps, but not good, no, not if I can tell what faces mean.

While I was thinking of these things and of the number of lodging-houses that could have been supplied by all the bedroom chairs which were got together under that glass roof, my little boy began whispering me again to look at a lady who was sitting two or three rows on in front, and who had actually brought her work with her and was stitching away just as if she had been at home. Well to be sure, I thought to myself, you must have a collected mind to go on like that all through the performance. For she did so—sat and stitched and stitched all the time the music was going on. But oh dear me! there *are* such queer people in the world. Why, when the luncheon-hour came and me and Charley was wandering about the building eating our sandwiches, we came upon one party of friends who were sitting in a *pew* in the church-furniture department, and pic-nicking away there like anything. Lots of such things as that we saw, me and Charley.

But the music!

It's not for such as me to speak of that music. What do I know about it? When the organs come and play against the area-railings in Soane-street I don't like it a bit, and when Miss Tympanum had my second floor I certainly didn't care for her playing, which used to crash through the house all day long. But this music of Mr. Handel's does seem to me to be very different, and I had rather hear it than even the band of my poor sergeant-major's regiment playing in the distance as the troops marched away. There seemed to be something so innocent about this music at the Crystal Palace. It seemed as if it came from a heart that was at peace and full of happiness and sunshine. I dare say a gentleman might write very good music and very fine tunes and yet lead a very bad life. But I do *not* believe that such music as that which me and Charley heard at that rehearsal could come from any but a good and innocent man. It seemed all so light-hearted and happy.

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I could follow the different pieces as they came one after another, because there was just in front of me a brother and sister (as I took them to be), who looked as if they lived in some cathedral-close, and who held their book between them so that I could look over, without appearing to intrude, and see the words. And very few words there did seem to me to be, the same doing duty over and over again in a way that I could not a bit understand. When they were singing about "Hercules" especially, they went on saying, "The world's avenger is no more," till my Charley wanted to know how long it would be before they got to the next verse.

But, dear me, it didn't matter how long they were over some of those pieces, so beautiful as they were. Why, there was one that was like being in a grove full of singing-birds, with a beautiful whistling sound following after the words as if some thrush or nightingale was mimicking the singer. "Hush, ye pretty warbling choir," it was called, and many the warbling choir that the gentleman who wrote that must have listened to and well and truly imitated. Ah! it's no use my speaking of these things. If I was to go through all I heard, and put down each piece, as it was spoken of in the newspapers next day, I shouldn't be giving pleasure to any living soul by doing so, nor could I say the half or the quarter of what ought to be said about that precious music. But this I do know, that there is refreshment and rest in such sounds, and something even more than these. For as I listened to that song, "Unto us a child is born," I felt a strange stirring in my heart, and the thought did come into my mind, whether my poor departed one heard music such as that where he is gone to. And my good man seemed at that time to come back and speak to me, and to help me with such comfort as I have not known since the day when he died serving his country in the Russian war. My boy kept still and close beside me while those words were sung, and neither moved nor looked about as he does at other times. It was a strange thing for a poor old lodging-house keeper to have such thoughts as I had then, and sure I am that they will come back to me often yet and cheer me through all the toil and all the trials, of one common sort or other, that may be in store for me between this time and the hour when I devoutly hope that, please God, toil and trouble may be no more.

*** My good landlady's notes on the Handel rehearsal stop at this place, the worthy woman having been called away by some of those household cares which naturally make very large demands upon her time and attention. She asks me to finish her letter for her, but I really find that I have nothing to add to what she has already so ingeniously stated. So being very hard pressed with my great inquiry as to what would at this moment have been the position of European affairs if Napoleon the First had escaped to America, instead of trusting himself to the tender mercies of the captain of the Bellerophon, I will excuse myself from any further remarks, and leave the excellent Mrs. Jones's letter to speak for itself.

John Broadhead.

LIGHT WINES.

The time, we hope, is fast approaching, when summer-heat and dog-days' dust, and galley-slave toil of Exhibition-seeing, will create thirst which will require to be slaked with something less potent than Portuguese and Spanish liquors. True, we might make them into wine-and-water; but, as wet is the greatest enemy of the vine, so all aristocratic wines repudiate an alliance with water, as a cause of weakness and diminished repute. Secondly, from humbler wines refreshing wine-and-water can be made, less expensive, containing a larger proportion of the healing virtues of the grape, and more thirst-quenching and agreeable to those whose taste has been duly educated.

Nor need the vinous draught be wine *and* water, unless for form's sake, appearances, and modesty, just to avoid the direct stares or side-long glances of inveterate port and sherry drinkers, or persevering quaffers of stout and bitter ale. If, at the Exhibition, a herculean amount of galleries and foreign courts, including trophies, with explanations of machinery and mathematical instruments by learned and communicative experts have been done—why, then, on returning to your lonely lodging, or sitting down to your choice dinner at your hotel, you may boldly pour out a tumbler of wine—pure from the bottle, unadulterated by the pump—to dispel your weariness, and may drink the same with beneficial effect, provided you select a wine suitable for the season and the purpose.

All fermented liquors are employed to restore (temporarily or permanently) expended strength, to support weakness, to stimulate lassitude. There is a degree up to which they are beneficial, and a degree beyond which they are injurious, and that both temporarily and permanently. It happens, that some of the liquids which give the strongest immediate stimulus are the most injurious if abused or indulged in habitually; while others, whose effect is gentle and moderate at the time, may be daily taken in reasonable quantities, with a favourable influence on the health and constitution. Such is the difference between wine, the ancient cheerer of the heart of man, and the modern discovery —alcohol, represented generally by three of her daughters, brandy, rum, and gin. The average life of a wine-bearing vine, fairly treated and in favourable circumstances, is from a hundred to a hundred and fifty years. Some few at two hundred years are still healthy and productive. The life of Man, according to M. Flourens, *ought to be* about the same, the end of the second century being its extreme limit. To attain this, the only elixir to be employed is a sober allowance of good wine.

The different effects of different fermented and spirituous liquors are dependent on other qualities besides their strength. A glass of

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gin-and-water diluted down to exactly the same strength as a glass of ordinary Macon (red Burgundy), has not the same effect on the human system as that glass of ordinary Macon has. Brandy (French and British), rum, gin, scheidam, whisky (Scotch and Irish), have each their amateurs, admirers, and advocates, who extol the virtues of their own favourite spirit. A pot of beer has not the same effect as a pot of cider of the same strength. Certainly, the former contains an element, the hop, which is wanting in the latter; but while Sir John Barleycorn has the reputation of calming the nerves, Sir Devonshire Pippin will tingle them up and keep them in a state of undue excitement. The truth is, in respect to either of those worthies, if you give them an inch (too much) they will take an ell. In cider countries, cider-drinking is not an unfrequent cause of delirium tremens. Cider is very treacherous in regard to its strength; and so is ale, and so is sometimes porter. However strong either may be, neither mixes well with pure spring water, although combined with effervescent draughts (soda-water, seltzer-water, ginger beer, or lemonade) they form a more trustworthy mixture, grateful to thirsty throats and jaded minds.

In Normandy, the great home of cider, a marked distinction is drawn and maintained; only the pure unmixed juice of the apple is dignified with the name of "cidre," which is therefore, as a matter of course, known by the consumer to be potent. He is duly forewarned to be prudent in his potations. The finer qualities (partly, perhaps, or entirely perry), are bottled, gaudily ticketed with "Sillerie de Normandie," and other fine names, and sold on the spot, as dear as a franc a bottle, retail. Ordinary cider, in the manufacture of which a considerable proportion of water is used—the cider which you see contained in casks large enough to hold a small dinner-party—is universally known as "boisson," "drink," and *is* the drink of the population at all seasons, in all places, at all times of the day and night, at the morning meal and the evening repast. It is often more difficult to get a glass of water than a glass of "boisson." Tables d'hôte overflow with the latter; the former you may sometimes call for in vain. In great droughts, for want of water (only to be had by fetching it two or three miles), "boisson" has been given to servants to wash up plates and dishes with.

Of course, boisson in Normandy is swallowed in indefinite and unmeasured quantities; nor do the Normans look the worse for the regimen. They are a tall strong hearty race, utterly unlike the meagre Frenchmen of our old farces and caricatures. We have, in England, a school of drinkers whose practice is directly opposed to the Norman. Instead of imbibing, at discretion or indiscretion, what is offered when they are dry, our abstinents, under medical advice or personal whim, take as little liquid as possible: drinking at dinner nothing but undiluted wine, with no water, still less with beer. They are not numerous, as a sect.

All Europe, south of the latitudes where grapes ripen in the open field, produces light wines which would supply a healthy and not expensive beverage here, if once a taste for them were spread. When the consumption is sufficiently rapid, they are excellent drawn fresh from the cask. The French call them "small wines;" the "grand wines" and the "fine wines" being such as are carefully bottled with the honours of long corks and waxed necks. Switzerland has several good wines, both small and strong, which may be tasted around the lakes of Neuchatel, Geneva, and others. Light wines are consumed both when new and sweet, and also just a little older (for they are not expected to attain great age), dry, "sec," or "sack," when they are somewhat stronger, which might be the reason for Falstaff's preference. In Roman wine-shops you are mostly asked whether you will have your "bicchiere de vino," your beaker of wine, "asciutto" —dry, or "dolce"—sweet. Of Italian light wines, both red and white, the variety is considerable. For convenience, many of these are kept in narrow-necked flasks, stopped with a no more solid cork than a teaspoonful of olive oil. When the wine is wanted, the stopper is removed by a jerk of the wrist, which scatters it and a few drops of wine on the floor. Several Italian wines will shortly merit the attention of English importers. Noteworthy are the vino d'Astè of Piedmont, white and sparkling; the Montepulciano of Tuscany, red and clarety; and the two sorts of lagrime cristi and other wines resembling them, from Naples. When the Roman question is settled, the Roman wines will be settled too, and that for the better. Hungary furnishes capital wines, both little and great; Swiss tourists make their acquaintance with general satisfaction. Unfortunately, their place of growth renders the expense of their import to us, a little heavy. The Rhine wines are old familiar friends; they need no bush—only, like the Hungarians, a diminished duty.

Both for geographical and commercial reasons, the majority of our light wines, therefore, come from France. But in France itself there are many prejudices, or settled notions (to use a more parliamentary term), with regard to wine. One of them is, that the frequent use of white wines is far from salutary, and is bad for the nerves; respecting which a word may be said.

The expression "white wines" sounds comprehensive and general; but there is an important difference in their mode of preparation, separating them into two classes, which differ from each other much more widely than any one unadulterated red wine differs from another. In all pure red wines the colouring matter is the skin of the grape. When the fruit is thrown into the vat, the grapes are partially crushed, and there left together (pulp, stalks, and skins) until fermentation has reached a certain point. They are then finally pressed, still all together; the liquor drawn off, further fermented and duly fined, becomes red wine.

The higher the class of wine, the fewer are

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the varieties of grape employed. The highest are extracted from as few as two sorts of grape only. The best clarets are made almost exclusively from the Carmenet or Petite-Vidure, and the Carmenère or Grosse-Vidure grapes. A vine-owner who wishes to maintain the repute of his wines will make two or three gatherings. In general the first batch will prove the best. The bunches hanging on the vines will be carefully selected, cutting only those that have been well exposed to the sun, and whose berries are equal in size and colour. Bunches ripened at the base of the vine will have the preference, while all green or decayed berries will be thrown away. For some wines, a certain proportion of the grape-stalks are rejected. These rules are followed with such minuteness that in certain communes the vintage lasts full two months.

Second-class red wines admit into their composition a larger number of varieties of grape; and the more ordinary the wine, the greater is the number so admitted. It is singular that several kinds of grape, which are excellent to eat, produce defective and imperfect wine; it is apt to turn sour, or has a want of delicacy, or its colour is pale, or it has not exactly the right tint; it may be plentiful, but of inferior quality; it may have a particular taste of the soil in which it is grown, disagreeable or not, as the case may be. From these varieties, judiciously mingled, good and wholesome, though not first-rate nor first-priced wines, are prepared.

It will be evident that, in consequence of this simultaneous fermentation of the stalk, the skin, and the pulp of the grape together, all genuine red wines contain divers medicinal elements supplied by the vine-plant, which must have their effect on the human system, according to the place of growth, and the varieties of grape used in making the wine, and also according to the constitution of the individual drinker.*

The same cannot be said of all white wines: some of them are less tonic, less medicinal than others. Sanitarially, white wines may be classed as those made from red grapes (or a mixture of all and any grapes), and those made from white grapes only. White wine from red grapes may seem a paradox, but it is a fact annually accomplished. The skin of the grape, when not over-ripe, does not readily part with its colour, without maceration in its own juice or in water. Consequently, grapes carried, as soon as they are gathered, to the mechanical wine-press (not to the slow mingling, mashing, and treading out by human feet), give out a colourless juice very nearly as limpid as water. This juice clearly contains only the elements to be found in the pulp of the grape, to the exclusion of those which are peculiar to the pips, the skin, and the stalk of the grapes. It is not, indeed, truly and completely wine. There would be no tannin or astringent principle in it. Anything, too, is good enough to put into these white wines; sour and decayed berries, as well as ripe and sound berries, serve to bring in grist to the mill. The value of the best white wines never attains anything like the figure of the red wines of the choicest vineyards. Amongst the white wines so manufactured from coloured and miscellaneous grapes, is the world-wide favourite, Champagne.

There are other white wines, made entirely from white grapes, and treated in the same way as red wines are, only, perhaps, with somewhat less care. Many of these might fairly be called "yellow wines" by way of distinction; they contain more aroma and medicinal virtue than the white wines of the previous category, nor does their temperate use appear to be followed by any inconvenience. On the contrary, the wines of the Rhine and the Moselle are found by many persons to be particularly agreeable and restorative on recovering from a fit of sickness. Some of the French yellow vins de liqueur or sweet wines, such as Muscat, Frontignac, and Lunel, are delicious and gently-stimulating elixirs. One glass at a time is a dose; it is like drinking plum-pudding or richly perfumed cake. They should be tasted *after* any other beverage or aliment; for whatever comes *after them* is comparatively insipid in its savour. They attain these highly concentrated flavours by being left to hang until they are far on the way to the condition of raisins, before being applied to wine-making.

The well-known white wines from the environs of Bordeaux are made from white grapes, and possess the corresponding merits. No less than seven varieties of white grape are grown to furnish the best qualities of Sauternes, while four others help to supply an abundant quantity of ordinaries. The vins de Grave, so called because the choicest are grown on "graviers" or gravelly soils, exhibit still more frequently the yellow tint which is an indication of their wholesomeness. They bear a close resemblance to the Rhenish family. Their head-quarters is the Château Carbonnieux; remarkable also for its collection of vines, which, at the date of a recent report, comprised more than a thousand varieties of grape, contributed by Madeira, Hungary, Portugal, Spain, Greece, and Corsica, not to mention France. The dominant variety employed for the Graves, as well as for the Sauternes, is the Sauvignon, which gives bunches well furnished with oblong amber-coloured berries, and is, moreover, one of the best table grapes. Wine made of the Sauvignon only is highly aromatic, but has a tendency to get into the head. And yet some people say that it is a waste of time to try to get tipsy with French wines.

On this delicate question the opinion of the Turks would be valuable. It is rumoured that Champagne is innocently tippled by Mahometan

* The maximum of alcohol contained in the first-rate wines of Medoc is from 8.50 to 9.25 per cent. They contain, besides free acids and vegetable and mineral salts, tartaric, malic, acetic, and œnanthic acids. The salts are, bitartrate of potash, tartrate of lime, tartrate of aluminium, and *tartrate of iron*. They carry *from seventeen to eighteen hundredths of tannin*, and from thirty-four to thirty-five hundredths of colouring matter.

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bons vivants, who take it for a sort of improved soda-water. The estate and vineyards of Carbonnieux formerly belonged to the Benedictine Abbey of Sainte Croix, at Bordeaux. The jolly monks, after enjoying the fruits of the earth themselves, drove a thriving trade with Turkey in bottles filled with limpid liquid, and ticketed MINERAL WATERS OF CARBONNIEUX. It was a terrible infraction of the Mussulman law; which law, however, the Benedictines were in no way bound to obey. The monks and the imams may be left to discuss which is really the greater offence: the selling of wine under the semblance of water, or the selling of water disguised as wine. As a punishment to the backsliding followers of the prophet, a few bottles of vermuth (wine made with wormwood combined with the grapes, and taken as bitters) might have been rightly substituted for an equal quantity of "mineral water."

Another settled belief in France is that the Bordeaux are the wholesomest of all their red wines. Of course, in wine-growing neighbourhoods, nearly everybody drinks the wine grown there as the habitual beverage. But in departments and districts where people have to buy their wine from a distance, the growths of Bordeaux and its environs, though dearer than most others, are preferred, on account of their supposed superior qualities. In the north, too, whither they arrive direct by sea, they are believed to stand the voyage better than other wines. There is a curious but deep-rooted idea that *sea air*, the mere vicinity of the sea, injures Burgundian wines, even when they are safe in bottle. How sea air should influence a liquid defended from it by a coating of glass and an inch depth of cork, is not attempted to be explained; but so it is that wine-merchants in the north keep (professedly and confessedly) very short stocks indeed of wine from the central interior.

The consequence of the prejudice is that, in the markets, and in table-talk, the existence of a great number of growths of wine is quite ignored. People speak of Burgundies and Bordeaux, and that is all, forgetting that the term Bordeaux wines ought in strictness to mean only those of Medoc. True, there are the Beaujolais wines; but they would rank as Burgundies: those of the Côtes du Rhône, such as Hermitage, Côte-Rôtie, and St. Peray (sparkling), hang on close to the skirts of the former. But then there is an immense quantity of Vins du Midi, wines of the south, such as Roussillon, which are imbibed by the natives only, which are the object of an enormous commerce at Cette and elsewhere, and which disappear from vulgar ken. They go in very large quantities to Bordeaux, and never come out of it, to anybody's cognisance. As to what becomes of them, we had better imitate the prudent discretion of the minister without portfolio respecting Spanish wines imported into France. Our guesses would only lead to the reflection what a fine thing fancy is for numerous discriminating and fastidious persons who can drink none but the purest clarets, the unquestioned produce of Medoc. Alas! for those who have not faith. In France alone, at least one hundred times as much Château Lafitte claret is drunk as the whole estate yields annually. Where do the false ninety-nine bottles come from? And who are the lucky individuals who manage to secure the genuine hundredth?

A fresh attempt might now be advantageously made to introduce several of these vins du midi to English favour. They are full-bodied, fruity, cheap, and strong; wholesome, also, if used with caution. But they are not light wines. Let no one make the inconvenient mistake of drinking ad libitum at his first experiment. He will discover more double stars than the Observatories acknowledge, and will feel the earth's revolution on her axis to be wonderfully accelerated.

The Touraine, again, and many a square league thereto adjacent, draws from the earth hogsheads upon hogsheads of excellent wines, which no one has ever seen or tasted out of the Touraine; which appear on nobody's table, which figure in no French innkeeper's bill of fare. Nevertheless, the writer knows by experience that they are very drinkable; nay, exhilarating. There are ruby-coloured, clarety growths, more or less light; there are the white wines of Blois and Beaugency; and at Vouvray, near Tours, is concocted an effervescent draught which, with your eyes shut or open, might pass for champagne. What becomes of the Touraine wines? Total ignorance; Egyptian darkness. Inquire for them of your wine-merchant. He keeps nothing of the kind, and never has kept anything of the kind. What do you mean by asking him such a question? All his clarets, without exception, come to him direct from Bordeaux. Plenty of Touraine wine, however, reaches Paris, perhaps even Bordeaux, where it is lost, like the Rhône, in holes in the ground.

Instead of buying questionable Châteaux Margaux and St. Juliens, the lover of light wines might venture to patronise some of those of the Touraine, boldly calling them by their real names, and giving them out, at table, for what they are. The Touraine barrique or hogshead gauges two hundred and fifty litres. Now, although wines are dear just now, I am offered (on the spot) a good table wine, of 1859, for one hundred and ninety francs the hogshead, and an extra sample of 1857 for two hundred and fifty francs, or ten pounds, *i.e.* at tenpence a litre (a trifle more than a pint and three-quarters) for the best. Their carriage is easy; there is a railway direct from Tours to Paris. Touraine wines might be reckoned on being supplied genuine, because there is no temptation to substitute changelings for them. The growers truly say, "Our red wines are similar in character to those of Bordeaux, and are often given as such; we may even state that they are better (at equal prices) as ordinary table wines." But names have such great weight in this world! If there is no disputing about tastes, there is also no discussion about names. A bottle of wine ticketed Château Margaux *must* be better, say inexperienced epicures, than another humbly labelled Vernou or Vouvray, or

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perhaps not labelled at all. The length of one's purse, and one's French connexions, are the turning-points which must decide the question practically. Those who are rich enough, do well to buy the grand wines of Bordeaux and Burgundy, if they can get them for their money; those who are not, are wise in searching for a palatable succedaneum from other quarters; particularly as, for one bottle of grand wine, they can have four, or six, or more bottles of good ordinaire—a serious consideration. The working and middle class population of Paris have no other vinous beverage (setting aside beer, which is increasing in fashion) than the ordinary wines of Central France, condescending even to make merry with "little blues" and "little whites;" and they thrive not badly under the circumstances.

If the taste for light wines here be not yet come, it will come by-and-by. The appetite will gradually grow with its indulgence. With regard to the wines of France, one thing is clear; either they improve considerably with a certain degree of age in bottle; or the consumer's taste insensibly adapts itself to their little peculiarities.

You get in a cask of "bon ordinaire," already drawn off (soutiré) and fined (collé), and only requiring three weeks' or a month's repose in your cellar or warehouse to put in bottle. At times of the year when it does not freeze, an aboveground warehouse is the most convenient to perform the operation in; there is at least a certain amount of daylight, and your man is not exposed for hours to the temperature and atmosphere of an underground cellar. You bottle your wine, selecting a bright sunshiny day, with the wind not far from the north or the east. At the Channel ports of France, you can get good *ordinary* Bordeaux for from nine to twelve pounds the cask, which will yield three hundred and a few odd bottles. I find what contents *me*, for eight. Very good ordinary Burgundy may be had for less, but put it down at eight, and it is not dear. A cask of Burgundy yields only from two hundred and seventy to two hundred and eighty bottles; but the contents of wine-casks, now differing greatly, according to locality, are shortly to be equalised throughout France. If you deal with Bordeaux or Burgundy direct, a "chemise" or second outer cask, to prevent tricks being played with your wine on the road, costs five francs, and is not money thrown away. Adding to these prices the freight to London, the wharfage, the English duty, and the cost of bottling and of corks [the best are the cheapest; many a bottle of good wine is spoilt by a bad cork], the reader may calculate at what a cheap rate he can furnish his table with good light wine, by following the plan of buying it in the wood. English wine-merchants should persuade their customers to buy their ordinary French wine in the cask, and bottle it themselves; they might sell it so at a reasonable price, and yet get a fair profit.

Your wine is bottled and stacked: a goodly store. For the first three or four months it is "sick," and out of order. If you can leave it untouched a twelvemonth, so much the better; but in six or eight months you may begin to make use of it. "It is pretty well," you think. "Very fair." If Burgundy, the bottle already begins to show a crust, delightful to most English eyes; if pure Bordeaux, it should not betray the slighest crust or deposit after being ten years in bottle. Your wine costs so little that you make free with it, giving country cousins tastes of what they never tasted before, and trying its healing qualities on your poor sick neighbours. When it is half finished, you begin to say: "I like this wine; we must be more sparing with it." When it is drawing near to its close, you shut up the last two dozen in some secure hiding-place, only to be produced on state occasions. This is the history of many and many a cask of "bon ordinaire." We do not fully value our friends until we are on the point of losing them.

At the moderate outlay which now is possible, a collection of wines of different vintages may be formed, by laying in every year a little more than is consumed; and then the collector has the pleasure of talking about "My cellar," if he only knows where to purchase. In Medoc there are a number of peasants who work at their vines with their own hands, and who take great pains and pride in treading closely on the heels of aristocratic wines. Of these persons excellent wine is to be had, at not extravagant prices. And besides professional vignerons (people who cultivate the vine either for a livelihood or to make a fortune), there are in France many amateur wine-growers who possess small vineyards, which occupy the leisure left by other more serious employments. A lawyer, a medical man, a draper, inherits or acquires a patch of stony ground sloping to the south, which is, or is soon, promoted to the dignity of "Ma Vigne." The happy proprietor forgets the flowers of forensic oratory, while sniffing the perfume of his vines in blossom; prunes redundant shoots when tired of amputating limbs; decides the most suitable length of his vine stakes, after handling linen and the metre measure. All sell the wine they do not consume at home, with even greater delight than they sell the extra produce of their gun or their garden. They prefer a set of private customers to letting their wares go to wine-merchants, for one good reason —they get a better price. But the amusement of the whole affair, from the beginning to the end, is a great inducement to its pursuit. The watching and the "feeding" of the wine in casks, affords continual interest. The tasting is an effort of critical acumen. "My 'fifty-sevens are perfect! My 'fifty-eights, as comet wines, will be worth something ten years hence. Do you think we shall have another comet soon? What bouquet in my 'fifty-nines! Colour like a ruby; no earthy aftertaste. How were your 'sixties? Sourish, eh? Mine were not bad, and plenty of them. All gone to Paris, to make old Medoc."

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"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—Shakespeare.

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

THE FOURTH SCENE.

Aldborough, Suffolk.

CHAPTER I.

The most striking spectacle presented to a stranger by the shores of Suffolk, is the extraordinary defencelessness of the land against the encroachments of the sea.

At Aldborough, as elsewhere on this coast, local traditions are, for the most part, traditions which have been literally drowned. The site of the old town, once a populous and thriving port, has almost entirely disappeared in the sea. The German Ocean has swallowed up streets, market-places, jetties, and public walks; and the merciless waters, consummating their work of devastation, closed, no longer than eighty years since, over the salt-master's cottage at Aldborough, now famous in memory only, as the birthplace of the poet Crabbe.

Thrust back year after year by the advancing waves, the inhabitants have receded, in the present century, to the last morsel of land which is firm enough to be built on—a strip of ground hemmed in between a marsh on one side and the sea on the other. Here—trusting for their future security to certain sand-hills which the capricious waves have thrown up to encourage them—the people of Aldborough have boldly established their quaint little watering-place. The first fragment of their earthly possessions, is a low natural dyke of shingle, surmounted by a public path which runs parallel with the sea. Bordering this path in a broken, uneven line, are the villa residences of modern Aldborough—fanciful little houses, standing mostly in their own gardens, and possessing here and there, as horticultural ornaments, staring figure-heads of ships, doing duty for statues among the flowers. Viewed from the low level on which these villas stand, the sea, in certain conditions of the atmosphere, appears to be higher than the land: coasting vessels gliding by, assume gigantic proportions, and look alarmingly near the windows. Intermixed with the houses of the better sort, are buildings of other forms and periods. In one direction, the tiny Gothic town-hall of old Aldborough—once the centre of the vanished port and borough—now stands fronting the modern villas close on the margin of the sea. At another point, a wooden tower of observation, crowned by the figure-head of a wrecked Russian vessel, rises high above the neighbouring houses; and discloses through its scuttle-window, grave men in dark clothing, seated on the topmost story, perpetually on the watch—the pilots of Aldborough looking out from their tower, for ships in want of help. Behind the row of buildings thus curiously intermingled, runs the one straggling street of the town, with its sturdy pilots' cottages, its mouldering marine storehouses, and its composite shops. Towards the northern end, this street is bounded by the one eminence visible over all the marshy flat—a low wooded hill on which the church is built. At its opposite extremity, the street leads to a deserted martello tower, and to the forlorn outlying suburb of Slaughden, between the river Alde and the sea. Such are the main characteristics of this curious little outpost on the shores of England, as it appears at the present time.

On a hot and cloudy July afternoon, and on the second day which had elapsed since he had written to Magdalen, Captain Wragge sauntered through the gate of North Shingles Villa, to meet the arrival of the coach, which then connected Aldborough with the Eastern Counties Railway. He reached the principal inn as the coach drove up; and was ready at the door to receive Magdalen and Mrs. Wragge, on their leaving the vehicle.

The captain's reception of his wife was not characterised by an instant's unnecessary waste of time. He looked distrustfully at her shoes—raised himself on tiptoe—set her bonnet straight for her with a sharp tug—said, in a loud whisper, "Hold your tongue"—and left her, for the time being, without further notice. His welcome to Magdalen, beginning with the usual flow of words, stopped suddenly in the middle of the first sentence. Captain Wragge's eye was a sharp one; and it instantly showed him something in the look and manner of his old pupil which denoted a serious change.

There was a settled composure on her face which, except when she spoke, made it look as still and cold as marble. Her voice was softer and more equable, her eyes were steadier, her step was slower than of old. When she smiled, the smile

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came and went suddenly, and showed a little nervous contraction on one side of her mouth, never visible there before. She was perfectly patient with Mrs. Wragge; she treated the captain with a courtesy and consideration entirely new in his experience of her—but she was interested in nothing. The curious little shops in the back streets; the high impending sea; the old town-hall on the beach; the pilots, the fishermen, the passing ships—she noticed all these objects as indifferently as if Aldborough had been familiar to her from her infancy. Even when the captain drew up at the garden-gate of North Shingles, and introduced her triumphantly to the new house, she hardly looked at it. The first question she asked related, not to her own residence, but to Noel Vanstone's.

"How near to us does he live?" she inquired, with the only betrayal of emotion which had escaped her yet.

Captain Wragge answered by pointing to the fifth villa from North Shingles, on the Slaughden side of Aldborough. Magdalen suddenly drew back from the garden-gate as he indicated the situation, and walked away by herself to obtain a nearer view of the house.

Captain Wragge looked after her, and shook his head discontentedly. "The devil take that gentleman in the background," he thought. "She has not got over the loss of him yet."

"May I speak now?" inquired a meek voice behind him, articulating respectfully ten inches above the top of his straw hat.

The captain turned round, and confronted his wife. The more than ordinary bewilderment visible in her face, at once suggested to him that Magdalen had failed to carry out the directions in his letter; and that Mrs. Wragge had arrived at Aldborough, without being properly aware of the total transformation to be accomplished in her identity and her name. The necessity of setting this doubt at rest was too serious to be trifled with; and Captain Wragge instituted the necessary inquiries without a moment's delay.

"Stand straight, and listen to me," he began. "I have a question to ask you. Do you know whose Skin you are in at this moment? Do you know that you are dead and buried in London; and that you have risen like a phœnix from the ashes of Mrs. Wragge? No! you evidently don't know it. This is perfectly disgraceful. What is your name?"

"Matilda," answered Mrs. Wragge, in a state of the densest bewilderment.

"Nothing of the sort!" cried the captain, fiercely. "How dare you tell me your name's Matilda? Your name is Julia. Who am I? Hold that basket of sandwiches straight, or I'll pitch it into the sea!—Who am I?"

"I don't know," said Mrs. Wragge, meekly taking refuge in the negative side of the question, this time.

"Sit down!" said her husband, pointing to the low garden-wall of North Shingles Villa. "More to the right! More still! That will do. You don't know?" repeated the captain, sternly confronting his wife, as soon as he had contrived, by seating her, to place her face on a level with his own. "Don't let me hear you say that a second time. Don't let me have a woman who doesn't know who I am, to operate on my beard to-morrow morning. Look at me! More to the left—more still—that will do. Who am I? I'm Mr. Bygrave—Christian name, Thomas. Who are you? You're Mrs. Bygrave—Christian name, Julia. Who is that young lady who travelled with you from London? That young lady is Miss Bygrave—Christian name, Susan. I'm her clever uncle Tom; and you're her addle-headed aunt Julia. Say it all over to me instantly, like the Catechism! What is your name?"

"Spare my poor head!" pleaded Mrs. Wragge. "Oh, please spare my poor head till I've got the stage-coach out of it!"

"Don't distress her," said Magdalen, joining them at that moment. "She will learn it in time. Come into the house."

Captain Wragge shook his wary head once more. "We are beginning badly," he said, with less politeness than usual. "My wife's stupidity stands in our way already."

They went into the house. Magdalen was perfectly satisfied with all the captain's arrangements; she accepted the room which he had set apart for her; approved of the woman-servant whom he had engaged; presented herself at tea-time the moment she was summoned—but still showed no interest whatever in the new scene around her. Soon after the table was cleared, although the daylight had not yet faded out, Mrs. Wragge's customary drowsiness after fatigue of any kind, overcame her; and she received her husband's orders to leave the room (taking care that she left it "up at heel"), and to betake herself (strictly in the character of Mrs. Bygrave) to bed. As soon as they were left alone, the captain looked hard at Magdalen, and waited to be spoken to. She said nothing. He ventured next on opening the conversation by a polite inquiry after the state of her health. "You look fatigued," he remarked, in his most insinuating manner. "I am afraid the journey has been too much for you."

"No," she replied, looking out listlessly through the window; "I am not more tired than usual. I am always weary now—weary at going to bed; weary at getting up. If you would like to hear what I have to say to you, to-night—I am willing and ready to say it. Can't we go out? It is very hot here; and the droning of those men's voices is beyond all endurance." She pointed through the window to a group of boatmen, idling, as only nautical men can idle, against the garden-wall. "Is there no quiet walk in this wretched place?" she asked, impatiently. "Can't we breathe a little fresh air, and escape being annoyed by strangers?"

"There is perfect solitude within half an hour's walk of the house," replied the ready captain.

"Very well. Come out, then."

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With a weary sigh, she took up her straw bonnet and her light muslin scarf from the side-table upon which she had thrown them on coming in; and carelessly led the way to the door. Captain Wragge followed her to the garden-gate—then stopped, struck by a new idea.

"Excuse me," he whispered, confidentially. "In my wife's existing state of ignorance as to who she is, we had better not trust her alone in the house with a new servant. I'll privately turn the key on her, in case she wakes before we come back. Safe bind, safe find—you know the proverb!—I will be with you again in a moment."

He hastened back to the house; and Magdalen seated herself on the garden-wall to await his return.

She had hardly settled herself in that position, when two gentlemen walking together, whose approach along the public path she had not previously noticed, passed close by her.

The dress of one of the two strangers showed him to be a clergyman. His companion's station in life was less easily discernible to ordinary observation. Practised eyes would probably have seen enough in his look, his manner, and his walk, to show that he was a sailor. He was a man in the prime of life; tall, spare, and muscular; his face sunburnt to a deep brown; his black hair just turning grey; his eyes dark, deep, and firm—the eyes of a man with an iron resolution, and a habit of command. He was the nearest of the two to Magdalen, as he and his friend passed the place where she was sitting; and he looked at her with a sudden surprise at her beauty, with an open, hearty, undisguised admiration, which was too evidently sincere, too evidently beyond his own control to be justly resented as insolent—and yet, in her humour at that moment, Magdalen did resent it. She felt the man's resolute black eyes strike through her with an electric suddenness; and frowning at him impatiently, she turned away her head, and looked back at the house.

The next moment she glanced round again, to see if he had gone on. He had advanced a few yards—had then evidently stopped—and was now in the very act of turning to look at her once more. His companion, the clergyman, noticing that Magdalen appeared to be annoyed, took him familiarly by the arm; and, half in jest, half in earnest, forced him to walk on. The two disappeared round the corner of the next house. As they turned it, the sunburnt sailor twice stopped his companion again, and twice looked back.

"A friend of yours?" inquired Captain Wragge, joining Magdalen at that moment.

"Certainly not," she replied, "a perfect stranger. He stared at me in the most impertinent manner. Does he belong to this place?"

"I'll find out in a moment," said the compliant captain; joining the group of boatmen, and putting his questions right and left, with the easy familiarity which distinguished him. He returned in a few minutes with a complete budget of information. The clergyman was well known as the rector of a place situated some few miles inland. The dark man with him, was his wife's brother, commander of a ship in the merchant service. He was supposed to be staying with his relatives, as their guest for a short time only, preparatory to sailing on another voyage. The clergyman's name was Strickland, and the merchant captain's name was Kirke—and that was all the boatmen knew about either of them.

"It is of no consequence who they are," said Magdalen, carelessly. "The man's rudeness merely annoyed me for the moment. Let us have done with him. I have something else to think of—and so have you. Where is the solitary walk you mentioned just now? Which way do we go?"

The captain pointed southward, towards Slaughden, and offered his arm.

Magdalen hesitated before she took it. Her eyes wandered away inquiringly to Noel Vanstone's house. He was out in the garden; pacing backwards and forwards over the little lawn, with his head high in the air, and with Mrs. Lecount demurely in attendance on him, carrying her master's green fan. Seeing this, Magdalen at once took Captain Wragge's right arm, so as to place herself nearest to the garden when they passed it on their walk.

"The eyes of our neighbours are on us; and the least your niece can do is to take your arm," she said, with a bitter laugh. "Come! let us go on."

"They are looking this way," whispered the captain. "Shall I introduce you to Mrs. Lecount?"

"Not to-night," she answered "Wait, and hear what I have to say to you first."

They passed the garden-wall. Captain Wragge took off his hat with a smart flourish, and received a gracious bow from Mrs. Lecount in return. Magdalen saw the housekeeper survey her face, her figure, and her dress, with that reluctant interest, that distrustful curiosity, which women feel in observing each other. As she walked on beyond the house, the sharp voice of Mr. Noel Vanstone reached her through the evening stillness. "A fine girl, Lecount," she heard him say. "You know I am a judge of that sort of thing—a fine girl!"

As those words were spoken, Captain Wragge looked round at his companion, in sudden surprise. Her hand was trembling violently on his arm, and her lips were fast closed with an expression of speechless pain.

Slowly and in silence the two walked on, until they reached the southern limit of the houses, and entered on a little wilderness of shingle and withered grass—the desolate end of Aldborough, the lonely beginning of Slaughden.

It was a dull airless evening. Eastward was the grey majesty of the sea, hushed in breathless calm; the horizon line invisibly melting into the monotonous misty sky; the idle ships shadowy and still on the idle water. Southward, the

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high ridge of the sea dyke, and the grim massive circle of a martello tower, reared high on its mound of grass, closed the view darkly on all that lay beyond. Westward, a lurid streak of sunset glowed red in the dreary heaven—blackened the fringing trees on the far borders of the great inland marsh—and turned its little gleaming water-pools to pools of blood. Nearer to the eye, the sullen flow of the tidal river Alde ebbed noiselessly from the muddy banks; and nearer still, lonely and unprosperous by the bleak water-side, lay the lost little port of Slaughden; with its forlorn wharfs and warehouses of decaying wood, and its few scattered coasting vessels deserted on the oozy river-shore. No fall of waves was heard on the beach; no trickling of waters bubbled audibly from the idle stream. Now and then, the cry of a sea-bird rose from the region of the marsh; and, at intervals, from farmhouses far in the inland waste, the faint winding of horns to call the cattle home, travelled mournfully through the evening calm.

Magdalen drew her hand from the captain's arm, and led the way to the mound of the martello tower. "I am weary of walking," she said. "Let us stop and rest here."

She seated herself on the slope, and resting on her elbow, mechanically pulled up and scattered from her into the air the tufts of grass growing under her hand. After silently occupying herself in this way for some minutes, she turned suddenly on Captain Wragge. "Do I surprise you?" she asked, with a startling abruptness. "Do you find me changed?"

The captain's ready tact warned him that the time had come to be plain with her, and to reserve his flowers of speech for a more appropriate occasion.

"If you ask the question, I must answer it," he replied. "Yes: I do find you changed."

She pulled up another tuft of grass. "I suppose you can guess the reason?" she said.

The captain was wisely silent. He only answered by a bow.

"I have lost all care for myself," she went on, tearing faster and faster at the tufts of grass. "Saying that, is not saying much, perhaps—but it may help you to understand me. There are things I would have died sooner than do, at one time—things it would have turned me cold to think of. I don't care now, whether I do them or not. I am nothing to myself; I am no more interested in myself than I am in these handfuls of grass. I suppose I have lost something. What is it? Heart? Conscience? I don't know. Do you? What nonsense I am talking! Who cares what I have lost? It has gone: and there's an end of it. I suppose my outside is the best side of me—and that's left at any rate. I have not lost my good looks, have I? There! there! never mind answering; don't trouble yourself to pay me compliments. I have been admired enough to-day. First the sailor, and then Mr. Noel Vanstone—enough for any woman's vanity surely! Have I any right to call myself a woman? Perhaps not: I am only a girl in my teens. Oh me, I feel as if I was forty!" She scattered the last fragments of grass to the winds; and, turning her back on the captain, let her head droop till her cheek touched the turf bank. "It feels soft and friendly," she said, nestling to it with a hopeless tenderness horrible to see. "It doesn't cast me off. Mother Earth! The only mother I have left!"

Captain Wragge looked at her in silent surprise. Such experience of humanity as *he* possessed, was powerless to sound to its depths the terrible self-abandonment which had burst its way to the surface in her reckless words—which was now fast hurrying her to actions more reckless still. "Devilish odd!" he thought to himself uneasily. "Has the loss of her lover turned her brain?" He considered for a minute longer, and then spoke to her. "Leave it till to-morrow," suggested the captain, confidentially. "You are a little tired to-night. No hurry, my dear girl—no hurry."

She raised her head instantly, and looked round at him, with the same angry resolution, with the same desperate defiance of herself, which he had seen in her face, on the memorable day at York when she had acted before him for the first time. "I came here to tell you what is in my mind," she said; "and I *will* tell it!" She seated herself upright on the slope; and clasping her hands round her knees, looked out steadily, straight before her, at the slowly darkening view. In that strange position, she waited until she had composed herself; and then addressed the captain, without turning her head to look round at him, in these words:

"When you and I first met," she began abruptly, "I tried hard to keep my thoughts to myself. I know enough, by this time, to know that I failed. When I first told you at York that Michael Vanstone had ruined us, I believe you guessed for yourself that I, for one, was determined not to submit to it. Whether you guessed or not, it is so. I left my friends with that determination in my mind; and I feel it in me now, stronger, ten times stronger, than ever."

"Ten times stronger than ever," echoed the captain. "Exactly so—the natural result of firmness of character."

"No. The natural result of having nothing else to think of. I had something else to think of, before you found me ill in Vauxhall Walk. I have nothing else to think of now. Remember that—if you find me, for the future, always harping on the same string. One question first. Did you guess what I meant to do, on that morning when you showed me the newspaper, and when I read the account of Michael Vanstone's death?"

"Generally," replied Captain Wragge—"I guessed, generally, that you proposed dipping your hand into his purse, and taking from it (most properly) what was your own. I felt deeply hurt at the time by your not permitting me to assist you. Why is she so reserved with

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me? (I remarked to myself) why is she so unreasonably reserved?"

"You shall have no reserve to complain of now," pursued Magdalen. "I tell you plainly—if events had not happened as they did, you *would* have assisted me. If Michael Vanstone had not died, I should have gone to Brighton, and have found my way safely to his acquaintance under an assumed name. I had money enough with me to live on respectably for many months together. I would have employed that time, I would have waited a whole year, if necessary, to destroy Mrs. Lecount's influence over him—and I would have ended by getting that influence, on my own terms, into my own hands. I had the advantage of years, the advantage of novelty, the advantage of downright desperation, all on my side; and I should have succeeded. Before the year was out—before half the year was out—you should have seen Mrs. Lecount dismissed by her master; and you should have seen me taken into the house, in her place, as Michael Vanstone's adopted daughter—as the faithful friend who had saved him from an adventuress in his old age. Girls no older than I am, have tried deceptions as hopeless in appearance as mine, and have carried them through to the end. I had my story ready; I had my plans all considered; I had the weak point in that old man to attack, in my way, which Mrs. Lecount had found out before me to attack in hers—and I tell you again, I should have succeeded."

"I think you would," said the captain. "And what next?"

"Mr. Michael Vanstone would have changed his man of business, next. You would have succeeded to the place; and those clever speculations on which he was so fond of venturing, would have cost him the fortunes of which he had robbed my sister and myself. To the last farthing, Captain Wragge—as certainly as you sit there, to the last farthing! A bold conspiracy, a shocking deception—wasn't it? I don't care! Any conspiracy, any deception, is justified to my conscience by the vile law which has left us helpless. You talked of my reserve just now. Have I dropped it at last? Have I spoken out, at the eleventh hour?"

The captain laid his hand solemnly on his heart, and launched himself once more on his broadest flow of language.

"You fill me with unavailing regret," he said. "If that old man had lived, what a crop I might have reaped from him! What enormous transactions in moral agriculture it might have been my privilege to carry on! *Ars longa*," said Captain Wragge, pathetically drifting into Latin—"*vita brevis!* Let us drop a tear on the lost opportunities of the past, and try what the present can do to console us. One conclusion is clear to my mind. The experiment you proposed to try with Mr. Michael Vanstone, is totally hopeless, my dear girl, in the case of his son. His son is impervious to all ordinary forms of pecuniary temptation. You may trust my solemn assurance," continued the captain, speaking with an indignant recollection of the answer to his advertisement in the Times, "when I inform you that Mr. Noel Vanstone is, emphatically, the meanest of mankind."

"I can trust my own experience as well," said Magdalen. "I have seen him and spoken to him—I know him better than you do. Another disclosure, Captain Wragge, for your private ear! I sent you back certain articles of costume—when they had served the purpose for which I took them to London. That purpose was to find my way to Noel Vanstone, in disguise, and to judge for myself of Mrs. Lecount and her master. I gained my object; and I tell you again, I know the two people in that house yonder whom we have now to deal with, better than you do."

Captain Wragge expressed the profound astonishment, and asked the innocent questions, appropriate to the mental condition of a person taken completely by surprise.

"Well," he resumed, when Magdalen had briefly answered him; "and what is the result on your own mind? There must be a result, or we should not be here. You see your way? Of course, my dear girl, you see your way?"

"Yes," she said, quickly. "I see my way."

The captain drew a little nearer to her, with eager curiosity expressed in every line of his vagabond face.

"Go on," he said, in an anxious whisper; "pray go on."

She looked out thoughtfully into the gathering darkness, without answering, without appearing to have heard him. Her lips closed; and her clasped hands tightened mechanically round her knees.

"There is no disguising the fact," said Captain Wragge, warily rousing her into speaking to him. "The son is harder to deal with than the father——"

"Not in my way," she interposed, suddenly.

"Indeed!" said the captain. "Well! they say there is a short cut to everything, if we only look long enough to find it. You have looked long enough, I suppose; and the natural result has followed—you have found it."

"I have not troubled myself to look; I have found it without looking."

"The deuce you have!" cried Captain Wragge, in great perplexity. "My dear girl, is my view of your present position leading me altogether astray? As I understand it, here is Mr. Noel Vanstone in possession of your fortune and your sister's, as his father was—and determined to keep it, as his father was?"

"Yes."

"And here are you—quite helpless to get it by persuasion; quite helpless to get it by law—just as resolute in his case, as you were in his father's, to take it by stratagem in spite of him?"

"Just as resolute? Not for the sake of the fortune—mind that! For the sake of the right."

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"Just so. And the means of coming at that right, which were hard with the father—who was not a miser—are easy with the son, who is?"

"Perfectly easy."

"Write me down an Ass, for the first time in my life!" cried the captain, at the end of his patience. "Hang me if I know what you mean!"

She looked round at him, for the first time—looked him straight and steadily in the face.

"I will tell you what I mean," she said. "I mean to marry him."

Captain Wragge started up on his knees; and stopped on them, petrified by astonishment.

"Remember what I told you," said Magdalen, looking away from him again. "I have lost all care for myself. I have only one end in life now; and the sooner I reach it—and die—the better. If——" She stopped; altered her position a little; and pointed with one hand to the fast-ebbing stream beneath her, gleaming dim in the darkening twilight—"if I had been what I once was, I would have thrown myself into that river, sooner than do what I am going to do now. As it is, I trouble myself no longer; I weary my mind with no more schemes. The short way, and the vile way, lies before me. I take it, Captain Wragge—and marry him."

"Keeping him in total ignorance of who you are?" said the captain, slowly rising to his feet, and slowly moving round, so as to see her face. "Marrying him, as my niece—Miss Bygrave?"

"As your niece, Miss Bygrave."

"And after the marriage——?" His voice faltered, as he began the question, and he left it unfinished.

"After the marriage," she said, "I shall stand in no further need of your assistance."

The captain stooped, as she gave him that answer—looked close at her—and suddenly drew back, without uttering a word. He walked away some paces, and sat down again doggedly on the grass. If Magdalen could have seen his face, in the dying light, his face would have startled her. For the first time, probably, since his boyhood, Captain Wragge had changed colour. He was deadly pale.

"Have you nothing to say to me?" she asked. "Perhaps you are waiting to hear what terms I have to offer? These are my terms. I pay all our expenses here; and when we part, on the day of the marriage, you take a farewell gift away with you of two hundred pounds. Do you promise me your assistance on those conditions?"

"What am I expected to do?" he asked, with a furtive look at her, and a sudden distrust in his voice.

"You are expected to preserve my assumed character and your own," she answered; "and you are to prevent any inquiries of Mrs. Lecount's from discovering who I really am. I ask no more. The rest is my responsibility—not yours."

"I have nothing to do with what happens—at any time, or in any place—after the marriage?"

"Nothing whatever."

"I may leave you at the church door, if I please?"

"At the church door—with your fee in your pocket."

"Paid from the money in your own possession?"

"Certainly! How else should I pay it?"

Captain Wragge took off his hat, and passed his handkerchief over his face with an air of relief.

"Give me a minute to consider it," he said.

"As many minutes as you like," she rejoined, reclining on the bank in her former position, and returning to her former occupation of tearing up the tufts of grass and flinging them out into the air.

The captain's reflections were not complicated by any unnecessary divergences, from the contemplation of his own position to the contemplation of Magdalen's. Utterly incapable of appreciating the injury done her by Frank's infamous treachery to his engagement—an injury which had severed her, at one cruel blow, from the aspiration which, delusion though it was, had been the saving aspiration of her life—Captain Wragge accepted the simple fact of her despair, just as he found it; and then looked straight to the consequences of the proposal which she had made to him.

In the prospect *before* the marriage he saw nothing more serious involved than the practice of a deception, in no important degree different—except in the end to be attained by it—from the deceptions which his vagabond life had long since accustomed him to contemplate and to carry out. In the prospect *after* the marriage, he dimly discerned, through the ominous darkness of the future, the lurking phantoms of Terror and Crime, and the black gulphs behind them of Ruin and Death. A man of boundless audacity and resource, within his own mean limits; beyond those limits, the captain was as deferentially submissive to the majesty of the law as the most harmless man in existence; as cautious in looking after his own personal safety, as the veriest coward that ever walked the earth. But one serious question now filled his mind. Could he, on the terms proposed to him, join the conspiracy against Noel Vanstone up to the point of the marriage—and then withdraw from it, without risk of involving himself in the consequences which his experience told him must certainly ensue.

Strange as it may seem, his decision, in this emergency, was mainly influenced by no less a person than Mr. Noel Vanstone himself. The captain might have resisted the money-offer which Magdalen had made to him—for the profits of the Entertainment had filled his pockets with more than three times two hundred pounds.

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But the prospect of dealing a blow in the dark at the man who had estimated his information and himself at the value of a five-pound note, proved too much for his caution and his self-control. On the small neutral ground of self-importance, the best men and the worst meet on the same terms. Captain Wragge's indignation, when he saw the answer to his advertisement, stooped to no retrospective estimate of his own conduct: he was as deeply offended, as sincerely angry, as if he had made a perfectly honourable proposal, and had been rewarded for it by a personal insult. He had been too full of his own grievance, to keep it out of his first letter to Magdalen. He had more or less forgotten himself, on every subsequent occasion when Noel Vanstone's name was mentioned. And in now finally deciding the course he should take, it is not too much to say, that the motive of money receded, for the first time in his life, into the second place—and the motive of malice carried the day.

"I accept the terms," said Captain Wragge, getting briskly on his legs again. "Subject, of course, to the conditions agreed on between us. We part on the wedding-day. I don't ask where you go: you don't ask where I go. From that time forth, we are strangers to each other."

Magdalen rose slowly from the mound. A hopeless depression, a sullen despair, showed itself in her look and manner. She refused the captain's offered hand; and her tones, when she answered him, were so low, that he could hardly hear her.

"We understand each other," she said; "and we can now go back. You may introduce me to Mrs. Lecount to-morrow."

"I must ask a few questions first," said the captain, gravely. "There are more risks to be run in this matter, and more pitfals in our way, than you seem to suppose. I must know the whole history of your morning call on Mrs. Lecount, before I put you and that woman on speaking terms with each other."

"Wait till to-morrow," she broke out impatiently. "Don't madden me by talking about it to-night."

The captain said no more. They turned their faces towards Aldborough, and walked slowly back.

By the time they reached the houses, night had overtaken them. Neither moon nor stars were visible. A faint noiseless breeze, blowing from the land, had come with the darkness. Magdalen paused on the lonely public walk to breathe the air more freely. After awhile, she turned her face from the breeze, and looked out towards the sea. The immeasurable silence of the calm waters, lost in the black void of night, was awful. She stood looking into the darkness, as if its mystery had no secrets for her—she advanced towards it slowly, as if it drew her by some hidden attraction into itself.

"I am going down to the sea," she said to her companion. "Wait here, and I will come back."

He lost sight of her in an instant—it was as if the night had swallowed her up. He listened, and counted her footsteps by the crashing of them on the shingle in the deep stillness. They retreated slowly, farther and farther away into the night. Suddenly the sound of them ceased. Had she paused on her course? or had she reached one of the strips of sand left bare by the ebbing tide?

He waited, and listened anxiously. The time passed, and no sound reached him. He still listened with a growing distrust of the darkness. Another moment, and there came a sound from the invisible shore. Far and faint from the beach below, a long cry moaned through the silence. Then, all was still once more.

In sudden alarm, he stepped forward to descend to the beach, and to call to her. Before he could cross the path, footsteps rapidly advancing, caught his ear. He waited an instant—and the figure of a man passed quickly along the walk, between him and the sea. It was too dark to discern anything of the stranger's face; it was only possible to see that he was a tall man—as tall as that officer in the merchant service, whose name was Kirke.

The figure passed on northward, and was instantly lost to view. Captain Wragge crossed the path; and, advancing a few steps down the beach, stopped, and listened again. The crash of footsteps on the shingle caught his ear once more. Slowly, as the sound had left him, that sound now came back. He called to guide her to him. She came on till he could just see her—a shadow ascending the shingly slope, and growing out of the blackness of the night.

"You alarmed me," he whispered nervously. "I was afraid something had happened. I heard you cry out, as if you were in pain."

"Did you?" she said, carelessly. "I *was* in pain. It doesn't matter—it's over now."

Her hand mechanically swung something to and fro, as she answered him. It was the little white silk bag, which she had always kept hidden in her bosom up to this time. One of the relics which it held—one of the relics which she had not had the heart to part with before—was gone from its keeping for ever. Alone on a strange shore, she had torn from her the fondest of her virgin memories, the dearest of her virgin hopes. Alone on a strange shore, she had taken the lock of Frank's hair from its once-treasured place, and had cast it away from her to the sea and the night.

GONE TO JAIL.

THE case of the woman-prisoner has been heard and the sentence pronounced, and now off in the prison van to that grim fortress of crime for the long years' penal servitude, and weary watching for the day of freedom. Few care to follow such wretched women into that grim beyond; few ask, and fewer know, how they live when shut out from the world—what influences are about them, and whether they are being fitted for a braver fight with sin and evil circumstances, than they have

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hitherto made, or whether they are hardening themselves in their vices, so that when they are set free they will fall again, and perhaps fall lower than before. What criminal women do when in prison has never troubled the world much; but now, a certain prison matron has expressed her experiences most admirably, in a work extremely interesting to any student of human history, anxious to know the truths of human life.*

The surging sea of crime flings up its female waifs and strays, with the sentence of the judge still ringing in their ears, to the dark stones of Millbank prison. The outer bell rings, and the gatekeeper unlocks and opens the first great gates; the inner gates of strong ironwork are next unfastened by the second gatekeeper, and the prison-van rolls in through the court to the door of the reception-room, where the matron receives the women, and learns who and what they are, and why they are come. Name, age, crime, and length of sentence, are then registered, and the "prison bird" is delivered to the hands of the prison authorities. Her first trial is the hair-cutting. Women who have murdered child, or friend, or husband, weep, and moan, and shiver, as the shears go round their heads, and their long dirty matted locks strew the floor. Some try what coaxing will do, and "my dear" and "God bless" the haircutter, in the hope of an extra half-inch left on for grace, if they cannot escape the penalty altogether; some weep passionately, and beseech the matron on their knees to spare them, and will she go to the lady superintendent and state their case, when surely the rule will be relaxed for this once and for them; others have violent shiverings and hysterical fits; others, again, set their lips hard, and submit without a murmur, sitting down in the chair and marching off to the bath afterwards, in quite a business-like way; others will yell, and kick, and bite, and are only to be kept quiet by handcuffs, and superior force, and by the guards in the outer yards called in to tame their tigerishness. One old woman past sixty, and with about a dozen grey hairs to fight for, resisted for a long time, on the plea that since she was last there, she had got married, and her hair was now her husband's, and not the Queen of England herself dare touch it; and one fair-haired Scotch girl was delirious for thirty-six hours—"Dinna cut my hair; oh! dinna cut my hair!" wailing through the deserted corridors all the night long. But criminals have not in general such sensitive organisations as this; and, besides, her "haar" has always been more sacred to a Scottish maiden than to an English one. After the hair then has been cut to the required length, and the due cleansing in the tepid bath administered, the prisoners are clothed in the brown serge gown, blue check apron, and white muslin cap, of prison uniform; then, each is assigned her cell in the solitary ward; and the key is turned on one more wretched outcast from liberty and love.

This is the uniform routine of prison life; day by day the same, varied only by the "breaks out" of the more fractious, or the illness of the delicate and diseased. At a quarter to six in the morning the guard, going off night duty in the yard, rings up the prison, and by six every woman is expected to be up and dressed in her cell, ready for inspection by the matrons of the ward as they pass down, unbolting the inner door of each cell and flinging it back to make sure that the prisoner has not torn her clothes, or strangled herself in her sheets, or opened a vein with a jagged stone, or hung herself to the grating, or done any other of the many acts of violence and self-damage that are not uncommon. The life of the day then begins. A certain number are let out to clean the flagstones in the ward, with a matron in guard over them; the best-behaved clean the matrons' rooms and make their beds; each cell is scrubbed, the deal table polished, the bed folded up, and the blankets, shawl, and bonnet are placed on it. At half-past seven, comes the breakfast of a pint of cocoa and a four-ounce loaf; and after this the day's work is fairly set in hand —coir-picking for the new comers, bag-making, shirt-making, and other work, all done silently and apart, each woman in her separate cell. At a quarter-past nine, the chapel bell rings, and service begins at a quarter to ten; at half-past twelve, water is served out; at a quarter to one, dinner—four ounces of boiled meat, half a pound of potatoes, and a six-ounce loaf; after dinner, coir-picking and shirt-making as before; in the morning or afternoon an hour's exercise in the yard: the women walking in Indian file, tramp, tramp, round and round the yard, under the care of a matron who not unfrequently falls asleep as she paces with them. For, this weary walking in the exercise-yard, shivering in the winter winds or fainting under the summer sun, is one of the most trying duties of the matron in charge; and the authoress of the book tells us how she once "nodded on her post," dreaming of the green lanes and the home friends she had lately left—a breach of duty which would infallibly have been seen and reported by the principal who just then entered the yard, had not one of the women lightly twitched her by the shawl as she passed. At half-past five, a pint of gruel; in the later evening, prayers read by a matron standing in the centre of each ward, so that all can hear her; after which, work again till half-past eight; then, bed-making; and at a quarter to nine the gas is turned off from each cell, and the prisoners are, or are supposed to be, in their beds and quiet for the night.

Supposed to be, in truth, and quiet very often not; for the night matron, whose duty it is to pace up and down the wards, passing once in the hour before each cell, has frequently to report some "break out" of one more turbulent than the rest, some coarseness of speech worse than usual, some insolent or blasphemous song, some smashing of windows, or tearing of clothes, or wild unbridled violence, which ensures the

* Female Life in Prison. By a Prison Matron. Published by Hurst and Blackett.

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arrival of the guards, the locking-on of handcuffs, and an ignominious dismissal to the "dark," where the noisy demon must be exorcised as it best can be. These breaking-out women, though not necessarily the worst in nature, are the most difficult of all to deal with. It is not always the result of ill-temper, or of having been affronted by matron or mate—a very fruitful source of violence and discontent—but often a mere animal protest against the dead monotony of their lives; an uncontrollable desire for change of any kind, even a change to something worse; a kind of brute instinct which, the more unconscious and brutal it is, is all the more difficult to suppress and turn aside. Sometimes they will give the matron warning that they intend to break out at such and such a time; sometimes they will be suppressed for weeks together, out of affection for some particular officer. For, bad as the women are—and, as a class, the prison matron says they are "desperately wicked"—they often form the most passionate attachments to certain matrons and officers, and some of them have been known to break the rules of Brixton and Fulham prisons—milder though they are, and a step in advance towards freedom and social esteem—only that they might return to the old place and the old ward where the one loved face shed the light of humanity and sympathy on their hearts. And some will go into the "dark," and bread-and-water for a day or two, only to have a companion—if they know that the cells are full, and that they must therefore be associated; and some to bear a favourite "pal" company, and not let her feel lonely. Christmas-time is generally the most excitable season, when breakings-out are rifest; and on Christmas-day, when all the world outside is merry and gay, the dark cells are always full, and the wilder and more restless spirits are at their worst.

Various and marked are the characters which form the world within the wards. Some are sullen, malicious, and revengeful; there are women who will bear a particular officer a grudge for years, waiting patiently for an opportunity of doing some injury—perhaps attempting to murder—in revenge for a fancied slight or petty wrong done months or years ago. Others are crafty, sly, and hypocritical: glib with Scripture phrases and adepts at pious acting: women who get the chaplain's good word, and the visiting ladies' commendation: but who are utterly irreclaimable, and all the more so because of their glib pretence; others, again, are passionate and impulsive, always ready for an outbreak, and with no more steadiness of principle than children or savages. These are by no means the worst women, but very trying prisoners, and generally in disgrace because of violated prison discipline; the observance of which is not, however, the whole duty of man, whatever visiting justices and inspectors may say. The prison matron knew some strange people while she was at her post. There were the "Garnetts," mother and daughter, tall thin angular women, taciturn and grave, pious and well-conducted, who came to Millbank to serve out their time—four years' penal servitude—on the charge of having starved to death a younger daughter of the elder prisoner's. They were lace-makers, and it was deposed that the younger daughter had been kept without food for two nights, because unable, through illness, to do her pillow-lace, and that her last words were, as she turned round to die, "Oh, Lord Jesus, help me to do my work next week!" for without work neither mother nor sister would give her bread. On this evidence the Garnetts were sent to prison, and the prison matron had the charge of them. Cool undemonstrative quiet women, gaunt and emaciated, with famine written on their haggard faces, and scored on every line of their bony forms, civil to their matrons, shy and quiet to the other prisoners, working out their sentences each in her own cell with patience and calmness—they impressed all who saw them with the belief of their innocence—innocence at least in intention. Once only, the mother made allusion to the cause of her imprisonment. Seeming to be more abstracted than usual one day, the matron asked her if anything troubled her, or if she wanted anything?

"Oh no, lady," she said, at once.

"I thought you were dull."

"I'm very comfortable, thank you."

"You are not fretting about the length of your sentence?" asked the matron, again.

"I've nothing to fret about, lady; I'm better off here than I ever was in ——shire. We were all starving there together; and my husband, who was a shepherd, was very ill, and my daughter was weak, too, and we had nothing to give them—nothing at all to give them or ourselves, and so my daughter died. But, lady, it wasn't in our power to help her."

The matron felt sure that the old woman spoke the truth. When mother and daughter first parted, each to go to her separate cell, they parted without word, look, or tear: they made no inquiries after each other, and when the mother was asked if she did not wish to hear how her daughter was getting on, her only answer was:

"She's getting on very well; she be a quiet girl, and no trouble to you, I'm sure, lady."

The daughter, when asked the same question about her mother, looked up from her coir-picking, and said she "hoped mother hadn't been a fidgeting." After some months' of imprisonment, they met one day, as if by chance, in the Millbank kitchen. One slight stare from each to each, and then both were busied about their duties, and never looked back again. After a still longer term of probation, they were admitted into the association class, and mother and daughter were placed in the same cell.

"Well, Elizabeth," said the mother, coldly.

"Well, mother," said the daughter, just as coldly.

Two minutes afterwards, they were seated opposite each other at the table, both working away assiduously, and neither addressing the other. After a week's association, a matron asked the

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daughter if she was not glad to have her mother as a companion?

"Ye—es, lady," was the hesitating answer; "it's a kind of change, but"—with a little impulsive dash—"she do make a great mess and litter, to be sure!"

They were quiet half-stultified simple-minded beings, whom poverty and starvation had reduced far below the natural sensibility of humanity; but they were not murderesses.

Then there was "Granny Collis," the mother of the prison in a way, above seventy years of age, who committed petty thefts that she might be sent to Millbank: having no friends out of doors, and disliking the workhouse, where they were quarrelsome and noisy, and "not used to her ways," as they were at Millbank. Collis was a small, spare, pretty old woman, with a chirping voice, and a merry way, good tempered, obedient, fond of her Bible, and sincerely religious. She did her small sins for the sole purpose of being sent to jail, where she was taken care of, and treated kindly, and where she found a happier home, and a more liberal one, than in the union. She wanted to die in jail, she said; it was her only place of refuge, and she did not care to leave it; and so, when she was discharged, she committed a petty theft again—after having honestly tried the workhouse, and found it would not answer—and came tottering back to Millbank, where she did die at last, in all peace and serenity, before her time had fully expired. These were two instances of innocent prisoners—for poor old Granny Collis was innocent in a way—where the fault lay with the hard ruling of society, and the bitter teaching of poverty, rather than with their own innate depravity, as with so many others.

Lydia Camblin, the "golden-haired, rosy-faced child, of slight, almost fragile figure," looked as if fresh from the holy keeping of a mother's love. Her sudden appearance in the ward, with her prison gown of preposterous size pinned up round her, and her fair child's face looking so strangely from beneath the great prison cap, awoke such a burst of womanly feeling among even the worst criminals of the ward. "My God, look here!" cried one woman, clasping her hands, while deep convulsive sobs broke out on all sides. "It's a shame! it's an awful shame! She should not have been let in here!" they cried, and the child was obliged to be passed on quickly to her cell, that the excitement of the women might calm down. Yet she was one of the most painful instances of premature vice and depravity that could have been found. She "might have been an old prison bird of forty years of age, for her coolness, presence of mind, and craft. She was terribly old in thought, even for a woman thrice her age; was hard to repress, and difficult to restrain. From her lips it has been the matron's unpleasant lot to hear the foul and obscene words which escape, in excited moments, from the most unprincipled of prisoners. One would believe, on hearing her, and in looking at the pale child-like face confronting the observer, that she was *born bad*, or that, if there were any parents whom she could recollect, they must have been 'God and Heaven reversed to her.'" What an awful account lies somewhere, that this young fair child should have been trained up to be the frightfully depraved being she was—a being doomed to inevitable ruin, going down to perdition.

Many prisoners are very troublesome, because entailing extra attention and attendance on the part of the matrons, and yet we, who read of their tricks, and are not irritated by their personal reference to ourselves, can only laugh at them, as humorous antics and pardonable freaks of fancy. There was McWilliams—well, to be sure she was marked *Incorrigible* in the Director's book of characters—who was always being sent to the "dark" for smashing windows and breaking prison rules, but she was a queer madcap rather than thoroughly bad. One day they heard shrieks of laughter issuing from her cell. Now, prisoners in a solitary cell don't laugh for nothing; so there was a hurrying to McWilliams to know what was the matter, and why she had laughed? "Nothing particular, ma'am—only—oh dear! it does look so funny—I have been cutting the broom's hair. It's much too long, miss, according to the rules!" And there, sure enough, was her new broom with all its bristles cut close to the stump, and done for, as a sweeper, for ever! Punished for this freak, her next act was to walk to chapel without shoes or stockings, amusing herself and the rest of the prisoners by thrusting out her bare feet and legs during the service, until the giggling of her companions betrayed her to the indignant matron.

Jarvis was another troublesome inmate. Jarvis had a fancy for getting her head into difficulty; wherever there was a square hole large enough for a head to go through, there was Jarvis in a self-made pillory, with her silly defying face turned aggravatingly towards you. In the doors of the refractory cells is a small trap for passing food through to the prisoners. If by chance this trap was opened, quick as a jack-in-the-box Jarvis's head would be thrust through, and the matron must sit down and keep close watch on her for hours and hours together, to see that she did not strangle herself. Sometimes the guards were able to thrust the head gently back again and close the trap, and then Jarvis would fling herself on her back and kick the floor with her heels violently for twenty-four hours at least, and without a moment's cessation. She was called "crying Jarvis," and was not of quite sound intellect. Indeed, many of the criminals are not quite sane:—a larger proportion than the world, eager to keep up the wholesome theory of moral responsibility, would like to acknowledge. Celestina Sommer, who murdered her child under circumstances peculiarly cruel and revolting, and whose sentence of death was commuted to penal servitude for life, would not have been pronounced sane by Dr. Conolly at any time of her career. A pale

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fair-haired woman, quiet, orderly, well conducted, with a horror of the other women, and inordinately vain of her singing (which was wretchedly bad), she gradually passed from constant ill-health to decided mania, and left Brixton prison, or rather the infirmary, only for the criminal lunatic asylum of Fisherton, where she died—hopelessly mad as she had been, poor wretch, all along, though not patently so. And there was a woman named Kearns, who was mad for some time before any one acted on the knowledge that she was; she nearly murdered one of the matrons, against whom she had long cherished a grudge, on account of that matron's having given her, as she thought, a cap and gown of inferior quality to the other prisoners. By means never clearly ascertained, she secreted a knife for days in her cell, her mind all the time persistently bent on this one design, and early one morning she called to the matron, begging her company for a few moments; "she had found such a beautiful verse in the Bible, and would she come and read it to her?" The matron went and took the Bible from her hands. "You'll see better near the light," said Kearns, craftily; and the matron drew to the window; when, quick as thought, the door was flung to, and with a wild beast's spring, Kearns was at the matron's throat, flinging her down on the ground and stabbing at her face and neck with the knife. Assistance came just in time, two other prisoners near at hand rousing up the jail, and themselves rescuing the matron; but the poor woman's life was long despaired of, and Kearns was taken off to Fisherton, a raving maniac, with her madness fully developed.

Another woman, one Mary Johnson, a jealous unfriendly sullen woman, had a quarrel with her "pal," and consequently was doubly insolent and aggressive to the officers. One evening she begged the favour of a staylace, and the matron, willing to oblige her, went to the store-room for one. On returning she noticed that Johnson's door was not properly closed, and that the woman was standing by it as if waiting for her. She paused a moment before entering, when Johnson, full of fury and madness, rushed out upon her. The matron ran back to the store-room and shut herself in, and the wretched woman, "baffled, turned suddenly to the railing, and with one awful leap cleared it, and went dashing to the bottom. The dead heavy thud on the flagstones below, the bloody heap of clothes lying there to blanch every face and sicken every heart, the hush and horror of prisoners and prison matrons, will be remembered by all whose business lay in that prison on that memorable and awful night."

Pretty vain fair-faced Edwards was another mad prisoner, whose special horror it was to be called "Irish," and who took in intensest hatred one Love, who was always calling after her, "You know you are Irish, Edwards; why can't you say so and be quiet! Everybody knows you are Irish as well as I do!" Whereupon Edwards would fly after Love and dodge her all round the airing-ward, swearing to have her life; as she would have done had not the matron and the other prisoners prevented her. Suddenly Edwards refused to go out into the airing-yard. "I shan't go, without you carry me out!" she said sullenly, so they left her to her ill humour, not sorry to save poor Love the usual chase. Edwards's cell looked into the yard; and, before the women were taken abroad, she managed to tear out the frame and glass of her cell window and press herself up into the space: holding in her hands, ready for a "shy at Love," two jagged pieces of stone, used in cleaning the pavement of the wards. Love was not out that day, fortunately for her; and next day Edwards, whose trick was not then discovered, refused to go out, as before. This time she was watched, and caught in her wild-beast attitude as if waiting for a spring; so she was sent to the "dark" for her destruction of prison property and murderous designs. When brought out, she did the same thing again, but, as Love was transferred to another part of the prison, she was let to sit out in the frost and snow, as probably a good natural corrective of her overheated blood. One day, long after this, she heard Love's voice in the ward. To rush out of her cell, and down the ward, to be at the heels of her old tormentor, before any one knew where she had gone, was the work of a moment; and then a matron flung herself in her arms and clung round her neck, Edwards still running with the matron hanging to her; but they got Love out of her way in time, and poor mad Edwards went off to Fisherton.

Who would expect coquettish dress at Millbank, or fashionable arrangement of prison uniform! And yet that was Mary Anne Ball's speciality. Mary Anne was a bold handsome girl of nineteen, whose charms would not be lost for want of their owner's consciousness of their power, and determination to give them full value. Mary Anne would rip up her mattress for cords to make a mock crinoline, and would tear out her window wires for stay bones; and she would twist and alter her gown so that the dull brown serge of antiquated cut, in which she disappeared behind her grating last night, would come out next day a fashionable flowing robe, with an elegant long waist, and a crinoline, and tight-fitting pair of stays, to match—so tight, indeed, that one day she fainted in chapel, owing to them. She would roll her hair, à l'Impératrice, under the prison cap, and would manipulate her poke bonnet into a capital imitation of the Haymarket and Cranbourne-alley; and she made a kind of bandoline out of candle-grease, and smoothed her dark hair off her brow with the best effect possible. But she was a very Devil. Strong as a lioness and as violent, she was for ever being sent off to the "dark"—her way thither, strewn with shreds and patches of prison stuff, tufts of whiskers, uniform buttons, and handfuls of men's hair: as slight tokens of "her mind," and what she felt on that occasion. Anything and everything put her out. Not that she was thoroughly bad-natured, but so violent and "hot," so apt to take offence, and so untameable when offended. And yet she could be managed sometimes—only

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rarely it must be admitted—by the kindness of those whom she particularly affected; and she has even been known to leave off singing and swearing when in the "dark," because the matron on night duty, whom she liked, was tired, having been nursing a sick brother all day, and besought her to be quiet. "Good night, miss, Gord bless you!" said the handsome tigress at last, one little ray of womanliness breaking through the storm. Mary Anne was marvellously strong. Nothing could bind her. If put into a strait-waistcoat, she used to rub the straps against the walls till she wore them through, and so had the use of her hands again; and she broke out of the refractory cell something after the fashion of Jack Sheppard, finally coming to grief in the matron's chimney, where she stuck. She was the terror and plague of the prison, and "Ball's coming back" went like lightning through the wards. At last, her health breaking, she got a little calmer, and worked her time out as well as she could, asking to be put "in the dark" and kept cool, when she felt the mad fits of passion or "breaking out" come on her; and so, fighting against her nature and doing the best she could with herself, poor wild fiery Ball worked through her time, and disturbed Millbank no more. It was she who introduced into the prison the many personal vanities which even yet afflict the matrons; for to this day the plaster scraped from the walls paints the complexion white, and the red threads of the aprons and other garments, steeped in water, colour the cheeks red, and grease from the candle is a good notion of bandoline—to the women's intense satisfaction and the matron's horror and perplexity how to act.

Other women were as strong and violent as Ball, though none so vain. There was one Copes, who would run up the wall of her cell like a cat, and with her teeth would tear down the canvas and framework of the padded cells where she was confined; as for securing her in a strait-waistcoat, she would get out of that, somehow, in a very few minutes. She was a perfect tigress, that woman, and only to be managed by superior force; she did not care what became of herself, and would frighten every one into fits by knocking her head against the stones of the yard, or against her own cell walls, until they expected to see her brains dashed out. She was a pleasant kind of companion, truly, and Brixton passed her on to Millbank, and Millbank returned her to Brixton, and a kind of electric shock went through whichever prison was doomed to hold her.

There is a great deal of feigned insanity and simulated disease among the women; for, the infirmary being their local paradise, as the more enthusiastic call it, every one makes what haste they can to get into it, and no one is very particular as to the means of getting in. Eating roughly pounded glass, to produce internal hemorrhage, is one of their great tricks—the doctor, not knowing what may be the cause of the very alarming symptoms, ordering them off to the infirmary at once, where they have "all that heart can desire," they say, including port-wine and good strong tea. Pricking their gums with a needle, to show actual spitting of blood; making soap pills, for epileptic frothing at the mouth; lying stiff and stark, to simulate catalepsy; sometimes assuming a rheumatic limp, which prevents their doing any active work, and which doubles them up into crooked balls and hunchbacks; in one instance, inflating the body to the most marvellous size, so that the patient seemed on the point of bursting asunder—a trick that exploded when she was chloroformed, and could not inhale the outer air as she had done—these are ordinary, every-day deceptions, which every prisoner with a taste for creature-comforts, and a good knack at acting, will attempt. It is sometimes difficult to tell the true from the false; but this kind of bewildered sympathy is what both doctors and matrons have to guard against, for the successful feigner is always one of the most corrupting examples. Also, the officers have to keep watch against the various tricks by which prisoners will communicate all they want known, either in the prison, or out of doors. They can talk silently, opening and shutting the mouth as if speaking, but without a sound issuing—a practice in great request at chapel, and thoroughly well understood by them all; and by some means, yet unknown, they are able to get news of themselves sent to their friends, in spite of all the vigilance possible. Nay, sometimes, at Millbank, they will get notes carried over to the men's side, and notes to them will find their way back; but how this is done no one knows, and the agents will not "split." One poor woman got word sent to her husband of the exact day and hour of her removal to the convict ship—this was in the old days of transportation—and how she herself came to that knowledge no one ever understood. She found it out mysteriously, and was never told officially or openly. However, there the husband was, with the large-hearted faith and love and patient forgiveness of the honest working man; and before the guards knew what was doing, he had thrust them aside, and was hugging his poor guilty wife in his arms. Tears were in the men's eyes when they warned him to "stand back," but he had had his last brief parting kiss, and it was his wife alone (as she used afterwards to boast) who had given him the opportunity for this melancholy joy. Do what they will, the prison authorities cannot stop this mysterious underground manner of communication, and by what means it is done none of them yet know, or can find out.

It would be impossible to go through all the interesting characters and events recorded in this sad book. There was the affected lady-like swindler Seymour, the mouse-tamer, who made such friends with a mouse that it would come at her call, run up her sleeve, and sleep in her bosom; and she used to take it to chapel and talk of it as "my friend," and discuss its health and character and constitution at length. One day, a spiteful woman in Seymour's absence imi-

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tated her call; the mouse came out on to the table; the woman caught it and bit its tail off. Poor Seymour's loyal wrath knew no bounds. Her passionate despair at the indignity to which her friend had been subjected was almost tragic in its intensity. Another woman tamed a sparrow; but both "my friend" and "Bobby" came to untimely ends, for "Alma," the prison cat, ate the one, and the other dashed into the lighted gas, singed his wings, and died that night, with the woman wringing her hands in grief over his body. It was some months before Seymour recovered the loss of "her friend," and she might be seen in the evenings sitting crying in her cell, unable to turn away her mind from her great sorrow. Another woman made her little poem out of a daisy, which was the only thing that touched her or brought tears to her eyes. She was one of the sullen and obdurate class; but the little daisy, surreptitiously picked in the yard and laid before her on the cell table, broke her down; and the matron, looking quietly through the grating, saw the fierce dark sullen woman bury her head in her folded arms, and burst into a passion of tears at the mute witness of that little flower. It was a strange travesty of Picciola.

It is a harder task to manage female prisoners than male, says the prison matron. They are more impulsive, more individual, more unreasonable and excitable, than men; will not act in concert, and cannot be disciplined in masses. Each wants personal and peculiar treatment, so that the duties fall much more heavily on the matrons than on the warders: the matrons having thus to deal with units, not aggregates, and having to adapt themselves to each individual case, instead of simply obeying certain fixed laws and making others obey them, as in the prisons for males. On this account the prison matron urges one reform much needed, namely, a larger staff of matrons and female officers. At present they are too few, consequently are overworked, and often obliged to give up their situations, broken down before their time. They suffer almost as severely as the criminals, and lead almost as terrible lives of monotony and confinement. For they, too, have gone to jail, with this sole difference, that they are innocent, not guilty prisoners, and are doing the work of law and good order, not of vice and demoralisation. Yet their case is a hard one, and to be looked into.

TWO DOG-SHOWS.

It has been said that every individual member of the human race bears in his outward form a resemblance to some animal; and I really believe that (you, the reader, and I, the writer of these words, excepted) this is very generally the case. Everybody surely can with ease point out among his friends some who resemble owls, hawks, giraffes, kangaroos, terriers, goats, monkeys. Do we not all know people who are like sheep, pigs, cats, or parrots; the last being, especially in military neighbourhoods, a very common type indeed? Let any one pay a visit to the Zoological Gardens with this theory of resemblances in his mind, and see how continually he will be reminded of his friends. Among the aviaries, before the dens, in the monkey-house, and even in the serpent department, he will find himself en pays de connaissance at every turn.

But what is more remarkable is, that there is one single tribe of animals, and that the most mixed up with man of all, whose different members recal to us constantly, different types of humanity. It is impossible to see a large collection of dogs together, without being continually reminded of the countenances of people you have met or known; of their countenances, and of their ways.

In that great canine competition which drew crowds, some week or two ago, to Islington, there were furnished many wonderful opportunities for moralising on humanity. It was difficult to keep the fancy within bounds. With regard to the prize dogs for instance (to plunge into the subject at once), was there not something of the quiet triumph of human success about their aspect? Was there not something of human malice and disappointment about the look of the unsuccessful competitors? Was there not a tendency in these last to turn their backs upon the winners, and to assume an indifference which they did not feel? There was a certain prize retriever, and a more beautiful animal never wagged tail. To see that creature sitting up and looking with an air of surprise towards the direction in which some other (and probably unsuccessful) dogs were making an immense noise with discontented growlings and barkings—to see his calm expression and utter want of sympathy—was a great sight, and the curled-up disgust of the other retriever who had failed, and whose position was next to that of the prize dog, was even a greater sight. On the whole, the winning dogs carried their honours with calmness, and, with the exception of the prize King Charles, the bearing of whose nose was a thought arrogant, sustained their triumph with modesty and forbearance. It is not difficult to occupy the first place becomingly. The winners of such high prizes can afford to be quiet and unassuming. But to feel that you can retrieve better than the prize retriever, that you can hang on to a bull's nose better than the prize bull-dog, that you can make yourself generally disagreeable better than the prize lap-dog, is a worrying thought for the second class competitor, and is apt to make him curl himself up and snap and render himself in a variety of ways hugely unpopular. For, it is to be supposed that the prizes in this same dog competition were accorded more to perfection of canine form than to intellectual merit, there being no opportunities of forming an estimate of a pointer's pointing, a retriever's retrieving, a bull-dog's bullying, or an Italian greyhound's aggravating, in the Agricultural Hall at Islington. To take the owner's word for the abilities of each animal would be of course out of the question.

