Various

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THE CAXTONS. – PART THE LAST

CHAPTER CI

Adieu, thou beautiful land! Canaan of the exiles, and Ararat to many a shattered ark! Fair cradle of a race for whom the unbounded heritage of a future, that no sage can conjecture, no prophet divine, lies afar in the golden promise-light of Time! – destined, perchance, from the sins and sorrows of a civilisation struggling with its own elements of decay, to renew the youth of the world, and transmit the great soul of England through the cycles of Infinite Change. All climates that can best ripen the products of earth, or form into various character and temper the different families of man, "rain influences" from the heaven, that smiles so benignly on those who had once shrunk, ragged, from the wind, or scowled on the thankless sun. Here, the hardy air of

the chill Mother Isle, there the mild warmth of Italian autumns, or the breathless glow of the tropics. And with the beams of every climate, glides subtle Hope. Of her there, it may be said as of Light itself, in those exquisite lines of a neglected poet —

> "Through the soft ways of heaven, and air, and sea,
> Which open all their pores to thee
> Like a clear river thou dost glide —
>
> All the world's bravery, that delights our eyes,
> Is but thy several liveries;
> Thou the rich dye on them bestowest;
> Thy nimble pencil paints the landscape as thou goest."[1]

Adieu, my kind nurse and sweet foster-mother! – a long and a last adieu! Never had I left thee but for that louder voice of Nature which calls the child to the parent, and woos us from the labours we love the best by the chime in the Sabbath-bells of Home.

No one can tell how dear the memory of that wild Bush-life becomes to him who has tried it with a *fitting spirit*. How often it haunts him in the commonplace of more civilised scenes! Its dangers, its risks, its sense of animal health, its bursts of adventure, its intervals of careless repose – the fierce gallop through a very sea of wide rolling plains – the still saunter, at night, through woods never changing their leaves – with the

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[1] Cowley's *Ode to Light*.

moon, clear as sunshine, stealing slant through their clusters of flowers. With what an effort we reconcile ourselves to the trite cares and vexed pleasures, "the quotidian ague of frigid impertinences," to which we return! How strong and black stands my pencil-mark in this passage of the poet from which I have just quoted before! —

"We are here among the vast and noble scenes of Nature – we are there among the pitiful shifts of policy; we walk here, in the light and open ways of the Divine Bounty – we grope there, in the dark and confused labyrinth of human malice."[2]

But I weary you, reader. The New World vanishes – now a line – now a speck: let us turn away, with the face to the Old.

Among my fellow-passengers, how many there are returning home disgusted, disappointed, impoverished, ruined, throwing themselves again on those unsuspecting poor friends, who thought they had done with the luckless good-for-naughts for ever. For don't let me deceive thee, reader, into supposing that every adventurer to Australia has the luck of Pisistratus. Indeed, though the poor labourer, and especially the poor operative from London and the great trading towns, (who has generally more of the quick knack of learning – the *adaptable faculty*– required in a new colony, than the simple agricultural labourer,) are pretty sure to succeed, the class to which I belong is one in which failures are numerous, and success the exception – I mean young men with scholastic education and the habits of gentlemen –

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[2] Cowley on *Town and Country*. (Discourse on Agriculture.)

with small capitals and sanguine hopes. But this, in ninety-nine times out of a hundred, is not the fault of the colony, but of the emigrants. It requires, not so much intellect as a peculiar turn of intellect, and a fortunate combination of physical qualities, easy temper, and quick mother-wit, to make a small capitalist a prosperous Bushman.[3] And if you could see the sharks that swim round a man just dropped at Adelaide or Sydney, with one or two thousand pounds in his pocket! Hurry out of the towns as fast as you can, my young emigrant; turn a deaf ear, for the present at least, to all jobbers and speculators; make friends with some practised old Bushman; spend several months at his station before you hazard your capital; take with you a temper to bear everything and sigh for nothing; put your whole heart in what you are about; never call upon Hercules when your cart sticks in the rut, and, whether you feed sheep or breed cattle, your success is but a question of time.

But, whatever I owed to nature, I owed also something to

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[3] How true are the following remarks: —"Action is the first great requisite of a colonist, (that is, a pastoral or agricultural settler.) With a young man, the tone of his mind is more important than his previous pursuits. I have known men of an active, energetic, contented disposition, with a good flow of animal spirits, who had been bred in luxury and refinement, succeed better than men bred as farmers, who were always hankering after bread and beer, and market ordinaries of Old England… To be dreaming when you should be looking after your cattle, is a terrible drawback… There are certain persons who, too lazy and too extravagant to succeed in Europe, sail for Australia under the idea that fortunes are to be made there by a sort of legerdemain, spend or lose their capital in a very short space of time, and return to England to abuse the place, the people, and everything connected with colonisation." —*Sidney's Australian Handbook*– admirable for its wisdom and compactness.

fortune. I bought my sheep at little more than 7s. each. When I left, none were worth less than 15s., and the fat sheep were worth £1.[4] I had an excellent shepherd, and my whole care, night and day, was the improvement of the flock. I was fortunate, too, in entering Australia before the system miscalled "The Wakefield"[5] had diminished the supply of labour and raised the price of land. When the change came, (like most of those with large allotments and surplus capital,) it greatly increased the value of my own property, though at the cost of a terrible blow on the general interests of the colony. I was lucky, too, in the additional venture

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[4] Lest this seem an exaggeration, I venture to annex an extract from a MS. letter to the author from Mr George Blakeston Wilkinson, author of *South Australia*."I will instance the case of one person who had been a farmer in England, and emigrated with about £2000 about seven years since. On his arrival, he found that the prices of sheep had fallen from about 30s. to 5s. or 6s. per head, and he bought some well-bred flocks at these prices. He was fortunate in obtaining a good and extensive *run*, and he devoted the whole of his time to improving his flocks, and encouraged his shepherds by rewards; so that, in about four years, his original number of sheep had increased from 2500 (which cost him £700) to 7000; and the breed and wool were also so much improved that he could obtain £1 per head for 2000 fat sheep, and 15s. per head for the other 5000, and this at a time when the general price of sheep was from 10s. to 16s. This alone increased his original capital, invested in sheep, from £700 to £5700. The profits from the wool paid the whole of his expenses and wages for his men."

[5] I felt sure, from the first, that the system called "The Wakefield" could never fairly represent the ideas of Mr Wakefield himself, whose singular breadth of understanding, and various knowledge of mankind, belied the notion that fathered on him the clumsy execution of a theory wholly inapplicable to a social state like Australia. I am glad to see that he has vindicated himself from the discreditable paternity. But I grieve to find that he still clings to one cardinal error of the system, in the discouragement of small holdings, and that he evades, more ingeniously than ingenuously, the important question – "What should be the minimum price of land?"

of a cattle station, and in the breed of horses and herds, which, in the five years devoted to that branch establishment, trebled the sum invested therein, exclusive of the advantageous sale of the station.[6] I was lucky, also, as I have stated, in the purchase and resale of lands, at Uncle Jack's recommendation. And, lastly, I left in time, and escaped a very disastrous crisis in colonial affairs, which I take the liberty of attributing entirely to the mischievous crotchets of theorists at home, who want to set all clocks by Greenwich time, forgetting that it is morning in one part of the world at the time they are tolling the curfew in the other.

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[6] "The profits of cattle-farming are smaller than those of the sheep-owner, (if the latter have good luck, for much depends upon that,) but cattle-farming is much more safe as a speculation, and less care, knowledge, and management are required. £2000, laid out on 700 head of cattle, if good runs be procured, might increase the capital in five years, from £2000 to £6000, besides enabling the owner to maintain himself, pay wages, &c." —*MS. letter from G. B. Wilkinson.*

CHAPTER CII

London once more! How strange, lone, and savage I feel in the streets. I am ashamed to have so much health and strength, when I look at those slim forms, stooping backs, and pale faces. I pick my way through the crowd with the merciful timidity of a good-natured giant. I am afraid of jostling against a man for fear the collision should kill him. I get out of the way of a thread-paper clerk, and 'tis a wonder I am not run over by the omnibuses; – I feel as if I could run over them! I perceive, too, that there is something outlandish, peregrinate, and lawless about me. Beau Brummell would certainly have denied me all pretension to the simple air of a gentleman, for every third passenger turns back to look at me. I retreat to my hotel – send for bootmaker, hatter, tailor, and haircutter. I humanise myself from head to foot. Even Ulysses is obliged to have recourse to the arts of Minerva, and, to speak unmetaphorically, "smarten himself up," before the faithful Penelope condescends to acknowledge him. The artificers promise all despatch. Meanwhile I hasten to re-make acquaintance with my mother country over files of the *Times*, *Post*, *Chronicle*, and *Herald*. Nothing comes amiss to me, but articles on Australia; from those I turn aside with the true pshaw-supercilious of your practical man.

No more are leaders filled with praise and blame of Trevanion. "Percy's spur is cold." Lord Ulverstone figures

only in the *Court Circular*, or "*Fashionable Movements*." Lord Ulverstone entertains a royal duke at dinner, or dines in turn with a royal duke, or has come to town, or gone out of it. At most, (faint Platonic reminiscence of the former life,) Lord Ulverstone says in the House of Lords a few words on some question, not a party one; and on which (though affecting perhaps the interests of some few thousands, or millions, as the case may be) men speak without "hears," and are inaudible in the gallery; or Lord Ulverstone takes the chair at an agricultural meeting, or returns thanks when his health is drank at a dinner at Guildhall. But the daughter rises as the father sets, though over a very different kind of world.

"First ball of the season at Castleton House!" Long descriptions of the rooms and the company; above all, of the hostess. Lines on the Marchioness of Castleton's picture in the "Book of Beauty," by the Hon. Fitzroy Fiddledum, beginning with, "Art thou an angel from," &c – a paragraph that pleased me more on "Lady Castleton's Infant School, at Raby Park;" then again – "Lady Castleton, the new patroness at Almacks;" a criticism more rapturous than ever gladdened living poet, on Lady Castleton's superb diamond stomacher, just re-set by Storr and Mortimer; Westmacott's bust of Lady Castleton; Landseer's picture of Lady Castleton and her children, in the costume of the olden time. Not a month in that long file of the *Morning Post* but what Lady Castleton shone forth from the rest of womankind —

" – Velut inter ignes
Luna minores."

The blood mounted to my cheek. Was it to this splendid constellation in the patrician heaven that my obscure, portionless youth had dared to lift its presumptuous eyes? But what is this? "Indian intelligence – Skilful Retreat of the Sepoys, under Captain de Caxton!" A captain already – what is the date of the newspaper? Three months ago. The leading article quotes the name with high praise. Is there no leaven of envy amidst the joy at my heart? How obscure has been my career – how laurel-less my poor battle with adverse fortune! Fie, Pisistratus! I am ashamed of thee. Has this accursed Old World, with its feverish rivalries, diseased thee already? Get thee home, quick, to the arms of thy mother, the embrace of thy father – hear Roland's low blessing, that thou hast helped to minister to the very fame of that son. If thou wilt have ambition, take it, not soiled and foul with the mire of London. Let it spring fresh and hardy in the calm air of wisdom; and fed, as with dews, by the loving charities of Home.

CHAPTER CIII

It was at sunset that I stole through the ruined courtyard, having left my chaise at the foot of the hill below. Though they whom I came to seek knew that I had arrived in England, they did not, from my letter, expect me till the next day. I had stolen a march upon them; and now, in spite of all the impatience which had urged me thither, I was afraid to enter – afraid to see the change more than ten years had made in those forms, for which, in my memory, time had stood still. And Roland had, even when we parted, grown old before his time. Then, my father was in the meridian of life, now he had approached to the decline. And my mother, whom I remembered so fair, as if the freshness of her own heart had preserved the soft bloom to the cheek – I could not bear to think that she was no longer young. Blanche, too, whom I had left a child – Blanche, my constant correspondent during those long years of exile, in letters crossed and re-crossed, with all the small details that make the eloquence of letter writing, so that in those epistles I had seen her mind gradually grow up in harmony with the very characters – at first vague and infantine – then somewhat stiff with the first graces of running hand, then dashing off, free and facile; and, for the last year before I left, so formed, yet so airy – so regular, yet so unconscious of effort – though, in truth, as the caligraphy had become thus matured, I had been half vexed and half pleased to perceive a

certain reserve creeping over the style – wishes for my return less expressed from herself than as messages from others; words of the old childlike familiarity repressed; and "Dearest Sisty" abandoned for the cold form of "Dear Cousin." Those letters, coming to me in a spot where maiden and love had been as myths of the bygone, phantasms and *eidola*, only vouchsafed to the visions of fancy, had, by little and little, crept into secret corners of my heart; and out of the wrecks of a former romance, solitude and reverie had gone far to build up the fairy domes of a romance yet to come. My mother's letters had never omitted to make mention of Blanche – of her forethought and tender activity, of her warm heart and sweet temper – and, in many a little home picture, presented her image where I would fain have placed it, not "crystal-seeing," but joining my mother in charitable visits to the village, instructing the young, and tending on the old, or teaching herself to illuminate, from an old missal in my father's collection, that she might surprise my uncle with a new genealogical table, with all shields and quarterings, blazoned *or*, *sable*, and *argent*; or flitting round my father where he sat, and watching when he looked round for some book he was too lazy to rise for. Blanche had made a new catalogue and got it by heart, and knew at once from what corner of the Heraclea to summon the ghost. On all these little traits had my mother been eulogistically minute; but somehow or other she had never said, at least for the last two years, whether Blanche was pretty or plain. That was a sad omission. I had longed just to ask that

simple question, or to imply it delicately and diplomatically; but, I know not why, I never dared – for Blanche would have been sure to have read the letter – and what business was it of mine? And, if she *was* ugly, what question more awkward both to put and to answer? Now, in childhood, Blanche had just one of those faces that might become very lovely in youth, and would yet quite justify the suspicion that it might become gryphonesque, witch-like, and grim. Yes, Blanche, it is perfectly true! If those large, serious black eyes took a fierce light, instead of a tender – if that nose, which seemed then undecided whether to be straight or to be aquiline, arched off in the latter direction, and assumed the martial, Roman, and imperative character of Roland's manly proboscis – if that face, in childhood too thin, left the blushes of youth to take refuge on two salient peaks by the temples (Cumberland air, too, is famous for the growth of the cheek-bone!) – if all that should happen, and it very well might, then, O Blanche, I wish thou hadst never written me those letters; and I might have done wiser things than steel my heart so obdurately to pretty Ellen Bolding's blue eyes and silk shoes. Now, combining together all these doubts and apprehensions, wonder not, O reader, why I stole so stealthily through the ruined courtyard, crept round to the other side of the tower, gazed wistfully on the sun setting slant on the high casements of the hall, (too high, alas, to look within,) and shrunk yet to enter; – doing battle, as it were, with my heart.

