

VARIOUS

BENTLEY'S
MISCELLANY,
VOLUME II

Various

Bentley's Miscellany, Volume II

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Various Bentley's Miscellany, Volume II

ADDRESS

Twelve months have elapsed since we first took the field, and every successive number of our Miscellany has experienced a warmer reception, and a more extensive circulation, than its predecessor.

In the opening of the new year, and the commencement of our new volume, we hope to make many changes for the better, and none for the worse; and, to show that, while we have one grateful eye to past patronage, we have another wary one to future favours; in short, that, like the heroine of the sweet poem descriptive of the faithlessness and perjury of Mr. John Oakhum, of the Royal Navy, we look two ways at once.

It is our intention to usher in the new year with a very merry greeting, towards the accomplishment of which end we have prevailed upon a long procession of distinguished friends to mount their hobbies on the occasion, in humble imitation of those adventurous and aldermanic spirits who gallantly bestrode their foaming chargers on the memorable ninth of this present month, while

"The stones did rattle underneath,
As if Cheapside were mad."

These, and a hundred other great designs, preparations, and surprises, are in contemplation, for the fulfilment of all of which we are already bound in two volumes cloth, and have no objection, if it be any additional security to the public, to stand bound in twenty more.

BOZ.

30th November, 1837.

SONG OF THE MONTH. No. VII

July, 1837

BEING A BAPTISMAL CHAUNT FOR THE BIRTH OF OUR SECOND
VOLUME, AS SUNG (IN CHARACTER) BY FATHER PROUT

(Tune "*The groves of Blarney.*")

"*Ille ego qui quondam,*" &c. &c. —*Æneid*

I

In the month of Janus,
When Boz to gain us,
Quite "miscellaneous,"
Flashed his wit so keen,
One, (Prout they call him,)
In style most solemn,
Led off the volume
Of his magazine.

II

Though Maga, 'mongst her
Bright set of youngsters,
Had many songsters
For her opening tome;
Yet she would rather
Invite "the Father,"
And an indulgence gather
From the Pope of Rome.

III

And, such a beauty

From head to shoe-tie,
Without dispute we
Found her first boy,
That she *detarmined*,
There's such a charm in 't,
The Father's *sarmint*
She'd again employ.

IV

While other children
Are quite bewilderin',
'Tis joy that fill'd her in
This bantling; 'cause
What eye but glistens,
And what ear but listens,
When the clargy christens
A babe of Boz?

V

I've got a scruple
That this young pupil
Surprised its parent
Ere her time was sped;
Else I'm unwary,
Or, 'tis she's a fairy,
For in January
She was brought to bed.

VI

This infant may be
A six months' baby,
But may his cradle
Be blest! say I;
And luck defend him!
And joy attend him!
Since we can't mend him,
Born in July.

VII

He's no abortion,
But born to fortune,
And most opportune,
Though before his time;
Him, Muse, O! nourish,
And make him flourish
Quite Tommy-Moorish
Both in prose and rhyme!

VIII

I remember, also,
That this month they call so,
From Roman Julius
The "*Cæsarian*" styled;
Who was no gosling,
But, like this Boz-ling,
From birth a dazzling
And precocious child!

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!

OLIVER TWIST;
OR, THE PARISH BOY'S PROGRESS
BY BOZ
ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

CHAPTER THE NINTH

CONTAINING FURTHER PARTICULARS CONCERNING THE PLEASANT OLD GENTLEMAN, AND HIS HOPEFUL PUPILS

It was late next morning when Oliver awoke from a sound, long sleep. There was nobody in the room beside, but the old Jew, who was boiling some coffee in a saucepan for breakfast, and whistling softly to himself as he stirred it round and round with an iron spoon. He would stop every now and then to listen when there was the least noise below; and, when he had satisfied himself, he would go on whistling and stirring again, as before.

Although Oliver had roused himself from sleep, he was not thoroughly awake. There is a drowsy, heavy state, between sleeping and waking, when you dream more in five minutes with your eyes half open, and yourself half conscious of everything that is passing around you, than you would in five nights with your eyes fast closed, and your senses wrapt in perfect unconsciousness. At such times, a mortal knows just enough of what his mind is doing to form some glimmering conception of its mighty powers, its bounding from earth and spurning time and space, when freed from the irksome restraint of its corporeal associate.

Oliver was precisely in the condition I have described. He saw the Jew with his half-closed eyes, heard his low whistling, and recognised the sound of the spoon grating against the saucepan's sides; and yet the self-same senses were mentally engaged at the same time, in busy action with almost everybody he had ever known.

When the coffee was done, the Jew drew the saucepan to the hob, and, standing in an irresolute attitude for a few minutes as if he did not well know how to employ himself, turned round and looked at Oliver, and called him by his name. He did not answer, and was to all appearance asleep.

After satisfying himself upon this head, the Jew stepped gently to the door, which he fastened; he then drew forth, as it seemed to Oliver, from some trap in the floor, a small box, which he placed carefully on the table. His eyes glistened as he raised the lid and looked in. Dragging an old chair to the table, he sat down, and took from it a magnificent gold watch, sparkling with diamonds.

"Aha!" said the Jew, shrugging up his shoulders, and distorting every feature with a hideous grin. "Clever dogs! clever dogs! Staunch to the last! Never told the old parson where they were; never peached upon old Fagin. And why should they? It wouldn't have loosened the knot, or kept the drop up a minute longer. No, no, no! Fine fellows! fine fellows!"

With these, and other muttered reflections of the like nature, the Jew once more deposited the watch in its place of safety. At least half a dozen more were severally drawn forth from the same box, and surveyed with equal pleasure; besides rings, brooches, bracelets, and other articles of jewellery, of such magnificent materials and costly workmanship that Oliver had no idea even of their names.

Having replaced these trinkets, the Jew took out another, so small that it lay in the palm of his hand. There seemed to be some very minute inscription on it, for the Jew laid it flat upon the table, and, shading it with his hand, pored over it long and earnestly. At length he set it down as if despairing of success, and, leaning back in his chair, muttered,

"What a fine thing capital punishment is! Dead men never repent; dead men never bring awkward stories to light. The prospect of the gallows, too, makes them hardy and bold. Ah, it's a fine thing for the trade! Five of them strung up in a row, and none left to play booty or turn white-livered!"

As the Jew uttered these words, his bright dark eyes which had been staring vacantly before him, fell on Oliver's face; the boy's eyes were fixed on his in mute curiosity, and, although the recognition was only for an instant – for the briefest space of time that can possibly be conceived, – it was enough to show the old man that he had been observed. He closed the lid of the box with a loud crash, and,

laying his hand on a bread-knife which was on the table, started furiously up. He trembled very much though; for, even in his terror, Oliver could see that the knife quivered in the air.

"What's that?" said the Jew. "What do you watch me for? Why are you awake? What have you seen? Speak out, boy! Quick – quick! for your life!"

"I wasn't able to sleep any longer, sir," replied Oliver, meekly. "I am very sorry if I have disturbed you, sir."

"You were not awake an hour ago?" said the Jew, scowling fiercely on the boy.

"No – no, indeed, sir," replied Oliver.

"Are you sure?" cried the Jew, with a still fiercer look than before, and a threatening attitude.

"Upon my word I was not, sir," replied Oliver, earnestly. "I was not, indeed, sir."

"Tush, tush, my dear!" said the Jew, suddenly resuming his old manner, and playing with the knife a little before he laid it down, as if to induce the belief that he had caught it up in mere sport. "Of course I know that, my dear. I only tried to frighten you. You're a brave boy. Ha! ha! you're a brave boy, Oliver!" and the Jew rubbed his hands with a chuckle, but looked uneasily at the box notwithstanding.

"Did you see any of these pretty things, my dear?" said the Jew, laying his hand upon it after a short pause.

"Yes, sir," replied Oliver.

"Ah!" said the Jew, turning rather pale. "They – they're mine, Oliver; my little property. All I have to live upon in my old age. The folks call me a miser, my dear, – only a miser; that's all."

Oliver thought the old gentleman must be a decided miser to live in such a dirty place, with so many watches; but, thinking that perhaps his fondness for the Dodger and the other boys cost him a good deal of money, he only cast a deferential look at the Jew, and asked if he might get up.

"Certainly, my dear, – certainly," replied the old gentleman. "Stay. There's a pitcher of water in the corner by the door. Bring it here, and I'll give you a basin to wash in, my dear."

Oliver got up, walked across the room, and stooped for one instant to raise the pitcher. When he turned his head, the box was gone.

He had scarcely washed himself and made everything tidy by emptying the basin out of the window, agreeably to the Jew's directions, than the Dodger returned, accompanied by a very sprightly young friend whom Oliver had seen smoking on the previous night, and who was now formally introduced to him as Charley Bates. The four then sat down to breakfast off the coffee and some hot rolls and ham which the Dodger had brought home in the crown of his hat.

"Well," said the Jew, glancing slyly at Oliver, and addressing himself to the Dodger, "I hope you've been at work this morning, my dears."

"Hard," replied the Dodger.

"As nails," added Charley Bates.

"Good boys, good boys!" said the Jew. "What have *you* got, Dodger?"

"A couple of pocket-books," replied that young gentleman.

"Lined?" inquired the Jew with trembling eagerness.

"Pretty well," replied the Dodger, producing two pocket-books, one green and the other red.

"Not so heavy as they might be," said the Jew, after looking at the insides carefully; "but very neat, and nicely made. Ingenious workman, ain't he, Oliver?"

"Very, indeed, sir," said Oliver. At which Mr. Charles Bates laughed uproariously, very much to the amazement of Oliver, who saw nothing to laugh at, in anything that had passed.

"And what have you got, my dear?" said Fagin to Charley Bates.

"Wipes," replied Master Bates: at the same time producing four pocket-handkerchiefs.

"Well," said the Jew, inspecting them closely; "they're very good ones, – very. You haven't marked them well, though, Charley; so the marks shall be picked out with a needle, and we'll teach Oliver how to do it. Shall us, Oliver, eh? – Ha! ha! ha!"

"If you please, sir," said Oliver.

"You'd like to be able to make pocket-handkerchiefs as easy as Charley Bates, wouldn't you, my dear?" said the Jew.

"Very much indeed, if you'll teach me, sir," replied Oliver.

Master Bates saw something so exquisitely ludicrous in this reply that he burst into another laugh; which laugh meeting the coffee he was drinking, and carrying it down some wrong channel, very nearly terminated in his premature suffocation.

"He is so jolly green," said Charley when he recovered, as an apology to the company for his unpolite behaviour.

The Dodger said nothing, but he smoothed Oliver's hair down over his eyes, and said he'd know better by-and-by; upon which the old gentleman, observing Oliver's colour mounting, changed the subject by asking whether there had been much of a crowd at the execution that morning. This made him wonder more and more, for it was plain from the replies of the two boys that they had both been there; and Oliver naturally wondered how they could possibly have found time to be so very industrious.

When the breakfast was cleared away, the merry old gentleman and the two boys played at a very curious and uncommon game, which was performed in this way: – The merry old gentleman, placing a snuff-box in one pocket of his trousers, a note-case in the other, and a watch in his waistcoat-pocket, with a guard-chain round his neck, and sticking a mock diamond pin in his shirt, buttoned his coat tight round him, and, putting his spectacle-case and handkerchief in the pockets, trotted up and down the room with a stick, in imitation of the manner in which old gentlemen walk about the streets every hour in the day. Sometimes he stopped at the fire-place, and sometimes at the door, making belief that he was staring with all his might into shop-windows. At such times he would look constantly round him for fear of thieves, and keep slapping all his pockets in turn, to see that he hadn't lost anything, in such a very funny and natural manner, that Oliver laughed till the tears ran down his face. All this time the two boys followed him closely about, getting out of his sight so nimbly every time he turned round, that it was impossible to follow their motions. At last the Dodger trod upon his toes, or ran upon his boot accidentally, while Charley Bates stumbled up against him behind; and in that one moment they took from him with the most extraordinary rapidity, snuff-box, note-case, watch-guard, chain, shirt-pin, pocket-handkerchief, – even the spectacle-case. If the old gentleman felt a hand in any one of his pockets, he cried out where it was, and then the game began all over again.

When this game had been played a great many times, a couple of young ladies came to see the young gentlemen, one of whom was called Bet and the other Nancy. They wore a good deal of hair, not very neatly turned up behind, and were rather untidy about the shoes and stockings. They were not exactly pretty, perhaps; but they had a great deal of colour in their faces, and looked quite stout and hearty. Being remarkably free and agreeable in their manners, Oliver thought them very nice girls indeed, as there is no doubt they were.

These visitors stopped a long time. Spirits were produced, in consequence of one of the young ladies complaining of a coldness in her inside, and the conversation took a very convivial and improving turn. At length Charley Bates expressed his opinion that it was time to pad the hoof, which it occurred to Oliver must be French for going out; for directly afterwards the Dodger, and Charley, and the two young ladies went away together, having been kindly furnished with money to spend, by the amiable old Jew.

"There, my dear," said Fagin, "that's a pleasant life, isn't it? They have gone out for the day."

"Have they done work, sir?" inquired Oliver.

"Yes," said the Jew; "that is, unless they should unexpectedly come across any when they are out; and they won't neglect it if they do, my dear, depend upon it."

"Make 'em your models, my dear, make 'em your models," said the Jew, tapping the fire-shovel on the hearth to add force to his words; "do everything they bid you, and take their advice in all

matters, especially the Dodger's, my dear. He'll be a great man himself, and make you one too, if you take pattern by him. Is my handkerchief hanging out of my pocket, my dear?" said the Jew, stopping short.

"Yes, sir," said Oliver.

"See if you can take it out, without my feeling it, as you saw them do when we were at play this morning."

Oliver held up the bottom of the pocket with one hand as he had seen the Dodger do, and drew the handkerchief lightly out of it with the other.

"Is it gone?" cried the Jew.

"Here it is, sir," said Oliver, showing it in his hand.

"You're a clever boy, my dear," said the playful old gentleman, patting Oliver on the head approvingly; "I never saw a sharper lad. Here's a shilling for you. If you go on in this way, you'll be the greatest man of the time. And now come here, and I'll show you how to take the marks out of the handkerchiefs."

Oliver wondered what picking the old gentleman's pocket in play had to do with his chances of being a great man; but thinking that the Jew, being so much his senior, must know best, followed him quietly to the table, and was soon deeply involved in his new study.

CHAPTER THE TENTH

OLIVER BECOMES BETTER ACQUAINTED WITH THE CHARACTERS OF HIS NEW ASSOCIATES, AND PURCHASES EXPERIENCE AT A HIGH PRICE. BEING A SHORT BUT VERY IMPORTANT CHAPTER IN THIS HISTORY

For eight or ten days Oliver remained in the Jew's room, picking the marks out of the pocket-handkerchiefs, (of which a great number were brought home,) and sometimes taking part in the game already described, which the two boys and the Jew played regularly every day. At length he began to languish for the fresh air, and took many occasions of earnestly entreating the old gentleman to allow him to go out to work with his two companions.

Oliver was rendered the more anxious to be actively employed by what he had seen of the stern morality of the old gentleman's character. Whenever the Dodger or Charley Bates came home at night empty-handed, he would expatiate with great vehemence on the misery of idle and lazy habits, and enforce upon them the necessity of an active life by sending them supperless to bed: upon one occasion he even went so far as to knock them both down a flight of stairs; but this was carrying out his virtuous precepts to an unusual extent.

At length one morning Oliver obtained the permission he had so eagerly sought. There had been no handkerchiefs to work upon, for two or three days, and the dinners had been rather meagre. Perhaps these were reasons for the old gentleman's giving his assent; but, whether they were or no, he told Oliver he might go, and placed him under the joint guardianship of Charley Bates and his friend the Dodger.

The three boys sallied out, the Dodger with his coat-sleeves tucked up and his hat cocked as usual, Master Bates sauntering along with his hands in his pockets, and Oliver between them, wondering where they were going, and what branch of manufacture he would be instructed in first.

The pace at which they went was such a very lazy, ill-looking saunter, that Oliver soon began to think his companions were going to deceive the old gentleman, by not going to work at all. The Dodger had a vicious propensity, too, of pulling the caps from the heads of small boys and tossing them down areas; while Charley Bates exhibited some very loose notions concerning the rights of property, by pilfering divers apples and onions from the stalls at the kennel sides, and thrusting them into pockets which were so surprisingly capacious, that they seemed to undermine his whole suit of clothes in every direction. These things looked so bad, that Oliver was on the point of declaring his intention of seeking his way back in the best way he could, when his thoughts were suddenly directed into another channel by a very mysterious change of behaviour on the part of the Dodger.

They were just emerging from a narrow court not far from the open square in Clerkenwell, which is called, by some strange perversion of terms, "The Green," when the Dodger made a sudden stop, and, laying his finger on his lip, drew his companions back again with the greatest caution and circumspection.

"What's the matter?" demanded Oliver.

"Hush!" replied the Dodger. "Do you see that old cove at the book-stall?"

"The old gentleman over the way?" said Oliver. "Yes, I see him."

"He'll do," said the Dodger.

"A prime plant," observed Charley Bates.

Oliver looked from one to the other with the greatest surprise, but was not permitted to make any inquiries, for the two boys walked stealthily across the road, and slunk close behind the old

gentleman towards whom his attention had been directed. Oliver walked a few paces after them, and, not knowing whether to advance or retire, stood looking on in silent amazement.

The old gentleman was a very respectable-looking personage, with a powdered head and gold spectacles; dressed in a bottle-green coat with a black velvet collar, and white trousers: with a smart bamboo cane under his arm. He had taken up a book from the stall, and there he stood, reading away as hard as if he were in his elbow-chair in his own study. It was very possible that he fancied himself there, indeed; for it was plain, from his utter abstraction, that he saw not the book-stall, nor the street, nor the boys, nor, in short, anything but the book itself, which he was reading straight through, turning over the leaves when he got to the bottom of a page, beginning at the top line of the next one, and going regularly on with the greatest interest and eagerness.

What was Oliver's horror and alarm as he stood a few paces off, looking on with his eye-lids as wide open as they would possibly go, to see the Dodger plunge his hand into this old gentleman's pocket, and draw from thence a handkerchief, which he handed to Charley Bates, and with which they both ran away round the corner at full speed!

In one instant the whole mystery of the handkerchiefs, and the watches, and the jewels, and the Jew, rushed upon the boy's mind. He stood for a moment with the blood tingling so through all his veins from terror, that he felt as if he were in a burning fire; then, confused and frightened, he took to his heels, and, not knowing what he did, made off as fast as he could lay his feet to the ground.

This was all done in a minute's space, and the very instant that Oliver began to run, the old gentleman, putting his hand to his pocket, and missing his handkerchief, turned sharp round. Seeing the boy scudding away at such a rapid pace, he very naturally concluded him to be the depredator, and, shouting "Stop thief!" with all his might, made off after him, book in hand.

But the old gentleman was not the only person who raised the hue and cry. The Dodger and Master Bates, unwilling to attract public attention by running down the open street, had merely retired into the very first doorway round the corner. They no sooner heard the cry, and saw Oliver running, than, guessing exactly how the matter stood, they issued forth with great promptitude, and, shouting "Stop thief!" too, joined in the pursuit like good citizens.

Although Oliver had been brought up by philosophers, he was not theoretically acquainted with their beautiful axiom that self-preservation is the first law of nature. If he had been, perhaps he would have been prepared for this. Not being prepared, however, it alarmed him the more; so away he went like the wind, with the old gentlemen and the two boys roaring and shouting behind him.

"Stop thief! stop thief!" There is a magic in the sound. The tradesman leaves his counter, and the carman his waggon; the butcher throws down his tray, the baker his basket, the milkman his pail, the errand-boy his parcels, the schoolboy his marbles, the paviour his pick-axe, the child his battledore: away they run, pell-mell, helter-skelter, slap-dash, tearing, yelling, and screaming, knocking down the passengers as they turn the corners, rousing up the dogs, and astonishing the fowls; and streets, squares, and courts re-echo with the sound.

"Stop thief! stop thief!" The cry is taken up by a hundred voices, and the crowd accumulate at every turning. Away they fly, splashing through the mud, and rattling along the pavements; up go the windows, out run the people, onward bear the mob: a whole audience desert Punch in the very thickest of the plot, and, joining the rushing throng, swell the shout, and lend fresh vigour to the cry, "Stop thief! stop thief!"

"Stop thief! stop thief!" There is a passion *for hunting something* deeply implanted in the human breast. One wretched, breathless child, panting with exhaustion, terror in his looks, agony in his eye, large drops of perspiration streaming down his face, strains every nerve to make head upon his pursuers; and as they follow on his track, and gain upon him every instant, they hail his decreasing strength with still louder shouts, and whoop and scream with joy "Stop thief!" – Ay, stop him for God's sake, were it only in mercy!

Stopped at last. A clever blow that. He's down upon the pavement, and the crowd eagerly gather round him; each new comer jostling and struggling with the others to catch a glimpse. "Stand aside!" – "Give him a little air!" – "Nonsense! he don't deserve it." – "Where's the gentleman?" – "Here he is, coming down the street." – "Make room there for the gentleman!" – "Is this the boy, sir?" – "Yes."

Oliver lay covered with mud and dust, and bleeding from the mouth, looking wildly round upon the heap of faces that surrounded him, when the old gentleman was officiously dragged and pushed into the circle by the foremost of the pursuers, and made this reply to their anxious inquiries.

"Yes," said the gentleman in a benevolent voice, "I am afraid it is."

"Afraid!" murmured the crowd. "That's a good un."

"Poor fellow!" said the gentleman, "he has hurt himself."

"I did that, sir," said a great lubberly fellow stepping forward; "and precious I cut my knuckle agin' his mouth. *I* stopped him, sir."

The fellow touched his hat with a grin, expecting something for his pains; but the old gentleman, eyeing him with an expression of disgust, looked anxiously round, as if he contemplated running away himself; which it is very possible he might have attempted to do, and thus afforded another chase, had not a police officer (who is always the last person to arrive in such cases) at that moment made his way through the crowd, and seized Oliver by the collar. "Come, get up," said the man roughly.

"It wasn't me indeed, sir. Indeed, indeed, it was two other boys," said Oliver, clasping his hands passionately, and looking round: "they are here somewhere."

"Oh no, they ain't," said the officer. He meant this to be ironical; but it was true besides, for the Dodger and Charley Bates had filed off down the first convenient court they came to. "Come, get up."

"Don't hurt him," said the old gentleman compassionately.

"Oh no, I won't hurt him," replied the officer, tearing his jacket half off his back in proof thereof. "Come, I know you; it won't do. Will you stand upon your legs, you young devil?"

Oliver, who could hardly stand, made a shift to raise himself upon his feet, and was at once lugged along the streets by the jacket-collar at a rapid pace. The gentleman walked on with them by the officer's side; and as many of the crowd as could, got a little a-head, and stared back at Oliver from time to time. The boys shouted in triumph, and on they went.

CHAPTER THE ELEVENTH

TREATS OF MR. FANG THE POLICE MAGISTRATE, AND FURNISHES A SLIGHT SPECIMEN OF HIS MODE OF ADMINISTERING JUSTICE

The offence had been committed within the district, and indeed in the immediate neighbourhood of a very notorious metropolitan police-office. The crowd had only the satisfaction of accompanying Oliver through two or three streets, and down a place called Mutton-hill, when he was led beneath a low archway and up a dirty court into this dispensary of summary justice, by the back way. It was a small paved yard into which they turned; and here they encountered a stout man with a bunch of whiskers on his face, and a bunch of keys in his hand.

"What's the matter now?" said the man carelessly.

"A young fogle-hunter," replied the man who had Oliver in charge.

"Are you the party that's been robbed, sir?" inquired the man with the keys.

"Yes, I am," replied the old gentleman; "but I am not sure that this boy actually took the handkerchief. I – I'd rather not press the case."

"Must go before the magistrate now, sir," replied the man. "His worship will be disengaged in half a minute. Now, young gallows."

This was an invitation for Oliver to enter through a door which he unlocked as he spoke, and which led into a small stone cell. Here he was searched, and, nothing been found upon him, locked up.

This cell was in shape and size something like an area cellar, only not so light. It was most intolerably dirty, for it was Monday morning, and it had been tenanted since Saturday night by six drunken people. But this is nothing. In our station-houses, men and women are every night confined on the most trivial *charges*— the word is worth noting – in dungeons, compared with which, those in Newgate, occupied by the most atrocious felons, tried, found guilty, and under sentence of death, are palaces! Let any man who doubts this, compare the two.

The old gentleman looked almost as rueful as Oliver when the key grated in the lock; and turned with a sigh to the book which had been the innocent cause of all this disturbance.

"There is something in that boy's face," said the old gentleman to himself as he walked slowly away, tapping his chin with the cover of the book in a thoughtful manner, "something that touches and interests me. *Can* he be innocent? He looked like – By the bye," exclaimed the old gentleman, halting very abruptly, and staring up into the sky, "God bless my soul! where have I seen something like that look before?"

After musing for some minutes, the old gentleman walked with the same meditative face into a back ante-room opening from the yard; and there, retiring into a corner, called up before his mind's eye a vast amphitheatre of faces over which a dusky curtain had hung for many years. "No," said the old gentleman, shaking his head; "it must be imagination."

He wandered over them again. He had called them into view, and it was not easy to replace the shroud that had so long concealed them. There were the faces of friends and foes, and of many that had been almost strangers, peering intrusively from the crowd; there were the faces of young and blooming girls that were now old women; there were others that the grave had changed to ghastly trophies of death, but which the mind, superior to his power, still dressed in their old freshness and beauty, calling back the lustre of the eyes, the brightness of the smile, the beaming of the soul through its mask of clay, and whispering of beauty beyond the tomb, changed but to be heightened, and taken from earth only to be set up as a light to shed a soft and gentle glow upon the path to Heaven.

But the old gentleman could recall no one countenance of which Oliver's features bore a trace; so he heaved a sigh over the recollections he had awakened; and being, happily for himself, an absent old gentleman, buried them again in the pages of the musty book.

He was roused by a touch on the shoulder, and a request from the man with the keys to follow him into the office. He closed his book hastily, and was at once ushered into the imposing presence of the renowned Mr. Fang.

The office was a front parlour, with a paneled wall. Mr. Fang sat behind a bar at the upper end; and on one side the door was a sort of wooden pen in which poor little Oliver was already deposited, trembling very much at the awfulness of the scene.

Mr. Fang was a middle-sized man, with no great quantity of hair; and what he had, growing on the back and sides of his head. His face was stern, and much flushed. If he were really not in the habit of drinking rather more than was exactly good for him, he might have brought an action against his countenance for libel, and have recovered heavy damages.

The old gentleman bowed respectfully, and, advancing to the magistrate's desk, said, suiting the action to the word, "That is my name and address, sir." He then withdrew a pace or two; and, with another polite and gentlemanly inclination of the head, waited to be questioned.

Now, it so happened that Mr. Fang was at that moment perusing a leading article in a newspaper of the morning, adverting to some recent decision of his, and commending him, for the three hundred and fiftieth time, to the special and particular notice of the Secretary of State for the Home Department. He was out of temper, and he looked up with an angry scowl.

"Who are you?" said Mr. Fang.

The old gentleman pointed with some surprise to his card.

"Officer!" said Mr. Fang, tossing the card contemptuously away with the newspaper, "who is this fellow?"

"My name, sir," said the old gentleman, speaking *like* a gentleman, and consequently in strong contrast to Mr. Fang, – "my name, sir, is Brownlow. Permit me to inquire the name of the magistrate who offers a gratuitous and unprovoked insult to a respectable man, under the protection of the bench." Saying this, Mr. Brownlow looked round the office as if in search of some person who would afford him the required information.

"Officer!" said Mr. Fang, throwing the paper on one side, "what's this fellow charged with?"

"He's not charged at all, your worship," replied the officer. "He appears against the boy, your worship."

His worship knew this perfectly well; but it was a good annoyance, and a safe one.

"Appears against the boy, does he?" said Fang, surveying Mr. Brownlow contemptuously from head to foot. "Swear him."

"Before I am sworn I must beg to say one word," said Mr. Brownlow; "and that is, that I never, without actual experience, could have believed –"

"Hold your tongue, sir!" said Mr. Fang peremptorily.

"I will not, sir!" replied the spirited old gentleman.

"Hold your tongue this instant, or I'll have you turned out of the office!" said Mr. Fang. "You're an insolent impertinent fellow. How dare you bully a magistrate!"

"What!" exclaimed the old gentleman, reddening.

"Swear this person!" said Fang to the clerk. "I'll not hear another word. Swear him!"

Mr. Brownlow's indignation was greatly roused; but, reflecting that he might only injure the boy by giving vent to it, he suppressed his feelings, and submitted to be sworn at once.

"Now," said Fang, "what's the charge against this boy? What have you got to say, sir?"

"I was standing at a book-stall –" Mr. Brownlow began.

"Hold your tongue, sir!" said Mr. Fang. "Policeman! – where's the policeman? Here, swear this man. Now, policeman, what is this?"

The policeman with becoming humility related how he had taken the charge, how he had searched Oliver and found nothing on his person; and how that was all he knew about it.

"Are there any witnesses?" inquired Mr. Fang.

"None, your worship," replied the policeman.

Mr. Fang sat silent for some minutes, and then, turning round to the prosecutor, said, in a towering passion,

"Do you mean to state what your complaint against this boy is, fellow, or do you not? You have been sworn. Now, if you stand there, refusing to give evidence, I'll punish you for disrespect to the bench; I will, by –"

By what, or by whom, nobody knows, for the clerk and jailer coughed very loud just at the right moment, and the former dropped a heavy book on the floor; thus preventing the word from being heard – accidentally, of course.

With many interruptions, and repeated insults, Mr. Brownlow contrived to state his case; observing that, in the surprise of the moment, he had run after the boy because he saw him running away, and expressing his hope that, if the magistrate should believe him, although not actually the thief, to be connected with thieves, he would deal as leniently with him as justice would allow.

"He has been hurt already," said the old gentleman in conclusion. "And I fear," he added, with great energy, looking towards the bar, – "I really fear that he is very ill."

"Oh! yes; I dare say!" said Mr. Fang, with a sneer. "Come; none of your tricks here, you young vagabond; they won't do. What's your name?"

Oliver tried to reply, but his tongue failed him. He was deadly pale, and the whole place seemed turning round and round.

"What's your name, you hardened scoundrel?" thundered Mr. Fang. "Officer, what's his name?"

This was addressed to a bluff old fellow in a striped waistcoat, who was standing by the bar. He bent over Oliver, and repeated the inquiry; but finding him really incapable of understanding the question, and knowing that his not replying would only infuriate the magistrate the more, and add to the severity of his sentence, he hazarded a guess.

"He says his name's Tom White, your worship," said this kind-hearted thief-taker.

"Oh, he won't speak out, won't he?" said Fang. "Very well, very well. Where does he live?"

"Where he can, your worship," replied the officer, again pretending to receive Oliver's answer.

"Has he any parents?" inquired Mr. Fang.

"He says they died in his infancy, your worship," replied the officer, hazarding the usual reply.

At this point of the inquiry Oliver raised his head, and, looking round with imploring eyes, murmured a feeble prayer for a draught of water.

"Stuff and nonsense!" said Mr. Fang; "don't try to make a fool of me."

"I think he really is ill, your worship," remonstrated the officer.

"I know better," said Mr. Fang.

"Take care of him, officer," said the old gentleman, raising his hands instinctively; "he'll fall down."

"Stand away, officer," cried Fang savagely; "let him if he likes."

Oliver availed himself of the kind permission, and fell heavily to the floor in a fainting fit. The men in the office looked at each other, but no one dared to stir.

"I knew he was shamming," said Fang, as if this were incontestable proof of the fact. "Let him lie; he'll soon be tired of that."

"How do you propose to deal with the case, sir?" inquired the clerk in a low voice.

"Summarily," replied Mr. Fang. "He stands committed for three months, – hard labour of course. Clear the office."

The door was opened for this purpose, and a couple of men were preparing to carry the insensible boy to his cell, when an elderly man of decent but poor appearance, clad in an old suit of black, rushed hastily into the office, and advanced to the bench.

"Stop, stop, – don't take him away, – for Heaven's sake stop a moment," cried the new-comer, breathless with haste.

Although the presiding geniuses in such an office as this, exercise a summary and arbitrary power over the liberties, the good name, the character, almost the lives of his Majesty's subjects, especially of the poorer class, and although within such walls enough fantastic tricks are daily played to make the angels weep thick tears of blood, they are closed to the public, save through the medium of the daily press. Mr. Fang was consequently not a little indignant to see an unbidden guest enter in such irreverent disorder.

"What is this? Who is this? Turn this man out. Clear the office," cried Mr. Fang.

"I will speak," cried the man; "I will not be turned out, – I saw it all. I keep the book-stall. I demand to be sworn. I will not be put down. Mr. Fang, you must hear me. You dare not refuse, sir."

The man was right. His manner was bold and determined, and the matter was growing rather too serious to be hushed up.

"Swear the fellow," growled Fang with a very ill grace. "Now, man, what have you got to say?"

"This," said the man: "I saw three boys – two others and the prisoner here – loitering on the opposite side of the way, when this gentleman was reading. The robbery was committed by another boy. I saw it done, and I saw that this boy was perfectly amazed and stupified by it." Having by this time recovered a little breath, the worthy book-stall keeper proceeded to relate in a more coherent manner the exact circumstances of the robbery.

"Why didn't you come here before?" said Fang after a pause.

"I hadn't a soul to mind the shop," replied the man; "everybody that could have helped me had joined in the pursuit. I could get nobody till five minutes ago, and I've run here all the way."

"The prosecutor was reading, was he?" inquired Fang, after another pause.

"Yes," replied the man, "the very book he has got in his hand."

"Oh, that book, eh?" said Fang. "Is it paid for?"

"No, it is not," replied the man, with a smile.

"Dear me, I forgot all about it!" exclaimed the absent old gentleman, innocently.

"A nice person to prefer a charge against a poor boy!" said Fang, with a comical effort to look humane. "I consider, sir, that you have obtained possession of that book under very suspicious and disreputable circumstances, and you may think yourself very fortunate that the owner of the property declines to prosecute. Let this be a lesson to you, my man, or the law will overtake you yet. The boy is discharged. Clear the office!"

"D – me!" cried the old gentleman, bursting out with the rage he had kept down so long, "d – me! I'll –"

"Clear the office!" roared the magistrate. "Officers, do you hear? Clear the office!"

The mandate was obeyed, and the indignant Mr. Brownlow was conveyed out, with the book in one hand and the bamboo cane in the other, in a perfect phrenzy of rage and defiance.

He reached the yard, and it vanished in a moment. Little Oliver Twist lay on his back on the pavement, with his shirt unbuttoned and his temples bathed with water: his face a deadly white, and a cold tremble convulsing his whole frame.

"Poor boy, poor boy!" said Mr. Brownlow bending over him. "Call a coach, somebody, pray, directly!"

A coach was obtained, and Oliver, having been carefully laid on one seat, the old gentleman got in and sat himself on the other.

"May I accompany you?" said the book-stall keeper looking in.

"Bless me, yes, my dear friend," said Mr. Brownlow quickly. "I forgot you. Dear, dear! I've got this unhappy book still. Jump in. Poor fellow! there's no time to lose."

The book-stall keeper got into the coach, and away they drove.

ELEGIAC STANZAS

BY MRS. CORNWELL BARON WILSON

Why mourn we for her, who in Spring's tender bloom,
And the sweet blush of womanhood, quitted life's sphere?
Why weep we for her? Thro' the gates of the tomb
She has pass'd to the regions undimm'd by a tear!

To the spirits' far land in the mansions above,
Unsullied, thus early her soul wing'd its flight;
While she bask'd in the beams of affection and love,
And knew not the clouds that oft shadow their light!

Fate's hand pluck'd the bud ere it blossom'd to fame,
No withering canker its leaflets had known;
The ministering angels her fellowship claim,
And rejoice o'er a spirit as pure as their own!