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The beauty of one dog, the ugliness of another, and of all the utmost development of the individual peculiarities of the species to which they belonged, would seem to have been the causes operating with the judges. Some prizes are to be won by size, by depth of chest, by clean finish of limb, and symmetry of points: as in the case of the setter, the retriever, the greyhound, the pointer. Meanwhile, to be bandy, blear-eyed, pink-nosed, blotchy, under-hung, and utterly disreputable, is the bull-dog's proudest boast. The bloodhound's skin should hang in ghastly folds about his throat and jaws, with a dewlap like a bull. The King Charles's spaniel wears a fringe upon his legs like a sailor's trousers, and has a nose turned up so abruptly that you could hang your hat upon it if it were not so desperately short. The prize terrier wins because he weighs two pounds and three-quarters, and the boar-hound wins because he would (to look at him) turn the balance with a Shetland pony in the other scale. Truly, the qualifications of dogs are numerous, and very various their claims on our admiration. We give a medal to a Cuban hound for tearing down a fugitive slave, and to an Italian greyhound for wearing a paletot and trembling from head to foot (I saw him) when a fly enters his cage.

It is a great comfort *not* to understand a subject. When I enter a friend's garden, and sniff and stare about me, how I enjoy the perfume and the colours of his flowers, what memories of childish days they awaken, and how grateful and happy I feel. The Scotch gardener has another Scotch gardener, and friend, to see him, and together they go the rounds of the beds. They only think whether this is a good "specimen," whether that is "doubled," or the other equal to the example exhibited by Mr. Dibble at the recent rose-show. How contentedly my friend Corker refreshes himself with that claret, which a connoisseur would pronounce undrinkable; how happily he sits behind that carriage-horse with the disgraced knees.

Now, if I had understood dogs, what sort of a visit would mine have been to the show? I should, like the Scotch gardeners, have gone about comparing "specimens," and carping, as I heard many wiseacres do, at the decisions of the judges. What time should I have had for speculating as to the respective sensations of the winning and losing competitors? What opportunities for twisting a look of disappointment out of the features of one dog, and a look of triumph out of another?

Should I, again, if I had understood dogs, have derived the pleasure I did derive from discovering that the prize terrier, which was about the size of a rat, was the property of an immensely big man, and so instantly darting off to the conclusion that all the little dogs belonged to big men and all the big dogs to small men. This exquisite theory, which no amount of examples to the contrary will ever shake me out of, would never have dawned upon me had I been a dog-fancier. On the contrary, I should have journeyed about among those delightful animals entirely blind to their more wonderful qualities. I should have talked about "a man I knew who had a pointer that could lick any dog in the place into fits;" or I might even have gone the length of remarking that if "Manger of Stayleybridge had sent that bitch of his, she would have taken the shine out of any of 'em." A propos of the fox-hounds, I should have related extraordinary performances in a run with the Quorn hounds after a certain vixen-fox, which the whipper-in said was a dog-fox the moment it broke away, but which "I knew was a vixen-fox, and so it turned out." Before the pointers, I should have discoursed again of shooting, and should, perhaps, have gone the length of saying, "Ah, many's the day's shooting I've had with that very dog, for I always go over in September to Sir Thomas's, and a capital cover it is. Here, Ponto, Ponto." Ponto would, perhaps, have failed to recognise me, and, perhaps, would have rewarded my caresses with an attempted snap, but still I should have gone on in the same way, and even the old spotted spaniel of the story-book illustrations, a spotted spaniel would have been to me, and "nothing more."

That Clumber spaniel is unquestionably the old original dog of one's childhood. One's first acquaintance with the canine species was made through the agency of the coloured story-book, and it was one of those spaniels which figured on the page. His name was Dash, and the tan spots were dabbed on in water-colour so boldly that they bulged in many places over the outline of the animal's form, and covered portions of the background (not to say miles of remote prospect) to which they were but indifferently appropriate. But it is not entirely owing to ancient associations that these dogs are so attractive; they are really most beautiful and rare animals. A dog is a great bore; he howls in the night; he is tiresome to feed; he wants to go out when you have somewhere to go on business and cannot take him, on which occasions to see him with his head on one side looking after you as you shut him up is enough to break your heart; he is disliked by your friends whose carpets he impairs and whose cat he frightens; he is liable to be stolen, and to catch distempers and other diseases—in short, he is altogether a heavy handful, but still, if any one were to offer me one of those real old-fashioned spaniels, I hardly think I could refuse the gift.

And if these Clumber spaniels are full of old associations, so also is a curly-haired liver-coloured retriever. To see one of these dogs is to think of some old squire in the country who, as he makes his rounds about his gardens and farms, armed with a walking-staff with a spud at the end of it, is sure to have a superannuated retainer of this sort at his heels. A good dog he has been in his time, but he is now past his work, and so is admitted as a privileged animal to the drawing and dining-rooms, is fed with bits of biscuit after dinner, and listens to all the squire's stories, and to the directions which he gives to the gardeners and the farm-labourers.

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But incomparably beyond all the other sources of delight, open to the uninitiated, and hermetically sealed to the "Fancy," was the contemplation of a certain domestic scene which went on in the particular corner of the Agricultural Hall assigned to the Pomeranian family. Father, mother, and a whole litter of pups, were here secured together in a sort of pen, or fold, from which there was no escape. Never was a better example of a certain kind of unwilling head of a family, than was furnished by that Pomeranian father. He was chained to his home, and so was his excellent consort; but while she lay contentedly in the midst of her offspring and completely covered and overwhelmed by the little wretches who were sprawling all over her, the sire was found sitting at the very extremest limits of his chain, and with his head averted from the group, in a kind of desperate attempt to ignore the whole concern. It was perfectly useless for any of the scions of his house to attempt to attract his attention. To him they represented doctor's bills, schooling, butcher's and baker's accounts, and disturbed rest, and nothing else in the world; and when at last he raised himself on his hind-legs, and placing his paws upon the edge of the fold, gazed round upon the world outside and uttered one long-drawn melancholy howl, it was the most perfect satire on undomesticated Paterfamilias that canine reproof could administer. And the poor mother, too, left at home with all the pain and all the trouble and all the labour devolving upon her, and looking as pleased and contented all the while as the other looked disgusted! It was as good as a sermon. Better, perhaps, than some.

Great monster boar-hound, alone worth a moderate journey to get a sight of; gigantic neighbour of the above, with your deep chest, your pointed nose, and your sable fur; sweet-faced muff from St. Bernard, whose small intellect is what might be expected of a race living on the top of a mountain with only monks for company; small shadowy-faced Maltese terrier; supple fox-hound; beloved pug; detested greyhound of Italy; otter-hounds that look like north country gamekeepers—each and all I bid you farewell, and proceed yet a little further on my way through the suburbs of North London.

Curiously enough, within a mile of that great dog-show at Islington there existed, and exists still, another dog-show of a very different kind, and forming as complete a contrast to the first as can well be imagined. As you enter the enclosure of this other dog-show, which you approach by certain small thoroughfares of the Holloway district, you find yourself in a queer region, which looks, at first, like a combination of playground and mews. The playground is enclosed on three sides by walls, and on the fourth by a screen of iron cage-work. As soon as you come within sight of this cage some twenty or thirty dogs of every conceivable and inconceivable breed, rush towards the bars, and, flattening their poor snouts against the wires, ask in their own peculiar and most forcible language whether you are their master come at last to claim them?

For this second dog-show is nothing more nor less than the show of the Lost Dogs of the metropolis—the poor vagrant homeless curs that one sees looking out for a dinner in the gutter, or curled up in a doorway taking refuge from their troubles in sleep. To rescue these miserable animals from slow starvation; to provide an asylum where, if it is of the slightest use, they can be restored with food, and kept till a situation can be found for them; or where the utterly useless and diseased cur can be in an instant put out of his misery with a dose of prussic acid;—to effect these objects, and also to provide a means of restoring lost dogs to their owners, a society has actually been formed, and has worked for some year and a half with very tolerable success. Their premises are in Hollingworth-street, St. James's-road, Holloway, and it is there that the public will find a permanent dog-show, of a very different sort from that which "drew" so well at the Agricultural Hall, Islington.

At the Islington dog-show all was prosperity. Here, all is adversity. There, the exhibited animals were highly valued, and had all their lives been well fed, well housed, carefully watched. Here, for the most part, the poor things had been half-starved and houseless, while as to careful watching, there was plenty of that in one sense, the vigilant householder having watched most carefully his entrance gate to keep such intruders out. At Islington there were dogs estimated by their owners at hundreds of pounds. Here there are animals that are, only from a humane point of view, worth the drop of prussic acid which puts them out of their misery.

Now we are accustomed to think that with human beings, high feeding, luxurious living, and constant appreciation on the one hand, and want, privation, and contempt on the other, will produce certain results on the character. Will it be considered too great a stretch of the imagination to say that something of the same sort is observable in lower animals? As I sit and write I get a glimpse through my window of a certain populous thoroughfare. I see the cab-horse trot by, with his head down and his ears slightly back, in a sort of perpetual protest; and presently I see a couple of highly-groomed ponies dance past with curved necks, and ears pricked forward, and hardly touching the ground, which they seem to despise. Is it fancy to suppose that this is not entirely a physical matter, and that there is something of arrogance about these spoilt beauties, and of humility in the poor cab-horse? Was it purely an over-indulged fancy that made me discern a great moral difference between the dogs at the Islington Show and those at the Refuge in Holloway?

I must confess that it did appear to me that there was in those more prosperous dogs at the "show," a slight occasional tendency to "give themselves airs." They seemed to regard themselves as public characters who really could not be bored by introductions to private individuals.

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When these last addressed them, by name too, and in that most conciliatory falsetto which should find its way to a well-conditioned dog's inmost heart, it was too often the case that such advances were received with total indifference, and even in some cases, I regret to say, with a snap. As to any feeling for, or interest in, each other, the prosperous dogs were utterly devoid of both.

Among the unappreciated and lost dogs of Holloway, on the other hand, there seemed a sort of fellowship of misery, whilst their urbane and sociable qualities were perfectly irresistible. They were not conspicuous in the matter of breed, it must be owned. A tolerable Newfoundland dog, a deer-hound of some pretensions, a setter, and one or two decent terriers, were among the company; but for the most part the architecture of these canine vagrants was decidedly of the composite order. That particular member of the dog tribe, with whom the reader is so well acquainted, and who represent the great and important family of the mongrels, was there in all his—absence of—glory. Poor beast, with his long tail left, not to please Sir Edwin Landseer, but because nobody thought it worth while to cut it, with his notched pendent ears, with his heavy paws, his ignoble countenance, and servile *smile* of conciliation, snuffing hither and thither, running to and fro, undecided, uncared for, not wanted, timid, supplicatory—there he was, the embodiment of everything that is pitiful, the same poor pattering wretch who follows you along the deserted streets at night, and whose eyes haunt you as you lie in bed after you have locked him out of your house.

To befriend this poor unhappy animal a certain band of humanely-disposed persons has established this Holloway asylum, and a system has been got to work which has actually, since October, 1860, rescued at least a thousand lost or homeless dogs from starvation. The modus operandi adopted and recommended by the committee of this remarkable institution for preventing the poorer London dogs from going *to* the dogs, is simply this: If it should happen in the course of your walks about the metropolis that that miserable cur which has been described above should look into your face and find in it a certain weakness called pity, and so should attach himself to your boot-heels; if this should befal you, and if you should prove to be of too feeble a character to answer the poor cur's appeal with a kick, you must straightway look about for some vagrant man or boy—alas! they are as common in this town as wandering dogs—and propose to him that for a certain guerdon he shall convey the dog to the asylum at Holloway, where he will be certainly taken in, and a printed receipt handed to the person who delivers him at the gates. It is not, upon the whole, considered a good plan to remunerate the vagrant man to whom the vagrant dog has been confided until his part of the contract has been performed, and this same receipt has been obtained. For, in the archives of the benevolent society whose system we are examining, there are recorded cases in which credulous persons have handed over the dog and the reward together to some "vagrom man," and somehow the animal has never found its way to Holloway after all.

Once at the "Home," the dog has a number tied round his neck similar to those which are appended to our umbrellas at the National Gallery, and which number corresponds with an entry made by the keeper of the place in his book, stating the date of the dog's arrival, and describing his breed—if he has any—and, at all events, his personal appearance as far as it is describable.

The dog's individual case is then considered. If he be ill, and his life be obviously not worth preserving, he is humanely disposed of with a little prussic acid. If, on the other hand, there seem some reasonable prospect of his obtaining a home hereafter, or if he appear to be of some slight value, he is doctored, fed, and gradually restored to health. Dogs are sometimes brought to the asylum in a most piteous state of exhaustion, and sometimes one of these poor little things will, after receiving a carefully administered meal, curl himself upon the straw and go to sleep for twenty-four hours at a stretch. From the greatest depths of prostration they are recovered by judicious treatment in a wonderfully short space of time. The society has also employed persons occasionally, to go about the streets and, in extreme cases, to administer a dose of prussic acid to such diseased and starving dogs as it has seemed merciful to put a quick end to.

Now, really, among all the queer things which a man might devote a whole lifetime to routing out and which lie within the limits of this metropolis, the existence of such an association as this is one of the queerest. It is the kind of institution which a very sensitive person who had suffered acutely from witnessing the misery of a starving animal would wish for, without imagining for a moment that it could ever seriously exist.

It *does* seriously exist, though. An institution in this practical country founded on a sentiment. The dogs are, for the most part, of little or no worth. I don't think the Duke of Beaufort would have much to say to the beagle I saw sniffing about in the enclosure, and I imagine that the stout man, who owned the smaller terriers at the show, would have had little to say to the black-and-tan specimens, which mustered strong in numbers, but weak in claims to admiration, in the shut-up house, in which there were as many lost dogs as in the enclosure outside. The thing owes its existence, as has been said, to a sentiment. It asks for but a very small donation, and does not enter into competition with those charities which would benefit the human sufferer. The "Home" is a very small establishment, with nothing imposing about it—nothing that suggests expense or luxury. I think it is rather hard to laugh this humane effort to scorn. If people really think it wrong to spend a very very little money on that poor cur whose face I frankly own often

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haunts my memory, after I have hardened myself successfully against him—if people really do consider it an injustice to the poor, to give to this particular institution, let them leave it to its fate; but I think it is somewhat hard that they should turn the whole scheme into ridicule, or assail it with open ferocity as a dangerous competitor, with other enterprises for public favour. I should be slow to believe that the five shillings which is sent to the Holloway asylum, is taken away from the poor, or that for the want of it some deserving mechanic, with his wife and family, will actually "go to the dogs." At all events, and whether the sentiment be wholesome or morbid, it is worthy of record that such a place exists; an extraordinary monument of the remarkable affection with which English people regard the race of dogs; an evidence of that hidden fund of feeling which survives in some hearts even the rough ordeal of London life in the nineteenth century.

SUGAR AND MILK.

An alchemist in a picture is an old and stupid-looking creature. Nevertheless, the alchemists were really the fast men of science, fast because they were young. As chemists got experience they learnt better to understand how high they might carry their heads; they found that they could only take to pieces when they dealt with living material. The alchemists sought not only to construct, but to fathom the secret means by which Nature worked in forming her productions; they had faith in a creative chemistry. Modern chemistry has, on the other hand, been content to derive all her great powers from the decomposition of things. Nevertheless, something has been done lately in the way of building an organic product, with how much difficulty and at what cost let us attempt to suggest. An organic product that the chemist has learnt one way of making is grape-sugar. He cannot make much of it, and what he makes costs him a good deal more than its weight in gold; still he can really make sugar, nearly as good as the brown sugar we put into puddings, at the cost of something like a hundred-pound note for the spoonful.

Vinegar, too, has been artificially made from its elements, by Dr. Kolbe, who used a most complicated and difficult process, and achieved his triumphs at a cost that, if we were dependent on this source alone for our vinegar, would enable any man to ruin himself by eating pickles. Berthelot, after enormous labour, succeeded by a general method of his own discovery in forming an immense number of organic substances, the most important of which were the alcohols, among which ordinary alcohol, or spirit of wine, is the best known. And he it was who showed how to make grape-sugar by the help of another process, discovered by Wurtz, and, by a slight evasion of the strict conditions of the problem, how to build from the elements without using any vital action.

This is the way to do it. Take the metal calcium (which is of a beautiful yellow colour) burn it in oxygen, and produce lime. Take carbon, which by burning in oxygen produces carbonic acid. By uniting the two we get carbonate of lime, or chalk. This, when heated to redness with iron filings, produces oxide of carbon, the gas which we see burning with a blue flame on the top of a well-burnt fire. This gas is passed into flasks containing a solution of potash, also built up from its elements of potassium, hydrogen, and oxygen. The flasks are carefully sealed, and kept at boiling temperature in a water-bath for three weeks, at the end of which time the gas is all absorbed, and formiate of potash is produced, formic acid being itself an organic product found naturally in the bodies of nearly all kinds of ants. It is the acid liquid they spirt out when irritated. The solution of formiate of potash distilled with sulphuric acid (which can easily be made from its elements) and the formic acid resulting, is passed into a solution of baryta. The formiate of baryta thus formed is heated to redness, and the resulting gas (which is principally marsh gas, being the gas which bubbles to the top of the water when the mud in stagnant ponds is stirred, and which, therefore, is also an organic product) is passed, together with some more oxide of carbon, through tubes heated to redness, and then into the liquid element called bromine. The resulting substance, called bromide of propylene, is dissolved, together with acetate of silver, in fused crystalline acetic acid, and digested a week in a sealed flask, at a temperature of boiling water, by which means a kind of oil is produced, which, by proper treatment, is separated, and after treatment with baryta water, yields glycerine. Now glycerine, though not itself a food, strictly speaking, yet forms part of a food, for it is an invariable constituent of fats and oils. So we have almost attained the desired end, namely, of building a food out of its elements. But now comes the weak part of the process; for, in order to change the glycerine into sugar—i.e. into a vital food—we are compelled to employ the assistance of vitality, in the shape of decaying animal membrane, which has the inscrutable property of causing by its presence (and by its presence only) a kind of fermentation which transforms the glycerine into grape-sugar, and it is thus that the aliment is artificially produced.

These are the greatest results at present obtained, and though of no practical use on account of the almost fabulous cost of each grain of the product of such a process, yet they are of the greatest interest, not so much in showing the wonderful possibilities that may arise in the future, as for the evidence they give of the marvellous powers that lie hidden in that intangible and incomprehensible principle of life, which, even with what it has once inhabited and quitted, can produce effects which at present lie beyond our utmost reach of knowledge.

There is a class of changes in the products of the animal and plant world of which vitality in another form seems to be the great cause.

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These are the different kinds of fermentation and decay of living substances. It needs, for example, life in the air to turn milk sour.

Last year a French chemist, M. Pasteur, made some experiments, which, though directed specially to the investigation of the nature of fermentation, have so much relation to the subject we are now considering, and show besides so clearly the almost infinite diffusion and powers of the vital principle, that a short detail of the facts discovered will be interesting.

When air was sucked through glass tubes, plugged with gun cotton for some time, and the cotton thus charged with the organised particles supposed to exist in the atmosphere, was dissolved in ether, it left behind a small quantity of an organic substance which, when patiently examined by powerful microscopes, disclosed the existence of many minute organisms, animal and vegetable infusoria, &c. These exist among the motes which we see floating in a sunbeam.

Now, when a fermentable solution was boiled, in order to destroy all germs of life that might exist therein, and only allowed to remain in contact with air that had been passed through red-hot platinum tubes, though placed in the most favourable circumstances for its fermentation, it underwent no change. Even after many weeks, though under ordinary circumstances such a mixture would not keep three days, there was no change. But when (still keeping the solution under the same conditions) a small plug of cotton or asbestos, charged with the "air-dust" above mentioned, was allowed to fall in the mixture, after a few hours the whole began to grow turbid, the yeast plants made their appearance, and the mixture became charged with animal life, exhibiting, in fact, all the phenomena of fermentation.

When a similar experiment was made with milk—which we know will not long remain sweet under ordinary circumstances—it remained uncurdled and pure for any length of time, until the germs of life obtained from the atmosphere were placed in it, then it quickly curdled and went sour, with all the appearances of milk spoilt with keeping.

With so much life in the air, we must breathe it, and every living sound we hear must vibrate through a world of life into our ears. It is everywhere, within us and about us, yet we cannot, even by the utmost flight of imagination, know more of what it is than that it is a precious gift of the All-Wise.

A TERRIBLE OLD LADY.

CONSULTING the pleasant stores of the Honourable Horace Walpole, Lord Hervey, Sir Nathanial Wraxall, Baronet, and other repertories of light and agreeable scandal—scandal, as it were, deodorised and prepared specially for the drawing-room—we are pretty sure to meet the spectres of very many terrible old ladies. Such old ladies must of necessity be an element of every fashionable society; and in its ranks are sure to be encountered, some fearful stragglers and veteran anacronisms, whose place is with that grand army who passed by, years ago. The presence of those "remains in the drift"—upon the sofa—that aggregate of sham hair, sham teeth, sham bloom, sham plumpness, and sham smiles—is salutary. These are the terrible old ladies of society—terrible because they fill us with awe and fear. The most terrible of all terrible old ladies, who stands out from the herd with a conspicuousness that renders competition hopeless, came into the world exactly two hundred and ten years ago, and after filling up nearly seventy-two years of scandal and intrigue, died in the odour of sanctity about the year seventeen hundred and twenty-two. She was Madame Charlotte Elizabeth, of Bavaria, daughter of the Elector Palatine, and married to the brother of the Great Louis. She was therefore mother to the famous Regent Orleans, who consequently took his rather free manners and general coarseness of speech by a sort of inheritance.

In her old age this terrible old lady used to correspond very largely with her German friends and relations; and from the heart of the French court poured forth strange budgets of gossip, coarse slanders, and piquant details of court life. A German lady of quality carefully collected those despatches, and put them aside, until by some accident they were brought to light, and it was determined to publish them.

It was a matter of considerable delicacy, dealing with these letters of the terrible old lady. They were so dreadfully plain-spoken, and called a spade a spade with such loud emphasis, that it was clear they could not be presented to the public in their natural state. On the other hand, it was scarcely respect to the departed dead to be thus tampering with her remains: and the good was so intimately associated with the bad, that the task of separation became one of extreme nicety. The editor grapples with the difficulty very ingeniously: "Far," he says, "from taking the liberty of altering ideas and expressions, under the idle pretext of a false delicacy, I have endeavoured to retain as much as possible that originality or preciseness of style which is, as it were, the physiognomy of wit. Anything that did not bear submitting to the public gaze I was not so presumptuous as to alter or soften. I simply suppressed it altogether—the only possible way of conciliating the respect due to the public with the respect due to truth."

This programme reads handsomely, and ought certainly to be a guarantee for the susceptibility of the public not being wounded. Yet when we look at the amount of strange and questionable matter that remains after this disinfecting process, we are confounded to find that either the respect due to "truth and to the public" has not been exactly "conciliated:" or that the public to whom they were presented had a lower standard of respect than our own, which is not improbable.

From these letters, infinitely entertaining, from their communicativeness and fulness of de-

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tails, we can easily vamp up a portrait of this terrible old lady. She must have been an exact royal Skewton, snuffy, double-chinned, rouged, patched to the eyes, with wicked old eyes, and daubed profusely with the fashionable dye or pearl powder existing in those days. She can scarcely have been lean or skinny, this terrible old lady, for she reads good humouredly and delivers her little tit-bits of scandal with a chuckle and raciness significant of abundant fat and ancient fleshiness. She must have been famous company, this superannuated duchess. On an ottoman in a corner she could have put out her snuffy fingers as the doubtful gallants and more doubtful ladies passed her by at Versailles, and could have touched off a series of the most racy little biographies, not such certainly as the late Mrs. Hannah More or Mrs. Elizabeth Fry could have listened to.

It is not too much to say, that the "remains" of this terrible old lady are about the most entertaining of the whole French memoir literature. The little defect, common enough to old ladies, does indeed crop up, possibly somewhat in excess; yet this may be on the whole taken to be their charm. For it is developed in so naïve and natural a fashion, and is so outspeaking of the original character of the person—who, it must be recollected, is an old lady—that it is impossible to frown, and play prude or moralist.

However, about the year seventeen hundred and twenty-two the terrible old lady was called away to account, as well as she might be able, for her long course of gossipings and scandals. It is recorded that she made an edifying end, as, somehow, all terrible old ladies contrive to do. But if we are to rely for this view of her happy departure on the same partial testimony that has summarised her life, even the most enthusiastic admirers of such conversions will be filled with awkward doubts; for a faithful chronicler has written of that scene, "her *solid piety*, her generosity, the nobleness of her sentiments, had attracted to her the admiration of all, and had brought her to a pitch of perfection almost too exalted for the common run of women to hope to reach to. The night before her death she had a very touching interview with her son the Regent—no doubt with a view to persuade him to fix his thoughts on a higher and better world than this!"

There was a certain Madame Maintenon, with whom we are tolerably familiar—Queen Maintenon, as the settled opinion now seems to be—whom the terrible old lady hated with her whole terrible old soul. If there be one thing that a terrible old lady loathes, it is a devout old lady, whom she of course suspects to be an ingrained hypocrite. It is a favourite bit of food for French sarcasm, that turning of ladies of easy life into saints as they grow old. It is held to be the fit and correct supplement. She seems to have writhed under the absolute supremacy of this royal nurse and secret wife, and grows livid in her letters whenever she has to speak of her.

She is always "the old one;" or, if she be specially wroth with her, the terrible old lady superadds an unhandsome substantive never more than delicately hinted at in our tongue by such indistinct sign as an initial and a dash. "This old lady," she writes with a suitable profanity, "on the nineteenth of November, seventeen hundred and eighteen, was held in such awe at court, that they would sooner have offended God than her." Later she writes, "I made my son laugh heartily the day before yesterday. I asked, 'How was Madame de Maintenon wearing?' 'Wonderfully,' he answered. 'How can that be, at her age?' I said. 'Surely, you know,' he answered, 'that the devil is an immortal being?' 'Then,' I answer, 'he must have done some fresh sin for the bon Dieu to have forced him to live so long in such a villanous carcase.'" Taking her own photograph of this son, Regent Philip, it is to be suspected that is about the most harmless of the jokes with which she was accustomed to make him laugh. The terrible old lady loved quips of a bolder and broader complexion. "No one," the terrible old lady goes on, "could carry perfumes; the king could not endure them." But "the old one" always wore gloves scented "with jasmine, and persuaded him that it was such or such one near him that was then perfumed."

She concedes that "the old one wept" a good deal at the death of the king; but she was not near so afflicted as she ought to have been. "She always looked forward to reigning with her pupil, the Duke de Maine." She had, however, the merit of inspiring attachment in her followers, for "the Humpy Fagon, a special protégé of the old ——, always said the only thing he disliked in Christianity was the impossibility of erecting churches and altars to Madame to worship her." Even after her death she would not forgive. "I always have it in my head," she writes, "that what caused the old —— the greatest chagrin in dying, was the leaving my son and myself well off, and in good health."

She was a darkly suspicious old lady, and scented plots against herself from afar off. "The old one" was always busy poisoning the king's mind against her. A gentleman, whose name she will not mention, had told her that "with his own 'ears' he had often heard the 'old one' instilling into the king every possible evil about her—actually tormenting the king to hate me." On his death-bed, that monarch said to her "Madame, they have done all they could to make me hate you. But I knew you too well for such calumny to do you the slightest harm with me." Madame de Maintenon, "who was standing by, had such a guilty look, that I had not an instant's doubt but that this was meant for her."

There is a very pretty picture drawn even by such a coarse touch of the princess who was called "the Little Dauphiness." A more lively engaging bit of royalty has not been presented to the student of history. She unhappily died early, it was said through pure medical mismanagement. But our terrible old lady hints very plainly at another very sufficient cause. "The old —— bore so inveterate an hatred to this poor child, that it has always

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been my conviction that Clement, the accoucheur, was acting under her instructions when he treated her so badly. What convinced me of this was—that Madame, seeing that she was still alive after her accouchement, came to her absolutely reeking with perfumes, which was enough to cause her death." The two old ladies actually wrangled over the death-bed. "The Doctor Chirac assured her, up to the very last moment, that she was not to die. They actually forced her to get up while still raging in the small-pox, and bathed in perspiration. I conjured of them to leave her in bed; but the two doctors, Fagon and Chirac, insisted. The old one, I thought, would have torn my eyes out. 'Eh, Madam,' she said, 'do you set up to know more than the physicians?' 'No, ma'am,' I answer, 'but it does not require much knowledge to see that we ought to follow nature, and not drag a person out of bed in a raging perspiration, to bleed her.' She only shrugged her shoulders and smiled scornfully." The terrible old lady insinuates that not only did she destroy "the Little Dauphiness" physically, but that she corrupted another Dauphiness morally—purposely corrupting her for ends of her own. This princess would seem to be a sort of royal hoyden. Young ladies of honour, specially selected for the purpose by the "old one," were placed about her, to tempt her into all sorts of follies. She used to fly through the streets of Versailles, attended only by one of her questionable companions, and disguised as a waiting woman. At Marli she used often to be abroad at nights, looking for adventures, until four in the morning. This has the true flavour of racy court scandal. She would tell her men-servants to take her by the feet and drag her along the floor, and those rascals were often heard saying to each other, "Come and let us have some fun with the duchess." But those who know anything of human character will agree that these pranks are merely symptoms of an indiscreet but perfectly innocent disposition. This terrible old lady is not very nice or careful in her epithets. Montespan was a "perfect devil." By dark allusions and insinuations she scatters abroad hints of secret poisonings and deeds that shun the light. "That Fontarge died of poison nothing can be more certain. She never ceased imputing her death to Montespan. I do not deny or affirm the charge: but I know that two of her servants died at the same time from drinking of the same milk, and that they declared solemnly they were poisoned."

The "first Madame" also died under suspicious circumstances. "It is certain, says our terrible old lady, "that Madame died of poison, but," she adds handsomely, "I must say, without her husband having anything to do with it. The authors of the plot," she goes on to say, rather qualifying this acquittal of Monsieur, "discussed with one another whether he should be taken into the secret. No, said one, he will only hang us ten years afterwards." She gives a terrible sketch of the supposed murderer.

"A man named Morel was the person whom they employed to fetch the poison from Italy: and for his reward they got him a place about my person as maître d'hotel. After he had pillaged me as well as he could, he sold his office at a handsome figure. He had the devil's own wit. He believed in nothing, he had neither faith nor morals. When he was dying, he would not listen to the name of God, and said, leave this poor carcase alone, it is good for nothing more. He robbed, lied, perjured himself, and was given to the most revolting excesses."

There are some more death-bed scenes very instructive as a commentary upon the manners of this lax period. The lantern of the terrible old lady throws a lurid glare upon these mortuary struggles, and shows the souls of fashionable men and women passing away. There was the Maréchale de * * * who, when she was told there was no hope, screamed out, "My God! my God! must I die. In my whole life I have never thought once of death." No wonder: for her whole occupation consisted in entertaining her admirers, up to five and six o'clock in the morning, taking snuff, and, adds the terrible old lady, "doing rather worse things." The end of the Chevalier de Lorraine, a fashionable man of gallantry on town, was no less morally hideous. This gentleman was sitting beside "Madame de Mare, sister of Madame de Grançai," and telling that lady some of his loose adventures of the night previous, when he was on the instant struck with apoplexy. He never recovered conscience, and died within an hour.

Here is a picture in the same spirit. "When the Maréchale de * * * became ugly, she nearly lost her wits with despair. Her lovely nose became long and coarse, and all mottled over with pimples; and on each pimple she placed a patch. The rouge and white with which she repaired her face did not stick well, so she had all the look of a plastered skin. Her eyes became sunk and withered; a more horrible change cannot be conceived." The queen she mentions as having an artist in her suite who was known by the droll title of "Repairer of the Queen's Countenance." "*Le Raccommodeur du visage de la Reine.*"

She has all sorts of comic court stories, this terrible old lady, which she tells humorously enough. How the old Princess Schoenich fell in love with Prince Maurice of Nassau, and tormented him sadly with her admiration. She worrying him for his portrait, he asks her what it is she admires so much in him? "All," says the old lady; "your fine figure! above all your back, so broad and compact (*uni*), and your noble legs." How he sent her his picture from Holland, and when every one was invited to see it unpacked, it was found to be a view of his *Back* only! How M. de Brancas was so absent in mind that, entering the chapel one day where the queen was on her knees bent down in devotion, he took her for a Prie Dieu, and knelt down on her, placing his two elbows on her shoulders. How the Duke D'Ossune ordered a rich dress for a certain actress, and how his duchess artfully anticipated him, and sent to the milliner

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and had it made up into a dress for herself—of course at his expense.

In short, a few minutes' conversation with this terrible old lady, who lived a good fifty years before the grand "Deluge" came, furnishes overwhelming testimony to that tremendous convulsion. If there were this utter rottenness in the green, what must it have been in the dry, after a momentum of so many years?

BALLOON MAD.

On the twenty-fourth of July, just five-and-twenty years ago, I saw my simple-hearted old friend, by his own will, drop from the clouds. He was cut from the tail of a balloon, sitting in a parachute of his own invention; the parachute at once broke into ruin; and with a sick heart I turned my eyes from the sight of that thing like a dull drunken day-meteor tumbling swiftly and unsteadily to earth with a friend's life at the heart of it thus visibly coming to its end.

If he had but dropped only an hour sooner from the clouds of that strange craze by which he was possessed! It is not easy to distinguish madness from enthusiasm, and I had but a youth's instinct of reason and unreason. It may not be the more true because I never doubted, and I don't doubt now, that my poor little friend and drawing-master, Mr. Cocking, was balloon mad.

He was indeed one of the simplest, kindliest, and happiest of little men. For a couple of years before his death and up to the very time of it, I had been one of two pupils and friends closeted with him in a small room, the sanctum of his house, for an hour or two on two evenings of the week, with drawing-paper, pencils, and Indian-rubber, subject to the direction of his patient skill. His affectionate simplicity of character attached him to the young.

On winter evenings he would sit with us, short, round, and pleasantly untidy, unbending a face that could, on occasion, meet the welcome pinch of snuff with an aspect highly sedate and important, over the frame on which he had mounted paper for a large and highly-finished sepia drawing of a balloon. He had many such drawings of one man's and another man's balloon; all the balloons beautifully large and brown and softly rounded, with their gores well indicated, their ropes faultless, and their cars minutely finished. Costly illustrated folios on aërostation lay, one on the top of another, on a book-stand, within reach of his little table. My impression was that there was, for library, everything that had been printed in French or English on the subject of ballooning, and nothing else. What Mr. Cocking meant to do with the contents of his own portfolio of balloon-drawings, I did not, as I saw its contents multiply, at all understand. After his death they were sold, and whoever possesses them now possesses true labours of love. For, certain it is that he drew balloons because he loved them, and delicately stroked with the sepia over their fat sides, as a lover strokes the curls of his mistress.

Contemplation of balloons might even have rounded his own person. At any rate he was not fat through over much prosperity. With patient drudgery his right hand held the house over his head, and he was able to support in modest comfort, not only his wife, but also two aged relatives whose claim on him was that they would have no helper were that hand of his withheld. What patient smiling drudgery it was! To his rare delicacy of pencilling he might have joined inventive power as an artist, and stood high in the profession by which he must live. But all his best energy went up in air-bubble, and his castles in the air were balloons. As it was, though he was not unknown as a clever landscape-painter, I suspect that he found the perfumers better patrons than the public. With a quiet unresentful patience, when he might not indulge in stroking at his dear balloons, he would slowly produce, designing as he drew, a delicately finished flower-border for the label of somebody's "Infallible Milk of Rosy Dawn for Improving the Complexion and removing Freckles." Communicative as a child, he never expressed either impatience at such work or pleasure in it.

He never showed us—and I believe never troubled himself to keep in the house—any of the engravings made from such designs, beautiful as they often really were. Yet he kept in his desk and in his drawers, all manner of small curiosities, suggesting greater thoughts not personal to himself. He had the youth's crude taste for collecting curiosities, and as I also had such treasures, he was free to give. I am sure that he hadn't more than five grains' weight of Sand from the Great Desert of Africa, and yet he gave me two of them. Poor dear old Cocking! The three grains he kept were all the hint of any sort of desert to be found at his fireside.

While we drew, he talked, and in his talk there never was a note of discontent, an unkind word of any one. To be sure, he talked almost entirely of balloons, and how could he be anything but happy when upon that theme? He had a profound regard for anybody who had climbed the sky. His mortal enemy, could he have had one, would have come down to him again, to be entertained as an angel after one mount heavenward in Mr. Green's balloon. As for the excellent Mr. Green himself, who was then already the hero of several hundred ascents, he can hardly have suspected how devoutly his old friend Cocking loved him. Once there was great joy in the house, for Mr. Green was coming to tea. We two youths (whom our kind little teacher could not so often see without taking us to his heart as friends) were invited to meet the great man. I remember the solemn delight of our friend's anticipation, and how his very soul went out in welcome to his guest. If all the Sovereigns in Europe had been coming to drink tea with him in force, he would without emotion have taken in for them an extra cottage-loaf and half-pound of fresh butter. He would have endeavoured also, as a polite host, not to talk balloons while they sat round his table, if he found them unwilling to enter into such high

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matters, much as he might feel the possible benefit to society contingent upon a Balloon Congress of Sovereigns. But Mr. Green himself! That was quite another matter. Good-natured Mr. Green came, and was received with honour; but, as it happened that he had just at that time a hobby for bee-keeping, instead of talking Balloons he talked Bees all the evening. I think the fact that Mr. Green thought bees interesting, may have had its weight with Mr. Cocking. I am sure that no child disappointed of a sweetmeat, ever went to bed so good as Mr. Cocking did that night—without his balloon talk.

Mr. Cocking's house stood in a little garden in one of the side roads between Kennington and Stockwell. Either from Vauxhall or the Surrey Gardens, balloons were continually going up during the season; and from Mr. Cocking's garden all the balloons that went up, were affectionately watched. When in the warm summer evenings our drawing-lessons were transferred from the upper sanctum to the room down stairs opening on this garden, we had, now and then, very short measure of instruction. Sensitive to the faintest whisper of "bal-loon!" our friend was out through the window, on the instant when he found that a balloon was visible. Once out, there he would stand fixed on the grass-plot with his chin up. While there remained the tiniest suspicion of an ink-blot up aloft to gaze at, there he remained at gaze. There is fascination, we all know, for many thousands who are not balloon-mad in the long look after a man who has floated far, far up into the sky. For Mr. Cocking, it was utter and irresistible. We went on drawing, and knew that we must consider our friend up in the balloon.

But in the old sanctum again, as winter drew on, and after he had seen his last season of scanty Christmas cheer, and when he was enthusiastic with faith in his parachute and expectation of a glorious descent in it; when his own little working model of it, neat and faultless as was all the work of his dexterous hands, was being hung over, and talked over, and explained again and again to us; the simplicity of his devotion to his subject was most touching. If he sought any fame it was to be remembered in the history of aërostation. But on the labour of his love he did not work conscious of a thirst for fame, and I never heard him, in all his panegyrics on his parachute, dwell for a minute on the possible money-reward success would bring; though it may well be that he cheered and sustained the patience of his wife with that suggestion. If he glorified himself, it was in, not because of, the parachute. It was the parachute of his fancy that he glorified and loved, as unselfishly as ever poet loved the idol of his dream. His faith in it never wavered. It resisted every attack, met every question, and backed as it was by what appeared to be good evidence, conquered all opposition to his resolve to prove, at "really not the least risk to his life," this parachute to be that for which the ages had been waiting.

Its shape was that of the inverted shade of a reading lamp, the car being dependent by attached ropes from the smaller opening. Years before, as a young man, he had witnessed the safe descent of M. Garnerin in a parachute of directly opposite design. There was then great oscillation at the moment of separation, with risk both to the aëronaut in the balloon, if it had carried one, and to the parachute, of which also the descent was exceedingly unsteady. Mr. Cocking at that time, a quarter of a century before his death, had scientific associates and tastes, and had already so decided a turn for balloons that he delivered a lecture on aërostation at the theatre of his friend Mr. Tatham, in Dorset-street, and with Mr. Tatham and Mr. Charles Green, then known, and afterwards famous, as an aëronaut, set on foot his first experiment. Two parachutes of some size were made: one upon Garnerin's principle, the other according to Mr. Cocking's suggestion; and one fine morning, Mr. Green being absent, Messrs. Cocking and Tatham took their parachutes to Hampstead Heath, with a paper balloon and means of inflation. The paper balloon was sent up with a cross stick hung from it, the two parachutes depending from each end of the stick to be set free by the burning of touch-paper. The apparatus answered its purpose, and the parachutes came down. Garnerin's fell swiftly with oscillation; Cocking's slowly and smoothly, travelling also a much greater distance in its descent. For a quarter of a century the coming down himself in such a parachute, had been the poor fellow's dream of hope.

He argued out his principle. Again, before his own descent was permitted, he sent down a model on the scale of an inch to a foot, from the top of the Monument, and that too, perversely and unhappily, descended in a faultless manner. A little gust of a malicious wind might have saved a life. But here was demonstration upon demonstration joined to argument and the enthusiasm of a monomaniac impelling all to the desired end.

It was argued that although the theory was good, safety required an increase of resisting power, consequently of weight, in the parachute, out of proportion to its capacity. Cocking again made calculations, and pointed to his experiments, on the scale of one-twelfth. Even the fatal result that destroyed the inventor, did not, perhaps, disprove his case. His parachute was fastened to the car of the balloon by a rope so attached that it was instantly to be set free upon the pulling, from the parachute car, of a cord attached to a trigger: the trigger being, of course, fixed to the balloon. It was, from what little he could observe at the moment of disengagement, the opinion of his friend, Mr. Green, who incurred some risk himself by piloting the "Nassau Balloon" on the occasion, that Cocking at once disturbed the balance of his parachute by failing to let go the cord (which passed outside its rim to be made fast to the balloon) at the moment when he pulled the trigger to which it was attached. It was said, also, that there was

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a flaw in the upper rim of the parachute, in which Mr. Cocking refused to see justification for postponement of his enterprise when the great day was come, when all the world was out to witness his success, and when his life's dream at last seemed to be coming true. I do not know how these things really were; I blame nobody, and least of all the hero of that misadventure.

The parachute that came down from the Monument, we saw and heard much of at our drawing lessons in the studio that was now become wholly a school of aërostatics. Not seldom while we drew, our friend was delicately chipping and carving with a penknife upon little morsels of wooden ladies and gentlemen, who were to be more company among the miniature spectators of his balloon ascent in a miniature Cremorne. I do not remember what gardens they were, but—small enough to stand under a glass shade of moderate proportions—it had been one of the pleasures of our friend to produce a lively miniature of the popular spectacle of a balloon ascent from Cremorne or whatever gardens, smaller than Vauxhall, were the Cremorne of thirty years ago. He painted the tiny walks, modelled the tiny supper-houses, cut out of wood and painted to the life the tiny company of the garden, eating and drinking, walking, talking. I think there were one or two hundred of daintily cut figures, forming groups various in life and character; and above all there was an exquisite model, plank for plank, of the stage on which the balloon was inflated, and from which it was to rise. There were the men at work, there was the aëronaut directing, there was the half-inflated balloon itself: a silken miniature into which he had put some real gas, swaying in the hold of miniature ropes. We saw the last arrivals of company whittled, scraped, painted, and provided with places in these little gardens. After poor Cocking's death the model was sold (to Mr. Monck Mason—I think) for a hundred pounds. I am sure that, on its own merits, it was worth the money.

As the fatal day drew near, while the parachute was in course of construction at Vauxhall, and while we heard more about gores than ever in our lives before or since, the eyes of the enthusiast were at last gladdened with the sight of a glorious placard in red and blue, without a hint of mourning black in its face. Thus it read:

"ROYAL GARDENS, VAUXHALL,

GRAND DAY FETE,

On Monday, the 24th of July, 1837.

Extraordinary Novelty and Combined Attraction!

ASCENT IN THE ROYAL NASSAU BALLOON

BY MR. GREEN,

AND DESCENT IN A NEWLY INVENTED

PARACHUTE

BY MR. COCKING.

"The proprietors of Vauxhall have the satisfaction to announce that they are enabled to present to the Public another grand improvement connected with the Science of Aërostation; viz. a PARACHUTE of an entirely Novel Construction, by which a perfectly safe and easy descent may be made from any height in the Atmosphere attainable by a Balloon.

"Mr. Cocking, a gentleman of great scientific acquirements, having, many years since, witnessed the descent of M. Garnerin (the only one ever made in England), was forcibly struck with the danger to which that gentleman was exposed on account of some error in the construction of his machine; and, after several years spent in numerous experiments, he has succeeded in discovering the faults in M. Garnerin's instrument, and also in producing

AN ENTIRELY NEW PARACHUTE,

which is allowed, by all who have seen it, to be constructed on unerring principles. The form is that of

AN INVERTED CONE, 107 FEET IN CIRCUMFERENCE!

which, during the Descent, is quite free from oscillation; and as it will be in its proper form previous to the Ascent, it is not liable to the objection of falling several hundred feet without expanding, which was the case with the Parachute of the old form.

MR. COCKING WILL MAKE HIS FIRST DESCENT ON MONDAY NEXT, JULY 24.

"The great power of the Royal Nassau Balloon has afforded the means of making an experiment with the above-named machine, which, from its great weight, would be impossible with any other balloon hitherto constructed.

"The plan adopted by M. Garnerin was to ascend alone and detach the parachute from the balloon, which, having no person to conduct it, fell in some very distant part, and was either lost or destroyed; but Mr. GREEN has undertaken to ascend in the Nassau Balloon, and to liberate the parachute himself, a feat never before attempted by any aëronaut.

THE PARACHUTE WILL BE EXHIBITED PREVIOUS TO ITS ASCENT."

The admission was half-a-crown, the ascent was to be at five, and there was to be the usual Vauxhall entertainment in the evening. I did not go to the gardens. Living close to them, I was where the essential thing, the perilous descent, could be seen in its whole course from a terrace on the house-top, undisturbed by crowds, and with nothing whatever to impede the view. Though influenced like others by long contact with his tone of perfect confidence, I dare say I was more nervous about the parachute than poor Cocking himself that afternoon; certainly none of his friends could have been in the mood to hear the Vauxhall comic singer, and the scraping of the bands. Quietly, then, as one of a household of his friends, I saw the balloon, with the parachute attached, go up into the summer evening air; saw the poor fellow wave his last adieu to this world; wished that he had not rashly floated so far and gone so high before he detached himself; and then—saw him descend in wreck, so instant, that the pulling of the trigger of a pistol pointed to his brain could not have seemed to slay him more immediately. The

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balloon suddenly and rapidly shot up into the sky. The parachute came toppling through the lower air, a hopeless ruin. It fell at Lee, and here not only was the parachute carried away piecemeal, but the dead man's purse was stolen from his pocket; his watch, his snuff-box, his eye-glass were taken; even the cap was stolen from his head; the shoes were pulled from his feet, the buttons from his dress.

Of Cocking's last mind on the subject of his parachute I have, in an imperfect newspaper cutting, a record by Professor Faraday. Mr. Faraday's authority having been cited at the inquest, he wrote to a daily newspaper as follows:—"I knew Mr. Cocking long ago, was a fellow member with him at the City Philosophical Society, and heard him deliver the lecture twenty-three years since, referred to by Mr. Gye at the inquest; and the recollection of his companionship, abilities, and kindness at that time adds greatly to my feelings of sorrow for his melancholy death. I did not know that he thought of putting his parachute to the proof by a descent until I saw his intention announced in the papers, and did not see him or the parachute until the day of the descent. He then asked me at the gardens my opinion of its safety, and I said that, as to its capability of retarding his descent, it was purely a matter of calculation into which I could not go. He said that he had made both experiments and calculations, and was fully assured the velocity of descent would not be greater than that of a man falling from a height of two feet. I then remarked upon the weakness of the construction, especially of the upper ring, and asked why he had not given it a form better able to resist collapsion? Why it was not assisted by stretchers, or bracing, &c.? He gave me the same answer generally that he had given to Mr. Gye, that it was strong enough, and that he objected to more weight above. I made other objections, as, for instance, to the opening in the middle of the parachute, the place of the centre of gravity, &c., but finding him perfectly satisfied with his preparations and resolved to ascend (as is fully proved by the evidence on the inquest), finding, also, by the care of Mr. Gye that every precaution was taken to enable him to abandon his intention at any moment, I desisted from making further remarks, which might tend to disturb his presence of mind, though they would not have prevented his ascent. I, however, said not a word to him to advance his going; but, being doubtful and anxious, had expressed myself so to some on the ground, and amongst others to Mr. Green, who asking me whether I would rather be in his or Mr. Cocking's situation, I said in his; and this he told to Mr. Cocking in my hearing. With these feelings on my mind I retired in part, and did not speak to Mr. Cocking for the last hour and a half.

"Hearing that Mr. Mason was disturbing Mr. Cocking's attention, I did venture to say to the former gentleman that, as Mr. Cocking was resolved to ascend, I thought it unwise. Mr. Mason told me that he had made calculations, the result of which was that the descent would be a very rapid one. I observed that Mr. Cocking had also told me he had made experiments and calculations, the results of which were that the descent would be slow. Mr. Mason's objections and calculations, as far as I know, had no relation to the strength of the parachute, or to the actual cause of the failure and sad result.

"The opinion given by Mr. Green and Mr. Gye (who appear to me to be the best judges under the circumstances) regarding the failure of the parachute, makes me glad that I said no more to Mr. Cocking than I did. The retention of the rope attached to the balloon at the moment of separation may have been due to some disturbance of mind through anxiety, thus bringing on the fatal termination;——"

Here ends my newspaper cutting. If the rope theory be true, however, I cannot believe that any fear caused Cocking to keep the rope too long in his hand. He was not capable of doubting the perfection of his parachute, and he pulled the fatal trigger, I am quite sure, with a confident exultation that may have been as destructive of cool presence of mind as fear itself.

As I have remembered that the dead man's shoes were stolen from his feet, let me not forget the spirit of human kindness that his fate awakened. His life had not been that of a money-maker; he had but laboriously earned bread as he ate it, for himself, his wife, and the two infirm women whom he had made it part of his life's duty to support. The sale of his little model, and of his balloon books and drawings, paid his debts. Beyond this, the efforts of friends produced a fund, trivial indeed as compared with the value of a patient man's unflinching labour year by year, yet sufficient to stay for the moment all pinch of distress, and to provide for the widow, who became a governess, a little life annuity. The Queen generously headed with fifty pounds a subscription-list, that attained to no great length. The proprietors of Vauxhall gave the gardens for a benefit, of which the expenses for gas and advertisements reached a hundred and nine pounds, and the receipts were a hundred and eighty. But, half the money gained for the widow at Vauxhall was presently lost by another benefit, at the Hackney Gardens, of which the receipts were twenty-two pounds, the expenses sixty-three. The London Gas Company that had provided the means of taking up the parachute, and was only in the remotest way a party to the disaster, generously subscribed thirty pounds to the widow's fund. Many withheld active sympathy for affliction which they held to be caused by a most rash adventure; for how could they be told then, the true story of the child-hearted enthusiast, when it would have been cold desecration to lay bare the simple secrets of his home!

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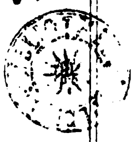
"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL.

CONDUCTED BY CHARLES DICKENS.

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED HOUSEHOLD WORDS.



No. 172.] SATURDAY, AUGUST 9, 1862. [PRICE 2d.

NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER II.

THE tall man who had passed Captain Wragge, in the dark, proceeded rapidly along the public walk, struck off across a little waste patch of ground, and entered the open door of the Aldborough Hotel. The light in the passage, falling full on his face as he passed it, proved the truth of Captain Wragge's surmise, and showed the stranger to be Mr. Kirke of the merchant service.

Meeting the landlord in the passage, Mr. Kirke nodded to him with the familiarity of an old customer. "Have you got the paper?" he asked; "I want to look at the visitors' list."

"I have got it in my room, sir," said the landlord, leading the way into a parlour at the back of the house. "Are there any friends of yours staying here, do you think?"

Without replying, the seaman turned to the list, as soon as the newspaper was placed in his hand, and ran his finger down it, name by name. The finger suddenly stopped at this line: "Sea-View Cottage; Mr. Noel Vanstone." Kirke of the merchant service repeated the name to himself; and put down the paper thoughtfully.

"Have you found anybody you know, captain?" asked the landlord.

"I have found a name I know—a name my father used often to speak of in his time. Is this Mr. Vanstone a family man? Do you know if there is a young lady in the house?"

"I can't say, captain. My wife will be here directly: she is sure to know. It must have been some time ago, if your father knew this Mr. Vanstone?"

"It *was* some time ago. My father knew a subaltern officer of that name, when he was with his regiment in Canada. It would be curious if the person here turned out to be the same man—and if that young lady was his daughter."

"Excuse me, captain—but the young lady seems to hang a little on your mind," said the landlord, with a pleasant smile.

Mr. Kirke looked as if the form which his host's good humour had just taken, was not quite to his mind. He returned abruptly to the subaltern officer and the regiment in Canada. "That poor fellow's story was as miserable a one as ever I heard," he said, looking back again absently at the visitors' list.

"Would there be any harm in telling it, sir?" asked the landlord. "Miserable or not—a story's a story, when you know it to be true."

Mr. Kirke hesitated. "I hardly think I should be doing right to tell it," he said. "If this man, or any relations of his, are still alive, it is not a story they might like strangers to know. All I can tell you is, that my father was the salvation of that young officer, under very dreadful circumstances. They parted in Canada. My father remained with his regiment: the young officer sold out and returned to England—and from that moment they lost sight of each other. It would be curious if this Vanstone here was the same man. It would be curious——"

He suddenly checked himself, just as another reference to "the young lady" was on the point of passing his lips. At the same moment, the landlord's wife came in; and Mr. Kirke at once transferred his inquiries to the higher authority in the house.

"Do you know anything of this Mr. Vanstone who is down here on the visitors' list?" asked the sailor. "Is he an old man?"

"He's a miserable little creature to look at," replied the landlady—"but he's not old, captain!"

"Then he is not the man I mean. Perhaps, he is the man's son? Has he got any ladies with him?"

The landlady tossed her head, and pursed up her lips disparagingly.

"He has a housekeeper with him," she said. "A middle-aged person—not one of my sort. I dare say I'm wrong—but I don't like a dressy woman in her station of life."

Mr. Kirke began to look puzzled. "I must have made some mistake about the house," he said. "Surely there's a lawn cut octagon-shape at Sea-View Cottage, and a white flag-staff in the middle of the gravel walk?"

"That's not Sea View, sir! It's North Shingles you're talking of. Mr. Bygrave's. His wife and his niece came here, by the coach, to-day. His wife's tall enough to be put in a show, and the worst dressed woman I ever set eyes on. But Miss Bygrave is worth looking at, if I may venture to say so. She's the finest girl, to my mind, we've had at Aldborough for many a long day. I

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wonder who they are! Do you know the name, captain?"

"No," said Mr. Kirke, with a shade of disappointment on his dark, weatherbeaten face; "I never heard the name before."

After replying in those words, he rose to take his leave. The landlord vainly invited him to drink a parting glass; the landlady vainly pressed him to stay another ten minutes, and try a cup of tea. He only replied that his sister expected him, and that he must return to the parsonage immediately.

On leaving the hotel, Mr. Kirke set his face westward, and walked inland along the high road, as fast as the darkness would let him.

"Bygrave?" he thought to himself. "Now I know her name, how much am I the wiser for it! If it had been Vanstone, my father's son might have had a chance of making acquaintance with her." He stopped, and looked back in the direction of Aldborough. "What a fool I am!" he burst out suddenly, striking his stick on the ground. "I was forty last birthday." He turned, and went on again faster than ever—his head down; his resolute black eyes searching the darkness on the land as they had searched it many a time on the sea, from the deck of his ship.

After more than an hour's walking, he reached a village, with a primitive little church and parsonage nestled together in a hollow. He entered the house by the back way, and found his sister, the clergyman's wife, sitting alone over her work in the parlour.

"Where is your husband, Lizzie?" he asked, taking a chair in a corner.

"William has gone out to see a sick person. He had just time enough, before he went," she added, with a smile, "to tell me about the young lady; and he declares he will never trust himself at Aldborough with you again, until you are a steady married man." She stopped; and looked at her brother more attentively than she had looked at him yet. "Robert!" she said, laying aside her work, and suddenly crossing the room to him. "You look anxious, you look distressed. William only laughed about your meeting with the young lady. Is it serious? Tell me, what is she like?"

He turned his head away at the question.

She took a stool at his feet, and persisted in looking up at him. "Is it serious, Robert?" she repeated, softly.

Kirke's weatherbeaten face was accustomed to no concealments—it answered for him before he spoke a word. "Don't tell your husband till I am gone," he said, with a roughness quite new in his sister's experience of him. "I know I only deserve to be laughed at—but it hurts me, for all that."

"Hurts you?" she repeated, in astonishment.

"You can't think me half such a fool, Lizzie, as I think myself," pursued Kirke, bitterly. "A man at my age ought to know better. I didn't set eyes on her for as much as a minute altogether; and there I have been, hanging about the place till after nightfall, on the chance of seeing her again—skulking, I should have called it, if I had found one of my men doing what I have been doing myself. I believe I'm bewitched. She's a mere girl, Lizzie,—I doubt if she's out of her teens—I'm old enough to be her father. It's all one: she stops in my mind in spite of me. I've had her face looking at me, through the pitch darkness, every step of the way to this house; and it's looking at me now—as plain as I see yours, and plainer."

He rose impatiently, and began to walk backwards and forwards in the room. His sister looked after him with surprise, as well as sympathy, expressed in her face. From his boyhood upwards, she had always been accustomed to see him master of himself. Years since, in the failing fortunes of the family, he had been their example and their support. She had heard of him, in the desperate emergencies of a life at sea, when hundreds of his fellow-creatures had looked to his steady self-possession for rescue from close-threatening death—and had not looked in vain. Never, in all her life before, had his sister seen the balance of that calm and equal mind lost, as she saw it lost now.

"How can you talk so unreasonably about your age and yourself?" she said. "There is not a woman alive, Robert, who is good enough for you. What is her name?"

"Bygrave. Do you know it?"

"No. But I might soon make acquaintance with her. If we only had a little time before us; if I could only get to Aldborough and see her—but you are going away to-morrow; your ship sails at the end of the week."

"Thank God for that!" said Kirke, fervently.

"Are you glad to be going away?" she asked, more and more amazed at him.

"Right glad, Lizzie, for my own sake. If I ever get to my senses again, I shall find my way back to them on the deck of my ship. This girl has got between me and my thoughts already: she shan't go a step further, and get between me and my duty. I'm determined on that. Fool as I am, I have sense enough left not to trust myself within easy hail of Aldborough to-morrow morning. I'm good for another twenty miles of walking—and I'll begin my journey back to-night."

His sister started up, and caught him fast by the arm. "Robert!" she exclaimed; "you're not serious? You don't mean to leave us on foot, alone in the dark?"

"It's only saying good-by, my dear, the last thing at night, instead of the first thing in the morning," he answered, with a smile. "Try and make allowances for me, Lizzie. My life has been passed at sea; and I'm not used to having my mind upset in this way. Men ashore are used to it; men ashore can take it easy. I can't. If I stopped here, I shouldn't rest. If I waited till to-morrow, I should only be going back to have another look at her. I don't want to feel more ashamed of myself than I do already.

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I want to fight my way back to my duty and myself, without stopping to think twice about it. Darkness is nothing to me—I'm used to darkness. I have got the high road to walk on, and I can't lose my way. Let me go, Lizzie! The only sweetheart I have any business with, at my age, is my ship. Let me get back to her!"

His sister still kept her hold of his arm, and still pleaded with him to stay till the morning. He listened to her with perfect patience and kindness—but she never shook his determination for an instant.

"What am I to say to William?" she pleaded. "What will he think, when he comes back, and finds you gone?"

"Tell him I have taken the advice he gave us, in his sermon last Sunday. I have turned my back on the world, the flesh, and the devil."

"How can you talk so, Robert! And the boys too—you promised not to go without bidding the boys good-by."

"That's true. I made my little nephews a promise; and I'll keep it." He kicked off his shoes, as he spoke, on the mat outside the door. "Light me up-stairs, Lizzie; I'll bid the two boys good-by without waking them."

She saw the uselessness of resisting him any longer; and, taking the candle, went before him up-stairs.

The boys—both young children—were sleeping together in the same bed. The youngest was his uncle's favourite, and was called by his uncle's name. He lay peacefully asleep, with a rough little toy ship hugged fast in his arms. Kirke's eyes softened as he stole on tiptoe to the child's side, and kissed him with the gentleness of a woman. "Poor little man!" said the sailor, tenderly. "He is as fond of his ship as I was at his age. I'll cut him out a better one when I come back. Will you give me my nephew one of these days, Lizzie, and will you let me make a sailor of him?"

"Oh, Robert, if you were only married and happy, as I am!"

"The time has gone by, my dear. I must make the best of it as I am, with my little nephew there to help me."

He left the room. His sister's tears fell fast as she followed him into the parlour. "There is something so forlorn and dreadful in your leaving us like this," she said. "Shall I go to Aldborough to-morrow, Robert, and try if I can get acquainted with her, for your sake?"

"No!" he replied. "Let her be. If it's ordered that I am to see that girl again, I *shall* see her. Leave it to the future, and you leave it right." He put on his shoes, and took up his hat and stick. "I won't over-walk myself," he said, cheerfully. "If the coach doesn't overtake me on the road, I can wait for it where I stop to breakfast. Dry your eyes, my dear; and give me a kiss."

She was like her brother, in features and complexion; and she had a touch of her brother's spirit—she dashed away the tears, and took her leave of him bravely.

"I shall be back in a year's time," said Kirke, falling into his old sailor-like way, at the door. "I'll bring you a China shawl, Lizzie, and a chest of tea for your store-room. Don't let the boys forget me; and don't think I'm doing wrong to leave you in this way. I know I'm doing right. God bless you and keep you, my dear—and your husband, and your children! Good-by!"

He stooped, and kissed her. She ran to the door to look after him. A puff of air extinguished the candle—and the black night shut him out from her in an instant.

Three days afterwards, the first-class merchantman, DELIVERANCE—Kirke, commander—sailed from London for the China Sea.

CHAPTER III.

THE threatening of storm and change passed away with the night. When morning rose over Aldborough, the sun was master in the blue heaven, and the waves were rippling gaily under the summer breeze.

At an hour when no other visitors to the watering-place were yet astir, the indefatigable Wragge appeared at the door of North Shingles Villa, and directed his steps northward, with a neatly-bound copy of Joyce's "Scientific Dialogues" in his hand. Arriving at the waste ground beyond the houses, he descended to the beach, and opened his book. The interview of the past night had sharpened his perception of the difficulties to be encountered in the coming enterprise. He was now doubly determined to try the characteristic experiment at which he had hinted in his letter to Magdalen: and to concentrate on himself—in the character of a remarkably well-informed man—the entire interest and attention of the formidable Mrs. Lecount.

Having taken his dose of ready-made science (to use his own expression) the first thing in the morning, on an empty stomach, Captain Wragge joined his small family circle at breakfast-time, inflated with information for the day. He observed that Magdalen's face showed plain signs of a sleepless night. She made no complaint: her manner was composed, and her temper perfectly under control. Mrs. Wragge—refreshed by some thirteen consecutive hours of uninterrupted repose—was in excellent spirits, and up at heel (for a wonder) with both shoes. She brought with her into the room several large sheets of tissue paper, cut crisply into mysterious and many-varying forms, which immediately provoked from her husband the short and sharp question, "What have you got there?"

"Patterns, captain," said Mrs. Wragge, in timidly conciliating tones. "I went shopping in London, and bought an Oriental Cashmere Robe. It cost a deal of money; and I'm going to try and save, by making it myself. I've got my patterns, and my dressmaking directions written out as plain as print. I'll be

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very tidy, captain; I'll keep in my own corner, if you'll please to give me one; and whether my head Buzzes, or whether it don't, I'll sit straight at my work all the same."

"You will do your work," said the captain, sternly, "when you know who you are, who I am, and who that young lady is—not before. Show me your shoes! Good. Show me your cap! Good. Make the breakfast."

When breakfast was over, Mrs. Wragge received her orders to retire to an adjoining room, and to wait there until her husband came to release her. As soon as her back was turned, Captain Wragge at once resumed the conversation which had been suspended, by Magdalen's own desire, on the preceding night. The questions he now put to her, all related to the subject of her visit in disguise to Noel Vanstone's house. They were the questions of a thoroughly clear-headed man—short, searching, and straight to the point. In less than half an hour's time, he had made himself acquainted with every incident that had happened in Vauxhall Walk.

The conclusions which the captain drew, after gaining his information, were clear and easily stated.

On the adverse side of the question, he expressed his conviction that Mrs. Lecount had certainly detected her visitor to be disguised; that she had never really left the room, though she might have opened and shut the door; and that on both the occasions, therefore, when Magdalen had been betrayed into speaking in her own voice, Mrs. Lecount had heard her. On the favourable side of the question, he was perfectly satisfied that the painted face and eyelids, the wig, and the padded cloak had so effectually concealed Magdalen's identity, that she might, in her own person, defy the housekeeper's closest scrutiny, so far as the matter of appearance was concerned. The difficulty of deceiving Mrs. Lecount's ears, as well as her eyes, was, he readily admitted, not so easily to be disposed of. But looking to the fact that Magdalen, on both the occasions when she had forgotten herself, had spoken in the heat of anger, he was of opinion that her voice had every reasonable chance of escaping detection—if she carefully avoided all outbursts of temper for the future, and spoke in those more composed and ordinary tones of her voice, which Mrs. Lecount had not yet heard. Upon the whole, the captain was inclined to pronounce the prospect hopeful, if one serious obstacle were cleared away at the outset—that obstacle being nothing less than the presence on the scene of action of Mrs. Wragge.

To Magdalen's surprise, when the course of her narrative brought her to the story of the ghost, Captain Wragge listened with the air of a man who was more annoyed than amused by what he heard. When she had done, he plainly told her that her unlucky meeting on the stairs of the lodging-house with Mrs. Wragge was, in his opinion, the most serious of all the accidents that had happened in Vauxhall Walk.

"I can deal with the difficulty of my wife's stupidity," he said, "as I have often dealt with it before. I can hammer her new identity *into* her head, but I can't hammer the ghost *out* of it. We have no security that the woman in the grey cloak and poke bonnnet may not come back to her recollection, at the most critical time, and under the most awkward circumstances. In plain English, my dear girl, Mrs. Wragge is a pitfal under our feet at every step we take."

"If we are aware of the pitfal," said Magdalen, "we can take our measures for avoiding it. What do you propose?"

"I propose," replied the captain, "the temporary removal of Mrs. Wragge. Speaking purely in a pecuniary point of view, I can't afford a total separation from her. You have often read of very poor people being suddenly enriched, by legacies reaching them from remote and unexpected quarters? Mrs. Wragge's case, when I married her, was one of these. An elderly female relative shared the favours of fortune, on that occasion, with my wife; and if I only keep up domestic appearances, I happen to know that Mrs. Wragge will prove a second time profitable to me, on that elderly relative's death. But for this circumstance, I should probably long since have transferred my wife to the care of society at large—in the agreeable conviction that if I didn't support her, somebody else would. Although I can't afford to take this course, I see no objection to having her comfortably boarded and lodged out of our way, for the time being—say, at a retired farm-house, in the character of a lady in infirm mental health. *You* would find the expense trifling; *I* should find the relief unutterable. What do you say? Shall I pack her up at once, and take her away by the next coach?"

"No!" replied Magdalen, firmly. "The poor creature's life is hard enough already; I won't help to make it harder. She was affectionately and truly kind to me when I was ill—and I won't allow her to be shut up among strangers while I can help it. The risk of keeping her here is only one risk more. I will face it, Captain Wragge—if you won't."

"Think twice," said the captain, gravely, "before you decide on keeping Mrs. Wragge."

"Once is enough," rejoined Magdalen. "I won't have her sent away."

"Very good," said the captain, resignedly. "I never interfere with questions of sentiment. But I have a word to say, on my own behalf. If my services are to be of any use to you, I can't have my hands tied at starting. This is serious. I won't trust my wife and Mrs. Lecount together. I'm afraid, if you're not—and I make it a condition that, if Mrs. Wragge stops here, she keeps her room. If you think her health requires it, you can take her for a walk early in the morning or late in the evening—but you must never trust her out with the servant, and never trust her out

by herself. I put the matter plainly: it is too important to be trifled with. What do you say—yes, or no?"

"I say, yes," replied Magdalen, after a moment's consideration. "On the understanding that I am to take her out walking as you propose."

Captain Wragge bowed, and recovered his suavity of manner. "What are our plans?" he inquired. "Shall we start our enterprise this afternoon? Are you ready for your introduction to Mrs. Lecount and her master?"

"Quite ready."

"Good, again. We will meet them on the parade, at their usual hour for going out—two o'clock. It is not twelve yet. I have two hours before me—just time enough to fit my wife into her new Skin. The process is absolutely necessary, to prevent her compromising us with the servant. Don't be afraid about the results; Mrs. Wragge has had a copious selection of assumed names hammered into her head in the course of her matrimonial career. It is merely a question of hammering hard enough—nothing more. I think we have settled everything now. Is there anything I can do before two o'clock? Have you any employment for the morning?"

"No," said Magdalen. "I shall go back to my own room, and try to rest."

"You had a disturbed night, I am afraid?" said the captain, politely opening the door for her.

"I fell asleep once or twice," she answered, carelessly. "I suppose my nerves are a little shaken. The bold black eyes of that man who stared so rudely at me yesterday evening, seemed to be looking at me again in my dreams. If we see him to-day, and if he annoys me any more, I must trouble you to speak to him. We will meet here again at two o'clock. Don't be hard with Mrs. Wragge; teach her what she must learn, as tenderly as you can."

With those words she left him, and went upstairs.

She laid down on her bed, with a heavy sigh, and tried to sleep. It was useless. The dull weariness of herself which now possessed her, was not the weariness which finds its remedy in repose. She rose again, and sat by the window, looking out listlessly over the sea.

A weaker nature than hers would not have felt the shock of Frank's desertion as she had felt it—as she was feeling it still. A weaker nature would have found refuge in indignation and comfort in tears. The passionate strength of Magdalen's love clung desperately to the sinking wreck of its own delusion—clung, until she tore herself from it, by main force of will. All that her native pride, her keen sense of wrong could do, was to shame her from dwelling on the thoughts which still caught their breath of life from the undying devotion of the past; which still perversely ascribed Frank's heartless farewell to any cause but the inborn baseness of the man who had written it. The woman never lived yet who could cast a true love out of her heart, because the object of that love was unworthy of her. All she can do is to struggle against it in secret—to sink in the contest, if she is weak; to win her way through it, if she is strong, by a process of self-laceration, which is of all moral remedies applied to a woman's nature the most dangerous and the most desperate; of all moral changes the change that is surest to mark her for life. Magdalen's strong nature had sustained her through the struggle; and the issue of it had left her—what she now was.

After sitting by the window for nearly an hour—her eyes looking mechanically at the view; her mind empty of all impressions, and conscious of no thoughts—she shook off the strange waking stupor that possessed her, and rose to prepare herself for the serious business of the day.

She went to the wardrobe, and took down from the pegs two bright, delicate muslin dresses which had been made for summer wear at Combe-Raven, a year since, and which had been of too little value to be worth selling when she parted with her other possessions. After placing these dresses, side by side on the bed, she looked into the wardrobe once more. It only contained one other summer dress—the plain alpaca gown which she had worn during her memorable interview with Noel Vanstone and Mrs. Lecount. This she left in its place; resolving not to wear it, less from any dread that the housekeeper might recognise a pattern too quiet to be noticed, and too common to be remembered, than from the conviction that it was neither gay enough nor becoming enough for the purpose. After taking a plain white muslin scarf, a pair of light grey kid gloves, and a garden-hat of Tuscan straw, from the drawers of the wardrobe, she locked it, and put the key carefully in her pocket.

Instead of at once proceeding to dress herself, she sat idly looking at the two muslin gowns; careless which she wore, and yet inconsistently hesitating which to choose. "What does it matter!" she said to herself, with a reckless laugh; "I am equally worthless in my own estimation, whichever I put on." She shuddered, as if the sound of her own laughter had startled her; and abruptly caught up the dress which lay nearest to her hand. Its colours were blue and white—the shade of blue which best suited her fair complexion. She hurriedly put on the gown, without going near her looking-glass. For the first time in her life, she shrank from meeting the reflexion of herself—except for a moment, when she arranged her hair under her garden-hat, leaving the glass again immediately. She drew her scarf over her shoulders, and fitted on her gloves, with her back to the toilet-table. "Shall I paint?" she asked herself, feeling instinctively that she was turning pale. "The rouge is still left in my box. It can't make my face more false than it is already." She looked

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round towards the glass, and again turned away from it. "No!" she said. "I have Mrs. Lecount to face, as well as her master. No paint." After consulting her watch, she left the room, and went down stairs again. It wanted ten minutes only of two o'clock.

Captain Wragge was waiting for her in the parlour—respectable in a frock-coat, a stiff summer cravat, and a high white hat; specklessly and cheerfully rural, in a buff waistcoat, grey trousers, and gaiters to match. His collars were higher than ever, and he carried a bran-new camp-stool in his hand. Any tradesman in England who had seen him at that moment, would have trusted him on the spot.

"Charming!" said the captain, paternally surveying Magdalen when she entered the room. "So fresh and cool! A little too pale, my dear, and a great deal too serious. Otherwise perfect. Try if you can smile."

"When the time comes for smiling," said Magdalen, bitterly, "trust my dramatic training for any change of face that may be necessary. Where is Mrs. Wragge?"

"Mrs. Wragge has learnt her lesson," replied the captain, "and is rewarded by my permission to sit at work in her own room. I sanction her new fancy for dressmaking, because it is sure to absorb all her attention, and to keep her at home. There is no fear of her finishing the Oriental Robe 'in a hurry'—for there is no mistake in the process of making it which she is not certain to commit. She will sit incubating her gown—pardon the expression—like a hen over an addled egg. I assure you her new whim relieves me. Nothing could be more convenient under existing circumstances."

He strutted away to the window—looked out—and beckoned to Magdalen to join him. "There they are!" he said, and pointed to the parade.

Mr. Noel Vanstone slowly walked by, as she looked, dressed in a complete suit of old-fashioned nankeen. It was apparently one of the days when the state of his health was at the worst. He leaned on Mrs. Lecount's arm, and was protected from the sun by a light umbrella which she held over him. The housekeeper—dressed to perfection, as usual, in a quiet lavender-coloured summer gown, a black mantilla, an unassuming straw bonnet, and a crisp blue veil—escorted her invalid master with the tenderest attention; sometimes directing his notice respectfully to the various objects of the sea view; sometimes, bending her head in graceful acknowledgment of the courtesy of passing strangers on the parade, who stepped aside to let the invalid pass by. She produced a visible effect among the idlers on the beach They looked after her, with unanimous interest; and exchanged confidential nods of approval which said as plainly as words could have expressed it:—"A very domestic person! a truly superior woman!"

Captain Wragge's parti-coloured eyes followed Mrs. Lecount with a steady, distrustful attention. "Tough work for us, *there*," he whispered in Magdalen's ear; "tougher work than you think, before we turn that woman out of her place."

"Wait," said Magdalen, quietly. "Wait, and see."

She walked to the door. The captain followed her without making any further remark. "I'll wait till you're married," he thought to himself—"not a moment longer, offer me what you may."

At the house door, Magdalen addressed him again.

"We will go that way," she said, pointing southward—"then turn, and meet them, as they come back."

Captain Wragge signified his approval of the arrangement: and followed Magdalen to the garden gate. As she opened it to pass through, her attention was attracted by a lady, with a nursery-maid and two little boys behind her, loitering on the path outside the garden wall. The lady started, looked eagerly, and smiled to herself, as Magdalen came out. Curiosity had got the better of Kirke's sister—and she had come to Aldborough for the express purpose of seeing Miss Bygrave.

Something in the shape of the lady's face, something in the expression of her dark eyes reminded Magdalen of the merchant-captain whose uncontrolled admiration had annoyed her on the previous evening. She instantly returned the stranger's scrutiny by a frowning, ungracious look. The lady coloured, paid the look back with interest, and slowly walked on.

"A hard, bold, bad girl," thought Kirke's sister. "What could Robert be thinking of to admire her? I am almost glad he is gone. I hope and trust he will never set eyes on Miss Bygrave again."

"What boors the people are here!" said Magdalen to Captain Wragge. "That woman was even ruder than the man last night. She is like him in the face. I wonder who she is?"

"I'll find out directly," said the captain. "We can't be too cautious about strangers." He at once appealed to his friends, the boatmen. They were close at hand; and Magdalen heard the questions and answers plainly.

"How are you all, this morning?" said Captain Wragge, in his easy jocular way. "And how's the wind? Nor'-west and by west, is it? Very good. Who is that lady?"

"That's Mrs. Strickland, sir."

"Ay! ay! The clergyman's wife and the captain's sister. Where's the captain to-day?"

"On his way to London, I should think, sir. His ship sails for China, at the end of the week."

China! As that one word passed the man's lips, a pang of the old sorrow struck Magdalen to the heart. Stranger as he was, she began to hate the bare mention of the merchant-captain's name. He had troubled her dreams of the past night—and now, when she was most desperately and recklessly bent on forgetting her old home-

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existence, he had been indirectly the cause of recalling her mind to Frank.

"Come!" she said, angrily, to her companion. "What do we care about the man or his ship? Come away."

"By all means," said Captain Wragge. "As long as we don't find friends of the Bygraves, what do we care about anybody."

They walked on, southwards, for ten minutes or more—then turned and walked back again to meet Noel Vanstone and Mrs. Lecount.

UP AND DOWN IN THE GREAT SUN GARDEN.

Glorious with flowers, a great unexplored garden lies in calm seas under the burning sun. Except Australia, which is so large as to be called a continent, Borneo, lying north of it directly under the equator, and most tropical among tropical lands in the same Pacific seas, is the largest island in the world. It is more than three times as large as Great Britain, and it is by more than three thousand times less known. The greater part of the island south of the equator and on the eastern coast is considered subject to the Dutch, whose settlements are comprised in three provinces. On the northern coast between the sea and a range of Anga-Anga mountains, is Borneo Proper, with the town of Brunei, or Borneo, having the island of Labuan by the head of its bay—an island ceded to this country, in which are coal mines worked for the use of steamers in those Eastern seas. At the other, or western end of Borneo Proper, still on the northern coast of the great island, is Sir James Brooke's province of Saráwak, ceded to this country in 1843.

There was much need of a real traveller in this great island, that lay dimly seen by Europe glowing under the bright tropical sun, and we are very glad, then, now to get a real traveller's book about Borneo from Mr. Spenser St. John,* who, resident officially at the principal city of the island, journeyed towards the south, and in that direction advanced farther than any Malay or European who had been before him. First, he ranged among the tribes planted about Sir James Brooke's territory of Saráwak. Next, he ascended twice to the shoulders and head of the great mountain of Borneo, Kina-Balu, thirteen or fourteen thousand feet high. Lastly, he penetrated deep to the south and southeast of his place of residence, Brunei, the royal city where, as ancient voyagers say, the sultans were wont to hold court, with immense bodyguards and displays of barbaric splendour. For ten years, as he lay in the bay, he had looked up to the hills rising and rising southward, innumerable and mysterious, and wondered what manner of region lay beyond them. Neither Malay nor European could solve the mystery; the river Limbang, the outlet from that undiscovered interior, had only been navigated within sight of the sea, where it poured out its waters, which told no secret, from the profundity of forest and the labyrinth of mountains. It was long, however, before he could visit this Cloud-land, so he began with the places and people nearer at hand. He would look at the fauns and satyrs of the garden; the Sea-Dyaks, for example, so called from their familiarity with salt water, though many of them dwell far inland.

These are the warlike people accustomed to take heads, as the Red Indians take scalps, and addicted to plunder. They live in huts between five and six hundred feet long—commodious, clean, and airy. But they have their difficulties. Now and then a village will dwindle away under the influence of an epidemic, and everywhere the snakes are a coiling nuisance, eating pigs and dogs without ceremony, swallowing deer—horns and all—and even supping on late human loiterers in the woods. Until recently, worse than the snakes were the pirates—Dyak or Malay. Mr. St. John met with one of these buccaneers, who, left by his companions on the banks of a river, swam off to a floating island on its way seawards, and became a pilgrim of the waves and winds, his green ship, palm-masted, supplying him with fruit until a vessel picked him up.

There is a spicy breath of Eastern fairyland in the thought of these sailing islets spreading their foliage to the summer breeze, with a noisy, well-provisioned crew of birds and monkeys. Nothing, we suppose, exactly hits the fancy of an alligator, unless it be the leg of a Dyak, and the alligators see most of these floating islets. Alligators in Borneo are sometimes twenty-five feet long. Cats and monkeys are used as the baits for catching them, and in their deep stomachs ominous deposits of jacket-buttons, or the indigestible pigtails of Chinamen, may now and then be found. The great ourang-outang, too, as a distant connexion of Sir Oran Haut-ton, is reputed dangerous. But this is a libel, and Mr. St. John could never bring himself to shoot at creatures so very much like the people he had sometimes met. The noble savage is not, on the whole, more remarkable for the amenity of his habits here than elsewhere. Thus, the Millenans, a tribe of Dyak origin, say of themselves, that when they build a huge house on posts, they dig a deep hole to receive the first pile, which is hung suspended over it. A young girl is then put down, the lashings are cut, the enormous timber descends, and the blood of the crushed victim propitiates the evil spirits. Mr. St. John, however, never saw anything bigger than a chicken immolated in this manner.

But it is still doubtful whether human sacrifices do not take place at the burials of respectable men. The Kanowits, another variety of the same race, when a chief dies, are supposed to put his property in a canoe and send it adrift on a stream. But they swindle their dead by keeping the valuables and putting off the ghost with trash. Another strange custom was long hereditary on

* Life in the Forests of the Far East, published by Smith, Elder, and Co.