Steps! – one's sense of hearing grows so quick in the

Bushland! – steps, though as light as ever brushed the dew from the harebell! I crept under the shadow of the huge buttress mantled with ivy. A form comes from the little door at an angle in the ruins – a woman's form. Is it my mother? – it is too tall, and the step is more bounding. It winds round the building, it turns to look back, and a sweet voice – a voice strange, yet familiar – calls, tender, but chiding, to a truant that lags behind. Poor Juba! he is trailing his long ears on the ground: he is evidently much disturbed in his mind; now he stands still, his nose in the air. Poor Juba! I left thee so slim and so nimble —

> "Thy form, that was fashioned as light as a fay's,
> Has assumed a proportion more round."

Years have sobered thee strangely, and made thee obese and Primmins-like. They have taken too good care of thy creature comforts, O sensual Mauritanian! still, in that mystic intelligence we call instinct, thou art chasing something that years have not swept from thy memory. Thou art deaf to thy lady's voice, however tender and chiding. That's right, – come near – nearer – my cousin Blanche; let me have a fair look at thee. Plague take the dog! he flies off from her: he has found the scent – he is making up to the buttress! Now – pounce – he is caught! whining ungallant discontent. Shall I not yet see the face? it is buried in Juba's black curls. Kisses too! Wicked Blanche, to waste on a dumb animal what, I heartily hope, many a good Christian would

be exceedingly glad of! Juba struggles in vain, and is borne off. I don't think that those eyes can have taken the fierce turn, and Roland's eagle nose can never go with that voice which has the coo of the dove.

I leave my hiding-place, and steal after the Voice, and its owner. Where can she be going? Not far. She springs up the hill whereon the lords of the castle once administered justice – that hill which commands the land far and wide, and from which can be last caught the glimpse of the westering sun. How gracefully still is that attitude of wistful repose! Into what delicate curves do form and drapery harmoniously flow! How softly distinct stands the lithe image against the purple hues of the sky! Then again comes the sweet voice, gay and carolling as a bird's – now in snatches of song, now in playful appeals to that dull four-footed friend. She is telling him something that must make the black ears stand on end, for I just catch the words, "He is coming," and "home!"

I cannot see the sun set where I lurk in my ambush, amidst the brake and the ruins; but I *feel* that the orb has passed from the landscape, in the fresher air of the twilight, in the deeper silence of eve. Lo! Hesper comes forth: at his signal, star after star, come the hosts —

> "Ch'eran con lui, quando l'amor divino,
> Mosse da primà quelle cose belle!"

and the sweet voice is hushed.

Then slowly the watcher descends the hill on the opposite side – the form escapes from my view. What charm has gone from the twilight? See, again, where the step steals through the ruins and along the desolate court. Ah! deep and true heart, do I divine the remembrance that leads thee? I pass through the wicket, down the dell, skirt the laurels, and behold the face, looking up to the stars – the face which had nestled to my breast in the sorrow of parting, years, long years ago: on the grave where we had sat, I the boy, thou the infant – there, O Blanche! is thy fair face – (fairer than the fondest dream that had gladdened my exile) – vouchsafed to my gaze!

"Blanche, my cousin! – again, again – soul with soul, amidst the dead! Look up, Blanche; it is I."

CHAPTER CIV

"Go in first, and prepare them, dear Blanche: I will wait by the door. Leave it ajar, that I may see them."

Roland is leaning against the wall – old armour suspended over the gray head of the soldier. It is but a glance that I gave to the dark cheek and high brow: no change there for the worse – no new sign of decay. Rather, if anything, Roland seems younger than when I left. Calm is the brow – no shame on it now, Roland; and the lips, once so compressed, smile with ease – no struggle now, Roland, "not to complain." A glance shows me all this.

"Papæ!" says my father, and I hear the fall of a book, "I can't read a line. He is coming to-morrow! – to-morrow! If we lived to the age of Methusalem, Kitty, we could never reconcile philosophy and man; that is, if the poor man's to be plagued with a good affectionate son!"

And my father gets up and walks to and fro. One minute more, father – one minute more – and I am on thy breast! Time, too, has dealt gently with thee, as he doth with those for whom the wild passions and keen cares of the world never sharpen his scythe. The broad front looks more broad, for the locks are more scanty and thin; but still not a furrow!

Whence comes that short sigh?

"What is really the time, Blanche? Did you look at the turret clock? Well, just go and look again."

"Kitty," quoth my father, "you have not only asked what time it is thrice within the last ten minutes, but you have got my watch, and Roland's great chronometer, and the Dutch clock out of the kitchen, all before you, and they all concur in the same tale – to-day is not to-morrow."

"They are all wrong, I know," said my mother, with mild firmness; "and they've never gone right since he left."

Now out comes a letter – for I hear the rustle – and then a step glides towards the lamp; and the dear, gentle, womanly face – fair still, fair ever for me – fair as when it bent over my pillow, in childhood's first sickness, or when we threw flowers at each other on the lawn at sunny noon! And now Blanche is whispering; and now the flutter, the start, the cry – "It is true! it is true! Your arms, mother. Close, close round my neck, as in the old time. Father! Roland, too! Oh joy! joy! joy! home again – home till death!"

CHAPTER CV

From a dream of the Bushland, howling dingoes,[7] and the war-whoop of the wild men, I wake and see the sun shining in through the jasmine that Blanche herself has had trained round the window – old school-books, neatly ranged round the wall – fishing rods, cricket-bats, foils, and the old-fashioned gun, – and my mother seated by the bedside – and Juba whining and scratching to get up. Had I taken thy murmured blessing, my mother, for the whoop of the blacks, and Juba's low whine for the howl of the dingoes?

Then what days of calm exquisite delight! – the interchange of heart with heart; what walks with Roland, and tales of him once our shame, now our pride; and the art with which the old man would lead those walks round by the village, that some favourite gossips might stop and ask, "What news of his brave young honour?"

I strive to engage my uncle in my projects for the repair of the ruins – for the culture of those wide bogs and moorlands: why is it that he turns away, and looks down embarrassed? Ah, I guess! – his true heir now is restored to him. He cannot consent that I should invest this dross, for which (the Great Book once published) I have no other use, in the house and the lands that will pass to his son. Neither would he suffer me so to invest even

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[7] *Dingoes*– the name given by Australian natives to the wild dogs.

his son's fortune, the bulk of which I still hold in trust for that son. True, in his career, my cousin may require to have his money always forthcoming. But I, who have no career, – pooh! these scruples will rob me of half the pleasure my years of toil were to purchase. I must contrive it somehow or other: what if he would let me house and moorland on a long improving lease? Then, for the rest, there is a pretty little property to be sold close by, on which I can retire when my cousin, as heir of the family, comes, perhaps with a wife, to reside at the Tower. I must consider of all this, and talk it over with Bolt when my mind is at leisure from happiness to turn to such matters; meanwhile I fall back on my favourite proverb, – "*Where there's a will there's a way.*"

What smiles and tears, and laughter and careless prattle with my mother, and roundabout questions from her, to know if I had never lost my heart in the Bush; and evasive answers from me, to punish her for not letting out that Blanche was so charming. "I fancied Blanche had grown the image of her father, who has a fine martial head certainly, but not seen to advantage in petticoats! How could you be so silent with a theme so attractive?"

"Blanche made me promise."

Why? I wonder. Therewith I fell musing.

What quiet delicious hours are spent with my father in his study, or by the pond, where he still feeds the carps, that have grown into Ceprinidian leviathans. The duck, alas! has departed this life – the only victim that the Grim King has carried off; so

I mourn, but am resigned to that lenient composition of the great tribute to Nature. I am sorry to say the Great Book has advanced but slowly – by no means yet fit for publication, for it is resolved that it shall not come out as first proposed, a part at a time, but *totus, teres, atque rotundus*. The matter has spread beyond its original compass; no less than five volumes – and those of the amplest – will contain the History of Human Error. However, we are far in the fourth, and one must not hurry Minerva.

My father is enchanted with Uncle Jack's "noble conduct," as he calls it; but he scolds me for taking the money, and doubts as to the propriety of returning it. In these matters my father is quite as Quixotical as Roland. I am forced to call in my mother as umpire between us, and she settles the matter at once by an appeal to feeling. "Ah, Austin! do you not humble me, if you are too proud to accept what is due to you from my brother."

"*Velit, nolit, quod amica*," answered my father, taking off and rubbing his spectacles – "which means, Kitty, that when a man's married he has no will of his own. To think," added Mr Caxton, musingly, "that in this world one cannot be sure of the simplest mathematical definition! You see, Pisistratus, that the angles of a triangle so decidedly scalene as your Uncle Jack's, may be equal to the angles of a right-angled triangle after all!"[8]

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[8] Not having again to advert to Uncle Jack, I may be pardoned for informing the reader, by way of annotation, that he continues to prosper surprisingly in Australia, though the Tibbets' Wheal stands still for want of workmen. Despite of a few ups and downs, I have had no fear of his success until this year, (1849,) when I tremble to think what effect the discovery of the gold mines in California may have on his lively

The long privation of books has quite restored all my appetite for them. How much I have to pick up! – what a compendious scheme of reading I and my father chalk out. I see enough to fill up all the leisure of life. But, somehow or other, Greek and Latin stand still: nothing charms me like Italian. Blanche and I are reading Metastasio, to the great indignation of my father, who calls it "rubbish," and wants to substitute Dante. I have no associations at present with the souls

> "Che son contenti
> Nel fuoco;"

I am already one of the "*beate gente*." Yet, in spite of Metastasio, Blanche and I are not so intimate as cousins ought to be. If we are by accident alone, I become as silent as a Turk, as formal as Sir Charles Grandison. I caught myself calling her *Miss* Blanche the other day.

I must not forget thee, honest Squills! – nor thy delight at my health and success; nor thy exclamation of pride, (one hand on my pulse and the other griping hard the "ball" of my arm,) "It all comes of my citrate of iron; nothing like it for children; it has an effect on the cerebral developments of hope and combativeness." Nor can I wholly omit mention of poor Mrs Primmins, who still calls me "Master Sisty," and is breaking her heart that I will not wear the new flannel waistcoats she had such pleasure in making – "Young gentlemen just growing up are so apt to go off in a

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imagination. If thou escapist that snare, Uncle Jack, *res age, tutus eris*, – thou art safe for life!

galloping 'sumption!" "She knew just such another as Master Sisty, when she lived at Torquay, who wasted away, and went out like a *snuff*, all because he would not wear flannel waistcoats." Therewith my mother looks grave, and says, "One can't take too much precaution."

Suddenly the whole neighbourhood is thrown into commotion. Trevanion – I beg his pardon, Lord Ulverstone – is coming to settle for good at Compton. Fifty hands are employed, daily in putting the grounds into hasty order. Fourgons, and waggons, and vans have disgorged all the necessaries a great man requires, where he means to eat, drink, and sleep – books, wines, pictures, furniture. I recognise my old patron still. He is in earnest, whatever he does. I meet my friend, his steward, who tells me that Lord Ulverstone finds his favourite seat, near London, too exposed to interruption; and, moreover, that as he has there completed all improvements that wealth and energy can effect, he has less occupation for agricultural pursuits, to which he has grown more and more partial, than on the wide and princely domain which has hitherto wanted the master's eye. "He is a bra' farmer, I know," quoth the steward, "so far as the theory goes but I don't think we in the north want great lords to teach us how to follow the pleugh." The steward's sense of dignity is hurt; but he is an honest fellow, and really glad to see the family come to settle in the old place.

They have arrived, and with them the Castletons, and a whole *posse comitatus* of guests. The County Paper is full of fine names.

"What on earth did Lord Ulverstone, mean by pretending to get out of the way of troublesome visitors?"

"My dear Pisistratus," answered my father to that exclamation, "it is not the visitors who come, but the visitors who stay away, that most trouble the repose of a retired minister. In all the procession, he sees but the images of Brutus and Cassius – that are *not* there! And depend on it, also, a retirement so near London did not make noise enough. You see, a retiring statesman is like that fine carp – the farther he leaps from the water, the greater splash he makes in falling into the weeds! But," added Mr Caxton, in a repentant tone, "this jesting does not become us; and, if I indulged it, it is only because I am heartily glad that Trevanion is likely now to find out his true vocation. And as soon as the fine people he brings with him have left him alone in his library, I trust he will settle to that vocation, and be happier than he has been yet."