While she knew but life's purer and tenderer ties,
The guardian who watches life's path from our birth
Call'd home the bright being Heav'n form'd for the skies
Ere its bloom had been ting'd by the follies of earth!

Alas! while the light of her young spirit's flame
Shone a day-star of Hope to illumine us here,
The messenger-seraph too suddenly came,
And bore his bright charge to her own native sphere!

Yet mourn not for her, who, in Spring's tender bloom,
Has made life a desert to those left behind;
Like the rose-leaf, tho' wither'd, still yielding perfume,
In our hearts, ever fragrant, her memory is shrin'd!

FICTIONS OF THE MIDDLE AGES

BY DELTA

THE BUTTERFLY BISHOP

Amongst the numerous grievances complained of, during the reigns of the Anglo-Norman sovereigns, none gave more uneasiness than the inhuman severity of the forest-laws; they disgusted those nobles not in the confidence of the monarch, oppressed the people, and impoverished the country.

The privilege of hunting in the royal forests was confined to the king and his favourites, who spent the greater portion of their time, not engaged in active warfare, in that diversion; many of them pursued wild beasts with greater fury than they did enemies of their country, and became as savage as the very brutes they hunted.

The punishment for hunting or destroying game in royal forests, or other property belonging to the crown, was very severe: the offender was generally put to death; but, if he could afford to pay an enormous mulct to the king, the sentence was commuted either to dismemberment or tedious imprisonment.

The propensity of the dignified clergy to follow secular pastimes, especially that of hunting, is well known: they were ambitious to surpass the laity in the number and splendid livery of their huntsmen, and to excel in making the woods resound with the echo of their bugles; many of them are recorded for their skill in the aristocratic and manly amusement of the chase. Few persons, however, either ecclesiastic or secular, equalled Peter de Roches, Bishop of Winchester, in his fondness for, and prowess in, the chase.

Peter had spent the prime of his life as a soldier,¹ and having rendered King John essential service in such capacity, that monarch conferred upon him the lucrative office of Bishop of Winchester, and he thenceforth became a curer of souls instead of a destroyer of bodies.

Peter's appointment as a bishop afforded him ample time to devote to the fascinating employment of chasing the "full-acorned boar" and stealthy fox: he thought the hunter's shout, the winding notes of the clanging horn, and the joyous bark of the hounds, much sweeter music than the nasal chaunt of the drowsy monks.

It happened one day that Peter, (who was, according to the Chronicle of Lanercost,² a proud and worldly man, – as was too often the case with bishops of that period,) with a bugle dangling at his belt, and mounted upon a fiery steed, attended by a vast retinue of men, horses, and hounds, was in hot pursuit of a wary old fox; his courser, – more fleet than the mountain roe, scarce bruising the grass with his iron-shod hoofs, – like Bucephalus of Macedon, took fright at his own shadow, and became unmanageable; nor were all the skill and spur of the rider able to check his impetuous speed: the harder the bishop pulled, the more unruly became his steed; the bridle now suddenly snapped in twain, and the bishop was left to the fate that awaited him. Velocipede, for so the horse was called, now seemed exultingly to bound over the deepest ditches, and to clear the highest thorny-twining hedge with the greatest ease: nothing could moderate his foaming rage; he resembled more the far-

¹ Matthew Paris describes him as "*Vir equestris ordinis, et in rebus bellicis eruditus.*"

² The original words are, "*Idem vir vanus et mundanus, ut nimis inolevit nostris pontificibus.*"

famed Pegasus of Medusan blood, than the palfrey of a gentle bishop. The retinue, and eager hounds, notwithstanding their utmost endeavour to keep pace with their master, were left far behind.

Peter, having no control over his flying barbary, awaited with truly apostolic calmness and gravity the issue of his wondrous ride, seriously expecting every minute a broken neck or leg; or, perchance, to have his preaching spoilt by the dislocation of a jaw-bone. – Such thoughts will frequently obtrude themselves into the minds of men encompassed with similar difficulties, let their presence of mind be never so great.

After half an hour's ride in such unepiscopal speed, which can only be compared to that of a steam-engine upon the Manchester railroad, Velocipede suddenly stopped before a magnificent castle with frowning battlements and a gloomy moat. The bishop, wondering at what he saw, was struck dumb with astonishment; for he well knew that so extensive a castle had not hitherto existed in his diocese, nor did he know of any such in England. Velocipede seemed also at his wits' end, and commenced frisking and gamboling about; and, in making a devotional curvet to the castle, threw the gallant, but unprepared bishop, over his head. Peter was either stunned or entranced by the fall, – whether his senses ever returned the reader must determine for himself when he has perused what follows: the bishop, however, always declared that he was never senseless, and that he could preach as well after, as before his fall.

No sooner was the bishop safely located upon the verdant down by the reverential feelings of the awe-struck Velocipede, than the castle's drawbridge fell, and an aged seneschal, of rubicund-tinted face, with at least fifty liveried lackeys in fanciful suits, ran to assist the bishop, and help him to regain his legs.

By the aid of a restorative cordial the bishop was resuscitated, and, upon coming to himself, was welcomed by the seneschal to the castle of Utopia.

The bishop looked aghast.

"My lord bishop," said the seneschal, "the king, our master, has been long expecting you; he is all impatient to embrace you: hasten, my lord, hasten your steps into the castle; the wines are cooled, the supper is ready; oh, such a supper! my mouth waters at the very smell thereof! Four wild turkeys smoke upon the spit, seven bitterns, six-and-twenty grey partridges, two-and-thirty red-legged ones, sixteen pheasants, nine woodcocks, nineteen herons, two-and-thirty rooks, twenty ring-doves, sixty leverets, twelve hares, twenty rabbits, and an ocean of Welsh ones, (enough to surfeit all the mice, and kill every apoplectic person in the world,) twenty kids, six roebucks, eight he-goats, fifteen sucking wild-boars, a flock of wild-ducks, to say nothing of the sturgeons, pikes, jacks, and other fish, both fresh and saltwater, besides ten tons of the most exquisite native oysters: and then there are flagons, goblets, and mead-cups overflowing with frothy ale, exhilarating wine, and goodly mead, all longing to empty their contents into our parched and ready stomachs, which are unquenchable asbestos; for we drink lustily, my lord, and eat powdered beef salted at Shrovetide, to season our mouths, and render them rabid for liquid in the same proportion as a rabid dog avoids it."

The seneschal here paused to take breath, for his description of the supper exhausted the wind-trunk of his organ; and the bishop, seizing the opportunity of its being replenished, said,

"Peace, hoary dotard! thou hast mistaken thy man; I am Peter de Roches, Bishop of Winchester, and Protector of England during the king's sojourn abroad."

"You need not tell *me* what I already know," replied the seneschal; "though, it seems, I must again remind *you* that my lord the king awaits your coming within the castle walls, and has prepared a sumptuous supper, with all manner of good cheer, to greet you."

"Supper!" said the bishop in astonishment, "I have not yet dined; besides I never eat supper."

"The devil take your inhuman fashion, then!" replied the seneschal: "in extreme necessity I might forego a dinner, provided I had eaten an overwhelming breakfast; but I would as soon die as go without my supper. To go to bed without supper is a base and aristocratic custom; I say it is an

error offensive to nature, and nature's dictates; all fasting is bad save breakfasting. That wicked pope who first invented fasting ought to have been baked alive in the papal kitchen."

To the latter part of the seneschal's speech the bishop mentally assented; but he merely said, "Go to, thou gorged dullard, and tell thy master to gormandize without me."

"Well, go I suppose I must, if you will not come," returned the seneschal, "for I cannot longer tarry here. Ah, Sir Bishop, did you feel the gnawings of my stomach, you would be glad to throw some food to the hungry mastiff that seems feeding upon my very vitals!"

"Hold thy balderdash!" said the bishop, who had become very irritated, and would have sworn, had it been etiquette to do so in those days, at the effusive and edacious harangue of the seneschal. "Verily, thy hunger and thirst have gotten the better of thy wits! Whence comest thou?"

"From within the pincernary of that castle, where I have been indefatigably filling the goblets," answered the seneschal, smacking his lips. "*Sitio! sitio!* my parched mouth moistens at the thought! Oh! the lachryma Christi, the nectar, the ambrosia, and the true Falernian! Ah! Sir Bishop, some persons drink to quench their thirst, but I drink to prevent it."

"Pshaw!" said the bishop, "the wine that thou hast already drunken hath fuddled thy brains."

"By a gammon of the saltiest bacon!" returned the seneschal, "I have more sense of what is good in my little finger than your reverence has in your whole pate, or you would not stand shilly-shambling here whilst so goodly a supper waits within."

The bishop was highly incensed at the seneschal's reflection upon his pate, and would have followed, had he dared, the slashing example of his namesake, and have smitten off the ear of this high-priest of the pantry; (for he always wore a sword, even in the pulpit, firmly believing in the efficacy of cold steel, knowing from experience that it would make a deeper and more lasting impression upon human obduracy than the most eloquent preaching;) but the bishop was deterred by prudential reflections from such sanguinary vengeance.

How long the confabulation between the bishop and the loquacious seneschal would have lasted, and to what extent the patience of the former might have been tried, it would at this remote period be difficult to determine, especially as the Lanercost Chronicle does not inform us. At any rate, it was cut shorter than it would have been, by the approach of twenty youthful knights, clad in superb armour, and riding upon horses caparisoned in most costly and gorgeous trappings; they dismounted, and made a low obeisance. The bishop returned it as lowly as bishops generally do, unless they are bowing to the premier during the vacancy of an archbishoprick. The knights advanced; but Peter remained as firm and majestic as the rock of Gibraltar.

"Sir Bishop," said the chief of the knights, a youth with a most beautiful and smiling face, "we are come to request your speedy attendance upon our lord the king, who with any other than yourself would have been much displeased at your perverse absence, after you have been bidden by the steward of the household."

The bishop rubbed, shut, and opened his eyes. — "Am I bewitched," thought he to himself, "or do I dream?"

"Neither the one nor the other," said the knight, who perfectly understood the bishop's cogitations.

"No? What, then, does all this mean?" inquired the bishop. "When did my lord the king return from Picardy?"

"Proceed into the castle," replied the knight, "and let him answer for himself."

"If these people consider this a joke," thought the bishop, "I by no means think it one. At all events, come what come may, I will follow up this strange adventure, and be even with these gentlemen. I have not a bishop's garment," said he, addressing the seneschal; "how can I appear before the king, accoutred as I am?"

"Knowing how much you are addicted to hunting," returned the seneschal, "the king will assuredly receive you in your usual costume."

"Tut, fool!" said the bishop sneeringly; "do you forget, or has your time been so engrossed with epicurean pursuits, that you have not learnt how a guest, though bidden, was punished because he attended a supper-party without a proper garment? Find me a becoming dress, and I will instantly attend his highness' pleasure."

"If you will condescend to follow me," said the youthful knight, "a sacerdotal dress shall be procured for you."

The bishop, nodding assent, was then conducted in solemn silence into the wardrobe of the castle, where the obsequious attendants soon arrayed him in a dress fit for a bishop to sit with the king at supper in. It was not such unpretending costume as that in which bishops are at present apparelled; but robes of the tintured colours of the East, which were more apt to remind both the wearer and the beholders of mundane pomps and vanities, than of the humility and simplicity of Christianity. The alb was of most dazzling white, the dalmatica of gold tissue, the stole was embroidered with precious stones, and the chasuble, of purple velvet wrought with orfraise, was also studded with costly orient gems.

The bishop thus splendidly accoutred was conducted with great state and solemnity into the banqueting-room, one of the most magnificent and spacious of the kind. It excelled everything he had ever before seen: odoriferous and fragrant perfumes, fit for a Peri³ to feed on, saluted his nose; his sight was dazzled by splendid and radiant illuminations, the most exquisite music stole upon his ear, and laughter and mirth seemed to be universal; every face (there were many hundreds in the room) was decked with a smile; there wanted but one thing to complete the enchantment of the scene, – the light of woman's laughing eye.

As the bishop entered the hall, five hundred harpers in an instant twanged their harps; and the air resounded with trumpets, clarions, fifes, and other musical instruments, not omitting the hollow drum.

The bishop, being tainted with the superstitious feelings of the age, easily persuaded himself that he was in an enchanted palace; he therefore determined to conform to every custom that prevailed in the assembled company, and by that means he hoped to ingratiate himself with the presiding spirit. When he had reached the centre of the hall, the king (he wore a robe of rich crimson velvet, furred with ermine, over a dalmatica flowered with gold, rubies, emeralds, pearls, and diamonds, and on his head was a splendid crown beyond estimation,) descended from a throne of the purest crystal, and advanced to meet the bishop. As he passed the obsequious nobles, he received their servile adulation with a smile, and, extending his arms, folded the bishop in a royal embrace. The latter surveyed with some awe the brawny shoulders of the king, and regarded with much respect the amber-coloured locks hanging in great profusion down his muscular back. The bishop thought that the aquiline nose, the expansive brow, the large clear azure eye, and the ruddy complexion of his host, about as much resembled those of his own monarch as a terrible-looking bull-dog does a snarling mongrel. But he kept his complimentary thoughts of his host to himself, as he was not at any time of a communicative spirit, – he was a proud, not a vain man, – and he moreover did not know how his compliment might be received.

The king handed the bishop to the upper end of the hall, and placed him at his right hand. No sooner were they seated than twenty trumpeters, in a gallery at the lower end of the room, blew, as the signal for supper to be served up, three such electrifying blasts, that, had the building not been as substantial as beautiful, it must have been shaken.

As the loquacious seneschal, in tempting the bishop to quicken his steps to supper, has put us in possession of many of the various articles provided for this festive entertainment, we shall not weary our reader by recapitulating them; but content ourselves with stating that, in addition to the solid fare,

³ The Peris of Persian romance are supposed to feed upon the choicest odours; by which food they overcome their bitterest enemies the Deevs, (with whom they wage incessant war,) whose malignant nature is impatient of fragrance.

there were exquisite and delicate fruits and viands, with wines and liqueurs of the choicest quality and flavour. The supper-service was of the most superb description, frosted silver and burnished gold; the goblets, vases, and wine-cups were of crystal, mounted in gold richly carved. Such a feast the bishop had never seen or tasted; and yet he was, like many of his predecessors and successors too, perfectly familiar with the charms of eating and drinking.

Nothing produces good-fellowship, intimacy, and conviviality more than a good supper. We do not mean the cold, formal, and pompous supper given to a fashionable party of the present day; but such as were peculiar to by-gone days, when the table groaned under hot and solid joints, and the company, with good appetites as provocatives, ate and drank right heartily, – when glee and joy sat merrily upon every face, and the glass went briskly round. Even misanthropes or proud men could not be insensible to such festive scenes; their hearts would necessarily warm as the exhilarating wine washed away their gloomy and proud thoughts.

The bishop soon became familiar with his host, ate, drank, laughed, and was merry; (we will not so scandalise the Bench as to presume that he was drunk, although the Chronicle of Lanercost insinuates as much;) the conversation was brilliant, the wit bright and poignant, and the repartees flashed, and often rebounded upon the discharger.

To put a direct or pointed question at any time is, to say the least of it, ungentlemanly; it very often gives dire offence, is seldom admired or tolerated even by your most intimate acquaintance; and men are seldom guilty of it, unless in their cups, or with a desire of insulting: – how unpalatable must it be to royalty! As we know it was the bishop's desire to keep upon good terms with his host, it is but natural to infer that he would not intentionally insult him by any rude question. If, therefore, any rudeness occurred on the part of the bishop, it is charitable to set it down to inebriation, or perhaps to the bishop's habit of putting questions in the confessional.

To the ineffable surprise of the king, the bishop was so injudicious as to ask his host, in the most direct and pointed manner, who he was, and whence he came there.

No sooner had the bishop attempted to satisfy his prying curiosity by what appeared to him a very natural question, than the hall shook as if Nature were indignant at his presumptuous inquiry; the whole place was filled with an effulgent lambent light so brilliant, that it entirely eclipsed the blaze of the variegated lamps that burned in the hall; a low murmuring wind followed. The king's eyes seemed to flash liquid fire as he answered, "Know me for what I am, – Arthur, formerly lord of the whole monarchy of Britain, son of the mighty Pendragon, and the illustrious founder of the Order of the Round Table."

The bishop, having a firm heart and buxom valour, was far from being daunted, as most men in a similar situation would have been, and he inquired whether the story then current was true, that King Arthur was not dead, but had been carried away by fairies into some pleasant place, where he was to remain for a time, and then return again and reign in as great authority as ever; or whether he died by the sword-wounds he received from the sons of the king of the Picts; and if so, whether his soul was saved, and come to revisit this sublunary world. The bishop, meditating authorship, asked a thousand other questions relative to the immortality of the soul; and so subtle were they, that, had they been put in these days of sciolism and charlatanry, his fame would have been as brilliant, lasting, and deserved as that of the noble editor of Paley's Theology.

Whether King Arthur did not choose to satisfy the bishop's curiosity, or whether, judging from the usual depth of the human mind, he thought the immortality of the soul a subject too deep and mystic for such moonshine treatises as have been written concerning it, the Chronicle of Lanercost does not inform us. It merely states, that to all the bishop's searching questions Arthur only replied, "*Verè expecto misericordiam Dei magnam.*" He had no sooner uttered those words than a roar, like the falling of mighty waters such as Niagara's was heard, and from the incense-altar another blaze of transcendent light issued: the whole assembly, excepting the bishop, prostrated themselves and chaunted a hymn, which he, mistaking for a bacchanal-venatical chorus, heartily joined in. Upon this

outrage of public decency, the chaunt instantly terminated with a crash resembling what is ignorantly called the falling of a thunderbolt; the altar again smoked, and horrible and clamorous noises issued therefrom, like the bellowing of buffaloes, the howling of wolves, the snarling and barking of hounds, the neighing of horses, the halloo of huntsmen, and the blasts of brazen trumpets, all in heterogeneous mingle. The smoke gradually assumed the appearance of a host of hunters; one of them, evidently their chief, fixed his glaring eyes upon the bishop, and frowned awfully. The bishop did not admire the looks of the hunter-chief, and even winced a little when he raised his ghastly arm, (as a self-satisfied orator does when about to enforce some appalling clap-trap sentiment,) and said in a gruff growl, "I am Nimrod, of hunting fame, and such a hunter was I as the world had not before, or since, or will ever have again. Yet was I no monopolizer of game, or murderer of men to preserve it, as some have unjustly charged me. I loved the chase, and taught my subjects to love it too; but thou, oh Bishop Peter, hast been a cruel hunter, and strict preserver of game. The tongues thou hast dilacerated, the ears and noses thou hast cut off, and the wretches thou hast slain, form an awful catalogue of cruelty, and one that will require tears of blood to wash out. Harken to the lamentations of thy victims, and the bewailings of the widows and orphans thy cruelty hath made! Hadst thou not been so peerless and bold a hunter, I should not have condescended to warn you of the terrible fate you will experience in the world to come, unless you mend your ways. Lover and encourager that I was, and interested as I still am in that manly sport, I would sooner that it were entirely lost to the world than it should be disgraced by human bloodshed. List, I say, to the cries of the victims whom thou hast sacrificed at the altar of Diana, thy divinity!" Loud lamentations were now heard, and a hideous group of dismembered menacing ghosts flitted rapidly before the bishop's wondering sight. He closed his eyes to avoid their angry looks; one writer insinuates that he swooned, but we think that unlikely. Be it, however, as it may, upon his opening his eyes he neither saw Nimrod, his crew, nor any of the victims of the forest-laws. They had every one of them disappeared!

King Arthur, like a brave and magnanimous prince, soon forgot and forgave the bishop's want of good breeding in asking impertinent questions; though he severely chid him for having split so many human noses, and dismembered Christians without the slightest remorse, for so trifling an offence as infraction of the forest-laws: and that, too, within the very precinct of Winchester Castle, where the Round Table was preserved. The bishop thought those offences anything but trifling, and that the souls as well as bodies of the offenders merited the severest punishment, instead of commiseration.

King Arthur then denounced the concupiscence of the dignitaries of the church, and their appetite for, and easy digestion of, the good things of the world; and he declared that they regarded nothing but sensual gratification, and wasted their precious lives in banqueting, hawking, and hunting. He entreated the bishop to leave off his hunting habits, and to take unto those that were more episcopal and less sanguinary. He told him that it would add considerably to his mundane happiness, and tend more to his salvation than ten thousand thoughtless repetitions of the "pater noster" and twelve thousand of the "ave Maria." So much did King Arthur say, needless here to be repeated, that the bishop mentally resolved to profit by the king's advice. But it occurred to him that he could not suddenly leave off hunting without assigning a sufficient reason for his determination; and that if he related what had befallen him, his being a bishop would not entitle him to credit, nor protect him from the derision of his sovereign and his courtiers; for who would believe his most solemn asseveration that he had seen Nimrod, and conversed and supped with King Arthur?

King Arthur, perceiving what was agitating the bishop's ideas, determined to assist in fulfilling so righteous a resolve as the bishop was meditating.

"Extend your right hand," said Arthur; the bishop complied. "Shut it," said Arthur; the bishop did as he was told. "Now open it," continued Arthur. The bishop opened his hand, and there flew therefrom an exquisitely beautiful butterfly.

The bishop, notwithstanding all that he had just before seen and heard, now in real good earnest believed himself bewitched, and heartily wished that he had never forsaken the profession of a soldier

for that of a bishop, to be subject to miracles; for in those days miracles and visions only occurred to the dignified clergy.

King Arthur, compassionating the bishop's perturbation, said, "Whenever in relating your adventure any one doubts it, you shall afford him sufficient autopsy of its verity by sending, at all seasons of the year, a butterfly from your hand, in memorial of me and of your virtuous resolution."

The bishop cordially thanked King Arthur for his kindness and consideration, and swore by the face at Lucca, (his favourite oath,) that as long as he lived, he would never again sound the bugle, follow hounds, nor punish man, woman, or child for infringing the game-laws; and that he would moreover exert all his influence with King John to relax the inhuman severity of the forest-laws.

No sooner had the bishop made a solemn adjuration to that effect than he felt a stunning blow upon his head, which deprived him of all sensation. When he recovered, he found himself lying where Velocipede had thrown him, and the brute quietly grazing by his side.

The bishop vaulted upon his saddle, spurred his steed, and galloped off as fast as the creature could go. After a ride of about five miles, he found his attendants anxiously seeking him. He related all that had occurred, to their great awe and astonishment; but when they had autoptical evidence of the truth of his narration, by his letting loose a mealy-winged butterfly from his hand, their fear and wonder exceeded all bounds.

The bishop's adventure was soon bruited abroad, and thousands flocked from all parts of England, Scotland, Ireland, and even the Continent, to see the man who had supped with King Arthur, and seen the hunter Nimrod. Many more came to witness a miracle performed: a circumstance of rare occurrence to the vulgar in those days, miracles, as we have above observed, being reserved for the private view of bishops and monks. Those pilgrimaging to Winchester always sought and received a blessing from the butterfly hand of the bishop as soon as he was satisfied that a liberal oblation had been made at the high altar of his cathedral.

The frequent repetition of the miracle obtained for Peter the appellation of the Butterfly Bishop; and the offerings at the high altar so greatly augmented his revenue, that he never once repented of his promise to King Arthur. His time was so occupied in performing the miracle and blessing the people, that he had no time, whatever was his inclination, for hunting.

The Chronicler ends this strange story in the following words "*Quid in hoc anima Arthuri mortalis adhuc docere voluerit, perpendat qui melius conijicere poterit*:" – which, for the benefit of our female readers, may be rendered thus, – "What the still mortal soul of Arthur wished to teach by this, let him consider who can best interpret."

A NEW SONG TO THE OLD TUNE OF "KATE KEARNEY."

O, say have you heard of Duvernay?
They tell me she's able to earn a
Hundred pounds in a night,
Such crowds she'll delight —
What *danseuse* is like to Duvernay?

If you e'er go to see this Duvernay,
Just notice her when she shall turn a
Most sweet pirouette,
And you'll never regret
Forking out to behold this Duvernay.

Would you know where you may see Duvernay?
You must go to Pall-mall, and just turn a
Little up a wide street,
When the Opera you'll meet,
And there you'll behold this Duvernay.

Tell me not of Leroux or Taglioni;
One's too stout, and the other's too bony:
If you see them all three,
You'll be thinking with me,
Of all dancers the flow'r is Duvernay.

F.G.

City of London Institution,
Aldersgate-street.

WHAT TOM BINKS DID WHEN HE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH HIMSELF

Is it creditable to that very respectable academical abstraction, that indefatigable pioneer to the march of intellect, (which some imagine to be the rogues' march,) the *schoolmaster*, notwithstanding his ubiquity, and his being lately abroad on his travels, that the medical faculty, with all their appliances of pill and book, have not up to this hour been able to devise a remedy for a very commonplace disorder, so feelingly enunciated in that touching and eloquent exclamation, "I really don't know what to do with myself!" or to ascertain in what category of diseases incident to humanity it is to be placed? Like hydrophobia, it has baffled the ingenuity of the faculty, who summarily disposed of the evil between two feather-beds; and, though no effectual remedy has been devised for this pet malady, a feather-bed, or an easy-chair, has been found to operate as a sedative. One thing is clear; that, of all the ills that flesh or spirit is heir to, this interesting disorder possesses as respectable a degree of obstinacy and virulency as ever humanity had to cope with.

Talk of being dunned for your own or anybody else's debt; talk of a favourite horse or dog falling sick just as you are ready to mount, and the scent reeking hot on the stubble; of being bored, no matter with what; talk – even if one is put to that – of the devil; and what are all these petty annoyances to that sublime of *blue-devilism* to which a poor devil is reduced, when, in his extremity, he reposes his hands on his "fair round belly," or thrusts them to the very bottom of his breeches' pockets, with not a cross there to keep the devil out, and feelingly exclaims, "I really don't know what to do with myself!" One may double the corner on a dun, or stop his mouth for three months together with a promissory note, though at the end of that period it may be as fructifying as any note of admiration; or, at worst, pay him and be d – d to him, and there's an end. That biped Shank's mare is a very respectable animal, which you may borrow; or any body else's who may be disposed to lend. In case of a *bore*, you may retaliate, and *perforate* in your turn. You may defy the devil, though backed with this world, and his own, and the flesh to boot. But when that *ne plus ultra* of blue-devilism attacks you, what's the remedy? I don't know – do you? but this I know; that it is the most rascally, &c. &c. &c. kind of malady, will be generally admitted.

Your poor devil at the East-end, and your devil-may-care fellow of the West-end, are equally honoured by its visitation; while your happy, active middle-man, who stands aloof from either end, sturdily bids it defiance, and slams the door in its face. Under the influence of this visitor it is that sundry pious pilgrimages are made to the foot of Waterloo or Blackfriars' bridges, to steal out of life through an archway, unless the dear enthusiast is interrupted by a meddling officious waterman, and his senses gently wooed back by the resuscitating apparatus and warm blankets of the Humane Society. Will Sprightly, with four thousand a-year unincumbered, doesn't know what to do with himself, and straightway falls to the agreeable occupation of encumbering it, and, when it will bear no more, he finds he cannot bear himself, and incontinently flies from one state of suspense to another, and hangs himself; or, should the ruling passion be strong in death, and he is desirous even then to cut a figure, why, he cuts his throat; or, the report of a pistol will give you a pretty correct intimation of his whereabouts, and his probable occupation. "Temporary insanity" is uniformly the verdict of your "crowner's 'quest" on such occasions; even a physician of any repute will honestly state on ordinary occasions, particularly when the patient has the benefit of his skill and experience in helping him to leave this wicked world, that he died of such and such a disorder, and will manfully state the name of the disorder, and the world gives him credit for his skill and integrity. Would gentlemen serving upon "crownors' 'quests" imitate this heroic example, instead of recording the foolish verdict of "temporary insanity," they would say, "The deceased *didn't know what to do with himself!*" This would be intelligible, and the faculty might stumble upon a remedy; but "temporary insanity" is too

transitory, too fugitive to be grappled with, too vague and indefinite in its very name ever to do any good, and the patient is generally "past all surgery" before one suspects he is attacked with insanity, be it ever so temporary or evanescent: but in honestly recording that "he didn't know what to do with himself, *and thereby came by his death*," it would be but doing justice to that interesting malady. Thus it could be easily observed in all its stages, from its incipient symptoms at the gaming or any other well-garnished table, where it sometimes takes its rise, through all its phases and evolutions, till the malady comes to a *head*, and a man blows out his brains. The disease, through each of these changes, might be stayed in its progress, and society might be benefited by the honesty of the verdict.

Shade of the "mild Abernethy!" how many thousands of thy patients laboured under this disorder! and how often did thy sagacious and provident spirit turn the halter into a skipping-rope, and, in order that thy patients should live, insist upon a few mouthfuls the less!

To a feeling very near akin to this, Tom Binks found himself reduced, as, about twelve at noon, he flung himself into an easy-chair, and sought, from the appliances of its downy cushions, a lenitive for his wounded spirit. His feet on the fender, the fire gently stirred, the curtains still undrawn and shutting out the garish sun, his eye fixed on the glowing landscape formed by the fantastic combination of the embers in the grate, the corners of his fine mouth drawn down in hopeless despondency, as if nothing on earth could elevate them, his hands clasped over his knees, he sat, not knowing what to do with himself.

The room in which Binks sat was small, but elegant; pictures of the most costly description covered the walls, – the most exquisite that owned him or anybody else as *master*; gold and silver had done their work. On the polished surface of the tables were thrown the most amusing works of the day, the last new novel, the lively magazine, the gay album, the serious review, all exhibiting on the same board like so many brethren of the *Ravel family*, in the most alluring and seductive shapes; but they exhibited in vain. With all these elements of happiness around him, what *could* Binks sigh for? With easy possessions, he was the most uneasy of human beings. Did he play, fortune was always in the best humour with him: in the billiard-room the ball bounded from his cue to its destination; in the field his shot was unerring, and the papers regularly chronicled the murder, or the music, of his gun: no man stood better with *ins* and *outs*; his maiden speech was said to be *shy*, simply because it *was* maiden, but full of promise. With the ladies he was whatever he or they pleased; but now you could "brain him with my lady's fan" as he sits vegetating, or cogitating, on a pile of cushions, his breakfast scarcely touched, and hardly sensible of his shaggy friend that lay couched at his feet, with his snout buried in the hearth-rug, and his bloodshot eye occasionally wandering in search of a regard from his listless master.

At an early age Binks had contrived to run through half the Continent and his fortune together; he had travelled from "Dan to Beersheba," and all was barren; and, at twenty-three, the gay Binks had serious notions that *this* was not the best of all possible worlds, and that *that* world, commonly known as the other, to distinguish it from this, might hold out a store of enjoyment of higher zest and relish than the common-place realities of this. Whether he should wait for his turn when the passage to it might become quite natural, or force his way *vi et armis*, that is, with a pistol in hand, (for some folks *will* be impatient, and enter in at a breach,) was a matter that sorely perplexed him. Tired of this hum-drum life, which a man of common activity can exhaust of its most stimulating excitements in a few years, was it surprising that he wished for *another*? But the doubt that it was a better, would sometimes intrude itself, and agitate the very powder in the pan of the pistol that lay before him on the breakfast table. Now that the murder is out, it must be confessed that Binks had a notion of shooting himself.

What heroic resolves he then made! What a noble contempt for this world he then exhibited as he resolutely eyed the pistol, curiously scanned its silver mounting, saw that the powder was in the pan, looked anxiously around to see that none intruded, or should deprive him of the honour of falling by his own hand: still he hesitated; he lifted the deadly weapon with one hand, and with the other a

volume of Shakspeare, which opened at the play of *Hamlet*, and, by the hasty glance which he threw on it, he perceived that "the Eternal had set his canon 'gainst self-slaughter," and Binks was perplexed. It became now a matter not so much of life and death as of simple calculation; on one side there was a pistol *for*, and on the other a *canon* 'gainst self-slaughter. In this state of indecision, thus sorely beset with adverse arguments, what did Binks do? Why, he acted somewhat like a sensible man; he yielded to the heavier weight of metal, – the great-gun of Shakspeare carried it; and he consented to live, drew the charge, lest he should return to it, (for he knew his man,) and made up his mind that Shakspeare was a sensible fellow. Have you ever felt as if your very heart-strings were tugged at by wild horses, when the infernal host of *blues*, marshalled by the devil himself, have taken the field against your peace, and that you don't know what to do with yourself?

"Throw but a stone, the giant dies."

Very good; but a pebble of such potency is not always at hand, particularly in a drawing-room. Do something, no matter what: go into the open air; there's your window invitingly open, and, provided it is not too far from the ground, 'tis but a step in advance to the shock that may rouse you. Turn financier, – chancellor of your own exchequer; there's your tailor's bill lying on the table, wooing you to analyze its soft items; give it a first reading, and pass it. What a relief, on such occasions, is the presence of any living creature! – your sleek tabby, – no, – that fellow doesn't know what to do with himself neither. Your playful little Italian grey-hound, whose playfulness is the very poetry of motion. And Binks found no relief in these gentle appliances. There he lies, flung upon his ottoman, and dallying with its downy cushions, with his foot of almost feminine symmetry coquetting with his morocco slipper, jerking it off and on according to the intensity of the fit. Ponto stands before him. Noble dog, Ponto! He, too, has his turn at the slipper, and seizes it in his huge mouth, and gambols round the room with it, and now crouches with it before his master, and earnestly looks at him, and those two eyes of his suggest a double-barrelled gun, and this puts a pistol into his head, and there it was at hand, lying on the table, just ready for a charge.

"Mr. Cently," said a servant, half-opening the door; and Binks indolently extended the forefinger of his jewelled hand to his visitor.

"Very glad to see you, Cently; this mortgage, I suppose – "

"Is over due, Mr. Binks, – must redeem, though. I shan't let it out of the family. The sum is large – hard to get – bad times. Fine dog that – bulls and bears are very sulky to-day on 'Change. – Dear me, a murderous-looking pistol that, sir – muzzle to muzzle – then brains against the wall."

"Provided he has them," said Binks.

"Every man has a little – quality's the thing. I have to meet Scrip in the City at two – no time to lose, sir;" and Binks, who was made aware of the necessity of a visit to the City, to arrange the terms of a loan, put himself under the plastic hands of Bedo, and in a few minutes the pair were rolling towards the City in Cently's carriage, which thundered along, scarcely waiting to take the necessary turns, and narrowly escaped running down several old women of both sexes, till they came to Charing-Cross.

"Money is scarce in these times," said Cently, as a sprinkling of cabs and omnibuses impeded their course; "broad acres are fine things. I mustn't let them go. The sum is large – ten per cent."

All this, and a few other equally interesting particulars, were lost upon the abstract Binks, who was quietly lolling back in the carriage, and exercising his optics and calculating powers on the size, number, and colours of the tom-cats as they sunned themselves on the gutters, or held attic intercourse with one another, between May-fair and Temple-bar.

"You understand me," continued Cently; "let me see; how many thousands? I think it cannot be under fourscore, – great amount that!"

"Not quite so many," said Binks; "I only counted sixty, and I'm correct to a tail; bet you a rump and dozen on it."

"On what, sir?"

"On the cats, Cently."

"Ha! ha! Very facetious, Mr. Binks; but I'm not joking."

"You bore me, Cently. Set me down here. Go, and do the needful; and when all's ready to sign and seal, you'll find me here;" and Binks alighted from the carriage, and ascended the stairs of the Mansion-house, which was then alive with sounds and sights of gladness: a kind of fancy-fair was being held there for the benefit of some charitable institution, and the *élite* of the North, and wealth of the East and West ends were combined in the holy cause of charity. He entered, and mingled with the gay groups that promenaded the hall, which was converted into a bazaar, where beauty and *bijouterie* lured the careless purchaser, – where a thousand soft things were said and handled, and the angel of charity spread her wings over a scene where streamed and flaunted many a silken banner, and pointed to every little stand. "Happy country!" thought Binks, "that, amid all the anxieties and contentions of commerce and politics, remembers in these noble institutions the cause of the widow and the orphan. This must be the surest mart for beauty when she's found at a stand in the sacred cause of charity. Here the thoughtless forget themselves, and think of others; here the merchant is generous, and forgets his change."