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the banks of the great river Rejang. When a man's child died he sallied forth, killing the first person he met, even were it his own brother. The Saráwak government, however, not being of an antiquarian turn, abolished that old custom. These wild villagers have wilder neighbours in the wandering Pakatan and Punan, who build no permanent dwellings, but run up temporary huts, until they have exhausted the game and fruit of their camping-ground; when they hie them to fresh fields and pastures new. They are industrious collectors of wax, edible birds'-nests, camphor, and rattans. It is said that, living perpetually in the dark forest, and never exposed to the sun, they are fairer than the other inhabitants of Borneo; but Mr. St. John, though he often found their nests in the woods, and slept in them, never came across a tribe. It is by these true foresters that the blowpipe arrow is used, and, being often poisoned, is really a formidable weapon. The Sea-Dyaks, to whose class the Pakatan and Punan belong, salute their infants with music; though one man told the traveller that he had killed his only surviving child, having lost the other by disease, because he could not bear to see it grow up, to love it, and to see it slowly die. Instances have occurred of fathers, when their children were rude and abused them, taking poison in despair. The Sea-Dyaks are garrulous and hospitable; they accustom their brides and bridegrooms betimes to family jars by knocking their heads together three or four times on the wedding-day. They sacrifice a pig when civilised nations not seldom sacrifice a woman; and, when domestic broils occur, what does your sensible Dyak do? Instead of quarrelling and fighting at home, he starts out for a few days until the affair has blown over, and sulks by cutting off other folks' heads in the jungle. "The white men read books," they urge, "we hunt for heads instead;" and they account their way the most conducive to return of cheerfulness. The Kayans are another tribe, curious and little known. Mr. St. John visited them soon after his arrival at Borneo. They dwell on the banks of the stream in verandahed houses, sometimes clustered into towns, are primitive in dress and ideas, and have an inordinate regard for undiluted brandy.

Then, there are Land-Dyaks; their home being the Saráwak interior, to the left of the river, among the hills. They were, at the time of Mr. St. John's visit, gone away to prepare their farms, but the round houses, raised on posts, in which the heads were formerly kept, marked their places of resort, and the old men remained at home cowering over the embers of low fires. The Land-Dyaks are ingenious, industrious, and imitative; they construct elegant little suspension-bridges, and their humour is agricultural. The feet of the Europeans having been washed, the water was kept to manure the soil.

The island of Borneo, it should be premised, extending, with its parasite group, through eleven degrees of longitude and ten of latitude, contains two climates—that of Celebes on one side, and that of Java on the other. It is so imperfectly known, even by its own inhabitants, that many of the inland tribes have no notion that they are islanders, while to others a solitary stream is the whole world of waters. Sir Stamford Raffles spoke of Borneo as little more than a blank on the map of Asia. A large proportion of its surface still remains so, but new lines may now be traced around Kina-Balu, and in the regions hitherto unknown beyond Brunei. Even before he saw Borneo, Mr. St. John had been ambitious of climbing the mountain; he had aspired to be the first to stand upon its silent peaks; but Mr. Low, colonial treasurer of Labuan, was before him by seven years, and deposited a paper in a bottle within a few hundred feet of the summit. In the spring of 1858, Mr. St. John, with Mr. Low for his companion, started with two servants, a crew of six, and seventeen followers. It was agreed to reach the base of the mountain by way of the Abai river, on whose banks the salt-makers dwell, the salt being boiled from the roots of the nipa palm, which always grows in sea or brackish water. The nipa is, indeed, a little treasury of comforts to the natives. From its root the native extracts, as we see, salt; from its stem, sugar; with its leaves he contrives a roof for his house, and mats for the walls and for the awnings of his boat; he rolls his cigar in the fine leaf lining, and so on through a dozen other homely uses.

The party went slowly up the stream. On the way was seen a chief's grave, ornamented with sevenfold umbrellas. Thence the journey was continued on foot; visits were paid to great men, whose households displayed a sort of picturesque economy, and, as the distance from the coast lengthened, the travellers found themselves in a country where no European had hitherto been seen, so that if the region was strange to them, they were equally strange to the people. But it was no easy work to ascend barefoot the dry bed of a torrent in search of mountain pinnacles above the clouds. And what, the village folk asked, could these strangers promise themselves for their pains? Were they looking for gold or copper mines, or for the fruit of the tree lagundi, which, if eaten, restores youth and confers unending life; or, in the steps of Sadak, seeking the waters of oblivion? There was, moreover, a great diamond up there, and, in connexion with these stories, or Bornean romances, there being no Fadladeen in the party, one of the men commenced a tale which lasted seventeen days in the telling, all about a princess who "for seven days and seven nights neither ate nor drank, but only wept." However, like the Arabian hero, the travellers pushed on. There was an occasional curse, with a menace or two, from the villages—menaces and curses being deprived of all evil results by an exhibition of revolvers. Presently the mountain began to show itself boldly at close quarters. Its fortress faces of granite towered in front, and over masses of rock, through thickets of shrubs, bright with blood-coloured flowers, the explorers scaled the peak. The air was light, buoyant, and exhila-

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rating. "It made me," says the narrator, "long to float away."

From the mid-slope of Kina-Balu many brilliant glimpses of unexplored plains, unmapped rivers, unransacked valleys, and villages unknown to the best maps, could be obtained. At nine thousand feet above the level of the sea the travellers slept in a cave. Above rose the peak. Now the peak itself—the very apex of the mountains—was what Mr. St. John desired to reach. He tried his best; he persevered until the rising ledge narrowed under his foot to eight inches. It was unsafe to go further; so he, from a more secure point, flung a stone to the summit, forty feet above him, which he could not scale, and turned him downwards, collecting plants by the way, to return through a storm to the friendly people of the highest village. There all the girls had washed their faces, and brought little presents of tobacco, in exchange for pins and needles. On the way back to Brunei, botanising a little, Mr. St. John, not confining himself to the gorgeous flowers, also took notes of sundry marvellous fishes, very like those in the Arabian tale, where "the fisherman, looking into the lake, saw in it fish of various colours—white, and red, and blue, and yellow." And it is curious that those which live in the brilliant water-world, among coral reefs, where the nautili stand "at their diamond doors" in "rainbow frills," are singularly rich in tint and iridescence. There was one—emerald green, striped with rose, with adornments of amber and ultramarine—exactly suited for the dinner of a Calendar, or Sleeper Awakened, or a Princess of China betrothed to a monarch pavilioned with his hosts on the plains of Tartary. Glorious, indeed, is the face of nature in this land of birds of paradise, of scented beetles, coral snakes, the "sun-coloured" cinnyris, the Indian lotus, the original tiger lily, the harp-shell—tinted like a tulip—and the only genuine mermaid, whose flesh none but kings may eat.

The travellers' first object was attained. The mountain had told its story. The river was now to be questioned. This river Limbang is the Nile of Borneo, whose sources in the far interior are yet undiscovered. The natives talked of it as a second Alph, the sacred stream which

——ran
Through caverns measureless by man,
Down to a sunless sea.

It rushed, they declared, through miles of natural tunnel; beyond, it meandered through a seven days' journey of smooth land, peopled by tame goats without masters; but no one had been among these goats, nor visited the watery caverns. However, Mr. St. John, in the spirit of the simple old voyager who began his narrative with "being resolved to survey the world, I sailed from Bristol," undertook to explore the Limbang for himself, and go from its traditions into its geography. Two boats were equipped; the crews were armed; hatchets, yellow, black, red, and white cloths, looking-glasses, agates, and beads were taken in stock to propitiate the savages, and in August, 1858, a start was made. Away, past a burial-ground of chiefs, where gold ornaments are found, either in the earth or among the prawns in the river, past the stony relics of ancient Brunei, past rafts of palms, and through a connecting channel into the Limbang river. Thenceforward, no Malay dwellings were seen; the Bisayans, the Muruts, and a few Kayans occupied the sprinkled villages. It was a fatiguing but an interesting journey, with forest fare of the best; for Mr. St. John travelled with a cook who could make salads as he ran of cucumbers and chillies, of prawns and curry, or contrive curries finished in the orthodox way with cocoa-nut milk. The navigation was not only difficult but perilous, and the weather intensely disagreeable. In the woods, overhanging the stream, hideous green snakes were pendent; hornets infested the air, and stung fiercely; leeches clung to the explorers, legs, when they landed on the swampy shores. But they continued their adventures on foot, with provisions failing and men discontented. In the valley of the Limbang the women make the tapioca from the starch of the bitter cassava, cut into slices, dry its poison out and pound it into meal. The strange tribes, the singular village life, the legends of the elders, the manners and customs of a new race, the brilliant flowers of this wilderness of the Sun Garden, the sport, the scenery, and the promise of a glimpse of Larvi, a mountain of mystic fame in the far interior, occupied the minds of the travellers. A month was spent on the road, however, and Larvi was not reached. Still, the course of the Limbang, for a considerable distance, was determined.

On his way back to Brunei he heard some fearful and wonderful stories about the ourang-outang, the wild man of the woods. It had frequently been asserted that young girls were carried off by these poor relations of his lordship the gorilla; but here we have a tale about a monstrous female ourang-outang who, taking a fancy to a poor Murut gentleman whom she saw bathing, dragged him by force to a tree which she compelled him to climb, lodged him in a warm nest, watched him with feminine jealousy, fed him with fruits and palm cabbage, and forced him to travel from one branch to another instead of treading the ground. The tale is a tragedy; for the ungrateful Murut not only ran away at the first opportunity, but afterwards shot the forest syren with a poisoned arrow.

Forest travel in Borneo, then, was not altogether a luxury; nor was it monotonous. A mile an hour is the rate of progress under ordinary circumstances. With all exertion, Mr. St. John never recorded more than ten miles' progress in a day through the thick pathless forests, and that was a day of ten hours' hard incessant work.

As for the sultan to whom Mr. St. John was accredited, his is a Malay kingdom, one of the few which have not fallen. He keeps a constitutional court in the Oriental sense of the term, and his capital is styled the Abode of Peace. He is surrounded by an aristocracy—

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filthy, proud, and poor. The court of Borneo has also its fashions. There is, for example, a fasting month, at the end of which the sultan and rajahs go in gay procession to cleanse the graves of their ancestors. On the last day of the said month, everybody begs pardon of everybody else for the short-comings of the preceding year. Then they have professional story-telling, and lady conjurors. All this is of the East, Eastern. But there is no real government, no army, nor fleet, nor police; no regular punishment for crime. But Borneo is rich in coal-fields yet to be developed. There is intelligence in many of its native tribes, and the future lies not without hope before it.

Saráwak, the territory of Sir James, or Rajah, Brooke, has been more precocious. It has, with its present dependencies, a coast range of three hundred miles: it is nobly watered; it has an excellent soil; and its productions are valuable. Not many years ago, the visit of a schooner was an exciting event, whereas now an important commerce thrives in the rivers.

The Chinese are old visitors of Borneo. Chinese gardens and Chinese graves, are constantly to be met with. The Chinese, too, know where to wash for gold and diamonds.

Mr. St. John voyaged twice to the neighbouring islets of the Sulu Archipelago. Cayagan Sulu, with its three peaks, its jasmine-scented hills, and lawn-like sward, opened the gate to Sulu Proper, where an Englishman lived, and where the sultan, in the midst of a turbaned, gold-brocaded, and gold-braceleted court, behaved very like a gentleman, asking, in an approved coffee-room tone, "Is France quiet?" In another island of the group civilisation had ripened early. There was a corner shop in the town whither a young lady, Gabriella by name, attracted all the wanderers of those seas. Country-houses, too, throw open their doors to strangers, inviting them to drink cocoa-nut milk, chocolate, or gin. Unluckily, the piratical hordes of the Indian Ocean still haunt the inlets of Sulu, notwithstanding the naval crusades of Spain and the Dutch. One of these marauders went to Mr. Wyndham, an English resident trader, and, in selling his brass gun to him, said, that since the English had been settled in Labuan there were so many steamers about that it was no use pirating, so he disposed of his brass gun, and retired from business. The occupations of the islanders are more harmless. They are great pearl-fishers. There was a chief, the friend of an English merchant, and this chief, being rich, gambled away his property, pawning his wife and children, and retaining only a little slave, with whom he started in a canoe to fish for pearls. They fished together, and the pearls, gradually increasing in number, began to fill their casket; which was a hollow bamboo. But one pearl for a long time could not be found. It was that which a man of old had once actually caught, when it slipped through his fingers into the water. The big, experienced pearl-oysters, be it known, are very watchful, and keep their shells open. Well, it fell out upon a day that the slave boy, diving, hit upon the very pearl which had been lost; whereupon the chief redeemed his wife and children, paid off his debts, and became once more a respectable man. "It is a very curious superstition," Mr. St. John says, "in those countries, that if you place gold or pearls in a packet by themselves, they will certainly decrease in quantity or in number, and in the end totally disappear; but if you add a few grains of rice, the treasure is safe. I have never yet seen a native open a packet of gold, or pearls, or any precious stones, without noticing some grains of rice."

BOATING.

Our eager crew, six merry boys,
In the completest sailor trim,
Row, laugh, and talk with equal noise—
The shining eddies whirl and dim:
Beneath each oar an azure cup,
With sudden silver bubbling up.

The hinted summer thrills the scene,
Like a dear love-tale guessed, not told;
What flutter in Earth's youthful green,
What wooing in the sun's soft gold!
For Spring but just had passed away,
Veiled in her cloud of falling May.

Fresh'ning her sister's pathway first,
With scented dawns and showy eves,
Her lily-globes of perfume burst,
Spread her rich-lying tulip-leaves;
Her gold laburnum founts still shed
Some droppings on June's sunny head.

Alas! this bay of lovely nooks,
The boys, contemptuous, call a pond,
Bend on the helmsman anxious looks,
Assure him of dead calm beyond—
Yet loose the sail excitedly,
For he must turn the boat to sea.

And so before our vessel's prow,
In one grand line meet wave and sky;
Oh, this exuberant stir and glow,
The strength and the uncertainty
May well the boyish spirit win
To its own nature, so akin!

The glory of the setting sun
Rains down a dust of gold behind,
A cloud's cast shadow rests upon
The harbour rocks as moves the wind.
They gloom and glorify, a true
Magnificent dissolving view.

So we float on and on, then turn;
The boys reluctant furl the sail,
They see the beauteous waters burn,
But not the warning in the trail;
Steer for those rocks to see the cove
Called ours by right of trésor-trôve—

A tiny inlet out of sight,
And cool behind its rugged screen,
Filled with a curious pale-green light,
That ripples through the darker green
So calm, so clear, the emerald flow,
We see the starfish move below.

The seaweed, purple, olive, red,
It might a mermaid's garden be;
So saith a child, whose curly head
Is glassed in its transparency.

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Falls but a drop from rested oar,
We mark it dimpling to the core.

Again, out 'neath a crimson sky,
With flashings of a ruby tide,
In white relief those seagulls fly,
Then a deep purple falleth wide,
The boys, enwrapt, repress their glee,
Hushed to unconscious poetry.

And, floating through the vivid maze,
That looks as liquid as the sea,
We think of ancient sacred days,
Of Jordan and of Galilee:
It broodeth like an Angel's wing!
Draw in thy oars! the boys must sing.

They choose, boy like, no plaintive hymn,
Nor suit the hour with quaint old song,
But, just aware of feelings dim,
Relieve them with a carol strong—
That floods, as with a storm of mirth,
The purple air, and sea, and earth.

Oh happy age! With quick rebound
Their very sighs come laughing back,
They catch their oars, 'mid jocund sound
The boat turns, dancing on its track:
One whirl of motion, song and glee,
Till we stand laughing on the quay.

PERPLEXING PARISIANS.

An orator may be made, we are told; but a poet is born a poet. We hear also of born actors, born painters, born engineers, and others; but we have not yet heard of a born policeman. Yet that phenomenon is not an unlikely form of nature's efforts. Distinction in the police career is not to be attained without peculiar and considerable talent, combined with great corporeal capability—if not of sudden exertion of strength, certainly of endurance. If some achieve policemanship, whilst on others policemanship is forced, we may assume, without great effort, that a gifted few are born policemen.

Such, at least, appears to have been the case with Canler, Ancien Chef de Sûreté. Although in sufficiently poor circumstances to sharpen his wits, he was not driven into the force by necessity; nor had he committed any peccadillo which, subjecting him to the censure of the police, thereby rendered him its slave. He came into the world on the 4th of April, 1797, an enfant de troupe, or child of his regiment. In 1801, his father, holding the rank of sergeant, was made provisional director of the military prison at Namur; which office he retained six years. As the twig is bent, the tree's inclined. The jailer's son never forgot the impressions received during his prison childhood. His youth was spent as a drummer and soldier, mixing him up with episodes of Napoleon's triumph, decline, and fall. After Waterloo, he married Mademoiselle Denisot, an egg-merchant's daughter, and soon afterwards got his discharge from the army, without a sou in his pocket, and with no trade to follow.

Accident, like Newton's apple, decided the object on which his talents were to be employed. He tried to work as a paper-stainer, but found the occupation incompatible. One day, when going along the Rue St. Sebastian, he observed a crowd before a house. A lodger had discovered a thief in his room, who threatened him with a formidable knife, upon which the said lodger made his escape, double-locking the robber in.

This was the decisive moment of Canler's career. Rising equal to the occasion, he took the lead. He listened at the door. All was silent. He burst open the door. The cage was empty, the bird apparently flown. By intuition, he thought of the chimney, tore a bunch of straw out of a mattress, set fire to it, and was rewarded by the surrender of the thief; who went to the assizes, and was condemned to seven years' hard labour.

This adventure prompted the idea of devoting his life to the pursuit of malefactors. His offers of service were accepted (1820); promotion came in due time, concluding with his retirement in November, 1851. The natural consequence of his leisure is a volume of memoirs, written, he says, neither from the desire of celebrity, nor to make a market of the curiosity of the public; but through the wish to spread a knowledge of facts, which has been acquired by long practical experience; through the hope of saving weak-minded persons, by showing them vice as it is—ugly, low, ignoble, repulsive—with the belief, in short, that he is fulfilling a duty to society, by describing events in which he has been an actor or a witness, as a warning to the rising generation. His sole object is to caution honest folk against the tricks of malefactors, and to prove to the latter that, sooner or later, their machinations are sure to be found out.

A preliminary word on the French police, as an institution, may be useful. The préfet of police can order individuals, without trial, to leave Paris summarily or within twenty-four hours; and he can set at liberty convicted prisoners as a reward to other criminals who have given valuable information. He can arrest, at one haul, a score or two of ill-reputed persons, on the chance of catching some real offender; can keep them while he wants them; can set them at liberty at his pleasure. He can spy out the most trifling actions of anybody, without exception, the highest as well as the lowest of the land, and can act as seems good to him in consequence. If he guesses that any new branch of criminal art or immorality is started, he can set on a secret agent, with liberal pay, for the gratification of his own personal curiosity. He can cause people's rooms to be searched for political papers, in order to obtain possession of private documents whose existence inconveniences his protégés. It is not surprising that, with these and other powers, police functionaries (who began, some without a sou, others with debts) should have acquired, in six or seven years, fortunes of from fifteen to five-and-twenty thousand pounds.

It was the police, diverted from their proper employment and occupied with fulfilling the

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schemes of the Jesuits, who ruined the Bourbons of the Restoration. Provocation, that base and perfidious instrument, was established into a permanent system, both to extort harsh laws from a good-natured monarch, and to repress individual or public opinion. Honest workmen, enticed into public-houses by men professing to be their fellows, were excited, under the influence of drink, to express opinions adverse to the government, ending by blaming the king himself. The next step was to desire a radical change, and to agree to take part in a pretended plot. Amidst the fumes of wine and the clash of glasses, a patriotic compact to that effect was signed; immediately after the "agents provocateurs" disappeared, to present the treasonable act at the préfecture of police. The wretched dupes recovered from their orgies to find themselves in prison.

Louis the Eighteenth, taught by the experience of exile, ascended the throne with the firm intention of taking count of the new ideas which had sprung up in France. Unfortunately, he was surrounded by persons whom the Jesuits had inspired with the hope of regaining their ancient privileges by means of absolutism and the right divine. They organised the faction of "The Congregation," which formed a secret retrograde government in correspondence with every court in Europe. They fomented conspiracy after conspiracy, to frighten the king into annulling the Charter and re-establishing the old régime. Letters, even of ambassadors and ministers, were violated; for the Jesuits succeeded in putting tools of their own at the head of both the police-office and the préfecture of police. Hypocrisy became the order of the day; the policemen highest in favour and best rewarded, were those who took the sacrament frequently, went to confession, and acted as spies on their superiors. It is a wearisome task to follow their long and subterranean intrigues, often ending in bloodshed—witness the fusillades of the Rue St. Denis, which were the fruit of a make-believe insurrection got up by a convict. The end was the departure of Charles the Tenth.

The Police of Surety, of which M. Canler rose to be chief, dates no further back than 1817. Such a police should be completely distinct from a political police; and its special office ought to make it irremovable in the midst of revolutionary changes, for the very reason that its duty is to watch over the security of life and property. Conducted in this spirit, no one can dispute its utility, nor call its necessity in question. When not diverted from its real object, far from deserving the scorn frequently heaped upon it, it is entitled to the gratitude of honest men. Its veritable mission is to ensure personal safety, and the subordination of evil to good, by handing over criminals to justice. Without this guarantee, what would become of society? In what a condition would the world be, if everybody were obliged to protect himself, unaided, against every attempt that might be made on his purse, his honour, or his life? What a state of things if the public had to baffle, as it could, the schemes of villains to whom the property of others is a constant temptation, and the art of thieving an incessant study!

Nevertheless, the agents of the Police of Surety were long regarded with an evil eye. Disgust and loathing were the only sentiments felt for them by the citizens whom they were deputed to protect. The cause lay in the origin of the force. Vidocq, the first chief of the Brigade of Surety, had risen to that post by detestable means. He had often acted as an informer; and when threatened with imprisonment in a bagnio, discovered, in the baseness of his heart, a means—not of regaining his liberty, but of alleviating his position. He offered M. Henry, the chief of the second division of police, to make himself useful as a prison spy; to gain his comrades' confidence for the sake of betraying it; and to supply information respecting escaped convicts. Through his agency, several dangerous robbers who had infested the capital, were arrested; for which service he received money rewards, varying with the importance of the case. Finally, M. Henry set him at liberty, on condition that his services as informer should be continued, and that he should supply the police with a number of offenders (whose minimum was fixed) every month, under pain of being sent back to Brest himself. He was allowed four pounds a month, fixed salary, and a premium on every arrest effected through his means.

One of the first was that of a tanner, who had afforded him an asylum when he came out of prison, and whom he accused, truly or falsely, of coining. The tanner and one of his friends, a medical man, were condemned and guillotined, in return for their hospitality. To make up the required number of victims, he had recourse to the arts of provocation, and by that means ignobly throve, until the return of the Bourbons. He then thought that he would make a better thing of it by placing himself at the disposal of the dominant political party. When no one else could be found to pull down Napoleon's statue from the column in the Place Vendôme, Vidocq, with a gang of ruffians, displaced it with a rope tied round its neck. After this exploit, he looked down upon the Surety Police, devoting himself almost exclusively to politics.

But in 1817, when the political ferment of 'fifteen and 'sixteen had a little subsided, Vidocq was entrusted with a dozen policemen of his own kind, to hunt out criminals; and it was not until then that he was really the chief of the Brigade of Surety, which, in 1821, was increased to twenty-eight men, with an allowance of secret-service money, of which very little account was rendered.

One single instance of his mode of selecting his subordinates will give an idea of the rest of them. An unknown person, calling himself Jacquin, came to Vidocq's office to offer his services as "indicator"—that is to say, spy, denouncer.

"What can you do?" asked the man of police.

"A good many things!" replied the candi-

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date. "In the first place, I can buy things cheap. Only try me."

"Ah! very well. Take these two five-franc pieces, go to market, and bring me a couple of fowls. I shall see what sort of choice you make."

The new comer promised to be soon back again. In a very short time he returned, and delivered to Vidocq a pair of irreproachable pullets, as well as the cash he had received to pay for them.

"Capital!" said the great man. "But how did you manage?"

"In this way," answered Jacquin. "I borrowed of one of my friends, who is an under-cook, his linen smock, his cotton cap, and the basket he slings over his back. My basket was furnished with plenty of straw, and I half filled it with stones to give it weight. I bought six sous-worth of vegetables which I laid on the top. Further on, I paid my court to a poultry-woman, bargained for my fowls, and paid her the money. The basket being heavy, I kept it on my back. I was not going to have the trouble of taking it off, to put a couple of fowls into it; so I begged the good woman to pack the goods herself inside my wicker receptacle. Cooks and poulterers cannot help giving each other a hand's turn now and then. I stood facing her, as was the lady's due, and stooped a little. Her two hands were employed over my head, while mine were at work in her great front pocket. It certainly is a funny fashion of theirs to carry their till in front of their stomach! I easily got my own money back, besides this thirty francs-worth of loose silver."

"Do you often make a haul like that?"

"One does one's best," the other replied.

"A modest answer. 'Twas not a bad trick. To-morrow I'll find you some employment. Be off, and don't get caught between this and then. By-the-by, how often have you been in prison?"

"Never. I can't say that I have any experience in that line. I have managed hitherto to keep out of scrapes. Further, I don't pretend to say."

Jacquin went about his business. While he was explaining to Vidocq the way in which he had picked the poultry-woman's pocket, he had been very demonstrative in gesticulations. He had suited the action to the word, stooping and going down on one knee, to represent the scene more vividly. With all deference he had once or twice touched his catechiser, and he contrived to rob Vidocq of a handsome gold watch with heavy appendages. Jacquin (supposing that to be his real name, which is scarcely probable) never made his second appearance. Vidocq, whose rage and wounded vanity were excited beyond expression, moved heaven and earth to find out the clever thief; but they never traced either watch or Jacquin. Many years after the event, neither agent nor "indicator" dare pronounce Jacquin's name in Vidocq's presence.

In 1827, Vidocq left the Brigade of Surety with a considerable sum, which was *not* saved out of his salary. A préfectoral decree, of the 15th of November, 1832, dissolved the brigade. A second decree of the same date, reconstituted it on a different basis. The third article enacted that no individual on whom sentence had been passed, even for the most trifling offence, could belong to the service. The measure was salutary; but there was one result to be apprehended. Vidocq's agents, suddenly deprived of the means of existence, might take to their former line of life; and it was indispensable, at any price, to prevent these scarcely half-reformed men from resuming a course of crime. It was therefore decided that they should retain the title of indicators, and should be allowed a room of their own to meet in; and that, besides a salary of two pounds a month, they should receive a gratuity for every criminal they caused to be arrested. Fourteen only of the body accepted these terms.

M. Canler classes the thieves of Paris into twelve different categories, of which the upper half-dozen (they are not numerous, M. Canler never knew more than twenty), called la haute pégre — condescend to rob not more than twice or thrice a year. But their labours are always very productive. Their favours are confined to jewellers' shops, money-changers, the offices of legal gentlemen, and the apartments of wealthy persons. A member of la haute pégre is an elegant young man of distinguished manners and fascinating conversation. He is at ease in the best society, conducting himself with dignity and grace. With inexhaustible patience and untiring perseverance, which would be admirable if exercised in an honest cause, he lays out for an affair, months beforehand. He meditates, studies, and ripens his plan. He admits of no confederate, and never attempts to commit his robbery until he is certain of security and success. These Corinthians, therefore, often enjoy a long career before they get finally sent to the galleys. One famous fellow, Piednoir (Blackfoot), never put his hand at all to the twenty years' hard labour to which he was twice sentenced during his regretted absence from the court of justice.

The sixth category consists of scionneurs or escarpes, who, with violence and sometimes murder, rob any well-dressed person whom they meet in the public thoroughfares after midnight. Hiding behind a corner or under a doorway, they spring out upon their victim. These night-hounds always hunt in couples. One seizes the passenger by the throat, closing his mouth with his hand, while the other strips him of his valuables and sometimes of his clothes. This done, the robbers disappear, leaving the plundered man half-strangled on the pavement. On the bank of a canal, matters are still more serious. The escarpes hide behind trees, heaps of stones, or piles of timber. At the approach of the first respectable-looking individual, one escarpe accosts him, under pretence of asking the time, or his way; the other passes a twisted handkerchief round his neck, and so contrives to hang him over his (the highwayman's) own

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shoulders. The operation completed, whether the patient be dead or give signs of life, it is all one; he is summarily pitched into the canal. Next day, when the body is found, people believe in a suicide or in an accident, the result of intemperance. The habits and resorts of the escarpes are what might be expected from such monsters. Like wild beasts, they prowl by night, and hide themselves during the day. Happily, the species is diminishing, with a tendency to disappear. Their number never much exceeded sixty; the arrest of fourteen put the others out of spirits. One of these, Fournier, was executed; fourteen went to the galleys. There remained only forty-six to make midnight walks in Paris agreeable.

The eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh categories are almost exclusively monopolised by Israelites. Under pretence of making purchases in jewellers' shops, they steal unset diamonds, by means of a little bit of birdlime in the palm of the hand, and will even swallow them as one way of concealment. Or, one of two confederates will feign epilepsy, frothing at the mouth through the instrumentality of a bit of soap —during the confusion, the other will appropriate what pleases him best. M. Canler asserts that, as a general rule, the thieves who exert the most prudence and perseverance in the attainment of their ends belong to the stock of Abraham, and also that, in certain Jewish families, theft is a hereditary profession—a means of existence taught by the parents, and carefully studied by the children, under the maternal eye, and guided by paternal counsels and experience. One of these families, composed of father, mother, six daughters, and six sons-in-law, could boast within their own domestic circle an united sentence of two hundred and nine years of judicial condemnation. The head of the house exercised, besides, the lucrative employment of receiving stolen goods. Nevertheless, though from theft to murder there is only one step, Israelite thieves very seldom become assassins. Moreover, they never confess a crime, however overwhelming may be the proofs against them; nor do they make revelations, or denounce their accomplices.

The number of individuals belonging to the twelfth category, la basse pégre, is incalculable. Every day it is joined by new proselytes. These are the small fry who thieve in shoals, the scum of the caldron, the mob out of which great criminals emerge. Their tactics are as diverse as their body is multitudinous. There is the over-coat theft. This thief enters a public-house where people are playing at billiards. He hangs up his shabby surtout by the side of the best he can fix upon; then, when its owner is busy with his game, he slips out with the better garment, leaving the old one in its place. His profits are consequently calculated by the rule of subtraction. If caught in the fact of exchanging, he politely apologises for the mistake. The same manœuvre applies to hats and umbrellas.

There is the cobbler's-wax thief. An individual enters a restaurant where the spoons and forks are of real silver, seats himself alone at a table, and orders his dinner. The repast ended, by way of grace after meat, he fastens a spoon or a fork under the table with wax or pitch, pays his reckoning, and coolly retires. As he rises, a confederate takes his vacant place, dines, and, before leaving, pockets the article so ingeniously suspended by his colleague.

We often say, "Proud as a peacock;" we might say with equal truth, "Proud as a thief." The thief is as proud of his evil deeds as the soldier is of his victories. He boasts of his exploits, and delights to talk to his co-mates of the onslaughts he has made on society and property: of his successes, and the modes employed to obtain them. The glory of theft is his darling theme. Not only does he relate his own stratagems, but his enthusiasm leads him to prate of robberies which he only knows as the secret of others; and as he thus lets out both his own culpability and the names of his confederates, thieves' vanity is often the cause of a gang of from thirty to forty malefactors being brought to justice in a body.

It is terrible to know that, for the Parisian who has once been in prison, there is neither peace nor security afterwards, however well he may conduct himself. The laudable desire of regaining lost respectability is made the torment of Sisyphus. Extortion (chantage, in Paris slang: attaining the proportions of a frightful profession) pulls the victim down at every attempt he makes to rise, and often finally crushes him. Extortioners make a trade of hunting up people who would fain lead an honest life, and on whom they fasten as their lawful prey.

A carpenter, doing a good business in Paris, had, several years previously, been condemned to, and had undergone, five years' reclusion—French imprisonments are long—and had married in the country after he was set at liberty. By industry and economy he had saved sufficient to bring up his family respectably. Only, as liberated reclusionaries are forbidden to reside in the capital, he avoided company, never went to the cafés outside the Barrières, and walked about the streets as little as possible, for fear of meeting any of his former fellow-prisoners. Notwithstanding these wise precautions, and in spite of the change wrought in his countenance both by prosperity and time, he one day fell in with one of his ex-companions who was authorised to reside in Paris, and who, under pretence of renewing acquaintance, offered to treat him to a bottle of wine. The carpenter dared not refuse. Once inside the public-house, they emptied their bottle, and then a second; and when they rose to take their departure, the carpenter's friend proposed to accompany him home.

"No, I thank you," the other replied. "I have a great many business errands to do; besides, I must go to my timber-merchant's, which would make the walk a little too long."

"Well, at any rate, give me your address, that I may make a friendly call when I happen to pass your way."

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"With all my heart! I live——" And the carpenter, giving a false address, turned his back on his former comrade. But the one was as cunning as the other was prudent. Suspecting the cheat, he dogged the carpenter home, unseen. Next day the jail-bird favoured the house with a visit, as unexpected, and about as agreeable, as the fall of a thunderbolt.

"I'll tell you what," he said, grinning at his old companion; "you played me a shabby trick yesterday. But I am a good sort of fellow and bear no malice. You see I am come to give you a call, all the same."

"Ah!" ejaculated the poor carpenter.

"Yes, but you have got on famously. Comfortable rooms; first-rate! You are a lucky chap. Why don't you introduce me to your wife? You'll allow me the pleasure of breakfasting with you?"

"Certainly. But—in short——"

"In short, what? Do you want to get rid of me again, as you got rid of me yesterday? Have a care! If you give yourself any airs with me, everybody shall know that we were schoolfellows (in prison) together."

The wretched carpenter turned pale. Under the influence of terror, he entertained his worthless acquaintance as well as he could.

Next day the same farce was played, with the addition of the blood-sucker's borrowing twenty francs; this loan was followed, on subsequent occasions, by loans of thirty, forty, fifty francs, and more; until the carpenter, driven to despair, played his last card, and went to M. Canler for aid and protection, at the risk of being arrested for rupture de ban, or infringement of exile.

After due inquiry, M. Canler laid the case before the préfet of police, who ordered the expulsion of the villain who victimised the carpenter, and granted to the latter individual permission to sojourn in the capital. A few days afterwards, M. Canler received the grateful thanks of his protégé. It is evident, our author adds, that chantage is all the more dangerous to society in proportion to the difficulty of preventing it, and that this abominable trade is a social ulcer which sometimes attains the proportions of crime.

The book swarms with instances proving that human treachery knows no limits, being kept in check neither by gratitude, esprit de corps, nor natural affection.

One P. was seriously compromised in an attempt to murder; but he hid himself so well that all the efforts of the police to discover him were fruitless. The case was in course of trial. The president of the assize court urged the préfet of police to do his utmost to effect this individual's arrest, because his presence promised to throw great light on an affair which was entangled and difficult. The search was renewed with redoubled energy, but with equal want of success. At last, the man's sister came to inform the police that her brother, for the last month, had been concealed in her habitation.

"You may imagine," she added, "that I cannot afford to keep him for ever. It costs money to maintain him."

So it was agreed with the worthy sister to relieve her of her brother during the night. The house was surrounded by police agents, and P. was caught just as he was about to escape by jumping out of a window. So much for fraternal affection. As to filial love: A young man arrested for theft, "twenty-four years of age, well educated, of gentle aspect," indicated to a fellow-prisoner a capital job; namely, the murder of his (the instigator's) own father, who was clerk in a bank. This last personage, M. Canler avows, made him shudder from head to foot.

Can such things be, in a city calling itself the metropolis of the civilised world, the pioneer of science and art, the capital governed by the Eldest Son of the Church?

PAINT, AND NO PAINT.

The recent revelations in a public court, of an artiste in what is said to be the art of enamelling ladies' faces, did not disclose any novelty. Those who remember to have seen the late Madame Vestris on the stage must have observed

> that whiter skin than snow,
> And smooth as monumental alabaster.

The covering which that lady is believed to have used during the later years of her successful career as an actress is said to have been composed of the oxide of bismuth—a metallic substance, triturated with rose or orange flower water, and delicately spread over the features. This pigment, which is a subnitrate, is called by the French blanche de perle, or pearl white, and tends to confer clear tints on a fading complexion. It has this little drawback: in a bad atmosphere it tarnishes, and, should the blooming wearer show her face in an atmosphere charged with sulphur, its hue is certain to be changed to that of a dirty quadroon. A philosophic dowager, enamelled à la Vestris, once attended a chemical lecture at a fashionable institution, where her curiosity prompted her to bring her face into too close contact with water strongly impregnated with sulphuretted hydrogen. Suddenly she became black in the face.

Fluids for improving the complexion have been in all ages in favour with the fair. Cosmetics, in the various shapes of unguents and pastes, were patronised by the Roman ladies, and the word is derived from the Latin *cosmetæ*: female slaves who attended dames of rank, and applied the perfumed preparation to their cheeks. Martial reveals a secret that Fabula, one of the most celebrated beauties of his day, was afraid of the rain, on account of the chalk on her face; and Sabella avoided the sun because her features were covered with white lead. Poppæa, the mistress, and afterwards the wife of the Emperor Nero, while indulging in baths of pure milk to soften her skin, introduced a paste which hardened on the face, and was in effect an enamel. As empress, she led the fashion, which was generally adopted by every wealthy lady in her own house, so that the domestic face became a common

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phrase; and, according to Juvenal, the husband was rarely permitted to see any other. Indeed, it was the point of one of Martial's epigrams that a Roman lady of rank did not sleep with the same face which she exhibited to her admirers when awake. Some of the ancient nations were in the habit of pounding cedar and cypress with aromatic balsams and gums, and then spreading an infusion of the compound over the face, in order to smooth and beautify, as well as perfume the features on which it was laid. The Grecian ladies of old revived the vermilion of their lips by a pigment which was said to be extremely beautiful; and we are told that modern Greek belles imitate their ancient statues by gilding their features on their wedding-days, a practice which they fancy confers irresistible charms.

Few articles produced by modern skill for the refinement of the complexion are more sought for than emulsions and milks, which are generally produced from nuts, and the milky appearance is due to the diffusion of their oil through the water. In the milk of roses, oil of almonds and otto of roses are the chief ingredients, and, applied to the most delicate skin, it is as grateful and as harmless as an April shower or the verdure of spring. Toilet rouges were long in vogue, but they have now been in a great measure superseded by carmine, a preparation of cochineal, which forms a beautiful pigment in every respect superior. Cochineal is procured from the female of an insect, and is brought principally from Mexico and Brazil, where it feeds upon, and derives its colour from the leaves of the Nopal plant after its fruit has ripened. The French carmine is said to owe its superiority to the same cause which renders the flowers of France so much richer in perfume than those of our colder and more cloudy climate,—the influence of light on its formation and precipitation resulting from the clearer and more sunny sky of the south. The colouring matter of cochineal, when spread on thick paper and dried very gradually, assumes a beautiful green tint, which, being moistened with damp cotton wool, and, applied to the lips or cheeks, produces a roseate hue. The theatre rouges are prepared from Brazil-wood lake, and from the safflower, which grows wild in some Eastern countries; the flowerets being of an orange colour, becoming red when dried. They contain a colouring matter known as carthamite, from which delicate rose-colours and rich scarlet are produced, and from this also the pink saucers are prepared. Cotton wool and crape similarly coloured are used for the same purpose, the former under the name of Spanish wool, the latter as crépon rouge. The sympathetic blush is produced from a chemical substance called alloxan, which was discovered by Liebig, and is in itself colourless. By exposure to the air it becomes oxydised, and, gradually turning to a deep rose-colour, stains the skin pink, and creates the most beautiful tint as yet introduced into the toilet of fashion. Alloxan is an animal product, and it is not, perhaps, expedient for the delicate beauty who is embellished by it to inquire too minutely into its source. Few fainting belles are, perhaps, aware that the most reviving smelling-salts are produced from most offensive substances. The chemical name is ammonia, originally derived from the temple of Jupiter Ammon in Lybia, where it was first made; but it is now produced in England from bones and from coal-tar, the refuse of gas-works. The expression of Hamlet,

> To what base uses we may return!

is here reversed, for the vilest garbage supplies to the gold, silver, and crystal cases of fashion an exquisite and reviving perfume. Ladies of high pretensions have been in the habit of obtaining a most delicate tint for the complexion by steeping the finest pale pink satin ribbon in the best eau-de-Cologne, and applying it to the cheeks. The most innocent and approved preserver of the skin is impalpable rice powder—poudre de riz—used after rubbing the face over with cold cream, which is itself commonly made with almond oil and equal proportions of the purest wax and spermaceti, perfumed according to fancy.

There is a strong sympathy between the functions of the skin and the vital organs, and the true mode to improve the complexion is to preserve and improve the health. Perfumes, from their cheering and exhilarating influence on the nerves and the mind, are invariably used in all the artificial preparations which have been devised to beautify the face. The volatile, invisible, and evanescent particles of fragrant and odoriferous substances so agreeable to our sense of smell, are so minute that it is said a single small portion of musk has been known to emit in one day fifty-seven millions of atoms within a radius of thirty yards, filling the entire room without any sensible diminution of its weight. The expression "I do not like musk," has become fashionable, but musk was once a very favourite perfume; and notwithstanding the remonstrances of Napoleon, the Empress Josephine was so fond of it, that although forty years have elapsed since her death, modern authors assure us that the present proprietor of her favourite residence, Malmaison, with all his efforts, has not been able to remove the scent from the rooms. Odorous ointments, preserved in bottles made of alabaster, onyx, and glass, are constantly found in the tombs of the ancient Egyptians, and we are informed that one of these now at Alnwick Castle contains a perfumed substance, which, after more than three thousand years, still retains its scent. Moore poetically alludes to this singular retentive principle:

> Like the vase in which roses have once been distilled,
> You may break, you may shatter the vase, if you will,
> But the scent of the roses will hang round it still.

Flowers as they go out of bloom still retain their odour, a property which did not escape Shakespeare:

> Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made.

As many of our fair readers may have flowers

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at command, the following simple process, recommended by Mr. Piesse, of New Bond-street, will concentrate and preserve those odours.* The flowers must be gathered with as little stalk as possible, and then placed in a jar three parts full of oil of sweet almonds, or the purest Lucca olive oil. After remaining twenty-four hours steeped they are to be squeezed in a coarse cotton cloth, and fresh flowers added to the oil, and this repeated from day to day until the required perfume is procured. When the oil is considered sufficiently saturated, it should be mixed with an equal quantity of the purest and strongest rectified spirits to be obtained at the chemist's, and the jar or bottle containing the mixture well shaken every day for a fortnight, when it may be poured off quite bright and highly charged with the odoriferous principle. When only one kind of flower is used, the quantity required to produce a highly scented oil, is considerable, but the amateur experimentalist can scarcely hope for any but a mixed, or, as the French term it, "mille fleur," or thousand flower perfume, in which the scent of the peculiar flower most abundant may prevail.

The preparation of cosmetics was at a very early period even in England combined with that of perfumes. A very curious and scarce book was "Imprinted in London" in the early part of the reign of Elizabeth, A.D. 1560, "The secrets of the reverend Master Alexis of Piemount, translated by William Warde," and in its quaint pages will be found a variety of secrets, and amongst them several "for making a natural white skin," and "making the skin fair and bright," in which oil of almonds and rose-water would seem to be the favourite ingredients. The modern perfumer will there find directions for preparing musked and odoriferous soaps with dentifrices or rubbers for the teeth, and pastiles; all of which must have been in use three centuries past. We have secrets for "waters to beautify the face" and "to make people look young and to make a goodly lustre for the face, good for ladies and dames," and "an ointment for the face which altereth the skin and reneweth it finely." One of the secrets may amuse our fair friends; and, although we do not vouch for its efficacy, we venture to predict that the experiment will not be attended with injurious effects. "Take a great lemon, and make a hole in the top of him, through the which hole, you shall take out of the substance within the bigness of a walnut, and fill it again with sugar-candy, with four or five gold foyle leaves, and cover it again with the piece that you take off, sowing it with a needle, so that it may remain fast on. Then set the sayde lemon to roste upon the coales right up, and after as it shall begin to roste or boyle, tourne it often, until it hath sweate a good space, then take it off. And when you will use of it putte one of your fingers into the hole that was sowed up, and rub your face with it with some fine linen-cloth, and it will prove an exquisite thing!" We trust that those who make the trial may find it so.

Fashion has as yet forgotten to revive what were once favourite embellishments of beauty, patches of black silk covered with isinglass, an adornment so highly patronised as to obtain the name it still bears of court-plaister. These patches were artistically distributed on the cheeks and chin as foils to divert the eye from certain features, or as beauty-spots to attract attention to others. Pope, in describing the toilet of his favourite heroine, Belinda, thus alludes to them:

> And now unveiled the toilet stands displayed,
> Each silver vase in mystic order laid,
> First robed in white, the nymph intent adores
> With head uncovered the cosmetic powers.
> This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,
> And all Arabia breathes from yonder box.
> The tortoise here and elephant unite,
> Transformed to combs, the speckled and the white;
> Here piles of pins extend their shining rows,
> Puffs, powders, *patches*, bibles, billet-doux.

Addison, in the Spectator, describes two rival beauties of the day: "They were patched differently, and cast hostile glances on one another, and their patches were placed in different situations as party signals to distinguish friends from foes." Black sticking plaister was cut out into the most ridiculous forms and stuck on the face. Conceive a beauty displaying on her cheek, a hearse!—the coaches and six to which the belle gave her countenance, having been cut out in black plaister. Silouettes of stars, flowers, hour-glasses, and even comical little demons were commonly sold by perfumers for face-patching.

Before we conclude, let us retouch the subject of paint; for the age of no-paint has not yet arrived. A streak of black under the eyes (borrowed from the land of Egypt) and the timidest idea of red may, to this day, be detected upon the cheeks of ladies, to whom no suspicion of enamelling need attach. When you see a pair of piquant eyes surmounting a faint blush under the half-veil now so fashionable, and which pretty black lace "fall" is not raised during a long morning visit, you may conclude that the pencil and tinting-pad have been at work.

RED-CAPE.

I AM by profession a tutor. Carefully educated, and of a studious disposition from the first, I had been designed by my father for the bar, but his commercial misfortunes, followed by ruin and death, had compelled me to leave the university without even the barren advantage of a degree. Fit to teach, and fit, as discerning friends unanimously declared, for nothing else under the sun, I was induced to apply such abilities as I possessed to the task of tuition. Having passed some years in this calling: now assistant master in a school: now "coach" to a party of young Oxonians or Cantabs reading through a vacation spent in Wales or Cumberland: I at length found myself in want of an

* See page 607 of our fifth volume.

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engagement. None of my old pupils or surviving relatives could assist me in this strait, and I at last determined to apply to one of the more reputable of those agents who profess to facilitate both the obtaining of situations and the choice of competent persons to fill them. I paid my fees, was duly entered by name in some enormous ledgers, and for several weeks was a punctual caller at the office, which was near Oxford-street, but without success. I seldom visited Mr. Hudson's—this was the agent's name—without seeing other applicants, sad-eyed and dejected, sent empty away. And I began to regard the whole system as a snare and a delusion.

"I will call yet this once," said I one muggy autumn day, as I turned into Oxford-street with my umbrella, "yet this once, and if the usual answer is returned, I will trouble Mr. Hudson no more, but will accept the post of usher in that school at Northampton."

The office was empty of all but the clerk, posted behind his monstrous books, in a sort of mahogany cage. Of him I made, though with little hope of a favourable answer, the customary inquiry; "Anything for Mr. Edwin Kirby?"

"Kirby," said the clerk, rustling the leaves of a ledger, and referring to the Ks, with an irritating pretence of never having seen me before: "Kirby—Edwin, I think you said? Was it Edwin, or Edward?"

I nearly lost my temper at this. I had besieged the office for weeks, and here was this man, not merely forgetting me, which was pardonable, but talking as if he had a legion of Kirbys—not a very common name—entered on his books. Very opportunely his employer, who lay ensconced in some hidden recess, like a human spider, intervened.

"Don't worry the gent, Druce. I told you I'd see him when he called, and I've got something for him."

Mr. Hudson came wriggling out from his den, rubbing his hands and congratulating me with a warmth which seemed to savour of surprise. Perhaps it was not every day that the wealthier portion of the public consulted the office as to the filling up of such posts as they had to bestow.

"This is bonny fide, mind," said the agent, holding up a dirty forefinger. "I've as good as fixed the gentleman for you, and you can have an interview any day before three, at Ducrocq's Hotel."

"Ducrocq's?" repeated I, rather puzzled; for I knew the hotel to be a fashionable one, chiefly patronised by foreign visitors to London, whose rank or fortune made them shrink from Leicester-square.

"Yes; the party is a foreign party. Rich, I believe. He's a markis, and he wants a tutor for his only son. Salary's the only thing, Mr. Kirby, I can't tell you about; but I'll go to the hotel and introduce you to-morrow, if you like."

Mr. Hudson's information was accurate. The French gentleman in want of an instructor for his only son was really the Marquis de Vauxmesnil, a rich landed proprietor in one of the central departments. The salary he offered was one which, had salary been my chief object, I should have owned to be liberal. The manner in which his tutor was to be treated at his château, was kind and handsome. I might have my own suite of rooms, M. de Vauxmesnil said, and dine alone or with the family exactly as I pleased. If I cared about riding, a horse should be at my disposal. My time out of school-hours, was my own. So far, so good, and indeed I had never dreamed of such privileges; but there were some things which puzzled me. The marquis was perfectly polite, and yet I was rather repelled than attracted by his courtesy. He was a tall and handsome man, in spite of his dyed hair; but there was a curl in his lip when he spoke, more like a sneer than a smile, and his voice had an imperious accent, as of one who had pampered his pride until it was a passion. There were traces of other passions, in the crow's feet and wrinkles about his keen dark eyes and firm mouth, and his complexion was so pale as to be colourless. Why had he come to England in search of a tutor? Why apply to an agency? Why, indeed, did he want a tutor at all, if his son were, as he told me, hardly eight years old: an age at which boys are generally left under female superintendence?

I am unskilful, I know, in hiding my thoughts. The marquis read them with ease.

"My dear sir," he said, taking snuff from a little gold box, which he handled with all the foppish grace of the old régime, "I see you are dying to know why I have come for a tutor to your foggy capital—excuse me—and whether I am what I profess to be, or an adventurer masquerading in the title of marquis. Reassure yourself. I am neither a Monte Christo nor a chevalier of industry. As to my wanting to place my child so early, under a tutor, that is my affair; it is my idea that education cannot begin too soon. As for my preference for an Englishman, it is briefly this—I cannot easily find a Frenchman of learning who is not imbued with horrible revolutionary principles, unless I take an ecclesiastic, to which course I also object. Therefore, I choose an Englishman, and prefer that he should teach my child your barbarous pronunciation of Latin—pardon me—than that Henri should learn to lisp the cant of the Jacobins."

All this, of course, was said in French, which I fortunately happened to be pretty conversant with; but it was an unknown tongue to Mr. Hudson, the agent. The marquis, however, found English words enough to inform my introducer that the result of the interview was satisfactory, and he begged me to favour him by leaving my testimonials with him for a day or two, until his final answer should be given. For my part, I was referred to a member of the French embassy for any information I might desire respecting the position of M. de Vauxmesnil.

I did apply in the quarter indicated, and all

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the statements of the marquis were fully confirmed: with the addition that M. de Vauxmesnil had been a peer of France under the Orleans reign, and enjoyed the post of senator under the existing government.

"Ma foi! a superior man," added the young attaché, with one of those shrugs that say so much; "a man eminent in every sense of the word, but not of our century. There is no love lost between the government and M. de Vauxmesnil."

The political squabbles of France were no concern of mine, and I gladly closed with the liberal proposals of the marquis. During the journey to his country seat, which was on the banks of the Rhône, a short distance below Lyons, I had ample opportunity for estimating the character of my employer. He was a man who had had the irreparable misfortune to be born some hundred years too late, for his sympathies and tastes were wholly absorbed in a bygone state of things, and his life had been spent in useless struggles to put back the hands of the clock of time. He was not precisely a bad man, but he contrived to do more harm and to provoke more antipathies than many who were worse than himself. He treated me well and civilly, but I could see that in his ideas there was a great gulf between us, never to be bridged, and that a Brahmin could as easily believe a Sudra his equal as the Marquis de Vauxmesnil could regard Edwin Kirby in that light. Once or twice I had my doubts whether I were doing wisely in burying myself in a lonely château in a foreign country; in turning my back, so to speak, on the nineteenth century, and becoming the stipendiary of an obstinate grand seigneur. But my prospects in England had been dark enough, and I had little choice.

"Welcome, M. Kirby," said the marquis, at last; "welcome to Rochaigue!"

The train had just come jarringly to a halt at a small station. On the right hand, foamed the Rhône; on the left, shot up a sharp and jagged rock, rising to a point like the spire of a Gothic cathedral; and on a platform of this rock stood the castle—a very imposing structure, especially at a first glance. The village, with its grey stone houses and avenue of walnut-trees, nestled below; and the well-wooded and broken country on one bank, and the green meadows on the other, made up a pleasant prospect.

We quitted the train, and reclaimed our luggage. A carriage was waiting: not, as I had half expected, a coach and six, with triple file of powdered lacqueys: but one of those roomy shapeless vehicles, fitted with a light roof, and drawn by two long-tailed La Perche nags, commonly used by rich residents in the south. The coachman, in laced coat and flat cap, clambered on to a little pyramid of our portmanteaus and hat-boxes; the marquis's valet, who had been with him to England, climbed up beside him, and sat more comfortably on the box; the whip cracked, and we set off at a round trot. As we passed through the village many hats and caps flew off in honour of the rich proprietor, but I saw few or no smiles of genuine welcome. M. de Vauxmesnil returned all these salutes affably.

"I am bon prince," he said, with one of his faint smiles. "So long as no idea-mongers come between us, my tenants and I get on reasonably well. What do you think of Rochaigue?"

"Splendid!" was my involuntary exclamation. Indeed, from the point to which we had attained in our winding ascent, the old castle looked grand and majestic. On a nearer approach I could see that much of this splendour faded into nothing. Great part of the building was in ruins—a mere shell; the towers were broken, the walls breached, and the white modern house that clung to the shattered pile appeared smaller than it really was by contrast with its neighbour.

The marquis smiled bitterly as he observed my look of unconscious disappointment.

"Yes," said he, "Rochaigue has seen its best days, like its master. Yonder, where you see the burnt beams, stood the gallery where the king—pshaw! what do you care for such old-world memories, monsieur? I dare say you would rather see a good dinner, now, than all the ruins on earth. So should I have thought, at your age. We are arrived."

My life at the château was somewhat monotonous, but decidedly not an unhappy one. The marquise, with the little boy, my pupil, and a sister of M. de Vauxmesnil, a quiet prim person, made up the family circle. Madame de Vauxmesnil was much younger than her husband—a pale gentle woman, with fair hair and kind grey eyes that had something mournful and timid in them. Very likely the match between those two had been made up, as French marriages often are, by busy relatives, and without much regard for the wishes and inclinations of poor Mademoiselle Louise. She was very obedient and subdued, not over cheerful, seldom well. The child, on the other hand, was really a noble little fellow, with chesnut hair curling in heavy natural rings, a clear healthy red and white complexion, and the frankest blue eyes in the world. A fine little fellow, with good abilities, so far as I could judge, and giving promise of a high spirit and a sweet temper—rare but enviable combination. It is not surprising that the little Henri—his father's christian names were Gaston Pierre Louis Armand Henri, after the fashion of the Faubourg St. Germain—was the idol of his parents, and that he stood as fair a chance of being spoiled as ever boy did.

There are some natures, however, which even flattery and indulgence seem unable to corrupt, and such was that of my little pupil the tiny viscount, as he had been called while still in the cradle: the eldest son of the Marquis de Vauxmesnil possessing that rank. His father wished his education to be conducted on as nearly as possible the system that had been in vogue before the Revolution. He did not, to be sure, insist upon my teaching the young heir the history of his native land through the medium of that veracious chronicle of the Abbé

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Labeille, much esteemed in clerical schools, and which represents Austerlitz and Marengo as victories gained by a certain Marquis de Bonaparte, "general of the armies of the king." The scholastic works whose use were enjoined upon me were not such transparent traps for blindfolding the intellect. But they had been carefully selected, and were from the pens of men who viewed the progress of our age with fear and dislike, and who availed themselves of modern discoveries to hamper and embarrass the march of public opinion. The object of M. de Vauxmesnil was no secret.

"A gentleman," he used to say, "should not be ignorant of what is known to all the canaille of the cities. For my own part, I value your wonderful nineteenth century and its boasts, your steam, gas, and electricity, at less than a pinch of snuff. But Henri must not grow up unacquainted with all these material phenomena which it is the trick of the time to praise and to study. I was a page to Louis the Eighteenth, and we had something else to talk of then, than your science and your improvements. Gentlemen were gentlemen, in those days, my good M. Kirby."

Fortunately for me, the marquis had a high appreciation of the classics. The study of Horace and Cicero was to his taste, and had been sanctioned by the approval of the Grand Monarque, and he therefore encouraged his youthful son to devote much time to the dead languages. I say fortunately for me, because in helping little Henri through the Latin grammar, my way was clear before me, and I had none of the perplexities which beset me when natural science and history were under discussion. Then, indeed, my pupil often puzzled me by asking questions which it was hardly possible to answer in accordance at once with truth and with his parent's wishes. Children, when even moderately intelligent, have a restless curiosity and a talent for cross-examination, worthy of a procureur impérial; and Henri frequently perplexed me by pointed inquiries which it was scarcely within my power to answer or evade. The boy's nature was singularly frank and noble; there was a true chivalry in it, of which his father's disposition, with all its superficial gloss and glitter, possessed little or nothing. I felt assured that Henri de Vauxmesnil had only to know what was right, to act on that knowledge, without reference to sacrifice of self or prejudices. And I often thought with apprehension of the day when the young heir, arrived at man's estate, would find himself radically at variance with his father on some social or political question.

For, it was impossible that Henri should be always content to look at the broad noonday world through a pair of mediævally-tinted spectacles. Anything might open his eyes, any accident might reveal to him the actual condition of Europe, and enlist his sympathies on the side most opposed to the stubborn prejudices of his parent. As for myself, my position sometimes caused me considerable uneasiness. My own opinions were those which I shared with the majority of my countrymen, of whatever class, and were naturally heterodox in the eyes of my employer. It would have been a gross breach of duty had I imparted to my young charge, facts and theories which his father abhorred; but, on the other hand, my conscience did not permit me to paint things in false colours—to blacken white, or whiten black. I tried to be neutral, to act a purely negative part, and for some time I succeeded tolerably well, but the effort was far from agreeable. Meanwhile, my little pupil became fond of his English tutor, and I had no cause to complain of want of kindness from any member of the household.

The Marquise de Vauxmesnil had not, I fancy, been consulted as to my engagement. She was always gentle and polite, but I imagined that she objected to me as a foreigner and a Protestant: while her husband more than once hinted that her desire had been that little Henri's education should be conducted by a priest.

"But that," said the marquis, in his sprightly way, "was out of the question. Certainly the Church is to be supported, but it would bore me frightfully to have a calotin under my roof, though my wife, poor dear creature, believes that every soutane covers an angel. No! I do not wish the boy to grow up awkward and silly, with a spice of cunning mixed with much ignorance. I am of the counsel of M. de Voltaire, himself a pupil of the Jesuits."

That was true. The marquis was an odd mixture of the eighteenth-century philosopher, and the political partisan of the Church. His speeches in the senate were bitter and violent, full of ultramontane feeling and spleen, but he made no pretence of being devout or even reverent when out of the tribune. He was an active opponent of the existing government; was often in Paris, where he used his whole influence for the Legitimist party; was constantly in correspondence with the exiled Bourbons, and always busy in weaving some cobweb conspiracy to annoy, if he could not overturn, the actual authorities of his country.

Life at the château was dull enough. A very few great people, who lived a long way off, would sometimes drive solemnly along the poplar-fringed roads, to dine at Rochaigue, to play old-fashioned games at cards, and discuss new events by the light of old politics. But there were not many persons left in the department who were considered worthy the honour of admission to the formal saloons of the Vauxmesnil family. Titled names, indeed, abounded in the province, but some fatal flaw attached itself to most of them. Such and such a count was ineligible, as a Bonapartist son or grandson of one of Napoleon's rough soldiers of fortune; this baron was an Orleanist; that baron was a flatterer of the imperial master of the Tuileries; while the rest were hobereaux or French squireens, or were descended from pitiful farmers of the revenue, dishonest stewards, or wily notaries of the old régime. So, except the old Prince de Pontanec, the Duke and Duchess of Rohan-Bournon, and four or five other families whose

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nobility was as ancient as that of the Vauxmesnils, hardly any visitors crossed the threshold.

I was fond of sitting with my volume or my sketch-book, on the summit of the ruined keep, which commanded a splendid view. The elevation was considerable; the air, even in sultry weather, was generally, at that height, refreshed by a breeze; and it was pleasant to look down over the broad country, the distant mountains, and the wide river specked with barge and steam-boat. I was there, one day, with my drawing apparatus before me, and little Henri by my side, and the marquis was walking slowly to and fro on the terrace beneath—a favourite promenade of his—conning some speech which he intended to "fulminate" in the senate. The day was a peculiarly fine and bright one, with a brisk breeze stirring, and through the clear air the mountains looked nearer than usual, and showed new tints and fantastic forms of precipice and glen. I worked vigorously at my sketch, and the child looked on with his great solemn eyes. He was in an inquisitive mood that day.

"Mr. Kirby," said the little fellow, "whom do those meadows belong to? There where the cows are grazing, below the vineyards?"

I told him to his papa, but was rather surprised when he rejoined:

"But the country yonder, across the river, towards those hills you are drawing, does not belong to papa, does it?"

I answered in the negative.

"And yet it did."

"How do you know that, Henri?" I asked. I was surprised at the boy's knowledge. My own had been gained from the accidental study of an old map of the estate, in which the confiscated possessions of the family had been carefully scored off with red ink. I was aware that the lands remaining to the marquis were but a fourth of the great property owned by his forefathers, but I had been careful not to arouse feelings of discontent in the child's innocent mind by any hints on the subject.

"Old Pierre, the gardener, told me," said the boy, looking forth into the distance. "Those were the revolutionists that took the lands away; the same who burnt the gallery and the chapel here, and made the castle so ruinous. Why did they do so, monsieur? Were they not very wicked men?"

It was an awkward question. How was I to explain to this child that feudal tyranny and court vice had brought about a dire retribution? How was I to tell him that there were faults—black and bitter faults—on both sides, and that the guiltless had suffered for the guilty?

But before I could frame a discreet answer, an eldritch laugh, harsh as the cry of the screech-owl, broke upon our ears, and made us both start. I looked hastily round, and so did Henri, for the sound seemed to proceed from among the ruins. To my surprise I caught sight of what seemed to be a human form; but so small and fantastically arrayed as to resemble a huge ape rather than a woman. Yet a woman it was, dwarfish, bowed, and draped in a short red cape, blotched by stains of rough weather, and over which her long grey hair hung in tangled masses. A woman with a face hideous and wrinkled enough to have looked upon the wickedness and woe of a hundred years, but with bright malignant eyes in whose sparkle there was none of the bleared dimness peculiar to extreme age.

"I know her. I have seen her before—the Cape Rouge!" cried the child. Meanwhile, the old hag mopped and mowed, and shook her skinny finger at us, and mumbled out a cackling laugh.

"She is crazed, of course, poor creature," said I. Though I spoke in English, and to myself, the old woman guessed my meaning, for her moans instantly changed into a shrill laugh.

"Ah! ah! Mon beau monsieur, you think so too, do you?" were the words that reached me. "Wait and see; wait and see. And you, pretty child, does the curse weigh on you, my——?" Here the lunatic, or whatever she was, ceased abruptly, and vanished so noiselessly and quickly among the ruins, that it almost seemed as if she had melted into air.

Next moment the stately step of the marquis was heard ascending the stone steps. I have no doubt the old crone's ears had caught the sound some seconds before I did, and that the approach of the lord of the castle had cut short her warning or her malediction.

"The owls are noisy to-day," said the marquis, taking snuff from his precious little bijou of a box.

The owls! Doubtless M. de Vauxmesnil had heard that strange cry without distinguishing that it came from human lips, nor did either the little boy or myself breathe a word regarding the weird figure in the stained red mantle.

I took an early opportunity of asking Pierre, the old gardener, the meaning of the apparition. The old man seemed rather disturbed by my question, for he leant heavily on his spade, and devoutly crossed himself, as he said, "Holy St. Catherine! Has *she* been here again. That bodes bad luck."

"But who is she?" I asked, a little impatiently.

"Not know the Cape Rouge! Ah, pardon! I forgot monsieur's quality of foreigner. Well, sir, they call her Red Cape because of the mantle she wears, but her true name is the Mère Chardon—Marie Chardon—and she lives in a little hut among the stones by the river, all alone. As for her age, who can tell it? I have heard my father say that when he was young the Cape Rouge always looked as old, and as wrinkled, and as grey as to-day. But, one thing is sure, her presence bodes no good."

With some difficulty I elicited from the gardener that this old crone was believed to have been an eye-witness of the Revolution, and a sharer in its wild frenzy. She was reported to have joined in the dance of the Carmagnole around the scaffold at Lyons, when the

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dismal guillotine was plied in the suburb of the Croix Rousse, until the knife was notched and blunted, and the headsmen's arms were weary with hauling at cord and pulley, and the yelling mob had grown hoarse. She was mixed up, traditionally, with the attack and conflagration of the Château de Rochaigue, and there were vague rumours of some great wrong that had been done to her or hers by a former seigneur of the castle, and which had been thus avenged.

"Certain it is, sir, that though the Cape Rouge hates all the noblesse, she hates our master and his family worst of all, and never speaks of the Vauxmesnils but with a curse. She has seldom appeared here, and never but as the precursor of sorrow, the saints be with us!"

I tried to laugh the old man out of his superstitious apprehensions, but in vain. He shook his head, and overwhelmed me with melancholy facts gathered from the storehouse of his memory. The Cape Rouge had appeared just one week before the younger sister of the marquis had sickened of a fever which carried her off on the very day fixed for the wedding. On the morning of the day when M. de Vauxmesnil's uncle, from whom he had inherited the title and property, was shot in a duel at Paris, the fatal red cape had fluttered among the ruins. And, again, when the great process was lost, by which the marquis failed to re-establish his fallen fortunes, and when the political earthquake happened which deprived the Vauxmesnils of place and power, the same evil-omened visitor had haunted the château.

That Pierre Ducosse, gardener, and ex-corporal in the Garde Royale of Charles the Tenth, should believe in the supernatural powers and malignity of the Mère Chardon, was not wonderful; but I was surprised to find that the priest of the village in some degree shared his opinions. This priest, M. Tonot, came often to the château, and was always welcomed, though less in his spiritual capacity than as a healer of bodily ailments. It is not unusual for a curé, especially in remote and poor places, to possess a smattering of medicine; and as the parish did not boast a doctor, M. Tonot's simple lore was in frequent request. There was a surgeon in a neighbouring commune, to be sure, and good medical attendance was of course procurable from Lyons; but the marquis had an odd antipathy to doctors—the "trumpeters of revolution," he styled them—and so the curé had to prescribe, alike for the feeble health of the marquise and for the infantine ailments of the young heir. I liked M. Tonot very well. He was a tall stout portly man, with a wholesome florid face, an honest common-place mind, and a deep quiet sense of duty. The poor were fond of M. Tonot, so were the children and dogs of the village, and Madame de Vauxmesnil always had a smile of welcome for him. But the marquis, who was kind to the priest in his way, mixed a good deal of contempt with his regard. Indeed, such an ecclesiastic as M. Tonot was hardly adapted to please M. de Vauxmesnil. He was neither ambitious nor witty, neither a cynical jesting sprightly abbé, with poetry and the classics at his finger ends, nor a dark-browed ultramontane, cork-screwing his way to notoriety and a bishopric.

"Eh! You have seen her then, the unfortunate! Poor soul, she has suffered in her time, I fear, and no wonder that her temper is soured," said M. Tonot, when I questioned him on the subject of the Cape Rouge. "It is wonderful, monsieur, how accurately some of her predictions have turned out, sinister as they always are—for she bears no love to the family at the château."

The priest could tell me little more. Even Mary Chardon's age was unknown, the church registers having been burned at the Revolution. How she lived was doubtful, but it was known that she derived some support from the fears or from the pity of the peasants, though she never begged. She was no sham sorceress, such as are common in the French provinces, telling fortunes for a silver fee, and vending charms against mildew and blight, murrain and oidium. She had no living relatives, and none knew the cause of her vindictive spite towards the Vauxmesnils, though the old crone had been heard to mutter, "Blood for blood, tears for tears, sorrow for shame!"

"Old stories, monsieur; tales before the Flood," said M. Tonot, with a shrug; "but it is surprising how keen the old woman's scent is for any misfortune about to overtake the Vauxmesnils. You smile, monsieur. You are an esprit fort, I see: all you English are."

Time went on, and nothing occurred to justify these remarks. The weird figure was never seen again among the ruins during my residence at the château, and I began to forget it. M. de Vauxmesnil, though comparatively a poor nobleman, was owner of a good deal of property, which might have been worth much more had it been sensibly managed. On this head, however, his prejudices interposed. The métairie system was that which had suited his ancestors, and to this system he obstinately adhered, at a considerable loss of rental. The agriculture of his estates was singularly backward, progress made no way there, and new-fangled machines and modern breeds of cattle were discouraged. When the prefect of the department publicly congratulated the notables on the improvements that yearly took place, he could not deny himself the pleasure of a civil sneer at the ponderous ploughs, the ill-drained fields, and the gaunt coarse-woolled sheep on the Vauxmesnil property. But this censure on the part of a Bonapartist functionary was enough to confirm the marquis in his antiquated habits, and he politely derided all that I could hint on the subject.

In one matter the fancies of the marquis and his farmers went hand in hand; and this was the wholesale slaughter of small birds. The French tiller of the soil has a deep prejudice on this score; small birds, says Jacques Bonhomme, eat wheat, and peck grapes and cherries:

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so death to them! And birds grew scarcer and scarcer throughout the province. But matters were brought to a climax, indeed, when a remonstrance was sent down from the ministry in Paris, with orders that the printed document should be affixed to the door of every mairie and chapel, and that the destruction of birds should be stayed. I read the paper, which was terse and good, and pointed out very forcibly what an important link in the chain of nature would be missing were the feathered tribes swept away from earth. The farmer was warned that in murdering birds he was fostering noxious insects; he was reminded that a few ears of corn, and a little fruit, were but a small makeweight to ricks burrowed by the weevil, and fields black with the fly; and that the tiny destroyers would harm his crops a thousand-fold more than ever the poor tomtits and chaffinches had done.

There were those who had the sense to listen to this well-timed appeal. There were more who gaped incredulously at the statistics, and let the nest-robbing and sparrow battues go on. But to the marquis such a piece of advice was gall and wormwood. *He* change his practices at the bidding of an usurping government! *He* receive good counsel at the hands of an imperialist minister of agriculture! He assembled his tenants, harangued them in a speech that came very close to sedition, and set himself to thwart the wise and kind designs of the authorities, with all the short-sighted malevolence of an ill-tempered child.

Such a massacre of birds as then took place the country had never known. The songs of the grove and meadow were silenced. Rewards were offered for the heads of lark and robin, thrush and wren, anything with beak and feathers. Gangs of birds'-nesters prowled through the woods, guns popped ingloriously all day long among vines and hedgerows, poisoned grain was thickly strewn about, until hundreds and thousands of dead birds lay stiff and stark on the inhospitable soil.

The usual consequences of such suicidal folly succeeded. There was a Nemesis of insect life, in the second year of my stay, which made the most obstinate farmer stare aghast at the countless legions burrowing, creeping, or winging their way to blight his hopes of profit. Grubs, caterpillars, flies, weevils, everything that crawls or flies, that bores the root or gnaws the bursting corn-ear, or cankers the blossom, or hollows out the fruit, everything that tunnels the bark or harms the wood of trees, everything that haunts the barn or the store, seemed gathered in hosts undreamed of. There were no birds to thin off the plunderers. Those faithful allies had been stupidly butchered. Their sharp-sighted little eyes and active bills would have done, for scanty wage, a hundred times more to stem the plague than all the hired labourers could do, with all their work of crushing and quick-liming, sulphuring and smoking. What with loss to grain, trees, and fruit, what with the cost of keeping down the pest by human agency, every cultivator suffered heavily, and the marquis found his income and his popularity waning together. For, people began to regret the birds, and to blame the noble adviser who had urged their extermination. But the marquis was a dogged personage; he would not own himself in the wrong; he hired more and more men to dress the trees of his orchards, and he tried to make clumsy human fingers and toes do the work of the tomtit and the swallow.

On one sad afternoon in early autumn, while they were gathering the wreck of the fruit crop, little Henri begged for a walk in the woods. It was a dark hot lowering day; the air was heavy and dull; and the great masses of copper-coloured cloud that hung lazily in the deep blue sky, had a lurid tinge that threatened storm. All nature seemed oppressed beneath the menace of the gathering tempest, and the hum of the insects sounded sullen among the shrubs of the garden. I declined to accompany my young charge so far as the woods, but suggested as a compromise that we should repair to a certain hill-side orchard, where I knew the fruit was to be gathered that day. Thither we bent our steps, and, seating ourselves on a mossy bank close to the edge of the forest, which in that place bordered the cultured land, we watched the workers. It was a busy scene. Crowds of peasants: the men in blouse and striped nightcap: the women with broad hats of coarse yellow straw, crimson kirtles, and sabots of black wood: were swarming round the trees, filling baskets with red-cheeked apples and violet or yellow plums. But the fair promise of many a tree proved hollow and fallacious, the caterpillar and grub had been beforehand with the gleaners, and the men were more busy in killing insects than in piling fruit.

I took a book out of my pocket and began to read, giving Henri permission to join one of the groups of apple-pickers, in which old Pierre and his daughter, the blanchisseuse of the château, were employed. Presently I sauntered down to join the party, and found Henri, rosy with exercise, clambering into the upper branches of a gnarled old tree, the trunk of which he had scaled by help of a ladder.

"Hola, cher enfant!" I exclaimed, in some trepidation; "have a care, or you will tumble and hurt yourself."

"No fear, Mr. Kirby," cried the laughing child. "See those apples up above! I *will* pick them." And he pointed to a cluster of fine fruit on a lofty bough, while the servants clapped their hands, and applauded the courage of young "M. le Vicomte."

Plump! A great ugly caterpillar, dislodged by the boy's shaking the tree, fell upon my foot, and then another, and then another, a perfect shower of caterpillars. I picked one of them up. It seemed to be of a new species, and as I had commenced, in a humble way, the study of entomology, I placed it in a tin box to carry home. The peasants were less critical.

"Ah, the wicked beasts!" they cried; "it is they that spoil the apple-crop. Peste! there must be a regular nest of them aloft. Shake

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them down, please, M. Henri, and we'll stop their pillaging."

The little viscount shook the bough lustily, and the insects fell in swarms, many of them dropping on his upturned face and bare neck; he brushed them off with a cry of dislike, but more fell next moment. The peasants, with their wooden shoes, soon crushed the fallen brood. A growl of thunder was heard afar off. I called to the child to come down, but it was not until he had gathered two of the apples that he would obey. When he descended he was flushed and trembling.

"Tiens, M. Kirby," said he, "can caterpillars sting? I feel as if I had fallen among the nettles, as I did last year. My neck smarts, and so do my hands, and oh, how my face burns!"

To my surprise I found the child's face and neck covered with dull red blotches, while his little hands were hot and dry, and he trembled like a leaf.

"My poor Henri, we must go home at once," said I, getting alarmed, while the quick natures of those around us broke out into loud exclamations.

The sky darkened fast, and a bright flash of lightning gleamed across the horizon, followed by the deep roll of advancing thunder. The poor little boy was in much pain; he put his weak little hand to his head, and moaned as he lay in my arms. He was getting delirious, or at least stupified with the rapid progress of fever.

"Quick!" I exclaimed. "Pierre, help me to carry M. Henri home. The doctor must be fetched at once."

A laugh, as harsh as the croak of a raven, followed my words, and something red came rustling and glancing through the bushes of the nearest thicket.

"The Cape Rouge! The Mère Chardon!" cried the peasants, huddling together. Sure enough, the goblin face and dwarfish figure of the malignant hag, in her frouzy red cape, and leaning on her crutch, hobbled out from the screen of embrowned leaves. Her grey hair fluttered loose, and her eyes sparkled with hate and cunning. She lifted her crutch as if it had been the wand of a wicked fairy, and cried, in an ear-piercing voice:

"Ah! evil race of the Vauxmesnils! Brood of vipers with gilded skin! The curse works, does it? You who oppress and scorn the poor: you who robbed me of home and hope: you on whose heads lie my son's blood and my daughter's shame: you who even murder the little birds of the forest, blight and wither, old and young, till none of ye be left!"

Through the storm and through the rain and the hoarse roar of the tempest, Pierre and I hastily carried the helpless child home. As I looked half timidly back amid the gathering blackness and the fitful glare of the forked flashes, I could still see the figure in the red cape, with streaming grey hair and upraised staff, screaming out unheard curses in the very rush of the tempest. I have seldom seen so painful a sight as the château presented, when the child was laid on his little bed. The sorrow of the mother was passionate and unrestrained, but I think it was still more distressing to mark the anguish of the stern proud father, callous to all the world besides. M. Tonot was sent for and came in haste, but could do nothing.

"If you will take my advice, M. le Marquis, you will send to Lyons for advice at once, and by telegraph. No ordinary physician will be able to deal with such a case. Send for Dr. Servans himself."

The marquis groaned, for the name of Servans was associated in the department with the most advanced principles in politics, and there had been something like a personal antipathy between the Legitimist noble and the Republican doctor. But he meekly obeyed, and I myself hurried to send off the message. A train left Lyons within the hour, and, in a few minutes after its arrival at Rochaigue station, the famous physician stood knitting his grey eyebrows by the bedside of the dying boy. He had never spoken since we brought him in. His eyes were half closed, and he did not know any one present: not the nurse crying at the foot of the bed: not the mother sobbing beside his pillow: not the hard and haughty father, never haughty or hard to him, who stood by, with unwonted tears in his eyes.

It was piteous to see the imploring eagerness with which the marquis scanned the face of his old enemy the doctor, trying to read hope there. Dr. Servans saw the pain and quivering anxiety written on the ordinarily impassive face, and his own shaggy brows twitched, and his rough voice was unusually gentle, as he asked the necessary questions.

"Had the child been stung by a snake? Well, then, had he eaten any berry, or herb, in the woods? Who was with him when it happened?"

"Mr. Kirby, the English tutor."

I gave a brief account of what had occurred. Dr. Servans saw light amid the darkness.

"The caterpillar—you say you preserved one, monsieur—let me see it!"

I drew out the tin box, and the doctor pronounced the insect to be a specimen of the rare and poisonous Bombyx processionea, whose touch, or even smell, is well known by naturalists to produce violent pain, inflammation, fever, and death.

Why prolong a sad tale? The great physician could do nothing.

Three blouse-clad men then came up, carrying on a hurdle something that lay still and shapeless, something in a tattered Red Cape. There was an awe-stricken look on the men's worn faces.

"Struck by lightning, you say?" cried the doctor. "Ah! I can do nothing here, my friends."

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER IV.

CAPTAIN WRAGGE and Magdalen retraced their steps until they were again within view of North Shingles Villa, before any signs appeared of Mrs. Lecount and her master. At that point, the housekeeper's lavender-coloured dress, the umbrella, and the feeble little figure in nankeen walking under it, became visible in the distance. The captain slackened his pace immediately; and issued his directions to Magdalen for her conduct at the coming interview, in these words:

"Don't forget your smile," he said. "In all other respects you will do. The walk has improved your complexion, and the hat becomes you. Look Mrs. Lecount steadily in the face; show no embarrassment when you speak; and if Mr. Noel Vanstone pays you pointed attention, don't take too much notice of him while his housekeeper's eye is on you. Mind one thing! I have been at Joyce's Scientific Dialogues all the morning; and I am quite serious in meaning to give Mrs. Lecount the full benefit of my studies. If I can't contrive to divert her attention from you and her master, I won't give sixpence for our chance of success. Small-talk won't succeed with that woman; compliments won't succeed; jokes won't succeed—ready-made science may recal the deceased Professor, and ready-made science may do. We must establish a code of signals to let you know what I am about. Observe this camp-stool. When I shift it from my left hand to my right, I am talking Joyce. When I shift it from my right hand to my left, I am talking Wragge. In the first case, don't interrupt me—I am leading up to my point. In the second case, say anything you like; my remarks are not of the slightest consequence. Would you like a rehearsal? Are you sure you understand? Very good—take my arm, and look happy. Steady! here they are."

The meeting took place nearly midway between Sea-View Cottage and North Shingles. Captain Wragge took off his tall white hat, and opened the interview immediately on the friendliest terms.

"Good morning, Mrs. Lecount," he said, with the frank and cheerful politeness of a naturally sociable man. "Good morning, Mr. Vanstone; I am sorry to see you suffering to-day. Mrs. Lecount, permit me to introduce my niece—my niece, Miss Bygrave. My dear girl, this is Mr. Noel Vanstone, our neighbour at Sea-View Cottage. We must positively be sociable at Aldborough, Mrs. Lecount. There is only one walk in the place (as my niece remarked to me just now, Mr. Vanstone); and on that walk we must all meet every time we go out. And why not? Are we formal people on either side? Nothing of the sort—we are just the reverse. You possess the continental facility of manner, Mr. Vanstone—I match you, with the blunt cordiality of an old-fashioned Englishman—the ladies mingle together in harmonious variety, like flowers on the same bed—and the result is a mutual interest in making our sojourn at the sea-side agreeable to each other. Pardon my flow of spirits; pardon my feeling so cheerful and so young. The Iodine in the sea-air, Mrs. Lecount—the notorious effect of the Iodine in the sea-air!"

"You arrived yesterday, Miss Bygrave, did you not?" said the housekeeper, as soon as the captain's deluge of language had come to an end.

She addressed those words to Magdalen with a gentle motherly interest in her youth and beauty, chastened by the deferential amiability which became her situation in Mr. Noel Vanstone's household. Not the faintest token of suspicion or surprise betrayed itself in her face, her voice, or her manner, while she and Magdalen now looked at each other. It was plain at the outset that the true face and figure which she now saw, recalled nothing to her mind of the false face and figure which she had seen in Vauxhall Walk. The disguise had evidently been complete enough even to baffle the penetration of Mrs. Lecount.

"My aunt and I came here yesterday evening," said Magdalen. "We found the latter part of the journey very fatiguing. I dare say you found it so too?"

She designedly made her answer longer than was necessary, for the purpose of discovering, at the earliest opportunity, the effect which the sound of her voice produced on Mrs. Lecount.

The housekeeper's thin lips maintained their motherly smile; the housekeeper's amiable manner lost none of its modest deference—but

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the expression of her eyes suddenly changed, from a look of attention to a look of inquiry. Magdalen quietly said a few words more; and then waited again for results. The change spread gradually all over Mrs. Lecount's face; the motherly smile died away; and the amiable manner betrayed a slight touch of restraint. Still, no signs of positive recognition appeared; the housekeeper's expression remained what it had been from the first—an expression of inquiry, and nothing more.

"You complained of fatigue, sir, a few minutes since," she said, dropping all further conversation with Magdalen, and addressing her master. "Will you go in-doors and rest?"