"And that vocation, sir, is – "

"Metaphysics!" said my father. "He will be quite at home in puzzling over Berkeley, and considering whether the Speaker's chair, and the official red boxes, were really things whose ideas of figure, extension, and hardness, were all in the mind. It will be a great consolation to him to agree, with Berkeley, and to find that he has only been baffled by immaterial phantasma!"

My father was quite right. The repining, subtle, truth-weighing Trevanion, plagued by his conscience into seeing all sides of a question, (for the least question has more than two sides, and

is hexagonal at least,) was much more fitted to discover the origin of ideas than to convince Cabinets and Nations that two and two make four – a proposition on which he himself would have agreed with Abraham Tucker, where that most ingenious and suggestive of all English metaphysicians observes, "Well persuaded as I am that two and two make four, if I were to meet with a person of credit, candour, and understanding, who should sincerely call it in question, I would give him a hearing; for I am not more certain of that than of the whole being greater than a part. And yet I could myself suggest *some considerations that might seem to controvert this point*."[9] I can so well imagine Trevanion listening to "some person of credit, candour, and understanding," in disproof of that vulgar proposition that twice two make four! But the news of this arrival, including that of Lady Castleton, disturbed me greatly, and I took to long wanderings alone. In one of these rambles, they all called at the Tower – Lord and Lady Ulverstone, the Castletons, and their children. I escaped the visit; and on my return home, there was a certain delicacy respecting old associations, that restrained much talk before me on so momentous an event. Roland, like me, had kept out of the way. Blanche, poor child, ignorant of the antecedents, was the most communicative. And the especial theme she selected – was the grace and beauty of Lady Castleton!

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[9] *Light of Nature – chapter on Judgment.*– See the very ingenious illustration of doubt, "whether the part is always greater than the whole" – taken from time, or rather eternity.

A pressing invitation to spend some days at the castle had been cordially given to all. It was accepted only by myself: I wrote word that I would come.

Yes; I longed to prove the strength of my own self-conquest, and accurately test the nature of the feelings that had disturbed me. That any sentiment which could be called love remained for Lady Castleton, the wife of another, and that other a man with so many claims on my affection as her lord, I held as a moral impossibility. But, with all those lively impressions of early youth still engraved on my heart – impressions of the image of Fanny Trevanion, as the fairest and brightest of human beings – could I feel free to love again? Could I seek to woo, and rivet to myself for ever, the entire and virgin affections of another, while there was a possibility that I might compare and regret? No; either I must feel that, if Fanny were again single – could be mine without obstacle, human or divine – she had ceased to be the one I would single out of the world; or, though regarding love as the dead, I would be faithful to its memory and its ashes. My mother sighed, and looked fluttered and uneasy all the morning of the day on which I was to repair to Compton. She even seemed cross, for about the third time in her life, and paid no compliment to Mr Stultz, when my shooting-jacket was exchanged for a black frock, which that artist had pronounced to be "splendid;" neither did she honour me with any of those little attentions to the contents of my portmanteau, and the perfect "getting up" of my white waistcoats and cravats, which made her natural instincts on such

memorable occasions. There was also a sort of querulous pitying tenderness in her tone when she spoke to Blanche, which was quite pathetic; though, fortunately, its cause remained dark and impenetrable to the innocent comprehension of one who could not see where the past filled the urns of the future, at the fountain of life. My father understood me better – shook me by the hand, as I got into the chaise, and muttered, out of Seneca —

> "Non tanquam transfuga, sed tanquam explorator!"
> 'Not to desert, but examine.'

Quite right.

CHAPTER CVI

Agreeably to the usual custom in great houses, as soon as I arrived at Compton I was conducted to my room, to adjust my toilet, or compose my spirits by solitude: – it wanted an hour to dinner. I had not, however, been thus left ten minutes, before the door opened, and Trevanion himself, (as I would fain still call him) stood before me. Most cordial were his greeting and welcome; and, seating himself by my side, he continued to converse, in his peculiar way – bluntly eloquent, and carelessly learned – till the half hour bell rang. He talked on Australia, the Wakefield system – cattle – books, his trouble in arranging his library – his schemes for improving his property, and embellishing his grounds – his delight to find my father look so well – his determination to see a great deal of him, whether his old college friend would or no. He talked, in short, of everything except politics, and his own past career – showing only his soreness in that silence. But (independently of the mere work of time,) he looked yet more worn and jaded in his leisure than he had done in the full tide of business; and his former abrupt quickness of manner now seemed to partake of feverish excitement. I hoped that my father *would* see much of him, for I felt that the weary mind wanted soothing.

Just as the second bell rang, I entered the drawing-room. There were at least twenty guests present – each guest, no

doubt, some planet of fashion or fame, with satellites of its own. But I saw only two forms distinctly – first, Lord Castleton, conspicuous with star and garter, somewhat ampler and portlier in proportions, and with a frank dash of gray in the silky waves of his hair, but still as pre-eminent as ever for that beauty – the charm of which depends less than any other upon youth – arising, as it does, from a felicitous combination of bearing and manner, and that exquisite suavity of expression which steals into the heart, and pleases so much that it becomes a satisfaction to admire! Of Lord Castleton, indeed, it might be said, as of Alcibiades, 'that he was beautiful at every age.' I felt my breath come thick, and a mist passed before my eyes, as Lord Castleton led me through the crowd, and the radiant vision of Fanny Trevanion, how altered – and how dazzling! – burst upon me.

I felt the light touch of that hand of snow; but no guilty thrill shot through my veins. I heard the voice, musical as ever – lower than it was once, and more subdued in its key, but steadfast and untremulous – it was no longer the voice that made "my soul plant itself in the ears."[10] The event was over, and I knew that the dream had fled from the waking world for ever.

"Another old friend!" as Lady Ulverstone came forth from a little group of children, leading one fine boy of nine years old, while one, two or three years younger, clung to her gown. "Another old friend! – and," added Lady Ulverstone, after the first kind greetings, "two new ones, when the old are gone." The

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[10] Sir Philip Sidney.

slight melancholy left the voice, as, after presenting to me the little viscount, she drew forward the more bashful Lord Albert, who indeed had something of his grandsire's and namesake's look of refined intelligence in his brow and eyes.

The watchful tact of Lord Castleton was quick in terminating whatever embarrassment might belong to these introductions, as, leaning lightly on my arm, he drew me forward, and presented me to the guests more immediately in our neighbourhood, who seemed by their earnest cordiality to have been already prepared for the introduction.

Dinner was now announced, and I welcomed that sense of relief and segregation with which one settles into one's own "particular" chair at your large miscellaneous entertainments.

I stayed three days at that house. How truly had Trevanion said that Fanny would make "an excellent great lady." What perfect harmony between her manners and her position; just retaining enough of the girl's seductive gaiety and bewitching desire to please, to soften the new dignity of bearing she had unconsciously assumed – less, after all, as great lady than as wife and mother: with a fine breeding, perhaps a little languid and artificial, as compared with her lord's – which sprang, fresh and healthful, wholly from nature – but still so void of all the chill of condescension, or the subtle impertinence that belongs to that order of the inferior *noblesse*, which boasts the name of "exclusives;" with what grace, void of prudery, she took the adulation of the flutterers, turning from them to her children, or

escaping lightly to Lord Castleton, with an ease that drew round her at once the protection of hearth and home.

And certainly Lady Castleton was more incontestably beautiful than Fanny Trevanion had been.

All this I acknowledged, not with a sigh and a pang, but with a pure feeling of pride and delight. I might have loved madly and presumptuously, as boys will do; but I had loved worthily; – the love left no blush on my manhood; and Fanny's very happiness was my perfect and total cure of every wound in my heart not quite scarred over before. Had she been discontented, sorrowful, without joy in the ties she had formed, there might have been more danger that I should brood over the past, and regret the loss of its idol. Here there was none. And the very improvement in her beauty had so altered its character —*so* altered – that Fanny Trevanion and Lady Castleton seemed two persons. And, thus observing and listening to her, I could now dispassionately perceive such differences in our nature as seemed to justify Trevanion's assertion, which once struck me as so monstrous, "that we should not have been happy had fate permitted our union." Pure-hearted and simple though she remained in the artificial world, still that world was her element; its interests occupied her; its talk, though just chastened from scandal, flowed from her lips. To borrow the words of a man who was himself a courtier, and one so distinguished that he could afford to sneer at Chesterfield,[11] "*She* had the routine of that style of conversation

[11] Lord Hervey's *Memoirs of George II.*

which is a sort of gold leaf, that is a great embellishment where it is joined to anything else." I will not add, "but makes a very poor figure by itself," – for *that* Lady Castleton's conversation certainly did not do – perhaps, indeed, because it was not "by itself" – and the gold leaf was all the better for being thin, since it could not cover even the surface of the sweet and amiable nature over which it was spread. Still, this was not the mind in which now, in maturer experience, I would seek to find sympathy with manly action, or companionship in the charms of intellectual leisure.

There was about this beautiful favourite of nature, and fortune a certain helplessness, which had even its grace in that high station, and which perhaps tended to insure her domestic peace, for it served to attach her to those who had won influence over her, and was happily accompanied by a most affectionate disposition. But still, if less favoured by circumstances, less sheltered from every wind that could visit her too roughly – if, as the wife of a man of inferior rank, she had failed of that high seat and silken canopy reserved for the spoiled darlings of fortune – that helplessness might have become querulous. I thought of poor Ellen Bolding and her silken shoes. Fanny Trevanion seemed to have come into the world with silk shoes – not to walk where there was a stone or a briar! I heard something, in the gossip of those around, that confirmed this view of Lady Castleton's character, while it deepened my admiration of her lord, and showed me how wise had been her choice, and how

resolutely he had prepared himself to vindicate his own. One evening, as I was sitting a little apart from the rest, with two men of the London world, to whose talk – for it ran upon the *on-dits* and anecdotes of a region long strange to me – I was a silent but amused listener; one of the two said – "Well, I don't know anywhere a more excellent creature than Lady Castleton; so fond of her children – and her tone to Castleton so exactly what it ought to be – so affectionate, and yet, as it were, respectful. And the more credit to her, if, as they say, she was not in love with him when she married, (to be sure, handsome as he is, he is twice her age!) And no woman could have been more flattered and courted by Lotharios and lady-killers than Lady Castleton has been. I confess, to my shame, that Castleton's luck puzzles me, for it is rather an exception to my general experience."

"My dear * * *," said the other, who was one of those wise men of pleasure, who occasionally startle us into wondering, how they come to be so clever, and yet rest contented with mere drawing-room celebrity – men who seem always idle, yet appear to have read everything; always indifferent to what passes before them, yet who know the characters and divine the secrets of everybody – "my dear * * *," said the gentleman, "you would not be puzzled if you had studied Lord Castleton, instead of her ladyship. Of all the conquests ever made by Sedley Beaudesert, when the two fairest dames of the Faubourg are said to have fought for his smiles in the *Bois de Boulogne*– no conquest ever cost him such pains, or so tasked his knowledge of women, as

that of his wife after marriage! He was not satisfied with her hand, he was resolved to have her whole heart, 'one entire and perfect chrysolite;' and he has succeeded! Never was husband so watchful, and so little jealous – never one who confided so generously in all that was best in his wife, yet was so alert in protecting and guarding her wherever she was weakest! When, in the second year of marriage, that dangerous German Prince Von Leibenfels attached himself so perseveringly to Lady Castleton, and the scandal-mongers pricked up their ears in hopes of a victim, I watched Castleton with as much interest as if I had been looking over Deschappelles playing at chess. You never saw anything so masterly: he pitted himself against his highness with the cool confidence, not of a blind spouse, but a fortunate rival. He surpassed him in the delicacy of his attentions, he outshone him by his careless magnificence. Leibenfels had the impertinence to send Lady Castleton a bouquet of some rare flowers just in fashion. Castleton, an hour before, had filled her whole balcony with the same costly exotics, as if they were too common for nosegays, and only just worthy to bloom for her a day. Young and really accomplished as Leibenfels is, Castleton eclipsed him by his grace, and fooled him with his wit: he laid little plots to turn his mustache and guitar into ridicule; he seduced him into a hunt with the buckhounds, (though Castleton himself had not hunted before, since he was thirty,) and drew him, spluttering German oaths, out of the slough of a ditch; he made him the laughter of the clubs; he put him fairly out of

fashion – and all with such suavity and politeness, and bland sense of superiority, that it was the finest piece of high comedy you ever beheld. The poor prince, who had been coxcomb enough to lay a bet with a Frenchman as to his success with the English in general, and Lady Castleton in particular, went away with a face as long as Don Quixote's. If you had but seen him at S – House, the night before he took leave of the island, and his comical grimace when Castleton offered him a pinch of the Beaudesert mixture! No! the fact is, that Castleton made it the object of his existence, the masterpiece of his art, to secure to himself a happy home, and the entire possession of his wife's heart. The first two or three years, I fear, cost him more trouble than any other man ever took, with his own wife at least – but he may now rest in peace; Lady Castleton is won, and for ever."

As my gentleman ceased, Lord Castleton's noble head rose above the group standing round him; and I saw Lady Castleton turn with a look of well-bred fatigue from a handsome young fop, who had affected to lower his voice while he spoke to her, and, encountering the eyes of her husband, the look changed at once into one of such sweet smiling affection, such frank unmistakeable wife-like pride, that it seemed a response to the assertion – "Lady Castleton is won, and for ever."