"I ain't a-going to be done out of my half-crown that way neither, ma'am," said a burly little personage in top-boots and perspiration to a lovely girl who presided at a stand, and who was trying to lure a supplementary half-crown, the balance of a half-sovereign, which, after much grumbling, he consented to pay for a shaking mandarin. The thorough-bass in which this was uttered roused Binks from his reverie, and, on looking round, he beheld the lovely girl in playful yet earnest contention for the half-crown, which the fat little man finally surrendered to a few persuasive looks, and good-humouredly pocketed his shaking mandarin and his chagrin together, and marched off.

Binks approached, and as she raised her eyes from the gay assortment before her, still animated with the pious contention in which she was engaged, they encountered those of Binks, who was riveted to the spot gazing at the beautiful creature that stood before him. He turned over a few articles, and became at once deeply immersed in the gay little miscellany before him. She would show everything. – Yes, – the articles were of the best description; and Binks felt those taper fingers, as they tossed them about, as if they were busy with his heart-strings; and the perverse Binks asked twenty different questions, and got as many answers eloquent and sweet: and then there were looks lustrous and shy, and blushes deep and enchanting; and she would go on expatiating on the beauty of her *bijouterie*, and he would stand absorbed and drinking in the sweet sound of a voice that was modulated with the sweetest harmony, – and she would help him to a pair of gloves. Binks took several pairs. The first he tried on were very perverse, – too tight; and the fairest hands in the City would distend them, and she would help to draw them on; and then their palms would meet, and their fingers seek one another, and the taper finger of the sweet girl and the jewelled hand of Binks would be imprisoned unconsciously for a few seconds in the same glove.

"I shall take the whole," said he, and Julia (for that was her name) was delighted; and Binks was asking for more, and pulled out, – not his purse, but the disappointed hand that was seeking for it. – The purse was not there.

No doubt it was that very civil gentleman that rubbed against him as he was stepping out of the carriage, and apologised. Here was a grab at heart-strings and purse-strings together. He drew out a box set with brilliants, – it would stand him at a pinch, – and took a small one from the stand, and he would exchange boxes. And this was love, – love at first sight, – which we would match all the world over with any at second sight.

"Oh, love! no habitant of earth art thou."

Henceforth shalt thou take thy *stand* at a bazaar, and we shall bare our bosom to thy shafts, provided they be tipped with a little charity, and drawn in the holy cause of a benevolent institution! The hours lingered on as if they too had come to a stand, the evening stole on apace, group after group vanished from the bazaar, and Binks and Julia were still in sweet and endearing communion with each other. The evening was chilly, and he would help on her splendid cachmere; and the loveliest arm in the City leant on Binks as he led her down the steps of the Mansion-house. The evening was fine, and he would see her home; and both wondered to find themselves at her father's door. And then there was a sweet good-night, and kind looks, and gentle pressings of the hand, and promises to meet again.

"Want a coach, sir?" said a heavy-coated, slouched-hat brother of the cab to Binks, as he stood wondering at himself, his adventure, and the fairy figure that a smart servant in livery had just closed the door upon.

"Yes – no, – I – I'll walk, friend, – the night's fine;" which healthy resolution he was induced to take from certain reminiscences, and his purse, though absent, was thought of with regret.

And Binks trod his perilous way through the "palpable obscure" of the City with buoyant spirits, as if a pinion lifted every limb, notwithstanding a little plebeian pressure from without through Cheapside, as often as he forgot his own side of the way; and he entered his club the happiest dog that ever moonlight, or its rival luminary gas-light, shone upon, and surrendered himself to the intoxicating influence of the only draught of pure pleasure he ever quaffed.

Julia Deering was the only daughter of a rather comfortable trader, a man well to do in the world, – that is, in the City. Business – business was at once his solace and his pride, and any pursuit or avocation in life of which that bustling noun-substantive was not the principal element, was an abomination in his sight. The West-end, he thought, had no business where it stood. He looked upon it as a huge fungus, the denizens thereof good for nothing; and lords – no matter of what creation – he looked upon with the most supreme contempt. Julia was his only child, and, next his business, the sole object of his solicitude. She grew into loveliness and womanhood amid the smoke and seclusion of her father's premises; and, though turned of "quick seventeen," yet he thought that her settlement in the world, like the settlement of an account with an old house in the City, might take place at any time. Any hint to the contrary, whether through the eloquent and suggestive looks of the maiden herself, or the unequivocal assiduity of City beaux, was sure to make the old man peevish.

Julia, with a world of sense, had a spice of romance about her. She loved the West-end, or anything pertaining to it, as much as her father hated it. A noble mirror in her little boudoir, as she toyed and coquetted with her budding beauties before it, frequently hinted that she might be a fine lady; which could only come to pass by her becoming the wife of something like a lord. City beaux were her aversion. They looked at her through *stocks*, and she often wished their necks in them.

Many were the stolen visits to the City which Binks made to see his young betrothed. His suit prospered, – Julia was everything he could wish; but as fathers *will* be in the way on such occasions, – how can they be so hard-hearted? – and as something like his consent was deemed necessary, Binks, through the medium of a friend, had the old man's sentiments sounded on the subject; and a decided refusal, couched in no very flattering terms, was the result. "I cannot disguise from you," said Julia one evening to Binks, after he had communicated to her the disastrous intelligence, "that there is much to encounter in my father's disposition. He is old and wealthy, with only myself to inherit it; and – would you believe it? – he has the greatest aversion to a man of rank, and thinks superior manners and accomplishments only a cover to heartlessness and deceit; and, what is strange, he has repeatedly said he will never consent to my union with anybody as long as he is in anything like health, – in short, till he is no longer able to protect me himself."

"That is strange indeed!" said Binks, as he hung with the tenderest rapture on the confiding frankness and simplicity of his fair companion; "your father's objections are no less serious than strange."

"Can nothing," inquired Julia despondingly, "be done to get over them?" Had Echo been present, she would have said, "Get over them."

"There can, there can," said Binks with transport; "I have it. So long as your father is in good health, he will never give his consent to your marriage. Now he is old: and suppose he can be persuaded that he *looks* ill, – such things, you know, are done, – and contrive that he shall keep his bed for a few days; and then, – and then, my dear girl, let the affair be again pressed upon him." And Binks met the ingenuous blush and smile of his young betrothed as she acquiesced with an embrace, in which was blended more heartfelt rapture than ever he experienced in the dissipated round of tumultuous and exciting pleasures.

"The times are certainly very bad, Julia," said old Deering to his daughter, as they were at breakfast one morning together; "I never recollect them so bad;" and he helped himself to a large slice of ham.

"They may be bad, pa," said the daughter; "but you mustn't take it so much to heart. Everybody notices how ill you look since the firm of Dobody and Sons went."

The old man suspended a piece of ham, that he had impaled on a fork, midway between his mouth and plate; and, planting his right hand on his thigh, he looked earnestly at the girl.

"What connexion, hussey, has that failure with my looks or my books either? As long as I can keep both free from blotches, I don't care a fig for what the world says. But I do believe, girl, that I am not as well as either of us could wish, – I am fallen off in my appetite. I *could* finish my ham, – three slices, – and a few eggs; but I am a little changed, Julia. Hussey, you've a sharp eye; and to notice it!"

"Lord! pa," said the insidious Julia, "all your acquaintance notice it. Mr. Coserly was the first to notice it."

"And what did the rascal say?"

"Why, pa, he said nothing; but there was a great deal in *that*. When certain people say little or nothing, they mean a great deal; and when there is a great deal of meaning in what one does not say, why, it's a very dangerous thing; isn't it, pa?"

"Very true, child, very true. But what can we have for dinner to-day, Julia? I expect an old friend of mine, Mr. Tibbs over the way; a very proper, industrious, well-to-do-in-the-world kind of man is honest Dick Tibbs. He owes me a trifle, – but that is nothing between us. He is none of your West-end chaps, – no lack-silver spendthrift, – no hair-lipped, hair-brained scamp, with all his fortune on his back, like a pedlar and his wallet. – Another cup of tea, Julia. – As I was saying, honest Dick Tibbs is – ' But what's the matter with the girl? Why, there's the tea running out of the urn these last two minutes about the floor. Why, Julia, what *is* the matter? Ah! I see how it is – I thought as much. Ye're a cunning pair. But not yet a while, Julia; time enough, girl, – time enough. When your dear mother was – "

"I – I – wo-o-on't be Mrs. Ti-i-bbs for all that, pa," hysterically sobbed Julia; "I won't be married – "

"That's a dear love!" whimpered the old man; "don't think of marrying him yet until I'm – . But I'm pretty strong yet. I'll live, so I will, till – ugh! – ugh! – these rheumatics – as long as – Deuce take this old cough!"

"As long as God pleases, pa; as long as God pleases," said Julia; and she slid her arm coaxingly round her father's neck, and wiped away the perspiration that stood like whip-cord upon his brow; and he fell to musing on the girl's words, and left his breakfast unfinished.

In the course of that week, through the industry of his daughter, the old man was plagued wherever he went with condolence and inquiries about his health, which he heard with all the petulance and irritability of a miser upon whose hoards an unexpected demand is to be made. He

accordingly dosed himself with physic, gorged himself at his meals, and took such peculiar pains to preserve his health after this fashion as would have deprived any other person of it.

A circumstance at length occurred that bade fair to supersede the necessity of Julia's pious artifice, and to produce ill looks in abundance in the old man. A house with which he was connected failed, and involved him in its ruin. This was a blow that smote the old man to the heart, and he sank under it. Everything was surrendered to the creditors; and his house, with its splendid furniture, was submitted to the hammer of the auctioneer.

On the morning of that day a note was put into Binks' hands; it was from Julia, and to the effect "that as her father's ruin left her no alternative but to share his lot, she could not, under such circumstances, think of involving him in their ruin, and begged he would think no further of the matter."

"Poor girl!" said Binks, as he gazed on the note that told so briefly of so much calamity. What a real *bonâ-fide* misfortune was, crushing and accumulating, and, as it were, breaking the man's heart within him, he had no idea of, except what the pathetic in a novel, or the chapter of accidents in a newspaper, furnished. These things were well enough to read, and to talk about, at a clear fire-side; but for a substantial display of energetic and effective sympathy, by succouring the distressed, it was what he did not think himself capable of. A second time, however, he mastered his indolence, and drove to Julia's house.

What a situation was it in, and what a sight did it present! If there is in this world a scene more harrowing to human feeling than another, 'tis that presented by one's house on the eve of an auction, – a scene of "confusion worse confounded." The tossing about and displacing, by strange hands, of articles that from time and association have become part and parcel of ourselves, linked with a thousand sweet recollections, and the innocent display of which was a source of dearest household pleasure, now parcelled and ticketed out, and catalogued, for the curious and malevolent hands and eyes of strangers! Our dearest and holiest places of privacy intruded upon; our sweet little nooks and haunts, which are, as it were, set apart for the most favoured of our household gods, and where only the footsteps of tenderest love should be heard, now echoing and teeming with strange sounds and sights!

What a sad volume, and in boards too, is a piece of carpeting piled in a corner of a room, revealing the unsightly seams of the naked floor; and "the decent clock," with its hands either broken or pointed to the wrong hour! The bleak and cheerless hearth, every brick of which was an object for the vacant and listless gaze of a pensive abstraction, the scene of sweet gambols and merry gossipings, all are sad mementos of the "base uses" to which the iron hand of necessity will convert objects dear to us from the sweetest household associations.

Elevated in his pulpit, the eloquent Mr. Touchem, the auctioneer, presided; and, seated beside him, the very picture of broken-heartedness, was old Deering, bent, and leaning forward on his gold-headed cane, his eye vacant and listless, looking at every article with the curiosity of a child, speaking not a word, and only betraying his interest in the scene by a sympathetic stamp of his cane on the floor whenever the nervous and grating click of the auctioneer's hammer on his desk announced the sale of some favourite article. There was one lot only which he showed any anxiety to possess, and as the porter handed it round, the old man's countenance gleamed with pleasure as his eye wistfully followed it: it was the representation of a little spaniel worked in worsted, and the joint work of Julia and his deceased wife.

"Rascal!" exclaimed the old man, as the porter somewhat roughly rubbed the dust off it, "be tender of the poor thing. That's Julia's. I – I bid for that; I bid five pounds for that," said the old man, in a voice scarcely articulate with emotion.

"Six pounds," said a voice in the crowd.

"Who bids against me?" muttered old Deering, as he ran his eye over the group whence the voice issued. "It was the work of my poor child's hands, and of her dear departed mother. Another pound for it, Mr. Auctioneer."

The same voice bid against him.

The old man raised himself in his chair, gazed wistfully and imploringly in the direction of the voice, and sank back in sullen resignation in his chair.

"Going for eight pounds – once – twice – the last time!" and the sharp and sudden click of the auctioneer's hammer, as it fell, came with a harsh grating sound on the ear of the old man, as he groaned, and muttered something between a curse and an entreaty.

Old Deering, notwithstanding the utter ruin of his fortune, still continued, from sheer force of habit, to frequent his old haunts; and his drooped and wasted figure, with his well-known *tops* and gold-headed cane, might be seen loitering about the purlieus of the Exchange, inquiring the price of stocks with as much anxiety as ever, and wondering at the ill-manners of some persons who, from his rambling and incoherent expressions, looked upon him as somewhat crazed. He was in truth so.

This was the time for the active benevolence of Binks to show itself; for, except when his indolence stood in the way, he had a heart. He saw Julia, and gave her the most decided assurances of his unaltered attachment, as the old man's malady threatened to become serious. He privately purchased a neat little cottage outside town, and had all the furniture (for he attended the auction, and arranged that every article of it should be bought in,) conveyed to it. He took particular care – for he consulted Julia on the details – that the disposition of the furniture in the new house should, as nearly as circumstances would permit, be exactly the same as in the house in town. Her father's easy-chair, pictures, books, the pianoforte, – for almost every article had been preserved by the management of Binks, – were put into something like their accustomed places; and little Fidelio, the object of contention at the auction, looked quite as brisk as ever, enshrined in his glass-case over the mantelpiece, not a whit the worse for having his jacket dusted. Change of air, and absence from the scene of his former activity, was suggested as the best remedy for the malady of the old man.

To this little cottage Julia and her father drove one day, on pretence of looking for a suitable residence, such as became their altered circumstances. This little cottage struck his fancy, and he expressed a wish to see it. A very agreeable young man showed them over the house. The more he examined it, the more he liked it; every thing in it was so like what he once had.

"Why, Julia, this is your pianoforte! let me hear you play; I'll know it among a thousand;" and Julia played "sweet home" for him, – an air her father always liked. His eye glistened as she played; it reminded him of better days and his old house in the City, and he dropped into his easy-chair. "And Fidelio, the little spaniel! Why, how is this, Julia? – And this gentleman?" and he looked alternately at Binks and Julia. "Ah, hussey! I see how it is; but it's an odd way of coming together."

And Binks was happy – happy as the day was long. Julia and he were married. The gay Binks, like another Hercules, gave up his *club* when he married, and was content with his love in a cottage, with no other interruption to his happiness than the occasional pettishness of the old man, who could never well forgive Binks for outbidding him for Fidelio at the auction. And the malady of *not knowing what to do with himself* never afterwards attacked him, now that the odds were two to one against it.

S. Y.

A GENTLEMAN QUITE

In Bentley's May number I read of a goose,
Whose aim in this life was to be of some use;
Now *I* always act on the opposite plan,
And endeavour to take the least trouble I can:
I sing at no concert, I dance at no ball, —
I'm a gentleman quite, and of no use at all!

When invited to dinner, I'd much rather starve,
Than attempt for some hungry half-dozen to carve;
And folks do exist, who, when dishes are nice,
Won't scruple to send their plates up to you twice:
All vainly for sauces on me do they call, —
I'm a gentleman quite, and of no use at all!

If ask'd for some verses an album to fill,
I don't plead want of time, but admit want of skill;
There's nothing ungentlemanlike in a dunce,
So I state the plain fact, and save trouble at once;
For, rather than write, I'd mend shoes in a stall, —
I'm a gentleman quite, and of no use at all!

When doom'd to the Opera with ladies to go,
I'm not quite so green as to play the old beau;
The fiddlers and dancers are paid to amuse,
And, to stand on their level, is what I don't choose.
When over, for footman or coach I don't bawl, —
I'm a gentleman quite, and of no use at all!

Of my club in Pall Mall I was very soon cured,
They wanted to make me a sort of a steward;
Those persons must surely have owed me a grudge,
To wish me to work as an amateur drudge.
A suggestion so horrible made my flesh crawl;
I'm a gentleman quite, and of no use at all!

I've an uncle, or nephew, or kin of some kind,
Who, to sit in St. Stephen's, once felt much inclin'd;
To his vulgar committee he added my name;
When my poor valet read it, he reddened with shame.
With no mob from the hustings will I ever brawl, —
I'm a gentleman quite, and of no use at all!

But Death's the great leveller: every one knows
Gentility's essence is graceful repose,
And the grave yields repose that must charm e'en a Turk;

No labour or toil there, the worm does the work.
When shrouded, and coffin'd, and under a pall,
Man's a gentleman quite, he's of no use at all!

May, 1837.

J.S.

THE FOSTER-CHILD

"Ten years to-day! Mercy on us, time does fly indeed! it seems but yesterday. And here she sat, her beautiful fair face all reddened by the heat, as in her childish romps she puffed with might and main the fire in this very grate. Dear heart, how sweet a child it was surely! Well, David, say what folks will, I'm convinced there was a fate about it."

Before I relate how far David coincided in this opinion of his "gude wife," I will mention to whom and to what she alluded, and how I had an opportunity of declaring a similar conviction. Seated, after a kind reception by the master and matron, in their best room in the workhouse of L – , at my request they were proceeding to gratify my curiosity, raised by a picture which hung between the windows. The subject and execution were striking: it had been hit off at one of those luckiest moments for the artist, when, unconsciously, the study presented that inspiration to the task which so rarely occurs in what is termed "a sitting for a likeness." On a three-legged stool, with one foot raised upon the fender, and an old pair of bellows resting on her lap, in the act of blowing the fire, – long clustering locks, the brightest yellow that ever rivalled sunbeams, flowing from a head turned towards her right shoulder, from which a coarse holland pinafore had slipped by the breaking of one of the fastenings, – sat a child, apparently eight or nine years of age, in whose face beamed more beauty, spirit, and intelligence than surely ever were portrayed on canvass. Well might the good dame cry, "Dear heart, how sweet a child it was!" Never before or since have I beheld its equal; and the vivid recollection of the wonder I then felt, will never cease to throw its light upon the page of memory till time turns over the new leaf of existence. What admirable grace! how exquisitely free! she seemed indeed to inhale the breath that panting look bespoke a lack of. What joyous fire in her large blue eyes! and then the parted laughing lips, and small pearl teeth! the attitude how careless, and most natural! all appeared as much to live as if all actual. But, little do I hope, gentle reader, to excite in you as lively an interest for the original, by my weak tints of simple black and white, as the glowing colours of the picture roused in me. I will not attempt it; but at once proceed with the story appertaining to the object of my inquiry, as narrated by the worthy matron of "the house."

"Do you tell the tale, Bessum," said honest David, addressing his spouse, whose name, from Elizabeth and Betsy, had undergone this farther proof of the liberties married folks take with one another. "Do you tell the tale, and, if needs be, I can help you on, where you forget any part of it."

"Ah! you're a 'cute fellow, David," said Elizabeth; "you know how to set an easy task as well as any one, 'specially when it's for yourself to go about; but, never mind, I won't rate 'e for 't, for I know 'tis a sad subject for you to deal with."

Bessum was evidently right, for the tear that stood trembling for a moment in the corner of David's eye as she spoke, rolled unheeded down his cheek; while the handkerchief that seemed to have been taken from across his knees for the purpose of concealing the simplicity of the tribute his honest heart was paying, was employed, for at least the tenth time that day, to brush the irreverent dust from the picture of his "poor dear child."

I was affected to a degree for which I was unable to account, by the touching sigh poor David heaved as he replaced the handkerchief on his knees, and resigned himself to the pangs my curiosity was about to inflict on him. There was a tender melancholy in the kind creature's face that seemed to mark the lacerated feelings of intense affection. I could have pressed him to my breast in sympathy of his sufferings, for I was already a sharer of his grief before I knew the cause of it. It was at this moment that the dame began her story in the words of my commencement.

"Ten years to-day," said she, "since that picture was painted, sir."

"Ah, my poor dear child!" sighed David; from which ejaculation I inferred that I was about to hear a tale, of which his own daughter was the heroine: but I was soon undeceived by his wife, who thus proceeded: —

"It ben't necessary to go farther back into the dear child's life than to the day on which she was first placed with me to nurse. Who she is has nought to do with what she is, or the story of her life; certain sure it is she was the loveliest babe I ever saw, and I and David were as proud of her as if she were our own, bless her dear heart! How everybody talked about her! and how all the folks did love her too, surely! I can't tell ye, sir, how beautiful she was; and, as she grew, her beauty kept good pace with her years, I promise you. She was nine years old the day the painter came to make a likeness of her for her father. Here she sat in this very room, just as you see her in the picture, sir: she had run in from the garden where she had been at romps with poor George, and was puffing away at the fire with an old pair of bellows which she found among the lumber in the tool-house, when the gentleman, whom she did not notice at first, was arranging his matters for the painting of the picture. It was at the moment that she turned round to see who was in the room, that, as he said, he was so struck with her lovely face he could have taken her likeness if he had not seen her a moment longer; and, sure enough, he was not out much in his reckoning, for scarcely had he taken his pencil in his hand before the little mad-cap bounded out of the room, and ran off to her playmate in the garden. That is a copy of the picture, sir; and if the poor dear child were sitting here as she was on that day, she couldn't look more like herself than that painting does to me."

David was in the very act of again converting his handkerchief into a duster; but, after a momentary struggle, for once in a way he pressed a corner of it to his eyes, and kept his seat.

"Of all those, barring myself and David," continued the dame, "who loved the sweet child, – as, to be sure, everybody did more or less, – none seemed to dote on her so much as the young gentleman who was then our village doctor's assistant, and poor George."

"And, pray, who was poor George?" said I.

"Ah! sir, his is a sorry story too; but of that anon. He was a gentleman born, sir, bless his dear soul! but, before he was barely out of his teens, study and such like turned his wits, and poor George was placed in our care, an idiot. Oh! how he would watch and wait upon his "young mistress," as he used to call the dear child! and Harri – for so we nicknamed our little Harriet – seemed to look up to him for all her amusements and happiness. Good heart! to see him racing round the garden till he was fairly tired and beat for breath, trundling her in the wheelbarrow, and fancying himself her coachman; and then how he'd follow her wherever she went, as if to protect her; always at a distance when he fancied she didn't wish him with her, but never out of sight. She appeared to be his only care; his poor head seemed filled with nothing but thoughts of her. His friends used to send him trinkets, and money, and baubles, to amuse him; and his greatest pride was to take little Harri into his room, and show her his stores, hang his gilt chains and beads about her neck, seat her in his large arm-chair, and stand behind it as if he were her footman, and play all kinds of pranks to make her laugh; for he seemed pleased when she laughed at him, though he wouldn't bear a smile from anybody else at the same cause. His senses served him at times, and then he would fall into fits of the bitterest melancholy as he sat looking in our sweet child's face, as if reflecting how much he loved her, and how little his wandering mind was able to prove his affection! Ah, poor dear fellow! it's well his sufferings ended when they did, for they would have been terrible indeed if he had lived till now; but all who loved her best, fell off from her either by death or desertion when her day of trouble came."

David's resolution was plainly wavering as to the application of his handkerchief, when Bessum gave it the turn in favour of the picture on perceiving her husband's emotion, by adding,

"As for David and myself, you know, sir, we are nobody; it would be strange indeed if we could ever have turned our backs upon the dear child."

"God forbid!" said David; and little Harri's portrait received the extra polish breathed upon it by a deep sigh, previous to the ordinary one emanating solely from the handkerchief. "God forbid!" repeated David, and Bessum added a hearty amen as she resumed her story.

"As the sweet child grew up," continued she, "she was the talk of all tongues far and near; and, before she was fifteen, sir, gentlefolks came from all parts to see her. A fine time we had of it surely;

first one pretence, and then another, kept us answering questions and inquiries about her all day long. As for Dame Beetle, who kept a little shop, and sold gloves, over the way, just facing this window, she made a pretty penny by the beauty of our sweet child, although the old simpleton thought it was the goodness of her gloves that brought her so many gentlemen customers. Why, I have known no fewer than five or six of the neighbouring squires, – ay, and lords too, – so difficult to fit, that they've been standing over the little counter by the hour together; but I warrant not to much purpose, as far as the real object of their visit was concerned. No sooner did horse, or gig, or carriage stop in the village, than dear Mr. George, – that is him that was with the doctor, you know, sir."

"Oh, his name was George too?"

"Yes, that it was, sir; and down here he would run as fast as legs could carry him, and his first question was always, 'David, where is little Harri? Take her into the garden.' And here he would sit till the gentlefolks opposite were gone away. If ever one creature did dote upon another, Mr. George loved that sweet child. Ah! would to Heaven he had lived to make her his wife! but it's all fate, and so I suppose it's for the best as it is; though I would have died sooner than things should have fallen out as they have, if that could have prevented it!"

"A thousand times over," responded David, with a fond glance at the picture. "I'd rather never have been born than have lived to weep over the ruin of such heavenly beauty and goodness."

A chill of horror struck upon my heart as I repeated with inquiring emphasis the word that had produced it.

"The ruin!" said I; "impossible!" and as I raised my eyes towards heaven at the thought of such a sacrifice, they caught those of the victim in the picture. I could have wept aloud, so powerful was the influence of the gaze that I encountered. There sat the loveliest creature that the world e'er saw, – an artless, careless child, health, hope, and happiness beaming in her sweet fair face; her lips, although the choicest target for his aim, the foil of Cupid's darts, so pure, so modest was the smile that parted them; her eyes, the beacon-lights of virgin chastity; her joyous look, the Lethe where pale Care could come but to be lost, – it scared off Woe! And were these made for Ruin to write shame upon! Oh, man! – monster! – ingrate fiend! – I was roused from my reverie by the perseverance of the good dame, who thus took up the thread of her discourse, that my exclamation had broken:

"Ah, poor Mr. George! if he had lived, all would have been well. I make bold to say, for certain sure, they would have been man and wife by this time; for though she used to go on finely at 'that doctor,' as the darling girl used to call him, because he was the cause of her being taken into the garden so often, without knowing why, – for all that, she loved him in her heart, poor dear! as well she might; for, as I said before, he fairly doted upon her. And yet, so delicate was his noble mind, he could never as it were talk seriously to her, – that is to say, not to make any kind of love to her, you know, sir. He had known her from a precious babe; and although his whole heart and soul, I do believe, were set upon one day making her his wife, if so be as she should not refuse him of her own free will, still he felt so almost like a father to her, though he was not more than eight or nine years older than she, that he never could bring himself to fairly pay court to her as a lover, you see."

"God bless his noble heart!" said David, as he rested his elbow on his knee, and his chin on the palm of his hand; "he always said he should be drowned: there's fate again, Bessum, sure enough."

"And did he die by drowning?" said I.

"Ay, sir," replied the dame; "and scarce was he dead, as if they only waited for that, than our sweet child's misfortunes began."

"Destiny, indeed!" thought I, as a superstitious feeling seemed to prepare me for the proofs of it.

"She was just sixteen, and that's nearly five years ago, when she lost him who would have been more than all the world to her, as a body may say, and when Lieutenant H – brought permission from a certain quarter to court her for his wife. Heavy was my poor heart at the thought of parting with the dear child; but more so ten times over, though I couldn't tell why, at the idea of who I was going to part with her to. She, poor darling, was proud of the conceit of being married, and pleased with

the gold lace and cocked-hat of the young sailor. I don't believe the thought of love for him ever once entered her head: but that was nothing, for she would have loved any one who behaved kindly to her; and then to be a wife, and her own mistress, and the mistress of a house! Alack-a-day! she little knew what she was doing when she promised her hand where her heart had not gone before, and where none was beating for her. But it was well she made no objection, for it was to be, whether or no; so she was spared at least the pain of being forced against her will. Well, sir, the wedding-day came, and never do I remember such a day as it was. In vain did the bells ring and the sun shine; folks, spite of all, and of themselves too, couldn't be merry: they smiled, and talked, and tried to appear gay; but, to my plain, honest thinking, there was not a light heart in the village. Poor George, to be sure, was dancing with delight, for he saw the preparations, and the fine clothes, and he heard the bells ringing and the neighbours talking, and he understood that all was for and about his lady, as he then called his old playmate; and the idea of so much fuss and bustle on her account made him as proud and happy as if he were to be the sharer of it. Little did he imagine that it was to end in robbing him of the only comfort of his hapless life, poor fellow; and as the bride and bridegroom came from church, where to the very altar he had followed like a guardian saint, his watchful eye faithful in its duty to the last, he picked up here and there a flower that the villagers had strewn, on which she trod, and stuck them in a row in the button-holes of his waistcoat. But when the time came that our dear sweet child was to be torn from our arms, then was a scene I never shall forget. She bade us one by one good-b'ye, as if she didn't dream of being gone from us a day. It fairly seemed as though Providence had deprived her of all thought. But when she came to take her leave of George, she appeared to shrink from bidding him farewell. She took his hand, and with a fluttering smile said, 'George, I am going for a ride,' and she was gone! For full three hours after, George was missing; and when the twilight made us stir to find where he could be, there by the garden-gate he stood, with the old wheelbarrow at his side, his handkerchief spread out upon it, as he was wont to do when he used to wheel his little playmate in it years ago, — there was he waiting till she should come 'to ride.' Poor, poor creature! he had no idea of the journey that she meant, when she told him she was going for a ride. He knew that he had been her coachman many a time and oft, and he thought of no other carriage than that which he had driven. I burst out a-crying at the very sight of him. There he stood, as confident that she was coming as if he had seen her on the threshold of the door with her gypsy hat on her head. Three hours he had waited; and when I saw him, it would have melted a heart of stone to watch his look, and think upon the misery in store for him. The sun had gone down, and there was not a sound to hear, but now and then the melancholy pipe of a robin, or the distant tinkle of a sheep-bell. Everything seemed sorrowing in silence at our loss; and he that would pine most, alone was ignorant of it. I hadn't courage to call him away and tell him his misfortune; but when David brought him in, and told him that his lady had gone for a ride with the 'new footman,' as the poor fellow called the lieutenant, the anguish in his face was more woeful than you can think of, sir. Every day at the same hour he brought the wheelbarrow to the garden-gate, and kept it there till sunset; then, till he went to bed, he'd sit arranging the withered flowers in his waistcoat. He was never obstinate in refusing to do as he was desired; but, unless he had been bidden to eat and drink, no morsel would have passed his lips: he never thought of hunger or of thirst; his little mistress, his old playmate, and, as he thought her, his only friend, alone occupied his mind, that never wandered now. It was fixed upon one object, and on that it dwelt. Ten months he pined and lingered for his loss; and then, more sensible than he had ever been before, poor George, sir, died!"

"And happy for him that he is no more," said I, anticipating the sequel of little Harri's story. "He has gone down to the cold bed, it is true; but his pillow is far smoother than the down that is pressed in vain for quiet and repose by the heartless and unfeeling."

"True, very true, sir," said David, and I was half in doubt whether the handkerchief would be put in requisition again; but it kept its place across the knees of my host, and Bessum continued. "From the day she left us, sir, we saw no more of our dear child for two years; but sad was the tale that

reached us in the mean while. Think of her wrongs, sir; – the man who had taken her, to be parted but by death, left her the very next day, after he had robbed scores of honest hearts of the chance of proving the sincerity of their love by a life of cherishing and devotion."

"God forgive him!" said David, "for I never can."

"The gallows pardon him! for I never would," cried I. – "And what became of the deserted wife?"

Bessum, who had for nearly an hour stifled the feelings to which she was all that time hankering to give vent, finding this either too seasonable or powerful an occasion to resist, burst into tears; while David, as a counterpoise to the grief which he had heretofore monopolised, evinced a well-timed symptom of stoicism, by folding up his handkerchief at least three times as small as the usual dimensions which laundresses or common consent have established time out of mind as its proper limit, and then thrusting it into the salt-box pocket of his coat, as being the last place, at that particular crisis, to which, under the influence of his senses, he certainly must have intended its destination.

"I shall make short work of the rest on't, I promise ye, sir," sobbed the tender-hearted foster-mother; "it ben't much use to dwell upon the finish."

"End it at once," said I, impatient of farther melancholy detail.

"Twenty-four hours had not passed, sir, after the heartless fellow had become a husband, before he was aboard ship, and on his way to the Indies. He had completed his bargain; he had married our blessed child, and received his wages for the job. He took her to the house of one of her relations near London, and without telling her whither he was going, or when, if ever, he should return, left her as I have described. Fancy the sweet soul's sufferings, sir! – think what she felt when she found herself a widow before she was fairly a wife! Oh! my heart bleeds when I recollect her wrongs! Well, sir, she pined and fretted till those with whom she lived would fain to have got rid of her, I promise you; and it was not long before they had their wish."

"And did the poor child die of her distress?" said I. "Alas! so young!"

"Not just then, sir. You'll scarcely think that the worst of her troubles had yet to come; but so it was, poor dear! As fate would have it, she was one day met and followed home by a gentleman, who, she could not help observing, appeared so struck with her, that, though he did not offer to speak to her, he seemed determined upon finding where she lived. Every day for more than a week did he watch the house nearly all day long; and when at last she went out of doors, he made the best of the opportunity, and began in the most woeful manner to tell her how much he loved her, and what he was suffering on her account, and to beg and pray of her not to be angry with him for what he could not help. Well, sir, he spoke so mild and respectful, and seemed so truly miserable, that the wretched widow couldn't find it in her heart to speak harshly to him, and so at first she made no answer at all. He told her that he saw she had something on her mind that distressed her, and said he felt certain sure he could make her happy, and that not even her displeasure should make him cease from the attempt. And, sure enough, to her, poor thing! he seemed to be as good as his word; for, though she forbade him to approach her in any way again, still he hovered about the house as much as ever, and wrote such letters, telling of his misery and anxiety on her account, that, tired out by the ill-treatment of those to whose tender mercies she was abandoned, sinking under the pangs of her desertion, and beset by the arts and entreaties of a fine young man, who seemed to speak so fairly for her comfort and good, in an evil hour the poor distracted and deluded creature flew to his arms for that protection which in vain was pledged her by a husband. I have already told you that, in my opinion, she never had a thought of any love for the man she had married. It is not to be wondered at, then, that one, who at least professed himself to be all that a husband should be, found no great difficulty or delay in gaining her affections and confidence in return. In short, her young heart, that had never before known the feeling, was now fixed upon this man with all the fondness and devotion of a first love. It was no hard matter, therefore, for him to persuade her to whatever he liked; and the first advice he gave her for her good, was to take a house in the neighbourhood of one of the parks, which he

made his home, eating, drinking, and riding about at her expense. Well, sir, for several months this was a life of uninterrupted happiness for our poor Harri. She had quiet or company as she liked, and the society of him that she loved to madness. The first sign of interruption to the joys that, alas! are always too dearly bought at the sacrifice she had made, was the news of the arrival in England of her husband, and, within two days after that, his appearance at her house. Here was a fine to do, indeed! She was alone in her drawing-room, and no one else in the house but the two maid-servants. In vain did she entreat and resist him; by main force he carried her out of the house; put her into a hackney-coach, without bonnet or shawl; and drove away with her to the house of his mother. That man was born to be her torment and ruin, sir. He had left her when he ought most to have been in her company, and he returned when his desertion had driven her in misery and despair to seek for happiness, in the expectation of which with him he had deceived her, – to disturb the comfort his heartlessness had neglected to afford her. Don't fancy that he loved her, sir. 'Twas no such thing, as I shall soon make clear to you. However, not six hours after she had been taken away, the dear child was home again, and in the arms of the man she would have risked her life for. Here was devotion, sir! She got out of a one-pair of stairs window, by letting herself down with the bed-clothes as far as they would reach, and by jumping the rest; and just as she had been taken from her home, without a bit of outdoor covering, off she set, in the cold and wet of a December night, and had to walk for full a mile and a half before she got the coach that carried her home. Did her husband love her, sir? Day after day he rode or walked past the house, and sent letters to her; but never once offered to seek out the man that kept his wife from him. *Can* he have loved her, sir? To leave her in the quiet possession of another, and take himself off again to the Indies! So much for the husband: – and now for the lover, as he called himself. Matters, I don't know what, took him to France, and he was to return to her who was weary of her life in his absence, within a month. He had not been gone a fortnight before she received a letter from him, written in a French prison, where he was confined for debt. That hour she started post for Dover, and in three days they were on their road home together. Little Harri had released the man she adored, and brought him away from his troubles in triumph and joy."