The proprietor of Sea-View Cottage had hitherto confined himself to bowing, simpering, and admiring Magdalen through his half-closed eyelids. There was no mistaking the sudden flutter and agitation in his manner, and the heightened colour in his wizen little face. Even the reptile temperament of Mr. Noel Vanstone warmed under the influence of the sex: he had an undeniably appreciative eye for a handsome woman, and Magdalen's grace and beauty were not thrown away on him.

"Will you go in-doors, sir, and rest?" asked the housekeeper, repeating her question.

"Not yet, Lecount," said her master. "I fancy I feel stronger; I fancy I can go on a little." He turned simpering to Magdalen, and added in a lower tone, "I have found a new interest in my walk, Miss Bygrave. Don't desert us, or you will take the interest away with you."

He smiled and smirked in the highest approval of the ingenuity of his own compliment—from which Captain Wragge dexterously diverted the housekeeper's attention, by ranging himself on her side of the path and speaking to her at the same moment. They all four walked on slowly. Mrs. Lecount said nothing more. She kept fast hold of her master's arm, and looked across him at Magdalen with the dangerous expression of inquiry more marked than ever in her handsome black eyes. That look was not lost on the wary Wragge. He shifted his indicative camp-stool from the left hand to the right, and opened his scientific batteries on the spot.

"A busy scene, Mrs. Lecount," said the captain, politely waving his camp-stool over the sea and the passing ships. "The greatness of England, ma'am—the true greatness of England. Pray observe how heavily some of those vessels are laden! I am often inclined to wonder whether the British sailor is at all aware, when he has got his cargo on board, of the Hydrostatic importance of the operation that he has performed. If I were suddenly transported to the deck of one of those vessels (which Heaven forbid, for I suffer at sea); and if I said to a member of the crew, 'Jack! you have done wonders; you have grasped the theory of floating vessels'—how the gallant fellow would stare! And yet, on that theory Jack's life depends. If he loads his vessel one-thirtieth part more than he ought, what happens? He sails past Aldborough, I grant you, in safety. He enters the Thames, I grant you again, in safety. He gets on into the fresh water, as far, let us say, as Greenwich; and—down he goes! Down, ma'am, to the bottom of the river, as a matter of scientific certainty!"

Here he paused; and left Mrs. Lecount no polite alternative but to request an explanation.

"With infinite pleasure, ma'am," said the captain, drowning in the deepest notes of his voice the feeble treble in which Mr. Noel Vanstone paid his compliments to Magdalen. "We will start, if you please, with a first principle. All bodies whatever that float on the surface of the water, displace as much fluid as is equal in weight to the weight of the bodies. Good! We have got our first principle. What do we deduce from it? Manifestly this: That in order to keep a vessel above water, it is necessary to take care that the vessel and its cargo should be of less weight than the weight of a quantity of water—pray follow me here!—of a quantity of water equal in bulk to that part of the vessel which it will be safe to immerse in the water. Now, ma'am, salt water is specifically thirty times heavier than fresh or river water; and a vessel in the German Ocean will not sink so deep as a vessel in the Thames. Consequently, when we load our ship with a view to the London market, we have (Hydrostatically speaking) three alternatives. Either we load with one-thirtieth part less than we can carry at sea; or we take one-thirtieth part out at the mouth of the river; or we do neither the one nor the other, and, as I have already had the honour of remarking—down we go! Such," said the captain, shifting the camp-stool back again from his right hand to his left, in token that Joyce was done with for the time being; "such, my dear madam, is the theory of floating vessels. Permit me to add, in conclusion—you are heartily welcome to it."

"Thank you, sir," said Mrs. Lecount. "You have unintentionally saddened me, but the information I have received is not the less precious on that account. It is long, long ago, Mr. Bygrave, since I have heard myself addressed in the language of science. My dear husband made me his companion—my dear husband improved my mind as you have been trying to improve it. Nobody has taken pains with my intellect since. Many thanks, sir. Your kind consideration for me is not thrown away."

She sighed with a plaintive humility; and privately opened her ears to the conversation on the other side of her.

A minute earlier, she would have heard her master expressing himself in the most flattering terms on the subject of Miss Bygrave's appearance in her sea-side costume. But Magdalen had seen Captain Wragge's signal with the camp-stool, and had at once diverted Mr. Noel Vanstone to the topic of himself and his possessions,

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by a neatly-timed question about his house at Aldborough.

"I don't wish to alarm you, Miss Bygrave," were the first words of Mr. Noel Vanstone's which caught Mrs. Lecount's attention—"but there is only one safe house in Aldborough—and that house is Mine. The sea may destroy all the other houses—it can't destroy Mine. My father took care of that; my father was a remarkable man. He had My house built on piles. I have reason to believe they are the strongest piles in England. Nothing can possibly knock them down—I don't care what the sea does—nothing can possibly knock them down."

"Then, if the sea invades us," said Magdalen, "we must all run for refuge to you."

Mr. Noel Vanstone saw his way to another compliment; and, at the same moment, the wary captain saw his way to another burst of science.

"I could almost wish the invasion might happen," murmured one of the gentlemen, "to give me the happiness of offering the refuge."

"I could almost swear the wind had shifted again!" exclaimed the other. "Where is a man I can ask? Oh, there he is. Boatman! how's the wind, now? Nor'-west and by west still—hey? And south-east and by south yesterday evening—ha? Is there anything more remarkable, Mrs. Lecount, than the variableness of the wind in this climate?" proceeded the captain, shifting the camp-stool to the scientific side of him. "Is there any natural phenomenon more bewildering to the scientific inquirer? You will tell me that the electric fluid which abounds in the air is the principal cause of this variableness. You will remind me of the experiment of that illustrious philosopher who measured the velocity of a great storm by a flight of small feathers. My dear madam, I grant all your propositions——"

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Mrs. Lecount; "you kindly attribute to me a knowledge that I don't possess. Propositions, I regret to say, are quite beyond me."

"Don't misunderstand me, ma'am," continued the captain, politely unconscious of the interruption "My remarks apply to the temperate zone only. Place me on the coasts between the tropics—place me where the wind blows towards the shore in the daytime, and towards the sea by night—and I instantly advance towards conclusive experiments. For example, I know that the heat of the sun during the day, rarefies the air over the land, and so causes the wind. You challenge me to prove it. I escort you down the kitchen-stairs (with your kind permission); I take my largest pie-dish out of the cook's hands; I fill it with cold water. Good! that dish of cold water represents the ocean. I next provide myself with one of our most precious domestic conveniences—a hot-water plate—I fill it with hot water, and I put it in the middle of the pie-dish. Good again! the hot-water plate represents the land rarefying the air over it. Bear that in mind, and give me a lighted candle. I hold my lighted candle over the cold water, and blow it out. The smoke immediately moves from the dish to the plate. Before you have time to express your satisfaction, I light the candle once more, and reverse the whole proceeding. I fill the pie-dish with hot water, and the plate with cold; I blow the candle out again, and the smoke moves this time from the plate to the dish. The smell is disagreeable—but the experiment is conclusive."

He shifted the camp-stool back again, and looked at Mrs. Lecount with his ingratiating smile. "You don't find me long-winded, ma'am—do you?" he said, in his easy, cheerful way, just as the housekeeper was privately opening her ears once more to the conversation on the other side of her.

"I am amazed, sir, by the range of your information," replied Mrs. Lecount, observing the captain with some perplexity—but, thus far, with no distrust. She thought him eccentric, even for an Englishman, and possibly a little vain of his knowledge. But he had at least paid her the implied compliment of addressing that knowledge to herself; and she felt it the more sensibly, from having hitherto found her scientific sympathies with her deceased husband, treated with no great respect by the people with whom she came in contact. "Have you extended your inquiries, sir," she proceeded, after a momentary hesitation, "to my late husband's branch of science? I merely ask, Mr. Bygrave, because (though I am only a woman) I think I might exchange ideas with you, on the subject of the reptile creation."

Captain Wragge was far too sharp to risk his ready-made science on the enemy's ground. The old militiaman shook his wary head.

"Too vast a subject, ma'am," he said, "for a smatterer like me. The life and labours of such a philosopher as your husband, Mrs. Lecount, warn men of my intellectual calibre not to measure themselves with a giant. May I inquire," proceeded the captain, softly smoothing the way for future intercourse with Sea-View Cottage, "whether you possess any scientific memorials of the late Professor?"

"I possess his Tank, sir," said Mrs. Lecount, modestly casting her eyes on the ground; "and one of his Subjects—a little foreign Toad."

"His Tank!" exclaimed the captain, in tones of mournful interest. "And his Toad! Pardon my blunt way of speaking my mind, ma'am. You possess an object of public interest; and, as one of the public, I acknowledge my curiosity to see it."

Mrs. Lecount's smooth cheeks coloured with pleasure. The one assailable place in that cold and secret nature, was the place occupied by the memory of the Professor. Her pride in his scientific achievements, and her mortification at finding them but little known out of his own country, were genuine feelings. Never had Captain Wragge burnt his adulterated incense on the flimsy altar of human vanity to better purpose than he was burning it now.

"You are very good, sir," said Mrs. Lecount,

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"In honouring my husband's memory, you honour *me*. But though you kindly treat me on a footing of equality, I must not forget that I fill a domestic situation. I shall feel it a privilege to show you my relics, if you will allow me to ask my master's permission first."

She turned to Mr. Noel Vanstone; her perfectly sincere intention of making the proposed request, mingling—in that strange complexity of motives which is found so much oftener in a woman's mind than in a man's—with her jealous distrust of the impression which Magdalen had produced on her master.

"May I make a request, sir?" asked Mrs. Lecount, after waiting a moment to catch any fragments of tenderly-personal talk that might reach her, and after being again neatly baffled by Magdalen—thanks to the camp-stool. "Mr. Bygrave is one of the few persons in England who appreciate my husband's scientific labours. He honours me by wishing to see my little world of reptiles. May I show it to him?"

"By all means, Lecount," said Mr. Noel Vanstone, graciously. "You are an excellent creature, and I like to oblige you. Lecount's Tank, Mr. Bygrave, is the only tank in England—Lecount's Toad, is the oldest toad in the world. Will you come and drink tea, at seven o'clock to-night? And will you prevail on Miss Bygrave to accompany you? I want her to see my house. I don't think she has any idea what a strong house it is. Come and survey my premises, Miss Bygrave. You shall have a stick, and rap on the walls; you shall go up-stairs and stamp on the floors—and then you shall hear what it all cost." His eyes wrinkled up cunningly at the corners, and he slipped another tender speech into Magdalen's car, under cover of the all-predominating voice in which Captain Wragge thanked him for the invitation. "Come punctually at seven," he whispered, "and pray wear that charming hat!"

Mrs. Lecount's lips closed ominously. She set down the captain's niece as a very serious drawback to the intellectual luxury of the captain's society.

"You are fatiguing yourself, sir," she said to her master. "This is one of your bad days. Let me recommend you to be careful; let me beg you to walk back."

Having carried his point by inviting the new acquaintances to tea, Mr. Noel Vanstone proved to be unexpectedly docile. He acknowledged that he was a little fatigued, and turned back at once in obedience to the housekeeper's advice.

"Take my arm, sir—take my arm, on the other side," said Captain Wragge, as they turned to retrace their steps. His parti-coloured eyes looked significantly at Magdalen while he spoke, and warned her not to stretch Mrs. Lecount's endurance too far at starting. She instantly understood him; and, in spite of Mr. Noel Vanstone's reiterated assertions that he stood in no need of the captain's arm, placed herself at once by the housekeeper's side. Mrs. Lecount recovered her good humour, and opened another conversation with Magdalen, by making the one inquiry of all others which, under existing circumstances, was the hardest to answer.

"I presume Mrs. Bygrave is too tired, after her journey, to come out to-day?" said Mrs. Lecount. "Shall we have the pleasure of seeing her to-morrow?"

"Probably not," replied Magdalen. "My aunt is in delicate health."

"A complicated case, my dear madam," added the captain; conscious that Mrs. Wragge's personal appearance (if she happened to be seen by accident) would offer the flattest of all possible contradictions to what Magdalen had just said of her. "There is some remote nervous mischief which doesn't express itself externally. You would think my wife the picture of health, if you looked at her—and yet, so delusive are appearances, I am obliged to forbid her all excitement. She sees no society—our medical attendant, I regret to say, absolutely prohibits it."

"Very sad," said Mrs. Lecount. "The poor lady must often feel lonely, sir, when you and your niece are away from her?"

"No," replied the captain. "Mrs. Bygrave is a naturally domestic woman. When she is able to employ herself, she finds unlimited resources in her needle and thread." Having reached this stage of the explanation—and having purposely skirted, as it were, round the confines of truth, in the event of the housekeeper's curiosity leading her to make any private inquiries on the subject of Mrs. Wragge—the captain wisely checked his fluent tongue from carrying him into any further details. "I have great hope from the air of this place," he remarked, in conclusion. "The Iodine, as I have already observed, does wonders."

Mrs. Lecount acknowledged the virtues of Iodine in the briefest possible form of words, and withdrew into the innermost sanctuary of her own thoughts. "Some mystery here," said the housekeeper to herself. "A lady who looks the picture of health; a lady who suffers from a complicated nervous malady; and a lady whose hand is steady enough to use her needle and thread—is a living mass of contradictions I don't quite understand. Do you make a long stay at Aldborough, sir?" she added aloud; her eyes resting for a moment, in steady scrutiny, on the captain's face.

"It all depends, my dear madam, on Mrs. Bygrave. I trust we shall stay through the autumn. You are settled at Sea-View Cottage, I presume, for the season?"

"You must ask my master, sir. It is for him to decide, not for me."

The answer was an unfortunate one. Mr. Noel Vanstone had been secretly annoyed by the change in the walking arrangements, which had separated him from Magdalen. He attributed that change to the meddling influence of Mrs. Lecount, and he now took the earliest opportunity of resenting it on the spot.

"I have nothing to do with our stay at Ald-

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borough," he broke out peevishly. "You know as well as I do, Lecount, it all depends on *you*. Mrs. Lecount has a brother in Switzerland," he went on, addressing himself to the captain—"a brother who is seriously ill. If he gets worse, she will have to go there and see him. I can't accompany her, and I can't be left in the house by myself. I shall have to break up my establishment at Aldborough, and stay with some friends. It all depends on you, Lecount—or on your brother, which comes to the same thing. If it depended on *me*," continued Mr. Noel Vanstone, looking pointedly at Magdalen across the housekeeper, "I should stay at Aldborough all through the autumn with the greatest pleasure. With the greatest pleasure," he reiterated, repeating the words with a tender look for Magdalen, and a spiteful accent for Mrs. Lecount.

Thus far, Captain Wragge had remained silent; carefully noting in his mind the promising possibilities of a separation between Mrs. Lecount and her master, which Mr. Noel Vanstone's little fretful outbreak had just disclosed to him. An ominous trembling in the housekeeper's thin lips, as her master openly exposed her family affairs before strangers, and openly set her jealousy at defiance, now warned him to interfere. If the misunderstanding were permitted to proceed to extremities, there was a chance that the invitation for that evening to Sea-View Cottage might be put off. Now, as ever, equal to the occasion, Captain Wragge called his useful information once more to the rescue. Under the learned auspices of Joyce, he plunged, for the third time, into the ocean of science, and brought up another pearl. He was still haranguing (on Pneumatics this time), still improving Mrs. Lecount's mind with his politest perseverance and his smoothest flow of language—when the walking party stopped at Mr. Noel Vanstone's door.

"Bless my soul, here we are at your house, sir!" said the captain, interrupting himself in the middle of one of his graphic sentences. "I won't keep you standing a moment. Not a word of apology, Mrs. Lecount, I beg and pray! I will put that curious point in Pneumatics more clearly before you on a future occasion. In the mean time, I need only repeat, that you can perform the experiment I have just mentioned, to your own entire satisfaction, with a bladder, an exhausted receiver, and a square box. At seven o'clock this evening, sir—at seven o'clock, Mrs. Lecount. We have had a remarkably pleasant walk, and a most instructive interchange of ideas. Now my dear girl! your aunt is waiting for us."

While Mrs. Lecount stepped aside to open the garden gate, Mr. Noel Vanstone seized his opportunity, and shot a last tender glance at Magdalen—under shelter of the umbrella, which he had taken into his own hands for that express purpose. "Don't forget," he said, with his sweetest smile; "don't forget, when you come this evening, to wear that charming hat!" Before he could add any last words, Mrs. Lecount glided back to her place; and the sheltering umbrella changed hands again immediately.

"An excellent morning's work!" said Captain Wragge, as he and Magdalen walked on together to North Shingles. "You and I and Joyce have all three done wonders. We have secured a friendly invitation at the first day's fishing for it."

He paused for an answer; and, receiving none, observed Magdalen more attentively than he had observed her yet. Her face had turned deadly pale again; her eyes looked out mechanically straight before her in heedless, reckless despair.

"What is the matter?" he asked, with the greatest surprise. "Are you ill?"

She made no reply; she hardly seemed to hear him.

"Are you getting alarmed about Mrs. Lecount?" he inquired next. "There is not the least reason for alarm. She may fancy she has heard something like your voice before; but your face evidently bewilders her. Keep your temper, and you keep her in the dark. Keep her in the dark; and you will put that two hundred pounds into my hands before the autumn is over."

He waited again for an answer; and again she remained silent. The captain tried for the third time, in another direction.

"Did you get any letters this morning?" he went on. "Is there bad news again from home? Any fresh difficulties with your sister?"

"Say nothing about my sister!" she broke out, passionately. "Neither you nor I are fit to speak of her."

She said those words at the garden gate, and hurried into the house by herself. He followed her, and heard the door of her own room violently shut to, violently locked and double-locked. Solacing his indignation by an oath, Captain Wragge sullenly went into one of the parlours on the ground floor to look after his wife. The room communicated with a smaller and darker room at the back of the house, by means of a quaint little door, with a window in the upper half of it. Softly approaching this door, the captain lifted the white muslin curtain which hung over the window, and looked into the inner room.

There was Mrs. Wragge, with her cap on one side, and her shoes down at heel; with a row of pins between her teeth; with the Oriental Cashmere Robe slowly slipping off the table; with her scissors suspended uncertain in one hand, and her written directions for dressmaking held doubtfully in the other—so absorbed over the invincible difficulties of her employment, as to be perfectly unconscious that she was at that moment the object of her husband's superintending eye. Under other circumstances, she would have been soon brought to a sense of her situation by the sound of his voice. But Captain Wragge was too anxious about Magdalen to waste any time on his wife, after satisfying himself that she was safe in her seclusion, and that she might be trusted to remain there.

He left the parlour, and, after a little hesi-

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tation in the passage, stole up stairs, and listened anxiously outside Magdalen's door. A dull sound of sobbing—a sound stifled in her handkerchief, or stifled in the bed-clothes—was all that caught his ear. He returned at once to the ground floor, with some faint suspicion of the truth dawning on his mind at last.

"The devil take that sweetheart of hers!" thought the captain. "Mr. Noel Vanstone has raised the ghost of him at starting."

PERVERTED INGENUITY.

Tired out with the search after ideas, with the uncertainty and incompleteness of all human science—weary of great speculations that end in doubt, of unrewarded efforts, of misinterpreted opinions, of wisdom that brings no heart's ease, and knowledge that only enlarges the self-cognisance of pain—the intellectual men of all ages have, in that mood of playfulness which sometimes partakes of the sadness of disappointment, no less than of the brightness of fancy, employed their leisure moments in the composition of laborious trifles, such as mock the fruits of their graver studies with something of a fairy quaintness. Hence the flood of anagrams, acrostics, palindromes, alliterative verses, shaped verses, echo verses, macaronics, *bouts rimés*, &c., poured forth over the broad lands of literature, not by mere flippant idlers, or dull men mistaking themselves for wits, but often by authors of real scholarship and ability. It is true that Addison, in his papers on False Wit, published in successive numbers of the Spectator, says that it would be impossible to decide whether the inventor of the acrostic or the anagram were the greater blockhead. But, with all due respect to the exquisite essayist of the days of Anne—to the immortal creator of Sir Roger de Coverley—there was a little affectation of extreme classical propriety about the period to which Addison belonged, which sometimes cramped even his genial mind, and certainly rendered him incapable of doing justice to the wild freakishness of these literary games. Men of larger powers than Addison have not disdained to stoop to this level. Friar Bacon, Huyghens, Galileo, and even Sir Isaac Newton, communicated several of their discoveries to the world by means of anagrams; and Camden wrote an essay on the subject (to be found in his Remains), in which he calls the objectors to such toys, persons of "the sowre sort." In fact, it is as great a mistake to under-rate as to over-rate them; and, considering the extraordinary degree of ingenuity, patience, and wit, often exhibited in their construction, they are deserving of more regard than they have recently obtained.

A curious collection of anagrams and other cognate oddities has just been put forth by Mr. H. B. Wheatley, who, in a little volume, produced in the manner dear to antiquarians—with gilt edges at the top, and plain edges at the bottom and side: with toned paper, old-fashioned type, and fantastic ornaments—has brought together a large amount of rare information on the topics which he undertakes to handle. We cannot spend half an hour more agreeably than by glancing through Mr. Wheatley's pages, occasionally supplementing his knowledge by the fruits of our own casual reading.

Chronograms are sentences so formed that they shall include the letters necessary to signify in Roman numerals some date relating to the person or circumstance commemorated. These are generally in Latin, and the numeral letters are distinguished by being placed in capitals. A chronogrammatical Latin poem is in existence, containing a hundred hexameters, every one of which contains the date 1634. Like its twin brother, the anagram, the chronogram has been used as a vehicle of mysticism by the fanatical. Michael Stifelius, a Lutheran minister at Würtemberg, deduced in this way from a passage in John, xix. 37, a prophecy that the world would come to an end in 1533. The passage ("They shall look on him whom they pierced") stands thus in Latin, which we give in the chronogrammatical form adopted by Michael: "VIDebVnt In qVeM transfIXerVnt;" from which the reader may pick out the date MDXVVVVIII (1533). The prophet even went so far as to state the month, the day of the month, and the hour, at which the vaticination was to be fulfilled; but for these he does not seem to have had even a fanciful warrant. On the morning when the chronogram was to come true, Stifelius was preaching to his congregation, when a violent storm arose, and the people began to think that their pastor was verily an inspired man. Suddenly, however, the clouds dispersed, to the confusion of chronogrammatical prophecy, and to the great indignation of the worshippers, who, disappointed of the wonder they had been led to expect, set upon the preacher, and beat him severely for not knowing better. The frame of mind of the worshippers at the coming on of the storm must have been equivalent to that of the Irish hodman, who had made a bet that his comrade could not carry him up a ladder to the top of a high house without letting him fall, and who, feeling the other's foot slip about the third story, "began to have hopes." Their exasperation at the non-fulfilment of the prophecy will probably be understood by those modern believers in similar forecastings who have been so frequently disappointed of late that one of them has been heard to declare he shall "give it up" if something does not happen next year.

Palindromes are words or sentences that may be read the same backwards and forwards, letter by letter; such as this motto, once made by a lawyer for himself: "Si nummi immunis"—translated by Camden, "Give me my fee, and I warrant you free," in which the sense is preserved, and the mechanical ingenuity lost. Such, also, is the sentence in which Adam has been supposed by some profane wit to have introduced himself to Eve: "Madam, I'm Adam." In Lyon verses (apparently so called after the city of Lyons, where they originated), the sentence is read backwards word by word, instead of letter

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by letter; and a question or statement is sometimes thus made to supply its own answer. An epitaph in Crumwallow churchyard, Cornwall, is composed on this principle:

> Shall we all die?
> We shall die all;
> All die shall we;
> Die all we shall.

Mr. Wheatley might have mentioned, in connexion with this branch of his subject, the singular fact that the third line of Gray's Elegy may be transposed eighteen times without injury to the sense, the metre, or the rhyme; as thus, by way of specimen:

> The weary ploughman plods his homeward way.
> The ploughman, weary, plods his homeward way.
> Weary, the ploughman plods his homeward way.
> Homeward, the ploughman, weary, plods his way.
> The homeward ploughman plods his weary way.

But this is a very poor triumph compared with that of the subtle scholar who discovered that the words contained in the following lines—

> Lex, Rex, Grex, Res, Spes, Jus, Thus, Sal, Sol, *bona* Lux, Laus,
> Mars, Mors, Sors, Lis, Vis, Styx, Pus, Nox, Fæx, *mala* Crux, Fraus,

can be changed in their order 39,916,800 times, while still retaining the two words in italics in their original position, to preserve the measure of the verse. In presence of such a fact (if it be one), what can we do but exclaim, "Good gracious!" and pass on?

Lipograms are a species of verse in which, to quote the account given of them by De Quincey, the writers, "through each several stanza in its turn, gloried in dispensing with some one separate consonant, some vowel, or some diphthong, and thus achieving a triumph such as crowns with laurel that pedestrian athlete who wins a race by hopping on one leg, or wins it under the inhuman condition of confining both legs within a sack." Macaronic verses consist of a grotesque union of Latin and English or some other modern tongue, in which the vernacular words must have Latin terminations, and agree, the one with the other, in number and case; as in this specimen:

> Omne quot exit in um,
> Ceu winum, beerum, toastum, cheerum.

Still more amusing was Swift's freak of writing English words with Latin spelling, of which, we think, Mr. Wheatley should have taken some notice. The following, for instance, has the appearance of Latin, and yet is very good English:

> Mollis abuti,
> Has an acuti;
> No lasso finis;
> Molli divinis.

Restore the English spelling, and we get—

> Moll is a beauty,
> Has an acute eye;
> No lass so fine is;
> Molly divine is.

Bouts Rimés, or "rhymed ends"—a French invention—make a capital game for those who are gifted with a little fancy and literary address. You are presented with a set of rhymes—the skeleton of so many lines or stanzas—and you have to supply verses of your own to fit these words. This species of literary exercise was at one time so popular in France that the ladies imposed on their lovers the task of filling up "rhymed ends" of their own supplying; and we doubt not that many a pretty compliment was thus asked for and had. The practice originated in rather a singular way. A poetaster named Dulot, who lived in the middle of the seventeenth century, was one day grieving for the loss of three hundred sonnets. His friends expressed their surprise at the largeness of the number (though it was nothing to what was achieved by some of the Italian poets); whereupon, Dulot told them that the sonnets he had lost were only the ends waiting to be filled up. He thus became the unintentional originator of Bouts Rimés. It is said that in this way Campbell wrote his poem, Lochiel; and Dryden in some degree justified the habit by that wonderfully ingenuous confession of his, that a rhyme sometimes helped him to a thought. The practice was for a long while kept alive in France by the Academy of Lanternists at Toulouse proposing each year a set of fourteen on the subject of the Grand Monarque, and giving a medal to the author of the best.

Echo verses are best described in the following clever specimens:

> I'd fain praise your poem—but tell me, how is it?
> When I cry out "Exquisite!" Echo cries "Quiz it!"

During the rage for Paganini, a wit thus expressed in the columns of a weekly newspaper his contempt for the prevalent mania:

> What are they who pay three guineas
> To hear a tune of Paganini's?
> *Echo*—Pack o' ninnies!

To the same class must be referred that catch, commencing with the words "Ah how, Sophia," which are frequently repeated, and made to bear both the sound and the meaning, "Ah, house a-fire!" and that other, in which a skit against Hawkins's History of Music is conveyed in the constant iteration, in connexion with Sir John's name, of the words "Burney's History," which take the sound of "Burn his History!" Echo verses are generally comic and satirical; but George Herbert has some of a religious character, quoted by Mr. Wheatley; and Webster, in his ghastly tragedy, the Duchess of Malfi, introduces an Echo into an old churchyard, with an effect at once fantastic and dreary.

Much amusement may be derived from equivocal verses; that is to say, verses that contain two precisely opposite meanings according to the order in which you read them. They must have been invented by some one with a genius for malicious insinuation, and they have been found very useful in the propagation of political libels during troublous times. Thus, the following lines, read straight down in the ordinary

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way, are very loyal to the house of Hanover; but, read from column to column, they change into a piece of rank Jacobinism:

I love with all my heart	The Tory party here
The Hanoverian part	Most hateful do appear
And for that settlement	I ever have denied
My conscience gives consent	To be on James's side, &c.

Mr. Wheatley has given several specimens; but he has missed one which is in our opinion among the best, notwithstanding its want of gallantry. It is a little poem on matrimony; and the subjoined are the first two stanzas:

That man must lead a happy life
Who is directed by a wife;
Who's free from matrimonial chains
Is sure to suffer for his pains.

Adam could find no solid peace
Till he beheld a woman's face;
When Eve was given for a mate
Adam was in a happy state.

At first sight this seems very complimentary to the sex; but read the lines alternately, and you will see what a quintessence of poison the savage old bachelor or henpecked husband (as the case may be) has contrived to wrap up in the heart of his rosebud.

Our author might have given us a chapter on Nonsense Verses, which were at one time popular; but of Shaped Verses he tells some curious stories. The English poets of the time of James the First and Charles the First were fond of displaying their ingenuity this way, and certainly rode their hobby to death. One Edward Benlowes made verses in the shape of altars, of pyramids, of gridirons and frying-pans (wherein, "besides the likeness in shape," as an old writer records, "the very tone and sound of the words did perfectly represent the noise that is made by those utensils, such as the old poet called sartago loquendi"), of bridles, saddles, cruppers, and bits. Mr. Wheatley does not mention the achievements in this way of "silver-tongued Sylvester," who translated the works of the French poet Du Bartas, and literally wrote "columns" of poetry; but he was in truth surpassed by others. The freak was a genuine product of the age which, while giving birth to Shakespeare and Bacon, Spenser and Ben Jonson, delighted in cutting trees into the similitude of peacocks and ships, box-edgings into hour-glasses, and men's beards into spades, forks, and hammer-heads. Yet, in this as in other matters, we must go to the East for the greatest marvels. Shahin Ghiraz, Khan of the Crimea in the last century, composed an ode in Turkish, in the form of an orb, from the centre of which flow thirteen rays, intertwining with each other; and the manner of reading the poem is thus described in vol. xviii. of the Journal of the Asiatic Society: "The letter at the centre is the first and last letter of every distich; the letters in the radii are the penultimates of each distich, and, read inversely, follow the initials in the next succeeding distich. The words in the intersectional compartments are common to each of the intersecting verses. The ode begins and ends at the centre through the radius which points directly upwards."

Acrostics are among the most curious of these literary amusements. They seem to have become common in the early Christian ages; and Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea, who died in the fourth century, professed to have discovered a copy of verses by the Erythræan Sybil, the initial letters of which make up the Greek words corresponding to "Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour." The poem describes the coming of the Day of Judgment, and what renders the acrostic more noteworthy is the fact that the initial letters of the five Greek words forming the sentence give the Greek word for "fish," which St. Augustine says is to be understood as a mystical epithet of Christ, "who lived in this abyss of mortality without contracting sin, in like manner as a fish exists in the midst of the sea without acquiring any flavour of salt from the salt water." The passage has been translated into Latin hexameters, so as to give the words "Jesus Christus, Dei Filius, Servator;" but the allusion to the fish is lost. Addison, in his Essay on False Wit, says that "there are compound acrostics, where the principal letters stand two or three deep. I have seen some of them where the verses have not only been edged by a name at each extremity, but have had the same name running down like a seam through the middle of the poem." Some writers have even carried their triumphs so far as to produce pentacrostics, in which the name is repeated five times. A strange instance of an involuntary or accidental acrostic occurred in the reign of Charles the Second, when the initials of the five ministers of the king after the fall of Lord Clarendon—viz. Clifford, Ashley, Buckingham, Arlington, and Lauderdale—formed the word Cabal, which had already been used as the designation of the cabinet. It is commonly supposed in these days that the word originated in the way alluded to; but this is a mistake. The expression existed previously, and seems to have been derived by us, through the French, from the Cabala of the Hebrews, signifying something occult and hidden from the vulgar.

Simply to write acrostics in the shape of poems requires no great ability, for we find that they are frequently put forth in the handbills of shopkeepers, who cannot be supposed to command the services of very illustrious wits. But to execute them with grace of style, elegance of thought, and poetical feeling, is quite another matter; and in this way there are few if any equals of Sir John Davies, poet and judge, who, towards the close of the sixteenth century, wrote twenty-six acrostic hymns on Queen Elizabeth, the initial letters in each of which form the name and title of "Elisabetha Regina." Two of these in particular (the fifth and seventh) are so charming, that, as they are not generally known, and are not included in Mr. Wheatley's volume, we quote them here. The fifth is addressed to the lark, and runs thus:

E arly, cheerful, mounting lark,
L ight's gentle usher, morning's clerk,
I n merry notes delighting;
S tint awhile thy song, and hark,
A nd learn my new inditing.

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B ear up this hymn, to Heav'n it bear,
E 'en up to Heav'n, and sing it there;
T o Heav'n each morning bear it;
H ave it set to some sweet sphere,
A nd let the angels hear it.

R enown'd Astrea, that great name,
E xceeding great in worth and fame,
G reat worth hath so renown'd it;
I t is Astrea's name I praise:
N ow then, sweet lark, do thou it raise,
A nd in high Heav'n resound it.

The seventh hymn, addressed to the rose, is as follows:

E ye of the garden, queen of flow'rs,
L ove's cup, wherein lie nectar's pow'rs,
I ngender'd first of nectar;
S weet nurse-child of the spring's young hours,
A nd beauty's fair charàcter;

B est jewel that the earth doth wear,
E 'en when the brave young sun draws near,
T o her hot love pretending;
H imself likewise like form doth bear,
A t rising and descending.

R ose, of the Queen of Love belov'd!
E ngland's great kings, divinely mov'd,
G ave roses in their banner:
I t show'd that beauty's rose indeed,
N ow in this age should them succeed,
A nd reign in more sweet manner.

A very ingenious species of acrostic is the Telestich—verses in which two words of opposite meaning are to be indicated by the first and last letters of the lines taken consecutively; while, to make the difficulty still greater, the words are to be composed of precisely the same letters. We might fairly suppose such a feat impossible; but we have met with the following specimen:

U-nite and untie are the same—so say yo-U.
N-ot in wedlock, I ween, has the unity bee-N.
I-n the drama of marriage, each wandering gou-T
T-o a new face would fly—all except you and I,
E-ach seeking to alter the *spell* in their scen-E.

Anagrams are extremely ancient. They were known to the Greeks, who were taught by Plato to discover in these transpositions of names a mystical meaning typifying the character or fate of the persons concerned. The later Platonists carried the theory to a still greater extent than their original master, as in many other matters; and the Cabalists ranked anagrams among the elements of their secret wisdom. Camden says that the French of his time leant much to the same opinion, "and so enforced the matter with strong words and weak proofs, that some credulous young men, hovering between hope and fear, might easily be carried away by them into the forbidden superstition of Onomantia, or Soothsaying by names." The same writer calls anagrammatism "the only quintessence that hitherto the alchemy of wit could draw out of names;" and he tells us what amount of latitude is permitted to those who practise the science. The more precise only make free with the letter H, which they either omit or retain, because it cannot challenge the right of a letter. Those who are more lax in their principles allow themselves to double or reject a letter, to use E for Æ, V for W, S for Z, C for K, and vice versâ. It is to be feared that a large number of anagrams are referable to the latter class; and in some the meaning elicited by the transposition of the letters is not sufficiently applicable to the original subject. When, however, an anagram is perfect in every respect, it may really claim a place among the achievements of wit. Of such was the answer discovered by a mediæval anagrammatist to Pontius Pilate's question, Quid est veritas? ("What is truth?") Transposed in due order, the letters composing these words give the sentence, Est vir qui adest ("It is the man who is here.") But one of the happiest of anagrams was made on the name of a certain lady of the time of Charles I., widow of the Sir John Davies already alluded to. Sir John, as we have seen, was great in acrostics: his wife was equally so in anagrams, which she used as a means of prophecy, and, owing to one or two successes, obtained a name in this species of divination, though ultimately doomed to be discomfited in the same way. There can be little doubt that she was insane; and her libels on several persons of distinction gave so much annoyance to her husband that he threw her MSS. into the fire. Thereupon, she prophesied that he would die within three years, at the expiration of which time she put on mourning. Sir John died suddenly of apoplexy, and the widow soon after married again. Her second husband, however, treated her writings in the same fashion as the first; but the lady went on with her prophecies and her libels, until she was prosecuted before the Court of High Commission. She seems, unlike Davies, to have inclined to the Puritanical side; and she endeavoured to convince the court that the spirit of the prophet Daniel was within her, because she had found in her maiden name (Eleanor Audeley) the words, "Reveal, O Daniel!" The judges tried in vain to argue her out of so ridiculous a fancy; but at length the Dean of Arches, one Lamb (who must surely have been an ancestor of Elia), discovered in her first married name (Dame Eleanor Davies) the sentence "Never so mad a ladie!" This he read aloud, throwing the court into extreme laughter, and the poor prophetess into such utter confusion of spirits that she appears never to have recovered her former confidence.

The discovery of prophecies in anagrams has at all times been rather common. Thomas Billon, a Provençal, who was specially retained by Louis the Thirteenth as an anagrammatist, with a pension of 1200 livres, made a set of prophecies in this way; and Cotton Mather, the fanatic New England minister and witch-persecutor (whose name one can hardly mention without a shudder of abhorrence), found a good deal of religious teaching, after his fashion, in the art of verbal transposition. When carried to such extremes, these ingenious exercises become a pernicious folly; and, in a purely literary sense, all such freaks of fancy must be sparingly and modestly used, or they do an injury to more

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dignified composition. But, temperately resorted to as an amusement, they are worthy of all praise, for they combine mental recreation with intellectual discipline, and redeem playfulness from frivolity. There are many more beautiful objects of art than a Chinese carved ivory ball; yet we admire the ball for the sake of the mechanical skill necessary to its production. The skill in itself is a good thing; the exercise of patience, the mastery over stubborn materials, the gay defiance of difficulties that to the indolent might seem insurmountable—all these are excellent for their own sakes, whether the substance be simple bone, or the nobler organism of human speech.

A DAY'S RABBIT-SHOOTING.

I AM a pretty reasonable shot with the rifle at what sportsmen call, graphically enough, "a dead mark," yet I confess it was with some feelings of apprehension that one February morning in Downshire I received a note from Farmer Redleaf, inviting me to my third day's rabbit shooting up in Summerleas Wood. I longed for the sport, but I dreaded the ignominy of perpetual misses. Now a target, white and black, like the ace of clubs, is a good patient thing, and waits for you; but your rabbit is a dodgy bustling creature, and puts a quiet slow man like me out. A zig-zag snipe, a pheasant that rises like a firework, a whirring partridge, all want good shooting; but rabbit-killing has its own independent artifices, and requires its own especial training. Before you can wink, a rabbit has flashed by and is out of sight among the furze. The aim must be instinct, the eye and finger must work together, quick and sure, or no luck; all this I knew, and, being a beginner, I trembled at the knowledge.

I had, however, two golden rules of my friend Silvertup in my mind, and they upheld me. The one was, "Fire at everything you see." The second was, "Aim at a running rabbit's head, or the shot will fall behind." I repeated these golden rules incessantly to myself, as I made my way that cold whistling February morning to the upper wood.

High and pale was the blue sky; the rolling clouds were a cold brightening grey; the wind north-east, sharp and cutting, sounded shrill in the black close wiry hedges in which there still dolefully dangled wheat-straws that had been swept from last autumn's harvest-waggons. The great white horses were speeding on bravely with the ploughs, preparing for the barley sowing in the broad dark fields that sloped up on my right hand from the country lane, and there were files of women stone-picking there far away to the left. The only sounds to be heard were wild wintry sounds, such as the chattering of flocks of starlings, the fluttering "chink-chink" of the startled blackbirds, and occasionally the cry of a stray plover overhead.

It was pleasant, that February morning, from the higher land to look down on the pretty coloured ground plan of Downshire, and see roads that seemed mere white lines, grass fields that appeared mere squares of green, and fir plantations that might have been taken for small patches of mustard-and-cress. It was pleasant to see the blue lines of distance, too, melt gradually into air, lessening and lessening, with now a farm-house, now a little grey spire, peering from the folds of azure.

I am on the path leading to Summerleas across the grizzled grass, when I see Badger the keeper approaching, his double-barrel on his shoulder, and my friend Silvertup's little pack of beagles at his heels. He wishes me "the top of the morning," and gives a tug at the rusty brim of his hat; while he is performing these acts of politeness, we are joined by Farmer Redleaf busy and hearty, Silvertup business-like and alert, and young Farmer Stockton, a fresh-coloured vigorous sportsman, who is shy, seldom speaks, but halloos a good deal at the dogs to relieve his spirits.

Now, after mutual greeting, there is a general loading of guns; powder is poured in, wadding driven down, shots are rattled in, and finally caps are fitted on nipples. The respective merit of brown and shining barrels is discussed, and Silvertup shows us in the palm of his hand the size shot he finds best for rabbits. A slight discussion also on the price of wool and the prospects of the lambing season while away the few minutes until Rasper, the second keeper, has time to come up and take charge of the beagles.

He has been away with four other men, pitching the nets all round Summerleas Wood, round nearly half a mile of bushy hazels, purple-leafed brambles, leafless larches, and green firs. Many a rabbit will to-day dash gallantly or blindly at that net wall, and there be clubbed with sticks, or leaped on and strangled. Herod and his dogs are out—there will be no quarter to the innocents.

There are four guns in our party, and we range ourselves at the corners of a large patch of yellow-blossomed prickly furze, as Rasper, with long whip trailing over his left arm, halloos the dogs into the covert, yelling with elevated eyebrow and with hand guarding his mouth, shouting alternate praise and chiding to "Challenger," "Conqueror," "Bruiser," "Beauty," "Music," and their mottled companions. The white tails of the dogs are twinkling among the furze in a moment. "Click, click, click, click," go the hammers of the four guns, and Silvertup's two-barrel—one of which I have christened "MURDER" and the other "SUDDEN DEATH," for they never seem to miss—seem to actually glare at the covert they point at. Woe be to the rabbit that comes out on Silvertup's side of the covert! As for myself, I begin to feel what the Americans describe as "kinder skeared," and could almost pray, were it not pusillanimous, that the first rabbit would not come out on my side of the furze.

Presently an old dog in the centre of the covert gives tongue in a tone of deep melancholy conviction; a second repeats the alarm with a

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light playful alacrity; a third carries it on petulantly; presently all fall to and assert their discovery, as with one voice, until the welkin resounds.

Every sort of dog-voice is now heard asserting itself; every note in the dog-gammut is audible, from the deep growling bass of the old dog, to the shrill petulant falsetto of the most ardent puppy. They are all at it tooth and nail eating the rabbit up alive—a novice like myself would be inclined to think—then quarrelling over his bones.

Look how the four guns point at the covert, the death-flame as yet unlighted in them, but all ready to launch at the poor timid creatures we are all so earnestly intent on destroying. Hark! A quick snappish yelp, and next moment out bolts the rabbit at my corner—a mere little lump of reddish-brown fur, a twinkle of white tail, a mere glimpse and gone again, before you can wink! I fire and Stockton fires; but the rabbit is unscathed. I see the little trough in the turf that my shot ploughed up. I tried to be prepared. I thought nothing could startle me, or be too quick for me; but that conceit of mine has gone for ever.

Farmer Redleaf roars with laughter at my wanting "a slower breed of rabbits;" but stop! they have him again. A posse of dogs throw themselves on a certain furze-bush, all their white tails vibrate through the covert as they worm in, stirred by a common sympathy. Badger shouts and urges on the dogs. Rasper, whip in hand, dashes forward; having high boots on, he springs into a world of thorns, shouting "Tally-ho! Tantivy!" or some such old sportsman's war-cry.

Now the dogs go fairly mad; out bolts the rabbit again; he skims across the path between the two furze clumps. After him, pell-mell, go the dogs. I fire again, as the animal trips in a deep rut; taking no aim whatever, of course I miss. Again he is lost in the furze—but this trick is his last. The unerring Silvertup sees him for an instant. Bang! cries "Sudden Death," and next minute Rasper emerges from the covert with a dead rabbit on his shoulder; but I feel no envy and no mortification, for I am but a beginner, and I have at least attended to Silvertup's golden rule of rabbit-shooting, "*Fire at everything you see.*" It is a step of progress in the art of shooting when the sportsman can feel cool and ready as the game starts into view. The instant a pheasant rises and does not appear to you in the likeness of a sky-rocket—the instant a rabbit's bolting out of covert startles you less than if a tiger had shown himself—the instant a covey of partridges can get up and not appear to make a noise like ten watchmen's rattles sprung at once; that instant, depend on it, you have passed your "*Little Go*" in shooting; and have only to improve your eye, gain experience by frequent practice, accustom eye and finger to work exactly together, and avoid either undue haste or undue slowness.

The scene has changed. We are now some three hundred yards further on towards the nets. I myself am just on the edge of a green riding of Summerleas Wood. A great wall of dry leafless larches rises before me, mixed with the horned and wayward firs whose deep green no frost can harm and no east wind blight. I delight in the grateful resinous smell of the fir-cones, and in the pretty chequer of light I can see moving between the trunks of the young trees. The violets are as yet hushed and flowerless in the dry white brake; the primroses dare not show their little blossoms under the oak-trees; but still, far overhead I can hear the pairing wood-pigeons murmuring together their love-secrets, and I remember at once that love and spring walk ever hand in hand.

I might, perhaps, have stayed half an hour, for all I know, day-dreaming in this manner, or staring with rapt wonder at the magic blue distance that, stretched fold on fold in misty recessions of beauty, seemed to grow only more divine the further it passed from the real earth, when a sharp cry from Redleaf, who was guarding the wood a hundred and fifty yards off, awakes me to the fact of an impending rabbit.

"Look out!" he roared. I did look out, and that impromptu vigilance of mine was not unrewarded. The distant yelp of dogs widened into a fuller sound that rapidly fanned out in my direction.

"Here they are!" Whish! The rabbit runs across the riding, thirty yards before me. I fire a little before him for he is "going the pace," but he dashes into the covert apparently unhurt. What! have I missed him? Then I'll throw my useless gun away. No! Redleaf comes to my rescue, steps calmly into the brake, and emerges with my dead victim. Hurrah!

But all this time the wood further in is echoing with the death-knells of "Murder" and "Sudden Death." Silvertup is performing miraculous feats of shooting. He has killed two rabbits with one shot—two rabbits that had foolishly got into a line. He kills a rabbit with a shot from the hip—I mean with the gun not even placed at his shoulder. More wonderful still, he is "so smart, sir," that he actually kills two rabbits with right and left barrel—two almost simultaneous shots. All these feats are told me exultingly by old Badger the keeper, as again "Forward!" rings through the woods and we plunge among the trees.

Another scene. We are now deep in the fir-wood, and on the brow of a small dell filled with bramble-bushes, dead wood, and short scrub. I am ankle deep in beech-leaves that are dry and dusty above and a dark wet purple below. The coppery antlers of the fir-trees rise over my head waving to the blue sky. Below, in the dell, the beagles are working with excellent though fussy unanimity. It is an excellent "stand-point" here for a beginner, because there is little covert for the fugitive rabbit, who has to race up hill in face of our fire, and to pass unsheltered over the dead leaves and between the tall slim pillars of the fir-trunks. I can get a

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clear full shot here, and though the aim must be equally quick as elsewhere, still there is a great increase of chance for me.

But before I shed blood again in fair field I bag two more rabbits in a less glorious way. Redleaf, suddenly stepping up to me, quietly points me out what seems a large flint at the foot of a beech-tree some thirty yards off.

"It's a flint," said I.

"Bah! it's a rabbit," said he; "kill him."

I aimed at what must be the head. The next moment the rabbit lay stretched out dead upon the leaves, a drop of blood and a pinch of bluish grey fur the only proofs of the cause of his sudden decease. Presently I see another cowering under a dead tree trunk, and I kill him also just as he is springing up.

But it is Silvertup who shows me the true path to glory, though "it leads but to the grave." A rabbit comes trotting up the hill. Bang goes "Murder," and the rabbit rolls over on the leaves like a round ball of whitish fur, throwing such a strange summersault that had you never seen fire-arms you might have supposed it some mere harmless trick of the live animal.

"Bang-bang" from different stations in the wood, at intervals, go Redleaf and Stockton's guns; sometimes, like other mortals, they kill, sometimes they miss; often when Redleaf's first barrel blunders, his second barrel corrects. I too have my occasional moment of slaughter, for I fire at everything, but as for Silvertup he never misses but once, and then he kills with the post-script shot.

Sometimes, from not quite understanding which way the dogs are working, I find myself far behind the other guns, and hear them squibbing about such an immense way off, that the crack of the shot comes quite faintly to my ear. On these occasions, I generally stumble out of the wood, when I can, into the spongy mossy path, where the nets are reared. There I stop like an Indian scout watching, till I see perhaps a rabbit suddenly emerge cautiously from the wood, and thinking himself safe and unseen, dash at the fatal opening where the treacherous net walls out hope.

Sometimes, with the speed of lightning, the frightened animal turns back into the dog beleaguered wood; but more often, just as I run up to bag him, down comes an ash stick on his skull, and a boisterous voice shouts, "I say, Mas'r Kippur, I've been and clubbed another rabbit." The voice is that of one of Redleaf's shepherd-boys, who, under covert like myself, has been watching stealthily the same animal.

But now it gets late; the furze has all been drawn, the dogs have worked every part of the wood; it is time for lunch. The net-stakes are pulled up, the dead rabbits are taken down from the dead fir-boughs, where here and there they are hanging; we all converge to one point, and that point is the old lodge in the wood, where luncheon has long ago been prepared.

Rasper whips in the dogs. Badger and his retinue groan under grievous burden of rabbits. Stockton, Redleaf, Silvertup, and myself, a trifle tired, lounge towards the lodge.

The cheese in great moist wedges awaits us; the cider is ready in its great stone jar; the loaves are duly cloven; the strong XXX ale is frothing in the horns; the guns stand in the corners; long rows of rabbits, twenty couple at least, lie in the outhouse; the keeper and his men seat themselves on distant benches, joking under their breath about Harker's appetite and Fitzpayne's laziness; and we eat and talk.

STRANGE AND YET TRUE.

When the evening lamps are lighted, or, rather, just before that operation—say in the little interval which follows the retirement of the ladies from the dining-room, and precedes the appearance of the laughing, sceptical faces left temporarily below—a grain of ghost-talk mingles, not inharmoniously, with the gentle and domestic topics invoked by the subdued light and confidential feeling of the hour. The treatment of the subject is necessarily superficial. Twenty minutes will not suffice for a dive into philosophic deeps. Facts are simply adduced. Theme and proposition are laid bare, and left so, for any after-manipulations profounder thinkers please. Nevertheless, from the pabulum (often exceedingly raw) supplied by these little conversations, may be deduced a whole garden of thought, worthy the attention of the most earnest sage.

Whatever be the cause, the fact will hardly be disputed that a taste for the supernatural has greatly augmented of late among the educated classes of society. It has, indeed, as might be expected, abandoned its ancient form of bald credulity. We neither believe in the ghost, nor shoot at him. We require to know something of *his* nature who walks uninvited into our dwelling, and what may be his immediate business there, but not with rudeness nor intolerance. In a word, the indulgent spirit of the time is the welcome child of progress. As every age stamps itself upon the roll of time with the seal of some grand discovery—as every successive year reveals its half-suspected wonders—the mind becomes less and less inclined to impose limits upon that vast unexplored ocean which, like the natural horizon, seems to know no bound but God—and man, as he grows wiser, grows humbler.

To this improved feeling, and this better discipline of reason, we are indebted for many an interesting narrative which would else have never passed the bounds of a family circle; or, in doing so, would have at least been carefully denuded of such corroboration as name, place, and time afford. In the incidents hereafter to be related, these have been supplied without scruple, and without desire for any greater reticence than the editor in his discretion may impose. The circumstances of each case have been verified with unusual care, because another object than simple curiosity sug-

gested the inquiry. Still, it may be proper to call attention to the fact, that persons who have been, or who have conceived themselves to have been, the witnesses of so-called supernatural appearances, are, in recalling the occurrence, never wholly free from the dominion of that exalted feeling which accompanied it, and which is ill-calculated for minute and accurate detail. He, therefore, who undertakes to relate a ghost story at second-hand, may have the difficult task of rendering incoherences in such a manner as shall not bring down unjust doubt upon what is no less correct than clear.

To assist analysis, we must compare. To aid comparison, the least possible reserve should unite with the closest possible adherence to facts, so far as facts can be ascertained after passing through strongly susceptible imaginations. Even were these extra-natural occurrences not explicable (which we hold them in every case to be), there is surely nothing terrible or revolting in the pursuit. It is, for example, a simple, touching, and beautiful faith that the last earthly regards of the liberated spirit should be fixed upon its best beloved. If such be the work of a mocking spirit, it wears a wonderfully heavenly dress. "I am a ghost," says Wolfrau, in the Fool's Tragedy:

> Tremble not. Fear not me:
> The dead are ever good and innocent,
> And love the living. They are cheerful creatures—
> And quiet as the sunbeams—and most like,
> In grace, and patient love, and spotless beauty,
> The new-born of mankind.

To proceed at once to illustration, here are two instances of "intuition," both brief and true. The first is supplied by a gentleman well known in French literary circles, whom it induced to bestow much attention on that and kindred subjects.

In 1845 he was visiting a lady of his acquaintance at Rouen. They were engaged in earnest conversation on the subject of the future prospects of the lady's children, the youngest of whom—a girl of eighteen—sat working beside them. Suddenly, the latter started from her seat with a loud shriek, and threw herself into her mother's arms. On being questioned as to the cause of her agitation, she pointed to a sofa, and, weeping bitterly, declared she had seen *descend* upon it the figure of her elder sister, Rosalie, then on a visit to some relations at or near Havre. The countenance of the phantom was pale and death-stricken. This occurred at four o'clock in the afternoon of the 17th September. Two days after, tidings arrived that Rosalie L—— had been unhappily drowned in a boating excursion at Havre, at (it was affirmed) the precise moment of the appearance.

As another instance, here is a circumstance minutely related by Monsieur M——, a retired French officer, in a letter to a friend:

"Left an orphan at an early age, I was brought up under the care of a kind-hearted godmother, who could scarcely have cherished me more, had I been her own offspring. She resided at Harfleur, and being in easy circumstances, refused me nothing that could contribute to my youthful pleasure, keeping my pockets, withal, comfortably lined with that material which rendered my frequent visits to the Sunday fêtes in the neighbourhood doubly agreeable. On one occasion I had started as usual in company with a band of young vagabonds like myself to attend a fête at Quillebœuf, on the opposite side of the Seine.

"Contrary to my natural habit, I felt uneasy and depressed. An inexplicable feeling of gloom hung upon my mind, and neither my own efforts, nor the raillery of my companions, could drive it away. I had, indeed, left my good protectress confined by illness to her bed, but I was not aware that she was in any danger. However, the cloud upon my mind, far from dispersing, momentarily increased. If I joined as usual in the different sports, I was slow and unskilful; and, in the war of wit that generally accompanied our games, had not a word to say for myself. We had engaged in a match of skittles. It was my turn to deliver the ball, and I was standing, half pensively, poising it in my hand, when I distinctly heard a soft voice pronounce my name. I started, and turned round, hastily asking who had spoken.

"'Nobody,' replied those around me.

"I insisted that I had heard a woman's voice say 'M——.'

"'Bah! you're dreaming. Play away.'

"Hardly had the ball quitted my hand, when, a second time, I heard my name pronounced in a soft and plaintive tone; but fainter than the former. Again I inquired who called me.

"No one present had heard the sound.

"It struck me that some one of the party was playing a trick upon me, in order to increase my evident melancholy. Nevertheless, under the influence of some impression caused by the plaintive summons, I refused to play any longer, and presently returned alone to Harfleur. On reaching my godmother's house, I was shocked to learn that she had expired during the afternoon, pronouncing my name twice, and breathing her last sigh at the moment of the second summons I had heard. These facts are well known to some twelve or fifteen people at Harfleur and at Quillebœuf, most of whom are still (in 1854) living, and were *I* to live fifty years, the sound and the impression will never depart from my memory." But, of course, these so-called "facts" had their common source in the narrator. Therefore, as a question of evidence, no corroboration is gained by their being known to the dozen or fifteen people still living.

The heroine of our next illustration is Mrs. D——, an English lady.

When, five years ago, Mrs. D—— became a widow, it pleased the brother of her husband to dispute the dispositions of the latter's will—a proceeding the more annoying as the provision made for the widow was already extremely moderate. Ultimately an appeal was made to Chancery. The suit lasted three years, and caused Mrs. D—— the utmost vexation and anxiety, when, at length, the law, finding

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those claims indisputable, which had never been anything else, decided in her favour. Some short time after this, Mrs. D—— was residing in L—— Place, Brighton. A friend, Miss F——, usually shared her bedroom. Both were lying awake one morning about eight o'clock, when Mrs. D——, with some surprise, saw her friend rise up suddenly in bed, clasp her hands, and sink back again on the pillow in a profound sleep. Strange as seemed the movement, it was so evident to Mrs. D—— that her friend was really in a tranquil slumber, that she made no effort to disturb her. A minute elapsed, when the door quietly opened, and there seemed to enter a figure which she believed to be supernatural. She describes her feelings with great minuteness. She owned that, by nature, she was somewhat nervous, yet her impressions, as she afterwards remembered them, on this occasion had not the slightest intermixture of fear. She was conscious of a reverential awe, such as might become the witness of a revelation overruling the accepted law of nature, united with a feeling of intense curiosity as to the object of the apparition. Gliding through the subdued light, the figure had all the appearance, gait, and manner of her deceased husband; until, passing round the room, and sinking down into an arm-chair that stood nearly opposite her bed, turned slightly aside, the figure presented its profile, and Mrs. D—— instantly recognised her connexion, and late opponent, Mr. W. D——, at that time residing in the north. No sooner had the mysterious visitor sat down, than he raised his clasped hands, as in passionate entreaty; but though the spectral lips appeared to move, as in harmony with the gesture, no sound was audible. Three times the hands were lifted in the same earnest manner, then the figure rose, and retired as it came. Some nervous reaction followed its disappearance, for Mrs. D——'s maid appearing a minute or two later, found her mistress trembling violently, and much agitated. Nevertheless, she quickly regained her self-possession, and calmly related what she had seen, both to Miss F—— and the maid, the former being unable to recal anything unusual, and only knowing that she had fallen asleep again, contrary to her own intention.

The succeeding day was cold and stormy, and neither of the friends quitted the house. In the evening some neighbours called. As they were taking leave, one of the party suddenly inquired:

"By-the-by, have you had any recent news from the north? A rumour has reached us, I hardly know how, that Mr. W. D—— is dangerously ill, some say dying, even (but it is only report) *dead*."

"He *is* dead," said Mrs. D——, quietly. "He died this morning."

"You have a telegram?"

"You shall hear."

And Mrs. D—— told her story to her wondering friends.

As quickly as news could reach Brighton, she received intimation of Mr. D——'s death, at the hour of his appearance.

A singular and suggestive statement is, that the scene witnessed by Mrs. D—— at Brighton, was being enacted in the death-chamber of Mr. W. D——, hundreds of miles distant. His mind wandered somewhat, as the end drew near, but perpetually returned to the subject of the unhappy lawsuit. Mistaking his sister for Mrs. D——, he addressed to her the most fervent entreaties for pardon, avowing his bitter regret, condemning his own injustice and covetousness, and declaring that he could not die in peace without her forgiveness. Three times the dying man had raised his hands in the manner she had witnessed, and so expired.

One morning, some years since, the lady of a distinguished London physician was lying in bed at her house in P—— Street. It was daylight, and she was broad awake. The door opened, but Lady ——, concluding it was her maid, did not raise her head, until a remarkable-looking figure, passing between her bed and the window, walked up to the fireplace, when, reflected in the mirror which hung above, Lady —— recognised the features of her stepson, Dr. J. C——, then attached to a foreign embassy. He wore a long night-dress, and carried something on his arm.

"Good Heavens! is that you, John? and in that dress?" cried Lady ——, in the first surprise.

The figure turned slowly round, and she then became aware that the object he carried was a dead child, the body being swathed round and round in a large Indian scarf of remarkable workmanship, which Lady —— had presented to Mrs. J. C—— on the eve of her departure. As she gazed, the outline of the figures became indistinct—invisible. They were lost in the familiar objects of the room. Lady —— neither fainted nor shrieked, nor even rang the bell. She lay down and thought the matter over, resolving to mention it to no one until the return of her husband, then absent in attendance on an illustrious household. His experience would decide whether her physical health offered any solution of the phenomenon. As for its being a dream, it may be taken as an accepted fact that, though nobody is conscious of the act of going to sleep, everybody knows, by the sudden change of scenery, and snapping of the chain of thought alone, when he has awakened.

On hearing her story, her husband immediately looked at his lady's tongue, and felt her pulse. Both organs perfect. Of her nerves he had seen proof. Touching veracity she was truth itself. All his skill could devise nothing better than a recommendation to patience, and to see what came of it. In the mean time the day and hour were noted down, and the next advices from T—— awaited with more than usual interest.

At length they came. Dr. J. C—— informed his father that their child—an only one—had died on such a day (that of the apparition), and that his wife, anxious that it should be laid to rest in the land of its birth, had begged that it

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might be forwarded by the next ship. In due course it arrived, embalmed, but enclosed in a coffin so much larger than was required for the tiny occupant, that the intervening spaces had to be filled up with clothes, &c., while the Indian scarf had been wound, in many folds, around the child's body.

A favourite theory lays it down as law that it requires two minds to produce one ghost. There must be, on the one side, the power of projection of the image—on the other, that of receptivity. Unless the mirror be specially prepared, the object, though at hand, cannot become visible. Yet, here is an example of the substitution of one, certainly in no such condition of special preparedness, for another unquestionably interested.

Colonel M——, who perished, with a party of his men, in the lamentable burning of a transport on her voyage to the Crimea, was well known to the writer. M—— was a man of the coolest nerve, of the most imperturbable self-possession. It was his habit to sit up late, reading, in the chamber of his invalid wife, after the latter had retired to bed. One night, Mrs. M—— having fallen asleep, the door opened, and her maid, Lucy, who had been sent home, ill, to the charge of her friends, a few days before, entered the room. Perfectly conscious, as he declared, from the first, that the object he beheld was not of this world, the steady soldier fixed his eyes on the apparition, careful only to catch its every movement, and impress the whole scene with accuracy on his memory. The figure moved slowly to the side of the bed, gazed with a sad and wistful expression on the sleeper's face, and then, as though reluctantly, died away into the gloom. Colonel M—— then awoke his wife, and related what had occurred. The hour was noted, and proved to be precisely that at which the poor girl had breathed her last, murmuring her mistress's name.

Some twenty years ago, the attention of Sir M—— and Lady S—— was attracted to the friendless position of a little orphan boy. So great was the interest with which he inspired them both that they took entire charge of his future, giving him an excellent education, and, at a proper age, introducing him, on his own earnest request, into the navy. Several years passed, during which the young man advanced rapidly in professional and general knowledge, and was to all appearance on the outset of a prosperous career, when, one rude November night, about half-past twelve, the inmates of Lady S——'s country-house, at which she was then residing, in the absence abroad of Sir M——, were aroused by a loud ringing at the bell. Lady S——, herself awakened, heard the step of her steady old butler moving in person to ascertain who could possibly be arriving at such an hour. A furious gust of wind and rain seemed to burst in with the opening door. A long pause succeeded; after which the butler was heard reascending to his apartment. Lady S——'s curiosity was sufficiently aroused to induce her to summon her maid, who slept in an adjoining room, and send her to question the butler as to the untimely visitor. The answer returned was that, on opening the door, no one was to be seen. The night, though rough, was not very dark, and neither on the gravelled approach, nor on the broad lawns, could be discerned a living thing. But for so many having heard the bell, the butler would have imagined it a dream.

Gradually the household resumed its repose, when, at two o'clock, a second summons startled everybody. There was no mistaking now, for the bell had not ceased its impatient vibrations when the butler, with several other servants, set foot on the stairs. Again the storm dashed into the house, and nothing but the storm. No human shape was visible without, nor were any footprints to be traced on the smooth gravel sheltered by the porch. As they were about to close the door for the second time, Lady S——'s maid appeared on the landing, and beckoned, with a white scared face, to those below.

"Come up—come up, somebody! My lady has seen Mr. D——. I dare not stay there alone!"

It was, in effect, as she had said. Immediately after the group of servants had descended the stairs, Lady S—— had seen the figure of young D—— standing at the foot of her bed. Believing at the moment that it was actually himself, she had accosted him:

"What, Edward, you here?"

The figure immediately disappeared.

News shortly arrived that the young man had perished at sea on that wild November night, between the hours of twelve and two.

The following singular story, belonging, perhaps, more strictly to the realm of dreams than visions, was related to the writer, a short time since, by the lady of a distinguished German diplomatist, now residing at Frankfort:

A friend of the narrator had herself a beloved and attached friend, who died after a brief but severe interval of suffering. A short time after, the spirit of the departed stood, in a dream, by the bedside of her friend, Madame L——, and, with a countenance distorted with indescribable agony, implored the latter to interest in her behalf some "great, strong soul," that might wrestle for her in prayer, and emancipate the afflicted spirit, if it might be, from its present intolerable condition. This condition she described as one of an eager longing to repent, but of perpetual contention with some terrible hindrance, only removable through the means suggested. Much troubled in mind, Madame L——, after some deliberation, resolved to appeal to the strongest and most ardent soul within the range of her acquaintance, in the person of ——, sometimes called the "German Luther." To him, accordingly, she made her appeal. The good man consented, and redeemed his promise with characteristic zeal.

Soon after, the apparition revisited Madame L——. This time with aspect more composed,

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but still marked with traces of suffering and anxiety, and warmly thanking her friend for what had been already done, adjured her, in the most touching language (repeated by the narrator with wonderful power and pathos), to prevail upon the zealous intercessor to engage once more—but *once* again—in prayer, on her behalf. Madame L——, deeply moved, did as she was requested, and wrote at once to ——, who happened at this time to be absent at the distance of two days' journey.

On the third night, the spirit once more stood by her friend's side, with an aspect of complete tranquillity, and surrounded with angelic radiance, declaring that all was now well.

Two days more, and —— burst into Madame L——'s presence, pale, and greatly agitated.

"Woman, woman!" he exclaimed, "what have you done? For no reward that could be proposed to me would I endure such another hour of conflict and agony as that which my compliance with your request has caused me." He then proceeded to relate that, having—though with some reluctance—engaged in prayer as he was desired, he felt as though at once environed by all the powers of evil. Nevertheless, with reeling brain and bursting heart, and all but overcome, he steeled himself to the very utmost, and, struggling on through unutterable mental torture, at length regained his calm. But never more, for *him*, such fearful championship!

Without entering more deeply into discussion of this last example, it may be enough to hint that a solution might probably be found in the collision of two ardent and impressible natures, devoted, for the moment, with intense eagerness to a common object.

A broad distinction, of course, lies between cases of mere cerebral excitement and such as we have before adduced. Hallucinations are as fully recognised, if not quite so common, as colds in the head. Few of those who must have noticed the twitch or toss of the head peculiar to the late eminent counsel, Mr. B——, were aware that it was engendered by a perpetual vision of a raven perched on his left shoulder. A gentleman now residing in Broadway, New York, transacts business daily, under the immediate supervision of his great-uncle, who, in a laced coat and ruffles, occupies a large arm-chair placed expressly to receive the honoured vision.

However, the purpose of this paper being rather to suggest than to demonstrate, enough has been said, if we reiterate the opinion that inquiry is better than ridicule, that the object of relating "ghost stories" is not to propagate idle falsehood, but to elicit philosophic truth; and if there be among our readers one whose nerves are not trustworthy, it may comfort that individual to know that, in our experience, none who have been the subject of what (until we better comprehend their nature) must be called extra-natural visitations, have ever, at the trying moment, experienced the slightest agitation or fear. The inference is that the witnesses themselves are—albeit unconscious of the fact—intimately concerned in the production of those phenomena which they have been hitherto disposed to attribute to influences entirely independent of their own bodily and mental organisation.

OUT IN OREGON.

"Will you sell your horse, Harry, my boy? I'd be glad to give a fair price for him, if you like, and I want a second mount for the Surrey, since old Darius got that sprain. Fifty? Sixty? Well, seventy, then?"

I could not help laughing at my friend's ill-concealed anxiety to become the owner of my steed; but I still shook my head, in sign of negation. Snowball, as I called the pretty coal-black creature, was not for sale.

My friend, Tom Rawlinson, of the Stock Exchange, who prides himself above all things upon his knowledge of horseflesh, rode in silence beside me for a while, and then broke out again.

"I say, King, do oblige me. I've taken a particular fancy to your nag, and I know you're not the man to run me up because I say so. I'll give you any fair price—name it yourself, but let us have a deal. Why, man, you'd get a decent hack for half what I'd give you, and you don't hunt, and Snowball is too good for a stupid jog-trot from Highgate to Austin Friars, and from Austin Friars back to Highgate, six days out of seven."

I was not to be tempted into parting with my faithful dumb friend; but, to divert Tom's mind from his disappointment, I told him as we ambled homeward how I became Snowball's master, and why and how I had grown so fond of him.

"You recollect, Tom, that although we were old friends and schoolfellows, and shared pretty fairly the rice milk and canings at old Podmore's, there was a long hiatus in our intercourse. You, like a lucky fellow, got into a straight groove in life, which has kept you prosperous up to this hour, while I, through circumstances which you partly know, had to rough it on my journey through the world. Canada, Australia, and South America, all saw me in turn, and at the end of several years of hard living and desultory work, I found myself in one of the Western States of the Union, still a poor man.

"It was then that the loud outcry which followed the first discoveries of gold in British Columbia reached my ears. I do not know whether I should have given it any heed, but for the advice of one to whom I was under obligations for unexpected kindness, and on whose experience I placed much reliance. This was a corn-dealer in Chicago, whose book-keeper I then was, and whose good wife had nursed me, a lonely stranger, through one of the swamp fevers which are not uncommon in that 'Venice of the West,' where the houses rest on piles driven into the muddy alluvial soil.

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"'I shall be sorry to lose you, Mr. King,' said the worthy man, 'and if you care to remain and keep my books, well and good. But I think you're just the man to thrive up there. Climate's healthy, rowdies scarcer than in California, placers are rich, for my own brother's written me word what he's seen, and a sober man with good muscle and brain power, and used to shifts, can get on nicely. The journey's a wild one, for sure, but you've cut your eye-teeth. So, if a loan of money, and an introduction to my brother out there——'

"What could I do but squeeze the kind old factor's hand, thank him for his good will, and accept the offer? You needn't arch your eyebrows, Tom, and look incredulous, as if you thought an American must always overreach those he meets, and never, under any circumstances, do a generous thing. I have met with plenty of kindness across the Atlantic, ay, and confidence, too, though my tale will prove to you before I have done that the States are not peopled with angels.

"The corn-merchant lent me five hundred dollars. I had saved three hundred more. So, for an emigrant, I was by no means ill provided. One grand mistake I made at the outset. My best course would have been to follow the stream, to take the Panama route, and go up to Vancouver and Victoria in one of the coasting steamers from California. Instead of this, I chose the cheaper but more perilous overland route, and after procuring a plain outfit of homespun and blanketing, high digger's boots of greased hide, poncho, tin cullender, knife, rifle, and pistols, with a few tools and other necessaries, I travelled to Lecompton, in Kansas, there to make arrangements for my further journey.

"This appeared likely to prove a more difficult enterprise than I had anticipated. A war of extermination—that long cruel war that sometimes smoulders for a while, but never comes to an end—was going on in Oregon between the settlers and the natives. Many trappers, and more emigrants, had been cut off by the Indians, inspired by cupidity and smarting under a sense of bitter wrong. The northern prairies were the scene of many dreadful outrages, alternately committed by whites and aborigines, and vague but shocking rumours reached the frontier district in which I was a sojourner. Still the glittering bait of Columbian gold was too potent to fail of its effect, and numbers beside myself came crowding into Lecompton, eagerly inquiring for means of transport, and listening with a fearful interest to every wild story of the half-explored region before them.

"The greater part of the emigrants were of American origin, some of them Western farmers driving their own huge waggons in which their families sat commodiously enough behind the team of strong northern horses or big Kentucky mules, while many were from the New England States, and not a few from Europe. The latter, Germans and Irish for the most part, with a small sprinkling of English and Welsh, were by far the poorest, the most ignorant and helpless, of the party. Their scanty resources, whether brought from their distant homes or hoarded from the gains of a term of service among the Atlantic cities, were fast becoming exhausted, and the El Dorado of their dreams seemed as remote as ever. Many of these poor people, ill versed in geography, had been led by steam-boat agents and others to believe that the gold country lay within easy reach of the last river-side quay or railway station; and they broke out into passionate grief or indignation on learning how grossly they had been deceived. In this emergency aid arrived. A Yankee speculator set up an office in Lecompton, issued a flaming prospectus, and advertised his projects in the border newspapers. Dr. Ignotus Fieschi Smith announced himself as at once a capitalist and one of the earliest pioneers of the Indian territory. He offered the help of his means and his experience to intending emigrants, and was willing to supply information gratis, and to contract, on 'absurdly trifling and egregiously unremunerative terms,' for the conveyance of families and goods across the plains and mountains of the wild west. Dr. I. F. Smith—thus ran his printed promises—would 'guarantee absolute immunity from danger, suffering, or privation,' he would furnish 'the most intelligent and hardy guides and hunters,' would propitiate, elude, or discomfit the warlike tribes, would feed everybody, guard everybody, and convey the whole multitude to their journey's end, safe and sound, for a very slender pecuniary consideration.

"There is an amazing amount of gullibility in the United States, after all, for no 'spec' is too audacious or glaring for acceptance on the part of at least a portion of the public. So it proved on the present occasion. A great many emigrants entered into a contract with the doctor to convey them to Lytton, on the Fraser River, in British Columbia. I was among the number. I can truly say that I never gave unlimited credence to the tempting statements of our Yankee Mentor. But I fell into the error of imagining that where so much of superfluity was proffered, the performance must at any rate comprise all that was essential. As for the Irish emigrants, they were quite fascinated by the speculator's graces of deportment. I did not, personally, share in this admiration for the doctor. He was a thin cadaverous person, with hard features, a yellow face, and a backbone of eel-like suppleness. But it must be owned that his conversation was very persuasive, amusing, and full of anecdote.

"Dr. Smith paid me the compliment of ultra-frankness, candidly avowing that with a man of the world like myself it was useless to keep up the impression which served well enough for the rest.

"'*You* see, mister,' said he, 'well enough that it can't pay an individual like myself to carry these Paddies and Dutchmen to your British placers just for the few dollars agreed upon. Well, sir, and what then? Why, I. F.

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Smith has two strings to his bow. He means to get a big claim, and he's been long enough prospecting in California to know stuff that pays, when he sees it; and then he'll import machinery, and get up a regular grand quartz-crushin', steam-power washin', company. And these emigrants, who'll soon have spent their last dime in provisions, will be glad enough to work for the new company, and as they know me, and as I know them, we'll soon come to terms, and there's labour ready to hand.'

"'Ignotus is a queer given name, ain't it?' he said on another occasion; 'the minister to Salem poorhouse, he invented it for me, I guess. I was picked up in the streets of Salem, wrapped in an old shawl, the ugliest baby in the Union, I've heard tell. Not knowing what to call me, they wrote me Smith, and as it was just then that the chap tried to shoot the old King of the French, Fieschi was tacked to me, as well as Ignotus. Well, I growed. I've tried most callings. I'm a real doctor of Augusta College, and here's my diploma to prove it. I'm young enough yet, and I mean to be President afore I die.'

"The start at last took place, and a motley throng it was that poured out of the streets of Lecompton and struck into the renowned 'Oregon trail.' It had not been necessary for the doctor to provide means of conveyance for all the passengers. The farmers, as I have said, drove their own waggons, which formed carriages by day and tents by night for the accommodation of their families. But the Europeans, and many of the New Englanders, were of course destitute of such vehicles, and for them Dr. Smith had provided transport. Several waggons had been purchased or built, and these were crammed with women and children, with clothes, food, cooking utensils, bedding, and necessaries of various kinds. These waggons were variously horsed. Some were dragged by broad-footed strong-limbed steeds from the North; others were drawn by mules; one or two were set in motion by the exertions of a string of Indian ponies, piebald or brindled for the most part, and looking almost rat-like in their diminutiveness when compared with the big-boned importations from Kentucky. It was an understood thing that the able-bodied men were to walk, and to assist in the management of the teams; but those who could afford to pay for such a luxury as a pony were duly provided, the doctor having made an advantageous barter for some half-tamed animals brought in by an Indian half-breed, and I was one of this band of the privileged.

"Let me try to explain how the staff of the expedition was composed. First of all, there was Dr. I. F. Smith, physician in ordinary, contractor, and manager of the community. Then there were two satellites of the doctor's, whom he called his 'mates' by word of mouth, but who in the prospectus had been euphemised into 'assistant deputies'—Hiram Hall and Ben Tubber. There was a cook, a French creole, a gay laughing fellow, who played the fiddle, and who was the life and soul of the caravan when a halt was called; there were the cook's boy, a mulatto lad and runaway slave, and seven or eight teamsters. Besides these we had for guides and hunters the Indian half-breed who had sold the ponies, two savage kinsmen of his who accompanied him, and a promise of two or three more, who were to meet us at Yellowstone Rock, out on the prairies of the Platte. So far, so good.

"There were plenty of weapons belonging to the party; but we were far from trusting to our own valour in case of assault. Another caravan was to set out nearly at the same time, from another point on the frontier, bound for Oregon, and escorted by dragoons. We were to join this caravan, and travel under the protection of its soldiers, so far as our roads lay together; and when they diverged, the doctor assured us that the most dangerous part of the journey would be over; further, that the United States officer in command would not refuse to detach a party to guard us to the British borders.

"We set off confidently, gay with hopes of the bright fortunes in store for us in the far North-West. As we passed out of Lecompton, some of the idlers gave us a cheer in answer to the hurrahs of the Irish, the 'hoch hochs' of the Germans, and the shrill clamour of the women. But I noticed that one or two bearded old trappers, rough men of the wilderness, clad in greasy skins, and as grim and rude as bears masquerading in human shape, eyed us with a sort of scornful pity, and shook their grizzled heads as they watched the train of waggons rattle merrily by.

"The first part of the long journey gave us little to complain of. Our progress, to be sure, was tediously slow, but for this we were prepared; food was plentiful, and there was no danger, and but little fatigue. We were soon across the frontier, and out of the territory of the United States, but we found the plains of the Platte well watered, abounding in grass for our cattle, and brushwood to make our fires when we camped, and free from hostile savages. For the latter, indeed, we had little reason to care much, for we had met and joined the other caravan at Marysville, beyond Fort Leavenworth, and we were under the protection of a strong detachment of dragoons, hardened to the rugged warfare of the borders. Our principal trouble was in fording the numerous feeders of the Platte river, on which occasion the waggons were apt to stick in the slimy blue mud, until a number of men, waist deep in slush and water, literally put their shoulders to the wheels, and heaved the huge machine up the yielding bank. One or two of the children sickened of ague, and one was bitten by a snake; but Dr. Smith showed genuine skill in attending the sufferers, and set them right by prompt and vigorous measures, thereby winning more good will and admiration from every woman in the party.

"The doctor's satellites were by no means as popular as the doctor. Hiram Hall and

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Ben Tubber were a pair of the most truculent ruffians in all America, and it seemed a marvel to me what bond of union could exist between them and the soft-spoken pliant Ignotus, who gave me the idea of anything but a fighting man. Hall was a black-browed shaggy Missourian, athletic in person, and forbidding in countenance; his character was more than dubious, and he was reputed to have been one of the fiercest of those 'border ruffians' who had afflicted Kansas during the pro-slavery riots. Tubber was a powerfully-built Georgian, who prided himself on his prowess in 'rough and tumble,' and who boasted to me one evening, after a fourth tumbler, that he had 'gouged nigh twenty eyes,' and would back himself to 'do the trick neatly, all thumb and forefinger,' with any one in the United States. This engaging pair, who wore revolvers and bowie-knives in their belts, and who were never seen without their rifles, were nicknamed the doctor's bull-dogs.

"The teamsters were of very various characters. Two of them were lathy dark-complexioned Missourians, with reckless mien, and whisky written on their blotched faces; but still they were bold muscular men, who knew their trade. Two were mere lads, recent draughts from some Alleghany farm, and quite raw to prairie life; the others were flaxen-headed Germans, well-meaning enough, but very inexpert where horses were in question. The cook and his boy were general favourites, but the guides hardly pleased me. In the first place, even after they were joined by three other Indians at the Yellowstone Rock, they brought in no fresh meat.

"They made no pretence of hunting, but lounged about at every hut, sleeping in the shade of the cotton-wood trees, smoking and drinking, prowling about the waggons, and begging for tobacco and spirits, but never sallying far beyond the camp. When remonstrated with by those who began to grow tired of pickled pork for breakfast, dinner, and supper, the half-breed replied:

"'What for hunt here? No game here, so near settlement. All frightened away. Hunt when far off. You very foolish mans—you emigrees. Gib Rising Sun some tobacco, and he get you plenty of deer meat presently.'

"My second reason for not liking the half-breed and his red relations was a mere question of physiognomy. I did not like Rising Sun, in particular, for the same reason assigned in the poem for an aversion to Dr. Fell. He had the long slanting Mongolian eyes—the true feline eyes of his race—and as for his high cheek-bones, large mouth, and lank hair, these were such as all the aborigines possessed. But with him they had an especial treacherous crafty look, or so I fancied, and I hinted as much to the doctor, who merely laughed, and said the man had been well recommended.

"Nothing worthy of notice occurred till we crossed the Rocky Mountain, which we did by way of Fremont's Pass. Up to that time we had certainly seen bands of roving Indians, dim against the evening sky, a sort of distant vision of spears and blanket-clad horsemen; but they had been mere Pawnees or Foxes, tribes which were in a kind of vassalage to the white man. At the foot of the pass, however, an imposing cavalcade of Crows arrived, and seemed to design an attack. For some hours they kept prancing and caracoling around us, uttering loud shouts, and shaking their lances and robes at us, with many a barbarous gesture of defiance or threat, but they took care to keep out of rifle range, and our camp was too well watched at night to allow them an opportunity of stampeding our quadrupeds. The officer in command of the dragoons valued these Crows very lightly, but when we got over the pass, and into the country usually traversed by war parties of the Blackfeet tribe, he grew more serious, and his vigilance was unremitting.

"Our supply of meat now began to run short, for some of the barrels which had been stored up, and which were duly labelled with the words, 'Prime Pickled Pork,' proved to be half empty, and to contain little more than garbage, unfit for human consumption. Some of the flour and biscuits, too, turned out to be mouldy, and full of weevils; and while the doctor laid the blame on the storekeeper who had supplied the provisions, many were disposed to lay the blame on the doctor.

"Violent reproaches were also lavished on the laziness of the guides, and the military officer was appealed to to exert his authority in compelling the half-breed and his dusky kindred to hunt for us, in terms of the agreement. The officer spoke tartly, the doctor suavely, and the red-skinned attendants of the caravan were induced to sally forth; but they rarely brought in anything beyond a half-grown deer or a wild turkey, and excused themselves on the ground of the buffalo herds having been driven off by Indians.