Yes, that story increased my admiration for Lord Castleton: it showed me with what forethought and earnest sense of responsibility he had undertaken the charge of a life, the guidance of a character yet undeveloped; it lastingly acquitted him of the

levity that had been attributed to Sedley Beaudesert. But I felt more than ever contented that the task had devolved on one whose temper and experience had so fitted him to discharge it. That German prince made me tremble from sympathy with the husband, and in a sort of relative shudder for myself! Had that episode happened to me, I could never have drawn "high comedy" from it! – I could never have so happily closed the fifth act with a pinch of the Beaudesert mixture! No, no; to my homely sense of man's life and employment, there was nothing alluring in the prospect of watching over the golden tree in the garden, with a "woe to the Argus, if Mercury once lull him to sleep!" Wife of mine shall need no watching save in sickness and sorrow! Thank Heaven, that my way of life does not lead through the roseate thoroughfares, beset with German princes laying bets for my perdition, and fine gentlemen admiring the skill with which I play at chess for so terrible a stake! To each rank and each temper, its own laws. I acknowledge that Fanny is an excellent marchioness, and Lord Castleton an incomparable marquis. But, Blanche! if I can win thy true simple heart, I trust I shall begin at the fifth act of high comedy, and say at the altar —

"Once won, won for ever!"

CHAPTER CVII

I rode home on a horse my host lent me; and Lord Castleton rode part of the way with me, accompanied by his two boys, who bestrode manfully their Shetland ponies, and cantered on before us. I paid some compliment to the spirit and intelligence of these children – a compliment they well deserved.

"Why, yes," said the marquis, with a father's becoming pride, "I hope neither of them will shame his grandsire, Trevanion. Albert (though not quite the wonder poor Lady Ulverstone declares him to be) is rather too precocious; and it is all I can do to prevent his being spoilt by flattery to his cleverness, which, I think, is much worse than even flattery to rank – a danger to which, despite Albert's destined inheritance, the elder brother is more exposed. Eton soon takes out the conceit of the latter and more vulgar kind. I remember Lord – (you know what an unpretending good-natured fellow he is now) strutting into the play-ground, a raw boy with his chin up in the air, and burly Dick Johnson (rather a tuft-hunter now, I'm afraid) coming up, and saying, 'Well, sir, and who the deuce are you?' 'Lord – ,' says the poor devil unconsciously, 'eldest son of the Marquis of – .' 'Oh, indeed!' cries Johnson; 'then, there's one kick for my lord, and two for the marquis!' I am not fond of kicking, but I doubt if anything ever did – more good than those those kicks! But" continued Lord Castleton, "when one flatters a boy for his

cleverness, even Eton itself cannot kick the conceit out of him. Let him be last in the form, and the greatest dunce ever flogged, there are always people to say that your public schools don't do for your great geniuses. And it is ten to one but what the father is plagued into taking the boy home, and giving him a private tutor, who fixes him into a prig for ever. A coxcomb in dress," said the marquis smiling, "is a trifler it would ill become me to condemn, and I own that I would rather see a youth a fop than a sloven; but a coxcomb in ideas – why, the younger he is, the more unnatural and disagreeable. Now, Albert, over that hedge, sir."

"That hedge, papa? The pony will never do it."

"Then," said Lord Castleton, taking off his hat with politeness, "I fear you will deprive us of the pleasure of your company."

The boy laughed, and made gallantly for the hedge, though I saw by his change of colour that it a little alarmed him. The pony could not clear the hedge; but it was a pony of tact and resources, and it scrambled through like a cat, inflicting sundry rents and tears on a jacket of Raphael blue.

Lord Castleton said, smiling, "You see I teach them to get through a difficulty one way or the other. Between you and me," he added seriously, "I perceive a very different world rising round the next generation from that in which I first went forth and took my pleasure. I shall rear my boys accordingly. Rich noblemen must now-a-days be useful men; and if they can't leap over briars, they must scramble through them. Don't you agree with me?"

"Yes, heartily."

"Marriage makes a man much wiser," said the marquis, after a pause. "I smile now, to think how often I sighed at the thought of growing old. Now I reconcile myself to the gray hairs without dreams of a wig, and enjoy youth still – for" (pointing to his sons) "it is *there*!"

"He has very nearly found out the secret of the saffron bag now," said my father, pleased, and rubbing his hands, when I repeated this talk with Lord Castleton. "But I fear poor Trevanion," he added, with a compassionate change of countenance, "is still far away from the sense of Lord Bacon's receipt. And his wife, you say, out of very love for him, keeps always drawing discord from the one jarring wire."

"You must talk to her, sir."

"I will," said my father angrily; "and scold her too – foolish woman! I shall tell her Luther's advice to the Prince of Anhalt."

"What was that, sir?"

"Only to throw a baby into the river Maldon, because it had sucked dry five wet-nurses besides the mother, and must therefore be a changeling. Why, that ambition of hers would suck dry all the mothers' milk in the genus mammalian! And such a withered, rickety, malign little changeling too! She shall fling it into the river, by all that is holy!" cried my father; and, suiting the action to the word, away went the spectacles he had been rubbing indignantly for the last three minutes, into the pond. "Papæ!" faltered my father aghast, while the Ceprinidæ, mistaking the dip of the spectacles for an invitation to dinner, came scudding up

to the bank. "It is all your fault," said Mr Caxton, recovering himself. "Get me the new tortoise-shell spectacles and a large slice of bread. You see that when fish are reduced to a pond they recognise a benefactor, which they never do when rising at flies, or groping for worms, in the waste world of a river. Hem! – a hint for the Ulverstones. Besides the bread and the spectacles, just look out and bring me the old black-letter copy of St Anthony's *Sermon to Fishes*."

CHAPTER CVIII

Some weeks now have passed since my return to the Tower: the Castletons are gone, and all Trevanion's gay guests. And since these departures, visits between the two houses have been interchanged often, and the bonds of intimacy are growing close. Twice has my father held long conversations apart with Lady Ulverstone, (my mother is not foolish enough to feel a pang now at such confidences,) and the result has become apparent. Lady Ulverstone has ceased all talk against the world and the public – ceased to fret the galled pride of her husband with irritating sympathy. She has made herself the true partner of his present occupations, as she was of those in the past; she takes interest in farming, and gardens, and flowers, and those philosophical peaches which come from trees academical that Sir William Temple reared in his graceful retirement. She does more – she sits by her husband's side in the library, reads the books he reads, or, if in Latin, coaxes him, into construing them. Insensibly she leads him into studies farther and farther remote from Blue Books and Hansard; and, taking my father's hint,

"Allures to brighter worlds, and leads the way."

They are inseparable. Darby-and-Joan-like, you see them together in the library, the garden, or the homely little pony-phaeton, for which Lord Ulverstone has resigned the fast-trotting

cob, once identified with the eager looks of the busy Trevanion. It is most touching, most beautiful! And to think what a victory over herself the proud woman must have obtained! – never a thought that seems to murmur, never a word to recall the ambitious man back from the philosophy into which his active mind flies for refuge. And with the effort her brow has become so serene! That careworn expression, which her fine features once wore, is fast vanishing. And what affects me most, is to think that this change (which is already settling into happiness) has been wrought by Austin's counsels and appeals to her sense and affection. "It is to you," he said, "that Trevanion must look for more than comfort – for cheerfulness and satisfaction. Your child is gone from you – the world ebbs away – you two should be all in all to each other. Be so." Thus, after paths so devious, meet those who had parted in youth, now on the verge of age. There, in the same scenes where Austin and Ellinor had first formed acquaintance, he aiding her to soothe the wounds inflicted by the ambition that had separated their lots, and both taking counsel to insure the happiness of the rival she had preferred.

After all this vexed public life of toil, and care, and ambition, – to see Trevanion and Ellinor drawing closer and closer to each other, knowing private life and its charms for the first time, – verily it would have been a theme for an elegiast like Tibullus.

But all this while a younger love, with no blurred leaves to erase from the chronicle, has been keeping sweet account of the summer time. "Very near are two hearts that have no guile

between them," saith a proverb, traced back to Confucius. O ye days of still sunshine, reflected back from ourselves – O ye haunts, endeared evermore by a look, tone, or smile, or rapt silence, when more and more with each hour, unfolded before me that nature, so tenderly coy, so cheerful though serious, so attuned by simple cares to affection, yet so filled, from soft musings and solitude, with a poetry that gave grace to duties the homeliest; – setting life's trite things to music. Here nature and fortune concurred alike: equal in birth and pretensions – similar in tastes and in objects, – loving the healthful activity of purpose, but content to find it around us – neither envying the wealthy, nor vying with the great; each framed by temper to look on the bright side of life, and find founts of delight, and green spots fresh with verdure, where eyes but accustomed to cities could see but the sands and the mirage. While afar (as man's duty) I had gone through the travail that, in wrestling with fortune, gives pause to the heart to recover its losses, and know the value of love, in its graver sense of life's earnest realities; heaven had reared, at the thresholds of home, the young tree that should cover the roof with its blossoms, and embalm with its fragrance the daily air of my being.

It had been the joint prayer of those kind ones I left, that such might be my reward; and each had contributed, in his or her several way, to fit that fair life for the ornament and joy of the one that now asked to guard and to cherish it. From Roland came that deep, earnest honour – a man's in its strength, and a woman's

in its delicate sense of refinement. From Roland, that quick taste for all things noble in poetry, and lovely in nature – the eye that sparkled to read how Bayard stood alone at the bridge, and saved an army – or wept over the page that told how the dying Sidney put the bowl from his burning lips. Is that too masculine a spirit for some? Let each please himself. Give me the woman who can echo all thoughts that are noblest in man! And that eye, too – like Roland's, – could pause to note each finer mesh in the wonderful webwork of beauty. No landscape to her was the same yesterday and to-day, – a deeper shade from the skies could change the face of the moors – the springing up of fresh wild flowers, the very song of some bird unheard before, lent variety to the broad rugged heath. Is that too simple a source of pleasure for some to prize? Be it so to those who need the keen stimulants that cities afford. But if we were to pass all our hours in those scenes, it was something to have the tastes which own no monotony in Nature.

All this came from Roland; and to this, with thoughtful wisdom, my father had added enough knowledge from books to make those tastes more attractive, and to lend to impulsive perception of beauty and goodness the culture that draws finer essence from beauty, and expands the Good into the Better by heightening the site of the survey: hers, knowledge enough to sympathise with intellectual pursuits, not enough to dispute on man's province – Opinion. Still, whether in nature or in lore, still

"The fairest garden in her looks,

And in her mind the choicest books!"

And yet, thou wise Austin – and thou Roland, poet that never wrote a verse, – yet your work had been incomplete, but then Woman stept in, and the mother gave to her she designed for a daughter the last finish of meek everyday charities – the mild household virtues, – "the soft word that turneth away wrath," – the angelic pity for man's rougher faults – the patience that bideth its time – and, exacting no "rights of woman," subjugates us, delighted, to the invisible thrall.

Dost thou remember, my Blanche, that soft summer evening when the vows our eyes had long interchanged stole at last from the lip? Wife mine! come to my side, – look over me while I write; there, thy tears – (happy tears, are they not, Blanche?) – have blotted the page! Shall we tell the world more? Right, my Blanche, no words should profane the place where those tears have fallen!

And here I would fain conclude; but alas, and alas! that I cannot associate with our hopes, on this side the grave, him who, we fondly hoped, (even on the bridal-day, that gave his sister to my arms,) would come to the hearth where his place now stood vacant, contented with glory, and fitted at last for the tranquil happiness, which long years of repentance and trial had deserved.

Within the first year of my marriage, and shortly after a gallant share in a desperate action, which had covered his name with new honours, just when we were most elated, in the blinded vanity of

human pride – came the fatal news! The brief career was run. He died, as I knew he would have prayed to die, at the close of a day ever memorable in the annals of that marvellous empire, which valour without parallel has annexed to the Throne of the Isles. He died in the arms of Victory, and his last smile met the eyes of the noble chief who, even in that hour, could pause from the tide of triumph by the victim it had cast on its bloody shore. "One favour," faltered the dying man; "I have a father at home – he too is a soldier. In my tent is my will: it gives all I have to him – he can take it without shame. That is not enough! Write to him – you – with your own hand, and tell him how his son fell!" And the hero fulfilled the prayer, and that letter is dearer to Roland than all the long roll of the ancestral dead! Nature has reclaimed her rights, and the forefathers recede before the son.

In a side chapel of the old Gothic church, amidst the mouldering tombs of those who fought at Acre and Agincourt, a fresh tablet records the death of Herbert de Caxton, with the simple inscription —

HE FELL ON THE FIELD:

HIS COUNTRY MOURNED HIM,

AND HIS FATHER IS RESIGNED

Years have rolled away since that tablet was placed there, and changes have passed on that nook of earth which bounds our little world: fair chambers have sprung up amidst the desolate ruins; far and near, smiling corn-fields replace the bleak, dreary moors. The land supports more retainers than ever thronged to the pennon of its barons of old; and Roland can look from his tower over domains that are reclaimed, year by year, from the waste, till the ploughshare shall win a lordship more opulent than those feudal chiefs ever held by the tenure of the sword. And the hospitable mirth that had fled from the ruin has been renewed in the hall; and rich and poor, great and lowly, have welcomed the rise of an ancient house from the dust of decay. All those dreams of Roland's youth are fulfilled; but they do not gladden his heart as does the thought that his son, at the last, was worthy of his line, and the hope that no gulf shall yawn between the two when the Grand Circle is rounded, and man's past and man's

future meet where Time disappears. Never was that lost one forgotten! – never was his name breathed but tears rushed to the eyes; and, each morning, the peasant going to his labour might see Roland steal down the dell to the deep-set door of the chapel. None presume there to follow his steps, or intrude on his solemn thoughts; for there, in sight of that tablet, are his orisons made, and the remembrance of the dead forms a part of the commune with heaven. But the old man's step is still firm, and his brow still erect; and you may see in his face that it was no hollow boast which proclaimed that the "father was resigned: " and ye, who doubt if too Roman a hardness might not be found in that Christian resignation, think what it is to have feared for a son the life of shame, and ask, then, if the sharpest grief to a father is in a son's death of honour.