David's handkerchief, notwithstanding the depth into which it had been plunged, and the compactness with which it had been doubled up, was out of his pocket, unfolded, and across his knees in an instant; evincing a conviction in the mind of its proprietor that that part of Bessum's story was approaching to narration which would certainly call for its application in the united capacities to which David was in the habit of appropriating it.

The dame resumed; for I should mention that she had made a preparatory pause, in the interval of which she took occasion to fortify herself for the coming trial with a considerable pinch of Scotch snuff.

"They didn't reach home, sir," said she, "for more than a fortnight; for they stayed a day here, and a day there, to see the sights, and such like; and because she, poor dear! was in no condition for much hurry, though she had forgotten that, when she started, as she did every thing but her devoted love for him she went to rescue. But, when they did arrive, dearly did our sweet child pay for the fault a husband's cruelty had driven her to commit, and bitter was the punishment of Providence: but it was all fate, I'm sure it was; it must have been; for surely her crime did not call for such a dreadful judgment as befell her. Oh, good heart, sir! think of the poor dear after all she had undergone in a journey to a foreign land, where she had never been before, and all alone, too, sir, without a friend to help or to advise her! She had left a house fitted and furnished like a little palace, as a body may say; the homestead of her high-priced, fatal happiness. Think of her reaching what she thought a home, and finding none! She was soon to be a mother, and she had not a bed to lay her down upon! In the short time that she had been away, the servant in whose charge she left her house, by the help and advice of a villain she kept company with, had carried off every thing, under the pretence that she was moving for her mistress! Ah! you may look surprised, sir, and with reason, *but 'tis just as true as you and I sit here.*"

"God's will be done!" sobbed David, as he buried his face in his handkerchief with both his hands. "She's out of harm's way now, Bessum. God's will be done!" and the simple-hearted man wept like a boy. The tears ran so fast down the sorrowful face of the poor dame, that the relief they afforded her enabled her to proceed to the climax of little Harri's misfortunes.

"She didn't rave and take on, sir," said Bessum. "The hand of destiny was on her, and she felt it. As calmly as though nothing had occurred, she bade the coachman drive to a certain hotel; she seemed to reckon but for a moment between what she had lost and what she had regained, and she was satisfied with the account as it stood. All in the world for which she cared was still spared to her, – she had herself preserved him, the author of her dishonour, the cause of her loss, and, the only compensation for it, the father of her child! These were all she prized; and he who was one and all, now sat beside her. With a smile of resignation, confidence, and content, she looked in his face, and said, "What's to be done?"

The eyes upon the canvass seemed to ask *me* for an answer: I felt that I could beg subsistence for such a woman; become a drudge, a slave, or yield my life up for her sake.

"And what was his reply?" cried I.

"Good advice – good advice, sir," sobbed Bessum. "*He asked her if she did not think she had better go to her old nurse!*"

Mute with amazement and disgust, I sank back in my chair.

"What!" cried I, when the power of articulation returned; "was that the good advice?"

"Ay, sir, – ay! that was all the comfort our poor dear got from her *lover*; she asked him for no more. She didn't upbraid him. He had dealt her death-blow, and she followed his advice; she came to her old nurse, sir, – God be praised! – and I and David closed her precious eyes for ever, after they had lingered, in their last dim sight, on the lifeless image of him, whose name, with her forgiveness, and prayer to Heaven for his happiness, were the last words upon her sweet, sweet lips!"

"And if a special hand is not upraised to strew his path of life with tenfold the sharp pangs that he employed to drive his victim to an early grave," cried I, "it can only be that it has already crushed the monster into death."

My heart was faint and sick at the recital I had heard. I returned to my inn; and all that night – for it was in vain that I attempted to sleep – I mused upon this awful dispensation of the wrath of Heaven, and the dread severity with which the wisdom of vindictive Providence had stricken the transgression of poor little Harri!

Eugenius.

THE WHITE MAN'S DEVIL-HOUSE

A FRAGMENT

BY F. HARRISON RANKIN

"There is a magic in the craft."

Exoterics surmise it to consist in "winks and nods," proverbially of equal inspiration to steeds labouring under the dispensation of *gutta serena*. Mesmer's Animal Magnetism was nothing to the invisible "tractors." Ticklings of the palm have been surmised; talismanic numbers have been hinted at; sounds inaudible have been suggested; together with certain "melodious twangs," awakening pineal sympathy. Mrs. Veal's ghost, from De Foe's autopsy of the apparition, evidently held no less a grade in the scale of shadowy society than that of Master Mason.

John Locke, the philosopher, subsequently one of the fraternity, opined that the art embraced sorcery, alchemy, the transmutation of essences and of metals, together with similar common-place desiderata.

Whatever the nature of the spell, its sway is wide. Affinity of feeling generated by it runs round the world. It may be found in the land of the Chinese, of the Arab, the Red Indian, and the wild Tartar; in the frozen circle, habitat of all seals excepting Solomon's, and in the burning desert,

"Terra domibus negata."

Our story relates to the last pleasant locality.

Upon the windward coast of Africa, in a situation calculated to warm the coolest temperament, stands a European settlement, – a pimple of civilization upon the fiery face of a barbarous continent.

"Once upon a time" a lodge had existed there. Its members had ceased to melt, having gradually melted away; for the constant flux and reflux of white residents, the brief sojourn of many, and the death of an appropriate portion, rapidly vary the population of the little colony. After a lapse of years, however, it was not long since determined that the lodge should be re-opened.

The house formerly used had become ineligible; and, in the true spirit of a mason-soldier, a gallant captain offered to receive his brothers in his own wing of the barracks.

This building was advantageously situated. It crowned the summit of a high conical hill; so that, although the deluges of the rainy season were fast approaching, it could with much facility be closely and effectually tiled. But here, art was still in her swaddling bands; and although, in our accomplished country, bricklayers and plasterers are as "plenty as blackberries," in her colony no tiler could be found.

The name of Solyma, – that prince of architects, and prototype of modern Wrens and Barrys, – his glory, and his power over things seen and unseen, were familiar, especially to the black Mahometan population, to the sojourning Foulah, and the travelled Mandingo; but they possessed neither his skill nor his secret, being as mournfully ignorant of his workmanlike perfections as they are of the name of the mother of Moses. A tiler, however, was indispensable; and here arose a difficulty. What black man, Mahometan or pagan, could be induced to receive instruction; and, regardless of the prophet Mahmoud on the one hand, and, on the other, of Satan, – the principal object of fervid worship

amongst the infidels of those hot parts, – to hazard his well-being in this world, and his sombre soul in the next, by tiling the edifice?

Various were the negro gentlemen invited; but few possessed "hearts big enough." No wonder that in the gold-dust country they should prove deficient in the "*æs triplex*!" One refused upon the very admissible ground that the masons had been accustomed to attend service in the colonial church once annually; and that, claiming to himself the same liberty of conscience which he allowed to others, – being by birth, and subsequently by conviction, of that extensive religious "persuasion" called Pagans, and of the particular sect of the said popular church which worships the devil and reverences dead men's teeth, – he must decline compromising his religious principles, and sanctioning by his presence the heterodox tenets of the English colonial chaplain.

A second, however, had forsaken the Heathen modes of his ancestors, and had waxed into a fervent proselyte, under missionary auspices, in all respects save a tough hereditary prejudice in favour of a genteel establishment of eight or ten wives

"To grind his corn,"

as Mungo Park poetically saith, but

"To pound his rice,"

as it doubtless ran in the original and vernacular glote, whether Fantee, Mandingo, Cosso, Bullum, or Soosoo. This strange conjugal whim, be it remarked, generally is as unalienable, tenaciously tenable, and adhesive to the negro taste, as "roast pig" was to the palate of the mortal Charles Lamb and the immortal "Elia."

This reclaimed pagan, however, professed that he would rather dine on fried soles, that unclean piscatorial; masticate dog's flesh before it had become putrid; disbelieve in witchcraft; or put away a spouse, however freckled, than adjoin himself unto a society whose nominal master indeed might be the Honourable Colonial Secretary, but whose real spiritual president, he well knew, could be no other than Beelzebub the *Bugaboog*, whose ways he had renounced.⁴

The remaining mass of the negro "ton" declined their services on reasons no less satisfactory. They appealed to the yet living reputation of the deceased lodge, which they characterized as *prononcée* to a degree; for the spirit of the building, once redolent of mysteries and fraternity, prolongs a posthumous existence in their imaginings, awful and evitabund. It is desolate, for none will enter it; it is crumbling, for none will repair it; it is shunned as the favourite triclinium of Sathana, Beelzeboub, and Ashtaroth; it is known as

"The White Man's Devil-House."

As incredulous a negress as ever succumbed to Obeah asserted that, from its vague interior, bells were heard to toll, and chains to clank, at the lone hour of midnight, twelve, – when the "sun lived in the bush;" and that many a rash eye had been scared away by goblin apparitions and rank sights. With her own orbs, whilst stealthily prying through a window, had she beheld no less a potentate than Satan himself, sucking the blood of a white cock, and feeding a dead man with palaver sauce.

The idea of secret and mysterious associations is not new to the negroes; they have not borrowed it from the white man. A short reference to the nature of such as are familiar to them will throw

⁴ It is curious that whilst the Hebrew word Beelzebub means "prince of flies," Bugaboo, in negro language, signifies "the white ant," which is deemed the devil's familiar.

light upon the awe with which they regarded the old Devil-House of the white man, and declined the privilege of *entrée* at the new one.

Their own hidden fraternities existed in gigantic organisation, and with withering power, long before the diseased and "craw-craw" complexion of European discoverers was known to the natural inheritors of Warren's jet blacking. Evil rites attend them; and bodily mutilation, and the chance of slavery, are united to supernatural horrors. Well aware of this, they naturally imagine similar diabolic mysteries to constitute the "working" of white man's freemasonry: nay, more; recognising the superiority, the mastery of the whites in all things that come under their observation, they take for granted that the same exists in matters which they do not witness, and, if their own orgies are terrific, they suppose that those of the white man must be intensely more so.

Of all men they are most horribly superstitious, and, in consequence, are victims also to superstitious horrors of the first magnitude. The forest, or bush, the air, the streams, the ground, swarm with a surplus population of Satan's imps and witches. Each moment and each step expose the wayfarer to the gripe of some malicious fiend. To evade the unwholesome clutch, the limbs are ornamented with charms and talismans, with dead men's hair and leopards' teeth. To deprecate and conciliate these animavorous specimens of African zoology no pains are spared, and temples named "Devil-Houses" witness the placatory sacrifices to the spirit of evil.

But this will not suffice. It is not enough simply to protect the person. Associations are formed which recognise the necessity of watching over Satan's interests, by visiting with direful vengeance such members of the tribe at large as may have treated his majesty with less respect than his station entitles him to expect. There are liberalists and spiritual republicans even in Africa.

Some writers, in noticing these associations as similar to freemasonry, have fallen into the same error with the black colonists aforesaid, who refused their aid to tile the lodge because they confounded it with their own tremendous and execrable fraternities.

The secret sisterhoods of Africa have their own peculiar charms and peculiar annoyances. The initiated maidens enjoy much respect, and a singular liability to be sold to the slave-factory; and many inducements are held out to the grand-mistress of the order to dispose of her gentle sisters in this manner, since a well-built maiden, warranted of clever action, of unblemished points, and sound lungs, will find bidders at a hundred hard dollars at any respectable bazaar between Senegal and Guinea. "Inshallah!" (God be praised!) as the Mahometan slave-merchant thankfully observed.

The honour, however, compensates for the danger, and they love to entwine the privileged emblem of their order, the ivory circlets, in the hair; an ornament that glads the heart of the simple ebony maid, as feathers and brilliants rejoice that of the blonde or the nut-brown.

The initiations, alas! are attended with ungentle mutilation of the person; and the trembling and weeping girl is blindfolded, that she may never know the woman who lacerated her. Gashes, however, on the face, arms, breast, and back, are favourite ornaments; they are the unpretending substitutes for rouge and cosmetics. The society is in a flourishing state, and the worshipful mistress derives a considerable revenue by the sale of refractory maidens. The guilt generally arises in the practice of witchcraft and sorcery; – accomplishments assiduously cultivated by the young ladies of Nigritia.

But, to return to our story. Enough has been said to explain how it happened that ideas of awe rested amongst the black colonists upon "The White Man's Devil-House."

The night was of that deep-toned glory unimagined save by those who have watched the firmament of a tropical sky. No moon was up; but the moon-like planets threw upon the sultry ground shadows of man and horse as they slowly wound round the long mountain path that led from the sea-washed capital at its foot, to the summit of the Barrack Hill. As a higher elevation was gained, the suffocating breath of the low grounds became tempered by the land breeze, that floated down by the channel of the wide river, and flung itself rudely upon the hill side. Yet the still, close atmosphere, and the distant flickering of purple and golden lightning far away to the east over the lands of savage nations, warned against loitering for the chance of a tornado. By ones and twos the little straggling

brotherhood alighted at the barrack gates; and there, thousands of miles from Old England and the fire-side of home, men unconnected by birth, by interests, or by office, met, and cordially felt that they were related. Just before entering the chamber whose secrets are bound as by adamant, the eye fell upon a figure sitting in the verandah in the very dignity of overmastering terror. His aspect told that he was following the poet's advice,

"Nimium ne crede colori!"

He was a black man awaiting the ceremony of initiation with much the same intensity of interest that enlivens the criminal at execution. He appeared the living representative of that fear-stricken island tree whose trembling leaves distil a sympathetic dew. He was an old serjeant of the Royal African Corps. Years of discipline had taught him reverence for the tastes of his superiors; and when invited by his officer to tile the lodge, overcome on the one hand by the condescension of the captain, and overwhelmed on the other by misgivings of latent Satanic cajolery, he had plunged into the Rubicon. If his commander had deemed it expedient to form an alliance with so powerful a prince as the prince of darkness, what business had he to do with it? He had fought at Waterloo, and would fight at any time against the devil himself if ordered to the charge; but he had never expected to serve in the same company. However, he sturdily denied flinching from the approaching trial of his courage.

The negro's burnished face smartened up when all was over. Rumour, whose numerous tongues, if well pickled, would pair off with all the boiled turkeys cooked in Christendom on a Christmas-day, and leave plenty to spare, told the tale of wonder in "quarter less no time," how Serjeant B. had become a member of white man's purrah; how he had sat down to supper with Captain – on one side, the devil on the other, and the chief judge opposite; how the serjeant thought he recognised the "old gentleman" as a comrade in the Peninsula; and how the "old gentleman" politely acknowledged similar remembrances, and took wine with him; and how they had parted, with mutual hopes and promises of meeting again at some future day, in the hot season, not in "the rains."

The more the woolly-headed men and maidens of his inquisitive acquaintance interrogated the serjeant himself concerning his adventure on that fearful night, the more he would not tell them a word about the matter; and, to this moment, no mysteries are more mysterious, no secrets more arcane, than those which trouble the black population of the little colony respecting "The White Man's Devil-House."

A LYRIC FOR LOVERS

Love launch'd a gallant little craft,
Complete with every rope;
In golden words was painted aft —
"The Cupid, Captain Hope."
Pleasure was rated second-mate,
And Passion made to steer;
The guns were handed o'er to Fate,
To Impulse sailing-gear.

Merrily roved the thoughtless crew
Amidst the billows' strife;
But soon a sail bore down, — all knew
'Twas Captain Reason's "Life."
And Pleasure left, though Passion said
He'd guard her safe from all harms.
'Twas vain; for Fate ramm'd home the lead,
While Love prepared the small-arms.

A storm arose! The canvass now
Escaped from Impulse' hand,
While headstrong Passion dash'd the prow
Swift on a rocky strand.
"All's lost!" each trembling sailor cried;
"Bid Captain Hope adieu!"
But in his life-boat Reason hied
To save the silly crew.

Impulse the torrents overwhelm,
But Pleasure 'scaped from wreck;
Love, making Reason take the helm,
Chain'd Passion to the deck.
"I thought you were my foe; but now,"
Said Love, "we'll sail together;
Reason, henceforth through life shalt thou
My pilot be for ever!"

REMAINS OF HAJJI BABA

CHAPTER VII

My great anxiety now was to reach the foot of the English throne as soon as possible; and I consulted my infidel friend upon the safest, easiest, and least public manner of putting my project into execution. I had thought it right to place sufficient confidence in him to inform him that I was an agent of the King of Persia, commissioned to make certain proposals to the King of England; but that it was not my intention to insist upon an *istakbal*, or deputation, upon my entry into the principal city, or to demand either maintenance or lodging at the expense of the nation: in short, I wished to be as little known as possible. He assured me that the most private manner of travelling was a public coach. This rather appeared paradoxical, for how could I be private and public at the same time? but, after certain explanations, I found that he was right; particularly when he assured me that in point of expense the private mode of conveyance cost about seven times more than the public.

Accordingly, the next morning, having, through the interference of my friend, paid what was due to the owner of the caravanserai, I seated myself in the corner of a handsome coach, drawn by four fine horses, which appeared at the door on purpose for my convenience. My friend seated himself by my side, Mahboob was placed on the outside, and we drove off at such a rate, that I neither had time to find out whether the hour was fortunate, or indeed to ascertain which was the direction of Mecca, much less to say my prayers.

We had not proceeded far, when we stopped, and a third person ascended, and took possession of the corner opposite to me. He was a coarse-looking infidel, with a sallow face covered with hair: bushy eyebrows, dirty in appearance, and, as far as I could discover, wishing to look like one of the people, although he might be of the race of the *omrah*. He said nothing upon entrance, – not even the English *Selam alekum*, which I had long learned to be expressed by the words "Good morning, and fine day;" but there he sat, as if the orifice of his mouth had been closed by a stroke of fate. The cast of his eye as it glanced upon me was not that of hospitality; and I was certain that, had he been an Arab, I should not have heard the sound of his pestle and mortar braying the coffee for me in token of welcome.

I discovered that my friend's name, who had hitherto thrown his shadow over me, was Jān Pûl, words which surprised me, because they are pure Persian, and might be interpreted, "Soul, Money!" Although the new-comer eyed me with little kindness of aspect, yet, when he looked at my friend Jān, there was a slight indication of respect; but still he said nothing.

We had scarcely cleared the town, when the coach again stopped, and we discovered stepping out of a handsome equipage, with servants and men in *kalaats* to help him, an infidel, who, after some delay taken up in providing for his comfort and accommodation, was helped into our conveyance, and he occupied the fourth and last place in it. He was a handsome man, cleanly and handsomely dressed, full of fair forms and politeness; a perfect contrast to his predecessor, and upon whose whole bearing and manners was inscribed, in legible characters, *sahib najib*, or gentleman.

He was as civil to me as his predecessor had been the contrary. Having ascertained that I was a Persian, he welcomed me to his country in a form of words different from those used in Persia; but in so doing, he not only made my heart glad, but made his own face white. He then complimented me upon belonging to a nation whose people willingly obeyed and upheld the authority of their king, and who were satisfied to live under the laws of their ancient monarchy. I had so long been unaccustomed to receive compliments, that, upon hearing this from the *sahib najib*, I almost thought myself in Persia again, and was about preparing a suitable answer, – one in which I intended at once to uphold the dignity of my sovereign and to exhibit my own individual readiness of wit, – when an uncouth sound

proceeded from the unclean infidel, almost the first sign of life which he had given, that made me start, stopped my eloquence, and threw all the sugared words which I had prepared, back into my throat again. As far as I could understand, the purport of this inauspicious noise was to announce to the sahib najib that he had said something in the words he had addressed to me to which he did not agree, for I perceived anger and disgust arise in his countenance, while the looks of "Soul Money," though not much given to change, also became lowering.

"Surely, sir," said the sahib najib, addressing the unclean infidel still with courtesy in his manner, – "surely you will allow, in these unsettled times, that loyalty to one's king, and obedience to established laws, is a subject worthy of compliment."

"I allow nothing," replied the other, looking straight forward, "but what is for the good of the people."

Upon this there arose a discussion so long and so animated, that it lasted almost all the way to the foot of the English throne, and of which I could with difficulty catch the meaning, so new were most of the words used to my ears.

The sahib najib's argument was full of words such as these; the constitution – vested rights – ancient privileges – funded property – established church – landed interest; and although we were driving through a country more prosperous to my eye than even the regions of Mahomet's paradise could be, surrounded by every luxury, and he apparently the lord of wealth and luxury, still he seemed to persist that he was ruined and reduced to beggary, that his country was on the brink of perdition, and that nothing remained for him to do but to sit down for the rest of his days upon the nummud of despair, and to eat the bitter rind of grief.

The rough infidel, on the contrary, argued that constitutional rights, funded property, land, church, laws, and a great many more things, of the import of which I was ignorant, but of which I promised to acquire knowledge, all, he argued, were alone to be turned to the use of the people; and thus I began to have some little idea of what was meant by that People Shah of whom we had heard so much in Persia.

"What!" said the sahib najib, "when you see the constitution in danger, do not you perceive that it will endanger the happiness of the people whose cause you advocate?"

"I do not see that it is in danger," said the other. "If my boat is sinking because we carry too much sail, shall I not trim my sails and inspect my ballast?"

"But by trimming your boat you would throw all your cargo overboard, and thus lose all you have," answered the other.

This part of the conversation I understood, and then I said, "I now understand: when a camel is overladen, and cannot proceed, on account of the weight of his burthen, either the camel will die, or I must lighten his burthen."

"Very good," said the rough man, who now for the first time cast the shadow of his condescension over me. "You are the lord of quick understanding, and see things."

"But," said his well-dressed antagonist, "I neither agree that the boat is badly trimmed, or that the camel is overladen: " then, turning to me, he said, "Surely, sir, you, who have been bred and born a Mussulman, who have let your beard grow according to old-established custom, who have washed your hands and feet in accordance to the precepts of your law, – you would not change all at once, because some new sect in your country were to arise and say, 'Cut off your beard, cease to wash, pray in a new manner, and say to Mahomet, You are a false prophet;' you could not in your conscience do so."

"*Astafarallah!*" said I, blowing over my shoulders at the same time, "am I mad to eat such a profusion of abomination!"

"You are a man of perfection," said he. "I am sure the more you see of my country and get acquainted with its present condition, the more you will agree with me."

I looked towards my friend Jān Pûl, who hitherto had not uttered a word, and said, "This sahib says nothing. Perhaps owing to his saying less than we do, he may be the lord of more wisdom than all our heads put together."

"What can I say," said Jān calmly, "when there is much to be said on both sides? The highest wisdom is to gather experience from the past, and apply it to the necessities of the future."

"Agreed," said the rough man: "we must therefore reform."

"Agreed," said the smooth man: "reform is useless."

I immediately perceived how the matter stood, and, with that penetration for which all Persians are famous, I discovered the true state of the whole country. I saw that the people were divided into two sects, as much opposed to each other as Jews are to true believers; that plain sense had as little chance in the controversy as a sober man may have in the brawls of two drunkards; and that, before things get straight, each of the drunkards must be sobered by breaking their shins in stumbling over a stone, or their heads by carrying them too high.

CHAPTER VIII

We continued to drive onwards: the faster we went, the more the infidels argued. I sat in my corner guessing my way through their words, and already making up in my mind the sort of letter which I should write to the Asylum of the Universe upon the state of this extraordinary country, whilst my silent friend, with his hook-stick and close-buttoned coat, shut his eyes and slumbered; only occasionally giving signs of life. At length we arrived at a house which I supposed might be a caravanserai, after the Franc fashion, open to true believers, for, on looking up I saw painted upon a board an elephant with a castle upon its back. I began to think this might be in compliment to me, seeing that elephants are part of the state of Persian monarchs: but I was mistaken, because, instead of taking any notice of me, the sahib najib, on the contrary, did not show his usual civility; but, putting his head out of the window, he asked one of the bystanders, "Is there any news astir?"

"Nothing particular," said an unconcerned infidel; "nothing. The papers say, 'A man threw a stone and has broken the king's head!'"

"There," said the smooth man to the rough, "there, that comes of your reform!"

"I deny that," said the other: "on the contrary, it comes of your no-reform."

"Why, surely," answered the sahib najib, "if you had not taught the people not to respect their king, to despise his nobles, and to laugh at the laws, such an atrocity never would have happened."

"No, indeed, it never would," retorted the other, "if you had made such changes that the people would love their king, respect his nobles, and be satisfied with the laws."

"Then you think stoning your king a right thing to do?" said one.

"Then you allow making him odious," answered the other, "is what ought to be done?"

"Will a stone get up and throw itself?"

"Will a man complain unless he be aggrieved?"

"Hallo! my friend," said the sahib najib to the bystander, "what is said about this atrocious act, eh?"

"Why, some say, 'Poor king!' others say, 'Poor stone!'" answered the bystander in the coolest manner possible.

At this I began truly to have an insight into things, and could not help exclaiming in the bottom of my gullet, "*Allah Allah, il Allah!* There is but one Allah!"

"You understood what that man said?" said Jān Pūl to me, with a sigh, and in a low voice.

"*Belli*, yes," said I, "wonderful! The men of this country are lions without saints. Allah! Allah! to throw a stone at the king, and no executioner by, to cut the wretch's head off."

"No, no," said he, "that must be proved; first, whether it was a stone; second, whether it was a man who threw it; and, third, whether it hit the king's head, or some other head."

"*Aman, aman!* Mercy, mercy!" I exclaimed; "let me return to Persia. If so little is said about breaking the king's head, where shall I turn for justice if some one cuts off my ears? Well may the people want reform!"

"I will just prove to you, sir," said the soft infidel, "that this case just proves that we want no reform."

"How!" said I, "break your king's head, and nobody to mend it!"

"That is not the case," said he. "If a people have so much security from the laws, that not even the poorest wretch, even for a crime of such magnitude, can be condemned without proof against him and a full trial, surely they cannot complain: they are all equal in the eye of the law, and more they cannot want." He said this in great exultation, having obtained, as he conceived, a complete triumph over his adversary, and eyed him with appropriate scorn.

The rough man looked as if his head went round and round, and as if he were come to a full stop; but, pulling up the two ends of his shirt, – I suppose to show that he had one, – he said, "If

the people have one good law, is that a reason why they should not have more? The great man may get his head broke, – he is rich and mighty, a little salve cures him, and he is as rich and happy as ever; but the poor man who has broken it, save the satisfaction of making a good throw, he remains as poor and miserable as ever."

"Then, sir," said the sahib najib, "you would have what can never be, – you would have perfect equality amongst mankind?"

"Yes, truly," exclaimed the other; "because, if all were equal, there would be no heads broken, and no stones thrown."

This, too, I understood, and said, "What words are these? All men cannot be kings, nor can they all be viziers, nor all khans. I, who know nothing of your extraordinary customs, I can understand that. Were I to think of being anything but what I am, might not my neighbour think so too; and if I wished to be him, and he me, why, then the world would soon be upside down, and from one end of the universe to the other there would be nothing but clutching of beards, and cries of justice, and no justice!"

"Whatever you may say," said the rough infidel, "we must have more equality in our country than we have at present, or else the world will turn upside down. The rich must be poorer, and the poor richer."

During this conversation we were in rapid motion, driving through streets lighted up as magnificently as if the Shah himself had ordered a feast of fire-works, and ornamented by shops exhibiting such riches, that not all the wealth brought from Hind by Nadir Shah, or amassed by the Sofi, could compare to it.

"Strange," thought I to myself, "that this people are not satisfied with their lot!" Passing by a splendid shop, resplendent with cutlery, part of my instructions came into my head, and I said to the rough man, "In the name of the Prophet, do you still make penknives and broad-cloth?"

At this question my companion stared, and said, "Penknives and broad-cloth, did you say? Why, we have more penknives and broad-cloth than we know what to do with. We have made so much and so many, that the whole world has more of them than it wants; and the poor creatures, the manufacturers, are starving for want of work. Surely this wants reform."

This was delightful news for me, and I longed to send an immediate courier to the Shah to inform him of the important fact.

"Whose fault is it?" said the soft man, determined not to be beaten on any ground. "If manufacturers will do too much, whose fault is it but their own? Unless you make a reform in common sense, surely no other reform is needful."

By this time the coach had stopped, and I found that we had reached our last menzil. The rough man got out first; but just as he was stepping down, in order to ensure the last word, he exclaimed, "We want reform not only in that, but in everything else, – more particularly in rotten boroughs."

At these two last words, the soft man became evidently angered, his liver turning into blood, whilst his face became red. "Rotten boroughs, indeed! the country is lost for ever if one borough is disfranchised."

These words were totally new to my ears, and what they meant I knew not; but I became quite certain that the rough man had hit the smooth man in a sore place. But I was in the seventh heaven at the end of their controversy. I had never heard such warmth of argument, not since that famous dispute at the Medressah, in Ispahan, between two famous Mollahs, the one a suni, the other a shiah, whether the children of the true faith, in washing according to the prescribed law, were to let the water run from the hand to the elbow, or whether from the elbow to the hand. They argued for three whole moons, and neither were convinced; and so they remain to this day, each in his own persuasion.

"How will it be possible," thought I, "to unravel this intricate question? It is plain these English are a nation of madmen. Oh! could they but take one look at my country, where the will of one man is all in all, – where no man's head is safe on his shoulders for one moment, – where, if he heaps

up riches in the course of many years, they may be taken from him in an hour, – where he does not even think for himself, much less speak, – where man is as withering grass of the field, and life as the wind blowing over it; could they but know this, short would be their controversies. They would praise Allah with gratitude for their condition, be content with their fate, and drive all wish of change from their thoughts, as threatening the overthrow of their happiness."

SHAKSPEARE PAPERS. – No. III

ROMEO

"Of this unlucky sort our Romeus is one,
For all his hap turns to mishap, and all his mirth to mone."

The Tragicall Historye of Romeus and Juliet.

"Never," says Prince Escalus, in the concluding distich of Romeo and Juliet,

" – was there story of more woe
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo."

It is a story which, in the inartificial shape of a black-letter ballad, powerfully affected the imagination, and awakened the sensibilities, of our ancestors, and in the hands of Shakspeare has become the love-story of the whole world. Who cares for the loves of Petrarch and Laura, or of Eloisa and Abelard, compared with those of Romeo and Juliet? The gallantries of Petrarch are conveyed in models of polished and ornate verse; but, in spite of their elegance, we feel that they are frosty as the Alps beneath which they were written. They are only the exercises of genius, not the ebullitions of feeling; and we can easily credit the story that Petrarch refused a dispensation to marry Laura, lest marriage might spoil his poetry. The muse, and not the lady, was his mistress. In the case of Abelard there are many associations which are not agreeable; and, after all, we can hardly help looking upon him as a fitter hero for Bayle's Dictionary than a romance. In Romeo and Juliet we have the poetry of Petrarch without its iciness, and the passion of Eloisa free from its coarse exhibition. We have, too, philosophy far more profound than ever was scattered over the syllogistic pages of Abelard, full of knowledge and acuteness as they undoubtedly are.

But I am not about to consider Romeo merely as a lover, or to use him as an illustration of Lysander's often-quoted line,

"The course of true love never did run smooth."

In that course the current has been as rough to others as to Romeo; who, in spite of all his misfortunes, has wooed and won the lady of his affections. That Lysander's line is often true, cannot be questioned; though it is no more than the exaggeration of an annoyed suitor to say that love has *never* run smoothly. The reason why it should be so generally true, is given in "Peveril of the Peak" by Sir Walter Scott; a man who closely approached to the genius of Shakspeare in depicting character, and who, above all writers of imagination, most nearly resembled him in the possession of keen, shrewd, every-day common-sense, rendered more remarkable by the contrast of the romantic, pathetic, and picturesque by which it is in all directions surrounded.

"This celebrated passage which we have prefixed to this chapter, [chap. xii. vol. i. Peveril of the Peak,] has, like most observations of the same author, its foundation in real experience. The period at which love is felt most strongly is seldom that at which there is much prospect of its being brought to a happy issue. In fine, there are few men who do not look back in secret to some period of their youth at which a sincere and early affection was repulsed or betrayed, or became abortive under opposing circumstances. It is these little passages of secret history, which leave a tinge of romance in every

bosom, scarce permitting us, even in the most busy or the most advanced period of life, to listen with total indifference to a tale of true love."⁵

['Ah me! for aught that ever I could read,' &c.]

These remarks, the justice of which cannot be questioned, scarcely apply to the case of Romeo. In no respect, save that the families were at variance, was the match between him and Juliet such as not to afford a prospect of happy issue; and everything indicated the possibility of making their marriage a ground of reconciliation between their respective houses. Both are tired of the quarrel. Lady Capulet and Lady Montague are introduced in the very first scene of the play, endeavouring to pacify their husbands; and, when the brawl is over, Paris laments to Juliet's father that it is a pity persons of such honourable reckoning should have lived so long at variance. For Romeo himself old Capulet expresses the highest respect, as being one of the ornaments of the city; and, after the death of Juliet, old Montague, touched by her truth and constancy, proposes to raise to her a statue of gold. With such sentiments and predispositions, the early passion of the Veronese lovers does not come within the canon of Sir Walter Scott; and, as I have said, I do not think that Romeo is designed merely as an exhibition of a man unfortunate in love.

I consider him to be meant as the character of an *unlucky* man, – a man who, with the best views and fairest intentions, is perpetually so unfortunate as to fail in every aspiration, and, while exerting himself to the utmost in their behalf, to involve all whom he holds dearest in misery and ruin. At the commencement of the play an idle quarrel among some low retainers of the rival families produces a general riot, with which he has nothing to do. He is not present from beginning to end; the tumult has been so sudden and unexpected, that his father is obliged to ask

"What set this ancient quarrel new abroad?"

And yet it is this very quarrel which lays him prostrate in death by his own hand, outside Capulet's monument, before the tragedy concludes. While the fray was going on, he was nursing love-fancies, and endeavouring to persuade himself that his heart was breaking for Rosaline. How afflicting his passion must have been, we see by the conundrums he makes upon it:

"Love is a smoke raised with the fume of sighs;
Being purged, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;
Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears.⁶
What is it else? – a madness most discreet,
A choking gall, and a preserving sweet." —

And so forth. The sorrows which we can balance in such trim antitheses do not lie very deep. The time is rapidly advancing when his sentences will be less sounding.

"It is my lady; oh, it is my love!
O that she knew she were!" —

speaks more touchingly the state of his engrossed soul than all the fine metaphors ever vented. The supercilious Spartans in the days of their success prided themselves upon the laconic brevity

⁵ Was Sir Walter thinking of his own case when he wrote this passage? See his *Life* by Lockhart, vol. i. p. 242. His family used to call Sir Walter *Old Peveril*, from some fancied resemblance of the character.