"We found the grass much less plentiful and succulent, to the west of the mountains. It was a stony region which we were traversing, and the animals lost flesh and strength from the difficulty of picking up sufficient nutriment among the boulders and pebbles. Over vast tracts, too, extended a carpet of charred turf and white ashes, where the grass and flowery weeds had been wantonly set on fire by careless emigrants or roving savages. But when we got into the well-watered region on the banks of Lewis River, we found verdant pastures enough, and our jaded quadrupeds recovered their strength and sleekness.

"At Fort Boisé, on Lake River, our leader, Dr. Smith, suddenly announced that our road no longer lay in the same direction as that of the Oregon party. This was a great disappointment to myself and some others, who had begun to imagine that we should journey on with the other caravan, under military protection, almost as far as the British possessions. But Dr. Smith had decided that we should here quit the main Oregon trail, and strike off into the mountainous

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region to the westward: steering our course by Mount Jefferson and Mount Hood, and crossing the Columbia a little below the point where it is joined by John Dyer's River. This was certainly the most direct route, the usual Oregon road being very circuitous; but it led through an unknown tract of country, and its adoption deprived us of our escort.

"Fierce remonstrances and a long debate ensued, but the doctor was obstinate. He believed, or affected to believe, the assurances of the Indian guides, that the western region was safe, easy of access, and abounding in grass, water, and game. Indeed, some of us shrewdly suspected that this rumoured plenty of buffalo-meat, salmon, and venison was the main attraction in the eyes of our chief; for it would save his stores, which were nearly exhausted, and afford cheap sustenance for the hungry folks under his charge. Be that as it might, Dr. I. F. Smith was peremptory. In vain the officers, both the lieutenant commanding the dragoons and the captain who was governor of the fort, advised him to "keep on along with the Oregon emigrants, by way of Grande Ronde and the Walla Walla." He was deaf to all persuasion, and peevishly informed us that we might leave him if we chose, but that it was for him to select the route. It was a melancholy morning for us when, after two days' rest at Fort Boisé, we saw the Oregon caravan start, waggon after waggon, with the dragoons riding in front and rear, their arms and accoutrements glancing in the sun. Under their guardianship we had travelled safely for hundreds of weary miles, and a gloom that seemed prophetic of coming evil settled upon us as the last horseman vanished among the swells of the prairie.

"The commandant of Fort Boisé could not spare us a guard. His garrison consisted almost wholly of invalids or convalescent soldiers of infantry, dragoons, and rifle-rangers. These pallid veterans, most of whom were suffering under wearing intermittent fevers caught by long exposure on the swampy plains, were well able to man the stockades and crumbling earthen curtain of the little fort, but active service seemed beyond them.—I say seemed, because these poor sick soldiers were capable of much more exertion, under the influence of generous feeling, than would have appeared possible.

"We set forth on our lonely westward march. The doctor affected to rely implicitly on the knowledge and skill of the guides, but there were alarmists who noticed that a strange sort of understanding appeared to exist between Dr. Smith, the half-breed, and the two 'deputies.' These men had grown undisguisedly surly and insolent since the departure of the escort, while there was a sinister expression in the half-breed's cunning eyes as he pointed his finger northward, and spoke of the 'plenty grass, plenty meat' up there. Our journey was now very difficult. The grazing was bad, the springs were brackish, and we had to travel plains where the white salt crystals lay strewn like sand in an Arabian desert, dazzling our eyes as the sun glared upon us. Then there were innumerable slimy creeks to be crossed, where much exertion was needed to push or drag the waggons out of the deep mud. Worse than all, our provisions began to fail. The public stores were nearly spent, and inroads had been made on those supplies which a few of the more thoughtful farmers had taken with them in the waggons. Sickness appeared among us, and five children and a woman died of fever, while many suffered more or less in health from the effects of constant wettings and privations.

"Then the doctor showed the cloven foot. On the third day after leaving Fort Boisé he demanded payment of the second moiety of our passage money. I ought to have told you that, before starting, we paid down one half of the doctor's demand: the rest being to be paid, according to stipulation, on our arrival in British Columbia. Thus his sudden call for a second instalment was not only a very suspicious proceeding, but a direct breach of agreement. There was a warm dispute, for the doctor was by this time unpopular. His varnish of gentleness and politeness had long been rubbed off, and his hard grasping nature stood revealed. Besides, we were all half fed, weary and sickly, and it was but that very morning that one of the poor German women had been buried under the prairie turf, in a shallow grave scooped by the hands of her husband and son. The doctor's claim, then, came with a very ill grace, and so we flatly told him.

"But we found out, to our cost, the use of the doctor's human bull-dogs. Hall and Tubber came forward into the conclave, bristling like boars at bay, and armed to the teeth.

"'Jest look here, chaps,' said Hall, cocking his rifle, 'I'm not a man for many speeches, I ain't. You jest pay up the shiners, or I'm scrunched if we won't kick every tarnation emigrant, Britisher, or Dutch, or Irish, out of our waggons, and set 'em afoot on the parara, to pad the hoof to the diggins. As for you, western citizens, your traps is your own, but the grub's ourn, the Injuns air our Injuns, and if you don't like us, jest fish for yourselves. If any gentleman ain't satisfied, hyar's a convincing argument. He won't need two, I guess.'

"The ruffian tapped the brown barrel of his rifle and ran his wicked eye over our party, while the women set up a scream and clung to their husbands' arms, as if to restrain them. There were several present who had guns and knives, and who were no cowards; and at one time I really thought a bloody scuffle would have ensued. But Hall and Tubber were backed by the two Missourian teamsters; the doctor himself, though his face was very sallow and his eye unsteady, had turned out with rifle and revolver; and the guns and tomahawks of the six guides were plainly ready to be employed against us. The Irish and Germans were unarmed, or nearly so, while the western farmers could not resist the entreaties of

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their wives, who dreaded a sanguinary struggle, in which even victory must be fatal.

"The dollars were reluctantly told out, and the doctor received the entire remuneration for his services, while yet Columbia was far remote. I do not know, I never shall know now, what was the original project of this unscrupulous man.

"After another tedious day's march we had encamped on a plain of short crisp herbage, nearer to the rolling range of the Blue Mountains than we had previously attained. The guides had brought in a quantity of bull meat; they had fallen in, I believe, with a disabled buffalo that had been lamed by an Indian arrow, and which had been an easy prey. For once, we had supped well, and we settled ourselves to sleep, some under the waggon-tilts, the rest around the fires, the horses being picketed, and the care of keeping watch being left, as usual, to the sharp-eared Indian guides. The dews were heavy, lying in big beaded drops on buffalo-robe and blanket, and I gladly accepted an invitation to sleep under the waggon-roof of one of the Indiana farmers, big Simon Davis, a very good specimen of his sturdy class. Davis was a widower, having lost his wife but a short time, and his whole affections centred in his only child, a fine dark-eyed boy of six years old, over whom he watched with a care and patience wonderful in so rugged and bluff a man. The farmer had been for a fight when Dr. Smith extorted the second moiety of our payment from us, and he was by far the most resolute and respected member of the caravan. Well, we were all asleep, when I was awakened by the neighing and snorting of a beautiful coal-black horse, a mustang, which the farmer had bought from a trapper at Fort Boisé, and which had been captured out of a wild herd far south. This animal, kindly used, had become very affectionate and docile, and Davis had picketed it close to his waggon. He generally rode it for a short time every day, merely to pace it, meaning it for the riding of his young son, little Lafayette Davis, when he should be a couple of years older: for it was unfit to bear the father's weight.

"The mustang neighed and snorted, and I awoke with a sense of danger, and thrusting my head out, saw by the light of the expiring fire a dark form hovering around Snowball's heels, and apparently trying to reach the picket-ropes: a task rendered difficult by the furious way in which the gallant horse lashed out at the intruder.

"'Hulloa!' I cried, 'who are you, there? What do you want?'

"No answer was returned, until I called out that I would fire unless my challenge were replied to. Then the guttural voice of the half-breed Indian called out, cautiously,

"'Hist! no harm. Rising Sun walk sentry. Him tink hoss get loose from heel ropes, dat all. Good night!'

"And off the semi-savage went with his noiseless mocassined tread. Davis awoke, and sleepily asked what was amiss, then growled, and sank back into slumber.

"In the morning there was a great outcry. Treachery had been at work. We had been basely abandoned by our precious Mentor, his confederates from Missouri and Georgia, and the Indians. More than this, the beasts of draught were gone, every hoof of them had vanished. Horse and mule had been stolen away, not merely those animals which belonged to the contractor, but the teams which the richer among us had brought from distant farms. Only Simon Davis's beautiful black horse remained in camp, preserved, no doubt, by my opportune wakefulness on the previous night; but some distance off we saw a spotted mustang quietly cropping the short grass, and this, by the broken lariat about his neck, had probably escaped from the 'caballada' which I. F. Smith and his accomplices carried off with them. Further scrutiny showed that the store waggon had been stripped of clothes, medicines, arms and ammunition, and, in fact, of all that could be easily packed up and carried away. The trail of the deserters, trending due south, was plainly to be seen, but pursuit was hopeless, even had there been any use in overtaking so hardened a set of villains as our false allies.

"The screams, passionate outcries, and sorrowful forebodings that now resounded among us, made a perfect Babel of confusion. The women were loud in their wrath and fear, the men angry and perplexed, the children querulous and hungry. We had very little food—a few pounds of sorry flour and worse biscuit, and a small quantity of meat. What was to be done? Could we return on foot to Fort Boisé? The strong men might do so, but the feeble, the young, and the sick, must perish on the way.

"Big Simon Davis took no part in the idle clamour of the rest. He sidled quietly up to me.

"'Britisher,' said he, 'I don't think you're no chicken-hearted chap, an' so I'll tell you truth. I'm kinder skeared.'

"I stared at this confession, for my burly companion was a person of tried courage.

"'Kinder skeared,' repeated Davis, dropping his voice, 'and that not so much because the rascal Smith has skedaddled with the teams, as for what I see, jest now, when I took a turn round the outside of camp. Mister, I seed the print of a mocassined foot stamped into a bit of soft mould, clear as if 'twas the American eagle in the sealwax on a lawyer's letter.'

"'What of *that?*' said I, surprised. 'Our scoundrel guides wore mocassins, and——'

"'Stranger, I ain't a blind mole,' interrupted Davis; 'our guides war Osage Injuns, warn't they? and strapping redskins as all their nation? Their mocassins war soled with buffler parflêche, and all stitched up with porkypine quills and beads, smart as a squaw could work 'em. *This* foot war small; the leather mout have been deer, or mout have been pronghorn, but 'twar plain and hairy, raw hide, I guess. I tracked it

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up, and I found the hoofmarks of an unshod horse, down by some bushes. Shoshonies hev' been scoutin' nigh us, mister.'

"'Shoshonies?'

"'Ay, that's what they call themselves; the cruel Snake Injuns. That war a Snake's mocassin, I tell 'ee. Some cussed war party's hard by, and their loping spies hev seen the doctor vampoose, and know our helpless condition. May I never,' he suddenly exclaimed, 'but here the red beggars come!'

"Far off on the prairie appeared something like a herd of wild horses galloping towards us, for no riders were visible: a circumstance which drew a grim smile from the tall farmer.

"''Tis a stale trick, that,' said he, bitterly; 'every darned brave of the lot is hangin' at his nag's flank, clingin' by the mane like a bat to a bough, and with jest one foot over the mustang's withers. We'll see enough of their painted faces afore we finish.'

"Then, uplifting his voice, he thundered out the alarm call:

"'To arms, men, to arms! Don't ye see the Injuns? Quick, Western-men, with your rifles, and recklect every grain of powder's preciouser nor gold dust, short of ammynition as we are. So—no use screechin', you gals and women (for a shrill cry had broken from the females of the party), we must fight for our scalps.'

"After the first moment of panic, nine-tenths of the men, and even several of the women, showed no lack of sense and courage. All the available weapons were brought out and got ready, the waggons were dragged and pushed until they formed a circular fortification, proof at any rate against the first rush of the mounted foe. The children were placed under shelter, and an active lad among the teamsters went out and caught the grazing horse, just as it threw up its head with a frightened air and was about to gallop off.

"You must not expect from me a detailed and minute account of what followed. I only remember what seems a hideous nightmare of frightful painted faces, brandished weapons, shields, lances, and tomahawks, the trampling and rearing of horses, the hurtle of arrows, and the hiss of rifle-balls. I remember the dreadful cry of the Indians, repeated again and again as they renewed their charge, and a sense of something like disappointment on my part that this horrid war-whoop was not *more* horrid, since it had been to me a subject of curiosity from childhood. And I recollect the oaths and cheers of our men, the shrieks and prayers of our women, the dust, smoke, flashes, and volleys, and that we fought hard, and drove off the yelling painted pack, again and again.

"We beat them, for the time at least. Seven grim bodies, smeared with paint and charcoal dust, lay stark upon the prairie, and five wounded horses were rolling over in the death-struggle, before the red robbers fell back. On our side we had many slight wounds, but only one death. A poor child, a little fair-haired German girl, had been pierced through the neck by a barbed arrow that went through the tilt of the waggon where she lay trembling beside her mother. The wound would have been mortal, even had surgical aid been at hand; the poor thing bled to death, while her parents almost raved in their entreaties to all present to save her.

"The Indians had not done with us yet. They hovered about like vultures, greedy for prey. Warned by their loss, they did not again try to storm our camp, but harassed us with endless stratagems and alarms, while awaiting the sure progress of starvation to reduce us. We had to fight for the water of the creek, and it cost us two lives before we remained masters of the deep stream, fringed by bushes, near which we had halted. We kept a vigilant watch by night, and our feverish slumbers were sure to be broken by the war-whoop. Several were badly hurt by the arrows that hailed on us every day; but the worst infliction was that of hunger. Our scanty food waned. The children cried for nourishment; but even they had to be severely stinted, and men and women grew pale, gaunt, and hollow-eyed, till our camp was as a camp of spectres. And still the hideous merciless savages thirsted for our blood and our plunder, and beset us like wolves. They were in no want. They hunted, and brought in plenty of game, and would tauntingly show us venison steaks and wild turkeys, impaled on the points of their lances, and then, with ferocious gestures, would draw the scalping-knife around their own uplifted hair. They were squat and low of stature, almost dwarfish in comparison with the tall tribes to the eastward; but these accursed Snakes showed no lack of strength or hardihood. And we knew too well how fearful it would be to fall *alive* into their hands.

"It was settled, as the sole last chance, that two messengers should mount the two remaining horses, and try to reach Fort Boisé and obtain a rescue. It was a desperate service, for the mounted Indians beset the path, while the captain of the fort and his ailing garrison seemed little likely to render prompt help. But it was a chance, and a chance not to be slighted. The food was all but gone. The powder was nearly spent. There was no other hope. The messengers were chosen. It was needful that they should be good horsemen. It was also needful that they should be light weights. The only good riders, in fact, besides big Simon Davis, were myself, and Triptolemus Nutkins, a little withered Yankee jockey who had ridden many a match in the North, and who had taken a fancy to make his fortune in Columbia. It was agreed that Trip Nutkins, as the lightest, should mount the spotted mustang, and I the black.

"Then it was that Davis gently twitched me by the sleeve, and addressed me with a timid hesitation quite uncommon to him:

"'Britisher, we're gone coons. Even if you git through safe, help won't hardly find

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us livin'. Twenty charges left, and no more, as I'm a sinner. I don't care over-much for myself. The Injuns will find my old bones tough pickin'. But the women—well! 'twill be soon over. Look here, sir, I'm that anxious about my little Laff—the child—I can't but ax a favour. Will ye take him with you? I know he'll hamper you some, but he's brave for a little chap of six; he'll hold fast and never cry. His weight's triflin'; but if you hev to fight, I don't disguise as Laff will hamper you. Still, do save him, and the very last word old Simon Davis says shall be, God bless and reward you, stranger!'

"There were tears in the father's bold eyes, and his voice shook in a manner very foreign to its usual manly tone. But the brave fellow was quite unselfish in his fears, which were wholly for the child. He had forgotten himself. I wrung his muscular hand.

"'Trust the boy to me,' said I; 'that is, if you really think it best.'

"'Harkye,' he continued, 'nothing for nothing. Snowball's your own from this minit. You've always consaited hevin' that hoss, and, win or lose, you shall keep him in remembrance of Simon Davis.'

"It was no easy matter to coax little Laff Davis into a quiet consent to the flight. The little fellow was my very good friend; but he had got an inkling of what was afoot, and he clung sobbing to his giant father's neck, declaring that he would not go unless 'daddy went too.' It was a painful parting. The tears ran down the farmer's sun-browned cheeks, but he dashed them away with the back of his rough hand, and lifted the boy on to the saddle-bow, bidding him hold tight, and be good, and do as Mr. King told him.

"Nutkins was already in the saddle, surrounded by anxious wild-eyed women, holding up their children and beseeching him to take some little Ellen or Gertrude along with him to the fort and safety. But the jockey was deaf to their cries, not from hardness of heart, but sheer conviction that such a burden must lead to capture and destruction. He was past middle age, and quite weak, though a superb horseman, and altogether unfit to carry a restless screaming child through so terrible a ride as lay before us. As for myself, I took off my cravat and tied little Lafayette fast to my belt, looked to my knife and pistol (the rifle I had abandoned), and asked Nutkins if he were ready.

"'Ready, mister!'

"Out we went, with a rush, from between the sheltering waggons, which had as yet screened our proceedings from the wild besiegers. The Indians were gathered around their fires, about half a mile off, their horses tethered and grazing, every horse with the hide saddle on his back, and a lance stuck in the turf beside him. We got out unseen, and headed for Fort Boisé.

"'Steady, mister,' said Nutkins, who was pale but collected; 'spare the hosses all we can. The niggers don't see us. We've got a goodish start, so let's canter quiet.'

"On we went at an easy hand-gallop, and perhaps we might have got off unperceived, had not some of those left behind given way to their feelings in a most luckless cheer of encouragement.

"'Cuss the noise; they'll be after us, now,' said the jockey, peering over his shoulder; and the words were hardly uttered before a yell, loud and fierce enough for the throats of a drove of wolves, was heard, and we saw the Indians leaping on horseback and dashing madly in pursuit of us. Fifty wild riders were in our rear. The fort was far ahead. It was a terrible race for life and death that ensued. Nutkins proved a valuable companion. His experience suggested what I should never have thought of.

"'Keep a tight rein,' he cried; 'hold your beast together, Britisher. Beat 'em by jockeyship. Do, Mr. King, keep a turn of speed in your hoss, and we'll beat them rowdies yet, for see how they flog and jag the reins, and a'most leap off in their hurry. The blood-thirsty muffs! They'll blow their beasts afore they go a brace of miles.'

"Instinctively I felt that the man was right. Still, it was an awful sensation to feel that the Indians were gaining on us, to look back and see their excited gestures, as they shook their spears and rattled their shields, while every now and then they beat their open hands upon their mouths as they uttered the hideous war-whoop. At last they got within a hundred yards, and an arrow whistled past us.

"Slip ahead, mister! No hurry, but hustle on quicker!" cried Nutkins, and we heard the yells of the disappointed savages as we forged ahead. We got clean out of sight of our pursuers, and saw nothing of them for a long time. Nutkins was triumphant, but I entertained strong doubts as to the chase being really over. And, indeed, more than an hour later, as we forded a creek, we heard the whoop of our barbarous foes, and twenty arrows were discharged at us, while the hoof-strokes resounded thick and fast on the turf of the prairie. We were in no light danger for the next half hour. The savages pressed us hard. Nutkins was slightly hurt by two shafts, a third arrow struck into the fleshy part of my right arm, causing a slight throb of pain but doing no severe injury, while another grazed Lafayette's cheek, just drawing blood. The gallant little fellow behaved very well. He never sobbed or screamed, but held fast to my belt with his small hands, and scarcely winced when the arrow touched him. We had hard work, swimming two rivers before we were free from our savage foes, but at last we saw them rein up, and heard their farewell yell of vexation.

"We had yet a rough and long ride to the fort; we had missed the direct route, and had to shape our course by bearings; but at last, after twenty hours in the saddle, we came in sight of the moss-covered stockade and shingled roofs of

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Fort Boisé. By this time even Snowball was in a sad state, covered with mud and foam, and with drooping head and quivering flanks. As for the other horse, he was so utterly done up that he fell about a mile from the outpost, and Nutkins had to walk the rest of the way. Both the jockey and I were very weary and worn, but I was glad to find that fatigue had proved a kind nurse, and that for some hours the child, quite exhausted, had been asleep.

"Our arrival created a great sensation, and when the lonely garrison of that little place heard that Christian men and women in sore distress were calling on them for help, they responded nobly to the summons. Captain Watkins, a grizzled, disappointed old officer, but of sterling stuff, as events proved, was at first much perplexed.

"'What on earth are we to do, doctor?' said he to the regimental surgeon; "out of ninety men of all arms, there are but twenty fit for duty. There are horses enough, if we take the waggon-teams on their way back to Fort Leavenworth, but the men! Yet, I'll go, if it's with a corporal's guard!'

"The surgeon considered awhile, then tapped his forehead briskly.

"'Our men are moped here,' said he, 'and nerves are queer things. This is a call might move the dead. I'll go to the infirmary and tell the lads there are women and children in danger a few miles off, beset by Indians, and you shall see what follows.'

"And, wonderful to tell, out of seventy invalids, fifty-five volunteered for instant service. Pale, gaunt, and tottering, but with bright eyes and faces elate with courage, the bold fellows came up one by one to report themselves as 'fit for duty' to the captain. I felt my own eyes moisten as I looked upon the simple chivalry of these poor soldiers, for the most part foreigners in American pay, who staggered from their very sick-beds to save those they had perhaps never exchanged a word with.

"Many who volunteered were too weak for such a ride, but at last a force of about fifty well-armed men set off on horseback. They were led by Captain Watkins, and guided by myself, the jockey being left behind, as too exhausted for more toil. Little Laff Davis was left at the fort, in charge of a good-humoured Scotchwoman, the wife of the pay-sergeant.

"Much time was necessarily lost; our march was not so rapid as we could have wished, for the waggon horses were heavy animals, and the infantry soldiers not very expert riders. Our progress was therefore slow."

"But you got there in time, eh?" exclaimed Tom Rawlinson, excitedly; "you set things to rights, and gave the Indians a lesson, surely?"

"No, Tom, we were too late. Too late by many hours. No living soul was left to tell the tale, but the ashes of the waggons were nearly cold, and we guessed that, the ammunition being spent, the camp had been forcibly entered immediately on the return of the party that had chased us. Doubtless the Indians struck quickly, lest a rescuing force should arrive to wrest the prey from them. The horrid work was complete. Everything portable had been carried off. The waggons had been set on fire, and the people—happiest those that died fighting, like poor Simon Davis, whose body, dreadfully disfigured, we found in the centre of a trampled patch of ground, marked by gory footsteps and torn turf. Yes, all had perished, some in fight, and some by torture, I fear, for the bodies that lay around, stripped and gashed by the knife, had been partially consumed by fire. Women, children, strong and weak, old and young, the butchers had spared none, and the mutilated corpses alone were left on the blackened turf. Tom! it sickens me to think of it, and I saw the bronzed soldiers' cheeks blanch, as they gazed on the hideous sight, and heard many a muttered vow of vengeance—vows generally well kept in those stern frontier wars. But the Indians were beyond reach of pursuit for the time. They had carried off their own dead.

"And now, Tom, I see the Whittington milestone, and we shall soon part company, so I must be brief. Little Laff Davis was adopted by Captain Watkins, who took a great fancy to him, is giving him a good education at Chicago, and promises to send him to the military school at West Point, there to qualify for a commission. Snowball, his father's gift, bore me faithfully for years; I kept him through my struggles in Columbia, where I did well, and saved enough to enter into the mercantile firm in which I am now a partner. And when I returned to Europe I could not bring myself to abandon the faithful creature, but brought him home, at no small cost, so you may easily guess, my friend, that Snowball is not for sale."

"But the knave of a doctor—Ignotus Smith—was he ever hanged?" asked Tom, eagerly.

"Never. But Nemesis overtook him in another form. I was in San Francisco, on my way home, when the event happened. Dr. I. F. Smith fought a duel in a tavern, 'over a handkerchief,' with a man whom he had cheated at cards. As usual, one pistol was loaded, and one empty, and the doctor put faith in a confederate, who acted as second to the antagonist, and was to give Ignotus the loaded weapon. But by some bungling or treachery the biter was bit. Dr. I. F. Smith received the wrong pistol, was shot through the heart, and died like a dog, without warning or repentance."

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ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER V.

WHEN Magdalen appeared in the parlour, shortly before seven o'clock, not a trace of discomposure was visible in her manner. She looked and spoke as quietly and unconcernedly as usual.

The lowering distrust on Captain Wragge's face cleared away at the sight of her. There had been moments during the afternoon, when he had seriously doubted whether the pleasure of satisfying the grudge he owed to Noel Vanstone, and the prospect of earning the sum of two hundred pounds, would not be dearly purchased, by running the risk of discovery to which Magdalen's uncertain temper might expose him at any hour of the day. The plain proof now before him of her powers of self-control, relieved his mind of a serious anxiety. It mattered little to the captain what she suffered in the privacy of her own chamber, as long as she came out of it with a face that would bear inspection, and a voice that betrayed nothing.

On the way to Sea-View Cottage, Captain Wragge expressed his intention of asking the housekeeper a few sympathising questions on the subject of her invalid brother, in Switzerland. He was of opinion that the critical condition of this gentleman's health might exercise an important influence on the future progress of the conspiracy. Any chance of a separation, he remarked, between the housekeeper and her master was, under existing circumstances, a chance which merited the closest investigation. "If we can only get Mrs. Lecount out of the way at the right time," whispered the captain, as he opened his host's garden gate, "our man is caught!"

In a minute more, Magdalen was again under Noel Vanstone's roof; this time in the character of his own invited guest.

The proceedings of the evening were for the most part a repetition of the proceedings during the morning walk. Mr. Noel Vanstone vibrated between his admiration of Magdalen's beauty and his glorification of his own possessions. Captain Wragge's inexhaustible outbursts of information—relieved by delicately-indirect inquiries relating to Mrs. Lecount's brother—perpetually diverted the housekeeper's jealous vigilance from dwelling on the looks and language of her master. So the evening passed, until ten o'clock. By that time, the captain's ready-made science was exhausted, and the housekeeper's temper was forcing its way to the surface. Once more, Captain Wragge warned Magdalen by a look, and, in spite of Mr. Noel Vanstone's hospitable protest, wisely rose to say good night.

"I have got my information," remarked the captain, on his way back. "Mrs. Lecount's brother lives at Zurich. He is a bachelor; he possesses a little money; and his sister is his nearest relation. If he will only be so obliging as to break up altogether, he will save us a world of trouble with Mrs. Lecount."

It was a fine moonlight night. He looked round at Magdalen, as he said those words, to see if her intractable depression of spirits had seized on her again.

No! her variable humour had changed once more. She looked about her with a flaunting, feverish gaiety; she scoffed at the bare idea of any serious difficulty with Mrs. Lecount; she mimicked Noel Vanstone's high-pitched voice, and repeated Noel Vanstone's high-flown compliments, with a bitter enjoyment of turning him into ridicule. Instead of running into the house as before, she sauntered carelessly by her companion's side, humming little snatches of song, and kicking the loose pebbles right and left on the garden walk. Captain Wragge hailed the change in her as the best of good omens. He thought he saw plain signs that the family spirit was at last coming back again.

"Well," he said, as he lit her bedroom candle for her, "when we all meet on the parade to-morrow, we shall see, as our nautical friends say, how the land lies. One thing I can tell you, my dear girl—I have used my eyes to very little purpose, if there is not a storm brewing to-night in Mr. Noel Vanstone's domestic atmosphere."

The captain's habitual penetration had not misled him. As soon as the door of Sea-View Cottage was closed on the parting guests, Mrs. Lecount made an effort to assert the authority which Magdalen's influence was threatening already.

She employed every artifice of which she was mistress to ascertain Magdalen's true position in Noel Vanstone's estimation. She tried again and

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again to lure him into an unconscious confession of the pleasure which he felt already in the society of the beautiful Miss Bygrave; she twined herself in and out of every weakness in his character, as the frogs and efts twined themselves in and out of the rock-work of her Aquarium. But she made one serious mistake which very clever people in their intercourse with their intellectual inferiors are almost universally apt to commit—she trusted implicitly to the folly of a fool. She forgot that one of the lowest of human qualities—cunning—is exactly the capacity which is often most largely developed in the lowest of intellectual natures. If she had been honestly angry with her master she would probably have frightened him. If she had opened her mind plainly to his view, she would have astonished him by presenting a chain of ideas to his limited perceptions, which they were not strong enough to grasp; his curiosity would have led him to ask for an explanation; and by practising on that curiosity, she might have had him at her mercy. As it was, she set her cunning against his—and the fool proved a match for her. Mr. Noel Vanstone, to whom all large-minded motives under heaven were inscrutable mysteries, saw the small-minded motive at the bottom of his housekeeper's conduct, with as instantaneous a penetration as if he had been a man of the highest ability. Mrs. Lecount left him for the night, foiled, and knowing she was foiled—left him, with the tigerish side of her uppermost, and a low-lived longing in her elegant finger-nails to set them in her master's face.

She was not a woman to be beaten by one defeat, or by a hundred. She was positively determined to think, and think again, until she had found a means of checking the growing intimacy with the Bygraves at once and for ever. In the solitude of her own room, she recovered her composure, and set herself, for the first time, to review the conclusions which she had gathered from the events of the day.

There was something vaguely familiar to her in the voice of this Miss Bygrave; and, at the same time, in unaccountable contradiction, something strange to her as well. The face and figure of the young lady were entirely new to her. It was a striking face, and a striking figure; and if she had seen either, at any former period, she would certainly have remembered it. Miss Bygrave was unquestionably a stranger; and yet——

She had got no farther than this during the day; she could get no farther now: the chain of thought broke. Her mind took up the fragments, and formed another chain which attached itself to the lady who was kept in seclusion—to the aunt, who looked well, and yet was nervous; who was nervous, and yet able to ply her needle and thread. An incomprehensible resemblance to some unremembered voice, in the niece; an unintelligible malady which kept the aunt secluded from public view; an extraordinary range of scientific cultivation in the uncle, associated with a coarseness and audacity of manner which by no means suggested the idea of a man engaged in studious pursuits—were the members of this small family of three, what they seemed on the surface of them?

With that question on her mind, she went to bed.

As soon as the candle was out, the darkness seemed to communicate some inexplicable perversity to her thoughts. They wandered back from present things to past, in spite of her. They brought her old master back to life again; they revived forgotten sayings and doings in the English circle at Zurich; they veered away to the old man's death-bed at Brighton; they moved from Brighton to London; they entered the bare, comfortless room at Vauxhall Walk; they set the Aquarium back in its place on the kitchen table, and put the false Miss Garth in the chair by the side of it, shading her inflamed eyes from the light; they placed the anonymous letter, the letter which glanced darkly at a conspiracy, in her hand again, and brought her with it into her master's presence; they recalled the discussion about filling in the blank space in the advertisement, and the quarrel that followed, when she told Mr. Noel Vanstone that the sum he had offered was preposterously small; they revived an old doubt which had not troubled her for weeks past—a doubt whether the threatened conspiracy had evaporated in mere words, or whether she and her master were likely to hear of it again. At this point her thoughts broke off once more, and there was a momentary blank. The next instant she started up in bed; her heart beating violently, her head whirling as if she had lost her senses. With electric suddenness, her mind pieced together its scattered multitude of thoughts, and put them before her plainly under one intelligible form. In the all-mastering agitation of the moment, she clapped her hands together, and cried out suddenly in the darkness:

"Miss Vanstone again!!!"

She got out of bed and kindled the light once more. Steady as her nerves were, the shock of her own suspicion had shaken them. Her firm hand trembled as she opened her dressing-case, and took from it a little bottle of sal-volatile. In spite of her smooth cheeks and her well-preserved hair, she looked every year of her age, as she mixed the spirit with water, greedily drank it, and, wrapping her dressing-gown round her, sat down on the bedside to get possession again of her calmer self.

She was quite incapable of tracing the mental process which had led her to discovery. She could not get sufficiently far from herself to see that her half-formed conclusions on the subject of the Bygraves had ended in making that family objects of suspicion to her; that the association of ideas had thereupon carried her mind back to that other object of suspicion which was represented by the conspiracy against her master; and that the two ideas of those two separate subjects of distrust, coming suddenly in contact, had

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struck the light. She was not able to reason back in this way from the effect to the cause. She could only feel that the suspicion had become more than a suspicion already: conviction itself could not have been more firmly rooted in her mind.

Looking back at Magdalen by the new light now thrown on her, Mrs. Lecount would fain have persuaded herself that she recognised some traces left of the false Miss Garth's face and figure, in the graceful and beautiful girl who had sat at her master's table hardly an hour since—that she found resemblances now, which she had never thought of before, between the angry voice she had heard in Vauxhall Walk, and the smooth well-bred tones which still hung on her ears, after the evening's experience down stairs. She would fain have persuaded herself that she had reached these results with no undue straining of the truth as she really knew it; but the effort was in vain.

Mrs. Lecount was not a woman to waste time and thought in trying to impose on herself. She accepted the inevitable conclusion that the guesswork of a moment had led her to discovery. And, more than that, she recognised the plain truth—unwelcome as it was—that the conviction now fixed in her own mind was, thus far, unsupported by a single fragment of producible evidence to justify it to the minds of others.

Under these circumstances, what was the safe course to take with her master?

If she candidly told him, when they met the next morning, what had passed through her mind that night, her knowledge of Mr. Noel Vanstone warned her that one of two results could certainly happen. Either he would be angry and disputatious; would ask for proofs; and, finding none forthcoming, would accuse her of alarming him without a cause, to serve her own jealous end of keeping Magdalen out of the house—or, he would be seriously startled, would clamour for the protection of the law, and would warn the Bygraves to stand on their defence at the outset. If Magdalen only had been concerned in the conspiracy, this latter consequence would have assumed no great importance in the housekeeper's mind. But seeing the deception as she now saw it, she was far too clever a woman to fail in estimating the captain's inexhaustible fertility of resource at its true value. "If I can't meet this impudent villain with plain proofs to help me," thought Mrs. Lecount, "I may open my master's eyes to-morrow morning, and Mr. Bygrave will shut them up again before night. The rascal is playing with all his own cards under the table; and he will win the game to a certainty if he sees my hand at starting."

This policy of waiting was so manifestly the wise policy—the wily Mr. Bygrave was so sure to have provided himself, in case of emergency, with evidence to prove the identity which he and his niece had assumed for their purpose—that Mrs. Lecount at once decided to keep her own counsel the next morning, and to pause before attacking the conspiracy, until she could produce unanswerable facts to help her. Her master's acquaintance with the Bygraves was only an acquaintance of one day's standing. There was no fear of its developing into a dangerous intimacy if she merely allowed it to continue for a few days more, and if she permanently checked it, at the latest, in a week's time.

In that period, what measures could she take to remove the obstacles which now stood in her way, and to provide herself with the weapons which she now wanted?

Reflection showed her three different chances in her favour—three different ways of arriving at the necessary discovery.

The first chance was to cultivate friendly terms with Magdalen,—and then, taking her unawares, to entrap her into betraying herself in Noel Vanstone's presence. The second chance was to write to the elder Miss Vanstone, and to ask (with some alarming reason for putting the question) for information on the subject of her younger sister's whereabouts, and of any peculiarities in her personal appearance, which might enable a stranger to identify her. The third chance was to penetrate the mystery of Mrs. Bygrave's seclusion, and to ascertain at a personal interview whether the invalid lady's real complaint might not possibly be a defective capacity for keeping her husband's secrets. Resolving to try all three chances, in the order in which they are here enumerated, and to set her snares for Magdalen on the day that was now already at hand, Mrs. Lecount at last took off her dressing-gown and allowed her weaker nature to plead with her for a little sleep.

The dawn was breaking over the cold grey sea, as she laid down in her bed again. The last idea in her mind, before she fell asleep, was characteristic of the woman—it was an idea that threatened the captain. "He has trifled with the sacred memory of my husband," thought the Professor's widow. "On my life and honour, I will make him pay for it!"

Early the next morning, Magdalen began the day—according to her agreement with the captain—by taking Mrs. Wragge out for a little exercise, at an hour when there was no fear of her attracting the public attention. She pleaded hard to be left at home; having the Oriental Cashmere Robe still on her mind, and feeling it necessary to read her directions for dressmaking, for the hundredth time at least, before (to use her own expression) she could "screw up her courage to put the scissors into the stuff." But her companion would take no denial, and she was forced to go out. The one guileless purpose of the life which Magdalen now led, was the resolution that poor Mrs. Wragge should not be made a prisoner on her account—and to that resolution she mechanically clung, as the last token left her by which she knew her better self.

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They returned later than usual to breakfast. While Mrs. Wragge was up-stairs, straightening herself from head to foot to meet the morning inspection of her husband's orderly eye, and while Magdalen and the captain were waiting for her in the parlour, the servant came in with a note from Sea-View Cottage. The messenger was waiting for an answer, and the note was addressed to Captain Wragge.

The captain opened the note, and read these lines:

Dear Sir,—Mr. Noel Vanstone desires me to write and tell you that he proposes enjoying this fine day by taking a long drive to a place on the coast here, called Dunwich. He is anxious to know if you will share the expense of a carriage, and give him the pleasure of your company, and Miss Bygrave's company, on this excursion. I am kindly permitted to be one of the party; and if I may say so without impropriety, I would venture to add that I shall feel as much pleasure as my master if you and your young lady will consent to join us. We propose leaving Aldborough punctually at eleven o'clock.

Believe me, dear sir, your humble servant,

VIRGINIE LECOUNT.

"Who is the letter from?" asked Magdalen, noticing a change in Captain Wragge's face, as he read it. "What do they want with us at Sea-View Cottage?"

"Pardon me," said the captain, gravely, "this requires consideration. Let me have a minute or two to think."

He took a few turns up and down the room—then suddenly stepped aside to a table in a corner, on which his writing materials were placed. "I was not born yesterday, ma'am!" said the captain, speaking jocosely to himself. He winked his brown eye, took up his pen, and wrote the answer.

"Can you speak now?" inquired Magdalen, when the servant had left the room. "What does that letter say, and how have you answered it?"

The captain placed the letter in her hand. "I have accepted the invitation," he replied, quietly.

Magdalen read the letter. "Hidden enmity yesterday," she said, "and open friendship today. What does it mean?"

"It means," said Captain Wragge, "that Mrs. Lecount is even sharper than I thought her. She has found you out."

"Impossible!" cried Magdalen. "Quite impossible in the time!"

"I can't say *how* she has found you out," proceeded the captain, with perfect composure. "She may know more of your voice, than we supposed she knew. Or, she may have thought us, on reflection, rather a suspicious family; and anything suspicious, in which a woman was concerned, may have taken her mind back to that morning call of yours in Vauxhall Walk. Whichever way it may be, the meaning of this sudden change is clear enough. She has found you out; and she wants to put her discovery to the proof, by slipping in an awkward question or two, under cover of a little friendly talk. My experience of humanity has been a varied one; and Mrs. Lecount is not the first sharp practitioner in petticoats whom I have had to deal with. All the world's a stage, my dear girl—and one of the scenes on our little stage is shut in from this moment.

With those words, he took his copy of Joyce's Scientific Dialogues out of his pocket. "You're done with already, my friend!" said the captain, giving his useful information a farewell smack with his hand, and locking it up in the cupboard. "Such is human popularity!" continued the indomitable vagabond, putting the key cheerfully in his pocket. "Yesterday, Joyce was my all-in-all. To-day, I don't care that for him!" He snapped his fingers and sat down to breakfast.

"I don't understand you," said Magdalen, looking at him angrily. "Are you leaving me to my own resources for the future?"

"My dear girl!" cried Captain Wragge, "can't you accustom yourself to my dash of humour yet? I have done with my ready-made science, simply because I am quite sure that Mrs. Lecount has done believing in me. Haven't I accepted the invitation to Dunwich? Make your mind easy. The help I have given you already, counts for nothing compared with the help I am going to give you now. My honour is concerned in bowling out Mrs. Lecount. This last move of hers has made it a personal matter between us. *The woman actually thinks she can take me in!!!*" cried the captain, striking his knife-handle on the table in a transport of virtuous indignation. "By Heavens, I never was so insulted before in my life! Draw your chair in to the table, my dear; and give me half a minute's attention to what I have to say next."

Magdalen obeyed him. Captain Wragge cautiously lowered his voice before he went on.

"I have told you all along," he said, "the one thing needful is never to let Mrs. Lecount catch you with your wits wool-gathering. I say the same, after what has happened this morning. Let her suspect you! I defy her to find a fragment of foundation for her suspicions, unless we help her. We shall see to-day if she has been foolish enough to betray herself to her master before she has any facts to support her. I doubt it. If she has told him, we will rain down proofs of our identity with the Bygraves on his feeble little head, till it absolutely aches with conviction. You have two things to do on this excursion. First, to distrust every word Mrs. Lecount says to you. Secondly, to exert all your fascinations, and make sure of Mr. Noel Vanstone, dating from to-day. I will give you the opportunity, when we leave the carriage, and take our walk at Dunwich. Wear your hat, wear your smile; do your figure justice, lace tight; put on your neatest boots and brightest gloves; tie the miserable little wretch to your aprong-string—tie him fast; and leave the whole management of this matter after that, to me. Steady! here is Mrs. Wragge: we must be doubly careful in looking after her now. Show me your cap, Mrs. Wragge! show me your shoes! What do I see on your

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apron? A spot? I won't have spots! Take it off after breakfast, and put on another. Pull your chair to the middle of the table—more to the left—more still. Make the breakfast."

At a quarter before eleven, Mrs. Wragge (with her own entire concurrence) was dismissed to the back room, to bewilder herself over the science of dressmaking for the rest of the day. Punctually as the clock struck the hour, Mrs. Lecount and her master drove up to the gate of North Shingles, and found Magdalen and Captain Wragge waiting for them in the garden.

On the way to Dunwich nothing occurred to disturb the enjoyment of the drive. Mr. Noel Vanstone was in excellent health and high good humour. Lecount had apologised for the little misunderstanding of the previous night; Lecount had petitioned for the excursion as a treat to herself. He thought of these concessions, and looked at Magdalen, and smirked and simpered without intermission. Mrs. Lecount acted her part to perfection. She was motherly with Magdalen, and tenderly attentive to Noel Vanstone. She was deeply interested in Captain Wragge's conversation, and meekly disappointed to find it turn on general subjects, to the exclusion of science. Not a word or look escaped her, which hinted in the remotest degree at her real purpose. She was dressed with her customary elegance and propriety; and she was the only one of the party, on that sultry summer's day, who was perfectly cool in the hottest part of the journey.

As they left the carriage on their arrival at Dunwich, the captain seized a moment, when Mrs. Lecount's eye was off him, and fortified Magdalen by a last warning word.

"'Ware the cat!" he whispered. "She will show her claws on the way back."

They left the village and walked to the ruins of a convent near at hand—the last relic of the once-populous city of Dunwich which has survived the destruction of the place, centuries since, by the all-devouring sea. After looking at the ruins, they sought the shade of a little wood, between the village and the low sand-hills which overlook the German Ocean. Here, Captain Wragge manœuvred so as to let Magdalen and Noel Vanstone advance some distance in front of Mrs. Lecount and himself—took the wrong path—and immediately lost his way with the most consummate dexterity. After a few minutes' wandering (in the wrong direction), he reached an open space near the sea; and, politely opening his camp-stool for the housekeeper's accommodation, proposed waiting where they were, until the missing members of the party came that way and discovered them.

Mrs. Lecount accepted the proposal. She was perfectly well aware that her escort had lost himself on purpose; but that discovery exercised no disturbing influence on the smooth amiability of her manner. Her day of reckoning with the captain had not come yet—she merely added the new item to her list, and availed herself of the camp-stool. Captain Wragge stretched himself in a romantic attitute at her feet; and the two determined enemies (grouped like two lovers in a picture) fell into as easy and pleasant a conversation, as if they had been friends of twenty years' standing.

"I know you, ma'am!" thought the captain, while Mrs. Lecount was talking to him. "You would like to catch me tripping in my ready-made science; and you wouldn't object to drown me in the Professor's Tank!"

"You villain, with the brown eye and the green!" thought Mrs. Lecount, as the captain caught the ball of conversation in his turn; "thick as your skin is, I'll sting you through it yet!"

In this frame of mind towards each other, they talked fluently on general subjects, on public affairs, on local scenery, on society in England and society in Switzerland, on health, climate, books, marriage, and money—talked, without a moment's pause, without a single misunderstanding on either side, for nearly an hour, before Magdalen and Noel Vanstone strayed that way, and made the party of four complete again.

When they reached the inn at which the carriage was waiting for them, Captain Wragge left Mrs. Lecount in undisturbed possession of her master, and signed to Magdalen to drop back for a moment and speak to him.

"Well?" asked the captain in a whisper; "is he fast to your apron-string?"

She shuddered from head to foot, as she answered.

"He has kissed my hand," she said. "Does that tell you enough? Don't let him sit next me on the way home! I have borne all I can bear—spare me for the rest of the day."

"I'll put you on the front seat of the carriage," replied the captain, "side by side with me."

On the journey back, Mrs. Lecount verified Captain Wragge's prediction. She showed her claws.

The time could not have been better chosen; the circumstances could hardly have favoured her more. Magdalen's spirits were depressed: she was weary in body and mind; and she sat exactly opposite the housekeeper—who had been compelled, by the new arrangement, to occupy the seat of honour next her master. With every facility for observing the slightest changes that passed over Magdalen's face, Mrs. Lecount tried her first experiment by leading the conversation to the subject of London, and to the relative advantages offered to residents by the various quarters of the metropolis on both sides of the river. The ever-ready Wragge penetrated her intention sooner than she had anticipated, and interposed immediately. "You're coming to Vauxhall Walk, ma'am," thought the captain; "I'll get there before you."

He entered at once into a purely fictitious description of the various quarters of London in which he had himself resided; and, adroitly men-

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tioning Vauxhall Walk as one of them, saved Magdalen from the sudden question relating to that very locality, with which Mrs. Lecount had proposed startling her to begin with. From his residences, he passed smoothly to himself; and poured his whole family history (in the character of Mr. Bygrave) into the housekeeper's ears—not forgetting his brother's grave in Honduras, with the monument by the self-taught negro artist; and his brother's hugely corpulent widow, on the ground floor of the boarding-house at Cheltenham. As a means of giving Magdalen time to compose herself, this outburst of autobiographical information attained its object, but it answered no other purpose. Mrs. Lecount listened, without being imposed on by a single word the captain said to her. He merely confirmed her conviction of the hopelessness of taking Noel Vanstone into her confidence, before she had facts to help her against Captain Wragge's otherwise unassailable position in the identity which he had assumed. She quietly waited until he had done, and then returned to the charge.

"It is a coincidence that your uncle should once have resided in Vauxhall Walk," she said, addressing herself to Magdalen. "My master has a house in the same place; and we lived there before we came to Aldborough. May I inquire, Miss Bygrave, whether you know anything of a lady named Miss Garth?"

This time, she put the question before the captain could interfere. Magdalen ought to have been prepared for it by what had already passed in her presence—but her nerves had been shaken by the earlier events of the day; and she could only answer the question in the negative, after an instant's preliminary pause to control herself. Her hesitation was of too momentary a nature to attract the attention of any unsuspicious person. But it lasted long enough to confirm Mrs. Lecount's private convictions, and to encourage her to advance a little further.

"I only asked," she continued, steadily fixing her eyes on Magdalen, steadily disregarding the efforts which Captain Wragge made to join in the conversation, "because Miss Garth is a stranger to me; and I am curious to find out what I can about her. The day before we left town, Miss Bygrave, a person who presented herself under the name I have mentioned, paid us a visit under very extraordinary circumstances."

With a smooth, ingratiating manner; with a refinement of contempt that was little less than devilish in its ingenious assumption of the language of pity, she now boldly described Magdalen's appearance in disguise, in Magdalen's own presence. She slightingly referred to the master and mistress of Combe-Raven, as persons who had always annoyed the elder and more respectable branch of the family; she mourned over the children as following their parents' example, and attempting to take a mercenary advantage of Mr. Noel Vanstone, under the protection of a respectable person's character and a respectable person's name. Cleverly including her master in the conversation, so as to prevent the captain from effecting a diversion in that quarter; sparing no petty aggravation; striking at every tender place which the tongue of a spiteful woman can wound—she would, beyond all doubt, have carried her point, and tortured Magdalen into openly betraying herself, if Captain Wragge had not checked her in full career, by a loud exclamation of alarm, and a sudden clutch at Magdalen's wrist.

"Ten thousand pardons, my dear madam!" cried the captain. "I see in my niece's face, I feel in my niece's pulse, that one of her violent neuralgic attacks has come on again. My dear girl, why hesitate among friends to confess that you are in pain? What mistimed politeness! Her face shows she is suffering—doesn't it, Mrs. Lecount? Darting pains, Mr. Vanstone, darting pains on the left side of the head. Pull down your veil, my dear, and lean on me. Our friends will excuse you; our excellent friends will excuse you, for the rest of the day."

Before Mrs. Lecount could throw an instant's doubt on the genuineness of the neuralgic attack, her master's fidgety sympathy declared itself, exactly as the captain had anticipated, in the most active manifestations. He stopped the carriage, and insisted on an immediate change in the arrangement of the places—the comfortable back seat for Miss Bygrave and her uncle; the front seat for Lecount and himself. Had Lecount got her smelling-bottle? Excellent creature! let her give it directly to Miss Bygrave, and let the coachman drive carefully. If the coachman shook Miss Bygrave he should not have a halfpenny for himself. Mesmerism was frequently useful in these cases. Mr. Noel Vanstone's father had been the most powerful mesmerist in Europe; and Mr. Noel Vanstone was his father's son. Might he mesmerise? Might he order that infernal coachman to draw up in a shady place adapted for the purpose? Would medical help be preferred? Could medical help be found any nearer than Aldborough? That ass of a coachman didn't know. Stop every respectable man who passed in a gig, and ask him if he was a doctor! So Mr. Noel Vanstone ran on—with brief intervals for breathing-time—in a continually-ascending scale of sympathy and self-importance, throughout the drive home.

Mrs. Lecount accepted her defeat, without uttering a word. From the moment when Captain Wragge interrupted her, her thin lips closed, and opened no more for the remainder of the journey. The warmest expressions of her master's anxiety for the suffering young lady, provoked from her no outward manifestations of anger. She took as little notice of him as possible. She paid no attention whatever to the captain, whose exasperating consideration for his vanquished enemy, made him more polite to her than ever. The nearer and the nearer they got to Aldborough, the more and more fixedly Mrs. Lecount's hard black eyes looked at Magdalen reclining on the

opposite seat, with her eyes closed and her veil down.

It was only when the carriage stopped at North Shingles, and when Captain Wragge was handing Magdalen out, that the housekeeper at last condescended to notice him. As he smiled and took off his hat at the carriage door, the strong restraint she had laid on herself suddenly gave way; and she flashed one look at him, which scorched up the captain's politeness on the spot. He turned at once, with a hasty acknowledgment of Noel Vanstone's last sympathetic inquiries, and took Magdalen into the house.

"I told you she would show her claws," he said. "It is not my fault that she scratched you before I could stop her. She hasn't hurt you, has she?"

"She has hurt me, to some purpose," said Magdalen—"she has given me the courage to go on. Say what must be done, to-morrow, and trust me to do it." She sighed heavily as she said those words, and went up to her room.

Captain Wragge walked meditatively into the parlour, and sat down to consider. He felt by no means so certain as he could have wished, of the next proceeding on the part of the enemy after the defeat of that day. The housekeeper's farewell look had plainly informed him that she was not at the end of her resources yet; and the old militiaman felt the full importance of preparing himself in good time to meet the next step which she took in advance. He lit a cigar, and bent his wary mind on the dangers of the future.

While Captain Wragge was considering in the parlour at North Shingles, Mrs. Lecount was meditating in her bedroom at Sea View. Her exasperation at the failure of her first attempt to expose the conspiracy, had not blinded her to the instant necessity of making a second effort, before Noel Vanstone's growing infatuation got beyond her control. The snare set for Magdalen having failed, the chance of entrapping Magdalen's sister was the next chance to try. Mrs. Lecount ordered a cup of tea; opened her writing-case; and began the rough draught of a letter to be sent to Miss Vanstone the elder by the morrow's post.

So the day's skirmish ended. The heat of the battle was yet to come.

IGNORAMUS AT THE EXHIBITION.

Not content with showing me the machinery,* which I understood no better after their explanation than I did before, another of my scientific friends insisted on taking me through the Eastern Annexe, to enlighten me concerning the uses of the various chemicals stored up there. I submitted: how could I do otherwise?

Off we went, through the colonial courts; past the monkeys and snakes of British Guiana and the Maltese stone-work and filigree silver; past the Australian wood trophy and the Canadian long-necked bottles of golden petroleum or rock oil—just glancing at the vases, and jugs, and tables, and tazzas of black marble from Derbyshire; and finally bringing up before a certain case, where some pretty things were to be seen.

First, there was some nitrate of uranium—not that I know what nitrate of uranium is, only that it is very like exceedingly yellow barley-sugar. It is used chiefly for glass-staining and painting on enamel. Uranium was first discovered by Klaproth in 1789, but found now to be comparatively common in the Cornwall tin mines and among the lead and silver veins of Saxony. Then there were two big vessels of platinum; the one an alembic (what an old alchemist's word!), and the other a boiler for rectifying sulphuric acid, and worth four hundred and sixty-five pounds, without the tubes. Platinum is essentially the chemist's metal, and the most useful that he has. Fire does not melt it, unless at the most outrageous and almost unattainable ferocity; air and water do not touch it; it can be heated to a white heat and still retain its polish; and the only acid that dissolves it, is the nitro-muriatic. What the analytical world did when it was not, no one now can understand. Platinum is rarely found in masses, only in grains or spangles, for the most part not so large as linseed, sometimes as large as hempseed, and sometimes, but very rarely, as big as peas. But there have been tremendous giants—just one or two—to show what platinum can do if it likes. The largest bit seen hitherto is in this very Eastern Annexe of ours. It is an irregular mass about a foot long, and from five to six inches deep, weighing three thousand two hundred ounces, or two hundred pounds. Up to the advent of this metallic son of Anak, the prize piece was one of twenty-one pounds' weight, brought from the Ural Mountains, and now in the famous Demidoff cabinet; then there was another, over eleven pounds, also found in the Ural Mountains in the year 1827; and one in the Royal Museum at Madrid, larger than a turkey's egg, and brought from the gold mine of Condoto, at Choco, in Peru; and another from the same place, weighing more than two ounces avoirdupois, which Humboldt presented to the cabinet of Berlin. All these were mighty in their day, when compared to the linseed and hempseed of ordinary growths; but what are they now in the presence of a leviathan weighing two hundred pounds! Platinum—a minor silver, from "plata," which means silver, according to the Spaniards—is found principally in the company of gold; and when first brought to Europe, in 1748, was called "white gold," in recognition of the many noble properties, which seem to make it akin to the royal metal. For it is so malleable that it can be beaten into leaves thin enough to be blown about and floated anywhere by the breath—just like gold-leaf, in fact; and it is so ductile (I am obliged to use these hard words, but I don't like them), that Dr. Wollaston made a wire of it no larger in diameter than the two-thousandth part of an inch; while its tenacity is proved by the

* See page 345.

fact that a wire, one-eighteenth of an inch in diameter, can support a weight of three hundred and sixty-one pounds. So, after all, it has a right to be called white gold, and of royal standing in the metallic world. It is used in ornamental porcelain, to give a steely lustre to figures and surfaces, as gold is used to gild them; and a certain preparation called platinum black—how made I don't in the least comprehend—can be used for fumigating rooms, by giving them the odour of vinegar if spread upon a watch-glass moistened with alcohol; and if introduced into a mixture of air and inflammable gas, causes an explosion as if it were fire itself. But its chief use is for chemical cups and vessels.

As we went further I saw some "platinum salts," which looked like sugared bonbons; and some granulated melted platinum, for all the world like the new American corn sweetmeat; and some blood-red platinum something; and one very beautiful ingot, perfectly pure, all hacked and cut like a rock, but a little dusky looking, and neither like steel nor silver. Then there was a lovely bit of granulated silver, like frosted rock-work, white and moony, obtained by pouring melted silver into water; and another bit of like form, appearance, and generation—only this was yellow gold instead of moonlight coloured silver—the sister and the brother keeping guard at each side of the case.

Then there was the aluminum case with its great gorged falcon cast in one piece, and other things full of interest and information. Aluminium, or aluminum, as it ought to be spelt, is what chemists call the "metallic base" of clay, as alumina is the "earth" and alum the "salt;" the metal of the ordinary common clay of the fields and wolds, where it has lain unnoticed and undiscovered from Adam's day to Sir Humphry Davy's and Wöhler's, while millions of generations have walked heedless over it, and not even chemists have suspected that they had a precious metal at their feet. It is only quite of late years that it has been made use of; but lately the whole woman world has decked itself out in those pretty light silver-grey ornaments, which are to be bought for a trifle, but which look well and simple when their form is good. They have been trying to make aluminum do more serious service than make brooches and buckles and buttons; they have proposed it for pianoforte wires, chemical balances, barometers, &c., and they have found it good for reflectors—better, indeed, than silver—because it does not blacken or tarnish, even when placed in a solution of sulphur; and they have been concocting a very beautiful looking metal, which they call "aluminum bronze," an alloy of aluminum and copper, and which they say likewise does not tarnish. But can copper be mixed with anything and not get dull and dirty? Aluminum is marvellously light, a sixth only of the weight of silver, and so little resonant that a huge bell as big as Big Ben would give out only a tiny little tinkle, very sweet and silvery, but utterly useless as a tocsin or a warning. The ruby, sapphire, oriental amethyst, topaz, and emerald, are all nothing but the crystallisation of aluminum, or alumina rather; bits of mere clay and marl, coloured in various proportions with oxide of iron; ninety-eight of clay (alumina), and the remaining two portions divided between the colouring matter and minute fractions of something else! This alumina, or the "earth of clay," is the chief constituent in the fine porcelain clay or kaolin used in our higher manufactures, giving it ductility in working, and tenacity in baking; it is also a mordant—that is, fastens certain colours on to printed cloths and calicoes; and the painters' colours called lakes are colours prepared with alumina. Pottery and colours are the chief uses to which we have put alumina as yet; and the creation of some of the most precious gems is one of the smallest uses to which it has been put by nature.

Then comes the "salt" or alum, which is got out of alumina by some tremendous process utterly unintelligible to the uninitiated. Alum is represented in the Eastern Annexe by a huge white serpent with a red tongue, a large white dirty-looking open-worked column, and by big blue and red crowns and runic crosses, just like the children's baskets to be had for sixpence at the bazaar, only on a magnified scale. But alum is a very beautiful thing after all; as for the "hair-salt alum," or—let me take breath and mind my spelling—"schistose sulphate of magnesia," it is one of the most lovely little dainty feathery bits of scientific nature to be found in the building; but I own I slacken a little in my admiration when I learn that hair-salt alum, or schistose sulphate of magnesia, is nothing but my old enemy, Epsom salts, in a more refined form and with a grander name. This grey and speckled mealy-looking stuff is what alum is made from, and is called alum schistose; it is not ugly, though nothing like the soft frosted work of the hair-salt alum. Alum has various uses; among them, it makes wood incombustible; gives hardness to candles; clears turbid water (do not the Chinese clear their worst and most brackish waters by a lump of alum properly proportioned?); it is used in tanning and dyeing leather, and in the silvering and lacquering trades; a pinch put into a churn bewitched, and when the butter will not "come," separates the water from the cream and produces the result—butter; it is an antidote to the painters' disease—the lead cholic; is a mordant in dyeing and printing calicoes; is used by book-makers in their paste, and by London bakers in their bread (the wretches!); and it was the cause of a monster chimney, a huge fortune, and a damaging lawsuit, when the Pendleton people tried to pull down Mr. Spence's chimney—three hundred feet high—which he had built for his "ammonia alum works" at Manchester, declaring that they would not be poisoned by the fumes, let what would be the consequences—the manufacture of alum not being considered the most savoury imaginable. This same Mr. Spence exhibits a lump of alum, of three tons and a half weight, natural size; and a noble white mammoth it is.

Presently we come upon a case where a mag-

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nificent gold-green crystal crown, like nothing in nature ever yet beheld, challenges public admiration as "acetate of rosaniline." And now I am coming upon dangerous ground. The metals were all very well, and even I, a confessed ignoramus, could make out something about them; but now when we are diving deeper into the chemical labyrinth, I must hold my end of the clue very firm, not to get utterly lost and bewildered. Well, this gold-green crown is called rosaniline; and rosaniline is aniline that turns a bright rose-red in alcohol; and aniline is got from the "basic oil of coal-tar," whatever that may be, and also in any quantity from indigo. This gold-green crown is very curious and very lovely. It is worth about four hundred pounds (at first the report went that it was worth a thousand), and one grain of it would dye a bucketful of water, deep magenta; and the whole crown itself would dye the Thames magenta from the sea to its source. Aniline is the material whence have been got the last two fashionable colours, mauve and magenta. A little way off, is a large bronze-coloured cylinder, called "solid purple aniline," worth eight hundred pounds, and capable of dyeing a nation's wardrobe the best shade of mauve. Mauve was originally sold at its weight in gold, for all that it was made of dirty bad-smelling coal-tar; but the secret has been found out now, and mauve and magenta fetch no more than some other dyes, though in the end a little dearer, because more fugitive than many others. In this case there are glass cups holding various coloured anilines: green, and blue, and yellow, and dull red, and purple, and dirty-looking mauve, all products of this basic oil of coal-tar under different conditions; as "precipitated," and "oxalate," and "sulphate," and "chloride," and "arseniate," and "crystallised;" only I cannot fit the name and condition together. Then there is some "magenta powder," a beautiful mass of rainbow-coloured grains, like crushed peacock ore; and a curious blue fluid called ameline, which the label tells us is also got out of aniline; and there are aniline orange, and aniline deep purple, and cyanine blue from aniline, and opaline blue from aniline; and all these last are liquids, and very bright and clear. There is another very brilliant colour got from coal-tar, called rosolic acid, which, if any one could fix as a dye, would make his fortune. But as yet rosolic acid is fugitive and shy, and fades away after a few hours' exposure to the light. But it is such a crimson! A blood-red damask rose would look pale beside it.

Then there are two crystal columns, which make part of Cinderella's story quite possible. One is a magnificent collection of eight-sided gorgeous yellow crystals; the other of blood red; the first is called the yellow prussiate of potash, the second the red prussiate of potash, and is made from the yellow. Very grand and glorious the colours of both! A maiden adorned with gems of these prussiates would outshine an Eastern queen for magnificence of jewellery; but fling a cup of water over her, O spiteful eldest sister, or malignant fairy uninvited at her birth, and the guards would see nothing but a poor little beggar-girl, with never a ruby or an amethyst upon her. For, water dissolves our prussiate of potash gems as quickly as it would dissolve a few grains of salt or sugar. These prussiates are got out of hoofs of cattle, blood, waste bits of skin, horns, hides, old woollen rags, and even dried fungus. The yellow prussiate makes the well-known "Prussian blue" when mixed with iron salt; though I confess, privately, I do not know what iron salt is exactly. Potash does a great deal in the world. There is, first of all, oxalate of potash, better known as salts of lemon, that is, a mixture of potash and oxalic acid; and there is pearlash, that is roasted potash, with all the carbon and sulphur roasted out of it; and there is caustic potash, which seems to be something like the universal solvent, and can dissolve almost anything, whether flint or silk, sulphur or wool. It should never be touched with the tongue or fingers, unless you are desirous of a burn and a blister. Then there is carbonate of potash, or salts of tartar, which helps to make effervescing drinks, and citrate of potash, which is merely citric acid and that same potash carbonate, in its fizzing state called effervescing lemonade and kali; and nitrate of potash, otherwise called nitre and saltpetre, good for corning rounds of beef and making gunpowder; and bitartrate of potash, which is cream of tartar, good for cooling heated blood, and got from the fermenting process of wines—called red or white argol, according to the colour of the wine fermenting. And potash generally is the "salts" of vegetables, the largest proportion of which exists in the fumitory, and the smallest in the wood of the pine. Its metallic base is the metal called potassium, and the iodide of potassium, which is a certain preparation of iodine and carbonate of potash, is one of the prime agents in the photographer's studio, and, if I mistake not, is also often to be seen in certain scrawling hieroglyphics on medical prescriptions.

Go a little further and you will see a mass of white grains and crystals, called oxalic acid, originally got out of the sorrel plants, but, because there is not enough sorrel in the world, now made from sawdust, heated with a mixture of caustic soda and potash. John Dale, of Manchester, makes seven tons a week of oxalic acid, and sells it for ninepence the pound, though formerly it was ruinously dear—to the great saving of calico printers, who use it as a discharging, not colouring or fixing, agent. Oxalic acid whitens linen and top-boots, takes out fruit-stains, and is obtained from starch, gum, sugar, and treacle, as well as from heated sawdust. Near at hand is a grand lump of white-streaked blue-green copperas, of marvellous beauty, if of common uses, for it is only a "salt" made by copper and sulphur in certain combinations, and called blue vitriol and blue stone by the world at the laboratory door. But then, indeed, the emerald or royal malachite is only flint and carbonate of lime coloured with

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oxide of copper; while the bluish malachite is pure carbonate of copper; and that lovely peacock ore of all imaginable colours, so richly scattered through the Burra Burra mines, is copper pyrites; and that queer-looking mass is arseniate of copper, or copper and arsenic, the crystals of which smell of garlic when heated, and run into metal when burnt to death with charcoal as their companion.

Very different in its different conditions is that one same substance—phosphorus. As phosphorus, pure and simple, the soft white waxy-looking residue of burnt bones, it takes fire in the open air, and by the heat of the hand alone; and by a strange bit of homœopathic revenge, though itself the product of bones, in its use and manufacture it destroys the jaw-bones of workmen. As amorphous or red phosphorus, that is, common phosphorus highly heated and stirred, it will not take fire save under certain special chemical combinations, and is so thoroughly innocent that it may be eaten with impunity. This amorphous phosphorus is the secret of our new safety-matches, for nothing in the way of friction can make them ignite unless they are rubbed on their own peculiar sand-paper—the sand-paper being phosphorised, and the matches tipped with sulphur and chlorate of potash, which is the only combination tending to flame. Wherefore, because of its harmlessness in the making, and its safety in the using, amorphous phosphorus is to be patronised for matches instead of the deadly and dangerous form of bone essence employed. Phosphoric acid has lately been found to be good for the over-tasked brain; being, in fact, the reparative power of the brain, and the cause of healthy mind-work.

Then there is a vast deal to be said on this white pleasant-looking stuff called soda; to be had from certain mineral waters, or from the ashes of the seaside plant, salsola—soda—so largely cultivated by the Spaniards at Alicante, and when burnt known as sweet barilla—or from the burnt sea-weed known as kelp, which now, however, is chiefly used for giving iodine. Le Blanc was the first manufacturer of soda, having Philippe Egalité for his partner, but poor Le Blanc did not make a fortune, as some others have done lately, and shot himself in despair, when poverty clutched him too tightly by the throat. Now, hundreds and thousands of tons are made weekly, to the devastation and destruction of the vegetable world for miles round. But no soda manufacturer could get out of the fatal consequences of scorched grass and poisoned trees, till Mr. Gossage invented something—unintelligible to me what—for collecting the muriatic acid gas, which does all the mischief. If the manufacturer will build a good Gossage tower, the making of soda need not absolutely destroy every bit of vegetable life as far as the vapour of the muriatic acid can reach. Every one knows what soda is, from the laundress at her tub to the afflicted with "acid," who keeps his little paper of carbonate of soda beside him as a usual after-dinner corrective; but every one does not know that this pure white innocent lump is caustic soda, and that, if you touch it, your flesh will be burnt to the bone; nor that this white mass, called sodium, the "metallic base" of soda, would, if broken in the air, go off into a flame, and that water kindles it, and nothing puts it out again. Then there are some long silky crystals rose-red, called palladium salts, and some long silky crystals of pure scarlet, called iodide of mercury; and specimens of gold and gold-leaf, white, greenish, yellow, and coppery, rhubarb-coloured, brown (for gilding porcelain), and heroic red—the gold-leaf made of the best gold, else it will not hammer into sufficient thinness, but breaks and goes off into flakes, and cannot be beaten into its hundred square feet of leaf from the ingot of one square inch or one ounce (troy); and glittering spangles of native gold, and a few specimens of Welsh quartz, I think it was, with actually half a dozen minute scales of gold glittering through the grey! and pretty rock of quite pure gold; and gold dissolved by chlorine, very bright, and used in photography.

And then there are the silver specimens—silver dissolved in nitric acid, making the nitrate of silver—also for photographers' use; called lunar caustic when melted, and capable of blackening any amount of flesh; and there is the case of German silver, which is a dull mixture of nickel and copper, and not to be encouraged by the lovers of the beautiful; and specimens of sulphur; and a pretty pale-yellow powder called tannin, and another, paler still, called gallic acid, and gallic acid crystallised; all got from oak-galls and used for dyeing. And there is a crystallised hollow sphere of bismuth, good, as the "sub-nitrate," for making pearl-white, which pearl-white is used by ladies for their faces, by potters for their enamelling, and by doctors for "cordalgia," or heart-ache of some kind; also, with a slight difference of preparation, good for making an invisible ink, to be brought out by plunging the paper written on, in water. This nitrate of bismuth mixed with tin makes a mordant for all violet tints in calico printing. And there is another crystallised hollow sphere, soft and waxen, but this is only camphor, about which I do not think it worth while to cudgel my brains, beyond the very patent example of camphor balls for winter chaps; and a greyish-coloured half hollow sphere, crystallised, of muriate of thebaia—what is that?—to be noticed because of its beauty, and another, lighter coloured, of like form, close to it, called papaverine, and another of codeine, larger and lighter still, and a lump of morphia pure white: and I believe all come from the same mother, and mean the same thing, namely, the essence of poppy, or opium under scientific disguises. Then there is a very pretty bit of antimony, called star regulus, like a dusky bit of tarnished silver with fern-leaves engraved on it, and a column of crude antimony, like a stalactite column, and printers' type cast from the metal alloyed; for type-casting and eye-blackening are the two principal uses of antimony that I know of.

A large ugly brownish-grey mushroom-

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shaped mass of corrosive sublimate seems to me like the chemical "correspondence" of lions and tigers, and all other noxious animals of the jungle; while this huge crystallisation of calomel, the offspring of corrosive sublimate, makes one shudder at the remembrance of all the lives its snaky deadliness has lost to the world. A case of terrible medicines is at my elbow. Jalap, and camomile, and henbane, and rhubarb, and bark, and colocynth, and aconite, gentian, and colchicum—brown and nasty—and belladonna of a dull olive, and extract of cleavers, and sickly-coloured hemlock got from the flowering plant, all sticky-looking treacly masses, not fluid, but bearing in their very look the ugly nature of their action. And then there is a case of unguents; one a sickly green, "unguentum conii," conium being the "volatile base" (!) of hemlock, with very many others, unintelligible to me. Some of the bottles are pretty; for instance, the bluish phosphate of iron, and the purple-blue litmus, and the golden-looking iodide of lead, and the steel-bright crystals of iodin. precip., and the carnation-coloured hydrarg. biniodid; but I have not the faintest conception of the meaning of these last words, or what the bottles really contain.

But the artists' colour-cases are still the most beautiful! Has any one ever seen anything like Winsor and Newton's cups of chromes, and carnations, and scarlet lakes, and royal blues, and paler azures, and insolent orange, and purples, and greens, and snowy knubbles of flake white, and primrose daintiness, and crimsons loud and fierce as a war-cry, and pinks tender and loving as a young girl? The gems of colour lie in that case of the Rathbone-place magicians; and if Linnell puts our eyes out with his Surrey sunsets, it is here that we find the cause.

And now I have done with all the scientific chemicals, for my chemical friend is disgusted with my ignorance; and I go wandering alone about the wax-candles, coloured, painted, and moulded, and fit only for the altars of monster cathedrals; and up to the cases of wax-flowers, where dreamy thoughts of bees and a summer's day among the lanes, and hedge-roses, and honeysuckles, and the sheep-dog barking on the fells in the distance, hang like an atmosphere about them; and I look at the dyed grass flowers; and at the fishing flies; and at Pears' transparent soap; and at that ugly looking block of primrose soap, more like common brown than primrose; and at the statuettes done in soap—our Queen and the rest of them in mottled or curd, with red and blue streaks across their faces; and at the pink and yellow crystallised spermaceti, very flaky, soft, and fairy-like. And near to them I learn something of the purification of sperm oil, and how it passes from the "crude or body oil" through the conditions of "head matter" and "bagged sperm" to finally culminate in that clear golden fluid, bright and beautiful and fit for home use. Then I taste Thorley's aromatic compound, which he lets fall into a little trough, like the trough of a bird-cage, and I do not think it delicious, though cows and horses may; and I smell the hops, which is a fresh and wholesome perfume; and I admire the new method of breeding wheat, and the lift which Darwin's theory of selection seems to have got thereby; and I look longingly at the biscuits, and the sugar-plums, and the crystallised fruits, and the cut bride-cake, with its luscious top of snow, and midland of creamy loam, lying on the rich and solid basis of its primitive formation; and I have a tender interest in the chocolate cases, and I feel a cannibal with respect to those little men and women in soft brown, and would like to try that old shoe, or even that miniature bird-cage; and then they give me a dozen different perfumes at the perfumery stands, each one of which neutralises the other, until the effect of the whole is decidedly unpleasant; and I wonder how those bottles of jelly would turn out if my cook had one for a gala day; and whether the coloured gelatine would be good to eat; and what the fruit essences are made of—knowing that they are not made of fruit, but of some monstrous compound, with a name no one can spell, and an origin no one can fathom; and I have larcenious designs on those oddly-cut pickles, and speculate on their flavour with imaginary cold roast beef; for the truth is I am getting hungry and tired, and my thoughts are wandering in a low-bred and unscientific manner to food and rest. And then faint gushes of sickly soup come in from the refreshment-room, and nearly drive me to despair, they smell so appetising and suggestive; and I do not dine till seven, and it is now only half-past four. So I turn my attention to the vegetable ivory and the shell-work, and try to feel an interest in both—wherein I signally fail; and I look at the seeds and the Indian corn, and the long eatable-looking starch, and the gums and the glues and the varnishes, and wonder how they ever came out of trees, when they look so like stones or crystallised pebbles; and then I sit down before some coloured wools, and wonder how much arsenic is in that marvellously bright green rug overhead, till I find myself nodding, and a policeman saying severely, "Move on; move on."

And so I wander out and homeward, giving one parting glance at all these wonders; and in my parting glance I come upon a case, with these things contained: dimethy parabanic acid—some soft, silvery crystals; orcine—dark flesh-red powder; kinate of calcium—like broken loaf-sugar; and sparkling crystals and spangles of deep salmon-coloured orcine; and purru—like rhubarb powder; and silicate of soda—pale blue crystals below and brown at the top, which I believe is an unhealthy condition for silicate of soda to be in; and another silicate of soda—a bright yellow fluid; and santonin—also bright yellow; and hypophosphate of quinine and iron—a pale yellowish brown; and pyrophosphate of iron—green and not bewitching. And, I ask you candidly—of all those tired-looking trailing women, carrying babies, or thumping lagging children—of all those half-washed men, with their mouths open, and their brains not over-phos-

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phorised—nay, even of all those smart young ladies, fresh and gay, and glib with last night's opera, or Lord Dundreary—how many have understood the uses of that case, or know the English of one single thing it contained? It may be all very clever and scientific; but I contend that it is not the least in the world instructive, and that a few good honest English explanations would have been of ten times more benefit to the sightseers.

FROM THE WILDS.

So my old friend recollects me, though the tide of time hath cast
Many a long wild wave between us, since we hailed each other last,
Yet I glory in the feeling that your love is not estranged,
That the boy-heart beats through manhood with an ardour all unchanged;
Dwelling in the giant city 'mid its shocks of worldly war,
And its roaring stream of traffic bridged by ancient Temple-bar;
Turning from the syren pleasures, from the sorrow and the strife,
Still your memory loves to wander on the morning hills of life,
Gaining glimpses of the glory that has burned to pass away,
As the dawn's wild hectic beauty melts into sober day.

And your thoughts are often with me, though you cannot well divine
How the scorching blasts of trial may have rudely shaken mine;
But my friend is unforgotten. Can he deem affection less
Where it bends a guardian spirit in the savage wilderness?
Where it reigns all undisputed, feeling nought of earth's alloy,
Like a free wild thing of nature, full of light and full of joy?
No! the friendship of our boyhood hath no change nor turning known,
But still burns strong within me, leaping up to meet your own.

Could you see me here at noonday, half a satyr, half a clown,
For my hands are hard with labour, and my cheek is darkly brown;
Not the slender youth you knew me, when on shining English sands
We watched the ships together and discoursed of foreign lands,
When our aims were undecided, and the golden future seemed
All that young Imagination in her heyday ever dreamed.

You may strive for fame and win it, *I* can only hope to share
Such poor toil and such poor triumph as the nameless exiles bear,
Fell the oak and rear the shanty, die amid the solitude,
Where the sword-bright river flashes from its sheath of sombre wood.
Yet I know not who is better—*you* with dreams of fame to come,
Or myself, whose aspirations in this awful bush are dumb,
For the dial-shadow pointeth to the grave when all is past,
And our toils, though high or humble, only seek for rest at last.

THE COUNTRY OF MASANIELLO.

Almost with his last breath, the great statesman who was the first Prime Minister of Italy deplored the condition into which Naples had been plunged by "that scoundrel Ferdinand"—the hero of Mr. Gladstone's indignant denunciations, and the father of him who fled like a spectre before the daylight of Garibaldi's advance. "There are now," said Cavour, while lying on his bed of death, "no longer Lombards, nor Piedmontese, nor Tuscans, nor Romagnols—we are all Italians. But there are still Neapolitans. There is much corruption in their country; but it is not their fault, poor people, they have been so badly governed!" Such is the report of those memorable words, given by Cavour's niece, the Countess Alfieri, in a recently published work by M. William de la Rive, entitled Le Comte de Cavour: Récits et Souvenirs. The count spoke with all the solemnity, the tenderness, the awe, and the sense of responsibility, of a man who knew that he had but few more moments to live; and there can be no doubt that what he said was the truth. It is one of the most fatal qualities of a despotism such as that of the detestable Neapolitan Bourbons that it not merely tortures the bodies of its victims, but poisons the whole national life. Self-respect disappears with self-government; abject servility is resorted to as the only protection against the caprices of a cruel and irresponsible tyrant; profligacy becomes the resource of men who, from not being allowed to speak, have almost ceased to think; violence, cowardliness, and greed, are soon equally the habits of the rulers and the ruled.

What Cavour expressed in brief, while waiting the Divine summons to depart, another Italian nobleman has just placed before the English public in a more elaborate form, in a style singularly vivid and dramatic, and from personal observation in what may be called the infected regions. Count Arrivabene, the author of Italy under Victor Emmanuel, is a member of an old Lombard family which for the last forty years has given many recruits to the patriotic party in the north of the peninsula. An Austrian subject by birth, an English subject by adoption, but above all things an Italian, the count is specially qualified to instruct Englishmen on the present position of his country, the virtues and short-comings of his countrymen, and the necessities of the future. A long residence in England as an exile, has given him such a command of our language that he writes his work in it direct, without trusting to the somewhat distorting medium of translation; and a corresponding knowledge of, and sympathy with, our institutions enable him to address his mind to the task in a spirit peculiarly acceptable to Englishmen. His two

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ample volumes contain an account of the wonderful events which have occurred in Italy within the last four years; but it is with his account of the social condition of the south that we have now to do. The battles of Lombardy, of Sicily, of Naples, and of the Papal States, are matters of history; and with politics we do not meddle in these pages. The accuracy of the count's volumes will not be doubted by any one acquainted with the work from which they are derived. The author, it is true, is a Lombard, and a strong Lombard feeling pervades his mind. Who so brave, patriotic, intelligent, statesman-like, gentle, and virtuous, as the men of that northern province recently belonging entirely to Austria, and still in one small fragment languishing beneath the grip of the Kaiser, or the count would not be a man proscribed in the ancient halls of his race? It has been a characteristic of Italians at all times to dwell with undue emphasis on what may be called provincial patriotism; but in Count Arrivabene this is balanced by a manifest habit of fairness, of the most scrupulous kind. The fact, moreover, is unquestionable, that the Lombard population is one of the finest in the peninsula, and has done priceless service in the national cause; but our author, while recording this with natural pride, does not forget the glories and the virtues of other parts of the common country, from the Alps to the Mediterranean.

Italy, like the sometime United States of America, may be divided into two grand sections, presenting many obvious contrasts. "The North" and "the South" are terms having a Transalpine as well as a Transatlantic signification, only with this vast difference—that the tendency of the two bodies in the one case is to cohesion, and in the other to separation. Yet in Italy there is in some respects a much more strongly marked distinction between the North and the South than exists in America. The original Italic stock in the North has been greatly and most advantageously qualified by the influx of Gothic races—the very bone and sinew of the modern world; the men of Naples and Sicily are in some measure Greek in their origin, and, though not without a Gothic infusion (for the Vandals, Normans, and Suabians have been there), have received a large element of Oriental and semi-Oriental blood, which they seem to have assimilated with greater readiness than the Teutonic. Their Greek ancestry should have made them great; but the Hellenes have not shone in the modern world, and they ceased to be the dominant race even in ancient times. The Greeks of the present day exhibit something of an Asiatic character; and the Neapolitans and Sicilians bear a strong family likeness. On the other hand, the contrast between the latter and the Northern Italians is most palpable. Though the language spoken by a Lombard or Tuscan and by a Neapolitan or Sicilian are both dialects of Italian, they are so dissimilar that an uneducated man from the one part of the country is absolutely unable to understand the speech of those belonging to the other part. The personal characteristics of the two races are equally distinct. Neither can claim a monopoly of good qualities; but the North is certainly far more energetic, strong, educated, and self-reliant, than the South, and is therefore fitter for freedom and self-government. Cavour saw and expressed the truth in those dying words of his, when he said that the Neapolitans must be taught morality, and be educated; but that, in the mean while, it was of no use to revile them. They are the children of a long succession of governments incalculably vicious and degrading, and it is to their credit that they have come no worse out of the trial.