Years have passed, and two fair daughters play at the knees of Blanche or creep round the footstool of Austin, waiting patiently for the expected kiss when he looks up from the Great Book, now drawing fast to its close; or, if Roland enter the room, forget all their sober demureness, and, unawed by the terrible "Papæ!" run clamorous for the promised swing in the orchard, or the fiftieth recital of "Chevy Chase."

For my part, I take the goods the gods provide me, and am contented with girls that have the eyes of their mother; but Roland, ungrateful man, begins to grumble that we are so neglectful of the rights of heirs-male. He is in doubt whether to lay the fault on Mr Squills or on us: I am not sure that he does not

think it a conspiracy of all three to settle the representation of the martial De Caxtons on "the spindle side." Whosoever be the right person to blame, an omission so fatal to the straight line in the pedigree is rectified at last; and Mrs Primmins again rushes, or rather rolls – in the movement natural to forms globular and spheral – into my father's room with —

"Sir, sir – it is a boy!"

Whether my father asked also this time that question so puzzling to metaphysical inquirers, "What is a boy?" I know not; I rather suspect he had not leisure for so abstract a question: for the whole household burst on him, and my mother, in that storm peculiar to the elements of the Mind Feminine – a sort of sunshiny storm between laughter and crying – whirled him off to behold the *Neogilos*.

Now, some months after that date, on a winter's evening, we were all assembled in the hall, which was still our usual apartment, since its size permitted to each his own segregated and peculiar employment. A large screen fenced off from interruption my father's erudite settlement; and quite out of sight, behind that impermeable barrier, he was now calmly winding up that eloquent peroration which will astonish the world whenever, by Heaven's special mercy, the printer's devils have done with "The History of Human Error." In another nook my uncle had ensconced himself – stirring his coffee, (in the cup my mother had presented to him so many years ago, and which had miraculously escaped all the ills the race of crockery is heir to,)

a volume of *Ivanhoe* in the other hand: and, despite the charm of the Northern Wizard, his eye *not* on the page. On the wall behind him, hangs the picture of Sir Herbert de Caxton, the soldier-comrade of Sidney and Drake; and, at the foot of the picture, Roland has slung his son's sword beside the letter that spoke of his death, which is framed and glazed: sword and letter had become as the last, nor least honoured, Penates of the hall: – the son was grown an ancestor.

Not far from my uncle sat Mr Squills, employed in mapping out phrenological divisions on a cast he had made from the skull of one of the Australian aborigines – a ghastly present which (in compliance with a yearly letter to that effect) I had brought him over, together with a stuffed "wombat" and a large bundle of sarsaparilla. (For the satisfaction of his patients, I may observe, parenthetically, that the skull and the "wombat" – that last is a creature between a miniature pig and a very small badger – were not precisely packed up with the sarsaparilla!) Farther on stood open, but idle, the new pianoforte, at which, before my father had given his preparatory hem, and sat down to the Great Book, Blanche and my mother had been trying hard to teach me to bear the third in the glee of "The Chough and Crow to roost have gone," – vain task, in spite of all flattering assurances that I have a very fine "bass," if I could but manage to humour it. Fortunately for the ears of the audience, that attempt is now abandoned. My mother is hard at work on her tapestry – the last pattern in fashion – to wit, a rosy-cheeked young troubadour playing the lute under

a salmon-coloured balcony: the two little girls look gravely on, prematurely in love, I suspect, with the troubadour; and Blanche and I have stolen away into a corner, which, by some strange delusion, we consider out of sight, and in that corner is the cradle of the *Neogilos*. Indeed it is not our fault that it is there – Roland would have it so; and the baby is so good, too, he never cries – at least so say Blanche and my mother: at all events he does not cry to-night. And indeed, that child is a wonder! He seems to know and respond to what was uppermost at our hearts when he was born; and yet more, when Roland (contrary, I dare say, to all custom) permitted neither mother, nor nurse, nor creature of womankind, to hold him at the baptismal font, but bent over the new Christian his own dark, high-featured face, reminding one of the eagle that hid the infant in its nest, and watched over it with wings that had battled with the storm: and from that moment the child, who took the name of Herbert, seemed to recognise Roland better than his nurse, or even mother – seemed to know that, in giving him that name, we sought to give Roland his son once more! Never did the old man come near the infant but it smiled and crowed, and stretched out its little arms; and then the mother and I would press each other's hands secretly, and were not jealous. Well, then, Blanche and Pisistratus were seated near the cradle, and talking in low whispers, when my father pushed aside the screen and said —

"There – the work is done! and now it may go to press as soon as you will."

Congratulations poured in – my father bore them with his usual equanimity; and standing on the hearth, his hand in his waistcoat, he said musingly, "Among the last delusions of Human Error, I have had to notice Rousseau's phantasy of Perpetual Peace, and all the like pastoral dreams, which preceded the bloodiest wars that have convulsed the earth for more than a thousand years!"

"And to judge by the newspapers," said I, "the same delusions are renewed again. Benevolent theorists go about, prophesying peace as a positive certainty, deduced from that sibyl-book the ledger; and we are never again to buy cannons, provided only we can exchange cotton for corn."

Mr Squills, (*who, having almost wholly retired from general business, has, from want of something better to do, attended sundry "Demonstrations in the North," since which he has talked much about the march of improvement, the spirit of the age, and* "US *of the nineteenth century."*) – I heartily hope that these benevolent theorists *are* true prophets. I have found, in the course of my professional practice, that men go out of the world quite fast enough, without hacking them into pieces, or blowing them up into the air. War is a great evil.

Blanche, (*passing by Squills, and glancing towards Roland*.) – Hush!

Roland remains silent.

Mr Caxton. – War is a great evil; but evil is admitted by Providence into the agency of creation, physical and moral. The

existence of evil has puzzled wiser heads than ours, Squills. But, no doubt, there is One above who has His reasons for it. The combative bump seems as common to the human skull as the philoprogenitive; if it is in our organisation, be sure it is not there without cause. Neither is it just to man, nor wisely submissive to the Disposer of all events, to suppose that war is wholly and wantonly produced by human crimes and follies – that it conduces *only* to ill, and does not as often arise from the necessities interwoven in the framework of society, and speed the great ends of the human race, conformably with the designs of the Omniscient. Not one great war has ever desolated the earth, but has left behind it seeds that have ripened into blessings incalculable.

Mr Squills, (*with the groan of a dissentient at a "Demonstration."*) – Oh! oh! OH!

Luckless Squills! Little could he have foreseen the shower-bath, or rather *douche*, of erudition that fell splash on his head, as he pulled the spring with that impertinent *Oh! oh!* Down first came the Persian War, with Median myriads disgorging all the rivers they had drunk up in their march through the East – all the arts, all the letters, all the sciences, all the notions of liberty that we inherit from Greece – my father rushed on with them all, sousing Squills with his proofs that, without the Persian War, Greece would never have risen to be the teacher of the world. Before the gasping victim could take breath, down came Hun, Goth, and Vandal, on Italy and Squills.

"What, sir!" cried my father, "don't you see that, from those eruptions on demoralised Rome, came the regeneration of manhood; the re-baptism of earth from the last soils of paganism; and the remote origin of whatever of Christianity yet exists, free from the idolatries with which Rome contaminated the faith?"

Squills held up his hands, and made a splutter. Down came Charlemagne – paladins and all! There my father was grand! What a picture he made of the broken, jarring, savage elements of barbaric society. And the iron hand of the great Frank – settling the nations, and founding existent Europe. Squills was now fast sinking into coma, or stupefaction; but, catching at a straw, as he heard the word "Crusades" he stuttered forth, "Ah! *there* I defy you!"

"Defy me, there!" cries my father; and one would think the ocean was in the shower-bath, it came down with such a rattle. My father scarcely touched on the smaller points in excuse for the Crusades, though he recited very volubly all the humane arts introduced into Europe by that invasion of the East; and showed how it had served civilisation, by the vent it afforded for the rude energies of chivalry – by the element of destruction to feudal tyranny that it introduced – by its use in the emancipation of burghs, and the disrupture of serfdom. But he showed, in colours vivid as if caught from the skies of the East, the great spread of Mahometanism, and the danger it menaced to Christian Europe – and drew up the Godfreys, and Tancreds, and Richards, as a league of the Age and Necessity, against the terrible progress of

the sword and the Koran. "You call them madmen," cried my father, "but the frenzy of nations is the statesmanship of fate! How know you that – but for the terror inspired by the hosts who marched to Jerusalem – how know you that the Crescent had not waved over other realms than those which Roderic lost to the Moor? If Christianity had been less a passion, and the passion had less stirred up all Europe – how know you that the creed of the Arab (which was then, too, a passion) might not have planted its mosques in the forum of Rome, and on the site of Notre Dame? For in the war between creeds – when the creeds are embraced by vast races – think you that the reason of sages can cope with the passion of millions? Enthusiasm must oppose enthusiasm. The crusader fought for the tomb of Christ, but he saved the life of Christendom."

My father paused. Squills was quite passive; he struggled no more – he was drowned.

"So," resumed Mr Caxton, more quietly – "so, if later wars yet perplex us as to the good that the All-wise One draws from their evils, our posterity may read their uses as clearly as we now read the finger of Providence resting on the barrows of Marathon, or guiding Peter the Hermit to the battle-fields of Palestine. Nor, while we admit the evil to the passing generation, can we deny that many of the virtues that make the ornament and vitality of peace sprang up first in the convulsions of war!" Here Squills began to evince faint signs of resuscitation, when my father let fly at him one of those numberless waterworks which his prodigious

memory kept in constant supply. "Hence," said he, "hence not unjustly has it been remarked by a philosopher, shrewd at least in worldly experience – (Squills again closed his eyes, and became exanimate) – 'It is strange to imagine that war, which of all things appears the most savage, should be the passion of the most heroic spirits. But 'tis in war that the knot of fellowship is closest drawn; It is in war that mutual succour is most given – mutual danger run, and common affection most exerted and employed; for heroism and philanthropy are almost one and the same!'"[12]

My father ceased, and mused a little. Squills, if still living, thought it prudent to feign continued extinction.

"Not," said Mr Caxton, resuming – "not but what I hold it our duty never to foster into a passion what we must rather submit to as an awful necessity. You say truly, Mr Squills – war is an evil; and woe to those who, on slight pretences, open the gates of Janus,

– 'The dire abode,
And the fierce issues of the furious god.'"

Mr Squills, after a long pause, (employed in some of the more handy means for the reanimation of submerged bodies, supporting himself close to the fire in a semi-erect posture, with gentle friction, self-applied, to each several limb, and copious recourse to certain steaming stimulants which my compassionate hands prepared for him,) stretches himself, and says feebly, "In

[12] Shaftesbury.

short, then, not to provoke further discussion, you would go to war in defence of your country. Stop, sir – stop, for God's sake! I agree with you – I agree with you! But, fortunately, there is little chance now that any new Boney will build boats at Boulogne to invade us."

Mr Caxton. – I am not so sure of that, Mr Squills. (*Squills falls back with a glassy stare of deprecating horror.*) I don't read the newspapers very often, but the past helps me to judge of the present.

Therewith my father earnestly recommended to Mr Squills the careful perusal of certain passages in Thucydides, just previous to the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War, (*Squills hastily nodded the most servile acquiescence*,) and drew an ingenious parallel between the signs and symptoms foreboding that outbreak, and the very apprehension of coming war which was evinced by the recent *Io pæans* to peace. And, after sundry notable and shrewd remarks, tending to show where elements for war were already ripening, amidst clashing opinions and disorganised states, he wound up with saying, – "So that, all things considered, I think we had better just keep up enough of the bellicose spirit, not to think it a sin if we are called upon to fight for our pestles and mortars, our three per cents, goods, chattels, and liberties. Such a time must come, sooner or later, even though the whole world were spinning cotton, and printing sprigged calicoes. *We* may not see it, Squills, but that young gentleman in the cradle, whom you have lately brought into light, may."

"And if so," said my uncle abruptly, speaking for the first time – "if indeed it is for altar and hearth!"

My father suddenly drew in and pished a little, for he saw that he was caught in the web of his own eloquence.

Then Roland took down from the wall his son's sword. Stealing to the cradle, he laid it in its sheath by the infant's side, and glanced from my father to us with a beseeching eye. Instinctively Blanche bent over the cradle, as if to protect the *Neogilos*; but the child, waking, turned from her, and, attracted by the glitter of the hilt, laid one hand lustily thereon, and pointed with the other, laughingly, to Roland.

"Only on my father's proviso," said I hesitatingly. "For hearth and altar – nothing less!"

"And even in that case," said my father, "add the shield to the sword!" and on the other side of the infant he placed Roland's well-worn Bible, blistered in many a page with secret tears.