⁶ Is there not a line missing?

of their despatches to states in hostility or alliance with them. When they were sinking before the Macedonians, another style was adopted; and Philip observed that he had taught them to lengthen their monosyllables. Real love has had a contrary effect upon Romeo. It has abridged his swelling passages, and brought him to the language of prose. The reason of the alteration is the same in both cases. The brevity of the Spartans was the result of studied affectation. They sought, by the insolence of threats obscurely insinuated in a sort of demi-oracular language, to impose upon others, – perhaps they imposed upon themselves, – an extravagant opinion of their mysterious power. The secret was found out at last, and their anger bubbled over in big words and lengthened sentences. The love of Rosaline is as much affected on the part of Romeo, and it explodes in wire-drawn conceits.

"When the devout religion of mine eye
Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires;
And those who often drown'd could never die,
Transparent heretics, be burnt for liars.
One fairer than my love! – the all-seeing sun
Ne'er saw her match since first the world begun."

It is no wonder that a gentleman who is so clever as to be able to say such extremely fine things, forgets, in the next scene, the devout religion of his eye, without any apprehension of the transparent heretic being burnt for a liar by the transmutation of tears into the flames of an *auto da fe*. He is doomed to discover that love in his case is not a madness most discreet when he defies the stars; there are then no lines of magnificent declamation.

"Is it even so? then I defy you, stars!
Thou knowest my lodging: get me ink and paper,
And hire post-horses; I will hence to-night."

Nothing can be plainer prose than these verses. But how were they delivered? Balthazar will tell us.

"Pardon me, sir; I dare not leave you thus:
Your looks are pale and wild, and do import
Some misadventure."

Again, nothing can be more quiet than his final determination:

"Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night."

It is plain Juliet, – unattended by any romantic epithet of love. There is nothing about "Cupid's arrow," or "Dian's wit;" no honeyed word escapes his lips, – nor again does any accent of despair. His mind is so made up, – the whole course of the short remainder of his life so unalterably fixed, that it is perfectly useless to think more about it. He has full leisure to reflect without disturbance upon the details of the squalid penury which made him set down the poor apothecary as a fit instrument for what now had become his "need;" and he offers his proposition of purchasing that soon-speeding gear which is to hurry him out of life, with the same business-like tone as if he were purchasing a pennyworth of sugar-candy. When the apothecary suggests the danger of selling such drugs, Romeo can reflect on the folly of scrupling to sacrifice life when the holder of it is so poor and unfortunate. Gallant and gay of appearance himself, he tells his new-found acquaintance that bareness, famine, oppression, ragged misery, the hollow cheek and the hungry eye, are fitting reasons why death should

be desired, not avoided; and with a cool philosophy assures him that gold is worse poison than the compound which hurries the life-weary taker out of the world. The language of desperation cannot be more dismally determined. What did the apothecary think of his customer as he pocketed the forty ducats? There you go, lad, – there you go, he might have said, – there you go with that in your girdle that, if you had the strength of twenty men, would straight despatch you. Well do I know the use for which you intend it. To-morrow's sun sees not you alive. And you philosophise to me on the necessity of buying food and getting into flesh. You taunt my poverty, – you laugh at my rags, – you bid me defy the law, – you tell me the world is my enemy. It may be so, lad, – it may be so; but less tattered is my garment than your heart, – less harassed by law of one kind or another my pursuit than yours. What ails that lad? I know not, neither do I care. But that he should moralise to me on the hard lot which I experience, – that he, with those looks and those accents, should fancy that I, amid my beggarly account of empty boxes, am less happy than he, – ha! ha! ha! – it is something to make one laugh. Ride your way, boy: I have your forty ducats in my purse, and you my drug in your pocket. And the law! Well! What can the executioner do worse to me in my penury and my age than you have doomed for yourself in your youth and splendour. I carry not my hangman in my saddle as I ride along. And the curses which the rabble may pour upon my dying moments, – what are they to the howling gurgle which, now rising from your heart, is deafening your ears? Adieu, boy, – adieu! – and keep your philosophy for yourself. Ho! ho! ho!

But had any other passion or pursuit occupied Romeo, he would have been equally unlucky as in his love. Ill fortune has marked him for her own. From beginning to end he intends the best; but his interfering is ever for the worst. It is evident that he has not taken any part in the family feud which divides Verona, and his first attachment is to a lady of the antagonist house.⁷ To see that lady, – perhaps to mark that he has had no share in the tumult of the morning, – he goes to a ball given by Capulet, at which the suitor accepted by the family is to be introduced to Juliet as her intended husband. Paris is in every way an eligible match.

"Verona's summer hath not such a flower."

He who has slain him addresses his corse as that of the "noble County Paris," with a kindly remembrance that he was kinsman of a friend slain in Romeo's own cause. Nothing can be more fervent, more honourable, or more delicate than his devoted and considerate wooing. His grief at the loss of Juliet is expressed in few words; but its sincerity is told by his midnight and secret visit to the tomb of her whom living he had honoured, and on whom, when dead, he could not restrain himself from lavishing funereal homage. Secure of the favour of her father, no serious objection could be anticipated from herself. When questioned by her mother, she readily promises obedience to parental wishes, and goes to the ball determined to "look to like, if looking liking move." Everything glides on in smooth current till the appearance of him whose presence is deadly. Romeo himself is a most reluctant visitor. He apprehends that the consequences of the night's revels will be the vile forfeit of a despised life by an untimely death, but submits to his destiny. He foresees that it is no wit to go, but consoles himself with the reflection that he "means well in going to this mask." His intentions, as usual, are good; and, as usual, their consequences are ruinous.

He yields to his passion, and marries Juliet. For this hasty act he has the excuse that the match may put an end to the discord between the families. Friar Lawrence hopes that

⁷ Rosaline was niece of Capulet. The list of persons invited to the ball is • "Signior Martino, and his wife and daughters; • County Anselm[o], and his beauteous sisters; • The lady widow of Vetruvio; • Signior Placentio, and his lovely nieces; • Mercutio, and his brother Valentine; • Mine uncle Capulet, his wife and daughters; • *My fair niece Rosaline*; [and] Livia; • Signior Valentio, and his cousin Tybalt; • Lucio, and the lively Helena." I have altered *Anselme* to the Italian form *Anselmo*, and in the seventh line inserted *and*. I think I may fairly claim this list as being in verse. It is always printed as prose.

"this alliance may so happy prove
To turn your households' rancour into love."

It certainly has that effect in the end of the play, but it is by the suicidal deaths of the flower and hope of both families. Capulet and Montague tender, in a gloomy peace the hands of friendship, over the untimely grave of the poor sacrifices to their enmity. Had he met her elsewhere than in her father's house, he might have succeeded in a more prosperous love. But there his visit is looked upon by the professed duellist Tybalt, hot from the encounter of the morning, and enraged that he was baulked of a victim, as an intrusion and an insult. The fiery partisan is curbed with much difficulty by his uncle; and withdraws, his flesh trembling with wilful choler, determined to wreak vengeance at the first opportunity on the intruder. It is not long before the opportunity offers. Vainly does Romeo endeavour to pacify the bullying swordsman, – vainly does he protest that he loves the name of Capulet, – vainly does he decline the proffered duel. His good intentions are again doomed to be frustrated. There stands by his side as mad-blooded a spirit as Tybalt himself, and Mercutio, all unconscious of the reasons why Romeo refuses to fight, takes up the abandoned quarrel. The star of the unlucky man is ever in the ascendant. His ill-omened interference slays his friend. Had he kept quiet, the issue might have been different; but the power that had the steerage of his course had destined that the uplifting of his sword was to be the signal of death to his very friend. And when the dying Mercutio says, "Why the devil came you between us? I was hurt under your arm;" he can only offer the excuse, which is always true, and always unavailing, "I thought all for the best." All his visions of reconciliation between the houses are dissipated. How can he now avoid fighting with Tybalt? His best friend lies dead, slain in his own quarrel, through his own accursed intermeddling; and the swaggering victor, still hot from the slaughter, comes back to triumph over the dead. Who with the heart and spirit of a man could under such circumstances refrain from exclaiming,

"Away to heaven, respective lenity!
And fire-eyed fury be my conduct now."

Vanish gentle breath, calm words, knees humbly bowed! – his weapon in an instant glitters in the blazing sun; and as with a lightning flash, – as rapidly and resistlessly, – before Benvolio can pull his sword from the scabbard, Tybalt, whom his kindred deemed a match for twenty men, is laid by the side of him who but a moment before had been the victim of his blade. What avails the practised science of the duellist, the gentleman of the very first house, of the first and second cause! – how weak is the immortal passado, or the punto reverso, the hay, or all the other learned devices of Vincent Saviola, against the whirlwind rage of a man driven to desperation by all that can rouse fury or stimulate hatred! He sees the blood of his friend red upon the ground; the accents of gross and unprovoked outrage ring in his ears; the perverse and obstinate insolence of a bravo confident in his skill, and depending upon it to insure him impunity, has marred his hopes; and the butcher of the silk button has no chance against the demon which he has evoked. "A la stoccata" carries it not away in this encounter; but Romeo exults not in his death. He stands amazed, and is with difficulty hurried off, exclaiming against the constant fate which perpetually throws him in the way of misfortune. Well, indeed, may Friar Lawrence address him by the title of "thou fearful man!" – as a man whose career through life is calculated to inspire terror. Well may he say to him that

"Affliction is enamour'd of thy parts,
And thou art wedded to calamity."

And slight is the attention which Romeo pays to the eloquent arguments by which it is proved that he had every reason to consider himself happy. When the friar assures him that the nurse may

think it a discourse of learning and good counsel, fit to detain an enraptured auditor all the night. Romeo feels it in his case to be an idle declamation, unworthy of an answer.

"A pack of blessings lights upon thy back,
Happiness courts thee in her best array,"

The events which occur during his enforced absence, the haste of Paris to be wedded, the zeal of old Capulet in promoting the wishes of his expected son-in-law, the desperate expedient of the sleeping-draught,⁸ the accident which prevented the delivery of the friar's letter, the officious haste of Balthazar to communicate the tidings of Juliet's burial, are all matters out of his control. But the mode of his death is chosen by himself; and in that he is as unlucky as in everything else. Utterly loathing life, the manner of his leaving it must be instantaneous. He stipulates that the poison by which he is to die shall not be slow of effect. He calls for

"such soon-speeding gear
As will disperse itself through all the veins,
That the life-weary taker may fall dead."

He leaves himself no chance of escape. Instant death is in his hand; and, thanking the true apothecary for the quickness of his drugs, he scarcely leaves himself a moment with a kiss to die. If he had been less in a hurry, – if he had not felt it impossible to delay posting off to Verona for a single night, – if his riding had been less rapid, or his medicine less sudden in its effect, he might have lived. The friar was at hand to release Juliet from her tomb the very instant after the fatal phial had been emptied. That instant was enough: the unlucky man had effected his purpose just when there was still a chance that things might be amended. Those who wrote the scene between Romeo and Juliet which is intended to be pathetic, after her awakening and before his death, quite mistake the character of the hero of the play. I do not blame them for their poetry, which is as good as that of second-rate writers of tragedy in general; and think them, on the whole, deserving of our commendation for giving us an additional proof how unable clever men upon town are to follow the conceptions of genius. Shakspeare, if he thought it consistent with the character which he had with so much deliberation framed, could have written a parting scene at least as good as that with which his tragedy has been supplied; but he saw the inconsistency, though his unasked assistants did not. They tell us they did it to consult popular taste. I do not believe them. I am sure that popular taste would approve of a

⁸ Is there not some mistake in the length of time that this sleeping-draught is to occupy, if we consider the text as it now stands to be correct? Friar Lawrence says to Juliet, when he is recommending the expedient, "Take thou this phial, being then in bed, And this distilled liquor drink thou off: When presently through all thy veins shall run A cold and drowsy humour, which shall seize Each vital spirit, &c. And in this borrow'd likeness of shrunk death Thou shalt remain full two and forty hours, And then awake as from a pleasant sleep." Juliet retires to bed on Tuesday night, at a somewhat early hour. Her mother says after she departs, "'Tis now near night." Say it is eleven o'clock: forty-two hours from that hour bring us to five o'clock in the evening of Thursday; and yet we find the time of her awakening fixed in profound darkness, and not long before the dawn. We should allow at least ten hours more, and read, which would fix her awakening at three o'clock in the morning, a time which has been marked in a former scene as the approach of day. "Thou shalt remain full two and fifty hours," — "Cap. Come, stir, stir, stir! The second cock has crow'd, — The curfew bell hath rung, — 'tis three o'clock." Immediately after he says, "Good faith, 'tis day." This observation may appear superfluously minute; but those who take the pains of reading the play critically will find that it is dated throughout with a most exact attention to hours. We can time almost every event. Ex. gr. Juliet dismisses the nurse on her errand to Romeo when the clock struck nine, and complains that she has not returned at twelve. At twelve she does return, and Juliet immediately proceeds to Friar Lawrence's cell, where she is married without delay. Romeo parts with his bride at once, and meets his friends while "the day is hot." Juliet at the same hour addresses her prayer to the fiery-footed steeds of Phæbus, too slowly for her feelings progressing towards the west. The same exactness is observed in every part of the play. I may remark, as another instance of Romeo's ill luck, the change of the original wedding-day. When pressed by Paris, old Capulet says that "Wednesday is too soon, — on Thursday let it be;" but afterwards, when he imagines that his daughter is inclined to consult his wishes, he fixes it for Wednesday, even though his wife observes that Thursday is time enough. Had this day not been lost, the letter of Friar Lawrence might still have been forwarded to Mantua to explain what had occurred.

recurrence to the old play in all its parts; but a harlotry play-actor might think it hard upon him to be deprived of a "point," pointless as that point may be.

Haste is made a remarkable characteristic of Romeo, – because it is at once the parent and the child of uniform misfortune. As from the acorn springs the oak, and from the oak the acorn, so does the temperament that inclines to haste predispose to misadventure, and a continuance of misadventure confirms the habit of haste. A man whom his rashness has made continually unlucky, is strengthened in the determination to persevere in his rapid movements by the very feeling that the "run" is against him, and that it is of no use to think. In the case of Romeo, he leaves it all to the steerage of Heaven, *i. e.* to the heady current of his own passions; and he succeeds accordingly. All through the play care is taken to show his impatience. The very first word he speaks indicates that he is anxious for the quick passage of time.

"Ben. Good morrow, cousin.

Rom. Is the day so young?

Ben. But new struck nine.

Rom. Ay me, sad hours seem long."

The same impatience marks his speech in the moment of death:

*"O true apothecary,
Thy drugs are quick!"*

From his first words to his last the feeling is the same. The lady of his love, even in the full swell of her awakened affections, cannot avoid remarking that his contract is

*"Too rash, too unadvised, too sudden,
Too like the lightning, which does cease to be
Ere one can say, It lightens."*

When he urges his marriage on the friar,

"Rom. O let us home: I stand on sudden haste.

Friar. Wisely and slow. They stumble that run fast."

The metaphors put into his mouth are remarkable for their allusions to abrupt and violent haste. He wishes that he may die

*"As violently as hasty powder fired
Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb."*

When he thinks that Juliet mentions his name in anger, it is

*"as if that name,
Shot from the deadly level of a gun,
Did murder her."*

When Lawrence remonstrates with him on his violence, he compares the use to which he puts his wit to

"Powder in a skilless soldier's flask;"

and tells him that

"Violent delights have violent ends,
And in their triumph die; like fire and powder,
Which, as they kiss, consume."

Lightning, flame, shot, explosion, are the favourite parallels to the conduct and career of Romeo. Swift are his loves; as swift to enter his thought, the mischief which ends them for ever. Rapid have been all the pulsations of his life; as rapid, the determination which decides that they shall beat no more.

A gentleman he was in heart and soul. All his habitual companions love him: Benvolio and Mercutio, who represent the young gentlemen of his house, are ready to peril their lives, and to strain all their energies, serious or gay, in his service. His father is filled with an anxiety on his account so delicate, that he will not venture to interfere with his son's private sorrows, while he desires to discover their source, and if possible to relieve them. The heart of his mother bursts in his calamity; the head of the rival house bestows upon him the warmest panegyrics; the tutor of his youth sacrifices everything to gratify his wishes; his servant, though no man is a hero to his *valet de chambre*, dares not remonstrate with him on his intentions, even when they are avowed to be savage-wild,

"More fierce, and more inexorable far,
Than empty tigers or the roaring sea," —

but with an eager solicitude he breaks his commands by remaining as close as he can venture, to watch over his safety. Kind is he to all. He wins the heart of the romantic Juliet by his tender gallantry: the worldly-minded nurse praises him for being as gentle as a lamb. When it is necessary or natural that the Prince or Lady Montague should speak harshly of him, it is done in his absence. No words of anger or reproach are addressed to his ears save by Tybalt; and from him they are in some sort a compliment, as signifying that the self-chosen prize-fighter of the opposing party deems Romeo the worthiest antagonist of his blade. We find that he fights two blood-stained duels, but both are forced upon him; the first under circumstances impossible of avoidance, the last after the humblest supplications to be excused.

"O begone!
By Heaven, I love thee better than myself,
For I came hither armed against myself.
Stay not; begone! — live, and hereafter say
A madman's mercy bade thee run away."

With all the qualities and emotions which can inspire affection and esteem, — with all the advantages that birth, heaven, and earth could at once confer, — with the most honourable feelings and the kindest intentions, — he is eminently an unlucky man. The record of his actions in the play before us does not extend to the period of a week; but we feel that there is no dramatic straining to shorten their course. Everything occurs naturally and probably. It was his concluding week; but it tells us all his life. Fortune was against him; and would have been against him, no matter what might have been his pursuit. He was born to win battles, but to lose campaigns. If we desired to moralize with the harsh-minded satirist, who never can be suspected of romance, we should join with him in

extracting as a moral from the play and attribute the mishaps of Romeo, not to want of fortune, but of prudence. Philosophy and poetry differ not in essentials, and the stern censure of Juvenal is just. But still, when looking on the timeless tomb of Romeo, and contemplating the short and sad career through which he ran, we cannot help recollecting his mourning words over his dying friend, and suggest as an inscription over the monument of the luckless gentleman,

"Nullum habes numen, si sit prudentia; sed te
Nos facimus, Fortuna, deam, cœloquê locamus;"

"I thought all for the best."

THE PIPER'S PROGRESS

BY FATHER PROUT

1.

When I was a boy
In my father's mud edifice,
Tender and bare
As a pig in a sty;
Out of the door as I
Looked with a steady phiz,
Who but Thade Murphy,
The piper, went by;
Says Thady, "But few play
This music—can *you* play?"
Says I, "I can't tell,
For I never did try."
So he told me that *he* had a charm
To make the pipes purlily speak;
Then squeezed a bag under his arm,
When sweetly they set up a squeak!
Fa-ra-la la-ra-la loo!

Och hone!
How he handled the drone!
And then the sweet music he blew
Would have melted the heart of a stone!

I.

Pater me clauserat
Domus homunculorum;
Grunniens sus erat
Comes, ut mos:
Transibat tibi-
Juxta domunculam,
Quando per januam
Protuli os;
Ille ait impromptu,
"Hâc tibiâ num tu,
Ut te sine sumptu
Edoceam, vis?"
Tum pressit amiculum
Sub ulnâ vesiculam
Quæ sonum reddidit
Vocibus his:
Fa-ra-la la-ra-la loo!

Φευ, φευ!
Modo flens, modo flans,
Magico ἐλελεν
Cor et aurem vel lapidi dans!

2.

"Your pipe," says I, "Thady,
So neatly comes over me,
Naked I'll wander
Wherever it blows;
And, if my poor parents
Should try to recover me,
Sure it won't be
By describing my clothes.
The music I hear now
Takes hold of my ear now,
And leads me all over
The world by the nose."
So I follow'd his bagpipe so sweet,
And I sung, as I leapt like a frog,
"Adieu to my family seat,
So pleasantly placed in a bog!"
Fa-ra-la la-ra-la loo!

Och hone!
How we handled the drone!
And then the sweet music we blew
Would have melted the heart of a stone!

II.

Cui ego tum: "Tu sic, ah!
Me rapis musicâ,
Ut sequar nudulus
Tibicen, te!
Et si pater, testibus,
Quærat me, vestibus,
Redibit, ædepol!
Vacuâ re.
Sic melos quod audio
Me replet gaudio
Ut trahor campos et
Flumina trans;"
Jam linquo rudibus
Hic in paludibus,
"Patris tigurium
Splendidè stans."
Fa-ra-la la-ra-la loo!

Dum tibicen, tu,
Modo flens, modo flans,
Iteras ἐλελεν,
Cor et aurem vel lapidi dans.

3.

Full five years I follow'd him,
Nothing could sunder us;
Till he one morning
Had taken a sup,
And slipt from a bridge
In a river just under us,
Souse to the bottom
Just like a blind pup.
He roar'd, and he baw'd out;
And I also call'd out,
"Now, Thady, my friend,
Don't you mean to come up?" ...
He was dead as a nail in a door;
Poor Thady was laid on the shelf.
So I took up his pipes on the shore,
And now I've set up for myself.
Fa-ra-la la-ra-la loo!

Och hone!
Don't I handle the drone,
And play such sweet music? I too,
Can't I soften the heart of a stone?

III.

Ut arte sic magicà
Egi quinquennium,
Magistro tragica
Accidit res;
Bacchi nam numine,
Pontis cacumine
Dum staret, flumine
Labitur pes!
"E sinu fluctuum,
O puer, duc tuum
(Clamat) didascalum,
Fer opem nans!" ...
Ast ego renuo;
Et sumens demuò
Littore tibia
Sustuli, fans,
Fa-ra-la la-ra-la loo!

Φευ, φευ!
Modo flens, modo flans,
Magico ελελεν
Cor et aurem vel lapidi dans!

DARBY THE SWIFT; OR, THE LONGEST WAY ROUND IS THE SHORTEST WAY HOME

CHAPTER II

"Aspettar' e non venire!"

The Sunday after Darby *lingeringly* started, I began to think it would be just as well to make "assurance doubly sure;" so I despatched a letter by post to my friend at Bally – , conveying similar instructions and advice to those contained in that entrusted to "*the running footman*" of my establishment. In three days I received a satisfactory answer, so I was at rest upon that point; but, as to Darby, I was quite at a loss. I turned over and over in my mind the various mishaps that might have befallen him by the way; but all to no purpose. I called up Eileen, and asked her what she thought about it. Her replies, mixed up, as they were, with her wild immoderate laughter, afforded me nothing beyond a sympathy with her mirth, which certainly was most infective. Reader, I am not a portrait-painter; but, nevertheless, I will attempt to give you an outline of Eileen. In the first place, she was a poor girl, (else she would not have been *my* servant,) born of honest parents; but, if fate had placed her in a higher sphere, she had natural accomplishments enough to have graced it, – namely, youth, beauty, and health, – and, beyond these, an intellectual, though uneducated, refinement of thought, when, *by chance*, she was serious; for gaiety seemed to be an indispensable element of her being. She was eighteen years of age, – well, what do I say? – beautifully formed, had eyes like violets, cheeks like roses, hair, when it was dishevelled (despite Goldsmith's satire), like a weeping willow in a sunset, and – but, hold! I must not go further, lest I be suspected of being enamoured of the original; so I will give up the remaining parts of the picture, and leave them to your imagination!

The Friday after Darby's setting out I was sitting in my room, very quietly poring over something or other of no importance, – I forget exactly what, but I think it was some speech in the House of Lords, – when a knock at the door agreeably disturbed me from an incipient somnolency, occasioned by a new and unprofitable line of reading.

"Come in!" said I. "Who is it? and what do you want?"

"It's only *me*, sir," said Eileen, laughing, as usual. "There's a crather below that wants to speak to you, sir."

"Who is it?" said I.

"I don't well know, sir," replied she; "but I think he's some relation to poor Darby, that ye sent to Bally – last Friday afternoon."

"Oh! then send him up; he may account in some way for the extraordinary absence of his relative," said I.

"Sure, an' it's myself, an' no relation at all," shouted Darby from below, indignantly.

"*Oh! widdy-eelish!*" cried Eileen, breaking out into her hearty wild laugh, that was sure to set at defiance anything like gravity!

"Come up, Darby," said I. "I thought we should never have seen you again."

"Troth, an' the same thing came into my head more than oncet, masther. What the divil are ye laughin' at, honey?" said he (entering the room) to Eileen, who still continued her most boisterous mirth.

"Go down stairs, Evelina," said I, "and leave Darby and me alone!"

She did so; but whispered something in his ear as she passed, which made him so furious that I thought he would have knocked her down, had she not adroitly escaped him by shutting the door after her, and holding the handle on the outside so tightly that his efforts to open it and follow her were abandoned in a moment as fruitless.

"What is the meaning of all this?" said I, severely. "Did you mean to strike the girl?"

"Strike the *caileen*, yir honour? Oh, the Lord forbid! but, if I cotch her upon the stairs out o' yir honor's sight, maybe I wudn't give her cherry-lips a *pogue* (yir honor knows what a *pogue* is) that wud drive her sweetheart crazy for a month o' Sundays!"

"Where have you been all this while?" inquired I, not willing to notice his speech.

"Oh then, sure!" said he, in a most mournful tone, "masther, I've had the divil's own time of it, sir, since you were so unfortunate as to part with me, yir honor, on that same journey to Bally – Bally – Bally – bad luck to it! what do they call it?"

"What has happened?" inquired I, anxiously, thinking he might have later news than my post-letter of three days before had conveyed.

"Happened, yir honour! to who?" said Darby, with a wild look of concern. "I hope the family, Christians, bastes, and all, not barrin' the pig that had the measles, are in good health, and well to do as when I left them. Has the bracket hin taken to standin' upon one leg yit, sir, since she lost the other through that baste of a bull-dog belongin' to the parson? I'd lay three of her eggs she'll never forget the affront he put upon her then!"

"We are all well here," said I; "but give me some account of what has befallen you on your journey, that delayed you so long."

"Troth, an' I'll tell ye, masther," replied Darby, "in no time. Have ye five minutes to spare, sir?"

"Yes," said I; "let me hear."

"Well then, sir," commenced he, "you may remimber that it was on a Friday you took lave of me – last Friday of all – Friday was never a *looky* day by *say* or by land: ye see, I didn't go far afore I met with a disappointment, for I met a berrin' comin' right *forienst* me – what *could* I do but turn back, in dacency, with it? – and, after I'd *keen'd* about a mile with the mourners, I made bould to ax who was the body that was makin' a blackberry *ov* himself."

"A blackberry!" interrupted I.

"Yes, yir honor, a blackberry," replied Darby: "do ye know that, let it shoot never so far, it's sure to come back as near as it can to the root of it where it first started; and so arn't we all blackberries? As the priest says on Ash-*Wendsday*, "Remember, man, you are but dust, and into dust you must return." Now, I've known bigger *dusts* in their lifetime than they were turned out of afterward, when they took to studyin' astronamy with

'The tops of their toes,
And the tip of their nose,
Turn'd up to the roots of the daisies!'

But, whose berrin' should it be, after all, but ould Jemmy Cullen, the piper's! Ye know Jemmy Cullen, yir honour? him that used to play the organ on the pipes at high-mass durin' Christmas an' Easter. Oh! he was the boy to lilt at a weddin' or a wake! but, *pace* be width 'im – God rest his sowl! as I said when I saw the *scragh* put over him for the first time. Well, ye know, yir honor, that oncet upon the same road width them I couldn't do more nor less than wet our clay together; so, after walkin'

the corpse three times round the churchyard of Glassin-oge – Were ye ever berried there, sir? – I mane, wud ye like to be berried there, sir?"

"Not just yet," said I.

"Oh, the Lord forbid, sir!" cried Darby. "I didn't mane that, by no manes. God send ye many days, and *prosperous* ones too! But there's a taste in chusin' a berrin'-ground as well as there is in a drawin'-room," said he, looking around him.

"So there may be," said I; "but that is only the whim or notion of a living man. When he dies, all churchyards are the same to him; he then can have no considerations about the matter."

"That's all very true, sir," replied Darby; "but would ye like to be burnt after the breath was out o' ye?"

"I could have neither liking nor disliking," answered I; "for I should be an insensible mass of matter."

"But mightn't yir ghost, sir, like to see ye were comfortably provided for? I mane yir honor's dead body that's alive an' in good health now, an' long may it continue so!"

"Oh! never mind," said I; "neither you nor I, Darby, know much about those things; so go on with your story."

"Thank ye, sir!" said Darby, and resumed. "I was sayin', sir, as how we went to wet our clay together at the '*Three Jolly Pigeons*.' Yir honor knows the '*Three Jolly Pigeons*,' facing the ould hawthorn o' Goldsmith, in the village of Auburn hard by here, eh? Sure, an' I've heer'd as much as how they want to take the merits of the whole place to themselves over in England somewhere, as if it couldn't spake plainly for itself that it was bred and born here in ould Ireland ages ago! Isn't the '*Desarted Village*' a *butiful* histry, masther? Lame Kelly, the poet, says, it bates the world for makin' the heart soft. It's myself that never passes the spot without a tear in my eye, like a widow's pig, as the sayin' is. There's the ruins of the *dacent* church on the hill all in *butiful* repair to this hour, and the parson's house, and the schoolmaster Tom Allen's, and the common, and the pond, width the geese upon it still, as if it was only yistherday, an' the ould hawthorn – bad *look* to their taste that built a stone wall round about it like a *jail*! What did the blessed tree ever do that it should be put in pound in that manner o' way?"

Gentle shade of Goldsmith! amongst the many tributes to thy immortal genius, receive kindly the simple but honest homage of poor Darby. He may not be able to appreciate thee in all thy varied splendour of moral and intellectual worth; but he has a heart full of benevolence like thine own, and, although a poor Irish serf, has feeling and fancy enough to reverence the spots thou hast consecrated by the thousand-spelled wand of thy muse!

"Darby," said I, "I promised you something on your return (though you did not come back as soon as I expected); there's a guinea for you."

"Augh, thin, may the light of Heaven break yir last sleep!" said Darby; "but isn't it too much, masther?"

"You are welcome to it," said I; "go on with your story."

"Thank ye, sir!" replied he. "Whereabouts was I when I left off?"

"Just where you are now," said I.

"Beggin' yir honor's pardon, I think I was at the '*Three Jolly Pigeons*.'"

"Be it so," said I, "go on."

"Well, as I was sayin', when we damp'd the grief a trifle at the *sheebeen* width a drop of the rale *stone turf*, I takes up the kish again; but first I put my hand in the straw to see if the *dog-een* was comfortable, and there he was to be sure, warm an' nice as a new-laid egg: so, wishin' the rest of the company every amusement in life, I set out on my travels agen. Just as I was in the doorway, Ned Coffey, the *whisperer*, – ye know Ned Coffey, yir honor, that brakes in the wild *coults* width a charm he's got? Well, anyhow, if he didn't laugh so as if his mother was a horse; but I never minded him, only went on wonderin' to myself what cud av' made him so humoursome at a berrin'. Well, never

mind that, I went on beautifully for a time, as good as an hour an' a half, when, all of a sudden, leppin' a ditch, the hayband I had across my breast bruk, and let the *clieve* fall *clane* in the dirty puddle. 'Oh, *hannamandhioul!*' says I, 'what'll the mather say to this?' The words were scarce past my lips when a *squake* that 'ud av' split the ears of a pitcher came out o' the *clieve*, an' after that a gruntin', such as I never *heer'd* come from mortal man afore, barrin' it was a pig under a gate!"

"What could it have been?" inquired I, affecting a grave concern; "it was not my dog Squib, surely?"

"Who the *nagers* else could it be?" said Darby. "Only, after crassing myself three times, and turnin' up the basket wid' my *horse*, I found he was bewitched into the shape of a porker, as purty a young pig sure enough, about seven weeks ould, as I'd wish to clap eyes on."

"A pig!" exclaimed I. "Why, he returned home that very night in his own shape."

"Well then, see that, now," said Darby, "thuv', for my own part, I think it was all Ned Coffey's doin'; but, be that as it may, I was never so frightened in all my born days, for I tuk to my heels, an' was out o' sight in no time, like a *haro!* tho' I hadn't far to go to be that same, for it was pitch-dark; so, to keep myself company, I began singin'

'The first o' my pranks was in little Rathshane,
Where love, just like whiskey, popp'd into my brain;
For Ally Magoolagh, a *nate* little sowl,
As tall and as *strate* as a shaverman's pole!"

'Augh! thin, *was* she?' says a voice that I cudn't see, tho' 'twas close to my left ear! 'Who's there?' says I. 'Where?' says it, on th' other side. 'Anywhere,' says I, 'to plaze ye;' and wid that I fell into a could sweat, for I began to think it was Mihilmas Eve, an' divil a grain of salt I had about me to keep me from harm! 'Crass o' Christ on us!' says I, 'an' God bless ye!' for I thought it was one of the good people, yir honor! so I made up my mind to get in-*doors* as soon as I could. But that wasn't so aisy as wishin', for there wasn't a village nearer than five miles, nor a cabin by the way-side. At last I spies a light at a distance in the fields aff the road, and away we set, I and my *horse*, full gallup. Oh! many's the ditch we cleared without seein'; but still, never a bit did we come nearer to the light! 'Is it a *Will*,' says I to myself, 'or a *Jack*?' an' wid that out it goes on a sudden, and laves me up to my chin in a bog. Augh! then, hadn't I a cruel time of it there? I was, for all the world, like a *flay* on Father Fogarty's pock-mark'd nose, or a blind horse in a tan-yard, – no sooner out o' one hole than into another! At last I got upon dry land, and wasn't I thankful for that same? for I got houl't ov a stone wall that directed me straight on to a gate that was only hasp'd; so I opened it, an' let myself out upon a *rodeiene*, that I knew by the tracks o' the wheels; so, turnin' myself round three times for *look*, (and bad *look* it was,) I steps out into a ditch that was handy by the way-side, – for it was across the *rodeiene* I went 'stead of lengthways either up or down; but how could I do better in the dark? Well, afther a while floundherin' about like a litter of pups in a bag, I got on my feet agen clane out o' the mud, shiverin' an' shakin' as if I had Jack Nulty's ague 'pon me! 'Well,' says I to myself, 'it was *looky* I stopp'd to have a drop at the berrin', or I'd av' nothin' to keep the could out o' me now! It was Providence as well as dacency that put it into my head!"

"If you had not stopped," said I, "you would not have been overtaken by the night, and exposed to such a disagreeable accident!"

"Well, sure, yir honor," replied Darby, "somethin' else might av' happened, an' who knows but it might 'a been worse? – there's no sayin' or accountin' for such things. Well, be that as it may, I began to walk on, feelin' afore me width my *horse* (that never forsook me all the time) whether I was in the right road or not, till at last I comes all ov a sudden into the middle o' the town o' Lanesbro', with *raal* candles (none ov yir *wisps* or *lanthorns*) burnin' in every window. Maybe I didn't know where I was then! So, mountin' my horse, sir, strad-legs, away I *canther'd*, blessin' my stars that I got

on my journey so well and so far, width only a wettin' in the bog-holes an' ditches, and a scratch or two on my hands an' cheeks, that I made nothin' ov. 'Where will we put up for the night,' says I to my horse; but yir honor knows the *crathur* cudn't answer me: so I tuk my own advice, an' went sthraight to 'The Cat and Bagpipes.' 'Will I get a lodgin' here the night?' says I to the lan'lady. – 'Who are ye?' says she. – 'Who am I!' I says; 'I'm yir honor's servant, on a mission,' says I, mentionin' yir name, masther. – 'Can ye pay for a bed?' says she. – 'Can money do it?' says I. – 'To be sure,' says she. – 'Then, look here,' says I; an' wid that I show'd her four and sixpence – for I only spent sixpence at the berrin'. – 'Go into the kitchen,' says she, 'an' I'll see what I can do for ye.' – 'Thank ye, ma'am,' says I. So I goes my ways into the kitchen, and sits down by the hob. That was very agreeable for a time; but, when I dried myself, an' wanted to go to bed after a drop or two, how d'ye think they sarved me? only sure, yir honor, by putting me in bed with a *furrener*, – nothin' more nor less than a *black*, savin' yir presence, – for it was the *fair* night o' the town, and beds were scarce, an' not to be had for love or money; so I was *oblidged* to sleep double, plaze ye, sir, in a two-bedded room. They tould me he was only a *sweep*; but he turned out to be a *raal* black, to my sorrow!"