Courage, which is one of the virtues of freedom, is not so widely diffused among the Southern as among the Northern Italians. It is true that, by a species of guerilla warfare, the Sicilians kept alive the insurrection in their island, in the spring of 1860, until the arrival of Garibaldi and his heroes changed a series of desultory operations into a triumphant campaign. But the Liberator had a good deal of trouble with the recruits he raised on the spot. Our countryman, Colonel Dunne, was entrusted with the command of a regiment of "Picciotti:" a name given to the volunteers supplied by the Sicilian peasantry. They had never been under fire, and at the taking of Melazzo they flinched unequivocally. This would not suit their English officer. Dunne accordingly resorted to a very rough device for urging them to the combat. He literally sabred them right and left wherever he found them hanging back, being at least determined that they should not save their lives by their cowardice. A battalion of this regiment was at one time skirting the wall of a garden from which the Neapolitan soldiers were directing a sharp fire. The colonel ordered one of his companies to jump over the wall, and dislodge the enemy from the enclosed space. The Picciotti hesitated, and even a vigorous application of the colonel's sword failed to urge them on. Dunne thereupon seized two of his lagging men, and threw them over the wall into the garden, repeating the operation two or three times. Struck with astonishment and consternation at this apparent descent from the sky of red-shirted Garibaldians (though, in truth, they were not worthy of that name), the Neapolitans exclaimed, "They fly, they fly!" and straightway began themselves to fly also, though in another sense and in a different manner. A good deal should of course be pardoned in young troops, to whom the perils of war are entirely new. The annals of all nations, if honestly written, would probably furnish instances of raw recruits wavering when opposed to disciplined battalions; for courage is as much a habit as a gift of nature. But it must be admitted that it is a very extreme instance when we find a people sabred by a foreigner into fighting for their own freedom. The population of Melazzo, moreover, left the town during the attack, instead of falling on the rear of its Neapolitan defenders.

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Count Arrivabene, however, attributes this pusillanimity to the demoralisation purposely encouraged by the Bourbon government, and he adds that "matters are in a fair way of changing; for, since Sicily has been freed, it gives to the Italian army soldiers who are worthy comrades of those drawn from the provinces of Piedmont, Lombardy, Tuscany, and the Æmilia."

Like most Southern races, the Sicilians are often superstitious, and not unfrequently cruel. The people of Messina boast of possessing an autograph letter of the Virgin Mary; and the inhabitants of another town say that they have some letters written by a very singular kind of saint—"San Diavolo" (St. Devil). The ferocity lurking in the hot blood of these impulsive islanders was shown in a very alarming way in the summer of 1860, while Garibaldi was preparing to cross the Straits into Naples. The people of the small town of Bronte thought they could not use their newly-acquired liberty better than by inaugurating a communistical movement, attended by all the horrors of the first French revolution. The adherents of the Bourbons were denominated "sorci" (rats), and in less than a week some fifty of them were slain in cold blood, and their property was divided amongst the rabble of the town. Educated in habits of violence and rapacity by their former rulers, the people seemed resolved to "better the instruction." But it was not for such purposes that Garibaldi had freed the Sicilians; so he sent one of his lieutenants (Bixio) to put an end to the outbreak, which was speedily done by a few summary executions. It is said—whether truly or not our author will not positively affirm—that General Bixio was so incensed on seeing the chief of the movement, who had himself slaughtered ten "rats," that he drew his revolver, and shot the culprit dead.

The Neapolitans are equally prone with the Sicilians to commit acts of ferocity. At Villa San Giovanni, the Bourbon troops shot a Garibaldian soldier who had mounted on the roof of a farm-house to exhibit a flag of truce; and two Neapolitan officers who afterwards visited the Liberator at his camp, to negotiate a surrender, coolly said, in excuse for that treacherous act, that "some wag of a sentry had let off his musket in a freak!" In the same "waggish" spirit, the men would sometimes turn upon their own officers. Shortly after Garibaldi's landing in Calabria, the Neapolitan General Brigante was compelled to capitulate. His soldiers looked upon this as the act of a traitor, and they slew the unfortunate commander in the piazza of Melito. From the first floor of the café commanding the piazza, Count Arrivabene, a day or two after, saw a half-dried pool of blood, mixed with cinders. It was there that Brigante had been murdered and half-burned, together with his unoffending horse.

Some weeks later, the count himself had practical evidence of the brutality of the Bourbon troops. In the pacific capacity of correspondent to a London newspaper, he was following the movements of the two armies at the battle of the Volturno, when he encountered a column of Neapolitans, who, after shooting him in the leg, made him their prisoner. One man struck him on the head; another gave him so heavy a blow on the shoulders that, although it was a bright day, he appeared to see all the stars in the heavens. About twenty Garibaldians had been captured by the same company. These men, together with the count, were forced to exchange their coats and caps for those of the Neapolitans, and to march at the front of the column. "You will thus have a chance of being killed by your own comrades," remarked one of the sergeants; and it is a marvel that no such catastrophe occurred. On entering the town of Capua, some of the populace endeavoured to tear the prisoners from the hands of the military, and to kill them at once. A barber rushed from his shop, razor in hand, and shouted out, "Captain, let me have one of the fellows!" Men, women, and children, showered stones on the captives; and some of the soldiers not forming their escort even endeavoured to cut them down with swords, or transfix them with bayonets. Still greater perils attended them on the following night; for, being compelled, in their journey to the fortress of Gaeta, to pass through a camp of twelve thousand Neapolitans, the soldiers who were sitting round their bivouac fires plucked out the burning stakes, and, with frightful howlings and execrations, threatened the Garibaldians with instant death. But the officer in command of the escort, who appears to have been a noble gentleman, drove back the infuriated troops, and in a quarter of an hour the prisoners were clear of the camp.

Servility is one of the inevitable fruits of a cruel and tyrannical government; and most painful were the exhibitions of this nature which Count Arrivabene saw in his progress through the southern provinces. Having been set free, owing to the interposition of the English government, he re-entered Capua on the 3rd of November, with the staff of Garibaldi. The same people who a month before had menaced the lives of the captives, now greeted their return as conquerors, with shouts of welcome and praise; the very barber who had thirsted for the blood of "one of the fellows" was amongst the most enthusiastic; and a Neapolitan captain, who, before the capitulation, had called Garibaldi a brigand, and Victor Emmanuel a scoundrel, professed himself a staunch patriot, and asked our author to recommend him to the Sardinian general, that he might obtain a commission as major. This tendency to beg for places, honours, and promotion, was lamented by Cavour on the solemn occasion to which we have already referred. It disgusted Garibaldi immediately after his arrival in the southern capital; and it met Count Arrivabene at every turn. The Liberator took up his quarters at the palace of the Foresteria, and here he was soon besieged by a mob of beggars of all classes. Every one professed to have endured

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unheard-of sufferings under the Bourbons for the cause of liberty, and all thought they had indisputable claim on the dictatorial government for pensions or sinecures. After the departure of Garibaldi, and during the Vice-regency of Farini, our author witnessed a disgraceful scene at the palace of the government. A porter entered one of the private rooms, and announced that a deputation from "the martyrs of freedom" was in the hall, and wanted to see Farini. He explained this singular designation by saying that the persons referred to were the patriots who had been either imprisoned or persecuted by the Bourbons. They were shown in to the governor-general, and courteously asked what they required. "The martyrs, whose messengers we are," answered the spokesman, "request places in the government—every man a place; but a lucrative one, and without delay." Farini replied that he would consider their cases, but he at the same time pleaded the difficulty of finding room for so many applicants. "Thereupon," says Count Arrivabene, "as if all the martyrs, living and dead, not only of the kingdom of Naples, but of all Italy, were assembled in the room, there arose a chorus of voices, shouting, 'Bread, bread! We are all starving!'" Farini, in a mood between pity and disgust, flung his purse towards the supplicants, saying, "If it is only bread you want, take this!" Our author witnessed the incident from the door of the room; and, he adds, "it was revolting to see how the miserable wretches, changing at once from candidates for office into downright beggars, clutched at the purse, tore it from each other's hands, and seized upon the few napoleons it contained, squabbling and snatching, as if oblivious of the absent martyrs, who were probably as hungry as themselves, but who assuredly never had their share of Farini's liberality." These men, it must be borne in mind, all belonged to the well-to-do classes, and therefore had not the excuse of dire necessity which they feigned.

There are other forms of beggary in Naples, less ignominious, perhaps, than this, but even more annoying. The streets are so infested (or at any rate were, until recently) with crowds of horrible creatures soliciting alms, and sometimes exhibiting malformations and the ravages of disease, that locomotion, whether on foot or in a carriage, becomes a difficult, painful, and disgusting task. Relieve one of these professed beggars, and you are a marked man; you are followed from place to place by a buzzing swarm of petitioners, and are even assailed outside the windows of your hotel by such cries as "Excellency—general—highness! we are dying of hunger—we are dying of hunger!" In England and in other countries, beggary is a trade; in Naples it appears to be an art—a science. The devices by which a traveller (especially an English traveller) is annoyed, are multitudinous in number, and wonderful in ingenuity. There are half-naked beggars and well-dressed beggars; gentlemanly beggars and priestly beggars. The mendicant friars supply a large contingent. In fact, mendicity approaches in so many shapes that the foreigner may well be excused if he doubts every man, woman, and child he meets. And yet Naples has a magnificent central workhouse, with a large annual income; but in the time of the Bourbons the funds were scandalously misappropriated, being divided amongst the administrators and the political police. It is to be hoped matters are now better.

The government deposed by Garibaldi, though strong enough to imprison and torture all who refuse to be its slaves, was powerless for good. Its impotence in a matter of ordinary police was strikingly shown in the rise of a society of thieves and assassins, called the Camorra, which was allowed to strike its roots so deep that it has not yet been extirpated even by the present government, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts made with that view. The society is composed of liberated convicts, minor officials, and men connected with the police and with the prisons. Its members keep a watch on all persons from whom they think they can extract anything, and by continued threats impose such contributions as they please. During the two last reigns they set the authorities completely at defiance. They paid no custom-house duties, and taxed the citizens in any way they liked. They even extended their influence over the jails, and forced the prisoners to buy with cash, protection from annoyance and injury. The government was at length roused into taking some steps against so frightful an evil; and the principal Camorristi were despatched to the penitentiary island of Ponza. But, by a piece of false liberalism in the days of June, 1860, when free institutions were proclaimed with a sort of hysterical haste and vehemence, in the vain hope of checkmating Garibaldi, the Camorristi were allowed to return. They affected to be great friends of liberty, and, in that desecrated name, abandoned themselves to the most horrible licence. "They smuggled, and protected smugglers; they violated all moral laws; they robbed openly; they used thieves as their instruments, and committed deeds of blood which remained unpunished, owing to the cowardliness of the witnesses, who would not depose against them, for fear of their lives." Since the revolution, the evil has been in some degree checked; but it still exists, and will probably continue to exist until the whole people have been educated in habits of industry and order. When the Duke of Cajanello—an alleged political offender—was in prison during the administration of Commendatore Nigra, he used to be met every Sunday, while taking his walk in the lobby, by the chief of the Camorra, who was there together with a crew of thieves and assassins, and who, addressing him with the greatest respect, would say: "Eccellenza, this week you have been fined such and such a sum." From twenty to thirty piastres a time, were thus extracted from the pocket of his excellency, who, had he refused the contribution, or denounced the miscreants to the authorities, would in all probability have been assassinated.

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One of the exploits of the Camorristi reminds us of the story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves. Two individuals having the appearance of workmen presented themselves at the mansion of the Marquis X., carrying a piano. They were told that the marquis had gone into the country; but the porter said that they might take the piano up-stairs, and place it in the apartment for which it was designed. This was done, and the two workmen left. In the evening, an inmate of the house went down to the porter, and asked him whether the marquis had returned from the country? The man replied in the negative; whereupon the other said that he had heard persons moving about in the marquis's private room. The two went up-stairs, and found several thieves at work; and the mystery as to how they had got in, was thus explained:—One of the nobleman's servants belonged to the society of the Camorra; and, having communicated with his associates, they placed in the piano one of their comrades, who afterwards admitted the rest.

As might be expected, ignorance, prejudice, and superstition, darken the minds of the Neapolitans to a lamentable degree. In the land of San Gennaro, the saints are worshipped with extravagant devotion, varied at times with downright abuse when they do not perform all that is required of them. The fisherman will not put to sea should a gust of wind quench the light of the oil-lamp burning before the Madonna of the house; the lazzarone pauses in unreasoning dread at the door of the wine-shop, if a dog and a cat are fighting there together; and all classes stand in awe of the Evil Eye. This last-named superstition is one of the most widely diffused in the world. It is found in the extreme north of Europe, and among the Oriental races, as readers of Beckford's Vathek are aware; but in Naples it is extremely prevalent. Even the educated believe in this occult and malignant influence; and those who have the unlucky credit of exercising it are universally shunned. The power is thought to be transmitted in some families from generation to generation. The late King Ferdinand, with the weakness of mind which commonly accompanies cruelty, was a firm believer in this superstition, and refused to receive at the palace any one, no matter how high his rank, who had the reputation of being a Jettatore, as these suspected persons are called. One day, however, a prince who was popularly accused of possessing the Evil Eye got admission to a royal ball at Caserta. Every one fled from his presence; and, as the king was talking to him, a large chandelier almost over their heads fell from its fastenings, and severely injured some of the guests. The unfortunate prince was of course never allowed to come near the court again, and was even shunned by his most intimate friends.

Yet, with all these bad characteristics, there are many excellent elements in the Neapolitans. Count Arrivabene says that they are quick, sharp, and intelligent, and that they possess much goodness of heart and a generosity which only requires training. He believes that they will form valuable members of the Italian family as soon as they have been educated to their new destinies; and he records that improvements have already taken place. In talking of the Neapolitans, we are too apt to think only of the people belonging to the metropolis, who, corrupted by the example of a bad court, and the opportunities for vicious indulgence which a large and pleasure-loving city affords, are not the best specimens of the race. Amongst the mountains of Calabria are to be found a community, not indeed highly civilised, but possessing many of the virtues of simple and primitive populations. The people of that province are brave and hospitable, and furnished Garibaldi with some excellent volunteers after he had crossed the Straits from Sicily. The gentry place their mansions at the disposal of any visitor who brings a letter of introduction; and on leaving one house, if the guest should be a traveller, he is furnished by the host with a letter to the master of some other house in the town or village where he will stop the following night. He may thus travel from one end of the province to the other, private houses doing the duty of inns, of which in those wild regions there is great need. To an Englishman with a sufficient knowledge of the Italian language, and a due familiarity with the associations of the country, a journey through Calabria and Basilicata is interesting in the highest degree. The scenery is magnificent. Sea and mountain and forest; valleys of enchanting beauty; rivers that have become illustrious in ancient and modern story; towns, hanging upon precipitous peaks, or basking on the shores of sunlit gulfs; vegetation that unites the glowing affluence of the tropics, with the sterner majesty of Central and Northern Europe, and an atmosphere of luminous blue; these are the natural attractions of Southern Italy. There are other attractions. The women are often surpassingly lovely; those of the town of Bagnara are so beautiful as to have found their way into a proverb. Our author and some of his English friends went to see them, and were transported with admiration. "In their countenances," we are told, "there was a curious mixture of sadness and gaiety, of severity and grace. Their soft dark-blue eyes glowed beneath black eyebrows, and their smooth low foreheads, of the Greek classical type, were shaded by a profusion of undulating brown hair. It was a half-sweet, half-savage beauty; a strange mixture of the Saracenic race with the purer blood of the Hellenes."

Among the most interesting features of Calabria are the Albanian colonies scattered about in little villages amid the mountains. In the fifteenth century, the reigning Prince of Bisignano married the daughter of the Albanian condottiere, Scanderbeg. Together with the lady came a number of settlers; and the descendants of these remain to the present day, unmixed with the surrounding population. They preserve their original tongue, their national costume, and their Greek form of Christianity; and their

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manners and customs present many interesting peculiarities. Yet they are true Italian patriots, vehemently opposed to the Bourbons and to all other forms of despotism, and admirable soldiers: as they proved themselves in 1860.

Whosoever wishes to gain a real insight into the Italy of the present moment, and to know what she is, what she has done, and what she has to do, should consult the volumes by Count Arrivabene.

A JUDICIAL ERROR.

Jean Guigourès, a man seventy-four years of age, lived, with his wife and a servant maid, in a little house in the village of Casselcoudiac, not far from the town of Bannalec, in the French department of Finistère. The house was a poor place; but the neighbours deemed Guigourès a miserly man, and they knew that he had recently received a considerable sum of money. After midnight, early in the morning of the 18th of January, 1854, the Guigourès household were startled out of their sleep by the breaking in of their door; and then two men entered, with white shirts over their working clothes, white handkerchiefs around their necks and heads, and with blackened faces. The elder of the two burglars appeared to be about fifty years of age; and he carried a lighted candle; the younger burglar seemed to be between thirty and forty, and was armed with a musket and pistol. With oaths and curses they ordered old Guigourès to get up and show them where his money was hidden. The old man offered them bread and pancakes, but they rejected his hospitality with scorn. The elder burglar instead of accepting his refreshments dragged and kicked his aged wife, and struck and kicked him for trying to protect her: while the younger took aim at them both with his fire-arms, threatening to shoot them and burn down their home if they did not deliver up their money. M. Guigourès nevertheless refused to point out his hoard. But after breaking open many drawers and boxes, the elder robber at last found in a cupboard a sum of more than eighty pounds. While the thieves were busy rifling this cupboard, M. Guigourès escaped to the door; but was prevented from getting out by a third robber, who had been stationed there on the watch. When the robbers left at daybreak, certain men hearing the cries of the Guigourès household came to them, and then started off in pursuit of the thieves. The pursuers came near enough to the burglars to hear them say, "We are followed. Let us save ourselves."

Thus far, we have but the particulars of a very common-place burglary; what follows is extraordinary.

The footsteps of the burglars were traced towards Bannalec. A search being made in the cottage of a labourer of the name of Auguste Baffet, a man in his fifty-first year, a shirt, a handkerchief, and other things similar to those worn by the thieves were found, muddy and blood-stained. Baffet had a mate, Yves Louarn, a labourer, thirty-seven years of age, and suspicion fell on these two men. They were arrested, and were confronted with the members of the Guigourès family, who, however, could not identify them. The witnesses could only say they were similar in age, height, build, beard, and clothes, to the burglars; the servant maid almost affirming that she recognised their voices. But the medical witness, strangely enough, dispelled the doubts of the court and jury by distinctly swearing that he found upon the brow of Louarn, and behind the ears of Baffet, notwithstanding the care with which they had been shaved and washed, marks of soot or charcoal, which had been applied with grease. The explanations Baffet and Louarn gave of these circumstances were set aside as inadmissible. The prisoners were proved to have been both in misery, and Baffet was proved to have been threatened with a seizure of his furniture. It was alleged that Louarn had proposed to a comrade, on the 17th of January, to go and commit a robbery, "where they would find corn and money." The prisoners denied everything charged against them. There was no other evidence than what has been herein set forth; a servant maid almost recognising their height and voice; and a medical statement respecting the remains of marks of blackened faces; they were both found guilty; Baffet was condemned to twenty years' imprisonment with hard labour, and Louarn to transportation for life. Nothing in the demeanour of these men, remarks the reporter, indicated the perversity they had evinced. Baffet died in the hulks at Brest in 1855, and Louarn died at Cayenne in 1856.

An interval of six years. In the French law reports for the end of February, 1860, stands a report of a case before the High Court of Revision, with these headings in italics: "Judicial error—two innocent men condemned to hard labour—their deaths in the hulks—condemnation of the guilty—prohibition to publish the report—appeal in cassation,"—i. e. revision.

Four or five years after the burglary—unhappily more than four or five years too late—and after the innocent had died of the sufferings due only to the guilty, in the month of February, 1860, three men, named Jambon, Ollivier, and Mallon, and a woman called Widow Sinquin, were clearly found guilty of the burglary committed in the house of the Guigourès family, and were justly condemned to the identical penalties under which the two innocent men had died.

But when trying and punishing the guilty, the assize court of Finistère, which had permitted the publication of the evidence against the innocent, prohibited the publication of any report of their proceedings. This power appears to have been conferred upon the tribunals, by a clause in a decree issued by the Prince-President of the Republic, on the 17th February, 1852. Oddly enough, certain of the guilty prisoners appealed against the sentence which condemned them,

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and one of the pleas of their appeal was, that there had been an unconstitutional prohibition of the publication of the proceedings of the court which tried them. Why publicity was more inconvenient in 1860 than in 1854 the court did not say; yet not one paragraph, sentence, or line, of the evidence establishing the innocence of Baffet and Louarn, was allowed to be published. The only amends made was the following sentence from the speech of the imperial procurator: "The real criminals are to-day in the hands of justice. They await the chastisement they have so justly merited. The deaths of Louarn and Baffet make it impossible to repair the judicial error of which they were the victims; but the debates of this trial, and the new verdict of the jury, will be a brilliant and solemn restoration of their memory."

Very brilliant, and very solemn, no doubt. But hardly satisfactory.

SOLID REASONS.

Ten years ago the mental condition of my friend Robert Bigge was such as to occasion us much secret anxiety.

Robert had held office in Downing-street, but had lately resigned the (wafer) seals of his department, in consequence of the sudden abolition of a class of gentlemen known by the appropriate title of "clerks extraordinary."

The genus being extinct, a few words to describe it may not be out of place.

In the event of a sudden accumulation of pressing correspondence, it was customary in the Yawhaw Office to engage a number of misguided persons ambitious of becoming public servants, to place them in an apartment provided only with such rude furniture as is essential to the fulfilment of public duty, and to employ them, so long as the stress continued, in copying returns and despatches at the remuneration of fourpence a page. This surplus work (which usually lasted only a few days, or, at most, weeks) being concluded, the class was sifted, as it were, two or three individuals remaining still attached to the establishment, in readiness for the next emergency. The remainder were requested to leave their addresses for the information of an embarrassed government, and depart.

My friend Robert had been of this fortunate minority. He had even entertained some secret hope of struggling fairly on to the "establishment," when a few words from a Scotch member of parliament, in the form of interrogatory, knocked the "extraordinary" arrangement at once on the head, and condemned the recognised members of the Yawhaw Office to the annoyance of doing their own work themselves.

Robert expressed himself a good deal hurt. He had "done the State some service." If they didn't "know it," that was no fault of Bob's. He had always signed his name in the attendance-book, and to the receipts for his stipend, in the very largest characters polite custom allows. He had dated all his letters "Downing-street," and, on a certain festive occasion, had insidiously engaged a friend to propose the health of her Majesty's "present advisers," in order that he might respond on behalf of that body. And so he did.

To be cast aside now, without compliment, without apology! His "cankered country" tendered him nothing but his wages. And what was thirty-seven pounds fourteen shillings for four months' sedentary service, and two thousand two hundred and sixty-two pages of manuscript? There was, moreover, another, and a far more serious claim upon the State; but of that presently.

Bob was, indeed, at the period I speak of, in a condition to demand the utmost sympathy and watchfulness friendship could afford. You might not unnaturally imagine that Bobby, wounded by the ungrateful return for his public services—dismissed into an uncared-for, and, what is ten times more galling to a sensitive mind, unpensioned obscurity—was sinking into mental prostration, tending, it may be, to idiotcy.

It was scarcely so. His mental faculties were wholly unimpaired. Again, it was abundantly evident that his bodily health did not suffer. It was a matter of congratulation among us, that our friend had of late grown singularly stout. But that his heart was a prey to some secret melancholy, had been for a long time a subject of strong suspicion to those who loved the boy (Bobby was but twenty-three), and this mystery I, at the instigation of his aunt, set myself diligently to fathom. For a while my endeavours proved fruitless. Hoping to fall in with his humour, I tried him, in the first place, with a quiet dinner, finishing the evening at a cheerful little lecture by Professor Grumbelow, "On the molecular variations exhibited by the application of acids to metamorphic rocks."

At the dinner Bobby ate; at the lecture he slumbered. I myself was not wholly disinclined to doze. I remember the professor holding up something that looked like a pink artichoke, after a pic-nic of caterpillars, which he called a "fibrous dolomite," and subsequently remarking that "a crystal of Thompsonite, boiled with hydrochloric acid, deposited a gelatinous transparent precipitate of silica." Here, I thought the lecturer handed round plates filled with flint broth, wherein floated slices of red sandstone for bread. Candidly, I believe this must have been illusion.

Neither these, nor scenes of wilder dissipation, appeared to answer my end. I sometimes conducted Bobby, docile enough, poor fellow, to the theatre, where my reward was to see him sit through a "screaming" farce without changing a muscle.

Once, and but once, were my pains rewarded. It happened in Slangster-square.

We had attended one of the most dismal dioramas ever, perhaps, designed by artist's haunted brain. A few mournful creatures moved stealthily through the building. An invisible (would I could add inaudible) harmonium executed a funeral dirge of the days of Queen Anne; the score of which, with the gifted person who composed it, should, in rigid justice, have been

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inhumed with the above lamented princess. As we issued forth, I glanced with some anxiety at my friend's countenance, deeming it not impossible that the degree of depression to which we had both been reduced might lead to a burst of tearful confidence which would reveal all.

Suddenly his face lighted up. He paused before the entrance to one of the smaller exhibitions.

"Let us enter," said Bobby, grasping my arm.

We paid a shilling each. I followed my friend into a large apartment on the ground floor. There was a sort of dais in the centre, upon the dais a huge chair, and, on that chair, the very fattest individual I ever beheld. The latter welcomed us with graceful ease, invited us to perform the tour of his person, and then, pointing to chairs, begged us to offer any personal observations that might suggest themselves to our minds.

The situation was not without its embarrassments. The cheerful countenance of our mighty host forbade all idea of condolence. On the other hand, congratulations to a man in hopeless captivity to his own fat were cruel and absurd. No question occurred to me, beyond that which, in the exhibition of other obese animals, is commonly anticipated by means of a placard above their heads—namely, what he had been fed upon?

Having ascertained that "'tators, tripe, and sausages," were principally responsible for the interesting result presented to us, we presently took our leave.

The strange sight had not quitted Bob's countenance during the whole interview. His eye was brighter, his step more elastic than I had seen for weeks past, as we took our westward way.

"And this man is not unhappy," said Bob, musingly. "He smiles. He is jocular. He acquiesces in a bodily formation only distinguishable from the purely spherical, by those two fat appanages it affords him a melancholy satisfaction to call his 'legs.' No remorse visits his, I cannot say, pillow—for he never goes to bed—but the back of his easy-chair, on account of those early excesses, that reprehensible indulgence in—what did he say?—tripes and sausages, that singular predilection for the interior of other animals which has proved so fatally nutritious to his own. He has broken no affectionate ties; he has estranged no friend. He, on the contrary, adds daily to their number, and a shilling apiece, besides. Why, then, should I——"

"Gennleman, sir, gi' a poor boy a hap'ny!" bellowed one of those young highwaymen the law hath hitherto forborne, charging viciously at Bobby with his muddy broom. But for this assault, I should have penetrated Bob's secret on the spot. As it was, a few days more elapsed.

I was dining one evening at my friend's chambers when a large brown paper parcel made its appearance. Bob turned pale, and laid down his knife and fork. He passed the napkin over his forehead, and appeared to collect himself. Then he opened the parcel, and fell back in his chair. I glanced at the contents, which seemed to consist of nothing more terrible than a new light paletot, forwarded, according to an address on the paper, by an eminent tailor.

"Away with it! Hide it from my sight!" cried Bob, with a palpable shudder, sinking his face in his hands.

I flung the parcel on the furthest sofa.

"It is the death-warrant," said Bob, presently looking up, with a ghastly smile, "of my hopes. George, my boy, the struggle is over. But *you* will not desert me, George" (the good fellow stretched over and grasped my hand). "Companion of my light and careless youth, to *you* it makes no difference whether your friend—is—you know—or——But I see you do not clearly comprehend."

Bob paused for a moment, then recommenced.

"It is now some eight months since, while attached—and very warmly so—to the Yawhaw Office, that I first became conscious of a slight difficulty in buttoning my coat. Willing to believe that this was due to some accidental shrinking of the cloth, or other extraneous cause, I simply had the button altered. Again, in a few days, the difficulty recurred; nay, other garments — my vest, the waistband of my trousers—began to evince a similar reluctance to meet on the usual easy terms. It was useless to shut my eyes to the miserable fact. I was growing fat, and that with startling rapidity. Eight hours a day at my desk had done the business. What could I do? I was inclined to work, attached to my department. I felt within me no ordinary powers of—of—copying. My aunt allows me but one hundred a year. Resign I could not. A martyr to my duty to the public, and to myself, I clung to my desk until dislodged, as you are aware, by the officious and unparliamentary comments of Mr. Angus McItchery. But, alas! the mischief was done. Day by day, hour by hour, adds something to my weight. You must have—eh?—*seen* it—eh, George?" asked poor Bob, piteously.

I was obliged to confess that I *had*.

"They have fattened me," said Bob, with intense pathos, "only to kill."

"No, no, Bob."

"You will see. Well, sir, I was resolved to know the very worst. Face my tailors I could not. They are remarkably fastidious men. I wrote to the firm, humbly, appealingly, 'Gentlemen, I enclose you a careful measurement of what was but recently recognised by you as my waist. If such proportions will not utterly disgrace a frock-coat of your design—send me one. If otherwise, then forward to me a paletot suited to my misfortune.' Behold their answer."

With an effort, Bob rose, walked to the sofa, seized, and shook out the paletot. The wide folds expressed but too eloquently the strength of the opinion entertained by Messrs. Stilts, on the case of their unhappy client.

"But, tcha! that is not the worst, old fellow," resumed Bob. "Vain I am not. At any other period of my life, I might defy my flesh to do its worst. I have, indeed, always looked forward to a certain amount of obesity, as the

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distinctive feature of my race. My governor was a nineteen stun-er; my mother was likewise a stunner, and her name was Lambert; she was descended from the illustrious Daniel, and I have in my possession the very last coat and waistcoat worn by that greatest of living men."

"I have always heard that your mother was very beautiful," I remarked.

"She was so fair," returned Bob, in his sentimental tones, "that it seemed impossible there could ever be too much of her. It did, however, become expensive, when it took three people to place her in her garden-chair! My good mother, you are aware, was not of ducal extraction. She had occupied that position which society, in its careless, generalising way, has agreed to call a 'cook.' In *her* case, it was the poetry of feeding. In *her* hands, the gross elements with which it was necessary to deal, changed, without the loss of any nutritive feature, into flowers and sunshine. My father married her by accident."

"By accident?"

"Pure toss-up," said Bobby, descending suddenly to prose. "The governor was spoony on a girl of the neighbourhood. Popped. She refused. Governor galloped home in a rage, vowing he would marry whichever of his maid servants opened the door to him. (Nota-bene. There was at the time a pretty little rustic, the gardener's daughter, who did occasional duty as portress.) Fate decreed that Susanna Lambert should be sweeping the hall. That young lady opened the door; and that young lady became my honoured parent.

"George," continued Bobby, rising and standing in an easy attitude with his back to the fire, and his coat-tails over his arms, "I take after my sire. I am, I own it, susceptible. I am what is popularly (but absurdly) termed, 'in love.' To speak more logically, love, sir, hath dwelt in *me*, from the moment at which the most dazzling face imagination can conceive, looked suddenly round the partition of box B, at the Haymarket Theatre, gazed straight at me, and disappeared. There were two other objects in that box—human, probably—I did not note. I was conscious of but one fact; that there, within nine inches of my right elbow, sat the Fate of Robert Bigge."

Bob paused, applied his handkerchief to his features, and resumed.

"The play, Hamlet, was, on that evening, prolonged to an indefinite extent. There were, I should say, nineteen acts, with musical interruptions of moderate duration. At the conclusion, I held a conference with the box-keeper touching box B. 'The Countess de Clerville and party.' Need I mention that I watched that box? Forth she came, leaning gracefully on the arms of her two companions. The ample folds of a rich burnous concealed her delicate form, but revealed the exquisite little foot that bore her to the awaiting carriage. I flung myself into the nearest Hansom. 'Follow that carriage. *Not too closely!*' I shouted through the little hole, as our horse began nibbling at the retreating calves of the countess's footman. We took the direction of the Regent's Park. In Portland-place a sudden pull up nearly flung me on the horse's tail. The carriage had stopped at one of the doors, and my donkey of a driver all but ran into it.

"It was, however, only one of the companions who alighted—when the carriage, turning sharply to the right, led us to a street in the immediate vicinity of Russell-square, 'at last,' I thought, 'I have thee!' Foiled again! The surviving companion got out, waving respectful adieus, and once more the carriage proceeded. Returning towards the Regent's Park, we skirted that beautiful enclosure on the Hampstead side, made a turn or two, and had reached a place called, I observed, Nasturtium Villas, when my cabman suddenly pulled up, and shouted down the orifice, 'I say, sir, would you mind 'aving another cab?' 'Nonsense!' I bellowed back. 'Get on, confound you! You'll lose.' ''Tell'ee what,' said the cabman. 'I can't go on this 'ere game all night. This 'ere 'oss 'e 'asn't 'ad 'is supper, nor I an't 'ad mine. Oss won't go no furder.'

"It certainly appeared so, and the upshot was that I found myself alone on foot, at half-past two in the morning, lurking in the neighbourhood of Nasturtium Villas, with as much hope of getting a cab as if I were on the banks of Newfoundland.

"How I got home I hardly know. I do know, however, that this failure by no means blunted my purpose. No Countess de Clerville appeared in the Court Guide. I therefore, on the very next day, repaired to Nasturtium Villas, and took up the scent where I had lost it. In that locality I was positive my beautiful fawn had run to covert. An intelligent-looking crossing-sweeper attracted my eye:

"'Did she, hem, know any of the residents in Nasturtium Villas?'

"'Yes, a plenty. Mrs. Biblicott.'

"'Nobody else?'

"'Yes, Mrs. Jones.'

"'Had she ever heard the name of the Countess of Clerville?'

"'*What* name, please?'

"'Clerville.'

"'Knows her very well. A very nice lady, giv' her tea-leaves. She was hunder 'ousemaid at number seventeen.'

"'Who?'

"'Kearwell, Susan Kearwell.'

"'Ridiculous!' The donation I made to this interesting person would not place her in absolute independence of her crossing.

"In vain I pursued my inquiries. No Countess of Clerville could I hear of, in that or any other neighbourhood.

"It was about this time that you must have noticed a marked change in my demeanour. In spite of much bodily exercise, as well as mental agitation, neither of which tends much to corpulence, I found myself, George, becoming fatter and fatter every hour. Living on the one hope;—that of once more seeing her who was

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the star of my existence, I could not but dread the actual meeting. There is something essentially inapt in a fat lover.

"One evening about dusk, some three months after our first meeting, as I was walking, or rather waddling in the neighbourhood of Nasturtium Villas, a carriage dashed past me, a face looked out, a beaming, brilliant face! Sir, it lit up the whole rank of villas, like—like——"

"Gas?" I suggested.

"Not at all," said Bob, with sudden indignation. "She was gone; but my eyes, straining, like twin detectives, in pursuit of the thief that had robbed my heart's till (and used it very roughly in doing so), observed something fall from the carriage window. I hurried up. A bouquet! More, sir, more! Among these blessed stalks nestled a scrap of paper, torn off a mantuamaker's bill. On the blank side had been written, with haste and a pencil, 'To-morrow. *Later.*' I dined that evening at the Starve-and-Tatter Club, upon whose elder and steadier members my feverish gaiety seemed to make a considerable impression.

"I was on the ground on the morrow at the appointed time. It was darkish. I wore my widest paletot, and walked with a carefully-studied lightness, more in keeping with my mind than body.

"Few carriages passed Nasturtium Villas. The excellent inhabitants did not evince symptoms of being in the full tide of London fashion. The consequence was that when the sound of approaching wheels *was* heard, my heart throbbed almost to bursting. *Again* the carriage, *again* the face. *Again* that footman's calves, two white meteors, receded into the darkness. *Again* a bouquet and a note! I hastened with my prize to the nearest lamp. There, to my utter astonishment, I read as follows:

"'Why this extraordinary persecution? If it be your fancy to haunt our quiet precincts, at least avoid Number Three, Laburnum Cottages, third turning to the left, at twenty minutes past eight, on Thursday. C. de C.' To-morrow, George, is 'Thursday.' I shall avail myself of this gracious prohibition. Will you accompany me?"

I pressed my friend's hand, not without emotion. Bob thanked me with a melancholy smile, for his eye had lit upon the paletot.

"In that hideous garb," he said, bitterly, "and under the shadow of night, I may, perchance, venture upon expressions which, spoken under ordinary circumstances, would reduce me to the rank of a Jack Pudding! But, George, should she invite me to approach nearer, so that the outlines of—what I dare no longer designate—my figure might become visible, sir, I could not do it. Revolt her taste at the very outset? Crush the tender buds of her young affection beneath this shapeless mound of flesh? Let me win her *first*, then, by those discreet degrees by which a certain cat is reported (whether correctly or otherwise) to have devoured the candle, reveal myself to her in all my fearful rotundity. It is here, my friend, that you can help me. There is much, I am told, in the magic of voice. Mine is low and sweet. *I* will do the speaking, *you* the acting. Excuse me," continued Bob, interrupting me as I was about to speak, "I have reconnoitred the premises. The object of my fair warner-off is to hold converse with me through the window which looks upon a little lawn, which is flanked by a shrubbery, which is open to the road, which is innocent of travellers nine-tenths of the day. Certain laburnums approach the house so closely as to be on speaking terms. I propose to avail myself of their friendly cover, while *you*, standing out just far enough to allow your noble form to be distinctly visible, will accompany my observations with appropriate action. How say you, George?"

"The system at present in vogue for the treatment of lunatics," I replied, slowly, "involves, I conceive, as complete an acquiescence in the ruling fancy as circumstances will allow. For this one evening, Robert, I am yours. Oh, my Bob, will I second, for this once, your intended assault upon the common sense, not to say peace of mind, of a lovely and confiding woman. What a goose she must be!"

Eight o'clock that evening saw us strolling leisurely past Laburnum Cottages. A small carriage-sweep led up to each, and the gates, in the instance of number three, standing open, there would, we saw, be no difficulty in slipping unobserved into the little shrubbery which, as Bob had said, reached, at one point, within a few paces of the house.

It was not without a slight blush, such as might become the cheek of a youthful burglar cracking, to speak technically, his maiden crib, that, following the intrepid Bob, I stole into the laburnum covert. It was growing dark. Bob's watch indicated the appointed time, when the sound of a window, gently opened, reached our ears.

"A—he—em!" remarked a soft voice.

"Thank you, I am aware of it," murmured Bob. "I see you distinctly, sweet. *Ehe—e—em!* (A little to the front, George, my boy.)"

I stepped out just clear of the trees, Bobby, with his head in the fork of a large laburnum, close in my rear.

"Come no nearer," said the voice from the window.

"I obey in all things," replied Bob, with alacrity, while I made a graceful bow.

"I see your figure quite well."

"Thank Heaven you *don't!*" said Bob, in a fervent whisper.

"But I have very solid reasons for the caution I exhibit."

"Mine are still more solid," muttered Bob.

"And I must beg you not to misinterpret my present line of conduct. I cannot, sir, be insensible to the persevering nature of your pursuit of me. I have seen you many times, when you were not aware of it——"

"The deuce she has!" said Bob, rather uneasily.

"And, dark as it was, have never failed to recognise that countenance which, I, I must

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own, at our first meeting, impressed me in a manner only to be understood by those who have tested the imponderable essences in the crucible of rational experiment. For do not imagine that the meeting of our eyes on the occasion I refer to was accidental. A powerful magnetic impulse compelled me, as it were, to look round the partition, and I was in no wise astonished to find your look awaiting mine. It is useless, my unknown friend, to contend against these occult influences. In that conviction, I have laid aside, in some measure, the reserves of my sex, and permitted this interview. I did, indeed, make *some* effort to contravene the decrees of fate, since, destined as we probably are, utimately, for each other, I yet foresee difficulties to be encountered, obstacles to be reduced, prejudices overcome. In short, I ——Hark! I fear we are about to be interrupted. You may approach the window for one moment, but do not utter a word."

I had been dying with curiosity to see the speaker more distinctly, for the voice was silver-sweet as Juliet's own; and, without waiting to consult my principal, made but three paces to the window, concealing my features as I might. One glance at the face that bent over the window-sill sufficed to assure me that Bob had not been romancing. I had never seen anything lovelier in woman. The stars that had begun to gather over us seemed to reflect themselves for an instant in those eyes that gazed down on me.

A hand glistened out from the darkness; it was not very far from my lips; it presently became nearer; it was soft, and white, and rather plump, that hand, and it bore a sapphire—poor counterfeit of the glittering eyes above.

"Wednesday week. The Botanical. *Across the rhododendrons*," was whispered hurriedly. There was a burst of light in the apartment. Back I skipped to covert.

"Across the rhododendrons! *Why* across—?" began Bob, discontentedly.

"Ingrate! Can anything be more fortunate? Your rhododendron I take to be a plant of considerable volume. Protected by one of these, you might, were you as fat as your maternal ancestor himself, hold converse with your princess as lightly and unconcernedly as though you had the waist of a wasp."

Robert assented, and we walked home, highly delighted with the prospect of affairs.

Wednesday week, according to Botanical tradition, proved a day of terrific storm and tempest. Tents there were, indeed, but, from the spouting, dropping, and drizzling in all directions under their fictitious shelter, one might have imagined it rather an interesting display of waterworks provided by the society.

The crowd was immense, and as Bob, regardless of long dresses, fought his desperate way to the region of rhododendrons, the eyes of more than one fair train-carrier spoke those daggers it is not considered polite to use. I followed, but not closely, as Bob was, on this occasion, both to show and speak for himself.

Suddenly I noticed my friend stop dead short; a change came over his really handsome face, the colour mounting to the roots of his hair. Following his gaze, I saw the beautiful face that had fascinated him come slowly into view, as if rising from a nest of flowers. It greeted him with a frank, sweet smile, after which an animated conversation ensued, a tall hedge of rich blossoms alone separating the pair. This lasted nearly half an hour, at the end of which the lovely head subsided into the crowd, and was seen no more.

Bob came back to me hopelessly enslaved and slightly incoherent.

"She is all that man's soul could covet, old fellow. Oh, George, George! Sweet enthusiast! Is it not wretched—is it not frightful, sir? Condemned to an inalienable inheritance of obesity! Tied to this unwieldly log of a body! But she loves me, George—she loves me! We shall meet. What do you think is our next rendezvous? The lecture-room of the Polytechnic—the dissolving views! Now, can anything be luckier? Totally dark. She will be in the second seat from the back, just perceptible, in a white lace mantilla. We are to correspond, too, at pleasure, for it seems that she is perfectly free to act as she pleases, except in being confined to these odd ways of meeting, which, however, suit me, for the present, admirably."

"Independent, and yet unable to receive you openly. Did she offer no sort of explanation?"

"Spoke vaguely of 'reasons,' merely remarking that, were I acquainted with them, I should allow them every weight."

"You might have retorted, Bob."

"She talked, too," said he, "in her sweet, fanciful way, you know, of the width, or breadth, of some barrier which at present keeps us asunder."

"My dear Bob, rely upon it she has seen you."

"Impossible!" said Bob. "I have never been off my guard. The precautions I have taken would baffle Robert-Houdin himself. At parting, she gave me a word of consolation. 'Though *mountains* rose between us,' said the sweet girl, with her bewitching smile, 'the spirit of love shall reduce them into smoothest lawns.'"

"Mountains! Bob, this woman is quizzing you."

"Does *this* look like quizzing?" asked Bob, reverently producing a silken tress, about two feet long, wrapped in silver paper. "She passed it through the pelargoniums."

"The what?"

"The flowers," replied Bob, generally.

I saw my friend no more till after the meeting at the Polytechnic, of which he gave me a succinct account. Obscure as it was, he at once detected the glimmer of the white mantilla. The white mantilla was attended by two sister-robes of grey, one of which appeared to yield place to the opaque shadow that approached them in the person of Bob.

A little cool hand was ready to welcome him,

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and the silver voice had so much to say, that Lisbon flourished and was destroyed, the fight of Waterloo resolved itself into Ascot Races, the eruption of Vesuvius was quenched in the waters of Niagara, and the final (pictorial) dissolution was at hand, before its topics seemed half exhausted. Before, however, the light returned, the three mantillas—like phantoms—rose, and glided away, Bobby receiving a caution which he was well content to obey, to remain for the moment where he was.

He had contrived to glean from his beloved a considerable amount of information touching herself. Here it is: Caroline de Clerville was an Englishwoman. Though scarcely twenty, she had been for two years the widow of a French nobleman, who died within a few weeks of his marriage, leaving her in affluent circumstances. A cousin of her deceased husband resided with her as "dame de compagnie," and a cousin of her own—the second grey mantilla—was her frequent visitor. Bob averred that, over and above her exterior charms, she was the most sensible woman he had ever known. She spoke, for example, with the most supreme disdain of mere personal appearance (indeed, this seemed to be one of her favourite topics), and was constantly inculcating the doctrine that the body being but, as it were, the handmaid of the soul, it mattered little in what guise it went about the latter's work.

So charmed was Bob with these liberal sentiments, and with the undisguised interest his beautiful mistress took in him, that he was half tempted to put them to the test, by revealing his portly presence in all its rotundity, when a letter—a sweet little letter of love—reached his hand, containing, in a postscript, the information that the writer would be present, on a certain evening, at a ball given by a friend of hers, from whom she would obtain a card for Bob.

Bob turned pale; his courage had entirely vanished. No escape now; substitution was impossible. Show himself he must, and that in a costume calculated to do even more than common justice to his size. Fancy the tight body-coat, the swelling white waistcoat. Madness!

The poor fellow subsided into a profound melancholy, shut himself up, refused nourishment, would not even see me, his friend.

It was the night before the ball, at which Bob must appear, or be for ever ruined in the good graces of his beloved, when, as I was calmly smoking the cigar that closed the day, my friend burst into the room in the highest state of joyful excitement, literally dancing round me, and flourishing a card over his head.

"Look there, sir! look there!" he exclaimed at last, panting for breath, as he thrust the card into my hand, "left hand corner, George. Huzza!"

I looked. In very minute characters appeared the two important words "*Fancy Dress.*"

I understood in a moment Bob's exultation.

"And how?" I asked, "do you propose to dress for it? Something loose, eh? Persian, or——"

"As tight as possible," retorted Bob. "I shall go, sir, as it is very fitting I should do, in the character of my own maternal ancestor."

"Daniel Lambert?"

"The same," said Bob, with dignity. "His own coat, his identical waistcoat, my widest summer trousers, a cushion here, towels there, and the thing is done. I say, old fellow, I wonder how *she* will go? A sylphide? Virgin of the Sun? Twilight? Snow? Undine? Yes, Undine, *that's* her style;" and so he bade me good night.

The interest I felt in the result of this singular love-affair induced me to assist at Bob's toilet, and in truth I was astonished to perceive how small an amount of adventitious aid had become necessary to the exemplification of the illustrious character Bob had selected.

After allowing him a few minutes to habituate himself in some degree to the management of his augmented person, we sent for a cab; but a little more time was lost, for, on presenting our revived Lambert on the door-steps, the man, struck with sudden terror, departed at a gallop, and was seen no more. A second driver, more collected, and confining himself to remonstrance, was quickly satisfied that the load was not so immoderate as it appeared, and Bob was at length fairly under way.

If the real Daniel Lambert ever went to a fancy ball in the height of a London season, it is to be hoped and presumed he went early. Poor Bob had quite forgotten the unusual difficulties that would naturally attend his getting up and down stairs. Now, Lady Pennard's house, though large, was insufficient for the number invited, and when the door which, previously open, had been duly slammed in Bob's face, in order that the form of knocking might be gone through, finally admitted him, hall, lobby, and stairs presented a mass of plumed and jewelled heads which seemed impenetrable.

Nearly an hour elapsed before Bob could succeed in reaching the ball-room. To him it seemed like twenty years. There were people coming down as well as going up, and the remarks that emanated from the descendants, drove Bob nearly frantic with impatience.

"Superb, indeed! I had no conception of her beauty," remarked a Circassian, his large false moustache tickling Bob's ear. "Madame de Clerville is, what her costume would indicate, the queen of the ball!"

"She rarely goes out, I think," said a spiteful-looking Roxalana. "Such faces are not for every-day's wear."

"Magnificent dress!"

"Looks the character to the very life."

They now approached the ball-room. Bob's name was announced.

"What's the attraction?" asked a man at Bob's side, of a friend in front.

"Madame de Clerville is standing up at last. I think she is going to dance."

The crowd in front of Bob opened, and made way for Lady Pennard, who greeted her extensive guest with a merry smile.

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"Oh, Mr. Bigge, I am so glad you are come! Madame de Clerville says she is engaged to dance the first set with you, and has refused half the room already. Come along!"

"*Dance*, Lady Pennard!" panted Bob. "I—eh—"

"Oh, it will be lovely!" cried the merry little hostess. "What an excellent idea! What *could* have put it into your heads?"

"Heads!" Bob was conscious of having but one such organ, and devoutly wished "it" had never entered *that*; but there was no help, and as he waddled up the entire length of the room, his immense coat-skirts swaying, like mighty banners, from side to side, and the protuberance covered by his vast striped waiscoat moving in unison, the entire assembly were in convulsions of mirth. Happily, Bob's mind was too much engrossed with the impending introduction to be very captious about general criticism.

"Here, my dear countess, is your tardy cavalier," said Lady Pennard.

A circle of admirers had opened, and Bob stood face to face with his beloved.

"I present Mr. Daniel Lambert to the first beauty of Teheran," laughed the hostess, as she glided away.

Beautiful as he had known her to be, Bob was perfectly dazzled with her loveliness on this occasion. She wore a Persian costume of the richest kind, so arranged as, while concealing the actual figure, to make it appear that the fair wearer was prodigally furnished with that most important item in the Persian estimate of beauty—fat. One might have thought it a little over-done, but for the perfect ease and grace with which the beautiful creature seemed to manage that "fair mountain" with which nature—or a sugar diet—was supposed to have invested her.

"In the name of all that's absurd, why thus disfigure her charming form?" was Bob's first thought; and, perhaps, he might have put it into some politer form of words, but for a sudden change which came across the countess's face. From evincing a very decided inclination to laugh, she became suddenly grave and pale, and seemed almost about to faint. Bobby instinctively extended his tremendous arm, which she took, and, avoiding the quadrille about to be formed, moved towards a side-room, which conducted into a sort of conservatory, tenanted at the moment by nothing but geraniums. There she sank down on the first seat.

"Robert, you have divined my secret," she murmured. "Generous, noble man! how kindly, how delicately have you conveyed to me your consciousness of—of my——"

"Ahem!" said the embarrassed Bob. "Your——"

"Being, to use the popular expression, considerably broader than I am long!" said the countess, smiling with bewitching sweetness.

Bob's pulse stood still. She was exquisitely beautiful. Her skin was whiter than the pearls she wore. You might have laid a tender young rose-leaf on her cheek, and never known the difference. Her rounded arms were the perfection of symmetry. But she *was* immensely fat!

"But," stammered Bob, hardly knowing what he said, "this decep——"

"Was useless, indeed, dear Robert," said the still smiling countess. "Your reproach is equally tender and just. Think you I have forgotten how eagerly you coincided in all my opinions relative to the very subordinate position held by the body in our mixed being? Perhaps a little childish vanity whispered me to keep you a short time longer in the dark upon this minor point."

("'Maximum,' rather!" muttered Bob.)

"And when I found you knew it, and had dressed yourself in that hideous guise *for my sake*, thus silently expressing your noble indifference to any amount of size, think, think, Robert, how my heart reproached me for my want of faith in you!"

Bob gently pressed the beautiful little hand that laid itself in his.

"Hem!" said Bob. "You have used, I think, the term 'hideous' in reference to my present appearance. Is it—and do not answer lightly—so *very* distasteful to you? My excellent maternal ancestor, whose garments, pantaloons excepted, I now wear, though not popular as a partner in a country-dance, was, nevertheless, a favourite in general society, and——"

"You are right to stand up for your distinguished relative," said the countess, laughing like a Hebe, "and it would ill become *me* to be over-critical as to his dimensions round the waist; but what do you mean?"

"That *I*, whom you think so noble and disinterested—*I*, whom you believe, purely for your dear sake, to have made such a booby of myself, am a humbug—an impostor! Oh, Caroline, Caroline (forgive me—I would kneel—the impossibility of getting up again without assistance alone deters me), I selected this absurd costume solely to conceal from your eyes, for the present, a figure scarcely less preposterous. Caroline, I am—do not start—if anything, a trifle stouter than your charming self!"

A burst of silver laughter was the only reply, in which Bob, unable to resist the pleasant contagion, heartily joined.

"It strikes me we have both been rather silly," said the countess at last, wiping away the tears that mirth had called into her beautiful eyes; "but it must be at least admitted that we both had 'solid reasons.'"

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NO NAME.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER VI.

ALL human penetration has its limits. Accurately as Captain Wragg had seen his way hitherto, even his sharp insight was now at fault. He finished his cigar with the mortifying conviction that he was totally unprepared for Mrs. Lecount's next proceeding.

In this emergency, his experience warned him that there was one safe course, and one only, which he could take. He resolved to try the confusing effect on the housekeeper of a complete change of tactics, before she had time to press her advantage, and attack him in the dark. With this view he sent the servant up-stairs to request that Miss Bygrave would come down and speak to him.

"I hope I don't disturb you," said the captain, when Magdalen entered the room. "Allow me to apologise for the smell of tobacco, and to say two words on the subject of our next proceedings. To put it with my customary frankness, Mrs. Lecount puzzles me, and I propose to return the compliment by puzzling her. The course of action which I have to suggest is a very simple one. I have had the honour of giving you a severe neuralgic attack already, and I beg your permission (when Mr. Noel Vanstone sends to inquire to-morrow morning) to take the further liberty of laying you up altogether. Question from Sea-View Cottage: 'How is Miss Bygrave this morning?' Answer from North Shingles: 'Much worse; Miss Bygrave is confined to her room.' Question repeated every day, say for a fortnight: 'How is Miss Bygrave?' Answer repeated, if necessary, for the same time: 'No better.' Can you bear the imprisonment? I see no objection to your getting a breath of fresh air the first thing in the morning, or the last thing at night. But for the whole of the day, there is no disguising it, you must put yourself in the same category with Mrs. Wragge—you must keep your room."

"What is your object in wishing me to do this?" inquired Magdalen.

"My object is twofold," replied the captain. "I blush for my own stupidity; but the fact is, I can't see my way plainly to Mrs. Lecount's next move. All I feel sure of is, that she means to make another attempt at opening her master's eyes to the truth. Whatever means she may employ to discover your identity, personal communication with you *must* be necessary to the accomplishment of her object. Very good. If I stop that communication, I put an obstacle in her way at starting—or, as we say at cards, I force her hand. Do you see the point?"

Magdalen saw it plainly. The captain went on.

"My second reason for shutting you up," he said, "refers entirely to Mrs. Lecount's master. The growth of love, my dear girl, is, in one respect, unlike all other growths—it flourishes under adverse circumstances. Our first course of action is to make Mr. Noel Vanstone feel the charm of your society. Our next, is to drive him distracted by the loss of it. I should have proposed a few more meetings, with a view to furthering this end, but for our present critical position towards Mrs. Lecount. As it is, we must trust to the effect you produced yesterday, and try the experiment of a sudden separation rather sooner than I could have otherwise wished. I shall see Mr. Noel Vanstone, though you don't—and if there *is* a raw place established anywhere about the region of that gentleman's heart, trust me to hit him on it! You are now in full possession of my views. Take your time to consider, and give me your answer—Yes or No."

"Any change is for the better," said Magdalen, "which keeps me out of the company of Mrs. Lecount and her master! Let it be as you wish."

She had hitherto answered faintly and wearily; but she spoke those last words with a heightened tone, and a rising colour—signs which warned Captain Wragge not to press her farther.

"Very good," said the captain. "As usual, we understand each other. I see you are tired; and I won't detain you any longer."

He rose to open the door, stopped half way to it, and came back again. "Leave me to arrange matters with the servant down stairs," he continued. "You can't absolutely keep your bed; and we must purchase the girl's discretion when she answers the door—without taking her into our confidence, of course. I will make her understand that she is to say you are ill, just as she might say you are not at home, as a way of keeping unwelcome acquaintances out of the house.

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Allow me to open the door for you.—I beg your pardon, you are going into Mrs. Wragge's work-room, instead of going to your own."

"I know I am," said Magdalen. "I wish to remove Mrs. Wragge from the worst room in the house, and to take her up-stairs with me."

"For the evening?"

"For the whole fortnight."

Captain Wragge followed her into the dining-room, and wisely closed the door before he spoke again.

"Do you seriously mean to inflict my wife's society on yourself, for a fortnight?" he asked, in great surprise.

"Your wife is the only innocent creature in this guilty house," she burst out vehemently. "I must and will have her with me!"

"Pray don't agitate yourself," said the captain. "Take Mrs. Wragge by all means. I don't want her." Having resigned the partner of his existence in those terms, he discreetly returned to the parlour. "The weakness of the sex!" thought the captain, tapping his sagacious head. "Lay a strain on the female intellect—and the female temper gives way directly."

The strain to which the captain alluded, was not confined, that evening, to the female intellect at North Shingles: it extended to the female intellect at Sea View. For nearly two hours, Mrs. Lecount sat at her desk, writing, correcting, and writing again, before she could produce a letter to Miss Vanstone the elder, which exactly accomplished the object she wanted to attain. At last, the rough draft was completed to her satisfaction; and she made a fair copy of it, forthwith, to be posted the next day.

Her letter thus produced, was a masterpiece of ingenuity. After the first preliminary sentences, the housekeeper plainly informed Norah of the appearance of the visitor in disguise at Vauxhall Walk; of the conversation which passed at the interview; and of her own suspicion that the person claiming to be Miss Garth was, in all probability, the younger Miss Vanstone herself. Having told the truth, thus far, Mrs. Lecount next proceeded to say, that her master was in possession of evidence which would justify him in putting the law in force; that he knew the conspiracy with which he was threatened to be then in process of direction against him at Aldborough; and that he only hesitated to protect himself, in deference to family considerations, and in the hope that the elder Miss Vanstone might so influence her sister, as to render it unnecessary to proceed to extremities.

Under these circumstances (the letter continued) it was plainly necessary that the disguised visitor to Vauxhall Walk should be properly identified—for if Mrs. Lecount's guess proved to be wrong, and if the person turned out to be a stranger, Mr. Noel Vanstone was positively resolved to prosecute in his own defence. Events at Aldborough, on which it was not necessary to dwell, would enable Mrs. Lecount in a few days to gain sight of the suspected person, in her own character. But as the housekeeper was entirely unacquainted with the younger Miss Vanstone, it was obviously desirable that some better informed person should, in this particular, take the matter in hand. If the elder Miss Vanstone happened to be at liberty to come to Aldborough herself, would she kindly write and say so?—and Mrs. Lecount would write back again to appoint a day. If, on the other hand, Miss Vanstone was prevented from taking the journey, Mrs. Lecount suggested that her reply should contain the fullest description of her sister's personal appearance—should mention any little peculiarities which might exist in the way of marks on her face or her hands—and should state (in case she had written lately) what the address was in her last letter, and failing that, what the postmark was on the envelope. With this information to help her, Mrs. Lecount would, in the interest of the misguided young lady herself, accept the responsibility of privately identifying her; and would write back immediately to acquaint the elder Miss Vanstone with the result.

The difficulty of sending this letter to the right address gave Mrs. Lecount very little trouble. Remembering the name of the lawyer who had pleaded the cause of the two sisters, in Michael Vanstone's time, she directed her letter to "Miss Vanstone, care of —— Pendril, Esquire, London." This she enclosed in a second envelope, addressed to Mr. Noel Vanstone's solicitor, with a line inside, requesting that gentleman to send it at once to the office of Mr. Pendril.

"Now," thought Mrs. Lecount, as she locked the letter up in her desk, preparatory to posting it the next day, with her own hand; "now, I have got her!"

The next morning, the servant from Sea View came, with her master's compliments, to make inquiries after Miss Bygrave's health. Captain Wragge's bulletin was duly announced—Miss Bygrave was so ill, as to be confined to her room.

On the reception of this intelligence, Mr. Noel Vanstone's anxiety led him to call at North Shingles himself, when he went out for his afternoon walk. Miss Bygrave was no better. He inquired, if he could see Mr. Bygrave. The wary captain was prepared to meet this emergency. He thought a little irritating suspense would do Mr. Noel Vanstone no harm; and he had carefully charged the servant, in case of necessity, with her answer:—"Mr. Bygrave begged to be excused; he was not able to see any one."

On the second day, inquiries were made as before, by message in the morning, and by Mr. Noel Vanstone himself in the afternoon. The morning answer relating to Magdalen was, "A shade better." The afternoon answer (relating to Captain Wragge) was, "Mr. Bygrave has just gone out." That evening, Mr. Noel Vanstone's temper was very uncertain; and Mrs. Lecount's

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patience and tact were sorely tried in the effort to avoid offending him.

On the third morning, the report of the suffering young lady was less favourable—"Miss Bygrave was still very poorly, and not able to leave her bed." The servant, returning to Sea View with this message, met the postman, and took into the breakfast-room with her two letters addressed to Mrs. Lecount.

The first letter was in a handwriting familiar to the housekeeper. It was from the medical attendant on her invalid brother at Zurich; and it announced that the patient's malady had latterly altered in so marked a manner for the better, that there was every hope now of preserving his life.

The address on the second letter was in a strange handwriting. Mrs. Lecount, concluding that it was the answer from Miss Vanstone, waited to read it until breakfast was over, and she could retire to her own room.

She opened the letter, looked at once for the name at the end, and started a little as she read it. The signature was not "Norah Vanstone," but "Harriet Garth."

Miss Garth's letter announced that the elder Miss Vanstone had, a week since, accepted an engagement as governess—subject to the condition of joining the family of her employer at their temporary residence in the south of France, and of returning with them when they came back to England, probably in a month or six weeks' time. During the interval of this necessary absence, Miss Vanstone had requested Miss Garth to open all her letters; her main object in making that arrangement being to provide for the speedy answering of any communication which might arrive for her from her sister. Miss Magdalen Vanstone had not written since the middle of July—on which occasion the post-mark on the letter showed that it must have been posted in London, in the district of Lambeth—and her elder sister had left England in a state of the most distressing anxiety on her account.

Having completed this explanation, Miss Garth then mentioned that family circumstances prevented her from travelling personally to Aldborough to assist Mrs. Lecount's object—but that she was provided with a substitute, in every way fitter for the purpose, in the person of Mr. Pendril. That gentleman was well acquainted with Miss Magdalen Vanstone; and his professional experience and discretion would render his assistance doubly valuable. He had kindly consented to travel to Aldborough whenever it might be thought necessary. But, as his time was very valuable, Miss Garth specially requested that he might not be sent for, until Mrs. Lecount was quite sure of the day on which his services might be required.

While proposing this arrangement, Miss Garth added that she thought it right to furnish her correspondent with a written description of the younger Miss Vanstone, as well. An emergency might happen which would allow Mrs. Lecount no time for securing Mr. Pendril's services; and the execution of Mr. Noel Vanstone's intentions towards the unhappy girl who was the object of his forbearance, might be fatally delayed by an unforeseen difficulty in establishing her identity. The personal description, transmitted under these circumstances, then followed. It omitted no personal peculiarity by which Magdalen could be recognised; and it included the "two little moles close together on the left side of the neck," which had been formerly mentioned in the printed handbills sent to York.

In conclusion, Miss Garth expressed her fears that Mrs. Lecount's suspicions were only too likely to be proved true. While, however, there was the faintest chance that the conspiracy might turn out to be directed by a stranger, Miss Garth felt bound in gratitude towards Mr. Noel Vanstone, to assist the legal proceedings which would, in that case, be instituted. She accordingly appended her own formal denial—which she would personally repeat, if necessary—of any identity between herself and the person in disguise who had made use of her name. She was the Miss Garth who had filled the situation of the late Mr. Andrew Vanstone's governess; and she had never in her life been in, or near, the neighbourhood of Vauxhall Walk.

With this disclaimer—and with the writer's fervent assurances that she would do all for Magdalen's advantage which her sister might have done, if her sister had been in England—the letter concluded. It was signed in full, and was dated with the business-like accuracy in such matters which had always distinguished Miss Garth's character.

This letter placed a formidable weapon in the housekeeper's hands.

It provided a means of establishing Miss Bygrave's identity through the intervention of a lawyer by profession. It contained a personal description minute enough to be used to advantage, if necessary, before Mr. Pendril's appearance. It presented a signed exposure of the false Miss Garth, under the hand of the true Miss Garth; and it established the fact, that the last letter received by the elder Miss Vanstone from the younger, had been posted (and therefore probably written) in the neighbourhood of Vauxhall Walk. If any later letter had been received, with the Aldborough post-mark, the chain of evidence, so far as the question of localities was concerned, might doubtless have been more complete. But, as it was, there was testimony enough (aided as that testimony might be, by the fragment of the brown alpaca dress still in Mrs. Lecount's possession) to raise the veil which hung over the conspiracy, and to place Mr. Noel Vanstone face to face with the plain and startling truth.

The one obstacle which now stood in the way of immediate action on the housekeeper's part, was the obstacle of Miss Bygrave's present se-

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clusion within the limits of her own room. The question of gaining personal access to her, was a question which must be decided before any communication could be opened with Mr. Pendril. Mrs. Lecount put on her bonnet at once, and called at North Shingles to try what discoveries she could make for herself, before post-time.

On this occasion, Mr. Bygrave was at home; and she was admitted without the least difficulty.

Careful consideration that morning, had decided Captain Wragge on advancing matters a little nearer to the crisis. The means by which he proposed achieving this result, made it necessary for him to see the housekeeper and her master separately, and to set them at variance by producing two totally opposite impressions relating to himself, on their minds. Mrs. Lecount's visit, therefore, instead of causing him any embarrassment, was the most welcome occurrence he could have wished for. He received her in the parlour, with a marked restraint of manner, for which she was quite unprepared. His ingratiating smile was gone, and an impenetrable solemnity of countenance appeared in its stead.

"I have ventured to intrude on you, sir," said Mrs. Lecount, "to express the regret with which both my master and I have heard of Miss Bygrave's illness. Is there no improvement?"

"No, ma'am," replied the captain, as briefly as possible. "My niece is no better."

"I have had some experience, Mr. Bygrave, in nursing. If I could be of any use——"

"Thank you, Mrs. Lecount. There is no necessity for our taking advantage of your kindness."

This plain answer was followed by a moment's silence. The housekeeper felt some little perplexity. What had become of Mr. Bygrave's elaborate courtesy, and Mr. Bygrave's many words? Did he want to offend her? If he did, Mrs. Lecount then and there determined that he should not gain his object.

"May I inquire the nature of the illness?" she persisted. "It is not connected, I hope, with our excursion to Dunwich?"

"I regret to say, ma'am," replied the captain, "it began with that neuralgic attack in the carriage."

"So! so!" thought Mrs. Lecount. "He doesn't even *try* to make me think the illness a real one; he throws off the mask, at starting! —Is it a nervous illness, sir?" she added, aloud.

The captain answered by a solemn affirmative inclination of the head.

"Then you have *two* nervous sufferers in the house, Mr. Bygrave?"

"Yes, ma'am—two. My wife and my niece."

"That is rather a strange coincidence of misfortunes."

"It is, ma'am. Very strange."

In spite of Mrs. Lecount's resolution not to be offended, Captain Wragge's exasperating insensibility to every stroke she aimed at him began to ruffle her. She was conscious of some little difficulty in securing her self-possession, before she could say anything more.

"Is there no immediate hope," she resumed, "of Miss Bygrave being able to leave her room?"

"None whatever, ma'am."

"You are satisfied, I suppose, with the medical attendance?"

"I have no medical attendance," said the captain, composedly. "I watch the case myself."

The gathering venom in Mrs. Lecount swelled up at that reply, and overflowed at her lips.

"Your smattering of science, sir," she said, with a malicious smile, "includes, I presume, a smattering of medicine as well?"

"It does, ma'am," answered the captain, without the slightest disturbance of face or manner. "I know as much of one as I do of the other."

The tone in which he spoke those words, left Mrs. Lecount but one dignified alternative. She rose to terminate the interview. The temptation of the moment proved too much for her; and she could not resist casting the shadow of a threat over Captain Wragge at parting.

"I defer thanking you, sir, for the manner in which you have received me," she said, "until I can pay my debt of obligation to some purpose. In the mean time, I am glad to infer, from the absence of a medical attendant in the house, that Miss Bygrave's illness is much less serious than I had supposed it to be when I came here."

"I never contradict a lady, ma'am," rejoined the incorrigible captain. "If it is your pleasure, when we next meet, to think my niece quite well, I shall bow resignedly to the expression of your opinion." With those words, he followed the housekeeper into the passage, and politely opened the door for her. "I mark the trick, ma'am!" he said to himself, as he closed it again. "The trump-card in your hand, is a sight of my niece; and I'll take care you don't play it!"

He returned to the parlour, and composedly awaited the next event which was likely to happen—a visit from Mrs. Lecount's master. In less than an hour, results justified Captain Wragge's anticipations; and Mr. Noel Vanstone walked in.

"My dear sir!" cried the captain, cordially seizing his visitor's reluctant hand, "I know what you have come for. Mrs. Lecount has told you of her visit here, and has no doubt declared that my niece's illness is a mere subterfuge. You feel surprised, you feel hurt—you suspect me of trifling with your kind sympathies—in short, you require an explanation. That explanation you shall have. Take a seat, Mr. Vanstone. I am about to throw myself on your sense and judgment as a man of the world. I acknowledge that we are in a false position, sir; and I tell you plainly at the outset—your housekeeper is the cause of it."

For once in his life, Mr. Nöel Vanstone opened his eyes. "Lecount!" he exclaimed, in the utmost bewilderment.

"The same, sir," replied Captain Wragge. "I am afraid I offended Mrs. Lecount, when she came here this morning, by a want of cordiality in my manner. I am a plain man; and I can't assume

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what I don't feel. Far be it from me to breathe a word against your housekeeper's character. She is, no doubt, a most excellent and trustworthy woman; but she has one serious failing common to persons at her time of life who occupy her situation—she is jealous of her influence over her master, although you may not have observed it."

"I beg your pardon," interposed Mr. Noel Vanstone; "my observation is remarkably quick. Nothing escapes it."

"In that case, sir," resumed the captain, "you cannot fail to have noticed that Mrs. Lecount has allowed her jealousy to affect her conduct towards my niece?"

Mr. Noel Vanstone thought of the domestic passage at arms between Mrs. Lecount and himself, when his guests of the evening had left Sea View, and failed to see his way to any direct reply. He expressed the utmost surprise and distress—he thought Lecount had done her best to be agreeable on the drive to Dunwich—he hoped and trusted there was some unfortunate mistake.

"Do you mean to say, sir," pursued the captain, severely, "that you have not noticed the circumstance yourself. As a man of honour, and a man of observation, you can't tell me that! Your housekeeper's superficial civility has not hidden your housekeeper's real feeling. My niece has seen it, and so have you, and so have I. My niece, Mr. Vanstone, is a sensitive, high-spirited girl; and she has positively declined to cultivate Mrs. Lecount's society, for the future. Don't misunderstand me! To my niece, as well as to myself, the attraction of *your* society, Mr. Vanstone, remains the same. Miss Bygrave simply declines to be an apple of discord (if you will permit the classical allusion?) cast into your household. I think she is right, so far; and I frankly confess that I have exaggerated a nervous indisposition, from which she is really suffering, into a serious illness—purely and entirely to prevent these two ladies, for the present, from meeting every day on the parade, and from carrying unpleasant impressions of each other into your domestic establishment and mine."

"I allow nothing unpleasant in *my* establishment," remarked Mr. Noel Vanstone. "I'm master—you must have noticed that already, Mr. Bygrave?—I'm master."

"No doubt of it, my dear sir. But to live morning, noon, and night, in the perpetual exercise of your authority, is more like the life of a governor of a prison than the life of a master of a household. The wear and tear—consider the wear and tear."

"It strikes you in that light, does it?" said Mr. Noel Vanstone, soothed by Captain Wragge's ready recognition of his authority. "I don't know that you're not right. But I must take some steps directly. I won't be made ridiculous—I'll send Lecount away altogether, sooner than be made ridiculous." His colour rose; and he folded his little arms fiercely. Captain Wragge's artfully-irritating explanation had awakened that dormant suspicion of his housekeeper's influence over him, which habitually lay hidden in his mind; and which Mrs. Lecount was now not present to charm back to repose as usual. "What must Miss Bygrave think of me!" he exclaimed, with a sudden outburst of vexation. "I'll send Lecount away—damme, I'll send Lecount away on the spot!"

"No, no, no!" said the captain, whose interest it was to avoid driving Mrs. Lecount to any desperate extremities. "Why take strong measures, when mild measures will do? Mrs. Lecount is an old servant; Mrs. Lecount is attached and useful. She has this little drawback of jealousy—jealousy of her domestic position with her bachelor master. She sees you paying courteous attention to a handsome young lady; she sees that young lady properly sensible of your politeness—and, poor soul, she loses her temper! What is the obvious remedy? Humour her—make a manly concession to the weaker sex. If Mrs. Lecount is with you, the next time we meet on the parade, walk the other way. If Mrs. Lecount is not with you, give us the pleasure of your company by all means. In short, my dear sir, try the *suaviter in modo* (as we classical men say), before you commit yourself to the *fortiter in re!*"

There was one excellent reason why Mr. Noel Vanstone should take Captain Wragge's conciliatory advice. An open rupture with Mrs. Lecount—even if he could have summoned the courage to face it—would imply the recognition of her claims to a provision, in acknowledgment of the services she had rendered to his father and to himself. His sordid nature quailed within him at the bare prospect of expressing the emotion of gratitude in a pecuniary form; and, after first consulting appearances by a show of hesitation, he consented to adopt the captain's suggestion, and to humour Mrs. Lecount.

"But I must be considered in this matter," proceeded Mr. Noel Vanstone. "My concession to Lecount's weakness must not be misunderstood. Miss Bygrave must not be allowed to suppose I am afraid of my housekeeper."

The captain declared that no such idea ever had entered, or ever could enter, Miss Bygrave's mind. Mr. Noel Vanstone returned to the subject nevertheless, again and again, with his customary pertinacity. Would it be indiscreet if he asked leave to set himself right personally with Miss Bygrave? Was there any hope that he might have the happiness of seeing her on that day? or, if not, on the next day? or, if not, on the day after? Captain Wragge answered cautiously: he felt the importance of not rousing Noel Vanstone's distrust by too great an alacrity in complying with his wishes.

"An interview to-day, my dear sir, is out of the question," he said. "She is not well enough; she wants repose. To-morrow I propose taking her out, before the heat of the day begins—not merely to avoid embarrassment, after what has happened with Mrs. Lecount—but because

the morning air, and the morning quiet, are essential in these nervous cases. We are early people here—we shall start at seven o'clock. If you are early too, and if you would like to join us, I need hardly say that we can feel no objection to your company on our morning walk. The hour, I am aware, is an unusual one—but, later in the day, my niece may be resting on the sofa, and may not be able to see visitors."

Having made this proposal, purely for the purpose of enabling Mr. Noel Vanstone to escape to North Shingles at an hour in the morning when his housekeeper would be probably in bed, Captain Wragge left him to take the hint, if he could, as indirectly as it had been given. He proved sharp enough (the case being one in which his own interests were concerned) to close with the proposal on the spot. Politely declaring that he was always an early man when the morning presented any special attraction to him, he accepted the appointment for seven o'clock; and rose soon afterwards to take his leave.

"One word at parting," said Captain Wragge. "This conversation is entirely between ourselves. Mrs. Lecount must know nothing of the impression she has produced on my niece. I have only mentioned it to you, to account for my apparently churlish conduct, and to satisfy your own mind. In confidence, Mr. Vanstone—strictly in confidence. Good morning!"

With these parting words, the captain bowed his visitor out. Unless some unexpected disaster occurred, he now saw his way safely to the end of the enterprise. He had gained two important steps in advance, that morning. He had sown the seeds of variance between the housekeeper and her master; and he had given Mr. Noel Vanstone a common interest with Magdalen and himself, in keeping a secret from Mrs. Lecount. "We have caught our man," thought Captain Wragge, cheerfully rubbing his hands—"We have caught our man at last!"

On leaving North Shingles, Mr. Noel Vanstone walked straight home; fully restored to his place in his own estimation, and sternly determined to carry matters with a high hand, if he found himself in collision with Mrs. Lecount.

The housekeeper received her master at the door with her mildest manner, and her gentlest smile. She addressed him with downcast eyes; she opposed to his contemplated assertion of independence a barrier of impenetrable respect.

"May I venture to ask, sir," she began, "if your visit to North Shingles has led you to form the same conclusion as mine on the subject of Miss Bygrave's illness?"

"Certainly not, Lecount. I consider your conclusion to have been both hasty and prejudiced."

"I am sorry to hear it, sir. I felt hurt by Mr. Bygrave's rude reception of me—but I was not aware that my judgment was prejudiced by it. Perhaps he received *you*, sir, with a warmer welcome?"

"He received me like a gentleman—that is all I think it necessary to say, Lecount—he received me like a gentleman."

This answer satisfied Mrs. Lecount on the one doubtful point that had perplexed her. Whatever Mr. Bygrave's sudden coolness towards herself might mean, his polite reception of her master implied that the risk of detection had not daunted him, and that the conspiracy was still in full progress. The housekeeper's eyes brightened: She had expressly calculated on this result. After a moment's thinking, she addressed her master with another question:

"You will probably visit Mr. Bygrave again, sir?"

"Of course I shall visit him—if I please."

"And perhaps see Miss Bygrave, if she gets better?"

"Why not? I should be glad to know why not? Is it necessary to ask your leave first, Lecount?"

"By no means, sir. As you have often said (and as I have often agreed with you), you are master. It may surprise you to hear it, Mr. Noel—but I have a private reason for wishing that you should see Miss Bygrave again."

Mr. Noel started a little, and looked at his housekeeper with some curiosity.

"I have a strange fancy of my own, sir, about that young lady," proceeded Mrs. Lecount. "If you will excuse my fancy, and indulge it, you will do me a favour for which I shall be very grateful."

"A fancy?" repeated her master, in growing surprise. "What fancy?"

"Only this, sir," said Mrs. Lecount.

She took from one of the neat little pockets of her apron a morsel of note paper, carefully folded into the smallest possible compass; and respectfully placed it in Noel Vanstone's hand.

"If you are willing to oblige an old and faithful servant, Mr. Noel," she said, in a very quiet and very impressive manner, "you will kindly put that morsel of paper into your waistcoat-pocket; you will open and read it, for the first time, *when you are next in Miss Bygrave's company;* and you will say nothing of what has now passed between us to any living creature, from this time to that. I promise to explain my strange request, sir, when you have done what I ask, and when your next interview with Miss Bygrave has come to an end."

She curtseyed with her best grace, and quietly left the room.

Mr. Noel Vanstone looked from the folded paper to the door, and from the door back to the folded paper, in unutterable astonishment. A mystery in his own house, under his own nose! What did it mean?

It meant that Mrs. Lecount had not wasted her time that morning. While the captain was casting the net over his visitor at North Shingles, the housekeeper was steadily mining the ground under his feet. The folded paper contained nothing less than a carefully-written extract from

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the personal description of Magdalen in Miss Garth's letter. With a daring ingenuity which even Captain Wragge might have envied, Mrs. Lecount had found her instrument for exposing the conspiracy, in the unsuspecting person of the victim himself!

SMALL-BEER CHRONICLES.

Where is the historian of our social life? While the great events of the History of Europe are duly recorded; while the diplomatic struggles, the commercial transactions, the political progress, of the civilised world, are discussed, reviewed, and commemorated; does any one note down the social changes which follow the progress of those greater developments, which are in some sort brought about by them, which may perhaps help to elucidate them, and which, even if they do not, are in themselves sufficiently interesting to have an historian of their own? Where is the Registrar-General who shall from time to time furnish a report how the great nation whose public doings are so adequately recorded, behave in the seclusion of private life? Where, in a word, is the Chronicler of the Country's Small-Beer?

Here he is, at the reader's service.

Whither are we tending? In manners, in morals, in literature, the drama, art, domestically? In our health, our temper of mind, our habits of life, the nature of our amusements? Is all going on right, or are there any little decay spots in our constitution which might be eradicated with advantage before they spread? Is any disease threatening us just now: not a great plague of London, but some lowered tone of the system generally?

The last fifteen or twenty years, which have wrought great alterations in the world at large, have brought about corresponding changes in our social existence. The changes have not been all on a grand scale. There have been smaller alterations too. Change, however, there has been in every direction. We are no longer the same people. The sun has set on many virtues of the olden time, and on many vices. Ladies are no longer the same, gentlemen are no longer the same. Costume has altered. Manners have altered. Form of speech has changed. The external aspect of our towns, our mode of getting from one town to another—all these things and many more have gone through great changes; nay, the very form which the age's greatness has taken, is itself new, and manifested after a sort that would have astonished our forefathers not a little. But here is a subject for the Chronicler of Small-Beer—Our Greatness.

He would be a poor officer if he had nothing to say in connexion with so important a subject, so grave a national symptom, as the Great Exhibition of 1862. The public tongue is not always easy to get a glimpse of. Here it is exposed to our scrutiny. It is hard to get one's middle finger on the public pulse. Here it is beating away, in such an exposed predicament, that one can test it to half a second.

The biography of a nation—nay, the history of the world itself, for we may as well go to work on a grand scale while we are about it—is in some respects comparable to the life of an individual. As the man has his infancy, his manhood, his maturity, his decay, so has the nation and the world. As the man passes through a series of phases and developments, putting off one and assuming the next, shedding one skin and getting another—which is his right and wholesome career—so it is with the nation and with the world. The world passes on from stage to stage, and from phase to phase. Woe to the people which should fail so to advance! Woe, and double woe to the individuals who would hinder the advance. The car of progress shall crush them, and they deserve it. (There is, by-the-by, a High Church Court in the Great Exhibition—but we have not got to that yet. We shall have some purgation to propose in connexion with that court by-and-by.)

To resume our comparison of the world with the man, and adhering still to the analogy between the two, one's first natural inquiry would be: How old is the world now? This is a difficult question to answer, but, on consideration, we are disposed to reply that, though not as Falstaff says, "clean past its youth," it is just touching on the border of middle age. Estimating the duration of the man's life at seventy years, and continuing our original comparison, we should judge the world to be about five-and-thirty, or from that to forty. The world, then, is no longer in its first youth. Its illusions are over, it is grown up, it has been through romance, and has become practical. Its long minority is over, its painful and severe education. Its early youth when it put on armour and went to the relief of the distressed damsel is gone. It has lost its taste for jingling spurs, and waving plume, and coloured jerkin. It dresses in sober broadcloth. It no longer makes pilgrimages and shuts itself up in monasteries, and takes vows of poverty. It builds model lodging-houses, and, when its sympathies are moved by a touching tale, sends a Mendicity officer to ascertain that all is as represented, before administering relief. The world is sensible and cautious, it looks before it leaps. The gilt is off the gingerbread, and that comestible appears for what it is.