There we all stood, grouping round the young centre of so many hopes and fears – in peace or in war, born alike for the Battle of Life. And he, unconscious of all that made our lips silent, and our eyes dim, had already left that bright bauble of the sword, and thrown both arms round Roland's bended neck.

"*Herbert*," murmured Roland; and Blanche gently drew away the sword, – and left the Bible.

LYNMOUTH REVISITED

BY THE SKETCHER

Nearly sixteen years ago, there appeared in the pages of Maga, descriptions of the scenery of Lynmouth, North Devon. As Sketcher, I then proposed to myself to analyse the impressions which landscape scenery makes upon the minds of artists and lovers of nature, and to show that there must be in the artist a higher aim than imitation; and that the pleasure of the unpractising admirer will be in proportion to his power of extracting from the insensitive matter of nature, the poetic life of thought; to rescue both art and nature from the degradation they suffer when disconnected with the higher senses; to show that nature, to be the worthy object of art, should be suggestive. Its charm is to elicit, to draw out finely, and to embellish what is already, in a ruder state, in the mind. If there be poverty within, there is no room for the reception of the riches so profusely surrounding us in the external world. Neither artists nor amateurs are generally sufficiently aware, that a previous education is necessary to make sketching effective and expressive. We find *ourselves* everywhere. Whatever be the scenery, the sketcher brings little back that he does not take with him. Hence the

diversity in the character of sketches – of different sketchers – and the one character that pervades the portfolio of each. I have heard of an artist who visited our lakes, and brought back with him only cottages! Morland would have added, or rather made the principal, the stye and pigs; and even Gainsborough's sketch-book may have shown little more than ragged pollards, and groups of rustic children. To know what is in nature, you must know what is in yourself. If you are ignorant of art, your sketches can only be accidentally good. It is possible to be a very close observer, even of minute beauties, and yet be a very bad sketcher. One of an original genius will convert, and, by a bold dissimilitude in non-essentials, incorporate into his own previous conceptions whatever is before him; and thus, by preserving the great suggestive characteristics, represent nature with a far greater truth, exhibiting her very life and feeling, than they who aim at truth through exact and minute imitation.

Let this be exemplified in Salvator Rosa. Do his wild scenes of rock, and rugged rock-engendered trees, exist to the general eye, exactly in their form, and colour, and composition, as he has represented them? The exact sketcher would have found a less correspondence in branches and foliage – a less marked living feeling between the rocks and trees; he would have found much in the colouring, especially in the green leaves, where they are so few and scattered, of an inconsistent gaiety. These would have been distracting; but his educated eye, toned by a one bold feeling, rejected these, and seized the wilder characteristic, to

which he resolutely, under the impulse of his genius, made all the rest subservient and suggestive. He embodied what he saw with what he felt, and marred not the savage freedom by attractive littlenesses, but gave it full play; and with an execution as bold and free, which the minute critic would pronounce not natural, though most natural, as most expressive of that spontaneous out-flung unconstrained-ness of nature's growth, which really pervades all, he harmoniously brought all the parts under the dominion of one poetic feeling. Take his foliage, even in form – to say nothing of its actual unnaturalness of colour in the exact sense – there is a raggedness, as torn and storm-beaten, in the individual leafage, which the untutored sketcher will in vain look for in his beat; but all this stamps one great truth, and that speaks more of nature than many small ones. I do not mean here to give the palm to Salvator Rosa, as if he were "Lord of Landscape;" I mention him as a strong example, as the boldest deviator from that which the unpoetic eye sees, and minds totally uncharmed by poetry can conceive. I think it well here to lay some stress upon these preliminary remarks, because much has been written, with a great fascination of language, recommending, as I believe too strongly, a close observation in detail of the phenomena of nature; overlooking the great phenomenon – the accordance of external nature with the heart, feelings, and very life and soul of man. One writer in particular, with great ability, and audacious confidence, because in his blindness he, uneducated to it, sees not in nature what such great men as Salvator Rosa and Gaspar

Poussin, have extracted from it, and yet made it nature's and their own, flings upon their established fame the *brutum fulmen* of his contempt and abuse. *Damnat quod non intelligit.* He knows not the true principles of art which exist to perfection in their works, nor knows how strictly these principles belong to art and nature only through and by their connexion with the mind of man. You may study meteorology in the *Penny Magazine*, or geology and botany, most scientifically; but it will further you a very little way, while your portfolio is under your arm, and your eye in search of a picturesque which you have not learned to find. Nay, it may happen, for it often does happen, that the more you sketch the farther you are from art. It is possible, also, for the most accomplished artist to sketch too much; and to stay the power of his invention, by referring too constantly to the preciseness and individuality of scenery. He dares not so much trust his palette as his portfolio, as it were his register of nature, to which he has bound himself beyond the usual apprenticeship.

It has been remarked by sketchers, amateurs, and artists by profession, that, upon a sketching expedition, "their hands are not in" for some days. I doubt if the fault be so much in the hand as in the eye; for in most cases the hand had come from the immediate practice of the studio: but the eye is distracted by the many beauties which now force themselves into observation, and which in the home-practice, and in following the mind's bent on the canvass, the memory did not vividly present as not wanted. It is more difficult, therefore, at first to generalise, to escape

the fascinations of local form and colour, which keep the eye from the instant acknowledgment of a whole. We are thus at first apt to begin with the detail, instead of leaving it to the last, by which means we have more than we want, or less accurately and accommodatingly what is wanted. When we have learned again to reject, and to see, we are surprised with a facility we at first despaired of. We do, then, because we know what to do.

I would recommend therefore, before setting out on such expeditions, where it be practicable, to visit daily, and all day, during a week or fortnight, the best galleries of pictures, such as contain all schools, that as much as possible there may be no bias, but such as every one must find in himself before he reaches the gallery. I would do this to confirm, and fasten upon the memory, the principles of art, – breadth, greatness, truth, expression, colouring, sentiment, and how obtained. Here will be a grammar without its drudgery; for every lesson will be a delight, if we go to it with no conceited opinions of our own, and no cavilling spirit bringing ourselves down to an admission that these great men of former days had some foundation upon which they built their fame, their acknowledged fame – so searching, we shall see the reasons of their doings – why they, each for their own purpose, adopted this or that style of colour, or of composition, or chiaroscuro. Going then immediately to nature from art, we shall see how very true art is – a secret that, without this immediate comparison, would be very apt to be hidden from us. No man in his senses would begin a science from his own

observation alone. It was not the first shepherd who, studying the stars, laid open the study of astronomy. We shall learn nothing by despising all that has been learnt before we were born. So it is in art; some principles have been established, which it is well to know thoroughly; and, the more we know them, the more enthusiastic will be our admiration, the love of art through nature, and of nature through art.

During my former visits to the beautiful scenery of Lynmouth, I had seldom taken any whole view, but chiefly studied parts for use in the detail of compositions; and this I think to be a good practice for the landscape painter, which term I use here in contradistinction to the painter of views, there is so great a pleasure in as it were creating – in being the ποιητης, the maker – that, to one accustomed to and at all skilled in composing, it becomes an irksome task to make a "view." The continued habit of view-painting must necessarily check invention, and limit unworthily the painter's aim. In revisiting Lynmouth, I changed my purpose and this, not under the idea of making pictures of any of the sketches, but for the practice of noting how a picture, framed in from nature, as if it were a work of art, would be brought to its completion; for sketching, with such an object, I cannot but think of as great importance as the other method. We must learn from nature to make a whole, as well as the use of the parts separately. With this purpose the sketcher will look out for subjects, not detail; he will be curious to see how nature composes now, and when it is that scenes are most agreeable –

made so by what combination of lines, by what agreement of colours, by what proportions of light, and gradations of shadow: for he will often find, when nature looks her best, that light and shade are employed as substitutes for lines which, in the actual and true drawing of them, would be unfortunate. How often is it that a scene strikes the eye at once for its great beauty, that, when we come to it again, seems entirely to have lost its charm! Now these spots should be visited again and again, till the causes be ascertained of the charm and of the deterioration: for here must lie the principles of art, nature assuming and putting off that which is most agreeable to us, that in which our human sympathies are engaged. Sketchers often pass hastily these spots that are no longer beautiful; but they are wrong, for they can learn best, by accurate observation of the changes presented to them. And they will thus learn to remedy deficiencies, and acquire a better power of selecting scenes, by knowing where the deficiencies lie; the mind's eye will not dwell upon them, or will fill them up, and the composition show itself to them in a manner quite otherwise than it would have appeared, had no such previous observations been made. There are sometimes good lines marred by bad effects, and bad lines remedied by skilful management of effects – of light and shadow. It must be a practised eye that can properly abstract and separate lines from effects, and effects from lines. We play with colour, but our serious business is with light and shade; the real picture is more frequently in black and white, than those who addict themselves

to colour will credit. I will here but refer to some passages in the early numbers of *The Sketcher*, on the composition of lines, wherein I showed, and I believe truly explained, the principle of composition upon which many of the old masters worked. And I particularly exemplified the principle in the pictures of Gaspar Poussin, whom Thompson calls learned Poussin, (unless he meant Nicolo, who, though in other respects he may with equal justice be called learned, is, in this art of the composition of lines, in no way to be compared with his brother-in-law.) I showed that there was one simple rule which he invariably adopted. We may likewise go to nature, and find the rule there, when nature, as a composition, looks her best.

I think it will be found that any scene is most pleasing when its variety is in the smallest portion – that is, when the greatest part of the picture is made up of the most simple and pervading lines, and the intricacies, all variety, and alternations, and interchanges of lines and parts, shall be confined to a very small portion; for thus a greatness, a largeness, an importance, is preserved and heightened, and at the same time, monotony is avoided – though there be much in it, the piece is not crowded. There is a print from a picture by Smith of Chichester, who, by the bye, obtained the prize, against Richard Wilson, which attracted my attention the other day at a print-seller's window. It was meant, I presume, as an imitation of Claude, Claude reduced to the then English vulgarity. If multiplicity of parts would make a picture, doubtless Richard Wilson, with his simple, sweeping, free lines, could have

no chance in competition with such a painter. Every niche was crowded – and equally so – every niche might have made a picture, such as it was, but all the niches made none, or a bad one. Why, the variety was universal; it should have been confined to the smaller space. The picture is objectionable in other points of view; but this ignorance of the very nature of composition was fatal. Yet this work was evidently an imitation of Claude, whose variety, however, of distance, the modern imitator brought into his very foreground. He could not see the simplicity of Claude. Not that Claude himself was a learned composer; his lines are often incongruous, and there is not unfrequently a poverty of design, scarcely concealed by the magic of his colouring. Now, I find, in looking over my sketches, that I had selected those scenes where the passages of variety lay in the distance, and, it being a narrow valley, they occupied but a small space; but, though small, it was mostly the place of interest – there was the more vivid light or the deeper shade, the change, the life of the picture, and the embellished way of escape out of a defile, that from its closeness would have been otherwise painful. In saying "painful," I seem to point to a defect in this Lynmouth valley. Indeed, it will not suit those who do not love close scenery. That certainly is its character. Yet is it not so close, but that there is room for this kind of variety. I think what I have said upon this point, of interest and variety lying in the smaller portion of the canvass – for I here speak even of nature as a picture – may be applicable generally to light. I imagine those scenes will be found

most pleasing, where the light is by far the smallest portion, the half-tone by far the larger, and the dark but to show the power of both. Take, for instance, a garden scene – a broad walk, trees on each side – all is in broad light, but all is in painful glare, monotony, and sameness of endless detail. Let a shadow pass over it, a broad shadow – or rather a half-tone of light, that shall only show the local colour subdued – how, let a gleam pass across it, and just touch here and there the leafage, and seem to escape behind it – how small is the light, but it has given life to the picture. I cannot but think it a fault of our day that half-tone is neglected; light is made a glare, and therefore the very object of light is lost. I believe it was the aim at a mere novelty that first introduced this false principle. It was recommended to Guido, but he failed in it: pictures so painted by him are far from being his best. Rubens erred in it; but modern artists have carried the false principle to the utmost limit; and, in doing so, are liable to a palpable incongruity; an impossibility in nature, which they profess to imitate. For it is the property of light to take away colour; yet in this school, the whitest light, and the most vivid colours, are in the same piece. The old painters, aware of this property of light, in their out-of-door scenes, avoid, not to say a white, but even a light sky – especially the Venetian – so that their great depth and power of colour was rendered natural, by the depth of their skies. Their blues were dark – intensely so – but they were sustained by the general colour. If it be said the Italian skies are notoriously the bluest, Mr Ruskin has, in contradiction,

pronounced them to be white, but I believe the fact is, that the great painters considered colour, as a beauty in art, *sui generis*, and that there was no need of a slavish adherence, in this respect, to nature herself. Indeed, they delighted, even when aiming at the richest colouring, to subdue all glare, and to preserve rather a deep half-tone.

I believe they studied nature through coloured glasses; and we learn from Mrs Merrifield that Gaspar Poussin used a black mirror, which had been bequeathed to him by Bamboccio. The works of some of the Flemish painters evidently show that they used such a mirror.

Have I not, then, reached Lynmouth yet? I found it in full leafage, and the little river as clear as amber, and like it in colour. It is always beautiful, and variable too – after rain it assumes more variety of colour, and of great richness. For most part of the time of my visit, it was more shallow than I had ever seen it. I was pleased that it was so, though I heard many complaints on that score. To those who sketch close to the water, it is, in fact, an advantage; for where the scenery is so confined, it is a great thing to be able to reach the large stones in mid-stream, and thus many new views are obtained; and when you are pretty close to water, whether it be a fall, or still, there is really but very little difference whether the river be full or not – the falls still retain sufficient body, and the still pools are sufficiently wide.