"In what way?" inquired I.

"Oh! in many ways, sir," replied Darby. "First and forenenst, he prevented me takin' my natural rest afore midnight; for I took a Bible oath on a child's catechism that I wouldn't enther the room where he was afore the *good people* were gone to roost; for who knows what they might have made of me? Lord bless ye! they'd av' turn'd every hair o' my head into pump-handles, if they liked, afore morn! so I thought it best to sit up a while, an' kick up a bit ov a dance in the kitchen width Katheen the maid, an' two or three other *spreesans* that were inclined for the fun; an' fine sport we had, to be sure, to the tune of '*The Hare in the Corn*,' and '*Roger de Cuvverly*,' – did ye ever trip it to '*Roger de Cuvverly*,' yir honor? Oh! it's an illigant cure for the gout!"

"I never dance," said I.

"An' more's the sorrow!" said Darby, "for ye've a fine pair o' legs o' yir own, an' it's a pity that a lame piper shudn't be the better o' them some night or other!"

"We'll see about that," said I; "holiday-time is coming."

"Thank ye, and long life to yir honor! Will ye give us the barn, sir, for a hop width the girls a-comin' Christmas?"

"Yes," said I, "and a barrel of ale into the bargain."

"Oh! then won't that be illigant?" said Darby, cutting an anticipatory caper on the carpet. "An' won't yir honor dance yirself, sir?"

"I have said already that I never dance," replied I. "Go on."

"Yes, sir, immadiately," said he, and continued. "Well, after a bit we had a game o' blindman's buff, an', to be sure, *raal* fun it was while it lasted, and that was till we got into the little hours; an' many's the trick we play'd one another, till myself felt the miller throwin' dust in my eyes; so, givin' Katheen the wink that I was goin' aff slily, I tould her to call me early in the morn, an' left the party to themselves. I soon tuk aff me, an' was asleep in no time; but in less than half an hour I had a most wonderful *drame*. I thought I was the first paycock that ever wore a tail in Paradise; an' maybe I wasn't proud o' myself, sated in the tree of knowledge, width Adam an' Eve, *ketchin'* flies width their mouth open, lookin' at me for wonder. 'Arrah! *cushlah!*' says Adam to his wife; 'isn't it a *butiful* sight?' – 'Troth, an' it is,' says she; 'avick! I hope he won't fly away, for I'd like to make a pet ov 'im. I'll just step *indoors* for the blundherbuss!' When I came to this part o' my *drame*, the blood o' me ran could, an' I couldn't think what was the matther width me, barrin' it was the night-*mare*; but it was no such thing, for I turned on th' other side, and thought then I was a race-horse on the Curragh of Kildare, an' yir honor clappin' spurs into me within twenty yards of the winnin' post! Well, that was better than t'other; but, as I was *draming* in this fashion, I began to think they'd never call me at all, when Katheen, yir honor, – the purty little girl, sir, that kept me up so late the night afore, dancin' with her in the back-kitchen, – gave a *puck* at the door with her fist, that sent in one of the panels, and dumb-

foundered quite an ould clock on the back of it, that was pointin' width its two hands to some hour last year. 'Who the divil's that?' says I. – 'It's only me,' says she, with a voice like a spaking-trumpet, or a chorus of ganders. (I think the crather had a could upon her.) 'Arrah! d'ye never mane to lave off sleepin'?' – 'What o'clock is it, alanna!' says I. – 'Oh! the same hour it was this time yisterday, I suppose,' says she, 'for the clock is *down*.' – 'Faith! it is,' says I, nate and clane upon the *flooor*; 'but never mind that, the sun's *up*!' – 'Ay,' says Katheen, 'this two hours or more.' – 'And so wud I,' says I, 'if I had as far to travel in the day as he has!' – 'Augh!' said Katheen, 'you lazy *puckaun*, did ye never hear that the early bird *ketches* the worm?' – 'Troth, an' I did,' says I, 'putting on my shirt; 'but what an *ummadhaun* the worm must be to get up afore him.' – 'An' over an' above,' says Katheen, 'the man that was on the road betimes in the mornin' found a purse.' – 'Ay!' says I, 'but the poor divil that lost it was there first.' – 'Oh, the *divil* be width ye! stop there till ye're stiff av ye like,' said Katheen, and run down stairs afore I could say Jack Robison. Well, then, yir honor, I was soon drest an' up; so, as I'd *ped* my way *the night*, I had *nawthin'* to do but pass clane through the kitchen in the mornin', an' take to the road agen, when I saw Katheen a-lightin' the fire. I just stepped towards her for a kiss *a-dhurru*s, when she cried murther in Irish, loud enough to waken the whole house; so I thought I'd have nothin' more to do width her this time, and went my ways *paceably*. It was a fine mornin', barrin' the mist, that wudn't let ye see a yard afore ye at a time, an', to be sure, I *kep* it up at a fine rate 'till I *rached* the town of Kilcronan. But, what d'ye think happened me there, yir honor?"

"I'm sure I cannot say," said I.

"Well, then, I'll tell ye, sir. As I was passin' by a pawnbroker's that was settin' out his goods for sale, what did I see but a lookin'-glass starin' me in the face, an' a blackamoor's head in the middle of it. Well, I look'd, and look'd, and look'd agen, but divil a bit was it like me; so, turnin' 'pon my heel, 'Bad look to them!' says I, 'they've woke the *wrong man*;' for yir honor remimbers that I slept width a *furrener* the night afore, and left orders to be called early; so I had nothin' for it but run back agen as hard as I could lay foot to ground for twelve honest miles; and lucky sure it was that the fog was so thick as ye could cut it with a knife, or I'd av' 'ad the divil's own time of it on the way. But, as it happened, I met nobody that knew me, 'cept blind M'Diarmot the sign-painter."

"Sign-painter!" exclaimed I. "I thought you said he was blind."

"Augh! sure it was afore he lost his eye-sight," said Darby, "that he was the most illigant sign-painter in the county. Didn't he paint *The Pig and Thrush* for Mat Sleven; an' *The Three Blacks*, that ye'd take for two twins, they're so like one anuther; and *The Red Herrin'* for Pat Gaveny in the market, that look'd so *salt* it made yir mouth wather to that degree, that ye cudn't help, passin' by, goin' in to have a drop. Oh! it brought powers of custom anyhow!"

"How did he lose his eyes?" inquired I.

"He didn't lose them at all, sir," replied Darby, "only the sight o' *one* o' them, (for he never had th' other,) an' that was all through Molly, *the Lump*, that advised him, (bad win' to her!) to use crame when he had a could upon his intellects after the *typus*; so he mistuk a pot o' white lead for the same, one evenin' that he had a drop too much, and fairly painted himself blind; for from that hour to this he can't see a hole in a forty-fut laddher. And more's the pity, for he had plenty o' *drawin'* about the counthry to do; an' now his dog has got into the *line* ov it for him, the crathur! Well, anyhow, knowin' he was a jidge o' colours, I ax'd him to feel my face, an' tell me what was the matther width it; so he puts his hand upon me, an' may I never die, masther, if it didn't turn as black as a crow as soon as he drew it across my cheek! 'Well,' says I, 'this *bates* cock-fightin'!' But I soon found out the trick they played me; for M'Diarmot, when he smelt his hand, said there was *sut* and goose-grase upon it. So ye see, yir honor, the truth was, they blackened my face in the kitchen afore they put me to sleep with the black, that I mightn't know which was myself in the mornin'. May they live till the ind o' the world, that the divil may have a race after them, say I, for that same!"

THE DUEL

I was educated, said a French gentleman whom I met in quarantine, at Poitiers, though Lusignan is my native town.

Poitiers is well known to the antiquary as having possessed a Roman amphitheatre, of which, however, when I was at that university, only a vault, supposed to have been a cage for the wild beasts, remained. This cage, from the solidity of the masonry, and the enormous size of the blocks, seemed indestructible, but was not so; for when I last visited Poitiers, and asked for the key of the cavern, I found that it no longer existed, and that on the site had been constructed the inn of the "Trois Pelerins."

It is a stone's throw from the Salle d'Armes, a place with which I had been better acquainted than with the schools. To revive my ancient recollection, I entered the *salle*, and found there an inhabitant of the town whom I had known at college. He proposed that we should dine together at the "Trois Pelerins;" and, after drinking as good a bottle of wine as it afforded, he related to me what a few days before, in the very room where we were sitting, had happened at a dinner of the collegians. It was ordered for twelve; but, one of the party having invited a friend, the number swelled to thirteen.

It is said that superstition supplies the place of religion; I have observed this to be the case with the most sceptical of my acquaintance: and thus this number thirteen occasioned some remarks, and the stranger was looked upon with no very favourable eye, and considered as a supernumerary, who brought with him ill luck.

One of the set at last summoned resolution enough to say,

"I do not dine thirteen."

"Nor I," said another.

"Nor I," was repeated on all sides.

The guest, naturally embarrassed at this rudeness, got up, and was about to retire, when Alfonse, to whom he came as an *umbra*, proposed an ingenious expedient for doing away with the evil augury, and said,

"There is one way of annulling the proverb that threatens death in the course of the year to one of a party of thirteen; that way is, to decide which of us shall fight a duel this evening, or to-morrow morning."

"Done!" cried all the students at a breath.

"Shall it be among ourselves?" said one of them.

"No," replied the author of the proposition; "for then two of us would have to fight, whereas it ought to be the thirteenth."

"Right," said all the young men.

"Then let it be with one of the officers of the garrison."

"Be it so," said Alfonse; "we will make a pool, as usual, at the *café*, all thirteen of us; and –"

"The first out," said the student.

"No," interrupted Alfonse, "that would be a bad omen; it shall be the winner."

"Agreed!" replied all, and they sate down to table with as much gaiety and *insouciance* as if nothing had been said.

The stranger, just as the soup was being put on the table, got up, and with a magisterial tone of voice addressed the assembly. "Gentlemen," said he, "I feel suddenly inspired with a sublime idea. We are about to eat and drink in the ruins of Roman greatness (alluding to the amphitheatre). Let us imitate that people in every thing that is great. Nothing could be more splendid than the games of the gladiators which were celebrated over the tombs of the mighty dead, – nothing more sumptuous than the festivals held at their funerals. This is probably also a funereal fête; with this difference, that it is held before, and not after death. Let Poitiers therefore rival Rome in her magnificence; let this

cena be in honour of the mighty remains over which we are sitting; let it be *morituro*, – sacred to him who is about to perish."

"Bravo!" exclaimed the guests one and all; "a splendid idea, by Jove! – a splendid *cena* be it!"

"Open the windows!" cried Alfonse. The windows were opened. As soon as the soup was served, smash went all the plates into the yard, and shivered against the pavement. So, during the rest of dinner, every plate as fast as it was cleared, every bottle as soon as emptied, followed their fellows. One might perceive, by the practised dexterity of this feat, that it was not the first time they had played the same game.

During the first course nothing particular occurred to disturb their harmony; but it so happened that the *rôti*, which is, as you know, in France always served last, was burnt. Then there arose a general burst of indignation.

"Send the cook!" exclaimed they all to the waiters.

"Order up the cook! Here, cook! cook!" was the universal cry.

But the *chef* was not forthcoming.

Alfonse, the president, then said, "Must I go myself and fetch him?"

This menace had its effect: the *pauvre chef*, pale as death, and all cotton cap in hand, crawled into the room. He was greeted with deafening shouts.

"Come here!" said Alfonse. "Do you take us for the officers? What do you mean by serving us in this manner, – eh?"

The man of the spit stammered out an apology. Alfonse looked at him askance.

"If I served you right," said he, "I should make you eat this detestable *rôti* of yours; but, as it is the first time of happening, my chastisement shall be a paternal one. Hold out your cotton cap."

The *chef* obeyed, and Alfonse turned out of a dish into it an enormous clouted cream (*omelet soufflé*), and said,

"Come, now, on with the cap, and see you don't first spill a drop."

He was forced to comply; and the unhappy Ude (*udus*), his face and white jacket streaming with the contents of the *plat*, was followed out of the room with hisses and bursts of laughter.

Thus went on the dinner, and with it a concert of broken plates, dishes, glasses, and bottles, accompanied by noises of all sorts, which rose to *fortissimo* as the wine, of which they drank to excess, got into their heads.

The dessert, which succeeded the second course, was ended by what they called a salad. This salad was thus mixed. They turned up the four corners of the table-cloth, and rolled therein all the fragments that were left. At this juncture the waiters disappeared, conjecturing shrewdly that, if they stayed any longer, the feast might be too grand for them. In short, when all that remained of the dessert was bundled well up, the collegians got on the table, and, at the risk of cutting their feet with the fragments of the crockery, and the splinters of the glass, danced thereon, till everything was pounded, smashed, and broken. Then the table-cloth, with all it contained, (the salad,) was thrown out of the window; after it the table, then the chairs, then the rest of the furniture, and, when there was nothing more to destroy, the frenzied youths thought they could do no better than throw themselves out; and all the thirteen "followed the leader," Alfonse, and jumped from the first floor into the court.

There is a saying, that over drunkards watches an especial Providence. But there are, it seems, two; for the students, on this occasion, found one of their own, which doubtless befriended them in this mad leap. Certain it is that none of the party met with the slightest accident, and, gloriously drunk, they rushed out into the street, after the most remarkable orgie that had taken place for some time at Poitiers.

They made a brilliant *entrée* into the *café*, – a general place of rendezvous for the students and officers when they were not at daggers drawn.

Two of the latter were playing at billiards when they entered. But Alfonse, without waiting till the game was ended, asked, or rather demanded, in an authoritative tone, that the table should be given up for a single pool to the thirteen.

Thinking that the object was, as usual, to decide who should pay for the dinner, or the *demi-tasse et chasse*, the players did not seem inclined to comply with this requisition; but when they learnt that a more momentous affair, a duel, was on foot, they hastened to lay down their cues. A duel! everything must yield to that!

There were but few military men present, for that very day there was a *soirée* at the general-commandant's of the garrison; and those few consisted of veterans, who preferred passing the evening at the *café* to putting on silk-stockings and shoes, or of *chenapans*, who in the regiment went by the name of *crans*, or *bourreaux des cranes*. The old *grognards*, however, did not quit the room. The *chenapans* interchanged glances with each other; and one or two of the sub-lieutenants, who had come to take their *demi-tasse* before they went to the ball, also remained. They had all more or less formed a shrewd guess of what was to happen; and, for the honour of the service, waited for the quarrel to break out.

In our schools and garrisons at Paris we are totally unacquainted with that *esprit de corps* which engages a whole regiment, and an entire body of young men, in a duel, when two only are concerned; nor can we form a notion how slight a thing a duel is considered, when it is the custom to decide all questions sword in hand. Habit is all in all; and people soon learn to think no more of fighting than going to breakfast.

It becomes a general endemic; and a person who, lost in the world of Paris, where he is unknown, might hesitate about demanding satisfaction for an insult however gross, would, in that atmosphere, be ready any day, or hour of the day, to call a man out for merely looking at him.

The pool was begun. Never did a party, when a large sum of money depended on the issue of the game, play with more care and caution than those thirteen to decide which of them was to fight. By degrees the players lost their three lives, and the number was at last reduced to two; these two were the stranger guest and Alfonse. The lookers-on watched anxiously every stroke. Those balls, that as they rolled carried with them the fate of a man, were followed by earnest looks. The officers came nearer and nearer, and ranged themselves round the billiard. They were not a little interested to know whether they, or rather one of them, – which they knew not, – was to enter the lists with a freshman, no doubt unpractised in fencing, or with the most adroit and terrible duellist of the university.

The chances were against them. The stranger lost.

A singular excitement was occasioned by the disappearance of the last ball in the pocket. Some faces grew pale; but no one stirred from the spot where he had been standing as a spectator. Alfonse looked steadily round him, and made two or three times the circuit of the room, as though he were in search, but in vain, of some one worth quarrelling with. At last he perceived a sort of sub-lieutenant, originally drum-major and *maître-d'armes*, and who boasted of having killed his thirty pequins, sitting quietly in a corner. Alfonse walked straight up to him, and, saluting him with a politeness that electrified the company, said, in his cool way,

"Monsieur, I am exceedingly distressed at the situation in which I find myself placed; but my honour is concerned, and you will allow me to engage yours."

Without further preliminaries, he gave him a severe hit in the face.

The officer, who little expected so abrupt and unanswerable a mode of provocation, sprang like a madman from his chair; and had not Alfonse, with the activity and nimbleness of a cat, leaped with one bound on the table, the ex-drum-major would probably have strangled him on the spot.

He was quickly at the aggressor's heels, when his own comrades stopped him of their own accord, saying,

"Come, come! no child's play or boxing! the thing is too serious! *C'est un combat à la mort!*"

"Where shall I find you to-morrow?" said one of the officers, addressing Alfonse.

"Fix your ground," was the reply.

"No to-morrows!" said the officer who had received the blow; "this instant!"

"This instant be it, if you please," replied Alfonso with the utmost indifference.

"I shall not sleep to-night till that blow is avenged!" said the other, foaming with rage.

"I, too, want to unnumb my hand. I have hurt my knuckles against your cheek-bones," said Alfonse.

"Where would they fight at such a time of night as this?" observed some of the officers.

"In the garden behind the *café*," cried the ancient *maître d'armes*; "a sword in one hand, and a billiard-lamp in the other."

"But," said Alfonse, "I am tired. I know your style of fighting men, *Crane*; you want to make me break ground, and drive me step by step round the garden. Don't think it, my lad. Besides, the lamp may go out. But, if you have no objection, the billiard-table will be a good arena. We shall be well lighted, and there will be no means of drawing back a foot.

"Be it so," said the other.

The doors were closed, and they laid hands on the waiters and the proprietor of the *café*, who were going to the police. The swords were then brought. The two adversaries cast lots for them, and then pulled off their coats and waistcoats, and unbuttoned their shirts, to show that they had nothing under.

Both then took their swords.

The officer wrapt round his hand a handkerchief, leaving both ends dangling. Alfonse neglected this practice, the object of which was to distract the attention of the adversary by the perpetual flutter of their two white points, thus to turn away his attention from the sword. But Alfonse had a manner of fighting of his own, and cared little for these petty proceedings. He never looked at the steel; but, fixing his eye on that of his antagonist, anticipated every motion that he made.

The two wrestlers, or gladiators I might say, got on the table together, and, according to the terms or conditions agreed on between the students and the officers, rested their swords on the toes of their boots. A traveller from a commercial house who happened to be present, and could have no interest in the scene other than what its novelty excited, was fixed on to clap his hands three times, and at the third the swords were upraised in the air, and the two combatants came to guard.

A terrible silence reigned through the room, and for some seconds it was only broken by the clashing of the steel; for both parties, as they skirmished, were well aware that a single *faux pas* was death. The slightest stepping back, shrinking of the body, or leaping on one side, must inevitably prove fatal.

The officer was a head and shoulders taller than Alfonse, and looked as though he could crush him; but he little heeded this advantage, if advantage it was, for he by degrees lowered his body till he was right under the sword of his foe, and almost bent himself down upon the bed of the table. No other change in his attitude then took place.

All at once the officer, taking this posture for the effect of fear, made a furious lunge, which was parried with the greatest *sang froid* and skill, and Alfonse allowed the officer to return to his ground without attempting to return it. His adversary was deceived by this sort of timid defence, and, become more adventurous, attacked him again with increased fury, – so much so, that, thrown off his guard, his left foot quitted the cushion of the table, against which it had been fixed. Then it was that Alfonse made a rapid lunge at the officer's face. He endeavoured to regain the ground he had lost, to resume his position. The student would not give him time, and charged with impetuosity his disconcerted enemy, who could only avoid his thrusts by keeping his body bent backwards. Alfonse forced him to the edge of the table, when his foot tripped, and at that moment drove the sword up to the hilt in his heart.

The unhappy officer cried out "Hit! hit!" Then he raised himself to his full height, and fell backwards from the top of the table to the floor.

Awful was the sound that the weight of that body made upon the boards of the room! There was mixed up with it a feeling – a dread lest the dead man should hurt himself in falling. Never did I see, for I was present, so dreadful a contest! Never did I experience anything so frightful as the silence of those two men, – as the flashing of their swords by the light of the lamps, – as the fall of the vanquished, who, disappearing behind the table, seemed at once to have been engulfed in a tomb that opened from behind to receive him!

THE MONK OF RAVENNE

The Monk of Ravenne was daring and great,
He had risk'd his life for the Church's estate;
He was loved by all who the Virgin love,
And the Pope and he were hand and glove;
Not a deed was done by friars or men,
But *that* deed was known to the Monk of Ravenne.

The Monk of Ravenne on his death-bed lay,
His eyes were closed to the light of day,
His ears drank in the fathers' prayers,
And his soul shook off its earthly cares;
Many a tongue and many a pen
Moved in praise of the Monk of Ravenne.

The Monk of Ravenne in the tomb was placed,
With noble and fair the chapel was graced,
The requiem rose with the organ's swell,
And an hundred voices peal'd his knell;
The lightning flash'd, and up started agen⁹
The ghastly form of the Monk of Ravenne.

"Fools!" cried the monk, "do you pray for *me*,
Who have plunder'd you all, of every degree?
I have blasted your fame, I have mock'd at your shrine,
And now do I suffer this doom of mine,
'Deserted of heaven, detested of men,
Lost, body and soul, is the Monk of Ravenne!'"

Cleiaubuid.

⁹ *Vide* Chaucer, &c.

A MARINE'S COURTSHIP

BY MICHAEL BURKE HONAN

WITH AN ILLUSTRATION BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

I have the honour to be one of that class of amphibious animals called in his Majesty's service *sea-soldiers*; that is to say, I have the honour to hold a commission in the noble, ancient, and most jolly body of the Royal Marines. I am by profession, therefore, as well as by nature, a miscellaneous individual; and circumstances have more than once thrown me into situations where the desire to support the credit of the cloth, added to my own stock of cheerful impudence, have carried me through, in spite of difficulties which would have appalled another man. I had the misfortune to be employed on board one of the ships of the inner squadron in the Douro during the siege of Oporto. I do not say misfortune out of any disrespect to the commodore, or to the captain under whose command I was immediately placed, or to my brother officers, for a more generous, convivial set of fellows could not be got together; but I speak of the place, and of the people, and of the few opportunities which were afforded me of showing off a handsome uniform, and, I must say, rather a well-made person, which it inclosed. Besides, I was kept on hard duty; and though there were some pretty women who appeared on Sunday during the cessations of the usual shower of shells from the Miguelite camp, yet there were so many competitors for their smiles, that I really could not take the trouble of making myself as amiable as I otherwise should, and, as I flatter myself, I could. Don Pedro the emperor, who now sleeps with his fathers, and whose heart is deposited in the cathedral of Oporto, was then without the society of his imperial and beautiful wife; and, whether it was to set a good example to his court, or to prevent his mind from dwelling on the absence of his true love, he was one of the most active of my rivals, and I protest there was not a pretty face in the whole town that he had not the pleasure of paying his addresses to. The Marquis of Loule, his brother-in-law, also separated from that most lovely and most generous of Portuguese princesses who now sits nightly at Lisbon, smiling on all the world from her box at the French theatre in the *Rua dos Condes*, was regularly employed in the same operations; and I never took a sly peep at a pair of dark and bewitching eyes that I did not find the emperor or the marquis also reconnoitring. The marquis is one of the handsomest men in Europe, but with the most vacant expression possible. He wins every heart at first sight, but he loses his conquests as fast as he makes them. Women may be caught by glare; and a man of high rank, an Adonis in face and person, must tell: but I'll be hanged if the dear creatures are such fools as we think them; and the marquis's wife first, and every other flame of his after, have dismissed him, on finding that his good looks and brains were not measured by the same scale. Then there was the Count Villa Flor, and several other martial grandees; not to speak of the generals and colonels of regiments, and the well-built and well-whiskered officers of the British and French Legion, and the captains and first lieutenants of our squadron. I run over this list just to show what difficulties I had to contend with; and that, if I did not turn the head of the whole town, there was a numerous list of operative love-makers who shared the market with me.

About this time the senior captain of the squadron determined to establish a signal-station to communicate with the ships of his Britannic Majesty outside the bar; and, no fitting place being found on the Pedroite side of the river, an application was made to General San Martha, who commanded for the Miguelites, for permission to erect a post on the left bank, which permission was most liberally granted. A party was instantly set to work, and in the course of a few days a flag-staff was hoisted;

and a large house and court-yard given for the accommodation of the officer and men who were to work it. As luck would have it, I was selected for this service, in company with a wild lieutenant of the fleet, and we soon established ourselves in a comfortable quarter, having the permission to rove about among the Miguelite grounds where we pleased, and to cross as usual to Oporto, when leave of absence was to be procured.

We had not been long established at this fort, when the batteries which the Miguelites had established at the mouth of the river began to do their work in good earnest, and so effectually to close the bar, that not only was the usual supply of provisions cut off, but strong fears were entertained that the city would be reduced by famine to capitulate. There was an abundance of salt fish, or *bacalhao*, and a superfluity of port wine; but even the best fare will tire on repetition, and you may be assured that salt fish for breakfast, dinner, and supper was not very acceptable to the officers or the men. Our commodore, with the foresight that distinguishes a British officer, had provided for the coming difficulty; and had arranged with the Miguelite general for an abundant supply of fresh provisions, meat, poultry, and vegetables, for all the ships' crews, on the distinct understanding that no part of it was to be passed over to the besieged city. The squadron therefore lived in abundance, while the garrison was half starved; and as we passed through the streets with our shining red faces and sleek sides, puffed out by the good cheer our commodore had provided, we formed a strong contrast to the lean and shrivelled soldiers of glory, who were starving in honour of the charter. The private families of the town also began to suffer, and the beauty of many of the most admired, sensibly to diminish; salt fish and port wine did not in combination make a healthy chyle: and I could observe that the Oporto ladies, more carefully than before, wrapped their long dark cloaks about them, to hide the ravages which short commons was making in the plumpness of their persons.

It was at this moment that I conceived and executed the bold plan which forms the subject of this paper, and from which all learned communities may be informed that, for originality of thought and ability in the execution, no adventurer can compare to a British marine.

The most beautiful maiden at Oporto was a Spanish girl called Carolina. She was the daughter of the alcade of Ponte Vedra in Galicia, who had fled some time before, from the retributive justice of the law, which he himself had so long administered; he had died months before the present period, leaving Carolina exposed to all the privations of a besieged town, and to the temptations of a profligate and military court. I never saw a more lovely creature: her eyes were as dark as night, and her cheeks glowed with a warmth unknown in the cold complexions of the north. Her person was faultless; her feet and her hands were small: one could span her waist; and she walked with that combination of majesty and grace which a Spanish woman can alone assume. Poor Carolina was as good as she was beautiful; and though the emperor, and his hopeful brother-in-law, and all the gay cavaliers of the camp, were ready to throw themselves at her feet, she behaved with a discretion which won her the good opinion of the whole army, not to speak of the fleet, where such remarkable virtue could be fully estimated. I among the rest of the inflammable multitude had been struck with the magic charms of the angelic Carolina, and devoted every moment of the occasional leave of absence which I procured, to promenading up and down before her window, in the hope of catching a glance of her beautiful eyes, and of attracting her regard to my own beloved person. I was as much in love with her as a marine could be, and my hopeless passion became so well known that it was a standing joke at the mess-table, and our wicked wag of a commodore, who I fancied was a little caught himself, never failed to inquire if I had taken my usual walk, and met with the same good fortune.

You can easily imagine my delight when I heard that a scarcity was making such rapid progress in the city, and when I found that even the emperor's table was limited to the ordinary rations of *bacalhao*, black bread, and port wine. I will own that my heart leaped for joy when I ascertained from an emissary employed to watch the house of Carolina that she too was experiencing the pangs of want, and that with her scanty means she was unable to procure the common necessities for her sustenance. Our ships were abundantly supplied, as I have before informed you; and the little

signal-station which I occupied was the abode of plenty. The Miguelites faithfully performed their engagement; and day after day the regular supplies of beef, poultry, vegetables, and fruit came in. The commodore of course respected the contract that he had entered into; and though the emperor made several advances to his favour, and though he was openly solicited on his behalf by various officers of the staff, he refused to allow a pound of meat to be passed into the city. Several of the British residents represented their claims in a formal manner for his protection; but he did his duty like a man, and he resolutely determined not to break the engagement he had entered into with the general of Don Miguel, or compromise the safety of his own crews by giving way to his good-nature. The value of a leg of fowl may therefore be estimated; and it immediately occurred to me that I could soften the obdurate heart of the beautiful Spaniard by secretly conveying to her some portion of the stock which was appropriated to our own table.

I therefore set about purloining a capital *gallina*; and when I had secured it, in defiance of the jealous watch of the steward, I crammed it into my pocket, and, asking leave to go on shore, started about the close of day to try whether hunger, which breaks through stone walls, would open the oak door of the charming Carolina. I soon found myself in the well-known quarter, and before the house that contained my love; and, after reconnoitring for an instant to see that the emperor or his staff were not in the way, ran up to the first landing, where she lived, and pulled the little bell-string which hung at the door. In an instant I heard the pretty feet tapping along the passage, and the soft voice of Carolina herself exclaiming "*Quien es?*" Who is there? "It is I, a British officer, and a friend of yours," I replied; "I want particularly to speak to you."

"Sir," said Carolina, "I have not the honour of your acquaintance."

"It is true, señorita; but I come to serve you, and my good intentions will excuse the absence of ceremony."

"Sir, I must wish you a good day: I cannot accept a service from strangers; I have not asked you for any."

"Stay, beautiful Carolina," I exclaimed; "I adore you."

"Sir, I have the honour to wish you good evening."

"Stay, angelic vision: I am an officer of Marines."

"What have I to do with the Marines?"

"I come to devote myself to you."

"Sir, – really sir, you carry the joke too far; I must dispense with your unseasonable visit. I have again the honour to wish you good evening."

Carolina was about to close the little slide of the door through which this brief conversation had been carried on, when, growing desperate with vexation, I held the slide open with one hand, while with the other I pulled the fowl from my pocket, and held it dangling before her face. Oh! if you had seen her look! – her eyes were fixed as Hamlet's when he sees his father's ghost, her mouth opened, and two little rivulets of water ran down at each side as when an alderman gets the first odour of a well-kept haunch.

"Señorita," said I, eager to take advantage of the favourable impression the vision of the fowl had made on my beloved; "this bird is a proof of the warm interest which I take in your welfare. I have heard that you were suffering from the severe affliction that has fallen on this city; and, though I risk my character and the safety of his Britannic Majesty's fleet by bringing into Oporto any part of the provision allotted for the crews, I could not resist the impulse of stealing this bird, which I now have the honour to lay at your feet."

The señorita answered not: pride on the one hand, and hunger on the other, were struggling. The physical want prevailed over the moral feeling. "Señor," said she, "I will accept the fowl, and cannot but feel obliged by the interest you have taken in my welfare. Good night, señor; it is getting late: I am certain you are anxious to return to your ship." With these words she shut the little slide of the door, and I remained in the passage, gaping with astonishment, confounded with delight, and

wondering at the new recipe I had invented for making love. I waited for some time, hoping that the little wicket would be again opened; but Carolina, I presume, was too much occupied with the present I had made her to think of returning to bid me a second farewell; and I descended the staircase, charmed beyond expression with the result of my stratagem.

I kept, of course, my recipe for making love a profound secret; but I did not venture to put it again into operation for two or three days. I made, however, the accustomed regular survey of the street in which Carolina resided, and watched with much interest for the reception given to my rivals. I cannot express the delight with which I witnessed them all, one after the other, refused admittance to her house. "She is picking the bones of the fowl," thought I; "that is a much better employment than listening to their stupid declarations. I must take care to keep my mistress in good humour, and to improve the favourable opinion she has already formed of me." I therefore watched my opportunity; secured a duck out of the next basket of poultry, and hastened on the wings of love to lay my treasure at her feet. No sooner did my trembling hand pull the bell-cord, and my eager voice announce my name, than I heard her gentle step in the passage, and soon the little slide of the door was opened, and I felt my heart leap to my mouth as I beheld her beautiful eye beaming on me with undisguised satisfaction. To ensure my welcome, and to save the dear creature from the pangs of expectation, I produced the duck, swinging it to and fro before the wicket, as a nurse does a pretty toy that she offers to the longing wishes of the child. Carolina smiled her sweetest smile; and, when I pushed in the prize, she returned me thanks in so endearing a manner that I lost all command of my reason, and poured out upon the staircase a volume of protestations of eternal love which might have served for the whole ship's company. From that hour my affair was done. Carolina could not resist the voice of truth, and the tender proofs of esteem which I alone had the power to offer. She refused to admit me then, but promised to consult her aunt on the propriety of receiving my visits; and that, if the discreet matron permitted it, she would be too happy in my acquaintance. I entreated the dear girl not to delay my happiness, and I fixed the following Thursday for the formidable interview with the aunt.

I lay the whole of the next night awake, thinking over the present which would be most acceptable to the old lady. I finally resolved to purloin a small leg of lamb, which I observed hung up in the steward's pantry; and, in order to make room for it in my pocket, I cut a great hole in the bottom, so that the handle of the leg would hang down, while the thicker part prevented it from slipping through. Armed with my leg, I asked leave to go to Oporto, and received with joy the accustomed friendly nod. I soon landed at the arsenal, and mounted the long hill which led into the town, holding myself as straight as possible, so that the exuberance of my pocket should not be perceived. Unfortunately for me, a score of hungry dogs, which infest all Portuguese towns, were holding a council of war at the quay when I stepped on shore; and one of them, getting scent of the end of the leg of mutton which hung through the hole in my pocket, gave a hint to the rest of the contraband which was going on, and I soon had the whole train after me, sniffing at my tail, and making snaps at the tempting morsel. I would have stooped to pick up a stone, which is the only way of frightening a Portuguese street dog; but I was afraid to disarrange the perpendicular, recollecting that, as I bent down, the end of the leg of lamb would be visible. I therefore bore the annoyance as well as I could, kicking out behind from time to time when my friends were most troublesome.

Carolina and her aunt were at the window, probably expecting my arrival, and enduring the grumbling recollections of an ill-digested dinner of *bacalhao*, in the hope of a more wholesome supper being provided for them through my care; but when they saw me turn the corner of the street, and at least two dozen dogs smelling and sniffing at my skirts, they both burst out into an uncontrollable fit of laughter, and roared and roared again in a paroxysm of mirth. A crowd of dandies were passing at the moment, watching the window of Carolina, each hoping to be the favoured man; but when they heard the sudden burst of merriment which proceeded from her window, they looked round naturally for the cause, and they soon joined in the same chorus at my expense, on seeing me parade, with all the gravity of a drum-major, at the head of a legion of filthy curs.

To make my situation worse, I dared not enter the house of Carolina; her character would be compromised by a visit in presence of so many admirers: and I had the additional mortification of being obliged to pass her door, and to walk a considerable distance until I escaped the impertinence of the sneering puppies, though I could not shake off the annoyance of those that followed at my heels. How gladly would I have drawn my sword, and challenged the whole party! how cheerfully would I have drawn the leg of lamb from my pocket, and stuffed it in the mouth of each impertinent dandy! but not only was my own honour at stake, but that of the British fleet, and I bore all in the king's name, and for the credit of the service. I have been in many a hot engagement, but I never suffered more than I did that day. At length, after doubling through two or three by-streets, I got rid of my impudent macaroni, and traced my way back again to the house of my beloved. She, with the old lady, were watching me from the window; but, grown wiser by experience, and probably afraid of losing a good supper, they did not laugh again with the same violence. I observed, however, the wicked smile with which my fair one retired to receive me at the door, and the suppressed titter with which the maiden aunt pulled her head from the window.