And surely all this corresponds very much with the career of the average man. His life changes, his tastes change, and with so much of regularity that it is not difficult to predict at what particular epoch the taste for cricket-bats will be succeeded by a taste for clothes, for jewellery, for dancing, for dinners, for money-making, for domestic life, for hospitality, for excelling in wine, for retiring to the country, for building, for possessing land. Each of these phases the man passes through, and as he arrives at the new one, the last is abandoned.

Now, the analogy between this progress of the man and that of the world must not be pressed

—any more than other analogies—too far; for to carry analogy into too great detail is to destroy its usefulness, and deprive ourselves of one of the safest and wisest teachers we have. We contend for no more than that the world has become practical and sensible. It has done with toys, it has lost its enthusiasm for studs and scarf-pins. It has got to think of what will "*do*." The boyish days are over. The "box of paints" is put by. The world makes money. It is cautious, moderate in speech, fore-thoughtful in act. Machinery and the arts that facilitate the act of living are alive and flourishing. How many things are dead! Dead but not buried all of them. Some of our dead institutions are embalmed, and so kept above ground; some are galvanised into a kind of life by those whose interest it is to keep them going. Some are paralysed and virtually defunct, though the heavy breath is still drawn and the languid pulse still beats. Thus, popery is dead, and monarchy—real old absolute monarchy—is dead, but the bodies are still above ground, and will remain so for many a year to come. And the American Union is dead, but what fighting is going on over *that* body, and what a funeral wake it has!

We must be careful what we do in classing things among the dead. It is not everything that has lost its first exceeding vitality and the strength of novelty, that can be set down as dead, nor even everything that has ceased to advance. When new members are admitted into society the older members are not therefore ejected. The new are added to the old, and all go on together.

It would be wrong, for instance, for any one, observing the extraordinary vitality of mechanics in the present day, to say that the arts were dead. To say that the natural expression of the mind of the age is not through art would be to speak the truth, as it would be to say that it *is* through machinery. There *were* ages when the mind of civilisation expressed itself through art. That time is over, and the man who would be essentially a man of the day must ally himself with the mode of expression belonging to the day. Just now, he had better on the whole hang on to the tender of the locomotive than occupy the best seat in the chariot of fancy.

It is impossible to spend any time at the International Exhibition—impossible to look at the building itself, or to pass from the picture-galleries to the machinery department—without feeling in what direction the vigour of the age is tending, and what are its greatest wonders and things of mark. The arts are invented, established, brought to perfection. We can only go on practising them, each professor bringing his own manner of dealing with them to bear on them, and enriching their repertory with his additional atom. This is much to do in the arts, and few, indeed, are the men who can do it. But with mechanics the case is widely, widely different. What a prospect is open to the student in *that* science. What a land of promise is spread out before him. What rewards tempt him on. What possible discoveries urge him to new efforts, and banish that lassitude and despondency which often paralyse the follower of the arts. When the mechanician has turned that corner in the road, or got past the brow of that hill, he knows not what may reward his toil. The voyage of discovery in which he is engaged was only entered on the other day. But yesterday the electric telegraph was invented; the iron road but the day before. To-morrow, some other new invention, not dreamed of now, will be in force. "And why may not I be the discoverer of it?" says the mechanician as he works and thinks. It is more encouraging to help to raise a new edifice than to add fresh beauties to a structure already brought to such great perfection.

This will probably force itself on the mind of any unprejudiced observer who will feel the public pulse as it beats at South Kensington. Neither the enthusiast who thinks art the only thing in the world, nor the practical man who is all for iron, will entirely agree with us. But both are prejudiced. And before Prejudice, Reason has only to retire.

Suppose Reason were by any chance to direct her steps into the mediæval court, the ecclesiastical decorative department, of the International Exhibition. What a fall she would have to try with Prejudice there! One of two results must come of such a visit. Either Prejudice must shut up her court, entirely routed by Reason; or Reason, giving one glance round, must retire and leave the thing to Time, to be dealt with as that merciful and wise judge does deal with things. What a mystical and becoming light is over all the objects contained in that court! It is dark, not because the light cannot get to that part of the building, but because the light has been wilfully shut out—just as the designs are quaint and uncouth, not because the designer could not make them otherwise, but because he wilfully drew a curtain over his brains.

The white neckcloths and the spectacles gleam in that obscure court, like meteors. They were better out of it. It is not helping the ecclesiastical cause to ally it with darkness and with obsolete modes of expression, as if it had no part with the age, and as if modern light and modern knowledge and modern ways of thought must be banished before Church matters can be discussed at all.

This is the loose screw here. Many of the designs are pretty and elegant, but they are all tainted with affectation and dilettanteism—bad things to mix up with anything, but very very bad things to mix up with religion. How tired one gets of the altar-cloths and fald-stools, the trefoils and fleurs-de-lis, and all the rest of this Church upholstery! What a thing to have opinions which cannot be held comfortably unless their proprietor has a sofa to match. Such a sofa as that in one of the corners of this court, straight and angular, and stuffed, possibly, with discarded horse-hair shirts. It is pleasant, by the way, to observe that mediæval tendencies are not inconsistent with an appreciation of the creature-comforts; for, hard by this same angular sofa,

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with decorations looking like bars of music, are a couple of uncompromising spirit-stands, with bottles of very comfortable dimensions duly labelled. It almost reconciles one to this absurd court, to see gleaming in the corner among all sorts of strange and uncouth matters, the prosaic word "Rum."

Nearly every part of that Exhibition is devoted to progress. "See how we advance" is the cry. But here, as in those pictures by the Belgian Leys, the boast is rather "see how we go back. You are almost as badly off as the people of the sixteenth century." Wicked is the word for this. For a man with the glorious light of this age around him to labour day after day at pictures such as those is really wicked. Fancy any one getting up in the morning, and receiving his letter by the post, or haply a telegram fresh from the wires, and then going into his studio to try and force his mind back into a fit state to reproduce the infantine conceits of four centuries ago!

But, after all, we need not be very angry. This little court and these few pictures form but a very small portion of the great and goodly show, and in every other part of the building "Onward" is the motto of the workman. Not in unintelligible characters, not in Gothic letters that one cannot read, but in types to be understood by every passer-by.

It is not necessary to examine every yard of material, or every piece of china or hardware exhibited, in order to get to the conclusion that taste has made and is making, great and steady advances. The immense contrast, again, between the taste shown among the civilised nations, even when it is good, and that displayed by what are sometimes called the *un*civilised, may be estimated without a deliberate study of every yard of Eastern carpet, or every Chinese jar in the building. It is extraordinary to see how far the uncivilised people are beyond the civilised, in many matters of taste, and more especially in choice and brilliancy of colour. We finish neatly; we *now*, at any rate for the most part, combine colours harmoniously, but all we do is so small, so timid. It is a thing of rules and laid-down laws, and there is no hope of its being otherwise. The barbarous peoples in all matters of design have genius, and genius is audacious. Where there is no genius, there is, and *should* be, timidity. When we are not timid, but force a courage in design for which there is no groundwork of innate power, we become simply vulgar. To be neat, to be harmonious, pretty, highly finished, is all we can at present attempt, and even of this the results are often most charming. But the lavish, reckless splendour of uncivilised design is beyond us altogether.

It is difficult not to be lured away thus from time to time into criticisms on the separate objects exhibited in this great Bazaar, but such criticism is only parenthetical, and is not the distinct function of the Registrar-General. What that officer has undertaken is to show wherein the greatness of this age chiefly lies, and what particular phase in the history of our development we have reached.

We must look westward. The rising power of the age, its life, its natural development, the touch to which most natures of the present day respond, comes from that long low shed which is called the Western Annexe. Thither let us bend our steps.

If "Onward" be the motto throughout the great building, it is pre-eminently and above all the motto of the Western Annexe. As one passes that portion of the Exhibition edifice, even outside the walls, what a busy noise of rattling machinery comes from within. Progress enough here. Progress of thousand-horse power. One seems to hear the clatter of their hoofs. What proclamation of present strength, what promise of future achievement, in every wheel and piston-rod working under that roof. The wonders already performed are great, but who shall say what greater marvels are in store.

Even the people we meet in the Western Annexe, who are in any sort mixed up with the arts illustrated there, seem to wear a different aspect from other men. They look so strong, so prosperous, so alive. Confident as to the value of their work, conscious that the world cannot do without them, with the world on their side, understood by the men of their time, they work with courage and thrive. These are different men from the poet, the sculptor, the painter, whose lives are passed (unless they are very sorry performers indeed) in such misgivings as must attend the work of men who deal with Fancies in an age of Facts.

And who shall say that this age of machinery and steel is without its appeal to the imagination and to our sense of the beautiful? The engine that slowly year by year eats its way through the Alps, and will at last drill the Mont Cenis through, as a needle's eye is drilled, makes surely some appeal to fancy as it struggles with the most stubborn of the elements. To the fancy also appeals in a widely different way, that wondrous mechanism which almost seems to have a power of thought, and by which these very words might, in an incredibly short time, be fixed in print.

On the principle of selecting one or two things the most marked of their kind as illustrations of the class to which they belong, it may be admissible to register here in half a dozen words the existence of a machine which, though perhaps not more ingenious than some others, appeals more strongly than the rest to the intellectual faculty. The new machine for setting manuscript up in print, and for *putting the letters back in their places alphabetically after they are done with*, is a machine that may almost be said to think. At first one cannot understand how that last achievement, which implies selection, can be executed without thought. But thus it is: The compositor sits before an instrument with keys like those of a piano, on each of which is inscribed a letter or a mark of punctuation—comma, semicolon, note of interrogation. In combination with these keys are a set of tubes, each

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of which contains a different letter, one tube being full of *a*'s, another of *b*'s, and so on. The lower ends of these tubes converge towards a kind of long narrow trough, in which the words are to be formed. Suppose that the sentence "To be, or not to be," has to be printed. The compositor touches the key marked *t*, and instantly a valve is opened at the foot of the tube holding the *t*'s, and one of them is let down into the trough. Then he touches the *o* key, the *b* and *e* keys, and the comma key successively, and each of the letters descends into the trough and takes its place next to the last arrival. As each of the letters joins the others, of course it pushes those already in the trough onward, till at last a very long line of printed words, all in their right order, fills the trough. While you are watching this beautiful process, and as the trough becomes fuller and fuller, you find yourself getting into a state of apprehension that the types will run out at the other end, and all fall in disorder on the ground. You need not be alarmed. At the end of the row of words the compositor has been forming, is a heavy lead, which is pushed along further and further as each new letter is added, until at last it topples over, the trough being full, and in its fall strikes a bell placed beneath for the purpose. When the compositor hears the bell, he knows that the trough is full; the row of words is removed to the printing press, and the whole process is commenced over again with the words next in order.

One can more easily understand this piece of mechanism, beautiful and intricate as it is, than the other with which it is connected. The letters which make up the words "To be, or not to be," have all got to be separated again, and put back alphabetically in their places, ready for use. How is this to be done?

A set of grooves, more than thirty in number, enough to supply each letter of the alphabet, and the different notes of punctuation with a groove each, are set on a circular table: the grooves radiating towards a common centre, in which there is a kind of wheel set round with little receptacles, each of which will hold one letter and no more. The wheel is set in motion and begins to revolve. As it does so, each of these little receptacles comes under a kind of spout, out of which, one at a time, the letters fall in order, as they come from the press. The types fall into these receptacles, and their ends hang out below. These ends are furnished with small notches which fit into certain other notches at the mouths of the radiating grooves, and all which notches are in level, or some other way, different. Thus the notches which fit the end of letter *a* will not fit the end of letter *b*. The letters, then, with their ends hanging out as described, turn round on the wheel and come to the mouths of each of the radiating grooves in succession; but as the notches at the mouth of each vary, *a* cannot get into *b*'s groove, or *c* into *t*'s. Each goes on until it comes to the notch that fits it, by which it is instantly caught and dragged down: the wheel going on and the empty receptacle being filled when it gets under the spout with the letter next in order.

The excessive delicacy and ingenuity of this one piece of mechanism incline one to separate it from the rest, but it is, in truth, not more wonderful than many of the other machines of which this annexe is full. What is there that these machines can *not* do? From cracking a nut or winding a ball of cotton, to lifting a perfect Niagara of water at a stroke, all seems within reach of their mingled subtlety and strength.

But the Registrar-General would be poorly fulfilling his office if he took notice merely of those matters which everybody else has examined and approved. It is the duty of such a functionary to poke into holes and corners and see what is to be seen there. And still among the machinery, but neglected and hidden, and wholly unappreciated, what in pity's name are these poor little fabrics of tin and wood which we light upon in a very obscure corner of the Italian department? Little sorry wares these, made up of odds and ends of wood and small scraps of tin, and fashioned in the roughest way. They look as if they were made by some workman at his spare moments. Perhaps they were. Perhaps his wife and children watched their progress and thought London would be electrified when these inventions were displayed before it. They are, it seems, small models of certain inventions designed to be made on a larger scale for the benefit of humanity. Let us read the inscriptions upon them. One is the "model of an instrument for smoothing muddi roads with great speed and economy." Another is "a mechanis that can be applied to different motory contrivances as requiring a rotary movement at various distances and in various directions"! Here, too, is "a machine for thrusting the grain out of ears of Indian corn," and also "a machine for an economical and speedy removal of snow from the public streets, leaving but a thin layer of it"—this sounds slippery—"easily swept away." There is something very pitiful and affecting about these innocent little models, with their inscriptions in broken English. There they lie in an unknown corner, unseen, neglected, like many another object in this mighty show, which was expected by the maker of it, and by his friends, to make an immense sensation. Never mind; this honest engineer of Pavia may be in the right road, for aught we know, and may some day construct a "mechanis" which shall not only "smooth the muddi roads" of England, but smooth his own rough road to eminence and fortune.

To fortune, and to eminence too, the way lies surely through this Western Annexe. As you walk up one of its aisles and down another, you find at one place electricity blazing upon you with a light stronger than that of an ordinary day, at another the same power printing the words of a despatch issued a thousand miles away, and on which the fate of a nation may hang. Here, backwards and forwards, like a

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tide, the spinning machine advances to get gain, and retires with it garnered up in perpetual progress. There, the pattern grows as you look on the carpet. In one corner, cigars are rolled; in another, blocks of ice grow out of the heat and steam. Everywhere the strong steel arms are thrust out, and drawn back laden with profit. Everywhere the wheel revolves. Everywhere there is rushing of waters, and turning of wheels, and crashing of metal; and by everything that is done the progress of the world is hastened. Student of such arts as these press on and onward yet! Cultivator of a tenth muse, whose votaries worship amidst the clang of steel and the whir of wheels, go on, and prosper! Your crown shall not be of laurel nor of bay. It shall be a nimbus of polished steel, an emblem of that one eternal form, the wheel, which still recurs for ever in your labours. The wheel on which the culprits of the old time were broken, and on which, in these modern days, we are breaking the idols which ignorance and superstition have set up, and scattering their fragments to the winds of Heaven.

We cannot all devote ourselves to science or mechanics, but happy those whose lot it is to be engaged in such studies and speculations. They are in the van of that vast army that lays siege to the gates of knowledge. They are the High Priests who worship in the temple of wisdom, and seek to extract secrets from the oracle for the benefit of the congregation that waits behind them.

And what of those who head yet another band of pilgrims, those who having journeyed to the brink of that great chasm which lies beyond and outside this sphere of ours, stand upon the edge of the material shore, and strain with eager eyes into the darkness of the unknown firmament? If they are great who would strive to unlock the mysteries of earth and win new secrets from the mountain or the mine, what are they who stand upon the hill-top, tiptoe, and yearn for knowledge of the secrets above their heads? Well, as we get additional knowledge, or rather as our ignorance is diminished by an additional fraction, may we cry out for more and more light. What surface-knowledge is ours. The deepest hole we have made in this enormous ball on which we live, is a pin-prick below its outer crust; the highest flight of the aëronaut takes him nearer to the planets by a poor four or five miles. Shall we get, now that we have spread ourselves over the surface of the world, and know so much of its outside—shall we get more knowledge of what lies within and without it? It may be so. The geologist has not been long at work, and the air-navigator makes but trial-trips. Who knows what may happen in a year or two? We may have a succession of towns moored in mid-air between this and the moon, with air tubes as long as the Atlantic Cable to supply them with a breathable atmosphere; and when you ask a friend "where he is going this autumn?" he may tell you that he is off to "Skyville for quiet."

Meanwhile, and during the time that Skyville is still in the clouds, we may be satisfied that we have done some few wonderful things already. How wonderful are those photographic views of the moon which—placed in a rather out-of-the-way situation in one of the galleries—are among the most interesting things exhibited! One can peer into the crannies and lumps upon the moon's surface, by means of those views, to one's heart's content. Of course those same lumps and crannies, when magnified to their real size, are such mountains and valleys as are found among the Himalayas or the Alps. It is a curious thing that all these roughnesses and inequalities which represent chains of hills, all appear to be arranged in a circular form, as if all the hills were volcanic with craters in the midst. Yet this may be simply an effect of light. We know that the flickering lights which appear on the ground in a wood when the sun is shining, all partake of a circular form. Now, the apertures among the leaves through which the light comes are not round, but of various shapes. The rays of light affect, but are not affected by, the apertures through which they pass. Some such phenomenon may account for the circular appearance of these same roughnesses on the surface of the moon.

As one leaves the place where those photographs are, one feels that sadness which Wordsworth has spoken of, and something, too, of terror. For it *is* terrible to think of that vast globe away in the blue space, a chaos of rugged forms, deserted, silent. It is so now as we write, and as you read, while the cabs are rattling in Piccadilly, and the "Cure" is being sung by the comic singer who stands upon his head to sing it.

RUSSIAN TRAVEL.

WOLVES.

After visiting the White Village, I had agreed to accompany Saunderson to a place called the Little Village, which belonged to the widowed lady who had obtained from the white villagers mercy for being merciful. The management of this estate, including a large saw-mill, corn-mill, and sugar-mill, was under the control of the intelligent gentleman whose acquaintance I had made at the hunt. The distance was about thirty miles, and, although we could have gone by a more open and safe route, we decided on the forest track, as the nearest, and as affording the best chance of sport by the way. During two preceding nights the frost had sharpened, until the snow was crisp and firm, and formed in any direction through the wood a magnificent hard road, without a track on it. Instead of shunning the wolves, which abounded in the forest, we resolved to court their company, and for this purpose carried with us a decoy, in the shape of a young pig carefully tied up in a strong canvas sack. Rifles, knives, ammunition, brandy-flasks, and sandwiches, having been put into our well-appointed sleigh, we set off, passed the church, crossed the bridge, went up the hill a

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little, and then striking into the forest, were soon in its labyrinths. Our driver was the starost's son, a man of about five-and-thirty, who had established himself as coachman on all my excursions. Two of Saunderson's wolf-hounds and the count's Newfoundland dog, lay at our feet, perfectly alive to the possibilities of sport.

Sleigh-driving is the one grand unapproachable unalloyed pleasure to be enjoyed in Russia. There is nothing to compare with a long furious sweep in a good Russian sleigh over hard crisp clean snow, wrapped in good furs. With a great bear-skin hanging over the back of the sleigh, and its apron, another bear-skin, covering your legs, with your feet encased in fur goloshes, resting on a doubled-up black Siberian curly sheepskin, with a fur cap on your head as tall and straight and round as a very large English hat without the rim, with your hands buried four-inch deep amongst the sable sleeves of your coat;—as you lie easily back, thus comforted, under a clear frosty bright sky, the horses, in graceful silver-mounted harness, tossing their heads, the bells at their necks tinkling merrily, the driver in high wolf-skin cap and sheepskin coat, over which he has drawn a handsome blue caftan trimmed below the arms with silver-plated round buttons as large as little eggs, and with a large parti-coloured sash bound round his waist—a fellow all excitement, but coolly managing three wild horses, who tear on at whirling speed, dashing the crisp snow in showers from their hoofs, sometimes for a moment or two half blinding you with the finest cleanest and whitest powder in the world,—with these appliances, and as you see and feel them all, you know the luxury of sleigh-driving. I am not speaking of a drive through the streets of Petersburg, but of a drive of thirty or forty miles over untrodden virgin snow through the forest, when the trees are clothed in a dense fantastic foliage of hoar-frost festooned with millions of stalactites, and when the pure bracing air as you rush through it sends the blood tingling through your veins.

Before we had quite left all evidences of traffic we heard the sound of men shouting and laughing at some distance. Determined to see what was going on, we left the sleigh, and taking our rifles, made towards the noise. Sounds travel far in a wood through clear cold air, and we had further to go than we expected before we found several men, who in felling trees had unearthed a bear. There he stood on his hind-legs, in front of what had been his hibernating place—a large hole under an oak which had been just pulled down. He stood with his back against the trunk, and his fore-feet beating the air, and the men were amusing themselves with his antics. As he seemed to want something to hug, they stepped up close to him, and put a lump of wood covered with mat between his arms. He closed them with a growl, and gave it a hug, and tore the mat to pieces. I was astonished—only for a moment—to see the men so close to him, teasing him without fear for themselves. There was no cause for astonishment; poor Bruin had not yet come to his senses. He was quite blind, thin, and gaunt, his hide hanging on him like a loose garment, and his fur like that of a mangy dog. In the beginning of winter he had prepared his hole, and crept into it. There he had lain on one side, sucking one paw. There he had turned on his other side, and was fast exhausting the other paw, when his dwelling was broken open by an evil chance, and he was forced to get up and collect his benumbed and dormant faculties, among which sight seemed slow to return. He had a dismal and repulsive aspect, as he stood or advanced on his hind-legs a little way from his support, and retreated to it growling and angry. To prevent the men from torturing the poor creature to death, we put a bullet into the right place, and left the men and the bear together. The bullet saved him from a more cruel death: which is our only excuse for having shot that poor blind sleepy bewildered Bruin.

Again whirling over the snow, through the wood, the stern and cold magnificence of the scene passed all powers of description. It was evident from the division of trees that we were following some known track, though it was sometimes so narrow and circuitous that we were often in danger of collisions with the trunks of old oaks and their branches. Now and then we emerged from the trees into a wide open, of perhaps one or two hundred acres, with here and there a magnificent oak, covered with hoary foliage, towering in solitary grandeur. In summer, these opens present the appearance of parks artificially laid out, surrounded by dark forest on all sides. The driver was never at a loss. "I know these trees, baron. There is no danger with such angels of horses. Noo! noo! Step out, my dears. We shall soon get among the wolves. I think I see their marks."

"Shall we try the pig, as a decoy?" I said to Saunderson.

"By all means, let us have a shot at something that is not blind and helpless. I cannot get the old bear off my conscience, poor wretch."

The pig was dragged from under the seat, where he had lain very quiet, and, by dint of pinching his tail, was made to perform a solo of pig music with variations, which resounded for miles through the stillness of the forest. For some time we could discern no wolves, but at length we caught sight of two, skulking among the underwood, in a parallel line with our path, but at a respectful distance. Although we kept up the decoy music, they were shy of approaching within shot. One end of a long white cotton rope was then attached to the mouth of the pig's bag, the other end to the back of the sleigh, and as we slowly turned a bend in the track the bag was dropped behind. We slackened pace, and, as the rope ran out, the pig became of course stationary. When the rope was all run out, we

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stopped and got out of the sleigh to watch the result, taking our station about two hundred yards from the pig, behind a tree, with our eyes on the place where we had last seen the two wolves. The pig, meantime, finding himself in a new position, put new zeal into his music. The wolves left the cover with springs and jumps, and soon approached the poor pig, who was in no greater danger than ourselves. As they were on the point of springing on the bag—in fact, one of them had made the jump—a sign caused the driver to move on with his horses, thus pulling the prey out of their reach, and setting them both wondering what this could mean. The wonder did not last long, for the wolves distinctly had smelt pork, and meant to dine on it.

They again approached the bag, and the bag again receded, while the most vociferous and resounding shrieks proceeded from the pig inside. The wolves made a furious run, and again the driver gave reins to the horses till he had pulled the pig nearly on a line with the place where Saunderson and I were standing: the wolves following with tongues out and glaring eyes. Both rifles went off at the same moment, and, strange to say, only one wolf rolled over. We had both fired into one. The other wolf sprang for cover, but was stopped and brought to bay by the three dogs, who very soon made an end of him, receiving in the struggle a few sharp bites from his ugly teeth.

This method of decoying the wolves is common in that part of the country, and it is not unattended with danger, for, in case of a large pack being attracted, nothing but fleet horses can save the hunters. We had this advantage, besides rifles and dogs, and were prepared for as many wolves as might show themselves.

"Do you hear that?" said Saunderson, as an unmistakable howling yelp was borne to us on the wind. "We have only killed the advanced guard; the pack is in full cry. Be quick; fetch in the pig, and let us drag these two behind the sleigh."

We tied the rope round the neck of each wolf, and dragged both as fast as possible, secured the dogs in the sleigh, and jumped in ourselves. Then off we sped again, wolves by this time visible on each side of us and behind us. We soon found we could sustain a pace of three feet to their two, and this cleared us of risk. All we had to do was to prevent their getting ahead of us.

Having reloaded our empty barrels and lighted our cigars, we kept watch on either side for a good shot; but it is not easy to get a good shot in a running sleigh, unless the object be stationary, large, and near.

"Mattvic, go slower, keep your eye on the horses, and pull up very gradually when I cry 'stop.'"

"I hear."

A detachment behind were now coming up in fine style.

"Slower, Mattvic."

"I hear."

We got on our knees on the seat of the sledge with our faces to the approaching wolves, about fifteen in number; we rested our rifles on the back, and as the wolves came up Saunderson said,

"Now, take one on the left, and I'll take one on the right, and as soon as you see their teeth, fire."

"Stop, Mattvic."

"I hear."

Gradually the sleigh came to a stand. The wolves were by this time within twenty yards of us, and we could see their grinning and sharp grinders, their tongues lapping, and the light in their fiery eyes.

"Are you ready? Fire! Two down. Again! The other barrel. Ready? Fire! Other two down. Drive on, Mattvic, slowly; it will take them some time to consider of that."

The wolves all stopped, and seemed to gather round their fallen friends. A turn in the wood hid them from view. Even our enemies on the right and left flanks, paused at the unexpected reports of the guns, and allowed us to proceed without molestation. We went more and more slowly, and at length stopped altogether and waited; but no more wolves came up.

"I am afraid," said Saunderson, "our wolf-hunting is over for to-day. Drive on, Mattvic, we can't help it."

"Listen, barons," said Mattvic. "We can trap them all. I'll be the pig."

"Trap them. How?"

"It is easily done. About three versts from this, is Timofey Evanoffage, the woodman's hut. You have only to make one turn to the right, and keep straight on, and you will reach it. He has a wolf-trap. Get all ready, and I will bring on the wolves. Never fear. Only you must give me the little horse; he is swift and sure; I have hunted wolves before with him."

After a slight hesitation about the man's safety, which he thought in no peril of any sort, his plan was adopted. The little horse was got out and given to Mattvic; Saunderson mounted the dickey, and on we went ahead. Our man, screaming like a pig, rode back to invite the wolves to follow him into Timofey's trap. Around Timofey's house, was a strong high palisade; through this there was only one entrance, by a door opening inward and hung by a pulley and heavy balance-weight, so when a wolf pushed himself through this door, it closed, and shut him into the space between the house and palisade. This space was again divided off by strong cross-partitions round the premises, in each of which was fixed a sliding panel or a drop panel, that could be pulled up or let down from within the house. By these means the inmates could separate the wolves, and kill them with dogs, guns, or hatchets, at their leisure. I had heard of one man trapping in this manner as many as fifty wolves in a winter, besides other game, the

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skins of which were worth to him at least one hundred and fifty roubles.

As we approached the hut we found it of larger dimensions than we had expected, and the palisade seemed to take in a larger circumference than one hut required. We shouted, but no one answered; all was as still and quiet as if the place were uninhabited. On our entering the door through the palisade, it closed with a bang, and we found ourselves in a small enclosure with a gateway opposite, leading to the back premises; but it was made fast. After thundering at it for a minute or two, a small door in the gateway opened, and there emerged cautiously, the figure of a man rubbing his eyes and staring through his hair. He reminded me of the blind bear. His hair, like a great mass of tangled tow, was matted over his head and face; he wore a coarse grey ragged overcoat over a grey cotton or sacking shirt and trousers, and long felt boots completed his costume. He made many excuses, and asked pardon many times for keeping us waiting, but seemed to be in no hurry to admit us until we told him that a pack of wolves might be expected, and that our horses and conveyances must be put in a place of safety. The information acted on him like a galvanic shock, and he was off into the house with a spring, through a side-door inside the gateway. We followed, stooping all the time, and were in the house. It was a man-kennel, twenty or thirty feet square, a great stove in the centre, dogs about a score lying on the floor, and men snoring on the top of the pack. The heat was suffocating, the stench was poisonous. Timofey soon roused the sleepers, pulling them off their perch by the legs, pouring water over their heads, cuffing the men and kicking the dogs. "Wolves! wolves! you pigs, and you all sleeping! Be quiet, dogs. No barking. Evan, take the barons' horses and dogs round by the back entrance, to the shed. Quick! Andrea, stand by the big gate, and be ready to shut it after Mattvic gets through. Put the dogs in the third division, and get out the guns! Ah, thank God and these barons for bringing us the wolves!"

We had no intention of being cooped up in the hut while the fray went on, and therefore took our station beside the man at the gateway, which now stood wide open for the admission of Mattvic and his little horse. In a short time all was quiet, and every necessary preparation made. Then came the howling of wolves, and the screaming as of a pig, the gallop of a horse over the hard crisp snow, the rush of many small feet. The outer door in the palisade was dashed open, and Mattvic, followed in half a minute by the whole pack, rushed in. The half-minute was just sufficient to enable Mattvic to vanish through the outer door into the trap. Then, as the last pressure on the door was removed, it closed with a loud sharp sound, and some five-and-twenty wolves were snared in a space not larger than twelve feet by twenty. We did not at first close the inner gateway, but, levelling our pieces at the mass of wolves now huddling themselves up in a corner, poured in two volleys in rapid succession, then closed the gate, and reloaded for another charge. The change from the air of ferocious savage daring which the wolves had displayed in pursuit of a single horseman, to abject terror when they found themselves caught in the narrow trap, was instantaneous. They were like sheep in a pen, crushing up in a corner, riding on the top of one another, lying down on their bellies, crouching and shivering with fear. It is not necessary to describe the scene of mere slaughter. Two staves were chopped out of the gateway, that we might fire through. The drop panels were opened, and two or three were admitted at a time to the next division; there, dogs were let in on them through the adjoining trap, or they were killed by men with great bars of wood or axes, and at length when only six or seven remained, three of the men went in amongst them, and with perfect safety despatched them. They say that a worm will turn on the heel that treads on it, but wolves caught in a trap like this from which there is no escape, have less courage than a worm. They crouch, shiver, and die, as I saw, without one effort at self-defence, or one snap of retaliation.

Timofey's hut was not only a wolf-trap, but a farm-house too: it had a large shed attached, in which a few cows roamed loose during the day, and at night were put into a byre or stable. Timofey did not clean out this byre once a day, like a good modern farmer: he only spread a little straw over the dung every morning, and allowed it to accumulate until the month of June, when the cowhouse was emptied every year. After this "mucking of Timofey's byre," you had to descend a few feet if you desired to enter it, but before the "mucking" at the end of the year's accumulations, you had to ascend a few feet. In the one case you looked down on the cows, in the other you looked up at the cows. In fine, this was Timofey's manure depôt. It was the same with his stables. He told me that the horses accumulated so much, that he had to slope a path through, by which they might get in at the doors and climb up the slope. In the shed were lying two implements which attracted my attention; the first was composed of birch-trees cut down through the centre, with the branches chopped off within a foot of the trees. Half a dozen of these timbers, about seven feet long, were tied together with twigs of trees, the flat side up, and the prongs of the branches down. Put two rough poles for shafts into this contrivance, and the Russian peasant's harrow is complete; price, nothing. Timofey told me that it did very well for his light sandy land, and that if he found it rather light sometimes, he put a heavy stone on it. The other instrument was a plough having two turned-up prongs like Dutch skates ten inches apart, set in a rough wooden frame: betwixt them, a projecting movable scoop for turning over the ground. This scoop had to be reversed

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every time Timofey turned his horses. He said this was a very dear implement, for iron had to be used in its construction. It cost even as much as two roubles, or about six shillings.

CURIOSITIES OF PARISH BOOK-KEEPING.

PARISH registers as they used to be, were much livelier records than the dry entries of baptisms, marriages, and burials, now bearing the name. This assertion, Burn's History of them shall enable us here to prove. In the oldest books of the Old Testament we find registers of births, marriages, and deaths. Registers were kept in Athens and Rome. Parish registers were kept in France, as early as the year thirteen hundred and eight. In Spain, Cardinal Ximenes, in fourteen 'ninety-seven, ordered them to be kept in every parish, as a check to the frequency of divorce on the plea of spiritual affinity. It was not until the sixteenth century, that the general keeping of parish registers as written documents, began. To put beans in a bag, a white bean for every girl, and a black bean for every boy baptised, and to count them at the end of the year, had before then—even in Florence, the head-quarters of civilisation—been the registry in use.

The keeping of parish registers in England was one of the many wholesome ideas put in force in Henry the Eighth's day by that Thomas Cromwell whom Shakespeare's Wolsey charged to "fling away ambition," and in whose remarkable career there was honestly worked out the counsel which the fallen cardinal is made by the poet to give him:

> Be just, and fear not.
> Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,
> Thy God's, and Truth's.

The date of Cromwell's injunction to the clergy, that a book or register be kept by every parson, vicar, or curate, for every church, and that every Sunday the clergyman enter therein particulars of the previous week's christenings, weddings, and burials, is the year fifteen 'thirty-eight. In the churchwardens' accounts of that year for the parish of St. Margaret's, Westminster, we read: "Paid for a Book to registre in the names of Buryals, Weddings, and Christenings, 2d." The proposal had been before the public for some time, and had formed one of the grievances set forth two years earlier in a Yorkshire rebellion. It had then been given out "that the king designed to get all the gold of England into his hands, under colour of re-coining it; that he would seize all unmarked cattle and all the ornaments of parish churches, and they should be forced to pay for christenings, marriages, and burials (orders having been given for keeping Registers thereof), and for licences to eat white bread." From the west coast also, Sir Piers Edgcumbe wrote to Cromwell that "in sundry places within the shires of Cornwall and Devon there is among the king's subjects great fear and mistrust what the King's Highness and his Council should mean, to give in commandment to the parsons and vicars of every parish that they should make a book, and surely to be kept" for registry of births, marriages, and deaths. "Their mistrust is that some charges, more than hath been in times past, shall grow to them by this occasion of registering these things; wherein if it shall please the King's Majesty to put them out of doubt, in my poor mind shall increase much hearty love." The dissolution of the monasteries made Cromwell's suggestion the more necessary, for now there were no longer the monks busy as self-appointed registrars of all kinds of events, public and private, in Chartularies, Leiger Books, Obituaries, Registers, and Chronicles.

In fifteen 'thirty-six, when the requirement to keep parish registers was first discussed, the general dissolution of the monasteries was in progress. The same fear that bred opposition to the parish registers, excited hostility to the Census of 1801. So observes MR. CHARLES KNIGHT in his admirably comprehensive Popular History of England, from which no topic that concerns the history of the English people—not even this question of the origin of parish registers—has been omitted; that book of Mr. Knight's being, let us say here by the way, the best history extant not only for, but also of, the people. The keeping of the parish register being a duty misliked by many, was so commonly neglected, that, in King Edward's reign, a fine of three-and-fourpence to the poor-box was ordained to be the penalty of each omission of that most useful and necessary act. In Queen Elizabeth's reign, the injunction was repeated, with the penalty half payable to the poor-box and half towards church repair.

Of about eleven thousand parish registers now in existence, there are eight hundred which begin in fifteen hundred and thirty-eight; forty of these contain entries prior to that date; four thousand have their first entries within the sixteenth century. As to the early dates, many of the registers (kept sometimes by negligent incumbents) are defective by reason of gaps, omissions, and other acts of carelessness. For example, the clergyman of Tunstall, in Kent, was annoyed by the number of persons with a particular name—Pottman—among his parishioners. In one year he christened three Pottmans by the name of Mary, and soon afterwards, in fifteen 'sixty-seven, the disgusted pastor coolly writes in the register, "From henceforw[d] I omitt the Pottmans." In another parish, a clerk who was a grocer took waste paper for the wrappings of his groceries, out of the parish register, and so established some considerable gaps; other registers had leaves torn out by parliamentary soldiers during the civil wars; the register of Torporley, in Cheshire, explains that a breach of five years "hapned by reason of the great wars obliterating Memorials, wasting fortunes, and slaughtering persons of all sorts." The early registers of Christchurch,

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Hampshire, were found in course of being steadily used up some years since by the curate's wife, who made kettle-holders of them, and who would have consumed, in good time, all the archives if the parish clerk had not interposed. In an Essex parish, the clerk being applied to for a copy of an entry, and not having pen and ink handy, said to the applicant, "You may as well take the leaf as it is," and cut two whole pages out of the register with his pocket-knife. The old registers supposed in rustic parishes to be "out of date," have been found snipped into measures by a tailor-clerk, or used for singeing geese, or given by another clerk as parchment to his daughters, who were lace-makers. In Northamptonshire, a clergyman discovered at the house of one of his parishioners, an old parchment register sewed together as a covering for the tester of a bedstead. An inhabitant of Lambeth once got a tradesman's package in a leaf of parish register, and found that it contained the entry of his own baptism.

Sometimes, a clergyman was conscientious as well as negligent. The vicar of Barkston, Leicestershire, neglected to register at the time the baptism of a certain Ellen Dun, put it afterwards in the year sixteen 'eighty-nine, and then moved it a year forward, having written under his record, "Lord pardon me if I am guilty of any error in registering Ellen Dun's name." A little earlier we have this edifying entry in the register of Melton Mowbray: "Here is a Bill of Barton Lazars of the people which was buried, and which was and maried above 10 years old, for because the Clark was dead, and therefore they was not set down according as they was But they are all set down sure on nough one among another here in this place." The register of St. Mary, Aldermanbury, contains the following melancholy reason for a break in its record: "In the year 1625, Mr. Downing, the Curate of this Parish, his wife, three of his children, and the Parish Clerk, were victims to the plague, and the consequence was that a hundred names were entered in the Register from recollection." In recent time, a few years ago, the parish registers of Kew, certifying the baptism and the marriage of her Majesty's father, and other royal births, marriages, and deaths, were stolen, and they have not been recovered.

The signing of every page of a transcript by the minister and churchwardens of the year in which it was made, has given rise to the notion that any such minister and churchwardens have lived throughout all the years for which they signed. So it is that we hear of the longevity of a Mr. Simpson, of Keame, in Leicestershire, who was reported to have been incumbent of the same parish for ninety-two years, and to have had for seventy years the same churchwardens.

The title-pages to the register books vary, according to the taste of the original designer. Here, is a prayer that "our sovereign queen Elizabeth" may continue a Mother in Israel; here, the clergyman has pointed in verse from the earthly to the heavenly roll; or perhaps he takes, like the pastor of Rodmarton, an altogether earthly view of the matter, and writes on the title-page, "If you will have this Book last, bee sure to aire it att the fier or in the Sunne three or foure times a yeare—else it will grow dankish and rott, therefore look to it. It will not bee amisse when you finde it dankish to wipe over the leaves with a dry wollen cloath. This Place is very much subject to dankishness, therefore I say looke to it."

Times have changed very much since Camden said, "Two Christian names are rare in England, and I only remember now his Majesty who was named Charles James and the prince, his son, Henry Frederic; and among private men Thomas Maria Wingfield and Sir Thomas Posthumous Hobby." When the multiplication of Christian names first became a bad fashion it suggested the French epigram on M. L. P. St. Florentin:

> Here lies a little man who had a common little mind,
> Alive he had three names, and yet he leaves not one behind.

Since the Bugs have become Norfolk Howards, some question has arisen among lawyers as to a man's right to change his Christian name. The right to change the surname is undoubted, and the other right is admitted now; but the old law and custom were against it. The Christian name could only be changed at confirmation. Is it not so written in Coke upon Littleton? "If a man be baptised by the name of Thomas; and after, at his confirmation by the Bishop, he is named John, he may purchase by the name of his confirmation. And this doth agree with our ancient books, where it is holden that a man may have divers names at divers times, but not divers Christian names."

The registers illustrate the not infrequent practice, in days when mortality among the young was even far greater than it now is, of assuring the perpetuation of a father's or mother's Christian name by giving it successively to two or three living children. In the register of Beby, Leicestershire, twins are entered as baptised, one day in fifteen 'fifty-nine, John and John Picke. Two days afterwards, "the same John and John Picke were buried." There was also one John Barker who had three sons each named John Barker, and two daughters each named Margaret Barker.

With a view to the future casting of their horoscopes, the time of the birth, in the case of gentlemen's children, was often registered with astrological precision: the day, the hour, the place of the sun, the sign of the day and of the month, the planet of the day being recorded. In sixteen 'fifty-one, the clergyman of Eastbourne, Sussex, records the baptism of a son, "he being my 26th child." In the register of Allhallows, Bread-street, we read: "The 20th day of December, 1608, was baptised John, the sonne of John Mylton, Scrivener." In the register of Nunney, Somersetshire, we read of the baptism of another

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genius: "Roger Starr, baptised Dec. 17, 1604. He clymed up a ladder to the top of the house, 23 Oct. 1606, being seven weeks and odd days less than two years old." At Sea Saltor, in Kent, a memorandum of another feat not to be forgotten by posterity was attached by the clergyman to an entry of baptism in seventeen 'thirty-four: "Mrs. Wigmore made the Punch."

We turn from births to burials. In the register of burials at Bishopwearmouth, is one at mid-winter, more than two centuries ago, of "John, a child from the Pannes, foresworne of his Father, forsaken of his Mother;" and at Hart, in Durham, about the same time, an old woman's burial is thus recorded: "Old Mother Midnight, of Elwick, buried." Much later, not a hundred years ago, in seventeen 'sixty-eight, there is an entry as uncivilised, in the register of Spronton, Leicestershire: "A Tom Bedlam buried."

At Ashborn, in sixteen 'fifty, is this entry: "Buried Emma wife of Thomas Toplis who was found delivered of a child after she had layne 2 houres in her grave." At Clovelly, ninety years ago, the books were kept by a sentimental clergyman, who made several entries after this manner: "Christian Meek, truly deserving of that name." Sometimes, there was censure, as of a man at Misterton "who was bought off by his Father after enlisting, and had the meanness and ingratitude to suffer the said Father to be subsisted many years by the parish." Sometimes there was satire, as in the case of the clergyman at Buxted, in the year of the great fire of London, who records the burial of "Richard Bassett, the old clarke of this Parish, who had continued in the offices of clarke and sexton for the space of 43 years, whose melody warbled forth as if he had been thumped on the back with a stone." From different registers we take these entries, representing names of persons buried: The Old Girl from the Workhouse—Old Meg—Old Plod—Bacchus, alias Hogtub, alias Fat Jack, alias John from Lord Clive at Claremont (Esher, 1772), Old Half-head—Barberry an Old Maid—Mother Gammon—Old Father Beadle. At Teddington, we read of the burial of "James Parsons, who had often eat a shoulder of mutton or a peck of hasty pudding at a time, which caused his death."

In the way of marriages, the registers contain but one record of the performance of the old unregistered ceremony of public espousal before marriage. In that case espousal preceded marriage by three years. Before seventeen 'fifty-four there were the Fleet marriages, and marriages contrary to law, nevertheless held to be valid, in divers lawless churches. One of them was St. James's, Duke's-place, where there were sometimes thirty or forty clandestine marriages in a day. In the first register book of that church, forty thousand weddings are entered. Its exemption from ecclesiastical control arose in the claim of superior rights by the Lord Mayor and citizens of London, as lords of the manor and patrons of the church. Some of the Fleet marriage entries are curious. On one day, "Edward —— and Elizabeth —— were married, and would not let me know their names, ye man said he was a weaver, and liv'd in Bandyleg-walk, in the Borough." Some were entered as "quarrelsome people," others as "abusive with a Witness," or "exceeding vile in their behaviour." The Fleet parson's fee was four or five shillings, the clerk's was a shilling or two, and out of this a gratuity was paid to the person who brought the job. The fees were not always easy to get. "Had a noise for foure hours about the money," is one entry. Value was taken for the fee sometimes, by bride or bridegroom. Of one couple it is registered, "N.B. Stole a silver spoon." Of another, "Stole my clothes-brush." It was a popular superstition that if a woman were married without clothes on her back, her husband would not become answerable for her debts. This accounts for another sort of entry: "The woman ran across Ludgate-hill in her shift. 10s. 6d." The Fleet parson charged extra for marrying under such conditions. In a regular Wiltshire parish register, we find, as part of a record of marriage, "The aforesaid Ann Sellwood was married in her smock, without any clothes or headgear on." The most famous of the Fleet parsons, Parson Gaynham, after having married thirty-six thousand people, was himself, at the age of eighty, married to his servant maid. In the register of Everton, Notts, is a rhyme showing the right seasons for marrying:

> Advent marriage doth deny
> But Hilary gives the liberty
> Septuagesima says thee nay
> Eight days from Easter says you may
> Rogation bids thee to remain
> But Trinity sets thee free again.

Miscellaneous entries of many kinds occur in the old parish registers. Entries of licenses to eat flesh in Lent, of battles and great public events, of the parson's paying his butcher's bill, or his wrath at somebody, as "Mary Snelson is starke nought, stinking nought. Blot not this out;" of great storms, plague, or other events. At Loughborough, in Leicestershire, one June over three hundred years ago, the appearance of plague in the parish is thus registered: "The Swat, called New Acquaintance, alias Stoupe, Knave, and Know thy Master—began the 24th of this month." Touching for the king's evil, is often mentioned. In the twenty years before sixteen 'eighty-two, nearly a hundred thousand scrofulous persons were so touched by his majesty. A Derbyshire register records the dry summer in sixteen 'fifteen, when in that parish there fell only two showers, at intervals of six weeks, between Lady-day and the fourth of August. It had been preceded by what the register of Youlgrave, Derbyshire, calls "the greatest snow which ever fell upon the earth within man's memory." That fall began on the sixteenth of January, and increased until the twelfth of March, when men walked on the snow over the

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buried gates and hedges. The heaps and drifts were not consumed until the twenty-eighth of May following.

OVER THE ICE.

In the winter of 1813 there was hard fighting along the borders of Canada; the desultory campaign went on with variable fortune, but the Americans pressed us severely, and we, the few regulars, were worn out with fatigue and annoyance. This was the state of affairs when a heavy fall of snow put an end to hostilities, as the curtain of a theatre might drop upon a battle scene. A space of enforced quiet succeeded. The roads were impassable, the drifts lay deep over the country, and we had for a time to contend with the intense cold, instead of a human foe. However, fuel abounded, provisions were plentiful, and the troops enjoyed their rest after the harassing marches and counter-marches of the past season.

My detachment was stationed at Port Hope, a little fresh-water harbour on the north bank of Lake Ontario. It consisted of a single company of my own regiment, a few artillerymen, and a handful of sappers under charge of an engineer officer. Captain Haworth, of our own corps, was in command, and I was his only effective subaltern; the ensign having been wounded and removed to the hospital at Quebec, jus tbefore the snow set in. I was then a lieutenant, and, although a young man, had been a lieutenant for some time, having been lucky enough to win my first promotion in Spain, within a few months after joining Lord Wellington's army. But I was eager, almost unreasonably eager, for further and speedy advancement: not from motives of merely selfish ambition, but because I had left a mother at home in England who was old and in narrow circumstances, as well as sisters who had stinted themselves of many comforts to furnish the outfit for my career.

Port Hope was at that time a sorry little place, with mean sheds and shanties, a few boarded houses roofed with glittering tin, and many log-huts little better than the wigwams of the savages. The few barges and coasting craft belonging to it were fast ice-bound in the little haven, surrounded by bavins and fenders made of pliant brushwood, to protect the timbers from the grinding and pressure of the jagged ice, when the thaw should come. There was a stockaded enclosure which was called the fort: a place originally constructed by the French masters of Canada; but it had never been fit for defence against any but a hostile party of Indians or scouts, and was decayed and ruinous. We had toiled hard to strengthen it, under the direction of the engineer officer, and what with logs, and puddled clay for mortar, and gabions, and sand-bags, and earthen ramparts built up before the iron ground refused to admit the spade, we had really succeeded in rearing a solid and imposing series of defences. As the massive flakes of snow darkened the air, we were just finishing the embrasures, and we contrived to get the guns into position, swathing them with haybands and tarpaulin to preserve them from the weather.

Then our labours ceased. There was barrack-room drill, and nothing else, except a daily inspection of arms, and proper vigilance in posting and visiting sentries. But these precautions were regarded as hardly needful. The militiamen had been dismissed to their homes, and war slumbered. Great then was my surprise when, on my returning one evening from inspecting the sentries, Captain Haworth, wrapped in his cloak, met me with an unwonted look of trouble on his bronzed face.

"Ned, here's a precious business. Say nothing before the men, but go quietly up to my quarters. I'll join you in a moment."

The barrack-yard was half full: not merely of soldiers, their wives and children, but of settlers, country-folks, and miscellaneous hangers-on, white and black. Wondering what my commander could possibly have to communicate, I repaired to his quarters. In Haworth's sitting-room—for, as commander, he enjoyed the luxury of two rooms—a great fire of logs was burning, and before this fire, wrapped in a gaudy-coloured blanket, was an Indian asleep. The man's face was hidden by his arm, but his careless attitude and heavy breathing denoted fatigue, and his fringed leggings were wet and steaming, as if the frozen snow upon them had lately thawed. A plate, on which were some clean-picked bones and crumbs of bread, lay near, beside an empty tumbler, the latter of which exhaled an aromatic fragrance of whisky-and-water; a pair of snow-shoes had been tossed into a corner of the room.

I had barely time to take in all these objects at a glance, when Haworth entered, humming a tune, as if in lightness of heart. He was followed by his servant, with a fresh store of firewood.

"That will do, Martin; I shall want nothing more till nine. Mr. Mills sups with me, so you may grill the turkey legs as well as the other things I ordered. I'll brew the punch myself."

Martin made his military salute and departed. Instantly the captain's gaiety of manner fell like a mask.

"Ned Mills," said he, with unusual energy and seriousness, "I believe you're a true friend to me, and, Heaven help me, I want a friend this night, if ever a man wanted one since the world was a world."

I was a little startled by this preamble, but I lost no time in assuring him that my regard for him was genuine and of long date, and that I was ready to aid him in any way. "What was the matter?"

Haworth opened the door before replying, and glanced down the passage, to make sure no eavesdroppers were at hand; then gently closing the door, he said, in a low voice,

"Ned, this Indian runner has brought bad news. It is a lucky thing that he is a trust-

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worthy fellow, and came straight to me instead of blabbing the secret at the canteen. The enemy are wide awake across the border; they hope to catch us napping."

"The enemy?" cried I, half-incredulously; "why, the roads are sealed up. The drifts are deep enough to smother twenty armies; not a gun, not a waggon, can get along through the loose snow, and the war must wait till there is a smooth hard surface for the march."

"What do you say to that? Is *that* smooth and hard enough?" said Haworth, pointing to the frozen surface of Lake Ontario, where a pale blue sheet of polished ice, striped with fleecy streaks of snow, reflected the countless stars of a Canadian night.

Haworth proceeded to tell me that a force of Americans, powerful in comparison with our feeble garrison, had secretly assembled on the south shore of the lake, and, led by experienced guides, designed to cross the ice, which was strong enough to bear the weight of a considerable body marching in Indian file, according to the custom of western guerilla warfare. The Indian who brought the news, and who had been sent by one of the spies in British pay whom our government then maintained on the frontier, had, by a prodigious effort, crossed the frozen lake on snow-shoes, without rest or refreshment, and had arrived an hour before. At the time of his setting out, there were many dangerous places not frozen over to a sufficient thickness, and there was every likelihood that several hours would elapse before the enemy began an advance, which they fully counted on as a surprise.

"Why, let them come," said I, cheerfully, and wondering at Haworth's face; "we've got the ramparts well finished, a stout palisade, and bastions that would not disgrace Quebec itself. We shall beat them off, and the repulse will be worth a step in the Army List to both of us."

Haworth shook his head.

"They won't come here; small as our fort is, they know it to be well armed and in good repair, and too hard a nut for them to crack. I forgot to tell you that the invading force will not consist of American regulars, but of twelve or fifteen hundred of the New York militia, under a notorious partisan, Colonel Carter——"

"Carter? You don't mean Jeremy Carter, the plundering rascal who was near being cashiered for his cruelty at Senetchwan, near Sandwich, where he burned the village?"

"I do mean him," said Haworth. "He is the most unscrupulous leader on the frontiers, but he is a daring dog, and is not unpopular with the mob of his native state. As I told you, he has under his command at least twelve hundred militiamen: not to mention a force of six hundred Mohawk Indians in the pay of Congress. And their destination is Hamilton."

This explained Haworth's unwonted emotion. In the fort of Hamilton, at the western extremity of the lake, was residing, as I well knew, one very dear to him. Jane, Major Lee's only daughter, was affianced, with the full approval of her surviving parent, to Arthur Haworth, who was her cousin, and it was understood that their marriage was only deferred until my captain should be gazetted major. It was only natural that he should be alarmed by the prospect of a sudden attack upon the fort under Major Lee's command, the place being weak and the garrison slender.

"You see," said Haworth, "the general has been deceived by false reports, and has drawn away every available bayonet towards the Lower Province. Since the detachment of the Sixtieth were ordered off to Kingston, Lee has scarcely had men enough to mount guard and do fatigue work. And, depend on it, the Americans know well what a rich prize they will get, seeing that money, cannon, powder, and stores of all kinds are waiting there for transport to Toronto. The old major, you know, is as brave as a lion, but his resistance will probably lead to a massacre when the fort falls, and Carter is likely to have neither the will nor the power to restrain his savage allies, led as they are by Wild Cat, the very worst of the Mohawk nation. What can I do? Even if I dared abandon my post, to march the men to Hamilton is impossible, and Jane may perish while I am idling here."

Haworth was as gallant and good a fellow as any in our army, but he was utterly unmanned by the horrid vision his boding fancy had called up. I could not but own to myself, as I strove to comfort him, that he had reasons for his worst misgivings. But what could we do? Even supposing that my commanding officer could venture, at the risk of ignominious dismissal from the service, to abandon his post, our hundred and nine effectives could never cope with the superior numbers of the enemy; and the road was hopelessly impassable to any but the most adroit woodsman trained to snow-shoes. The lake presented a tempting expanse of flint-hard ice, but we knew that along the coast to the westward there were many spots where the flowing water from brook and creek had spoiled the uniformity of the surface: substituting rough "hammocks," cemented together by treacherous "glaire," for the firm and polished sheet that stretched away in front. A good many of our men were raw recruits from England, unused to ice, and certain to flounder and exhaust themselves in drifts of any depth, while only half a dozen of the old soldiers were even tolerable performers in snow-shoes. A rescue, therefore, seemed impossible.

"What on earth can I do?" said poor Haworth; "the major has not, to the best of my belief, sixty men under arms. The stockades are rotten, the earthworks are waiting till our sappers are at leisure to patch them up, and yet I know the stout old soldier won't surrender. His resistance will be just enough to rouse the devil in the hearts of those without; and when the Indians get at the spirit casks, who can tell what barbarous frenzy may take possession of their

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wild minds. No use in tears and prayers when a drunken Mohawk sniffs blood and liquor!"

I made no reply for some minutes, for I was pondering over a plan that had occurred to me. Haworth waited awhile, and then peevishly asked why I did not answer?

"Look here, old fellow," said I, at last, "if we can't help them, the next best is to warn them. A good runner in snow-shoes might get to Hamilton in time, and perhaps they may have some communication open with the interior. If Major Lee thinks fit to hold out, he can at least send his daughter to a place of safety, and——"

"Do you imagine I haven't thought of that? But it's hopeless. There is not a scout at Port Hope now, there is not an Indian worth his salt; none but a parcel of worthless drunken redskins, who have been so corrupted by fire-water and lazy dependence on the whites that they couldn't get through such a march to save their lives. O Heaven, if they were all like Kesnakupak there——"

"Kesnakupak!" exclaimed I, casting a look at the sleeping Indian in his scarlet blanket before the fire; "do you mean that our fleet-footed messenger of evil is Elk-that-runs himself?"

I had never before seen that renowned personage, equally famous for his speed of foot and his extraordinary skill in the chase. In time of peace, this man, who was one of the petty chiefs of the Huron tribe, had been a favourite with the British officers, on account of the ability with which he guided them on hunting excursions; and since the war began, he had approved himself one of the most faithful and daring of our scouts.

The sound of his own name aroused the slumbering savage; he raised himself on his elbow, opened his black eyes, and growled out the deep guttural "Wagh!" of Indian surprise.

"Captain want Elk-that-runs?" he inquired.

"No, my poor fellow," said Haworth, kindly, "you have done enough for one while, and had better rest. I was but wishing I had as good a runner as you to send to Hamilton."

A long conversation ensued, in which the Indian bore his part; and as his intelligence and fidelity were well proved, Haworth spoke freely before him. Elk-that-runs understood English pretty well, though occasionally he begged that some puzzling expression might be translated into French, which tongue was generally familiar to the Hurons. Haworth frankly owned that he was afraid to ask counsel or help from the colonists around, many of whom were at that time disaffected, as being the sons or grandsons of the original French settlers, smarting under British rule. Then, as now, the bulk of the Canadians were loyal to our government; but there was a wide-spread leaven of discontent among those of French stock; and we had reason to suspect that all we did, was notified to the enemy.

"I dare not send down to the village to ask for a messenger," said Haworth; "those two traitorous habitants, Duval and Fournier, are sure to hear of it, and to worm out the motive. North and west the people are staunch enough, but we have enemies here at our own doors. Except Kendal at the Big Lick——"

"I've got it," cried I, jumping up and clapping my hands—which drew from Elk-that-runs another "Wagh!" of grave astonishment. "Give me leave of absence for eight-and-forty hours at furthest, and, unless I much mistake the Kendal family, we'll pull through this awkward business yet."

After a few more words on both sides, my leave was granted me, and I wrapped myself in a buffalo robe, such as frontiersmen wore, to elude the recognition which might have proved untimely had I worn my military cloak, and set off through the piercing cold, to Big Lick farm. This farm was so called from the wide creek on whose banks it stood, and which was a favourite haunt of deer. It belonged to a most loyal emigrant family, whose children were growing up, healthy and prosperous, in the New World, but whose hearts were true to England and King George. The reason of my singling them out as recipients of my confidence was this:—Willy Kendal, a lad of seventeen, was the owner of the best and largest ice-boat on the whole Canada shore.

A special class of craft are those ice-boats, peculiar to Upper Canada, and their navigation requires an amount of skill and courage not every day to be found combined. They are barges or pinnaces, cutter-rigged for the most part, and built of the toughest timber the colony produces. Below the keel, is a raised runner of polished iron, sharp as a skate at the edges, and designed—not to plough the waters, but to skim across the ice of the great lakes. These craft are propelled by sails, and steered by helm, exactly like sea-going vessels; it is hardly necessary to add that with a favouring breeze they can attain a speed never equalled by a ship that has to cleave through water, and not much inferior to that of an express train. But they have the drawback of danger. So many accidents have occurred from the breaking in of the ice, from sudden squalls, collisions, and so forth, that these winter yachts have never attained the popularity of the safe and convenient sleigh.

It was a rough walk to Big Lick. More than once, in spite of all my caution, I plumped nearly waist deep into a bank of snow, and the loose drift was always up to my knees. But I pushed on, and presently found myself in the stove-heated "keeping room" of the Kendals, briefly telling my tale, and entreating assistance. A fine family group they made; the hale grey-haired father; Mrs. Kendal, a comely matron who had preserved her bright English complexion through many a Canadian summer; her daughters, of various ages, from infancy to nigh womanhood; and the frank bold Willy, with his blue eyes sparkling, and his sun-browned cheeks glowing with excitement, as he listened.

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Hardly had I finished when he sprang up.

"Thank you, Mr. Mills, for thinking of me in such a muss. I'll just jump up stairs for my rifle and ball-pouch, and I'll get Stormswallow out of dock, and we'll make shift to lug her down creek. Once on the lake, she'll show her heels, I guess, and if we *do* meet those robbers and their red bloodhounds, why——"

Here he caught sight of his mother's wistful gaze fixed upon him; he stopped short.

Mrs. Kendal's first remark was not an unnatural one: "Suppose Willy should be killed!"

It was her husband who answered, and though there were tears in the old farmer's hardy eyes, his voice was firm as he said:

"Wife, we must not hold back our boy from a work of mercy. If I knew how to steer as he does, I'd go in his place, and take all risk, sooner than lie snug and warm in my bed, and leave women and young girls to the murdering tomahawk of the savage. But let our dear boy go, in God's name, and trust to the Heaven above us all to send him safe back to us."

So it was settled; but the parting was a painful one. The sisters clung, weeping, to Willy as he went to and fro, and though Mrs. Kendal kept her feelings down for a while, and made a mighty show of business equanimity in giving out blankets and hides, provisions, cordials, and other necessaries, for the storing of the yacht during our wild trip, she broke down at last, and caught her son to her heart with a burst of passionate sobbing very painful to hear.

"Let the mistress have her cry out. It will do her good," whispered the old farmer. "You and I, lieutenant, will go down and get out the boat."

We went down, followed by two of the hired men, a negro and white, bending under the weight of our provisions and wrappings. With the help of these two men, we dragged the cutter from her miniature dock, got up her topmast, removed the tarpaulins, unlocked the cabin doors, bent the sails, and drew the light vessel to the frozen creek. Then Willy Kendal, his face stained with tears but flushed and eager with courage and hope, came up to us, with his gun on his shoulder, and his ammunition slung to his wampum-fringed belt.

"Aboard, if you please, Mr. Mills! We'll pull down the creek. Good-by, father. I'll soon be back. Cheer up mother and the girls. There's no danger."

Down the creek we slowly went, and by the soft light I could see the old farmer with his hat off, and his face turned up towards the bright starry Heavens, praying for the safety of his first-born.

Then we turned the corner, dark with maple-trees, and saw him no more. Willy gave me the needful instructions as to trimming the sails, while he grasped the helm. We were on the broad glassy lake, now ploughing through a seam of snow, now flitting lightly across a dark sheet of ice, polished and resonant as metal. The Stormswallow was a well-built boat, large, commodious, and swift. Willy Kendal, young as he was, had a very high reputation for skill in this peculiar and perilous navigation. He knew Ontario well, and had ranged its most distant waters scores of times. The light wind was tolerably favourable, and we were soon abreast of Port Hope, and showed a light three times, as I had concerted with my captain.

Presently a footstep was heard on the hard ice, and two muffled figures approached us. One was Haworth. The other was the Indian. In a moment they joined us.

"Thank you, Kendal, thank you, my brave lad," said Haworth; "and you, too, Mills. I'm no great hand at speeches; but if ever you want a friend, I owe you a debt a lifetime would be too short to pay. See, Mills! The Indian wants to go, tired as he is. He's a rare guide, and you may meet the enemy, and if so, his forest cunning may prove useful."

Elk-that-runs had by this time squatted himself on the deck, and was deftly proceeding to kindle his long pipe, the stem of which was of wild cherry, while the bowl was of soapstone from the western prairies. I pressed Haworth's hand once more, and we parted: he to plod his way back to shore: the crew of the Stormswallow to skim towards the west. We had to shape our course in a much more southerly direction than that in which Hamilton lay, to avoid weak places in the ice that would not have borne the weight of our vessel. Willy Kendal showed great adroitness in taking advantage of every puff of the light and fickle breeze, and I toiled to the best of my power to trim sail as he bade me; but our progress was not as fast as I could have desired. The cold, too, was bitter. In spite of our blanket-suits and robes, our fur-gloves and flap-eared caps of racoon-skin, we could hardly keep ourselves from stagnation of the blood, and our breath congealed in shaggy icicles on our wrappings of fur and woollen. For a time the boat glided on, ghost-like, over the smooth lake, under the pointed silvery stars; but presently a low sighing sound reached our ears, and a film like a black crape veil began to draw across the spangled dark-blue sky.

"A snow-squall comin' up!" said young Kendal.

Lashing the tiller, to keep the boat's head right, he sprang to help me in reducing sail. Just as we had got the cutter under a modicum of canvas, the sigh of the wind swelled into a roar, and Willy caught the helm while a whirling dash of snow-flakes reached us, whitening our decks, and the wind made us heel over perilously.

"We must let her run before it," said Willy; and in a moment we were rushing over the frozen lake at such a speed as I had never dreamed of, and which realised the hackneyed comparison of arrow-swift. On we went, lashed by the hissing gale and driving snow: the ice and the land and the sky equally hidden from our sight by the dazzling thickness of the shower of whirling flakes. There was something weird and

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unearthly in such headlong blind speed through such weather.

"The Labrador folks are plucking their geese some," observed Willy Kendal; "we're most smothered with the feathers."

I could not help smiling, though there was, in truth, good cause for being serious. The winter had set in too recently for the ice to have attained that comfortable "two yard" thickness in which Canadians delight. There were places where it groaned and quivered, bending like a floor of springy planks; there were other places where small gaps or cracks intervened, causing the Stormswallow to rock and reel as she flew over the dangerous spot like a hunter over a ditch. To lie to was now impossible, and while the furious squall lasted we were hurried along, without seeing a yard ahead of us. Presently the gale subsided, or more probably passed on towards the Upper Lakes, and we saw the snow-clouds break and scatter, and the bright stars glimmer overhead. The wind became moderate, and the cutter was once more under control.

"Where are we?" was my first inquiry.

My young companion looked around with a puzzled air.

"Crimp me like a shadfish if I can tell you, Mr. Mills! Better ask old beads and blankets there. Indians have the eyes of cats."

Elk-that-runs, who had not said one word since we started, but had gravely kept his pipe alight through the elemental strife, composedly made answer to my inquiry:

"Pale chief no can see? Dat (pointing over his shoulder) Bald Point, dere, lower down, is Voyageurs' Spit, where trees, and light you take for star, Hamilton."

"That beats all," cried Willy. "I thought I knew old Ontario a few, but the redskin whips me clean. See, lieutenant, there is the Spit, with something waving that may be trees, or may be feathers, for anything I can tell from here; but the Indian's right. Yon *is* Hamilton, though how we've run the distance in the time I can't guess. That puff of wind was some pumpkins!"

Hamilton it really was, to our great joy, and in about half an hour we were within a short distance of the shore, and heard the hail of a sentry, "Who goes there?"

Of course I had not the countersign, but replying "A friend," I jumped out upon the ice, and approached the sentry: opening my wraps to show my uniform. Thus I managed to be passed on to the guard-house, and thence to the commandant's quarters. By this time the stars were getting pale, and there was an intense chill in the air, and a grey tinge in the eastern sky that heralded the dawn. Major Lee was aroused from sleep, and came down half-dressed to meet me. The fine old soldier exhibited unusual emotion and discomposure when he learned my tidings.

"The defences are in wretched condition, by no fault of mine," said he. "It is in vain that I have urged them for months, at head-quarters, to spare us guns and engineers. But I don't mean to yield, Mr. Mills, on the first summons, I can assure you."

"I should be sorry to recommend such a step," said I; "and yet, major, this is one of those cases in which courage can hardly avail much. The Americans know your weakness, be assured, and their own strength. They are no clement conquerors, and their Mohawk allies are under no sort of discipline. If the fort should be stormed——"

"There it is, sir," said the old officer, pacing up and down the room in considerable agitation. "I am sorry for the poor fellows who wear the king's cloth, but they and I are soldiers, and must take our chance. But my daughter and my sister—and yet I have no means of sending them away. The roads are deep with mountains of drifted snow; no sleigh could run, no horse could struggle through. They would perish long before they were in sight of Toronto."

A bright idea flashed upon me.

"Major, you forget the Stormswallow. She will carry several persons, and Willy Kendal and the Indian guide can make shift to navigate her back to Port Hope. Put your daughter on board her, put Mrs. Harrison on board, put every soldier's wife and child on board, and let them trust to Providence and the care of my comrades. I can then stop here. You won't be sorry to have an extra man, and we'll endeavour, by hook or by crook, to give a warm reception to the enemy."

An animated though brief debate followed. Major Lee readily consented to my first proposal, but he would not hear of my remaining.

"You *must* go," said he. "Remember, I commit my daughter and her aunt to your care, and you are responsible to me for their security. A pretty thing, that I should suffer you to stop here and get knocked on the head, when you don't even belong to the regiment, and when your leave is only for eight-and-forty hours! As commandant of Fort Hamilton I order you, sir, to return to Port Hope—and no more words about it, my dear boy. My heart will be lighter when the women are gone, and perhaps I may think of some plan for checkmating the assailants."

The major was obliged to use both authority and persuasion to induce his daughter to leave him in peril. She clung to his side, wound her arms round his neck, and adjured him to let her stay, or to go with her—a thing, of course, impossible to be done without a breach of duty, which the veteran would not have been guilty of to save his life a score of times. Luckily, Mrs. Harrison, the aunt, was animated by her own fears into acting with the energy of selfishness, and she assisted in almost forcing the weeping girl on board the ice boat. With them went a negro woman servant, Susannah by name, and five soldiers' wives, their frightened children holding to their skirts. Two of these women were very reluctant to leave their husbands, but motherly apprehensions for the safety of their children when the Mohawks should win the fort, prevailed at last. The soldiers behaved very well

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and very gallantly, as soldiers usually do when they respect their commander. They were left to face cruel odds and a merciless foe, and they knew it; but no voice was raised for flight, though there was just a chance of escape on foot over the ice. They eagerly aided the females to embark, and stood around, prepared for the worst. Willy Kendal got the yacht's head round to the south-east, and amid wild outbursts of grief from those we were taking away, and many a cheer and hearty blessing from the brave fellows left behind, we glided off across the glassy ice, and heard the last English hurrah die away behind us.

It was now dawn, but the sun was hidden by thick grey clouds, and a dull mist, through which the familiar headlands of the coast loomed gigantic, until we lost them too, and trusted to the compass for our guide. The ladies were put in possession of the cabin, the stove was lighted, and such few preparations as we could make for their comfort were made. The soldiers' wives and their children crouched on the deck forward, and we were sorely put to it to provide the poor things with warm clothing to defend them from the piercing cold.

Three hours after daybreak it was still very foggy and dark. We were far out on the lake—at that part very narrow—and within sight, no doubt, if the weather had been clear, of the American shore. The women and children were fretful and low spirited. Miss Lee had covered her face with a shawl, and lay in a corner of the cabin, in an agony of speechless sorrow, and not answering a word to the voluble talk of her rather empty-headed aunt: a fussy worldly personage, who thought she had laid her brother the major under immense obligations by coming out, when her husband died insolvent, to share his home in Canada.

"Kendal," said I, "we're very much south of Port Hope; can't we bear up a bit?"

But the young colonist pointed out to me how very unstable and light the wind was, constantly veering from point to point, and always unfavourable to a direct course. He also told me, in a whisper, that there were "seams" in the ice, and he only hoped we should not come to "cl'ar water" presently.

It might have been half an hour after this when Susannah, the negress, as she came up from the tiny cabin, suddenly started and cried out,

"O massa, we 'rived! Poor 'Sannah see bay'net of sodger shine, dar."

She pointed south, where something shone through the fog.

"Wagh!" grunted Elk-that-runs, rising to his feet with the noiseless agility of a panther. "Kesnakupak blind squaw—deaf stupid Indian—let listen a bit."

He put his head on one side, and listened like a stag for the hunters. Then he drew himself up, folded his arms—naked but for the heavy silver bracelets on his medalled breast—and said:

"Men talk—Mohawk—out yonder."

"Impossible!" cried Kendal and I, with one accord.

"Elk-that-runs speak truth," answered the Indian, stoically. "Some talk English talk, dem Yankee soldier—some talk Mohawk—dem warriors of de Six Nations. Dat all."

"Hist!" cried Willy, very cautiously.

A shrill quavering sound reached our ears through the mist, and we recognised an American air, though the words could not be distinguished. At the same moment the curtain of fog lifted sufficiently to enable us to discern a sight appalling enough under the circumstances. A small sandy islet, specked with trees, visible above the ice, and on it and around it the temporary encampment of a large body of armed men. No tents, but many a rude "lodge" of skins and branches, while a number of hand-sleighs, probably containing provisions and ammunition, were scattered about. Most of those in sight were white men, of whom the majority wore the uniform of the New York militia, though many were in the fringed hunting-shirts or the suits of blanketing commonly worn in winter by the dwellers in Oswego county. There were a number of grim forms whose paint and fantastic head-gear of plumes and fox-tails, whose buffalo-robes and gaudy-coloured blankets, sufficiently denoted their stock. I saw no cannon, but bayonets glanced far and near, and the bright barrels of muskets and the clouded tubes of rifles bristled on all sides.

"We've poked our heads into a wild bees' nest, lieutenant," whispered the brave young Kendal. "Our best hope is, that the fog may fall again."

But a sudden yell from some sharp-eyed Indian announced that we were seen. Hundreds of voices took up the cry, and a huge clamour and confusion began. Rallying squares were formed by the Americans, while the savages huddled together in dusky groups.

"Hurrah! I see how 'tis," cried Willy Kendal; "the scamps think we're Britishers coming over to attack 'em. They're that struck of a heap, we might gain a couple of mile before a shot's fired, if——"

Flash! A rifle had been fired at us already, and the ball was so well aimed that it cut one of the feathers from the head-dress of Elk-that-runs, and sent it fluttering to the deck. The chief never moved a muscle, but sucked on at his pipe, and waited a full minute before he uttered his eternal "Wagh!"

But after this tribute to the etiquette of his stoical race, the intelligent savage proved anything but a drone in the hive. While Willy clutched the helm, and I did my best to trim sails and haul ropes so as to make the most of the sluggish breeze, the Indian rose to his feet, cast a piercing glance at the enemy, and then stood beside young Kendal, perfectly regardless of repeated discharges of fire-arms.

"Ice no good, dere!" cried Elk-that-runs. "More to east, young chief. Tell you, current dar, and you no sheer off we break through and all lose scalp, sure."

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Indeed, Kendal had but just time, by a sharp jerk of the helm, to avoid a sheet of weak "cat-ice" that glittered diamond bright in the rays of the dim wintry sun, and one plunge into which would have been fatal.

Elk-that-runs showed wonderful knowledge of the lake in that part, and, thanks to him, we avoided more than one shoal and more than one unsafe place, while the brave lad and his swift boat both did their best.

But the wind was faint and unsteady, the Stormswallow was heavily laden, and her progress was sorely unlike the lightning rush of the preceding voyage. We were chased hotly. I cannot tell whether the enemy guessed whence we came, but they spared no effort to overtake us, and while nearly two hundred joined the pursuit, about thirty of the fleetest gained on us terribly fast. Of those, about one-third were New Yorkers, the most being Mohawks; but all bore rifles, and frequently halted to fire. We were obliged to place the women and children under cover by crowding them into the cabin, and as to ourselves, we crouched down as we listened, under cover of the bulwarks.

"If the wind would but freshen!" said I.

Willy Kendal shook his head. Our pursuers were gaining on us. They came on in straggling disorder, white men and red men, pell-mell. Most of the Indians wore snow-shoes, which helped them well across the patches of loose deep snow; but the New Yorkers, in their "cramponned" shoes, made better way across the polished ice.

"Hilloa! Britisher, give in! You'd best!" bawled a threatening voice in our rear, half drowned by the whoops of the Mohawks.

"Surrender there!" cried another panting American. "We'll make short finish of the hull lot of you, once ye pull trigger!"

For Elk-that-runs had thrust the short clouded barrel of his rifle over the taffrail. I struck it up.

"No need to throw away a shot," said I; "besides, they are an overmatch. Ten to one. We had best make terms."

"Terms, lieutenant?" said young Kendal, bitterly; "the Yankees may promise, but the Mohawks ain't easy to choke off. Fight or yield, they won't spare us—and, may I never, but the wind's down!"

Too true. A sullen flapping of our sails announced that it was too true, and the Stormswallow only glided along under the influence of the momentum she had acquired. The Indians set up a long exulting whoop, like hounds when the chase is well-nigh over, and came on.

"Let us die like men, anyway!" cried Willy Kendal, catching up his gun: a motion which I half mechanically imitated. But at this instant Elk-that-runs let his own piece drop to the deck, and uttered a strange chuckle as he pointed with his tawny finger to the ice, and bent his head to listen.

A groaning sound, like the complaint of a tortured giant, came to our ears. Then the ice heaved, and a sharp detonation, like the crack of a hundred muskets, resounded. And then, with crack and roar, a long fissure opened through the gleaming sheet of dark blue, as if it were cloven by some mighty stroke. Seam after seam, chasm after chasm, burst through the frozen surface, and then, with a dull bellowing noise, louder than that of many heavy cannon, a huge mass of ice broke up into glittering fragments, that churned the water into foam, or slowly revolved, rising like jagged walls into the air.

Between us and the enemy extended this impassable barrier, and we knew that we were saved. We saw several of our pursuers, both Indians and whites, toss up their arms with a wild cry of despair, as the ice broke beneath their feet, sucking them down into the depths below, and settling above them as they sank. The Stormswallow was still on a firm surface, seventy yards from the edge of the shivered ice. By dint of poling for an hour, we made some progress, until a breeze sprung up which carried us, before night, to Port Hope.

The cracking of the ice preserved Hamilton, for it continued at intervals on the American side of the Lake for two days, and Colonel Carter was compelled by the clamours of his men to give up his expedition and regain the shore. The general in command was kind enough to forward home a favourable account of my conduct in volunteering to carry news to Fort Hamilton, and six months afterwards Captain Mills and his young friend Willy Kendal had the pleasure of being present when Arthur Haworth was married to Miss Jane Lee.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOMAN IN WHITE," &c.

CHAPTER VII.

LATE that evening, when Magdalen and Mrs. Wragge came back from their walk in the dark, the captain stopped Magdalen on her way up-stairs, to inform her of the proceedings of the day. He added the expression of his opinion, that the time had come for bringing Mr. Noel Vanstone, with the least possible delay, to the point of making a proposal. She merely answered that she understood him, and that she would do what was required of her. Captain Wragge requested her, in that case, to oblige him by joining a walking excursion in Mr. Noel Vanstone's company, at seven o'clock the next morning. "I will be ready," she replied. "Is there anything more?" There was nothing more. Magdalen bade him good night, and returned to her own room.

She had shown the same disinclination to remain any longer than was necessary in the captain's company, throughout the three days of her seclusion in the house.

During all that time, instead of appearing to weary of Mrs. Wragge's society, she had patiently, almost eagerly, associated herself with her companion's one absorbing pursuit. She, who had often chafed and fretted in past days, under the monotony of her life in the freedom of Combe-Raven, now accepted, without a murmur, the monotony of her life at Mrs. Wragge's work-table. She, who had hated the sight of a needle and thread, in old times—who had never yet worn an article of dress of her own making—now toiled as anxiously over the making of Mrs. Wragge's gown, and bore as patiently with Mrs. Wragge's blunders, as if the sole object of her existence had been the successful completion of that one dress. Anything was welcome to her—the trivial difficulties of fitting a gown; the small ceaseless chatter of the poor half-witted creature who was so proud of her assistance, and so happy in her company—anything was welcome that shut her out from the coming future, from the destiny to which she stood self-condemned. That sorely-wounded nature was soothed by such a trifle now as the grasp of her companion's rough and friendly hand—that desolate heart was cheered, when night parted them, by Mrs. Wragge's kiss.

The captain's isolated position in the house, produced no depressing effect on the captain's easy and equal spirits. Instead of resenting Magdalen's systematic avoidance of his society, he looked to results, and highly approved of it. The more she neglected him for his wife, the more directly useful she became in the character of Mrs. Wragge's self-appointed guardian. He had more than once seriously contemplated revoking the concession which had been extorted from him, and removing his wife at his own sole responsibility, out of harm's way; and he had only abandoned the idea, on discovering that Magdalen's resolution to keep Mrs. Wragge in her own company was really serious. While the two were together, his main anxiety was set at rest. They kept their door locked, by his own desire, while he was out of the house, and, whatever Mrs. Wragge might do, Magdalen was to be trusted not to open it until he came back. That night, Captain Wragge enjoyed his cigar with a mind at ease; and sipped his brandy-and-water in happy ignorance of the pitfal which Mrs. Lecount had prepared for him in the morning.

Punctually at seven o'clock Mr. Noel Vanstone made his appearance. The moment he entered the room, Captain Wragge detected a change in his visitor's look and manner. "Something wrong!" thought the captain. "We have not done with Mrs. Lecount yet."

"How is Miss Bygrave this morning?" asked Mr. Noel Vanstone. "Well enough, I hope, for our early walk?" His half-closed eyes, weak and watery with the morning light and the morning air, looked about the room furtively, and he shifted his place in a restless manner from one chair to another, as he made those polite inquiries.

"My niece is better—she is dressing for the walk," replied the captain, steadily observing his restless little friend while he spoke. "Mr. Vanstone!" he added, on a sudden, "I am a plain Englishman—excuse my blunt way of speaking my mind. You don't meet me this morning as cordially as you met me yesterday. There is something unsettled in your face. I distrust that housekeeper of yours, sir! Has she been presuming on your forbearance? Has she been

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trying to poison your mind against me, or my niece?"

If Mr. Noel Vanstone had obeyed Mrs. Lecount's injunction, and had kept her little morsel of note paper folded in his pocket until the time came to use it, Captain Wragge's designedly blunt appeal might not have found him unprepared with an answer. But curiosity had got the better of him—he had opened the note at night, and again in the morning—it had seriously perplexed and startled him—and it had left his mind far too disturbed to allow him the possession of his ordinary resources. He hesitated; and his answer, when he succeeded in making it, began with a prevarication.

Captain Wragge stopped him before he had got beyond his first sentence.

"Pardon me, sir," said the captain, in his loftiest manner. "If you have secrets to keep, you have only to say so, and I have done. I intrude on no man's secrets. At the same time, Mr. Vanstone, you must allow me to recal to your memory that I met you yesterday without any reserves on my side. I admitted you to my frankest and fullest confidence, sir—and, highly as I prize the advantages of your society, I can't consent to cultivate your friendship on any other than equal terms." He threw open his respectable frock-coat, and surveyed his visitor with a manly and virtuous severity.

"I mean no offence!" cried Mr. Noel Vanstone, piteously. "Why do you interrupt me, Mr. Bygrave? Why don't you let me explain? I mean no offence."

"No offence is taken, sir," said the captain. "You have a perfect right to the exercise of your own discretion. I am not offended—I only claim for myself the same privilege which I accord to you." He rose with great dignity, and rang the bell. "Tell Miss Bygrave," he said to the servant, "that our walk this morning is put off until another opportunity, and that I won't trouble her to come down stairs."