There are but two parties who know anything of the painter-scenery of Lynmouth – the sketchers and the anglers. The

common road generally taken by tourists shows not half the beauty of the place. Did Lynmouth appear less beautiful? – certainly not. I easily recognised the chosen spots, and was surprised to find what little change had taken place. I knew individual trees perfectly, and, strange to say, they did not seem to have acquired growth. There were apparently the same branches stretching over the stream.

In one spot where large ledges of rock shoot out in mid-stream, down whose grooves the river rushes precipitously, (I had, sixteen years ago, sketched the scene,) there was growing out of the edge of the rock a young ash-tree shoot – to my surprise, there it was still, or the old had decayed, and a similar had sprang up. There is something remarkable in this continued identity, year after year, as if the law of mutability had been suspended. Yet there were changes. I remember sketching by a little fall of the river, where further progress was staid by a large mass of projecting rock. I felt sure there must be fine subjects beyond, and in my attempt to reach it from the opposite side by climbing, and holding by the boughs of a tree, one broke off, and I fell into the cauldron. I found now that the whole mass of this ledge of rock had given way, and opened a passage, and one of no great difficulty. Here, as I suspected, were some very fine studies. The place where I descended is about half a mile, or less, from Lynmouth, where the road turns, near to a little bridge across a watercourse intercepting the road. The view of this little fall from above is singularly beautiful; and, being so

much elevated, you see the bed of the river continuous for a long distance, greatly varied. I know no place where there are such fine studies of this kind, though they are rarely taken, being only parts for composition – the whole not making a view.

Was Lynmouth, then, to me as it was? – not quite. The interval of years had not, I trust, been lost. If there was little change in the place, there was a change in the mind's eye and head of the sketcher. Though I recognised nearly all the spots where I had sketched, I found many new – some that might have escaped me, because I had not taken the feeling with me, at least not in the degree, in which I now possessed it. During all the years that had intervened, I had scarcely painted a single view. I could not but observe that the new scenes were those more especially suggestive, leading to the ideal.

A friend who was part of the time with me observed that he had thought some of my pictures, which he had seen, compositions without the warranty of nature; but he now saw that nature supplied me with what I wanted, and acknowledged that the sketches were correct. It was then I observed that the sketcher may find almost everywhere what he has learnt to look for. The fact is, that it is not whole and large scenery, nor the most beautiful, that best suits the painter, but those parts which he can combine. The real painter looks to nature for form and colour, the elements of his art: upon these he must work; and they seldom reach any great magnitude, or are diffused over large space.

Why is it, that generally what we term beautiful scenery was

seldom the ground of the old painters? They were not, generally speaking, painters of views; and why not? There the pictures were made for them. They, and all the world had the thing before them to love and to admire – it was already done; there was no room for their genius, which is a creative, not an imitative faculty. The scene for every eye was not theirs. They found that, by their art, they could take nature's best feeling, even from her fragments. It requires not an Alp to portray grandeur. Fifty feet of rock, precipitous or superimpending, will better represent the greatness of danger; for it is a more immediate and solid mass to crush the intruder, and the form may frown with a demon malice. The whole awe of darkness may be felt in a cavern of a few feet space. Indeed, it may be almost said that largeness is not to be obtained on the canvass, by the largeness of whole extensive scenes in nature, but by the continuous lines of near masses: whatever is actually largest in nature – the forest and the mountain – in art may with advantage occupy the smallest space. For the best magnitude here is in perspective, and in that aerial tone which, as a veil, half conceals, and thereby makes mysterious, and converts into one azure whole the parts which would, otherwise seen, but break up the great character. The Arabian genii were greatest when dimly seen through smoke and vapour.

Art, indeed, differs from nature in this, as regards the pleasure derived through the eye, that nature allows you many unperspective views at many instant glances, and therefore

surprises you, if I may so express it, with a perspective impossibility, of which the judgment at the time is not cognisant; whereas art is bounded by a rule, looks not all around, and comprehends by mind beyond the eye, but is constrained to frame in the conception. It must, therefore, make to itself another power – and this power it finds in form, in light and shade, and colour, all which are in greater intensity and force in the fragmentary parts than in the whole and large scenes. It is a step for the young artist to believe that art and nature are not and should not be the same – that they are essentially different, and use their materials differently, have other rules of space and largeness. If art be more limited, its power is greater by being more condensed, – and its impressions more certain, because more direct, and not under the vague and changeable process of making an idea from many perspectives.

If there be truth in these remarks, we may see why the old masters left untouched those scenes which are the delight of tourists. To copy the scene before them was to put their creative faculty in abeyance. It was only to work after a given pattern – and that pattern imperfect – of a whole which defied the laws of optics. I here speak almost entirely of the Italian masters, both the historical, and more strictly the landscape painters. The Flemish and Dutch schools had mostly another aim, and were more imitative; hence they are more easily understood, but felt with a far less passion. But even these, far from undervaluing the conventional aids of art, applied as much of them as the nature

of their subjects would admit.

But the sketcher must not consider himself in his studies when he is out with his portfolio. However he may select, he must be faithful. And this fidelity I have seen painters of great skill often unwisely contemn, become too conventional, both in their drawing and colouring. It requires much practice of the eye, as well as that knowledge which constitutes taste, to frame in as it were pictures, from the large space that fills the eye. Nothing is more useful than to carry in the portfolio a light frame of stiff paper or wood, and to hold it up, so as actually to frame in pictures, and thus to experimentalise upon the design, and see what shiftings of the frame make the best choice. It is an assistance even to the most practised in composition.

Lynmouth is greatly improved of late years in accommodation; many new lodging-houses are built, and there are some residents who have shown great taste in laying out their grounds, and in their buildings. The little pier has been rendered picturesque, by the erection of a small look-out house after a model from Rhodes. There is not much here at any time that would deserve the name of shipping; but a few fishing boats, and such small craft compose well with the little pier. The evenings are very fine, the sun setting over the Channel; and the Welsh coast in the distance assumes, occasionally, a very beautiful ultramarine blue, like a glaze over warm colouring. When the tide comes in, and the little vessels are afloat, these are good subjects, the water being of a gray green, softening

the reflections. I began a sketch when the boats were aground; but the tide, coming in rapidly, soon so altered the position of the vessels that I did not proceed. When the tide receded, leaving the vessels aground, they were not in the same direction in which I had sketched them; and an artist who was present remarked, that the beauty of the scene as a composition was gone, and referred to the sketch. This led to some discussion, as to the cause – Why should it be less good now, said he, than when you drew it? I believe I saw the reason, and pointed it out. There was a sloop, larger by much than all the rest, which were indeed, though having masts, but boats. The larger vessel was the principal object, even more so than the buildings on the pier, towards which it leaned; and this leaning was important, for a union and certain connexion of parts was everything here, for it made one of many things. Accordingly, the smaller boats on each side the larger vessel inclined their masts towards it; so that this manifest uniting, and the belonging of one to the other, was the pleasing idea, and invested the whole with a kind of life and sensitiveness; but in the alteration, after the receding of the tide, this communication of the one with the other was gone, and, on the contrary, there was left an uncomfortable feeling of disunion.

This reasoning was admitted, and we further discussed the principle involved in the remarks, as applicable to all scenes and subjects. It is this correspondence of part with part which animates the works of nature, invests them with an ideal sensitiveness; and through this fond belief of their life, our own

sensitiveness is awakened to a sympathy with them. Whatever inanimate objects we in our fancy invest with life, through our own sympathy, we clothe with a kind of humanity; and thus we look on trees and rocks, and water, as to a degree our fellow creatures, in this great wild world. We love accordingly. *Nihil humanum a me alienum puto.* The very winds speak to us as human voices, as do the trees in their whisperings or complainings; and the waters are ever repeating their histories and their romances to our willing ears. As we walked we tested the principle, and were believers in its truth. "Mark," said our friend, "that bank of fern – how graceful, how charming, is their bending, their interchange, their masses and their hollow shades, their little home-depths, wherein they grow, and retire as their home-chambers: there is throughout the pleasing idea of a family enjoying their quiet existence, and all in one small green world of their own." He enjoys nature most worthily, and most intensely, who carries with him this sense of nature's life, and of a mutuality, a co-partnership with the blessings of existence with himself. There are some fine rocks at the base of the precipitous cliffs – of fine form and colour; I never went sufficiently near to sketch them, having no fancy to be caught by the tide. I have seen sketches made amongst them that prove them to afford very good subjects. Many years ago, while sitting under these cliffs, I heard a groan; I thought at the time it must have been a delusion, but on that evening a man had fallen over the cliffs. His body was, I think, found the next day. It fell from Countesbury Hill, the road

on which is certainly not sufficiently protected. And this reminds me to speak of an alarming occurrence on the road, about half a mile from Lynmouth. We were a small party, and had taken shelter from rain against the receding part of the rocks cut for the widening the road. I and another were reading a newspaper. Looking up, we suddenly saw a woman on horseback very near us. The animal started, and was frightened at the newspaper. Our endeavour to conceal it made the matter worse; the horse retreated from us, and I think his hind legs could not have been many inches from the precipice. It was a trying moment; one step more back would have been certain death to both the woman and the horse. We were truly happy when, by a little management, we contrived to get them past us. The road, too, is in these dangerous places very narrow; yet the people venture to drive at a good pace, and without reins, their uncouth and apparently unmanageable teams – neither quite dray nor cart – fearlessly. It is surprising that accidents do not often occur, especially as there is some danger from the falling of masses of stone from above; and even such as the sheep remove with their feet may frighten horses, and precipitate all to sure destruction. There are great rents in huge masses of rock, close to the road, and some apparently are kept firm with but little earth, and seem to threaten a move. I have had some blows on the back occasionally from small stones, cast down by passing sheep, while I have been sketching down by the water; and once so large a one took the corner of my portfolio, that with my best speed I quitted the place. That was some years

ago; but I have recently seen not very small fragments fall very near me. I would, therefore, caution the sketcher to choose as safe a position as he can, which he may generally find under some projection of rock. Some of the masses in the bed of the river are of enormous size; and let me here remark upon the fine, bold character these masses in the river possess – they are very fine in form, and the beauty and variety in their colouring are quite wondrous. Some are very dark, entirely covered with brown, and some with, bright golden moss. But most of them when dry are gray – but one name will not describe that gray, varying as it does from the blue to the green and pink hues. They are commonly in bold relief against the dark water – yet themselves show dark, edged by the white foam, where the water, sloping insinuatingly, falls and rushes by them. Here and there, in some deep-shaded, wild, lonely places, they are of gigantic size, and look like huge Titans turned to stone, amid the fragments that had hurled them down. The sketcher may easily imagine himself in the territory of magic. Shall I confess that, in such places, I do not like to sketch alone? And why not? Why should there be a something like a superstitious awe of the spot, the "*severi religio loci*?"

Doubtless it is because we do feel contradicting knowledge, in this consciousness of all nature in its own life and power. Nor can we divest ourselves of a kind of natural poetry – a feeling that the rocks, the wild trees, and the somewhere though unseen "*genius loci*" all look at us, and we fancy ourselves but under sufferance, and know not how long our presence may be endured.

It is surprising how a sense of such presences possesses us when alone. I could often have fancied voices, and mocking ones too, in the waters, and threats that thundered in the ear, and went off as if to fetch and bring whole cataracts down upon me. In such places I do not like to be caught by the dusk of the evening, being quite alone.

The fact is, nature, to a real lover and sketcher, is at all times powerful. Scenes affect him as they affect no other. I have often surprised people by the assertion that I could not live in the midst of fine scenery; it is too powerful, it unnerves one with an unrelaxing watchfulness. The presence of the mountain will not be shaken off. It becomes a nightmare upon the spirits, holds communion with the wild winds and storms, and has fearful dealings I would not dream of in the dark, howling, dismal nights. Nor, when the sombre light of a melancholy day just obscures the clouds that have been gathering round it, would I in imagination draw the curtain to behold the unearthly drama.