The cursed dogs followed me up stairs, and it was with considerable difficulty I could prevent the most insolent from forcing their way with me into the presence of my mistress; but, after I got in, I heard them growling and barking on the stairs. The neighbours wondered what the deuce was the matter with the curs, or why they had come from their usual haunts to that unfrequented quarter.

The señorita presented me in due form to her aunt.

"Allow me," said she, "to introduce to you, dear aunt, this gallant English cavalier, Señor *Gallina*, – I beg pardon, Señor *Marinero*, – and permit me to present to you, señor, my respected aunt, Donna Francisca Azanares."

I made a low bow, but said nothing, seeing that my mistress thought more of the fowl than of me; such is the way of the world, and those who will win women must endure to have their pride occasionally mortified. The old lady, however, covered me with compliments; she was delighted to make my acquaintance; her niece had told her what an amiable and gentlemanlike young man I was. I could observe, while the aunt was hard at work overloading me with compliments, that Carolina was taking a sly peep at the bulk of my pockets, and wondering what kind of commodity it was that produced so misplaced a swelling on so well-formed a young man as I flatter myself no one can deny I am; but, just at this moment, the bevy of hungry curs at the door set up such a howl in concert, that my angel was fain to cram her handkerchief into her mouth to conceal her laughing, and I thought the old dame would go into a fit, so violent was her merriment. Finding the case going thus hard against me, I determined to strike a bold stroke for conquest; so, slipping out my penknife, I slit up the pocket where the treasure lay, and down fell the leg of lamb in all its natural beauty on the floor. I thought the aunt would have fainted with delight, such an unexpected vision of glory dazzled her understanding and her sight. The *bouquet* of the meat was, I suppose, conveyed through the keyhole to the canine multitude that still lined the stairs, and another universal howl proclaimed their despair that it was beyond their reach.

I soon took my leave, to the delight of Carolina and her aunt. I think I showed considerable tact in so doing; well knowing that a slice off the leg of lamb would be more acceptable to both than all the professions of admiration which I was prepared to make. I ventured on two or three civil things, but I could see my beloved's eyes fixed upon the handle of the leg; and it was evident the aunt was carrying on an internal debate whether it should be boiled, broiled, roasted, or stewed, or served up, according to the fashion of the province, with a mass of garlic. The dogs were waiting for me in the passage, and they eagerly followed me as I went down stairs; even the smell of my pocket had its attraction for them, but they dropped off one by one when they found the reality was gone. One old savoury rogue alone persecuted me to the river side; and though I pelted him with stones, and kicked him when I could, he still hung on my rear with his tongue out, licking the shreds which dangled from my torn pocket.

The next day, when I went on board ship to make the usual report to the captain, I found that a court of inquiry was going on into the disappearance of the very leg of lamb which I had feloniously purloined. The steward had reported the accident to the purveyor of the mess, and he had called a council of war, who thought fit to make an official report to the skipper; so that the readers will readily imagine the agony of my feelings when I was asked to join the board, and to assist in the investigation. Fortunately for me, one of the aides-de-camp of the emperor had that morning come on board to request of the captain some provision for the imperial table, protesting that Don Pedro and his staff had nothing better than salt fish for rations; which request the captain was compelled, by a strict sense of duty, to refuse; and everybody set it down as certain, the instant the circumstance was brought to mind, that it was the aide-de-camp who stole the lamb. He had come wrapped up in his cloak, which was a circumstance fatal to his character; and it was agreed by the whole conclave that the gentleman with the gold-laced hat and large cloak had been the thief. I blushed up to the eyes at the consciousness of my guilt, and the dishonourable part I was playing in allowing an innocent person to be wronged for my misdeed; but I recollected that the young man was one of the party who ridiculed me the day before in the presence of Carolina, and wounded vanity made me disregard the twitchings of conscience.

In order to avoid suspicion, I lay quiet for a day or two, and allowed Carolina and her aunt to feel the value of such an acquaintance as I was, under existing circumstances. While engaged with the captain on some official duty, the following morning, in his cabin, a young officer was introduced who solicited an immediate audience. The young man appeared buried in grief, and every now and then applied a handkerchief to his eyes, to wipe off the unbidden tears which mocked the sword which hung at his side. His profound sorrow and gentlemanlike appearance interested the good heart of our excellent captain; he begged him to be seated, and wished to know what service he could render him. The young man could with difficulty master his emotion, and the only words that were heard from him were, "My aunt! – my aunt!"

"Pray, sir, be composed;" said the captain, a little tired of the display.

"I will, sir," replied the young man, giving a great gulp, as if to swallow his misery, and applying his handkerchief to wipe off the tears from both his swimming eyes. "Oh! sir," he continued, "my poor aunt, she who reared me from a child, when I was left an unprotected orphan, and has placed me in the station which I now hold, is at the point of death, and the doctors all agree that nothing but *caldo di gallina* (fowl broth) can save her life. You know the state which we are in at Oporto, and that not a fowl is to be had if one offered a thousand milreas for it; I come to you, as a man and a Christian, to beg you will give me one single chicken from your larder."

"It is impossible," said the captain; "you know the convention we have made with Santa Martha."

"I know all that," resumed the young man; "but you must admit, my dear captain, that the convention is directed against the troops of Don Pedro, and the inhabitants at large who support him; but surely an old woman at the point of death was not contemplated by the treaty, and I entreat you to save the life of this most deserving and venerable of aunts." With these words the young officer again took out his handkerchief, and gave way to a flood of tears that would have moved the strictest disciplinarian that ever commanded a ship.

It was not to be wondered at that the soft heart of our benevolent skipper was affected. He took the young man by the hand, and said, "My dear fellow, I can do nothing for you; I have signed a convention, and I cannot break it, were it to save the emperor's life: but go you to my steward, and if you can manage to extract a fowl from what he has prepared for my table, you may do so; but take care, I am not to know anything about it."

I fancied the young fellow smiled in the midst of his grief at the mention of the emperor; but he dried up his tears in double quick time, and soon made his way to the steward's room, where I suppose he contrived to settle his affair to his satisfaction. He called on the following day to return

his grateful thanks; but the captain would not hear a word. I observed, however, that he went down to the steward's cabin, and took a hasty leave as he went over the ship's side on his return. He scarcely failed to pay us a daily visit, and made us all take a strong interest in him and the recovery of this favourite aunt to whom he was so devotedly attached.

This aunt, we found out afterwards, was the emperor; and so reduced was the imperial table for a short time, that Don Pedro must have starved, or lived on *bacalhao*, if this stratagem had not been adopted. The young fellow acted his part in a consummate manner, and I am told he boasts to this day of the trick he played the British squadron in the Douro. The captain, I am also told, gave him a little of his mind, having met him last year near the Admiralty, dressed out in fine feathers, and swelling with the importance of new-born greatness. "How is your aunt, you d – lying Portuguese?" said the skipper. "If I ever catch you on board my ship, I'll give you a rope's end, you dog!"

The more you beat one of the class of which this hero was a specimen, the more he likes it. So our Pedroite friend shrugged up his shoulders, and vanished in double quick time, the captain vociferating after him, "How is your aunt, you lubber?"

Afraid of the consequences in case a discovery should take place, I kept quiet for nearly a week together, until a little note, written in a cramped hand, was brought for me to the signal-station, from which I found by the confession of the aunt that Carolina was in despair at not seeing me again, and that she was very ill from a salt-fish diet. I was conscience-stricken at the consequences of my neglect, and determined not to lose a moment in carrying provisions to my starving beauty; so, running to a basket that had just been brought in from the Miguelite market to be passed on board the commodore, I seized a turkey-poult, feathers and all, and thrust it into the same coat-pocket which had been enlarged to hold the leg of lamb. I asked and received leave to go on shore, and pushed as fast as four oars could impel me to the usual landing-place near the old nunnery. I saw some of the idle dogs basking in the sun, but did not heed their presence, so filled was I with the idea of my Carolina; and, jumping out of the boat, I ran along the quay, totally unconscious of the sneers that my presence excited. At last, when I got to the open rope-walk where the market is usually held, the number of my canine assailants became increased; and one of them, bolder than the rest, making a sudden snap at the head of the young turkey, which hung down through the fatal hole in my pocket, dragged its long neck to view, and exposed my shame to the assembled multitude. A crowd immediately gathered round me, and a score of other dogs began to contest the prize with him that held the head of the turkey in his mouth. I was in despair, and drew my sword to rid me of the cursed assailants; when, on the instant, as if to overwhelm me with disgrace, the captain of the ship to which I belonged forced his way through the crowd, and, laying his hand on my arm, told me to consider myself under arrest.

The turkey-poult had by this time been torn from my pocket by the perseverance of my tormentors. It was pulled from one to the other on the ground; while the hungry citizens endeavoured to save its mangled remains, and a running fight was kept up between them and the dogs, which under other circumstances would have been highly amusing. My heart was heavy, and I was incapable of enjoying the most palpable joke. I walked slowly to the quay side, threw myself into the first boat that offered, went on board my ship, gave up my sword to the senior officer; was placed under a formal arrest, and told to prepare myself for a court of inquiry. I must say that I felt more for poor Carolina than I did for myself; and I could not help expressing my anxiety on her account to one of the brother officers who came to condole with me on my situation. The false friend, I was told afterwards, profited by the hint; and, instead of committing himself as I did, he hired a little cottage at the Miguelite side of the river, under cover of the guns of the fleet, where he placed Carolina and her aunt, and soon taught them to forget me. The worst of the affair was, that General Santa Martha sent in a formal complaint to the consul and the commodore of the squadron, and threatened to stop the usual supply of provisions for the ships' use. A long correspondence took place on the subject, which may be found now in the records of the Foreign Office. I am glad to say, for the credit of the service, that the affair was hushed up in the end, and the Miguelites consented to give the required number of

rations. I was made the victim of that arrangement, and was glad to retire from the service on half-pay, to escape being ignominiously dismissed by a court-martial. I now live a miserable example of the doctrine of expediency. I entertain a horror of young turkeys and of dogs, and would be gladly informed of some land where neither of those odious creatures are to be met with.

FAMILY STORIES. – No. VI. – MRS. BOTHERBY'S STORY

THE LEECH OF FOLKESTONE

Reader, were you ever bewitched? I do not mean by a "white wench's black eye," or by love-potions imbibed from a ruby lip; but, were you ever really and *bonâ fide* bewitched, in the true Matthew Hopkins sense of the word? Did you ever, for instance, find yourself from head to heel one vast complication of cramps? or burst out into sudorific exudation like a cold thaw, with the thermometer at zero? Were your eyes ever turned upside down, exhibiting nothing but their whites? Did you ever vomit a paper of crooked pins? or expectorate Whitechapel needles? These are genuine and undoubted marks of possession; and if you never experienced any of them, – why, "happy man be his dole!"

Yet such things have been; yea, we are assured, on no mean authority, still are.

The world, according to the best geographers, is divided into Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Romney Marsh. In this last-named and fifth quarter of the globe, a witch may still be occasionally discovered in favourable, *i. e.* stormy, seasons, weathering Dungeness Point in an egg-shell, or careering on her broomstick over Dymchurch wall. A cow may yet be sometimes seen galloping like mad, with tail erect, and an old pair of breeches on her horns, an unerring guide to the door of the crone whose magic arts have drained her udder. I do not, however, remember to have heard that any conjuror has, of late, been detected in the district.

Not many miles removed from the verge of this recondite region, stands a collection of houses, which its maligners call a fishing-town, and its well-wishers a Watering-place. A limb of one of the Cinque Ports, it has (or lately had) a corporation of its own, and has been thought considerable enough to give a second title to a noble family. Rome stood on seven hills; Folkestone seems to have been built upon seventy. Its streets, lanes, and alleys, – fanciful distinctions without much real difference – are agreeable enough to persons who do not mind running up and down stairs; and the only inconvenience at all felt by such of its inhabitants as are not asthmatic, is when some heedless urchin tumbles down a chimney, or an impertinent passenger peeps into a garret window. At the eastern extremity of the town, on the sea-beach, and scarcely above high-water mark, stood, in the good old times, a row of houses then denominated "Frog-hole;" modern refinement subsequently euphonized the name into "East-street:" but what's in a name? the encroachments of Ocean have long since levelled all in one common ruin. Here, in the early part of the seventeenth century, flourished, in somewhat doubtful reputation, but comparative opulence, a compounder of medicines, one Master Erasmus Buckthorne; the effluvia of whose drugs from within, mingling agreeably with the "ancient and fish-like smells" from without, wafted a delicious perfume throughout the neighbourhood. At seven of the clock in the morning when Mrs. Botherby's narrative commences, a stout Suffolk punch, about thirteen hands and a half in height, was slowly led up and down before the door of the pharmacopolist by a lean and withered lad, whose appearance warranted an opinion, pretty generally expressed, that his master found him as useful in experimentalizing as in household drudgery, and that, for every pound avoirdupoise of solid meat, he swallowed at the least two pounds troy-weight of chemicals and galenicals. As the town clock struck the quarter, Master Buckthorne emerged from his laboratory, and, putting the key carefully into his pocket, mounted the sure-footed cob aforesaid, and proceeded up and down the acclivities and declivities of the town with the gravity due to his station and profession. When he reached the open country, his pace was increased to a sedate canter, which, in somewhat more than half an hour, brought "the horse and his rider" in front of a handsome

and substantial mansion, the numerous gable-ends and bayed windows of which bespoke the owner a man of worship, and one well to do in the world.

"How now, Hodge Gardener?" quoth the leech, scarcely drawing bit; for Punch seemed to be aware that he had reached his destination, and paused of his own accord; "how now, man? How fares thine employer, worthy Master Marsh? How hath he done? How hath he slept? My potion hath done its office? Ha!"

"Alack! ill at ease, worthy sir, – ill at ease," returned the hind; "his honour is up and stirring; but he hath rested none, and complaineth that the same gnawing pain devoureth, as it were, his very vitals: in sooth he is ill at ease."

"Morrow, doctor!" interrupted a voice from a casement opening on the lawn. "Good morrow! I have looked for, longed for, thy coming this hour and more; enter at once; the pasty and tankard are impatient for thine attack!"

"Marry, Heaven forbid that I should baulk their fancy!" quoth the leech *sotto voce*, as, abandoning the bridle to honest Hodge, he dismounted, and followed a buxom-looking handmaiden into the breakfast parlour.

There, at the head of his well-furnished board, sat Master Thomas Marsh, of Marshton-Hall, a Yeoman well respected in his degree; one of that sturdy and sterling class which, taking rank immediately below the Esquire, (a title in its origin purely military,) occupied, in the wealthier counties, the position in society now filled by the Country Gentleman. He was one of those of whom the proverb ran:

"A Knight of Cales,
A Gentleman of Wales,
And a Laird of the North Countree;
A Yeoman of Kent,
With his yearly rent,
Will buy them out all three!"

A cold sirloin, big enough to frighten a Frenchman, filled the place of honour, counter-checked by a game-pie of no stinted dimensions; while a silver flagon of "humming-bub," viz. ale strong enough to blow a man's beaver off, smiled opposite in treacherous amenity. The sideboard groaned beneath sundry massive cups and waiters of the purest silver; while the huge skull of a fallow-deer, with its branching horns, frowned majestically above. All spoke of affluence, of comfort, – all save the master, whose restless eye and feverish look hinted but too plainly the severest mental or bodily disorder. By the side of the proprietor of the mansion sat his consort, a lady now past the bloom of youth, yet still retaining many of its charms. The clear olive of her complexion, and "the darkness of her Andalusian eye," at once betrayed her foreign origin; in fact, her "lord and master," as husbands were even then, by a legal fiction, denominated, had taken her to his bosom in a foreign country. The cadet of his family, Master Thomas Marsh, had early in life been engaged in commerce. In the pursuit of his vocation he had visited Antwerp, Hamburg, and most of the Hanse Towns; and had already formed a tender connexion with the orphan offspring of one of old Alva's officers, when the unexpected deaths of one immediate and two presumptive heirs placed him next in succession to the family acres. He married, and brought home his bride; who, by the decease of the venerable possessor, heart-broken at the loss of his elder children, became eventually lady of Marshton-Hall. It has been said that she was beautiful, yet was her beauty of a character that operates on the fancy more than the affections; she was one to be admired rather than loved. The proud curl of her lip, the firmness of her tread, her arched brow, and stately carriage, showed the decision, not to say haughtiness of her soul; while her glances, whether lightening with anger, or melting in extreme softness, betrayed the existence of passions as intense in kind as opposite in quality. She rose as Erasmus entered the parlour,

and, bestowing on him a look fraught with meaning, quitted the room, leaving him in unconstrained communication with his patient.

"Fore George, Master Buckthorne!" exclaimed the latter, as the leech drew near, "I will no more of your pharmacy; – burn, burn – gnaw, gnaw, – I had as lief the foul fiend were in my gizzard as one of your drugs. Tell me, in the devil's name, what is the matter with me!"

Thus conjured, the practitioner paused, and even turned somewhat pale. There was a perceptible faltering in his voice as, evading the question, he asked, "What say your other physicians?"

"Doctor Phiz says it is wind, – Doctor Fuz says it is water, – and Doctor Buz says it is something between wind and water."

"They are all of them wrong," said Erasmus Buckthorne.

"Truly, I think so," returned the patient. "They are manifest asses; but you, good leech, you are a horse of another colour. The world talks loudly of your learning, your skill, and cunning in arts the most abstruse; nay, sooth to say, some look coldly on you therefore, and stickle not to aver that you are cater-cousin with Beelzebub himself."

"It is ever the fate of science," murmured the professor, "to be maligned by the ignorant and superstitious. But a truce with such folly; let me examine your palate."

Master Marsh thrust out a tongue long, clear, and red as beet-root. "There is nothing wrong there," said the leech. "Your wrist: – no; the pulse is firm and regular, the skin cool and temperate. Sir, there is nothing the matter with you!"

"Nothing the matter with me, Sir Potecary?" But I tell you there is the matter with me, – much the matter with me. Why is it that something seems ever gnawing at my heart-strings? Whence this pain in the region of the liver? Why is it that I sleep not o' nights, rest not o' days? Why – "

"You are fidgety, Master Marsh," said the doctor.

Master Marsh's brow grew dark; he half rose from his seat, supported himself by both hands on the arms of his elbow-chair, and in accents of mingled anger and astonishment repeated the word "Fidgety!"

"Ay, fidgety," returned the doctor calmly. "Tut, man, there is nought ails thee save thine own overweening fancies. Take less of food, more air, put aside thy flagon, call for thy horse; be boot and saddle the word! Why, – hast thou not youth?" —

"I have," said the patient.

"Wealth, and a fair domain?"

"Granted," quoth Marsh cheerily.

"And a fair wife?"

"Yea," was the response, but in a tone something less satisfied.

"Then arouse thee, man, shake off this fantasy, betake thyself to thy lawful occasions, use thy good hap, follow thy pleasures, and think no more of these fancied ailments."

"But I tell you, master mine, these ailments are not fancied. I lose my rest, I loathe my food, my doublet sits loosely on me, – these racking pains. My wife, too, – when I meet her gaze, the cold sweat stands on my forehead, and I could almost think – " Marsh paused abruptly, mused a while, then added, looking steadily at his visitor, "These things are not right; they pass the common, Master Erasmus Buckthorne."

A slight shade crossed the brow of the leech, but its passage was momentary; his features softened to a smile, in which pity seemed slightly blended with contempt. "Have done with such follies, Master Marsh. You are well, an you would but think so. Ride, I say, hunt, shoot, do anything, – disperse these melancholic humours, and become yourself again."

"Well, I will do your bidding," said Marsh thoughtfully. "It may be so; and yet, – but I will do your bidding. Master Cobbe of Brenzet writes me that he hath a score or two of fat ewes to be sold a pennyworth; I had thought to have sent Ralph Looker, but I will essay to go myself. Ho, there! – saddle me the brown mare, and bid Ralph be ready to attend me on the gelding."

An expression of pain contracted the features of Master Marsh as he rose and slowly quitted the apartment to prepare for his journey; while the leech, having bidden him farewell, vanished through an opposite door, and betook himself to the private boudoir of the fair mistress of Marshston, muttering as he went a quotation from a then newly-published play,

"Not poppy, nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
Which thou own'st yesterday."

Of what passed at this interview between the Folkestone doctor and the fair Spaniard, Mrs. Botherby declares she could never obtain any satisfactory elucidation. Not that tradition is silent on the subject, – quite the contrary; it is the abundance, not paucity, of the materials she supplies, and the consequent embarrassment of selection, that make the difficulty. Some have averred that the leech, whose character, as has been before hinted, was more than thread-bare, employed his time in teaching her the mode of administering certain noxious compounds, the unconscious partaker whereof would pine and die so slowly and gradually as to defy suspicion. Others there were who affirmed that Lucifer himself was then and there raised *in propriâ personâ*, with all his terrible attributes of horn and hoof. In support of this assertion, they adduce the testimony of the aforesaid buxom housemaid, who protested that the Hall smelt that evening like a manufactory of matches. All, however, seem to agree that the confabulation, whether human or infernal, was conducted with profound secrecy, and protracted to a considerable length; that its object, as far as could be divined, meant anything but good to the head of the family; that the lady, moreover, was heartily tired of her husband; and that, in the event of his removal by disease or casualty, Master Erasmus Buckthorne, albeit a great philosopher, would have had no violent objection to throw physic to the dogs, and exchange his laboratory for the estate of Marshston, its live stock included. Some, too, have inferred that to him did Madam Isabel seriously incline; while others have thought, induced perhaps by subsequent events, that she was merely using him for her purposes; that one José, a tall, bright-eyed, hook-nosed stripling from her native land, was a personage not unlikely to put a spoke in the doctor's wheel; and that, should such a chance arise, the Sage, wise as he was, would, after all, run no slight risk of being "bamboozled."

Master José was a youth well-favoured and comely to look upon. His office was that of page to the dame; an office which, after long remaining in abeyance, has been of late years revived, as may well be seen in the persons of sundry smart hobbledehoys, now constantly to be met with on staircases and in boudoirs, clad, for the most part, in garments fitted tightly to the shape, the lower moiety adorned with a broad strip of crimson or silver lace, and the upper with what the first Wit of our times describes as "a favourable eruption of buttons." The precise duties of this employment have never, as far as we have heard, been accurately defined. The perfuming a handkerchief, the combing a lap-dog, and the occasional presentation of a sippet-shaped *billet doux*, are, and always have been, among them; but these a young gentleman standing five foot ten, and aged nineteen "last grass," might well be supposed to have outgrown. José, however, kept his place, perhaps because he was not fit for any other. To the conference between his mistress and the physician he had not been admitted; his post was to keep watch and ward in the ante-room; and, when the interview was concluded, he attended the lady and her visitor as far as the court-yard, where he held, with all due respect, the stirrup for the latter, as he once more resumed his position on the back of Punch.

Who is it that says "little pitchers have large ears?" Some deep metaphysician of the potteries, who might have added that they have also quick eyes, and sometimes silent tongues. There was a little metaphorical piece of crockery of this class, who, screened by a huge elbow-chair, had sat a quiet and unobserved spectator of the whole proceedings between her mamma and Master Erasmus Buckthorne. This was Miss Marian Marsh, a rosy-cheeked, laughter-loving imp of some six years

old; but one who could be mute as a mouse when the fit was on her. A handsome and highly-polished cabinet of the darkest ebony occupied a recess at one end of the apartment; this had long been a great subject of speculation to little Miss. Her curiosity, however, had always been repelled; nor had all her coaxing ever won her an inspection of the thousand and one pretty things which its recesses no doubt contained. On this occasion it was unlocked, and Marian was about to rush forward in eager anticipation of a peep at its interior, when, child as she was, the reflection struck her that she would stand a better chance of carrying her point by remaining *perdue*. Fortune for once favoured her: she crouched closer than before, and saw her mother take something from one of the drawers, which she handed over to the leech. Strange mutterings followed, and words whose sound was foreign to her youthful ears. Had she been older, their import, perhaps, might have been equally unknown. – After a while there was a pause; and then the lady, as in answer to a requisition from the gentleman, placed in his hand a something which she took from her toilette. The transaction, whatever its nature, seemed now to be complete, and the article was carefully replaced in the drawer from which it had been taken. A long and apparently interesting conversation then took place between the parties, carried on in a low tone. At its termination, Mistress Marsh and Master Erasmus Buckthorne quitted the boudoir together. But the cabinet! – ay, that was left unfastened; the folding-doors still remained invitingly expanded, the bunch of keys dangling from the lock. In an instant the spoiled child was in a chair; the drawer so recently closed yielded at once to her hand, and her hurried researches were rewarded by the prettiest little waxen doll imaginable. It was a first-rate prize, and Miss lost no time in appropriating it to herself. Long before Madam Marsh had returned to her *Sanctum*, Marian was seated under a laurestinus in the garden, nursing her new baby with the most affectionate solicitude.

"Susan, look here; see what a nasty scratch I have got upon my hand," said the young lady, when routed out at length from her hiding-place to her noontide meal.

"Yes, Miss, this is always the way with you! mend, mend, mend, – nothing but mend! Scrambling about among the bushes, and tearing your clothes to rags. What with you, and with madam's farthingales and kirtles, a poor bower-maiden has a fine time of it!"

"But I have not torn my clothes, Susan, and it was not the bushes; it was the doll: only see what a great ugly pin I have pulled out of it! and look, here is another!" As she spoke, Marian drew forth one of those extended pieces of black pointed wire, with which, in the days of toupees and pompoons, our foremothers were wont to secure their fly-caps and head-gear from the impertinent assaults of Zephyrus and the "Little Breezes."

"And pray, Miss, where did you get this pretty doll, as you call it?" asked Susan, turning over the puppet, and viewing it with a scrutinizing eye.

"Mamma gave it me," said the child. – This was a fib!

"Indeed!" quoth the girl thoughtfully; and then, in half soliloquy, and a lower key, "Well! I wish I may die if it doesn't look like my master! – But come to your dinner, miss. Hark! the *bell is striking One!*"

Meanwhile, Master Thomas Marsh, and his man Ralph, were threading the devious paths, then, as now, most pseudonymously dignified with the name of roads, that wound between Marsh-ton-Hall and the frontier of Romney Marsh. Their progress was comparatively slow; for, though the brown mare was as good a roadster as man might back, and the gelding no mean nag of his hands, yet the tracks, rarely traversed save by the rude wains of the day, miry in the "bottoms," and covered with loose and rolling stones on the higher grounds, rendered barely passable the perpetual alternation of hill and valley.

The master rode on in pain, and the man in listlessness; although the intercourse between two individuals so situated was much less restrained in those days than might suit the refinement of a later age, little passed approximating to conversation beyond an occasional and half-stifled groan from the one, or a vacant whistle from the other. An hour's riding had brought them among the woods of Acryse; and they were about to descend one of those green and leafy lanes, rendered by

matted and over-arching branches alike impervious to shower or sunbeam, when a sudden and violent spasm seized on Master Marsh, and nearly caused him to fall from his horse. With some difficulty he succeeded in dismounting, and seating himself by the road side. Here he remained for a full half-hour in great apparent agony; the cold sweat rolled in large round drops adown his clammy forehead, a universal shivering palsied every limb, his eye-balls appeared to be starting from their sockets, and to his attached, though dull and heavy serving-man, he seemed as one struggling in the pangs of impending dissolution. His groans rose thick and frequent; and the alarmed Ralph was hesitating between his disinclination to leave him, and his desire to procure such assistance as one of the few cottages, rarely sprinkled in that wild country, might afford, when, after a long-drawn sigh, his master's features as suddenly relaxed: he declared himself better, the pang had passed away, and, to use his own expression, he "felt as if a knife had been drawn from out his very heart." With Ralph's assistance, after a while, he again reached his saddle; and, though still ill at ease from a deep-seated and gnawing pain, which ceased not, as he averred, to torment him, the violence of the paroxysm was spent, and it returned no more.

Master and man pursued their way with increased speed, as, emerging from the wooded defiles, they at length neared the coast; then, leaving the romantic castle of Saltwood, with its neighbouring town of Hithe, a little on their left, they proceeded along the ancient paved causeway, and, crossing the old Roman road, or Watling, plunged again into the woods that stretched between Lympne and Ostenhanger.

The sun rode high in the heavens, and its meridian blaze was powerfully felt by man and horse, when, again quitting their leafy covert, the travellers debouched on the open plain of Aldington Frith, a wide tract of unenclosed country stretching down to the very borders of "the Marsh" itself. Here it was, in the neighbouring chapelry, the site of which may yet be traced by the curious antiquary, that Elizabeth Barton, the "Holy Maid of Kent," had, something less than a hundred years previous to the period of our narrative, commenced that series of supernatural pranks which eventually procured for her head an unenvied elevation upon London Bridge; and, though the parish had since enjoyed the benefit of the incumbency of Master Erasmus's illustrious and enlightened Namesake, yet, truth to tell, some of the old leaven was even yet supposed to be at work. The place had, in fact, an ill name; and, though Popish miracles had ceased to electrify its denizens, spells and charms, operating by a no less wondrous agency, were said to have taken their place. Warlocks, and other unholy subjects of Satan, were reported to make its wild recesses their favourite rendezvous, and that to an extent which eventually attracted the notice of no less a personage than the sagacious Matthew Hopkins himself, Witchfinder-General to the British government.

A great portion of the Frith, or Fright, as the name was then, and is still, pronounced, had formerly been a Chace, with rights of Free-warren, &c. appertaining to the Archbishops of the Province. Since the Reformation, however, it had been disparked; and when Master Thomas Marsh, and his man Ralph, entered upon its confines, the open greensward exhibited a lively scene, sufficiently explanatory of certain sounds that had already reached their ears while yet within the sylvan screen which concealed their origin.

It was Fair-day: booths, stalls, and all the rude *paraphernalia* of an assembly that then met as much for the purposes of traffic as festivity, were scattered irregularly over the turf; pedlars, with their packs; horse-croupers, pig-merchants, itinerant vendors of crockery and cutlery, wandered promiscuously among the mingled groups, exposing their several wares and commodities, and soliciting custom. On one side was the gaudy riband, making its mute appeal to rustic gallantry; on the other the delicious brandy-ball and alluring lollipop, compounded after the most approved receipt in the "True Gentlewoman's Garland," and "raising the waters" in the mouth of many an expectant urchin.

Nor were rural sports wanting to those whom pleasure, rather than business, had drawn from their humble homes. Here was the tall and slippery pole, glittering in its grease, and crowned with the

ample cheese, that mocked the hopes of the discomfited climber. There the fugitive pippin, swimming in water not of the purest, and bobbing from the expanded lips of the juvenile Tantalus. In this quarter the ear was pierced by squeaks from some beleaguered porker, whisking his well-soaped tail from the grasp of one already in fancy his captor. In that, the eye rested, with undisguised delight, upon the grimaces of grinning candidates for the honours of the horse-collar. All was fun, frolic, courtship, junketing, and jollity.

Maid Marian, indeed, with her lieges, Robin Hood, Scarlet, and Little John, was wanting; Friar Tuck was absent; even the Hobby-horse had disappeared: but the agile Morrice-dancers yet were there, and jingled their bells merrily among stalls well stored with gingerbread, tops, whips, whistles, and all those noisy instruments of domestic torture in which scenes like these are even now so fertile. – Had I a foe whom I held at deadliest feud, I would entice his child to a Fair, and buy him a Whistle and a Penny-trumpet!

In one corner of the green, a little apart from the thickest of the throng, stood a small square stage, nearly level with the chins of the spectators, whose repeated bursts of laughter seemed to intimate the presence of something more than usually amusing. The platform was divided into two unequal portions; the smaller of which, surrounded by curtains of a coarse canvass, veiled from the eyes of the profane the *penetralia* of this moveable temple of Esculapius, for such it was. Within its interior, and secure from vulgar curiosity, the Quack-salver had hitherto kept himself ensconced; occupied, no doubt, in the preparation and arrangement of that wonderful *panacea* which was hereafter to shed the blessings of health among the admiring crowd. Meanwhile his attendant Jack-pudding was busily employed on the *proscenium*, doing his best to attract attention by a practical facetiousness which took wonderfully with the spectators, interspersing it with the melodious notes of a huge cow's horn. The fellow's costume varied but little in character from that in which the late – (alas! that we should have to write the word!) – the late Mr. Joseph Grimaldi was accustomed to present himself before "a generous and enlightened public: " the principal difference consisted in this, that the upper garment was a long white tunic of a coarse linen, surmounted by a caricature of the ruff then fast falling into disuse, and was secured from the throat downwards by a single row of broad white metal buttons. His legs were cased in loose wide trousers of the same material; while his sleeves, prolonged to a most disproportionate extent, descended far below the fingers, and acted as flappers in the summersets and caracoles with which he diversified and enlivened his antics. Consummate impudence, not altogether unmixed with a certain sly humour, sparkled in his eye through the chalk and ochre with which his features were plentifully bedaubed; and especially displayed itself in a succession of jokes, the coarseness of which did not seem to detract from their merit in the eyes of his applauding audience.

He was in the midst of a long and animated harangue explanatory of his master's high pretensions; he had informed his gaping auditors that the latter was the seventh son of a seventh son, and of course, as they very well knew, an Unborn Doctor; that to this happy accident of birth he added the advantage of most extensive travel; that in his search after science he had not only perambulated the whole of this world, but had trespassed on the boundaries of the next; that the depths of Ocean and the bowels of the Earth were alike familiar to him; that besides salves and cataplasms of sovereign virtue, by combining sundry mosses, gathered many thousand fathom below the surface of the sea, with certain unknown drugs found in an undiscovered island, and boiling the whole in the lava of Vesuvius, he had succeeded in producing his celebrated balsam of Crackapanoko, the never-failing remedy for all human disorders, and which, a proper trial allowed, would go near to reanimate the dead. "Draw near!" continued the worthy, "draw near, my masters! and you, my good mistresses, draw near, every one of you! Fear not high and haughty carriage; though greater than King or Kaiser, yet is the mighty Aldrovando milder than mother's milk; flint to the proud, to the humble he is as melting wax; he asks not your disorders, he sees them himself at a glance – nay, without a glance; he tells your ailments with his eyes shut! Draw near! draw near! the more incurable the better! List

to the illustrious Doctor Aldrovando, first Physician to Prester John, Leech to the Grand Llama, and Hakim in Ordinary to Mustapha Muley Bey!"

"Hath your master ever a charm for the toothache, an't please you?" asked an elderly countryman, whose swollen cheek bespoke his interest in the question.

"A charm! – a thousand, and every one of them infallible. Toothache, quotha! I had hoped you had come with every bone in your body fractured or out of joint. A toothache! – propound a tester, master o' mine, – we ask not more for such trifles: do my bidding, and thy jaws, even with the word, shall cease to trouble thee!"

The clown, fumbling a while in a deep leathern purse, at length produced a sixpence, which he tendered to the jester. "Now to thy master, and bring me the charm forthwith."

"Nay, honest man; to disturb the mighty Aldrovando on such slight occasion were pity of my life: areed my counsel aright, and I will warrant thee for the nonce. Hie thee home, friend; infuse this powder in cold spring-water, fill thy mouth with the mixture, and sit upon thy fire till it boils!"

"Out on thee for a pestilent knave!" cried the cozened countryman; but the roar of merriment around bespoke the by-standers well pleased with the jape put upon him. He retired, venting his spleen in audible murmurs; and the mountebank, finding the feelings of the mob enlisted on his side, waxed more impudent every instant, filling up the intervals between his fooleries with sundry capers and contortions, and discordant notes from the cow's horn.