This strong proceeding had the desired effect. Mr. Noel Vanstone vehemently pleaded for a moment's private conversation before the message was delivered. Captain Wragge's severity partially relaxed. He sent the servant down stairs again; and, resuming his chair, waited confidently for results. In calculating the facilities for practising on his visitor's weakness, he had one great superiority over Mrs. Lecount. His judgment was not warped by latent female jealousies; and he avoided the error into which the housekeeper had fallen, self-deluded—the error of underrating the impression on Noel Vanstone that Magdalen had produced. One of the forces in this world which no middle-aged woman is capable of estimating at its full value, when it acts against her—is the force of beauty in a woman younger than herself.

"You are so hasty, Mr. Bygrave—you won't give me time—you won't wait and hear what I have to say!" cried Mr. Noel Vanstone, piteously, when the servant had closed the parlour door.

"My family failing, sir—the blood of the Bygraves. Accept my excuses. We are alone, as you wished; pray proceed."

Placed between the alternatives of losing Magdalen's society, or betraying Mrs. Lecount—unenlightened by any suspicion of the housekeeper's ultimate object; cowed by the immovable scrutiny of Captain Wragge's inquiring eye—Mr. Noel Vanstone was not long in making his choice. He confusedly described his singular interview of the previous evening with Mrs. Lecount; and taking the folded paper from his pocket, placed it in the captain's hand.

A suspicion of the truth dawned on Captain Wragge's mind, the moment he saw the mysterious note. He withdrew to the window, before he opened it. The first lines that attracted his attention were these:—"Oblige me, Mr. Noel, by comparing the young lady who is now in your company, with the personal description which follows these lines, and which has been communicated to me by a friend. You shall know the name of the person described—which I have left a blank—as soon as the evidence of your own eyes has forced you to believe, what you would refuse to credit on the unsupported testimony of Virginie Lecount."

That was enough for the captain. Before he had read a word of the description itself, he knew what Mrs. Lecount had done, and felt, with a profound sense of humiliation, that his female enemy had taken him by surprise.

There was no time to think; the whole conspiracy was threatened with irrevocable overthrow. The one resource, in Captain Wragge's present situation, was to act instantly on the first impulse of his own audacity. Line by line he read on—and still the ready inventiveness which had never deserted him yet, failed to answer the call made on it now. He came to the closing sentence—to the last words which mentioned the two little moles on Magdalen's neck. At that crowning point of the description, an idea crossed his mind—his parti-coloured eyes twinkled; his curly lips twisted up at the corners—Wragge was himself again.

He wheeled round suddenly from the window; and looked Mr. Noel Vanstone straight in the face, with a grimly-quiet suggestiveness of something serious to come.

"Pray, sir, do you happen to know anything of Mrs. Lecount's family?" he inquired.

"A respectable family," said Mr. Noel Vanstone—"that's all I know. Why do you ask?"

"I am not usually a betting man," pursued Captain Wragge. "But on this occasion, I will lay you any wager you like, there is madness in your housekeeper's family."

"Madness!" repeated Mr. Noel Vanstone, amazedly.

"Madness!" reiterated the Captain, sternly

tapping the note with his forefinger. "I see the cunning of insanity, the suspicion of insanity, the feline treachery of insanity in every line of this deplorable document. There is a far more alarming reason, sir, than I had supposed for Mrs. Lecount's behaviour to my niece. It is clear to me, that Miss Bygrave resembles some other lady who has seriously offended your housekeeper—who has been formerly connected, perhaps, with an outbreak of insanity in your housekeeper—and who is now evidently confused with my niece, in your housekeeper's wandering mind. That is my conviction, Mr. Vanstone. I may be right, or I may be wrong. All I say is this—neither you, nor any man, can assign a sane motive for the production of that incomprehensible document, and for the use which you are requested to make of it."

"I don't think Lecount's mad," said Mr. Noel Vanstone, with a very blank look, and a very discomposed manner. "It couldn't have escaped me—with my habits of observation—it couldn't possibly have escaped me if Lecount had been mad."

"Very good, my dear sir. In my opinion she is the subject of an insane delusion. In your opinion she is in possession of her senses, and has some mysterious motive which neither you nor I can fathom. Either way, there can be no harm in putting Mrs. Lecount's description to the test, not only as a matter of curiosity, but for our own private satisfaction on both sides. It is of course impossible to tell my niece that she is to be made the subject of such a preposterous experiment as that note of yours suggests. But you can use your own eyes, Mr. Vanstone; you can keep your own counsel; and—mad or not—you can at least tell your housekeeper, on the testimony of your own senses, that she is wrong. Let me look at the description again. The greater part of it is not worth two straws for any purpose of identification; hundreds of young ladies have tall figures, fair complexions, light brown hair, and light grey eyes. You will say, on the other hand, hundreds of young ladies have not got two little moles close together on the left side of the neck. Quite true. The moles supply us, with what we scientific men call, a Crucial Test. When my niece comes down stairs, sir, you have my full permission to take the liberty of looking at her neck."

Mr. Noel Vanstone expressed his high approval of the Crucial Test, by smirking and simpering for the first time that morning.

"Of looking at her neck," repeated the captain; returning the note to his visitor, and then making for the door. "I will go up-stairs myself, Mr. Vanstone," he continued, "and inspect Miss Bygrave's walking dress. If she has innocently placed any obstacles in your way—if her hair is a little too low, or her frill is a little too high—I will exert my authority, on the first harmless pretext I can think of, to have those obstacles removed. All I ask is, that you will choose your opportunity discreetly, and that you will not allow my niece to suppose that her neck is the object of a gentleman's inspection."

The moment he was out of the parlour, Captain Wragge ascended the stairs at the top of his speed, and knocked at Magdalen's door. She opened it to him, in her walking dress—obedient to the signal agreed on between them which summoned her down stairs.

"What have you done with your paints and powders?" asked the captain, without wasting a word in preliminary explanations. "They were not in the box of costumes which I sold for you at Birmingham. Where are they?"

"I have got them here," replied Magdalen. "What can you possibly mean by wanting them now?"

"Bring them instantly into my dressing-room—the whole collection, brushes, palette, and everything. Don't waste time in asking questions; I'll tell you what has happened as we go on. Every moment is precious to us. Follow me instantly!"

His face plainly showed that there was a serious reason for his strange proposal. Magdalen secured her collection of cosmetics, and followed him into the dressing-room. He locked the door, placed her on a chair close to the light, and then told her what had happened.

"We are on the brink of detection," proceeded the captain, carefully mixing his colours with liquid glue, and with a strong "drier" added from a bottle in his own possession. "There is only one chance for us (lift up your hair from the left side of your neck)—I have told Mr. Noel Vanstone to take a private opportunity of looking at you; and I'm going to give the lie direct to that she-devil Lecount, by painting out your moles."

"They can't be painted out," said Magdalen. "No colour will stop on them."

"*My* colour will," remarked Captain Wragge. "I have tried a variety of professions in my time—the profession of painting among the rest. Did you ever hear of such a thing as a Black Eye? I lived some months once in the neighbourhood of Drury-lane, entirely on Black Eyes. My flesh-colour stood on bruises of all sorts, shades, and sizes—and it will stand, I promise you, on your moles."

With this assurance, the captain dipped his brush into a little lump of opaque colour, which he had mixed in a saucer, and which he had graduated, as nearly as the materials would permit, to the colour of Magdalen's skin. After first passing a cambric handkerchief with some white powder on it, over the part of her neck on which he designed to operate, he placed two layers of colour on the moles, with the tip of the brush. The process was performed in a few moments—and the moles, as if by magic, disappeared from view. Nothing but the closest inspection could

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have discovered the artifice by which they had been concealed: at the distance of two or three feet only, it was perfectly invisible.

"Wait here, five minutes," said Captain Wragge, "to let the paint dry—and then join us in the parlour. Mrs. Lecount herself would be puzzled, if she looked at you now."

"Stop!" said Magdalen. "There is one thing you have not told me yet. How did Mrs. Lecount get the description, which you read down stairs? Whatever else she has seen of me, she has not seen the mark on my neck—it is too far back, and too high up; my hair hides it."

"Who knows of the mark?" asked Captain Wragge.

She turned deadly pale, under the anguish of a sudden recollection of Frank.

"My sister knows it," she said faintly.

"Mrs. Lecount may have written to your sister," suggested the captain.

"Do you think my sister would tell a stranger what no stranger has a right to know? Never! never!"

"Is there nobody else who could tell Mrs. Lecount? The mark was mentioned in the handbills at York. Who put it there?"

"Not Norah! Perhaps Mr. Pendril. Perhaps Miss Garth."

"Then Mrs. Lecount has written to Mr. Pendril or Miss Garth—more likely to Miss Garth. The governess would be easier to deal with than the lawyer."

"What can she have said to Miss Garth?"

Captain Wragge considered a little.

"I can't say what Mrs. Lecount may have written," he said; "but I can tell you what I should have written in Mrs. Lecount's place. I should have frightened Miss Garth by false reports about you, to begin with—and then I should have asked for personal particulars, to help a benevolent stranger in restoring you to your friends."

The angry glitter flashed up instantly in Magdalen's eyes.

"What *you* would have done, is what Mrs. Lecount has done," she said indignantly. "Neither lawyer, nor governess, shall dispute my right to my own will, and my own way. If Miss Garth thinks she can control my actions by corresponding with Mrs. Lecount—I will show Miss Garth she is mistaken! It is high time, Captain Wragge, to have done with these wretched risks of discovery. We will take the short way to the end we have in view, sooner than Mrs. Lecount or Miss Garth think for. How long can you give me to wring an offer of marriage out of that creature down stairs?"

"I dare not give you long," replied Captain Wragge. "Now your friends know where you are, they may come down on us at a day's notice. Could you manage it in a week?"

"I'll manage it in half the time," she said, with a hard, defiant laugh. "Leave us together this morning, as you left us at Dunwich—and take Mrs. Wragge with you, as an excuse for parting company. Is the paint dry yet? Go down stairs and tell him I am coming directly."

So, for the second time, Miss Garth's well-meant efforts defeated their own end. So, the fatal force of circumstance turned the hand that would fain have held Magdalen back, into the hand that drove her on.

The captain returned to his visitor in the parlour—after first stopping on the way, to issue his orders for the walking excursion to Mrs. Wragge.

"I am shocked to have kept you waiting," he said, sitting down again confidentially by Mr. Noel Vanstone's side. "My only excuse is, that my niece had accidentally dressed her hair, so as to defeat our object. I have been persuading her to alter it—and young ladies are apt to be a little obstinate on questions relating to their toilette. Give her a chair on that side of you, when she comes in—and take your look at her neck comfortably, before we start for our walk."

Magdalen entered the room as he said those words—and, after the first greetings were exchanged, took the chair presented to her, with the most unsuspicious readiness. Mr. Noel Vanstone applied the Crucial Test on the spot—with the highest appreciation of the fair material which was the subject of experiment. Not the vestige of a mole was visible on any part of the smooth white surface of Miss Bygrave's neck. It mutely answered the blinking inquiry of Mr. Noel Vanstone's half-closed eyes, by the flattest practical contradiction of Mrs. Lecount. That one central incident in the events of the morning, was of all the incidents that had hitherto occurred, the most important in its results. That one discovery shook the housekeeper's hold on her master, as nothing had shaken it yet.

In a few minutes, Mrs. Wragge made her appearance, and excited as much surprise in Mr. Noel Vanstone's mind as he was capable of feeling, while absorbed in the enjoyment of Magdalen's society. The walking party left the house at once; directing their steps northward, so as not to pass the windows of Sea-View Cottage. To Mrs. Wragge's unutterable astonishment, her husband, for the first time in the course of their married life, politely offered her his arm, and led her on, in advance of the young people, as if the privilege of walking alone with her presented some special attraction to him! "Step out!" whispered the captain, fiercely. "Leave your niece and Mr. Vanstone alone! If I catch you looking back at them, I'll put the Oriental Cashmere Robe on the top of the kitchen fire! Turn your toes out, and keep step—confound you, keep step!" Mrs. Wragge kept step to the best of her limited ability. Her sturdy knees trembled under her. She firmly believed the captain was intoxicated.

The walk lasted for rather more than an hour. Before nine o'clock they were all back again at North Shingles. The ladies went at once into

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the house. Mr. Noel Vanstone remained with Captain Wragge in the garden.

"Well," said the captain, "what do you think now of Mrs. Lecount?"

"Damn Lecount!" replied Mr. Noel Vanstone, in great agitation. "I'm half inclined to agree with you. I'm half inclined to think my infernal housekeeper is mad."

He spoke fretfully and unwillingly, as if the merest allusion to Mrs. Lecount was distasteful to him. His colour came and went; his manner was absent and undecided; he fidgeted restlessly about the garden walk. It would have been plain to a far less acute observation than Captain Wragge's, that Magdalen had met his advances by an unexpected grace and readiness of encouragement, which had entirely overthrown his self-control.

"I never enjoyed a walk so much in my life!" he exclaimed, with a sudden outburst of enthusiasm. "I hope Miss Bygrave feels all the better for it. Do you go out at the same time to-morrow morning? May I join you again?"

"By all means, Mr. Vanstone," said the captain, cordially. "Excuse me for returning to the subject—but what do you propose saying to Mrs. Lecount?"

"I don't know. Lecount is a perfect nuisance! What would you do, Mr. Bygrave, if you were in my place?"

"Allow me to ask a question, my dear sir, before I tell you. What is your breakfast-hour?"

"Half-past nine."

"Is Mrs. Lecount an early riser?"

"No. Lecount is lazy in the morning. I hate lazy women! If you were in my place, what should you say to her?"

"I should say nothing," replied Captain Wragge. "I should return at once by the back way; I should let Mrs. Lecount see me in the front garden, as if I was taking a turn before breakfast; and I should leave her to suppose that I was only just out of my room. If she asks you whether you mean to come here to-day, say no. Secure a quiet life, until circumstances force you to give her an answer. Then tell the plain truth—say that Mr. Bygrave's niece and Mrs. Lecount's description are at variance with each other in the most important particular; and beg that the subject may not be mentioned again. There is my advice. What do you think of it?"

If Mr. Noel Vanstone could have looked into his counsellor's mind, he might have thought the captain's advice excellently adapted to serve the captain's interests. As long as Mrs. Lecount could be kept in ignorance of her master's visits to North Shingles—so long she would wait until the opportunity came for trying her experiment; and so long she might be trusted not to endanger the conspiracy by any further proceedings. Necessarily incapable of viewing Captain Wragge's advice under this aspect, Mr. Noel Vanstone simply looked at it, as offering him a temporary means of escape from an explanation with his housekeeper. He eagerly declared that the course of action suggested to him should be followed to the letter, and returned to Sea View without further delay.

On this occasion, Captain Wragge's anticipations were in no respect falsified by Mrs. Lecount's conduct. She had no suspicion of her master's visit to North Shingles—she had made up her mind, if necessary, to wait patiently for his interview with Miss Bygrave, until the end of the week—and she did not embarrass him by any unexpected questions, when he announced his intention of holding no personal communication with the Bygraves on that day. All she said was, "Don't you feel well enough, Mr. Noel? or don't you feel inclined?" He answered, shortly, "I don't feel well enough;" and there the conversation ended.

The next day, the proceedings of the previous morning were exactly repeated. This time, Mr. Noel Vanstone went home rapturously with a keepsake in his breast-pocket—he had taken tender possession of one of Miss Bygrave's gloves. At intervals during the day, whenever he was alone, he took out the glove, and kissed it with a devotion which was almost passionate in its fervour. The miserable little creature luxuriated in his moments of stolen happiness, with a speechless and stealthy delight which was a new sensation to him. The few young girls whom he had met with, in his father's narrow circle at Zurich, had felt a mischievous pleasure in treating him like a quaint little plaything; the strongest impression he could make on their hearts, was an impression in which their lapdogs might have rivalled him; the deepest interest he could create in them, was the interest they might have felt in a new trinket or a new dress. The only women who had hitherto invited his admiration, and taken his compliments seriously, had been women whose charms were on the wane, and whose chances of marriage were fast failing them. For the first time in his life, he had now passed hours of happiness in the society of a beautiful girl, who had left him to think of her afterwards without a single humiliating remembrance to lower him in his own esteem.

Anxiously as he tried to hide it, the change produced in his look and manner by the new feeling awakened in him, was not a change which could be concealed from Mrs. Lecount. On the second day, she pointedly asked him whether he had not made an arrangement to call on the Bygraves. He denied it, as before. "Perhaps, you are going to-morrow, Mr. Noel?" persisted the housekeeper. He was at the end of his resources; he was impatient to be rid of her inquiries; he trusted to his friend at North Shingles to help him—and, this time, he answered, Yes. "If you see the young lady," proceeded Mrs. Lecount, "don't forget that note of mine, sir, which you have in your waistcoat-pocket." No more was said on either side—but by that night's

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post, the housekeeper wrote to Miss Garth. The letter merely acknowledged, with thanks, the receipt of Miss Garth's communication; and informed her that, in a few days, Mrs. Lecount hoped to be in a position to write again, and summon Mr. Pendril to Aldborough.

Late in the evening, when the parlour at North Shingles began to get dark, and when the captain rang the bell for candles, as usual, he was surprised by hearing Magdalen's voice in the passage, telling the servant to take the lights down stairs again. She knocked at the door immediately afterwards; and glided into the obscurity of the room, like a ghost."

"I have a question to ask you about your plans for to-morrow," she said. "My eyes are very weak this evening, and I hope you will not object to dispense with the candles for a few minutes."

She spoke in low stifled tones, and felt her way noiselessly to a chair far removed from the captain, in the darkest part of the room. Sitting near the window, he could just discern the dim outline of her dress, he could just hear the faint accents of her voice. For the last two days he had seen nothing of her, except during their morning walk. On that afternoon, he had found his wife crying in the little back room down stairs. She could only tell him that Magdalen had frightened her—that Magdalen was going the way again which she had gone when the letter came from China, in the terrible past time at Vauxhall Walk.

"I was sorry to hear that you were ill, to-day, from Mrs. Wragge," said the captain, unconsciously dropping his voice almost to a whisper as he spoke.

"It doesn't matter," she answered quietly, out of the darkness. "I am strong enough to suffer, and live. Other girls, in my place, would have been happier—they would have suffered, and died. It doesn't matter; it will be all the same a hundred years hence. Is he coming again to-morrow morning, at seven o'clock?"

"He is coming, if you feel no objection to it?"

"I have no objection to make; I have done with objecting. But I should like to have the time altered. I don't look my best in the early morning—I have bad nights, and I rise haggard and worn. Write him a note this evening, and tell him to come at twelve o'clock."

"Twelve is rather late, under the circumstances, for you to be seen out walking."

"I have no intention of walking. Let him be shown into the parlour——"

Her voice died away in silence, before she ended the sentence.

"Yes?" said Captain Wragge.

"And leave me alone in the parlour to receive him."

"Ay! ay!" said the captain. "I understand. I'll be out of the way, in the dining-room, while he is here—and you can come and tell me about it when he has gone."

There was another moment of silence.

"Is there no way but telling you?" she asked, suddenly. "I can control myself while he is with me—but I can't answer for what I may say or do, afterwards. Is there no other way?"

"Plenty of ways," said the captain. "Here is the first that occurs to me. Leave the blind down over the window of your room up-stairs, before he comes. I will go out on the beach, and wait there within sight of the house. When I see him come out again, I will look at the window. If he has said nothing, leave the blind down. If he has made you an offer—draw the blind up. The signal is simplicity itself; we can't misunderstand each other. Look your best to-morrow! Make sure of him, my dear girl—make sure of him, if you possibly can."

He had spoken loud enough to feel certain that she had heard him—but no answering word came from her. The dead silence was only disturbed by the rustling of her dress, which told him she had risen from her chair. Her shadowy presence crossed the room again; the door shut softly—she was gone. He rang the bell hurriedly for the lights. The servant found him standing close at the window—looking less self-possessed than usual. He told her he felt a little poorly, and sent her to the cupboard for the brandy.

At a few minutes before twelve, the next day, Captain Wragge withdrew to his post of observation—concealing himself behind a fishing-boat drawn up on the beach. Punctually as the hour struck, he saw Mr. Noel Vanstone approach North Shingles, and open the garden gate. When the house door had closed on the visitor, Captain Wragge settled himself comfortably against the side of the boat, and lit his cigar.

He smoked for half an hour—for ten minutes over the half-hour, by his watch. He finished the cigar down to the last morsel of it that he could hold in his lips. Just as he had thrown away the end, the door opened again; and Noel Vanstone came out.

The captain looked up instantly at Magdalen's window. In the absorbing excitement of the moment, he counted the seconds. She might get from the parlour to her own room in less than a minute. He counted to thirty—and nothing happened. He counted to fifty—and nothing happened. He gave up counting, and left the boat impatiently, to return to the house.

As he took his first step forward he saw the signal.

The blind was drawn up.

Cautiously ascending the eminence of the beach, Captain Wragge looked towards Sea-View Cottage, before he showed himself on the parade. Mr. Noel Vanstone had reached home again: he was just entering his own door.

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"If all your money was offered me to stand in your shoes," said the captain, looking after him —"rich as you are, I wouldn't take it!"

SMALL-BEER CHRONICLES.

The Small-Beer Chronicler in his last report had something to say on the subject of "our Greatness." He will now, with permission, venture to approach a topic of a humbler kind, and say a word or two about our Littleness.

In sending in the last report which it was his duty to make, the Chronicler felt some degree of pride and elation. It was his business to deal with what we know, and what we can do; and, in the main, things creditable to us, and calculated to raise us in our own esteem, were dwelt on. But now the case is different, and in that influential examination of our exact condition which the S. B. Chronicler feels it part of his function to make, it becomes necessary that he should call attention to some of the things which we do *not* know, or which we can *not* do, and perhaps to some matters also which are not entirely creditable to us, or calculated to raise into additional prominence that bump of self-esteem which, according to phrenologists, we all wear—as the toad wears his jewel—on the tops of our heads.

What unexplored regions, to which the mind of man cannot reach, rise up dimly in one's imagination when that function is turned towards a consideration of the things that we do *not* know and the things that we can *not* do. It would be to little purpose to dwell on them. The world on whose outer crust we tread, the sky that we look on, the vast space with those vast globes peopling it at intervals—to say that we know little of these things is to speak a truism. Is any object in that great collection of objects at Kensington calculated materially to increase our knowledge of all those square miles of furnace, or whatever else, which lie between us and Australia—not as the crow flies, but as the mole works? The miner who should tunnel his way from here to Melbourne in a straight line, what would he have to tell us when he got back again? Suppose that some aëronaut were to get away into regions where the earth's attraction was no longer felt, and could not get back again. When he had drifted long enough into space, where would he get to? The man would die, as thought and speculation die when they get too far from earth. The thought which is wafted too high, loses breath, becomes giddy, and can live no longer away from the mists which shroud us here below.

Our littleness is colossal. It was but the other day that a great ascent was made into the air, the largest balloon in existence being inflated for the purpose. The travellers who made that ascent passed first through one atmosphere and then another, the temperature decreased, increased, decreased again. The influence of the sun was felt less and more by turns. The clouds were left beneath, and the shadow of the balloon was seen on them as they lay below it. The blue sky was left—that is, the blue sky as we see it—and a deep blue, deeper than Lapis-Lazuli, was all around. And now the breath of the voyagers comes thick and short, their finger-nails are changed in colour, their pulses quicken. A terrible situation, an awful journey. But now comes our littleness to their aid. The traditions of a lifetime surge up to them, like a Deus ex machinâ coming the wrong way; the memories of civic feasts and wholesome mundane practices, mingle with their glimpses among the clouds, and they set to work to drink a series of toasts which would have astonished the echoes, if there had been any. The Queen, the Gas Company by whose agency the balloon was inflated, and for aught I know, the Ladies, and the Volunteers, were drunk in quick succession, and down comes the car again to the regions of taxes and butcher's-bills!

Well! These gentlemen were right. It would not do. The Lapis-Lazuli around and above the shadow of their vessel on the wrong side of the clouds, and the world like a map spread out beneath them, were too much. The toasts were a link with Buckingham Palace, and with public companies, and the commonplaces of earth, and there was health and safety in them. The right men to trust themselves in the clouds, depend on it, are the men who "propose" a gas company when they get there. Such a people as is represented by these gentlemen launched into space, with their eyes starting out of their heads, their nails blue, their hearts palpitating, and in this condition gasping out loyal and business-like sentiments,—such a people can be driven with reins of horsehair, provided always that those reins are held in gentlemanly fingers, and that the political coachman has a "sufficient stake in the country."

This curious aëronautical illustration of our littleness we have arrived at, while discussing the things of which our knowledge is small or altogether wanting. But for instances of such ignorance there is little need that we should turn our thoughts downward to the earth's centre, or upward to the eternity of space. There is very near to us, nay bound up within every one of us, that which we possess without understanding it, that which absolutely belongs to us and concerning which we know nothing—our own lives. Where does that vital element reside? What is it? What is our power of thought, our will? When I take this pen from this paper and dip it in the inkstand, I know the process by which the material act is accomplished; I know that certain muscles attached to certain bones have moved my arm by that contractile power which is inherent in them. But how was the order conveyed to those muscles to act? Again, in the course of conversation it is necessary that I should remember some name, some date, some historical incident, or even a tune. At first I cannot do so, but at last, after ransacking my memory and turning its contents over and over, I succeed in recalling what is wanted. Who can tell me where that storehouse is, where that thing, whatever it was, was registered and laid up till wanted? Impatient of "our littleness" in these respects,

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striving to look towards a light that blinds, or to gaze into a darkness that bewilders, the smaller order of speculative minds are ready to take up with all sorts of theories which empirics put forth as capable of solving difficulties which more patient and more humble souls acknowledge to be too much for them. Some are ready to grasp—in their desire to *know*—at the miserablest delusions, and so will lend themselves to follies which, but for their blasphemous pretensions, one could be content to treat with silent contempt.

Any attempt to report on the exact state of our public constitution, would be incomplete without some mention of so remarkable a symptom as the spiritual credulity which has of late years manifested itself in a certain portion of the community.

Between the viler kinds of magnetic imposture, as shown in pretended clairvoyance and the like, and the more recent spiritualistic deceptions, there seems some affinity. At all events, what Horatio said of the King of Denmark's funeral, and his widow's marriage, will apply here—"it followed hard upon." The history of this small national disease, which happily never spread very far, though it was, where it existed, very virulent, is told in a dozen words. Certain persons, with a view to their own advancement and to the acquirement of gain, came from America and elsewhere, giving themselves out as able to hold communication with another world, and also to be the media through which other and less gifted persons could hold intercourse with deceased friends, and others whose career in this world was ended. The persons who went over to this faith were of four classes. First, the professional charlatan, who made money by it; secondly, the amateur, who made notoriety by it; thirdly, the immense class who half-consciously and half-unconsciously assisted the professional or amateur impostor; lastly, the very weak and credulous, whose throats and powers of swallowing, were large out of all proportion to their brains and capabilities of discerning. The result of this combination of forces—or of weaknesses—may be easily imagined. The professional medium, as representing class No. 1, makes hay while the sun shines (in the eyes of his victims); the amateur medium, representing class No. 2, becomes a remarkable person, gets soon committed to more than he or she at first intended, and goes on from small impostures to greater; the willing self-deceivers of the third class are ready to lend themselves to anything that will keep the fiction going, shutting their eyes tightly to everything that could undeceive them; and class No. 4 goes on swallowing and swallowing more and more, until its throat becomes a perfect cavern of size and profundity to swallow anything.

Being present at one of these spiritual sittings—which I attended, less with the expectation of seeing anything wonderful than with the desire to speak with some authority on the matter—I was requested to write down the name of a deceased friend, introducing it among other names, seven or eight—any names—people I knew, people I did not know. It occurred to me that any person versed in the laws of probability would never think it likely that I should put the name to be guessed, first on the list. I therefore wrote the name of my deceased friend—with some reluctance—at the top of a slip of paper, and under it I wrote six or seven other names, John Robinson, Thomas Smith—what not. About the middle of my list I inserted the name of a public character recently dead, a name known to every one, the name of a person whom the medium might very well suppose to have been an acquaintance of my own. The list was handed to the medium, who glanced down it and gave it back to me, requesting that I would take a pencil and go down the list, touching each name with the pencil as I passed it. I touched the first name, that of my friend, and there was no response from the table; I touched the second, the third, and still silence; but the moment my pencil touched the name which, be it remembered, was the only name on the paper which the medium *knew to be that of a deceased person*, there was a volley of raps: so confident were the spirits that this was the name I had thought of. One instance such as this, is as good as a dozen. But I may add that the professional gentleman who failed most dismally in this particular and in every particular on the occasion in question—who could succeed in nothing when he was attentively watched by five persons seated in his own room at his own table: of which five persons the writer was one, the Conductor of this journal another, and M. Robin of the Egyptian Hall a very dangerous third—had been trumpeted about London as the most wonderful of all the wonderful mediums ever wondered at.

It has been still in considering the things that we do not know, that we have stumbled upon this subject: it being in sheer impatience of our littleness in knowledge of the unreal that some of us have lent ourselves to this miserable nonsense—have believed that the dead could be summoned from their solemn rest by showmen, and that being so summoned they would take our upholstery into their confidence, and through it reveal the most preposterous trifles.

And if in the things that we cannot know, "our littleness" is conspicuous, so is it in an eminent degree with regard to the things that we cannot *do*. All that mass of machinery, so marvellous in its power, so unerring in its accuracy, which shakes the very girders at the Great Exhibition—what is it for? To carry our bodies from place to place, to shift us hither and thither on the earth's surface, to twist the lumps of cotton-wool into strings, and then plait those strings together, till a web is made with which we may cover us. It can plait woollen strings together as well as cotton, and make a carpet for our feet. It can lift the water from the low-lying lands, and drain them for our use. It can bore through the Alps, or carry a thought a hundred miles in an electric flash, or give the fulness (sometimes the emptiness) of a mind to the world, on paper. But it cannot give health, or a quiet mind, or a fair exterior. It cannot

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restore sanity to the deranged, or sight to the blind, nor can it banish disease and death, nor drive crime out of the land. It cannot annul the past, nor undo the thing once done.

But "our littleness" has many developments besides those we cannot help and which are beyond our control, and to some of these there is blame attaching because we could be greater in respect of them, if we would. I was present on a recent occasion at the Crystal Palace when the "Share Clubs," as they are called, held one of their Sunday meetings there. Any attempt to turn the resources of the Crystal Palace, as a place of innocent Sunday recreation, to account, is worthy of record. The favour seemed, however, to have been conceded somewhat under protest. The children were admitted to their playground, but all the toys were locked up. There is one amusement and one only which has ever been the great Sunday stronghold of our poorer classes, and which seems likely to remain so for some time to come. To link themselves together in couples and walk with a slow and measured step in total silence, is the sport in question, and on the occasion of my Sunday visit to the Crystal Palace, this diversion was being kept up with great spirit. This Sunday walk requires to be registered as a remarkable institution in this country. A young man is considered to have made his final choice, when once it is said of him that he has "walked" with Mary Anne. It is a solemnity approached with very great gravity and a deep sense of its importance, by both the parties. An assignation is made at a street corner, and here George or Mary Anne, whosoever gets first to the ground, spends the time that elapses before the arrival of the other party to the contract, in chewing a straw or sucking a parasol handle, according to the sex of the individual. Some wrigglings announce the moment when the beloved object has hove in sight. Neither beloved object, however, looks at the other; but, having shaken hands very stiffly and glanced up the street and down the street, both stand for a short time apparently in some indecision what to do next. This state of things ends in desperation on the part of George, who suddenly turns about and hooks out his right elbow. Mary Anne attaches herself to the proffered limb, and off they march. From that moment the affair is concluded, and George and Mary Anne are held to be affianced. A great deal was done in this way at the Crystal Palace on Sunday, the fourth of August; but for those who were too young to walk, or who had already walked, there was mighty little amusement. True, the gymnasium was accessible—probably because it was impossible to render it otherwise without rooting it up from the ground; and every facility was afforded to the company for turning themselves topsy-turvy immediately after dinner, or for hanging with their heads downward till they were black in the face; but here the line was drawn. "To the Boats," was inscribed at the entrance of one path, but when you had pursued the path to the water's edge, the boats were found to have been cunningly removed to the centre of the lake, where nobody but a good swimmer who could pick a padlock, and row without oars, could get at them. "To the Cricket-ground," said another inscription; but there was no cricket when one got there. And the quoit-ground was destitute of those rings of iron which are rather an important ingredient in the game. Now, surely "our littleness" comes out rather here. What possible harm could there have been in allowing the perfectly well-behaved persons who visited the Crystal Palace on the Sunday of which I speak, to have had some few of the resources of the place left at their disposal? If any one strong enough to use the gymnasium swings were at liberty to do so, why lock up the see-saws and the merry-go-rounds from the weak remainder of the company? What harm in allowing those persons, who were to be found in considerable numbers, gazing, horror-struck, at the antediluvian monsters—what harm in allowing them a little row on the lake?

In that Great Building at Kensington "our littleness" comes out, in some respects, as well as our greatness. Was nothing consigned to the back settlements which might, with advantage, have taken the place of that Toy Trophy, with its rocking-horses and croquet-hammers? One first-class situation is occupied by a stall ornamented with "breadths" of alpaca, of different colours. The candles have it all their own way in another specially conspicuous place, where they are arranged with a symmetrical ludicrousness terrible to behold. These "trophies" are, generally speaking, very poor and paltry affairs. The word, according to Dr. Johnson, means "something shown or treasured up in proof of victory." What sort of victories are proclaimed here? There is one trophy where the victory is over the beasts of the field, and where the spoils are turned into peaceful fur-tippets; and one there is, consisting of all sorts of useful and homely wares, gathered together and brought into one bond of union, with this beautiful and mysterious inscription flourishing above it: "Far as the breeze can bear, the billows foam, Survey our Empire, and behold our Home!" There is something of littleness, again, in the crowds about the jewellery-cases. It is less the intrinsic beauty of the jewels that draws the numerous gazers, than the wretched thought of the money they are worth, or perhaps the even smaller thought of the wonderfully good society those trinkets are going into. What curiosity, what interest does this consideration awaken! And so the jewel-cases with their hideous silver cups and presentation candlesticks in the same ill-used metal, are thronged: and close by, in the Russian Court, the bronze groups, which as works of art are second to nothing in the place, are neglected and passed by. The bronzes will be purchased, perhaps, by people of taste, but one cannot depend on their going into the best society; whereas, on the other hand, the jewels will blaze at dinner-tables in Mayfair, and at balls in Belgravia—what a thought!

But perhaps the most remarkable develop-

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ments of "our littleness" are those connected with the proceedings of what is called the fashionable world. There seems reason to apprehend brain-softening in this large portion of the community. The littleness of the changes they are continually making in their code of laws is so microscopic, that to pay due attention to them must be seriously injurious to the mental health. Their sumptuary and other laws are all of a hair-breadth nature, which it must be extremely wearing to study continually. It is not only the case, as every one has observed, that "Society" is constantly altering the site on which it takes its exercise from one alley of the national playground to another. It goes further than this, and directs at what particular inch of ground you are to turn, and marks out a rubicon beyond which it is ruin to pass. I am told by trustworthy agents whom I employ, that similar microscopic changes are continually making in the costume worn by this same "Society," so that a gentleman will be obliged to have a new coat when he does not want one, because the garment he prized enormously a month ago has become obsolete, owing to a sudden rise or fall in buttons; or because some individual whom "Society" looks up to, has chosen to have his coat-tails cut "all round about" like the poor old woman in the nursery rhyme. Minute alterations, too, I am informed, take place in the colour of "Society's" gloves; at one time they must be lavender, at another pale drab, and at another straw-coloured. Ladies, too, I am given to understand, are also much addicted to these small alterations in their manners and customs. They will not only change the place where they disport themselves, but the hour, and even the hat under which they shelter themselves. And in this last particular they are even above all consideration of vanity, any young lady—"in Society"—being ready at a moment's notice to lay aside a hat which is becoming to her, and assume one hideously unbecoming, if Society's bidding urge that course as imperative. Nay, there would appear to be even more remarkable changes yet to which these docile creatures are ready to submit; and it has reached me from a special source that of late it has become the custom to change not only the objects by which a fair creature's face is surrounded but the face itself, which it has become fashionable to tint to the popular shade of the instant. Having had my attention directed to this matter, I felt called upon to investigate it myself, and I must acknowledge that it appeared to me that there was unquestionably a remarkable uniformity of complexion among many ladies, and also that the shade was one I had never observed in nature—some ladies, who had probably rather lost their "eye for colour," wearing faces of a pale mauve colour, and some having gone to work at lips, eyebrows, and so forth, to such purpose that it was plain they looked upon their countenances underneath, as a kind of rough sketch or rudimentary outline and substructure, on which to build, according to their own fancy and genius. Nor is this all. Among both ladies and gentlemen in "Society" there exist phrases and modes of speech which are as liable to alteration as the length of a coat-tail or the colour of a nose. Thus it will happen that on a certain day and at a certain hour the edict goes forth that in acknowledgment of all services whatsoever the word "Thanks" shall be used; and that when such services are to be rejected the form of speech shall be, "No. Thanks." From the moment of the issue of this command, no one "in Society" is ever heard to say "Thank you," and that poor miserable old expression of gratitude is handed over to the vulgar herd whose coat-tails are of all sorts of ridiculous lengths, and whose faces are of all sorts of ridiculous natural colours. I also gather from those persons in my employment whom I secrete on chairs in the Park, and in other localities where they can be on the look-out, that there are certain phrases in continual use, of a wholly unintelligible sort, but which Society is bound by its gentility to repeat on all occasions, possible and impossible. The first of these is, "Don't you know," and the second is, "That sort of thing." These two expressions are dragged in, pushed in, pulled in, and generally so inhumanly tousled and knocked about, that it is a marvel they hold together; one of my informers assures me that a certain gentleman, who was asked how he and the party he belonged to were going to Goodwood Races, was heard to answer, "Going over, don't you know, in an omnibus, *and that sort of thing.*"

I trust my official exertions will not become subject to disparagement in consequence of my frankly owning that I have been hitherto unable to ascertain who gives these laws, or how they are promulgated. It may be that there is some Social Parliament which holds midnight meetings, at which all such matters are discussed, and where honourable members inform the House that a snob has been seen in stone-coloured gloves, and it is necessary that even at that late hour the House should resolve itself into committee, and act on so fearful an emergency.

There is one very different detail of littleness, worth a moment's mention in conclusion.

Some years since, it happened that certain persons, with the idea of catering for the public amusement, discovered and brought to this metropolis an unhappy monster, such as, in the course of the accidents to which Nature is liable, will from time to time come into being and remain in the world, a blemish upon fair creation. The particular monster was some mixture of a terrible baboon and the lowest type of savage humanity, a humiliating link with the brutes, a creature which, though of the female sex, was bearded like a man, or like a goat, or what not? They called it Julia Pastrana.

Now I have not only to record that this thing while alive was shown among us, and that in a civilised country it was paraded about and advertised in order that nobody who was morbidly disposed might lose a chance, and that there were found people to respond to the appeal of the advertisers, but, still worse; when most merci-

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fully this poor thing died, there were people found who still looked upon its carcase as a property, who stuffed or preserved it in some way known to themselves, and brought it here again, ghastly and dead, stuck it in an attitude dressed up like a dancer, and showed it unchecked—not in a miserable booth at a fair, not in the back regions of Bethnal-green or Whitechapel, but in the best part of this great and civilised city, at the best season of the year 1862, when London was especially full of cultivated and educated persons.—Some littleness in this, somewhere?

THE MURDER OF THE SHEAS.

In 1821, a man named Gorman rented a farm among the wild mountains of Tipperary, from the Sheas, and the Sheas rented it from somebody else. They were not satisfied with Gorman for a tenant, but ejected him in the winter quarter. Gorman vowed to be revenged. He was in appearance the ideal of a bold and ferocious villain; he was gigantic in stature, with large features, ferocious eyes, a mouth like a wild beast, altogether a face hardly human, except for a look of diabolical cunning which was its prevailing expression. No sooner was he ejected from his holding, than he joined one Mayer, the chief of a gang of ruffians who were the terror of the country round about, and had perpetrated all manner of atrocities, but justice had never yet been roused against them. Mayer promised Gorman to revenge him upon the Sheas, for the insult they had put upon him. The Sheas were quite aware that there was evil intended against them, for they laid in a quantity of arms and ammunition, and fortified their house. All the neighbourhood were quite aware that mischief was brewing, but it never entered into the head of any one to apply for protection to the lawful authorities.

There was a small miserable public-house of evil repute, amongst the mountains, kept by a man named Kelly and his wife. It was much frequented by Mayer and his gang. Kelly was in league with the gang; his wife was a dark silent woman, accustomed to deeds of violence, and to look ruffians in the face every day. She had the reputation of having been an "unfortunate woman" before she married Kelly, and they did not live comfortably together. On Monday night, the 20th of November, 1821, Mayer came to Kelly's house, and going into an inner room began to melt some lead and cast bullets in a mould. Mrs. Kelly knew they were to kill the Sheas. She had a cousin who was servant to the Sheas. Moved by a blind emotion of compassion she went up to Mayer and begged him not to harm the Sheas. He did not reply, but went on with his work. Whilst Mrs. Kelly was trying to get some word out of him, a young woman entered the outer room, named Kate Muhaly. She was Mrs. Kelly's cousin, who lived with the Sheas as servant: she had been married some months, and was expecting her first confinement. As soon as Mayer saw who it was, he left his bullets and came forward to speak to her; they were old acquaintances. Mayer, on her entrance, had become quite pleasant and lively, and made himself as agreeable as he knew how. Poor Kate Muhaly, a simple sort of girl, thought no harm of him, and became very communicative. Mayer wanted to ascertain whether the Sheas were well on their guard, and what means of defence they had provided? This important information Kate Muhaly gave, without any suspicion of the mischief she was doing. She told him everything he wanted to know, about the house, the number of the family, the arms they possessed, and everything they would have wished to keep from the knowledge of their enemies; but how could a poor good girl suspect an old acquaintance, and her own cousin's friend, of any evil intention in asking questions? At last, after Mayer had learned all he wanted, and after a great deal of pleasant laughing and joking, enlivened by a cup of tea and a drop of whisky, Kate Muhaly took her leave, and returned home. When she was gone, Mrs. Kelly again entreated Mayer not to take away any life, or at any rate to promise he would not harm her cousin, Kate Muhaly; this Mayer readily promised; he desired Mrs. Kelly to feel easy, for that no ill should come to her cousin. He said this, for fear she should give any warning to save her cousin, and so put the Sheas on their guard. That very night Mrs. Kelly was unable to sleep, for thinking of Mayer and the mischief he was evidently meaning. She did not know *when* it was to be, but she was too anxious to sleep. She did not dare to speak to her husband, for he was in league with Mayer and his gang. When he was asleep, Mrs. Kelly rose softly, and wrapping herself in his coat, went softly out of the house and took her way to Mayer's cottage. It was a fine night for the time of year, and there was a moon. When she reached the door of Mayer's cottage, she heard a number of voices in eager consultation. Suddenly the door opened. Mrs. Kelly crouched behind some bushes; if she had been seen, she would certainly have been murdered without hesitation; as it was, the party passed on in half-military array, without suspecting that they were watched. She distinctly saw and recognised eight of the gang; they were all armed, and one of them carried two lighted pieces of turf, which he kept alive by blowing upon them from time to time. Mrs. Kelly then understood the nature of the mischief they were intending. Scarcely able to stand for terror, she nevertheless continued to follow them at a distance, over fields and fences and broken ground, until she reached a hill which overlooked the glen where the farmstead of the Sheas stood, and whence she could see everything. She was not without a hope that Mayer would still keep his word about sparing her cousin. Suddenly a bright light burst from the thatch of the farm-house; another flame broke out on the opposite side; the house was enveloped in flames, and the whole glen was lighted up in the glare. Shrieks, cries, entreaties for mercy, rose from the burning house—shrieks and cries that were responded to by yells

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of laughter and demoniac exultation; the murderers had secured all the doors, and, well armed, had posted themselves round the house to drive back any who should try to escape. They mocked the shrieks of their victims; they danced wildly about, in ferocious excitement; and let off their guns into the flames. There were seventeen human beings shut up in the Sheas' house; they were well armed, and provided with ammunition, but they do not seem to have made any effort to fire on their enemies from the windows, or to sell their lives dearly: paralysed with terror, they had only the blind instinct of trying to get out, all of them by the same door. They struggled, fought, and impeded each other, like rats in a burning barn, and were found next morning piled up behind the front door, an entangled blackened heap of what had once been human beings—a confused and horrible pile. One pitiful incident came to light of the events of that night. Poor Kate Muhaly, whose indiscretion had been the immediate cause of all, was, as we have said, near her confinement. The scorching heat and wild affright brought on premature labour. When she felt the first pains, she dragged herself to a wash-house, where there was a large tub of water. As soon as the child was born, she plunged the little thing into the tub, holding its head above water so that it might breathe. In the morning her body was found, with the arm that had held the child, hanging over the side of the tub. The poor little baby had been burned too.

The building had burned rapidly; the roof had fallen in, and the shrieks and groans were silent, when assistance came. The glare of the flames, and the noise of the shouting, and the firing of the guns, were seen and heard to a great distance. Philip Dillon, the nearest farmer, suspected at once what was going on, and called his labourers and servants, gave them arms, and led them himself towards the Sheas' dwelling, intending to help them; but he came too late. The murderers were still on the ground, but, as the party drew near, the roof fell in, and no more shrieks were heard. Philip Dillon and his party were inferior in numbers to Mayer and his gang, and neither party wished to attack the other. Mayer drew his men off, but not before a cow-boy in Dillon's party who was brother to one of Shea's servants had advanced near enough to recognise Gorman quite distinctly; he was with the gang enjoying his revenge, and making his companions laugh by mimicking the shrieks of the victims. On their road they passed close to the place where the miserable Mrs. Kelly was lying on the ground, still alive, and sensible of the horrors she had witnessed. She found her way home, and did not say a word to her husband. The cow-boy went to rouse up the poor old woman, his mother, to tell her of his brother's fate. As soon as she had a little recovered from the shock of hearing it, she laid her commands on him to keep silence lest the same doom should come upon them too.

Next morning the news of what had happened spread rapidly; the whole county gathered in crowds; the police were on the alert; but not a trace of the murderers could be found. The cow-boy held his peace. Philip Dillon and his men declared they had not come near enough to recognise any one. Mrs. Kelly was examined before the magistrates, but declared she knew nothing.

An immense reward was offered for the discovery of the murderers, but for a year and a half all the researches of government were in vain. The spot where the horrors had been transacted, was shunned as an accursed spot; but nobody would help to denounce the perpetrators of the horrible crime. Mary Kelly, who had witnessed everything, led a haunted life; the recollection of what she had seen, was more horrible than the sight of the reality. She could not rest in her bed, but arose night after night, to walk round the blackened ruins of Shea's farm-house, which had a horrible attraction for her. She spoke to no one, but wandered about, too miserable to live, and afraid to die. Her mind began to give way under her horrible secret. She believed that her cousin Kate Muhaly, holding her baby in her arms, was constantly haunting her and upbraiding her for not bringing the murderers to justice. At last, unable to bear her misery any longer, she revealed the secret to her priest in confession. He urged her to inform the magistrates; but it required all his authority, and long exercise of it, before he could succeed. She was a woman of great firmness, and would endure any torture sooner than turn "informer." At last the priest's words and the desire to give rest to the soul of her cousin, prevailed. Mary Kelly went to Captain Despard, a magistrate, and told him all she knew about the murder of the Sheas. Mayer, Gorman, and all the gang, were arrested, brought to trial, convicted, and executed.

We wish we could add what became of Mary Kelly, but we do not know. It has been mentioned that an immense reward had been offered for the apprehension of the murderers; but whether Mary Kelly took the money or not, is not recorded. Amid the annals of Irish crime and outrage, the murder of the Sheas bears away the palm for atrocity.

A FRENCH VIEW OF STARS AND STRIPES.

M. Maurice Sand, son of Madame Dudevant, had the fortune to travel in the United States, last summer, with Prince Napoleon and the Princess Clotilde. He was picked up in the prince's yacht at Algiers, and, having accepted an invitation to accompany the prince and princess to Lisbon, remained with them in their subsequent extended journeyings in America. After many stoppages and excursions, he arrived with them at New York, where M. Sand landed with, as he says, a pair of eyes and ears, but with no great pretensions to wisdom or powers of discernment. He describes in a fragmentary style what he saw and heard, and leaves his readers to make their own deductions.

M. Sand's attention, after he had landed at

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New York, was first attracted, while driving through Broadway, by "the Monument," which was hung with black and white flags, in addition to the national emblems, that have everywhere adorned the city since the commencement of the war. He asked the meaning of these funeral symbols, and was told that the country was wearing mourning for her children who were killed at Bull Run.

"But I thought Bull Run was a victory?"

"Oh no, it was a prudent retreat."

This seemed to the travellers rather a sorrowful awakening from the dream of triumph which had been previously trumpeted in the New York journals.

Some days later, M. Sand found all the public edifices of New York illuminated, and the population keeping holiday in the streets. Flags and lighted torches were being carried about by girls decked out with ribbons and flowers. The firemen were out with their engines, brilliant with red, white, and blue lamps—the Union colours—the militia was under arms with a band at its head. Music, dancing, and drinking were everywhere. What can all these exclamations mean?—"Where are they?" "Are they coming?" Who? What? Is it the celebration of another victory? Has there been a repetition of Bull Run? No; here they come: hurrah! Long live the volunteers of the Sixth Regiment! It was the return of the vanquished soldiers from the Potomac. Strange indeed! An ovation to a band of runaways!

The business of enlistment seems to be carried on (or seems to have been, when it *was* carried on) with about as much seriousness as a show at a fair. Here is a description of a recruiting-officer endeavouring to obtain a fresh supply of noble defenders of their country. The scene was a tent, adorned with warlike ornaments. A person attired in black clothes like a gentleman, but acting like a mountebank, having succeeded by means of a trumpet in drawing a large crowd around him, began thus to announce his business: "Make haste, for there are not more than twenty places left! Just see now, how I dress my soldiers," producing at the same time two fellows whom he used as advertisements, clothed in a fantastic Zouave costume. "Food, washing, and clothes, and twelve dollars for pocket-money!" His eloquence prevailing on some of the crowd, they entered the tent and enlisted, and were marched off immediately, flags flying and drums beating.

What a strange country! exclaims M. Sand. If among all these adventurers, whose only dream is of dollars, or if among those poor volunteers who are satisfied if they can get food and clothing for three months, there should be any true patriots, what steadiness of faith and devotion must they need to overcome the disgust inspired by these ridiculous affectations of enthusiasm!

The names of the recently-formed corps are placarded everywhere: sometimes accompanied by pictures, which connoisseurs of military costumes behold with amazement. There are German sharp-shooters, English volunteers, Scotch rifles, Garibaldians, Swiss cavalry, the guards of Lafayette, American chasseurs. The so-called uniform of the remainder is made up of bits of each of the others. The corps which is pre-eminently the favourite, is the Zouave. Everything is à la Zouave—women's and children's clothes, gaiters, bonbons, trousers, and soup. As for the puffing placards, here is a specimen:

Do you know a finer regiment than the Zouaves of New Attica?

No!

Do you know a regiment better commanded than the Zouaves of New Attica?

No! no!

Do you know a fiercer regiment than the Zouaves of New Attica?

No! no! no!

Do you wish to avenge your country?

Yes!

Do you wish to get twelve dollars a month?

Yes! yes!

Enrol yourself then in the Zouaves of New Attica!!!

Yes! yes! yes!

The whole is finished by an appeal "To Arms," in letters three feet high, with fifteen notes of admiration.

M. Sand visited the camp or depôt for recruits on the Hudson: made up of one of the most heterogeneous and motley companies of men that was ever dignified by the title of a military station. Nearly all the European nationalities were here represented—Germans, Irish, Swiss, Hungarians, Italians, and French; of Americans there certainly was not ten in a hundred. Many of the wretched fellows were men out of employment, who had preferred joining the Union army, to dying of hunger; for they at least got bread to eat, though little else, in spite of tempting promises. One of the recruits, a Frenchman who looked as if he were going to be hanged, said, "Yes, the *promises* are all well enough; sixty francs a month, exclusive of food and clothing, looks very attractive; but all the while we have been in camp we have not seen the colour of their dollars. For clothing they have given us one pair of gaiters and one pair of braces. The rations are very well for those who are particularly fond of ice, journals, and tobacco, but these don't happen to agree with me. I have engaged myself for three months, and I have yet six weeks more to remain. When that time has expired I hope they may get me here again."

There was also in camp here a company of the celebrated American Zouaves, almost entirely composed of Frenchmen who have seen but little service, and [French] Canadians who have seen none. This would not matter much, provided they were ready and willing; but respecting discipline? "Oh! discipline," said one of them; "what can you expect? There are those Canadians made corporals and sergeants because they can speak English; and difficult enough it is for us to obey commands given in that villanous language of theirs, of which we do not understand one word." "Then," said

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another, "You should see what sort of officers we have. A lawyer, a hairdresser, or an apothecary, raises a company, or battalion, which he calls a regiment, and of which he styles himself colonel or captain. He promises us, if we will only be induced to enlist, roasted larks with sauce à la victoire; but at the first shot our colonel, the lawyer, and our captain, the hairdresser, who perhaps know very well how to handle a pen and curling-irons, but who are entirely ignorant of the management of a sword or musket, run away, together with their soldiers of a fortnight's standing. This is what happened at Bull Run. I have been made a corporal, because I know fifteen English words. The other day I gave an order to an American soldier, who turned round and asked me the meaning of it. Now what would you have me do with soldiers who want an explanation of en avant, marche? From the least to the greatest, all want to command, and none obey."

At Washington M. Sand had opportunities of meeting men whose names are just now intimately associated with American affairs. He accompanied Prince Napoleon to the White House, where they were received by Mr. Seward, whom he describes as an intelligent man, with a countenance expressive of energy and refinement. Dressed in a yellow linen paletot and a broad-brimmed hat, Mr. Seward somewhat resembled—though only at first sight—a small country landlord. In Congress he is the personification of the Republican party, and from his courageous opposition to the anti-abolitionists, has the honour of being burnt in effigy in the South. After waiting a few minutes, a small door opened, and gave the visitors access to a very tall thin gentleman, dressed in black, and holding in his large shaggy hands a pair of white gloves, which had never been put on, and never could be. A long nose, a large mouth, a small soft eye, hollow cheeks, the beard arranged à l'Américaine—"a fashion which would make even Jupiter himself look vulgar—a tuft of long hair brushed up from the forehead and bending over it like a weeping-willow, and a pleasant face not without attractiveness—here you have the chief physical characteristics of President Lincoln." *Honest Abe*, as they call him, advanced to meet his visitors with a timid awkward manner, and, after shaking hands with them, endeavoured to commence a friendly conversation. "'How many days were you coming from Europe?' 'Is it to the son of Lucien Bonaparte that I have the honour of speaking?' 'How do you like America?' 'It is very warm!' The worthy man was evidently full of kindness; but, while he was the actual representative of freedom, he himself possessed no touch of it either in speech or manners."

During the same day, M. Sand met Generals Scott and M'Clellan. The former he describes as a tall stout old man of seventy-five, a hero at Vera Cruz and in Mexico in 1847. "I was asked," says M. Sand, "if I did not think he resembled Napoleon the First. But, with the very best intentions in the world, I could discover nothing in his appearance but an exceedingly English character. M'Clellan is a man of about thirty-five years of age, energetic and intelligent, with simple modest manners. During the time of the war in the Crimea he made a journey there for the purpose of military improvement."

General M'Dowell's camp, being situated last August, after the sad affair at Bull Run, close to Washington, on the other side of the Potomac, M. Sand, crossing the river in order to visit it, occupied himself in noticing the different occupations of the soldiers. Almost the first thing he observed on entering the camp, was a group of twenty soldiers sitting with their wives in a circle on the ground, under some large trees, singing psalms. There were, of course, the ordinary accompaniments of camp-life—tents, waggons, bundles of muskets, sentinels, couriers, groups of officers—but what struck the attention of our French friend most was the entire absence of gaiety and fun. A fine mansion, previously belonging to a Secessionist, was in use as general quarters; long rows of horses, tied up to the trees in the park, were grazing on the contents of ornamental flower-baskets; and a herd of oxen were stupidly splashing themselves in the ponds, waiting their turn to serve their country after their manner as beef. Here the prince and his party met General M'Dowell, who, with much simplicity and clearness, explained to the prince in French, by maps and plans, the evolutions of the armies on the 21st July.

The travellers also visited the Confederate camps. They were provided with a Union escort from Washington as far as the neutral ground between. Here they were received by a troop of Virginian Confederate cavalry, strong hardy horsemen, who conducted them to the camp at Fairfax, which they found pleasantly situated on the sides of well-wooded eminences. The men had an extremely picturesque appearance, and here, at least, they did not seem to be playing at soldiers. Leaving Fairfax, the party set out for Centreville, the road to which was covered by lamentable traces of the precipitous flight of the Unionists. In the neighbourhood of Centreville is Bull Run, the little river which has given its name to the Federal defeat. M. Sand visited it, and found, in the once peaceful country which surrounded it, the dismal spectacle which a deserted field of battle always presents. Trees mutilated by shot, cottages in ruin, spiked cannon, dead horses, and birds of prey. Many and loud complaints were made on both sides, of the inhumanity shown to the wounded. The North accused the South of having violated a church, used as a hospital for fifteen hundred of their men, by firing on the wounded and the surgeons—a charge which the South wholly denied, and brought counter-charges against the Unionists of treasonable murder, under a false flag. On both sides there existed such implacable

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hatred that a wounded man expected as little quarter as if he were engaged in a combat with wild Indians. This being the temper which existed on the part both of North and South, the subject of the following incident, which M. Sand met near the field of battle, may be forgiven for feeling disturbed in his mind on account of his possible fate. "Three horsemen made their appearance," says he, "conducting a prisoner on horseback tied to his saddle. He was a stout gentleman, with red hair and whiskers, looking very warm, bareheaded, wearing a white coat, and with his trousers up to his knees from the trot of his horse. He looked very foolish between his two guardians, with their long yellow moustaches; who, with revolvers in their hands, compelled him to obedience. I was told that he was a Northern spy. Poor fellow, I can quite understand his not being very gay in the contemplation of the cord that bound his wrists, which, in the course of an hour, perhaps, might be transferred to his neck, to hang him to the branch of a tree."

Arriving late one night at Manassas, the French party were received and entertained by General Johnston, the conqueror at Bull Run. He appeared to be a man about fifty; thin; of gentlemanly manners; not able to speak French; and either very reserved or very distrustful. Here, too, the party found General Beauregard—French in origin, language, and manners; not more than forty years old; short, but commanding, both physically and morally; of great energy, ready speech, and rough determined voice. These generals of the South, like those of the North, were dressed in blue tunics, without epaulets. "Although," says M. Sand, "our supper was wanting in wine and napkins, it was not the less good. As for ice, an object of the highest importance in a hot country, General Johnston excused himself for not having any, saying, 'Since the war we have no more had ice from the North, than the North have had cotton from the South.'" After supper, Prince Napoleon conversed until midnight with Generals Beauregard and Johnston, and the principal Secession officers. M. Sand gathered from these conversations that the Southerners have vowed a mortal hatred to the Yankees, and that they cleverly avoided the slavery question.

At Centreville, while M. Sand was lounging about from group to group, he heard several characteristic conversations among some of the young Confederate soldiers. Here are two or three specimens:

"We do not want to have anything to do with the Yankees; neither will we suffer a single Yankee foot on our territory; and they having once violated it, it is all over between us."

Then another:

"Have we not the right of separation, since we possess the right of union? They very well know that, without us, their commerce is ruined, for we are the cultivators. But we will be no longer cheated. We will continue the war two years—four, if it be necessary. We have sacrificed our property, and are ready to sacrifice our lives, but we will have nothing more to do with the Yankees. England and France want our productions, and we are willing to let them have them, but without the intervention of the North as the commercial middleman."

A third:

"Who in the United States thinks of freeing the slaves? Nobody. It is only in Europe that they trouble themselves about that; and there they fancy that we pass the whole of our time in thrashing our negroes. It is the Yankees who spread these false reports, in order to ruin us, and because they are jealous of our wealth. Look at Carolina, Georgia, and New Orleans, and you may see there what care we take of our slaves. If by chance one of them should fall sick, no means are spared towards his recovery. They are well lodged and fed; they work no more than is right, and they want for nothing. They are much more fortunate than the settlers and labourers out West. Yes! And with us they are far happier than black men are in the North; where, it is true, they have liberty—but it is the liberty to die of hunger!"

A private infantry soldier, whom M. Sand met, a moment after parting from these ardent Confederates, said: "I am a Frenchman. I came to America to pursue my calling as a gardener, but the war left nothing for me to cultivate but laurels. Well, although the country was turned topsy-turvy, still I must eat, so I enlisted myself for two years."

"And your pay?"

"And my pay, of course. The infantry are tolerably well paid. In the cavalry, more than three-quarters of the men receive nothing. They are nearly all men in a good position."

"Have you any negro soldiers?"

"Oh, indeed! negroes! Who would serve with negroes?"

"You despise the negroes, then?"

"Would you have me like them? The negro is not paid; he simply works, and is content to be a slave. He will tell you proudly: 'Me good slave; me work better than white man!' and thus small settlers, like me, for instance, are driven either to die of hunger or to hire ourselves to be killed for a cause which does not concern us. No; we don't like them any more than they do in the North—those negroes!"

It seemed to me, says M. Sand, that this volunteer gardener settled the question very well. The deplorable degradation of the slave contented with his lot, and the misery of the free man or mean-white reduced to starvation by this monstrous concurrence.

Concerning social things, M. Sand has this to say of the manner in which Sunday is observed in America:—"The Puritan Sabbath is distinguished here (New York) by all its horrible excess and laziness. Everything is shut up; and, from the first thing in the morning, you see men half stupified or dead drunk, lying in

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the corners or on the steps of the bar-rooms. The Sabbath is observed so strictly that a dead horse was allowed to lie the whole of one Sunday until late in the morning of the next day, in the middle of Broadway, before it was removed. But a sight infinitely more revolting was that of a human body, left hanging the whole day from a rope, fastened to a post at the edge of one of the quays, with only the head out of water. Do they save people here who happen to be drowned on Sunday? Perhaps such is not the custom! However that may be, some children were fishing around the miserable corpse, and were laughing at the livid face: which some of them made a mark to aim pebbles at. When the stone rebounded from the bare skull there were bursts of laughter. I turned away indignant: little attracted, I must confess, by this specimen of American manners. Two steps from these heartless little fishermen and close by the battery, I met with another scene which grieved me still more: it was a group of poor German labourers newly landed, who had established here their miserable encampment. In the midst of certain scattered trunks and implements, which were the hope of the family, some of the women were preparing food with their half-naked babies at their breast, while others were washing linen, which they hung out on poles to dry. These emigrants, having been attracted by the hope of large grants and riches which they fancied awaiting them in America, were beginning here their hard apprenticeship to American Reality. The speculators who had decoyed them were seeking money of them; but, as they had nothing save their labour to offer, they walked off shrugging their shoulders. And here these poor fellows, with the true resignation of peasants, intended to remain until fortune should favour them."

HEATH AND MOUNTAIN.

Ere yet the golden sheaves were piled,
We went, a solitary pair,
My friend and I, across the heaths,
To wander on the mountains bare,
The misty mountains broad and wild.

We wandered where the streamlet twines
Its silver, round the mountain's base,
Toiling through all that golden day,
Till on a rocky resting-place
We paused above the giant pines.

We clambered up the misty Ben,
Half cloud, half sunshine, there, the while;
We skimmed the silver-sheeted loch,
We rambled round the sleeping isle,
Or loitered in a twilight glen.

Deep was our rapture where we stept,
And one grey lonely ruin found,
Till in each broken arch we stirred
The slumbering ivy into sound,
Disturbed the halls where ages slept.

We read our Ossian in the fern,
Amid the mountain scenes he sung,
We revelled in his mists of gold,
Till grander seemed his mountain tongue
In that wild landscape bleak and stern.

We saw the little fishing town,
A dingy crescent round the bay,
The scaly prizes drifted in,
The morning breaking cold and grey
O'er ragged headlands bare and brown.

The bleating of the mountain flocks
That roam beyond a shepherd's care;
The wandering wild-fowls' lonely shriek,
Like murmurs of the dreaming air;
The seals half-sunned upon the rocks;

All haunt me yet. Were I to live
Untravelled till my latest hour,
These memories of the past would raise
A deathless charm, a quenchless power,
A sense of wild relief to give.

RUSSIAN TRAVEL.

THE TRAGEDY OF THE WHITE VILLAGE.

Not until 1863, when the act takes complete effect, shall we know the results of the emancipation of thirty millions of serfs. While among the peasants, journeying from one part to another, about the time of the first edict on the subject, I tried to ascertain what value the peasants themselves set on the promised boon; but I could not find my way far into the mass of their ignorance and apathy.

One day I had the following conversation with a serf, who brought me a message:

"Your name is Evan Vasiliovitch; to whom do you belong?"

"I am the serf of Karmoritch."

"How many are you?"

"Two thousand souls are we."

"You will all soon be free."

He looked at me from the corners of his eyes, and drawled out:

"Yes. If God and our Father wills."

"It will be better for you, Evan; will it not?"

"God knows, baron; how should I know?"

"How much obrok do you pay?"

"Thirty roubles a year."

"Do you pay it in work, or in money?"

"I work four days a week in the sugar fabric, to pay the obrok, passport, and taxes."

"How much are the passport and taxes?"

"About three roubles and a half, besides other things."

"That is thirty-three roubles and a half you have to pay, and for this you work four days every week in the sugar-mill?"

"It is so, baron, and hard work it is."

"When you get your freedom you will not require to pay obrok, or to work for it. Your time will be your own, to cultivate your ground. Will that not be better for you?"

"God give it. I don't know. But I am tired of working."

"How much land have you?"

"Three and a half deciatines" (ten acres).

"Well, that is plenty to keep your family on. If you spend all your time on it and pay no obrok, is it not plenty?"

"I don't know, baron, but I am tired of working in the fabric."

"Now, tell me, Evan, what do you intend to

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do when you get your freedom? Will you remain here and work your ground, or will you seek bread somewhere else?"

He turned his eyes first up, then down, then on both sides, as if seeking to evade an answer, gave the peculiar peasant's shrug, and slowly muttered:

"I shall sleep, baron."

"And after you have slept, Evan?"

"I shall eat, baron."

"And after you have eaten, Evan?"

"I shall sleep again, baron."

"And when the black bread is gone, and when the pig and poultry are all eaten, and when the potatoes, carrots, and cabbages, are all eaten, and when there is no firewood nor pasture, what will you do then, Evan?"

"Then I will tell you, baron. Now, may God give you health, and thank you for the tea-money you are going to give me. Give you good day!"

I believe this is the case of nearly all the serfs. The condition of many of these people at this time may be judged from the following account of himself, I got with difficulty from a peasant who worked in a cotton-mill:

"I earn four roubles (twelve and sixpence) a month. My time is all spent in the mill, from five o'clock in the morning until eight o'clock at night. My wife and two daughters work on the fields belonging to the baron, five days every week in summer. They get no wages. In winter they do any kind of work required of them by the steward. My son, who is seventeen years old, works also in the mill, and gets two roubles a month. We have three deciatines of land. It is our own, so is the house. We can only raise a few potatoes, cabbages, and carrots. The women do this work. We keep a pig, and we have some ducks. We eat them. We get black flour from the econome (the steward's tommy-shop); this is deducted from our wages. We pay no obrok from these wages nor taxes. Our work is counted for this; the steward manages all that. Somehow I am always in debt to the steward's office. I have worked ten years in the mill, and am a good spinner. I don't know what we shall do when we get our freedom. We shall not work any more, I suppose. I may go begging; it is an easy life. I am now unfit for out-door work, but my son is able; let him cultivate the land. We are three thousand souls on this estate; a thousand nearly are away, and pay forty roubles obrok each a year. They pay their own passports and taxes besides."

This is a sorry but true picture. Eleven pounds a year had this man and his family to live on! For this sum the father and son gave all their time in the mill, and the mother and two daughters five days a week in other work. In a free mill worked on the free principle, the father and son alone were worth, and were sure to receive, about sixty pounds, and the two daughters thirty; but then they could be forced to pay out of that what their master chose to exact for obrok and taxes. Many of the serfs are better off, and some are worse. The serfs, belonging at one time to the crown, are now free, and those possessed by the rich old families have paid five roubles obrok, and done what they pleased with their ground or themselves. Some of them are immensely rich, and could purchase their freedom at fabulous sums, but great nobles sometimes choose to retain them, either as a reserve fund in case of need, or from a foolish vanity in the possession of a serf worth half a million roubles. Such instances, however, are by no means common.

Intelligence reached us one day that something serious had happened among the serfs at a place called the White Village, twenty miles off. I started off to the place in company with my Scotch friend Saunderson, who was then my visitor. The White Village was a village of considerable size, and the houses seemed to have once been of a more comfortable class than any I had seen in those parts. Now it was a most desolate picture of extreme penury and woe: soldiers were in possession of every door; Cossacks patrolled the streets and the adjacent roads, so that but for my friend's clever assistance we should not have been allowed to enter. The steward's house, with all his property and stores, had been burnt down and he himself had been murdered. His family (a wife, a son, and two daughters) could nowhere be found. Some ten peasants were dead, and many were wounded. A gang of serfs in irons, or bound with ropes, followed by screaming women, some with babies in their arms, were leaving the place under an escort of Cossacks, who were jeering the poor wretches and probing them with lances, on their way to the government town prison: whence they would pass ultimately to the Siberian mines, no doubt.

This is the story of the outbreak:

General Obrassoff died and left his widow two estates: this of the White Village, which had come into his possession only a short time before his death, was one: the other was that upon which my friend Saunderson served as superintendent. The lady was a person of a tender heart, who had been well educated, and mixed in the best society. At her husband's death she left the capital and its pleasures, in order to devote herself to the education of her daughter, taking with her a first-rate governess and a little English girl as companion and English tutor. The little English girl, by name Lucy Murray, was fatherless, her mother was unable to educate her, and she was glad to give her companionship to the Russian young lady in exchange for good treatment and an education in German, French, and music.

Arrived at the White Village, which she had never seen before, the "generalshe" ("Mrs. General") decided upon living there for a time. While the old family house was being prepared for her reception she stayed in a friend's house in the nearest town. The former proprietor of the White Village had been rich, and easy

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with his serfs. He had possessed several estates of considerable extent lying widely separate from this part of the country, where he had never been but once: in fact, he knew very little of the White Village except that it was his, and that the steward sent or brought him plenty of excuses for non-payment, but little money. It did not trouble him much, therefore, when the people on the estate passed to the General Obrassoff at cards or dice: he merely remarked (Madame Obrassoff is herself my authority here) that if the general made no more of the pigs than he had made of them, they would not be of much use to him. The general determined, however, to make the estate valuable. It was in the same country as his other property, and would form a large addition to his income if well handled. But soon after he had sent off a new steward with the discharge of the old steward in his pocket, and with orders to repair the house, buy stock, and raise the obrok from ten roubles to thirty, he died. Thus madame, good tender-hearted compassionate Madame Obrassoff ruled in his stead until her child's majority.

On the morning after she had taken possession, and installed herself comfortably in her large wooden house, before she had quite got out of bed the large plot of grass (which served for a lawn in front) was filled with a mass of human beings clad in the most filthy rags, waiting to pay their respects to their new owner: the old "starost" heading the ragamuffins with evident pride and pleasure. English rags are bad, Scotch are worse, and Irish are worse, but Russian rags are beyond all conception. When the lady appeared on the lawn among her "souls" she was perfectly shocked by their wretched appearance; and the starost having marked with cunning satisfaction her aspect of sympathy, advanced first with a "welcome present," a lean goose, and laid it at her feet. He then kissed her feet and the feet of her daughter, and wished that all imaginable blessings might be poured down on their "high-born" heads. He then said that the present he had brought, was not fit to give to a stanavoy's clerk, far less to such a high-born generalshe, but it was all now left him to give, he was so poor! The rest of the ragged host advanced and followed suit, no one coming empty-handed. Some gave one egg, others a few berries or a bit of black bread, some a jug of kvass or an old paralytic hen; this one brought a starved rabbit, that one a small paper of salt or a few carrots. The speeches delivered on this great occasion by some of the elder peasants were similar to that of the old starost. "High-born lady, we are your humble slaves. Forgive us for having nothing better to offer you. We are poor. Look at us with the golden eye, and have pity. God give you health and long life to live among us. We are poor, but obedient. We will all die for you. It is God's truth, lady, we are poor." Many of them shed tears profusely. The kind-hearted woman wept in sympathy, and pitied the degraded beings from the bottom of her heart. How could she exact thirty roubles a year from such people? How could she put a hard steward over them, to grind more out of them? Had this not been already carried too far?

"Starost," she said, "hear me. My husband gave orders before he died, that each man should pay thirty roubles obrok. Has the steward told you so, and are you willing to pay it?"

"High-born lady, it is truth. We have been told, but God knows we cannot pay it. All we have, is not worth thirty roubles each. You have beautiful eyes to look with. See these people. Is it possible that we can pay all this large sum. Ah, lady! have compassion and be an angel, and make the obrok ten roubles as it was before."

"Steward," said the lady, "give me your opinion."

"My lady, honoured and obeyed, it is my opinion that all this is a farce got up to deceive you. Don't believe them. They seem poor, but I suspect them to be the reverse. I cannot prove it yet, but I soon will. Follow, madame, your illustrious husband's design, and I shall pledge myself to find the obrok. I have done."

Here the whole body of the peasants, about fifteen hundred, at a secret sign from the starost, surrounded the lady and fell on their knees, howling and crying.

"My children," she said, "I pity you. It is sad to look on you, with those rags. I will not ask you to pay what you cannot pay, but I must have some obrok, and shall be content with ten roubles each, if it is paid without trouble to me. I wish to be kind, and to live amongst you happily."

The starost crossed himself, and so did the multitude; the starost thanked the lady, and with many bendings and bowings vowed that this sum should be paid by the people, if he made them sell everything they had. They then parted: the lady rejoicing in having done a deed of mercy: the starost chuckling at the success of his trick: the new steward, finding his occupation gone, gave notice to quit, and so anticipated his dismissal.

Next day, while the generalshe was giving orders in her new house, and the French governess, the daughter, and Lucy Murray, were at their first lessons, the cunning old starost and twenty other peasants, clad in good comfortable garments, and looking healthy and well to do, unearthed some thirty or forty very fine young horses of their own breeding and rearing, from a secret spot in which they had been hidden, and were soon on their way to the large fair in the government town, to sell them for from one thousand to fifteen hundred roubles: the greater part of which money, after being divided, was destined for their secret hoards, as soon as it could be turned into hard cash. (Paper has no chance against bullion among the peasants.) The people of this village were to a man, dealers, breeders, and rearers of horses, who attended all the fairs for many hundred versts round, and only used their

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own land and that of the estate for the pasturage. Instead of being poor, they were the richest in the district, and none could have paid a higher obrok. But they had never paid much under the old proprietor, and they would not, if cunning could save their pockets, under the new.

The lady remained under her delusion for a year. When the time came for the obrok to be paid in, a scene similar to the first, which had been so successful, was again enacted. The winter had been severe; the summer rains had not come; the rot, or something else, had got amongst the pigs and poultry; the crops of everything were nothing; they were all nearly starving; they could not pay any of the ten roubles; her high-born ladyship might come and see for herself; she might take all they had, but the obrok in money they could not pay. (Not a word was said about horses.)

Again the trick succeeded. The other estate afforded means of living; this estate might improve with a little patience and kindness; and the kind woman not only forgave the whole year's obrok, but reduced it to five roubles for the next year. "Only remember, starost, this is my last step in that direction. If this five roubles each is not paid in good time, and if you assemble these people again without the money in their hands, I will sell the place and leave you. I will not struggle and fight, to get my money. I wish to be kind to you, but I must live, and it is a shame to you that I have to draw all my means from other poor serfs, who are perhaps as poor as you."

There is nothing more certain than that if you give a Russian serf an inch, he will take an ell. The next year came, and the five roubles did not. The poverty trick was again rehearsed, but this time her high-born ladyship dismissed the people with pain and anger, advertised the estate for sale, and, as she had threatened, sold it. All the horse-dealing "souls" on it, their wives and children, horses, cattle, goods and chattels, became the property of a certain Gospodin Popoff, who had spent the greater part of his life in official service on a salary of some forty-five or sixty roubles per month, and who had managed to live up to three hundred roubles, and to save money enough to buy the White Village at twenty thousand roubles.

Herr Hausen—the steward whom Madame Obrassoff allowed to leave her—was appointed by Gospodin Popoff; for this steward had kept his eye on the estate ever since, knew more by this time of its capabilities, and felt chagrined at having been outwitted and driven away by the cunning old starost.

His first act indicated what was to be expected now. The venerable old starost, and twenty of the principal peasants, were seized on their first repetition of the poverty farce, and received a very liberal supply of "stick." The stanavoy's men kept the stick going for half a day, and were well paid to lay it on hard: while Herr Hausen smiled complacently. This was the first turning of the tables, and they went on running round from bad to worse. Each serf was served with a demand for three years' arrears of obrok, passport-money and taxes, at a high rate. Failing to pay on the instant, the secret studs of horses and the more apparent goods of every kind, were appropriated and sold without the least compunction. The peasants were not allowed to leave the village, but were driven to work on the fields. Having formerly attended to nothing but horse-dealing, they were now almost destitute of the kind of produce necessary to human life. The old and infirm had to chop wood for the steward, the children gathered oak nuts and cut grass in the woods, for his cows and pigs; his barns, stables, and storehouses, filled as those of the peasants emptied. He became corpulent in substance as they grew lean and gaunt and hungry.

A sum equivalent to the purchase-money of the estate had already been realised; but this was not thought sufficient by Herr Hausen and his principal. They had not yet found any money; and money in hard cash there must be somewhere. Domiciliary visits had been made, the floors of the huts had been dug up, and every place the searchers could think of had been explored without success. At length, a Jew: one of those prowling sharp-featured wiry little fellows, who carry trinkets, gaudy-coloured prints, handkerchiefs, and money, to exchange for corn, flax, feathers, and other peasant produce, at a profit of eight hundred per cent or so: gave a hint to Herr Hausen for a per-centage on the money found. Measures were taken accordingly, and one day these peasants—already shorn to the bone of everything else—were deprived of their nest-egg. Where it was found, or how much it was, I did not hear, but hard bullion to a considerable amount was transferred to the iron safe in the strong-room of the steward's house. The peasants were now poorer a thousand times, than they had ever wished the kind generalshe to believe them.

What follows of the story I had partly from the old starost as he lay in his hut dying from a gun-shot wound, and partly from Lucy Murray at an after time.

One evening, four men stood at the end of a hut shaking something in a felt hat. One of them put his hand in and drew; he told the result, and the operation was repeated. Then the four separated and took different paths through the village, saying a few words quietly at every door. It was a cold clear night, soon after twilight, and the moon had risen in an almost cloudless sky. Just as the old starost passed the steward's gate, he met little Lucy Murray going in.

"How do you do, starost? I hope your health is good. Good night. I must run to the house."

"Stay, maiden with the golden hair and the laughing eyes, tell me who there is now in yonder house besides the steward and his."

"Madame Obrassoff and her daughter sleep there to-night. You know we came for the last instalment of the purchase-money of the estate."

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"When do you go?"

"To-morrow morning. We should have gone to-night, but it is late to begin a journey, and the horses want rest. Why do you ask, starost?"

"Listen, daughter of the English, and let my words go into your heart and remain there. Tell the generalshe from her old starost, who loves her and hers, though he has often deceived her, that she *must*—do you hear me say *must?*—leave that house in less than an hour. God dooms it, and all in it, to destruction. Now tell her soon and secretly, but as you value her life and your own, tell it to none other but her. Go, and remember my words. Good-by, English child, and may God give you happiness!"

So the starost passed on with the Russian fiery cross.

In about an hour after this, groups of men in noiseless felt boots went their way to the church front. Each of these men was armed with only one weapon, but it was a deadly one opposed to anything but fire-arms: the tapore, or Russian short-axe. With this the Russian peasant can hew down trees, cut them into pieces and slabs, build houses, make windows or picture-frames, sharpen and mend pens or pencils, kill a wolf or a bear, make tables and chairs, cleave his enemy's head from the crown to the neck. These men met at the church, each with his tapore stuck in his belt and resting on his hip. As each group approached the church every individual turned his body so as to face the holy emblems, images, and saints, the position of which he well knew, and with more than ordinary devotion bowed and crossed himself.

The starost lifted up his voice: "Brothers, many words, little deeds. Are you all ready and all willing?"

Each man drew from his back the tapore, flourished it over his head, and answered: "Ready!"

"That is well. We cast lots whether it should be to-night, and the answer was 'Yes;' we cast again, and the answer was, '*All.*' Follow me, then."

The body of men moved on, and, but for the slight crisping under their felt boots, they moved like noiseless phantoms. They were in number about five hundred. Half way between the church and the steward's gate a carriage drove up; they opened to let it pass, and looked in. Madame Obrassoff, her daughter, and Lucy, pale as spectres, and quaking in every limb, sat inside. Every man of the murderous band uncovered his head and bowed. The old starost said, "Go in peace, kind woman and innocent girls. Thank God! They have heard my words." He little knew that Herr Hausen's two daughters and his wife were concealed in the bottom of the lumbering vehicle. Lucy had warned not only Madame Obrassoff, but the steward and his family. His son, a young man of eighteen, had stepped out on the instant, mounted a fleet horse, and galloped to the nearest town for soldiers.

Thus was the steward left alone to meet the storm he had raised. Most tyrants are cowards, and Herr Hausen did not belie the statement. When the hatchets began to beat at his doors and windows, he became at last convinced (for he had until then derided the idea) that he had raised a demon he could never lay. He fled for refuge to some wretched hiding-place, as if any place in that great house could hide him from those who were now seeking his blood. His own domestics, all of them serfs to the village, joining the assailants, soon hunted him down and dragged him to the door, when he was commanded to give up the money he had robbed them of. With trembling limbs and pallid cheeks, he obeyed, yielded his keys, and begged on his knees for mercy. In the most abject fear and cowardly despair he offered them all he possessed, promised forgiveness, and that he would reduce the obrok—anything, everything, for his life. But mercy he had never shown, and mercy they did not show him. The axes of fifty men glittered in the cold moonlight and descended on his head. Then, when he was chopped to pieces, began the work of destruction. The wines and spirits found in the house added drunken madness to the madness of ignorant despairing vengeance, and morning found the revolted serfs dancing wildly about the dying embers of what had lately been the steward's house, offices, stables, and store-rooms. No thought of consequences entered their benighted heads. They had recovered the lost money and a great deal more; they had feasted to satiety on the rich stores of the steward; best of all, they had killed their enemy as they would kill a wolf. But consequences were not slow to come. A cry of "Soldiers!" was raised. Surprised, they ran this way to be met by a volley of musketry, and they ran that way to meet another volley. Dead and wounded fell like rotten sheep. The tapores were thrown down, the peasants fell on their knees screaming for mercy and surrendered at discretion.

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