There is something terrific in the sound of unseen rushing water. When all else is still in the dark night, and you are uncertain of the path, and feel the danger that a false footing may plunge you into an abyss of waters, that seem to cry out and roar for a victim, have you not felt both fear and shame? Recently I experienced this in Lynmouth, having in the darkness lost my way. To the poet and the painter, here is a source of the sublime. Plunge your pencil boldly into this eclipse, and work into it a few dim lights formless and undefined – the obscure will

be of a grand mystery. The night-darkness that settles over fine mountainous scenery does not remove the sense of its presence; as its lakes blacken, they become fabulous, of unknown depths, below which may be infernal "bolge." But I am wandering into strange regions now, and far from Lynmouth, whose scenes, after all, are not of a very severe beauty, unless we will to make it so. It will then answer the demand imagination makes upon it. Many are the scenes of a purely quiescent kind, still and calm, and of gentle repose, where the shallow river shows its amber bed, wherein the gleams rest upon the well-defined ledges beneath, whose gray shadows melt into golden tints; and beyond, in the deeper pools, the green of the trees is reflected greener still, across which here and there is a gray streak, showing the river's silent onward movement; and further on, some dark stones send their brown and purple hues, mirrored and softened down into the green, just dotted here and there with white. Then the trees shoot out lovingly from the bank overhead, and reach and communicate pleasantly with those on the opposite side; and here a bough sends down and just forbears to touch the stream, Narcissus-like, loving its own image. The gray stones in the foreground, half beneath the water, are of a delicate hue, blue intermingling with pale greenish and lakey tints; for there is nothing violent in all this scene of peaceful repose. Very many spots of this kind are there that court the sketcher. Let him wind his way over masses of stone, and roots of trees, beyond these – the scene how changed! The masses of stone are huge, blocking

up, in various positions, the free passage of the river, which chafes and foams between them, throwing off its whiteness into the brown and green water depths. One broad shadow is over the dark stones; and beyond that rise the tops of other masses, gray illuminated; and beyond them, a gleam or two of falling water. Wilder are the trees that shoot out, from rocky fragments near, and lock their branches with those on the other side; while in the hollow space beneath their arching boles, distant and fantastic stems cross the stream. Opposite are huge masses, ledges with precipitous and brown-mossed sides; above which the high rocky bank sends forth large trees, their roots twisting about the rocks and coming out again through the fissures, and met by green weed leafage. The trees are darker than the dun-red ground, but edged with greenish light; and above them the yellow sunlight gleams through, and the dotted blue of sky is just seen; and, as avoiding the light, a huge branch, or limb rather, shoots down, edged with the light on its upper surface, and dark underneath, and throws a scanty defined leafage across over the depth of the river. But this precipitous bank again terminates towards the ledges in fine masses, rocks that project and recede, partially luminous with reflected light, and then falling back into extreme brown and purple darkness, down into which the ivy falls clustering and perpendicular, with innumerable briar-like shoots and tendrils. Here are severer studies. They are to be found by crossing the Lyn by the wooden bridge, not far from Lynmouth, and following the path through the wood some way,

and seeking the bed of the river by a scarcely-discernible sheep-path, till it be lost at the edge of a downward way, not very difficult of descent. Within a very small space, there are fine and very different subjects. One of scarcely less grandeur than the last described, if it had not more beauty blended with it; but it must be seen in the sun's eye – the best time will be about 3 o'clock. Reach a large stone that juts out from the river's side, climb it, and look down the stream. You must sketch rapidly, for the charm will not last – it is most lovely in colour, and the forms are very beautiful. The opposite side of the river may be termed a mountain side, broken into hollows, in which rock and vegetation deepen into shade. The top is covered with trees, very graceful, the sun edges their tops, and rays flow through them, touching with a white and silver light the ivied rock, which is here perpendicular. Beyond this mountain-side, which juts out, is another clothed cliff, terminating at the base in bold and bare rock; beyond this, and high above, shooting into the sky, are piled rocks of a wild and broken character, gray, but dark against the distant mountain range, of an ultramarine haze, over warm and slightly marked downward passages; above is the illumined and illuminating sky. On the side of the river from which this lovely view is seen, are large masses, backed by trees, which shoot across, but high overhead, so that in the sketch the leafage would drop as it were from the sky into the middle of the picture. The river itself is quite accordant in colour, and in the forms and light and shade of the stones, that, though so large, are dwarfed by the

large precipitous rocks perpendicular above them. The course of the stream is away from the eye of the spectator – is in parts darkly transparent and deep – here and there showing the white foam, and in other parts its amber and reddish bed.

A little further back from this point of view is another of the same scene; I am doubtful which would make the best picture. On the very same stone from which I sketched the scene described, turning with my back to the opposite side of the river, I was much struck with the fine forms and solemn light and shade of a rock, that was cavernously hollow at its base, and very near the stream. Above it, and declining into the middle of the picture, the sunlit boles of coppice-trees, rising among the light-green leafage, made the only positive sunlight of the picture: whatever else of light there was, was shade luminous. This rock was united with another across the picture, that thus made a centre and opening for the coppice, dotted with the blue sky; but all that side of the picture was in very dark shadow, being rock perpendicular, through the depth of which light and boldly formed trees rose to the top of the picture, and threw down leafage into the deep shade. The colouring of the cavernous hollow was remarkable: it was dark, yet blending gray, and pink, and green. The scene was of an ideal character; and I doubt if the sketch, though taken with as much truth as I could reach, would be thought to be from nature. The same rocky mass, taken in another direction, supplies a very different but perhaps equally good subject for the pencil. I say these sketches are of an ideal kind. It may be

asked – Are they not true? – are they not in nature? They are; but still for a better use than the pleasure of the imitation a mere sketch offers. These are the kinds of scenes for the painter's invention, into which he is to throw his mind, and to dip his pencil freely into the gloom of his palette, and concentrate depths, and even change the forms, and even to omit much of the decorative detail, and make severity severer. He would give the little trees a wilder life, a more visible power, as if for lack of inhabitant they only were sentient of the scene. If a figure be introduced, they would be kept down, but shoot their branches towards him, for there would be an agreement, a sentient sympathy. But what figure? It is not peaceful enough for a hermit; too solemn for the bandit, such as Salvator would love to introduce; an early saint, perhaps a St Jerome – no unapt place for him and his lion: and somehow it must be contrived to have the water perhaps entering even into the retreat, and reflecting the aged, the hoary bearded saint. Is not then the subject ideal, and the sketch only suggestive? And here let me remark, with regard to that favourite word "finish," – an elaborate finish of *all* the detail, either of objects or colouring, would ruin the sketch; it would lose its suggestive character, which is its value. I have here described, I know how inadequately, several very striking scenes; yet are they scarcely a stone's throw apart. I mention them exclusively on that account, for, where there is so much, it must be the more worth the while of the sketcher to take some pains to find out the spot.

What do we mean by the "ideal" of landscape? The

"naturalists" ask the question in a tone of somewhat more than doubt. The sketcher is apt to be caught in the snare of nature's many beauties, and, growing enamoured of them in detail, to lose the higher sense in his practical imitation. This is a danger he must avoid, by study, by reflection, by poetry. If the "ideal" be in himself, he will find it in nature. If he sees in mountains, woods, and fields but materials for the use of man, and what the toil of man has made them, he may be a good workman in his imitation, but he will be a poor designer. The "ideal" grows out of a reverence, which he can scarcely feel. If the earth be nothing to him but for the plough, and the rivers for the mill, and its only people are the present people – doomed to toil, bearing about them parochial cares, and tasteless necessity, ignorant and regardless of the history of the earth they tread – he may boast of his love of nature; but his love is, in fact, the love of his technical skill, of his imitation. He thinks more of the how to represent, than what the scene may represent. The ideal ranges beyond the present aspect, and he who has a belief in it will reverence this ancient earth, the cradle wherein he and all living things took form from their creation. He will see visions of the past, and dream dreams of its future aspects and destiny; and will learn, in his meditations, to recall the people of old, and imprint its soil with imaginary footsteps. The painter is no true artist if he feel not the greatness of nature's immortality – at least, that as it rose from the creation so will it be, throwing forth its bounty, and beaming with the same vigorous beauty, till it shall pass away as

a scroll. The painter-poet must be of a loving superstition, must acknowledge powers above his own – beings greater between him and the heavens. They may be invisible as angels, yet leave some understanding of their presence. They will voice the woods and the winds, and tell everywhere that all of nature is life. Are there not noble elements here for the landscape painter, and can neither history nor fable supply him with better figures than toil-worn labourers, drovers taking their cattle or sheep to the butchers, and paupers walking the poorhouse? I like not the "naturalist's" poverty of thought. If the art be not twin sister with poetry, her charm is only for the eye. Nothing great ever came from such hands.

> "And deeper faith – intenser fire —
> Fed sculptor's chisel – poet's pen;
> What nobler theme might art require
> Than gods on earth, and godlike men?
> Yea, gods then watched with loving care
> (Or such, at least, the fond belief)
> E'en lifeless things of earth and air —
> The cloud, the stream, the stem, the leaf:
> Iris, a goddess! tinged the flower
> With more than merely rainbow hues;
> Great Jove himself sent down the shower,
> Or freshen'd earth with healing dews!"
>
> *Kenyon's Poems.*

How do such thoughts enhance all nature's beauties! The

sketcher's real work is to see, to feel them all, and to fit them to the mind's poetic thoughts.

I seem to be forgetting that the reader and myself are all this while at the water's edge, and under deep-brow'd rocks; that sunshine has left us, and it is time to climb to the path that leads toward Lynmouth. For such an hour we are on the wrong side of the stream. Now the woods are mapped, and edged only by the sun hastening downward. Yet after awhile we shall not regret that we are in this path. Escaping the closer and shaded wood, we shall reach a more open space, and see the flood of evening's sunlight pouring in. Here it is; my sketch was poor indeed, for there was neither time nor means to do anything like justice to the scene. Here is a narrow, winding rocky path, a little above the river, from whose superimpending bank, trees that now look large shoot across the landscape, and a bold stem or two rises up boldly to meet them; the river stretches to some distance, wooded on this side to the edge, and wooded hills in front, and in perspective. The distant hills are most lovely in colour, pearly and warm gray; the river, the blazing sky reflected, yet showing how rich the tone, by a few yellowish-gray lighter streaks that mark its movement. The fragments of rock in the river are of a pinkish-gray, and, though not dark, yet strongly marked against the golden stream, – the whole scene great in its simplicity of effect and design. In broad day the scene would be passed unnoticed; it would want that simplicity which is its charm, and be a scene of detail; but now the lines are the simplest, and, happily, where the river really

turns, its view is lost in the reflection of the shaded wood. And here, in this smallest portion of the picture, the hills on each side seem to meet and fold, giving the variety in the smallest space, upon which I have made remarks in this paper. This beautiful picture of nature I visited several evenings, and it little varied. But the charm lasts not long – the sun sets, or is behind the wooded hill, before its actual setting, yet leaves its tinge of lake blushing above the gold in the sky – the life of the scene has faded, and it is still and solemn. I cannot better describe the impression it left, than by a quotation from an old play, in which the lover sees his mistress, who had swooned, or was in a deathlike sleep: —

"Antonio

At the first sight I did believe her dead —
Yet in that state so awful she appeared,
That I approached her with as much respect
As if the soul had animated still
That body which, though dead, scarce mortal seemed.
But as the sun from our horizon gone,
His beams do leave a tincture on the skies,
Which shows it was not long since he withdrew;
So in her lovely face there still appeared
Some scattered streaks of those vermilion beams
Which used t'irradiate that bright firmament.
Thus did I find that distressed miracle,

Able to wound a heart, as if alive —
Incapable to cure it, as if dead."

Thus is there sympathy between our hearts and nature – a sympathy, the secret of taste, which, above all, the sketcher should cultivate as the source of his pleasure, and (may it not be added?) of his improvement.

I will not proceed further with description of scenes; Lynmouth will be long remembered. I scarcely know a better spot for the study of close scenery. On reviewing my former impressions with the present, I should not say that Lynmouth has lost, but I have certainly gained some knowledge, and, I think, improved my sympathies with nature; and if I have not enjoyed so enthusiastically as I did sixteen years ago, I have enlarged my sight and extended my power. I am practically a better sketcher. The hand and the eye, work together; the improvement of one advances the other.

I know no better method of sketching than the mixture of transparent and semi-opaque colouring. It best represents the variety and the power of nature; and as it more nearly resembles in its working the practice of oil-painting, so is it the more likely to improve the painter. I have remarked that, even in depth of colour, the semi-opaque is very much more powerful than the transparent, however rich; for the one has, besides its more varied colour, the solidity of nature; whereas the most transparent has ever an unsubstantial look – you see through to the paper or the

canvass. Semi-opaque, (or degrees of opacity, till it borders on the transparent,) as it hides the material, and throws into every part the charm of atmosphere, so it will ever bestow upon the sketch the gift of truth.

I did not begin this paper on Lynmouth Revisited with any intention of entering upon the technicalities of art; so I will refrain from any further remarks tending that way, which leads to far too wide a field for present discussion.

WHAT HAS REVOLUTIONISING GERMANY ATTAINED?

It is now rather more than a year since we asked, "What would revolutionising Germany be at?" A full year has passed over the dreamy, theorising, restless, and excited head of Germany, then confused and staggering, like "a giant drunken with new wine," but loudly vaunting that its strong dose of revolution had strengthened and not fuddled it, and that it was about to work out of its troubled brains a wondrous system of German Unity, which was to bring it infinite and permanent happiness; and now we would once more ask, What is the result of the attempted application of German revolutionising theory to practice? In fact, what has revolutionising Germany attained? Our first question we asked without being able to resolve an answer. The problem was stated: an attempt was made to arrive at something like a solution out of the distracting hurly-burly of supposed purposes and so-called intentions; but, after every effort to make out our "sum" in any reasonable manner, we were obliged to give it up, as a task impossible to any political mathematician, not of German mould; to declare any definite solution for the present hopeless, – and to end our amount of calculation by arriving only in a *cercle vicieux* at the statement of the problem with which we started, and asking, as despairingly as a tired schoolboy

with a seemingly impracticable equation before him, "What, indeed, *would* revolutionising Germany be at?" Are we any further advanced now? We will not attempt the difficult sum again, or we might find ourselves obliged to avow ourselves as much deficient in the study of German political mathematics as before. But we may at least try to undertake a mere sum of addition, endeavour to cast up the amount of figures the Germans themselves have laid before us, and make out, as well as we can, what, after a year's hard – and how hard! – work, revolutionising Germany has attained. The species of sum-total, as far as the addition can yet go, to which we may arrive, may be still a very confused and unsatisfactory one; but in asking, "What has revolutionising Germany attained?" we will not take it entirely to our own charge, if the answer attempted to be made is thus confused and unsatisfactory. German political sums are all too puzzling for English heads.

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