"Draw near! draw near, my masters! Here have ye a remedy for every evil under the sun, moral, physical, natural, and supernatural! Hath any man a termagant wife? – here is that will tame her presently! Hath any one a smoky chimney? – here is an incontinent cure!"

To the first infliction no man ventured to plead guilty, though there were those standing by who thought their neighbours might have profited withal. For the last-named recipe started forth at least a dozen candidates. With the greatest imaginable gravity, Pierrot, having pocketed their groats, delivered to each a small packet curiously folded and closely sealed, containing, as he averred, directions which, if truly observed, would preclude any chimney from smoking for a whole year. They whose curiosity led them to dive into the mystery, found that a sprig of mountain ash culled by moonlight was the charm recommended, coupled, however, with the proviso that no fire should be lighted on the hearth during the interval.

The frequent bursts of merriment proceeding from this quarter at length attracted the attention of Master Marsh, whose line of road necessarily brought him near this end of the fair; he drew bit in front of the stage just as its noisy occupant, having laid aside his formidable horn, was drawing still more largely on the amazement of "the public" by a feat of especial wonder, – he was eating fire! Curiosity mingled with astonishment was at its height; and feelings not unallied to alarm were beginning to manifest themselves among the softer sex especially, as they gazed on the flames that issued from the mouth of the living volcano. All eyes indeed were fixed upon the fire-eater with an intentness that left no room for observing another worthy who had now emerged upon the scene. This was, however, no less a personage than the *Deus ex machinâ*, – the illustrious Aldrovando himself. Short in stature and spare in form, the sage had somewhat increased the former by a steeple-crowned hat adorned with a cock's feather; while the thick shoulder padding of a quilted doublet, surmounted by a falling band, added a little to his personal importance in point of breadth. His habit was composed throughout of black serge, relieved with scarlet slashes in the sleeves and trunks; red was the feather in his hat, red were the roses in his shoes, which rejoiced, moreover, in a pair of red heels. The lining of a short cloak of faded velvet, that hung transversely over his left shoulder, was also red. Indeed, from all that we could ever see or hear, this agreeable alternation of red and black appears to be the mixture of colours most approved at the court of Beelzebub, and the one most generally adopted by his friends and favourites. His features were sharp and shrewd, and a fire sparkled in his keen grey eye much at variance with the wrinkles that ran their irregular furrows above his prominent and bushy brows. He had advanced slowly from behind his screen while the attention of the multitude was absorbed

by the pyrotechnics of Mr. Merryman, and, stationing himself at the extreme corner of the stage, stood quietly leaning on a crutch-handled walking-staff of blackest ebony, his glance steadily fixed on the face of Marsh, from whose countenance the amusement he had insensibly begun to derive had not succeeded in removing all traces of bodily pain. For a while the latter was unobservant of the inquisitorial survey with which he was regarded; the eyes of the parties, however, at length met. The brown mare had a fine shoulder; she stood pretty near sixteen hands. Marsh himself, though slightly bowed by ill health and the "coming autumn" of life, was full six feet in height. His elevation giving him an unobstructed view over the heads of the pedestrians, he had naturally fallen into the rear of the assembly, which brought him close to the diminutive Doctor, with whose face, despite the red heels, his own was about upon a level.

"And what makes Master Marsh here? – what sees he in the mummeries of a miserable buffoon to divert him when his life is in jeopardy?" said a shrill cracked voice that sounded as in his very ear. It was the Doctor who spoke.

"Knowest thou me, friend?" said Marsh, scanning with awakened interest the figure of his questioner: "I call thee not to mind; and yet – stay, where have we met?"

"It skills not to declare," was the answer; "suffice it we *have* met, – in other climes, perchance, – and now meet happily again, – happily at least for thee."

"Why truly the trick of thy countenance reminds me of somewhat I have seen before, where or when I know not; but what wouldst thou with me?"

"Nay, rather what wouldst thou here, Thomas Marsh? What wouldst thou on the Frith of Aldington? – is it a score or two of paltry sheep? or is it something *nearer to thy heart*?"

Marsh started as the last words were pronounced with more than common significance: a pang shot through him at the moment, and the vinegar aspect of the *Charlatan* seemed to relax into a smile half compassionate, half sardonic.

"Grammercy," quoth Marsh, after a long-drawn breath, "what knowest thou of me, fellow, or of my concerns? What knowest thou –"

"This know I, Master Thomas Marsh," said the stranger gravely, "that thy life is even now perilled: evil practices are against thee; but no matter, thou art quit for the nonce – other hands than mine have saved thee! Thy pains are over. Hark! *the clock strikes One!*" As he spoke, a single toll from the bell-tower of Bilsington came, wafted by the western breeze, over the thick-set and lofty oaks which intervened between the Frith and what had been once a priory. Dr. Aldrovando turned as the sound came floating on the wind, and was moving, as if half in anger, towards the other side of the stage, where the mountebank, his fires extinct, was now disgorging to the admiring crowd yard after yard of gaudy-coloured riband.

"Stay! Nay, prithee, stay!" cried Marsh eagerly, "I was wrong; in faith I was. A change, and that a sudden and most marvellous, hath come over me; I am free; I breathe again; I feel as though a load of years had been removed; and – is it possible? – hast thou done this?"

"Thomas Marsh!" said the doctor, pausing, and turning for the moment on his heel, "I have *not*; I repeat, that other and more innocent hands than mine have done this deed. Nevertheless, heed my counsel well! Thou art parlously encompassed; I, and I only, have the means of relieving thee. Follow thy courses; pursue thy journey; but, as thou valuest life, and more than life, be at the foot of yonder woody knoll what time the rising moon throws her first beam upon the bare and blighted summit that towers above its trees."

He crossed abruptly to the opposite quarter of the scaffolding, and was in an instant deeply engaged in listening to those whom the cow's horn had attracted, and in prescribing for their real or fancied ailments. Vain were all Marsh's efforts again to attract his notice; it was evident that he studiously avoided him; and when, after an hour or more spent in useless endeavour, he saw the object of his anxiety seclude himself once more within his canvass screen, he rode slowly and thoughtfully off the field. – What should he do? Was the man a mere quack? an impostor? His name

thus obtained! – that might be easily done. But then, his secret griefs; the doctor's knowledge of them; their cure: for he felt that his pains were gone, his healthful feelings restored! True; Aldrovando, if that were his name, had disclaimed all co-operation in his recovery: but he knew or, he announced it. Nay, more; he had hinted that he was yet in jeopardy; that practices – and the chord sounded strangely in unison with one that had before vibrated within him – that practices were in operation against his life! It was enough! He would keep tryst with the Conjuror, if conjuror he were; and, at least, ascertain who and what he was, and how he had become acquainted with his own person and secret afflictions.

When the late Mr. Pitt was determined to keep out Buonaparte, and prevent his gaining a settlement in the county of Kent, among other ingenious devices adopted for that purpose, he caused to be constructed what was then, and has ever since been, conventionally termed a "Military canal." This is a not very practicable ditch, some thirty feet wide, and nearly nine feet deep – in the middle, extending from the town and port of Hithe to within a mile of the town and port of Rye, a distance of about twenty miles; and forming, as it were, the cord of a bow, the area of which constitutes that remote fifth quarter of the globe spoken of by travellers. Trivial objections to the plan were made at the time by cavillers; and an old gentleman of the neighbourhood, who proposed, as a cheap substitute, to put up his own cocked-hat upon a pole, was deservedly pooh-pooh'd down; in fact, the job, though rather an expensive one, was found to answer remarkably well. The French managed, indeed, to scramble over the Rhine, and the Rhone, and other insignificant currents; but they never did, or could, pass Mr. Pitt's "Military canal." At no great distance from the centre of this cord rises abruptly a sort of woody promontory, in shape almost conical, its sides covered with thick underwood; above which is seen a bare and brown summit rising like an Alp in miniature. The "defence of the nation" not being then in existence, Master Thomas Marsh met with no obstruction in reaching this place of appointment long before the time prescribed.

So much, indeed, was his mind occupied by his adventure and extraordinary cure, that his original design had been abandoned, and Master Cobbe remained unvisited. A rude hostel in the neighbourhood furnished entertainment for man and horse; and here, a full hour before the rising of the moon, he left Ralph and the other beasts, proceeding to his rendezvous on foot and alone.

"You are punctual, Master Marsh," squeaked the shrill voice of the Doctor, issuing from the thicket as the first silvery gleam trembled on the aspens above. "'Tis well; now follow me, and in silence."

The first part of the command Marsh hesitated not to obey; the second was more difficult of observance.

"Who and what are you? Whither are you leading me?" burst not unnaturally from his lips; but all question was at once cut short by the peremptory tones of his guide.

"Hush! I say; your finger on your lip; there be hawks abroad: follow me, and that silently and quickly." The little man turned as he spoke, and led the way through a scarcely perceptible path, or track, which wound among the underwood. The lapse of a few minutes brought them to the door of a low building so hidden by the surrounding trees that few would have suspected its existence. It was a cottage of rather extraordinary dimensions, but consisting of only one floor. No smoke rose from its solitary chimney; no cheering ray streamed from its single window, which was, however, secured by a shutter of such thickness as to preclude the possibility of any stray beam issuing from within. The exact size of the building it was in that uncertain light difficult to distinguish, a portion of it seeming buried in the wood behind. The door gave way on the application of a key, and Marsh followed his conductor resolutely but cautiously along a narrow passage feebly lighted by a small taper that winked and twinkled at its farther extremity. The Doctor, as he approached, raised it from the ground, and, opening an adjoining door, ushered his guest into the room beyond. It was a large and oddly-furnished apartment, insufficiently lighted by an iron lamp that hung from the roof, and scarcely illumined the walls and angles, which seemed to be composed of some dark-coloured wood. On one side, however, Master Marsh could discover an article bearing strong resemblance to a coffin; on the other was

a large oval mirror in an ebony frame, and in the midst of the floor was described in red chalk a double circle, about six feet in diameter, its inner verge inscribed with sundry hieroglyphics, agreeably relieved at intervals with an alternation of skulls and cross-bones. In the very centre was deposited one skull of such surpassing size and thickness as would have filled the soul of a Spurzheim or De Ville with wonderment. A large book, a naked sword, an hour-glass, a chafing-dish, and a black cat, completed the list of moveables; with the exception of a couple of tapers which stood on each side the mirror, and which the strange gentleman now proceeded to light from the one in his hand. As they flared up with what Marsh thought a most unnatural brilliancy, he perceived, reflected in the glass behind, a dial suspended over the coffin-like article already mentioned: the hand was fast verging towards the hour of nine. The eyes of the little Doctor seemed rivetted on the horologe.

"Now strip thee, Master Marsh, and that quickly: untruss, I say! discard thy boots, doff doublet and hose, and place thyself incontinent in yonder bath." The visitor cast his eyes again upon the formidable-looking article, and perceived that it was nearly filled with water. A cold bath, at such an hour and under such auspices, was anything but inviting: he hesitated, and turned his eyes alternately on the Doctor and the Black Cat.

"Trifle not the time, man, an you be wise," said the former: "Passion of my heart! let but yon minute-hand reach the hour, and, thou not immersed, thy life were not worth a pin's fee!"

The Black Cat gave vent to a single Mew, – a most unnatural sound for a mouser, – it seemed as it were mewed through a cow's horn!

"Quick, Master Marsh! uncase, or you perish!" repeated his strange host, throwing as he spoke a handful of some dingy-looking powders into the brasier. "Behold, the attack is begun!" A thick cloud rose from the embers; a cold shivering shook the astonished Yeoman: sharp pricking pains penetrated his ankles and the palms of his hands, and, as the smoke cleared away, he distinctly saw and recognised in the mirror the boudoir of Marshton Hall. The doors of the well-known ebony cabinet were closed; but, fixed against them, and standing out in strong relief from the contrast afforded by the sable background, was a waxen image – of himself! It appeared to be secured and sustained in an upright posture by large black pins driven through the feet and palms, the latter of which were extended in a cruciform position. To the right and left stood his wife and José; in the middle, with his back towards him, was a figure which he had no difficulty in recognising as that of the Leech of Folkestone. It had just succeeded in fastening the dexter hand of the image, and was now in the act of drawing a broad and keen-edged sabre from its sheath. The Black Cat mewed again. "Haste, or you die!" said the Doctor. Marsh looked at the dial; it wanted but four minutes of nine: he felt that the crisis of his fate was come. Off went his heavy boots; doublet to the right, galligaskins to the left; never was man more swiftly disrobed: in two minutes, to use an Indian expression, "he was all face!" in another, he was on his back, and up to his chin, in a bath which smelt strongly as of brimstone and garlic.

"Heed well the clock!" cried the Conjuror: "with the first stroke of Nine plunge thy head beneath the water; suffer not a hair above the surface: plunge deeply, or you are lost!"

The little man had seated himself in the centre of the circle upon the large skull, elevating his legs at an angle of forty-five degrees. In this position he spun round with a velocity to be equalled only by that of a tee-totum, the red roses on his insteps seeming to describe a circle of fire. The best buckskins that ever mounted at Melton had soon yielded to such rotatory friction; but he spun on, the Cat mewed, bats and obscene birds fluttered over head, Erasmus was seen to raise his weapon, the clock struck! – and Marsh, who had "ducked" at the instant, popped up his head again, spitting and sputtering, half choked with the infernal mixture, which had insinuated itself into his mouth, and ears, and nose. All disgust at his nauseous dip was, however, at once removed, when, casting his eyes on the glass, he saw the consternation of the party whose persons it exhibited. Erasmus had evidently made his blow and failed; the figure was unmutated; the hilt remained in the hand of the striker, while the shivered blade lay in shining fragments on the floor.

The Conjuror ceased his spinning, and brought himself to an anchor; the Black Cat purred, – its purring seemed strangely mixed with the self-satisfied chuckle of a human being. Where had Marsh heard something like it before?

He was rising from his unsavoury couch, when a motion from the little man checked him. "Rest where you are, Thomas Marsh; so far all goes well, but the danger is not yet over!" He looked again, and perceived that the shadowy triumvirate were in deep and eager consultation; the fragments of the shattered weapon appeared to undergo a close scrutiny. The result was clearly unsatisfactory; the lips of the parties moved rapidly, and much gesticulation might be observed, but no sound fell upon the ear. The hand of the dial had nearly reached the quarter: at once the parties separated; and Buckthorne stood again before the figure, his hand armed with a long and sharp-pointed *misericorde*, a dagger little in use of late, but such as, a century before, often performed the part of a modern oyster-knife, in tickling the osteology of a dismounted cavalier through the shelly defences of his plate-armour. Again he raised his arm. "Duck!" roared the Doctor, spinning away upon his cephalic pivot: the Black Cat cocked his tail, and seemed to mew the word "Duck!" Down went Master Marsh's head; but one of his hands had unluckily been resting on the edge of the bath: he drew it hastily in, but not altogether scathless; the stump of a rusty nail, projecting from the margin of the bath, had caught and slightly grazed it. The pain was more acute than is usually produced by such trivial accident; and Marsh, on once more raising his head, beheld the dagger of the leech sticking in the little finger of the wax figure, which it had seemingly nailed to the cabinet door.

"By my truly, a scape o' the narrowest!" quoth the Conjuror; "the next course, dive you not the readier, there is no more life in you than in a pickled herring. What! courage, Master Marsh; but be heedful: an they miss again, let them bide the issue!" He drew his hand athwart his brow as he spoke, and dashed off the perspiration, which the violence of his exercise had drawn from every pore. Black Tom sprang upon the edge of the bath, and stared full in the face of the bather: his sea-green eyes were lambent with unholy fire, but their marvellous obliquity of vision was not to be mistaken, – the very countenance, too! – Could it be? – the features were feline, but their expression that of the Jack-Pudding? Was the Mountebank a Cat, or the Cat a Mountebank? – it was all a mystery; and Heaven knows how long Marsh might have continued staring at Grimalkin, had not his attention been again called by Aldrovando to the magic mirror. Great dissatisfaction, not to say dismay, seemed to pervade the conspirators; Dame Isabel was closely inspecting the figure's wounded hand, while José was aiding the pharmacopolist to charge a huge petronel with powder and bullets. The load was a heavy one; but Erasmus seemed determined this time to make sure of his object. Somewhat of trepidation might be observed in his manner as he rammed down the balls, and his withered cheek appeared to have acquired an increase of paleness; but amazement rather than fear was the prevailing symptom, and his countenance betrayed no jot of irresolution. As the clock was about to chime half-past nine, he planted himself with a firm foot in front of the image, waved his unoccupied hand with a cautionary gesture to his companions, and, as they hastily retired on either side, brought the muzzle of his weapon within half a foot of his mark. As the shadowy form was about to draw the trigger, Marsh again plunged his head beneath the surface; and the sound of an explosion, as of fire-arms, mingled with the rush of water that poured into his ears. His immersion was but momentary, yet did he feel as though half suffocated: he sprang from the bath, and, as his eye fell on the mirror, he saw, or thought he saw, the Leech of Folkestone lying dead on the floor of his wife's boudoir, his head shattered to pieces, and his hand still grasping the stock of a bursten petronel. He saw no more; his head swam, his senses reeled, the whole room was turning round, and, as he fell to the ground, the last impressions to which he was conscious were the chucklings of a hoarse laughter and the mewings of a Tom Cat.

Master Marsh was found the next morning by his bewildered serving-man, stretched before the door of the humble hostel at which he sojourned. His clothes were somewhat torn and much bemired; and deeply did honest Ralph marvel that one so staid and grave as Marsh of Marston should thus have played the roisterer, missing perchance a profitable bargain for the drunken orgies of midnight

wassail, or the endearments of some rustic light-o'-love. Tenfold was his astonishment increased when, after retracing in silence their journey of the preceding day, the Hall, on their arrival about noon, was found in a state of uttermost confusion. No wife stood there to greet with the smile of bland affection her returning spouse; no page to hold his stirrup, or receive his gloves, his hat, and riding-rod. The doors were open, the rooms in most admired disorder; men and maidens peeping, hurrying hither and thither, and popping in and out, like rabbits in a warren. The lady of the mansion was nowhere to be found.

José, too, had disappeared: the latter had been last seen riding furiously towards Folkestone early in the preceding afternoon; to a question from Hodge Gardener he had hastily answered, that he bore a missive of moment from his mistress. The lean apprentice of Erasmus Buckthorne declared that the page had summoned his master in haste about six of the clock, and that they had rode forth together, as he very believed, on their way back to the Hall, where he had supposed Master Buckthorne's services to be suddenly required on some pressing emergency. Since that time he had seen nought of either of them: the grey cob, however, had returned late at night, masterless, with his girths loose, and the saddle turned upside down.

Nor was Master Erasmus Buckthorne ever seen again. Strict search was made through the neighbourhood, but without success; and it was at length presumed that he must, for reasons which nobody could divine, have absconded with José and his faithless mistress. The latter had carried off with her the strong box, divers articles of valuable plate, and jewels of price. Her boudoir appeared to have been completely ransacked; the cabinet and drawers stood open, and empty; the very carpet, a luxury then newly introduced into England, was gone. Marsh, however, could trace no vestige of the visionary scene which he affirmed to have been last night presented to his eyes. Much did the neighbours marvel at his story: some thought him mad; others, that he was merely indulging in that privilege to which, as a traveller, he had a right indefeasible. Trusty Ralph said nothing, but shrugged his shoulders; and, falling into the rear, imitated the action of raising the wine-cup to his lips. An opinion, indeed, soon prevailed, that Master Thomas Marsh had gotten, in common parlance, exceedingly drunk on the preceding evening, and dreamt all that he had so circumstantially related. This belief acquired additional credit when they whom curiosity induced to visit the woody knoll of Aldington Mount declared that they could find no building such as that described; nor any cottage near, save one, indeed, a low-roofed hovel, once a house of public entertainment, but now half in ruins. The "Old Cat and Fiddle" – so was the tenement called – had been long uninhabited; yet still exhibited the remains of a broken sign, on which the keen observer might decypher something like a rude portrait of the animal from which it derived its name. It was also supposed still to afford an occasional asylum to the smugglers of the coast, but no trace of any visit from sage or mountebank could be detected; nor was the wise Aldrovando, whom many remembered to have seen at the fair, ever found again on all that country-side. Of the runaways nothing was ever certainly known. A boat, the property of an old fisherman who plied his trade on the outskirts of the town, had been seen to quit the bay that night; and there were those who declared that she had more hands on board than Carden and his son, her usual complement; but, as a gale came on, and the frail bark was eventually found keel upwards on the Goodwin Sands, it was presumed that she had struck on that fatal quicksand in the dark, and that all on board had perished.

Little Marian, whom her profligate mother had abandoned, grew up to be a fine girl, and a handsome. She became, moreover, heiress to Marshston Hall, and brought the estate into the Ingoldsby family by her marriage with one of its scions.

It is a little singular that, on pulling down the old Hall in my grandfather's time, a human skeleton was discovered among the rubbish, under what particular part of the building I could never with any accuracy ascertain; but it was found enveloped in a tattered cloth, that seemed to have been once a carpet, and which fell to pieces almost immediately on being exposed to the air. The bones

were perfect, but those of one hand were wanting; and the skull, perhaps from the labourer's pick-axe, had received considerable injury.

The portrait of the fair Marian hangs yet in the Gallery of Tappington; and near it is another, of a young man in the prime of life, whom Mrs. Botherby pronounces her father. It exhibits a mild and rather melancholy countenance, with a high forehead, and the picked beard and moustaches of the seventeenth century. The signet-finger of the left hand is gone, and appears, on close inspection, to have been painted out by some later artist; possibly in compliment to the tradition, which, *teste Botherby*, records that of Mr. Marsh to have gangrened, and to have undergone amputation at the knuckle-joint. If really the resemblance of the gentleman alluded to, it must have been taken at some period antecedent to his marriage. There is neither date nor painter's name; but, a little above the head, on the dexter side of the picture, is an escutcheon, bearing Quarterly, Gules and Argent; in the first quarter, a horse's head of the second; beneath it are the words "*Ætatis suæ*, 26." On the opposite side is the following marks which Mr. Simpkinson declares to be that of a Merchant of the Staple, and pretends to discover in the anagram comprised in it all the characters which compose the name of THOMAS MARSH, of MARSHTON.

Thomas Ingoldsby.

SONG OF THE MONTH. No. VIII

August, 1837

I

Of all the months in the twelve that fly
So lightly on, and noiselessly by,
There is not one who can show so fair
As this, with its soft and balmy air.
The light graceful corn waves to and fro,
Tinging the earth with its richest glow;
The forest trees in their state and might
Proclaim that Summer is at his height.

II

Of all the months in the twelve that speed
So quickly by, with so little heed
From man, of the years that swiftly pass
As an infant's breath from a polished glass,
There is not one whose fading away
Bears such a lesson to mortal clay,
Warning us sternly, when in our prime,
To look for the withering winter time.

III

I stood by a young girl's grave last night,
Beautiful, innocent, pure, and bright,
Who, in the bloom of her summer's pride,
And all its loveliness, drooped and died.
Since the sweetest flow'rs are soonest dust,
As truest metal is quick to rust,
Look for a change in that time of year,
When Nature's works at their best appear.

OLIVER TWIST;
OR, THE PARISH BOY'S PROGRESS
BY BOZ
ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

CHAPTER THE TWELFTH

IN WHICH OLIVER IS TAKEN BETTER CARE OF, THAN HE EVER WAS BEFORE. WITH SOME PARTICULARS CONCERNING A CERTAIN PICTURE

The coach rattled away down Mount Pleasant and up Exmouth-street, – over nearly the same ground as that which Oliver had traversed when he first entered London in company with the Dodger, – and, turning a different way when it reached the Angel at Islington, stopped at length before a neat house in a quiet shady street near Pentonville. Here a bed was prepared without loss of time, in which Mr. Brownlow saw his young charge carefully and comfortably deposited; and here he was tended with a kindness and solicitude which knew no bounds.

But for many days Oliver remained insensible to all the goodness of his new friends; the sun rose and sunk, and rose and sunk again, and many times after that, and still the boy lay stretched upon his uneasy bed, dwindling away beneath the dry and wasting heat of fever, – that heat which, like the subtle acid that gnaws into the very heart of hardest iron, burns only to corrode and to destroy. The worm does not his work more surely on the dead body, than does this slow, creeping fire upon the living frame.

Weak, and thin, and pallid, he awoke at last from what seemed to have been a long and troubled dream. Feebly raising himself in the bed, with his head resting on his trembling arm, he looked anxiously round.

"What room is this? – where have I been brought to?" said Oliver. "This is not the place I went to sleep in."

He uttered these words in a feeble voice, being very faint and weak; but they were overheard at once, for the curtain at the bed's head was hastily drawn back, and a motherly old lady, very neatly and precisely dressed, rose as she undrew it, from an arm-chair close by, in which she had been sitting at needle-work.

"Hush, my dear," said the old lady softly. "You must be very quiet, or you will be ill again, and you have been very bad, – as bad as bad could be, pretty nigh. Lie down again, there's a dear." With these words the old lady very gently placed Oliver's head upon the pillow, and, smoothing back his hair from his forehead, looked so kindly and lovingly in his face, that he could not help placing his little withered hand upon her's and drawing it round his neck.

"Save us!" said the old lady, with tears in her eyes, "what a grateful little dear it is. Pretty creetur, what would his mother feel if she had sat by him as I have, and could see him now!"

"Perhaps she does see me," whispered Oliver, folding his hands together; "perhaps she has sat by me, ma'am. I almost feel as if she had."

"That was the fever, my dear," said the old lady mildly.

"I suppose it was," replied Oliver thoughtfully, "because Heaven is a long way off, and they are too happy there, to come down to the bedside of a poor boy. But if she knew I was ill, she must have pitied me even there, for she was very ill herself before she died. She can't know anything about me though," added Oliver after a moment's silence, "for if she had seen me beat, it would have made her sorrowful; and her face has always looked sweet and happy when I have dreamt of her."

The old lady made no reply to this, but wiping her eyes first, and her spectacles, which lay on the counterpane, afterwards, as if they were part and parcel of those features, brought some cool stuff for Oliver to drink, and then, patting him on the cheek, told him he must lie very quiet, or he would be ill again.

So Oliver kept very still, partly because he was anxious to obey the kind old lady in all things, and partly, to tell the truth, because he was completely exhausted with what he had already said. He soon fell into a gentle doze, from which he was awakened by the light of a candle, which, being brought near the bed, showed him a gentleman, with a very large and loud-ticking gold watch in his hand, who felt his pulse, and said he was a great deal better.

"You *are* a great deal better, are you not, my dear?" said the gentleman.

"Yes, thank you, sir," replied Oliver.

"Yes, I know you are," said the gentleman: "you're hungry too, an't you?"

"No, sir," answered Oliver.

"Hem!" said the gentleman. "No, I know you're not. He is not hungry, Mrs. Bedwin," said the gentleman, looking very wise.

The old lady made a respectful inclination of the head, which seemed to say that she thought the doctor was a very clever man. The doctor appeared very much of the same opinion himself.

"You feel sleepy, don't you, my dear?" said the doctor.

"No, sir," replied Oliver.

"No," said the doctor with a very shrewd and satisfied look. "You're not sleepy. Nor thirsty, are you?"

"Yes, sir, rather thirsty," answered Oliver.

"Just as I expected, Mrs. Bedwin," said the doctor. "It's very natural that he should be thirsty – perfectly natural. You may give him a little tea, ma'am, and some dry toast without any butter. Don't keep him too warm, ma'am; but be careful that you don't let him be too cold; will you have the goodness?"

The old lady dropped a curtsey; and the doctor, after tasting the cool stuff, and expressing a qualified approval thereof, hurried away: his boots creaking in a very important and wealthy manner as he went down stairs.

Oliver dozed off again soon after this, and when he awoke it was nearly twelve o'clock. The old lady tenderly bade him good-night shortly afterwards, and left him in charge of a fat old woman who had just come, bringing with her in a little bundle a small Prayer Book and a large nightcap. Putting the latter on her head, and the former on the table, the old woman, after telling Oliver that she had come to sit up with him, drew her chair close to the fire and went off into a series of short naps, chequered at frequent intervals with sundry tumblings forward and divers moans and chokings, which, however, had no worse effect than causing her to rub her nose very hard, and then fall asleep again.

And thus the night crept slowly on. Oliver lay awake for some time, counting the little circles of light which the reflection of the rushlight-shade threw upon the ceiling, or tracing with his languid eyes the intricate pattern of the paper on the wall. The darkness and deep stillness of the room were very solemn; and as they brought into the boy's mind the thought that death had been hovering there for many days and nights, and might yet fill it with the gloom and dread of his awful presence, he turned his face upon the pillow and fervently prayed to Heaven.

Gradually he fell into that deep tranquil sleep which ease from recent suffering alone imparts; that calm and peaceful rest which it is pain to wake from. Who, if this were death, would be roused again to all the struggles and turmoils of life, – to all its cares for the present, its anxieties for the future, and, more than all, its weary recollections of the past!

It had been bright day for hours when Oliver opened his eyes; and when he did so, he felt cheerful and happy. The crisis of the disease was safely past, and he belonged to the world again.

In three days' time he was able to sit in an easy-chair well propped up with pillows; and, as he was still too weak to walk, Mrs. Bedwin had him carried down stairs into the little housekeeper's room, which belonged to her, where, having sat him up by the fireside, the good old lady sat herself down too, and, being in a state of considerable delight at seeing him so much better, forthwith began to cry most violently.

"Never mind me, my dear," said the old lady; "I'm only having a regular good cry. There, it's all over now, and I'm quite comfortable."

"You're very, very kind to me, ma'am," said Oliver.

"Well, never you mind that, my dear," said the old lady; "that's got nothing to do with your broth, and it's full time you had it, for the doctor says Mr. Brownlow may come in to see you this morning, and we must get up our best looks, because the better we look, the more he'll be pleased." And with this, the old lady applied herself to warming up in a little saucepan a basin full of broth strong enough to furnish an ample dinner, when reduced to the regulation strength, for three hundred and fifty paupers, at the very lowest computation.

"Are you fond of pictures, dear?" inquired the old lady, seeing that Oliver had fixed his eyes most intently on a portrait which hung against the wall just opposite his chair.

"I don't quite know, ma'am," said Oliver, without taking his eyes from the canvass; "I have seen so few that I hardly know. What a beautiful mild face that lady's is!"

"Ah," said the old lady, "painters always make ladies out prettier than they are, or they wouldn't get any custom, child. The man that invented the machine for taking likenesses might have known *that* would never succeed; it's a deal too honest, – a deal," said the old lady, laughing very heartily at her own acuteness.

"Is – is that a likeness, ma'am?" said Oliver.

"Yes," said the old lady, looking up for a moment from the broth; "that's a portrait."

"Whose, ma'am?" asked Oliver eagerly.

"Why, really, my dear, I don't know," answered the old lady in a good-humoured manner. "It's not a likeness of anybody that you or I know, I expect. It seems to strike your fancy, dear."

"It is so very pretty: so very beautiful," replied Oliver.

"Why, sure you're not afraid of it?" said the old lady, observing in great surprise the look of awe with which the child regarded the painting.

"Oh no, no," returned Oliver quickly; "but the eyes look so sorrowful, and where I sit they seem fixed upon me. It makes my heart beat," added Oliver in a low voice, "as if it was alive, and wanted to speak to me, but couldn't."

"Lord save us!" exclaimed the old lady, starting; "don't talk in that way, child. You're weak and nervous after your illness. Let me wheel your chair round to the other side, and then you won't see it. There," said the old lady, suiting the action to the word; "you don't see it now, at all events."

Oliver *did* see it in his mind's eye as distinctly as if he had not altered his position, but he thought it better not to worry the kind old lady; so he smiled gently when she looked at him, and Mrs. Bedwin, satisfied that he felt more comfortable, salted and broke bits of toasted bread into the broth with all the bustle befitting so solemn a preparation. Oliver got through it with extraordinary expedition, and had scarcely swallowed the last spoonful when there came a soft tap at the door. "Come in," said the old lady; and in walked Mr. Brownlow.

Now, the old gentleman came in as brisk as need be; but he had no sooner raised his spectacles on his forehead, and thrust his hands behind the skirts of his dressing-gown to take a good long look at Oliver, than his countenance underwent a very great variety of odd contortions. Oliver looked very worn and shadowy from sickness, and made an ineffectual attempt to stand up, out of respect to his benefactor, which terminated in his sinking back into the chair again; and the fact is, if the truth must be told, that Mr. Brownlow's heart being large enough for any six ordinary old gentlemen of humane disposition, forced a supply of tears into his eyes by some hydraulic process which we are not sufficiently philosophical to be in a condition to explain.

"Poor boy, poor boy!" said Mr. Brownlow clearing his throat. "I'm rather hoarse this morning, Mrs. Bedwin; I'm afraid I have caught cold."

"I hope not, sir," said Mrs. Bedwin. "Everything you have had has been well aired, sir."

"I don't know, Bedwin, – I don't know," said Mr. Brownlow; "I rather think I had a damp napkin at dinner-time yesterday: but never mind that. How do you feel, my dear?"

"Very happy, sir," replied Oliver, "and very grateful indeed, sir, for your goodness to me,"

"Good boy," said Mr. Brownlow stoutly. "Have you given him any nourishment, Bedwin? – any slops, eh?"

"He has just had a basin of beautiful strong broth, sir," replied Mrs. Bedwin, drawing herself up slightly, and laying a strong emphasis on the last word, to intimate that between slops, and broth well compounded, there existed no affinity or connexion whatsoever.

"Ugh!" said Mr. Brownlow, with a slight shudder; "a couple of glasses of port wine would have done him a great deal more good, – wouldn't they, Tom White, – eh?"

"My name is Oliver, sir," replied the little invalid with a look of great astonishment.

"Oliver!" said Mr. Brownlow; "Oliver what? Oliver White, – eh?"

"No, sir, Twist, – Oliver Twist."

"Queer name," said the old gentleman. "What made you tell the magistrate your name was White?"

"I never told him so, sir," returned Oliver in amazement.

This sounded so like a falsehood, that the old gentleman looked somewhat sternly in Oliver's face. It was impossible to doubt him; there was truth in every one of its thin and sharpened lineaments.

"Some mistake," said Mr. Brownlow. But, although his motive for looking steadily at Oliver no longer existed, the old idea of the resemblance between his features and some familiar face came upon him so strongly that he could not withdraw his gaze.

"I hope you are not angry with me, sir," said Oliver, raising his eyes beseechingly.

"No, no," replied the old gentleman. – "Gracious God, what's this! Bedwin, look, look there!"

As he spoke, he pointed hastily to the picture above Oliver's head, and then to the boy's face. There was its living copy, – the eyes, the head, the mouth; every feature was the same. The expression was for the instant so precisely alike, that the minutest line seemed copied with an accuracy which was perfectly unearthly.

Oliver knew not the cause of this sudden exclamation, for he was not strong enough to bear the start it gave him, and he fainted away.

CHAPTER THE THIRTEENTH

REVERTS TO THE MERRY OLD GENTLEMAN AND HIS YOUTHFUL FRIENDS, THROUGH WHOM A NEW ACQUAINTANCE IS INTRODUCED TO THE INTELLIGENT READER, AND CONNECTED WITH WHOM VARIOUS PLEASANT MATTERS ARE RELATED APPERTAINING TO THIS HISTORY

When the Dodger and his accomplished friend Master Bates joined in the hue and cry which was raised at Oliver's heels, in consequence of their executing an illegal conveyance of Mr. Brownlow's personal property, as hath been already described with great perspicuity in a foregoing chapter, they were actuated, as we therein took occasion to observe, by a very laudable and becoming regard for themselves: and forasmuch as the freedom of the subject and the liberty of the individual are among the first and proudest boasts of a true-hearted Englishman, so I need hardly beg the reader to observe that this action must tend to exalt them in the opinion of all public and patriotic men, in almost as great a degree as this strong proof of their anxiety for their own preservation and safety goes to corroborate and confirm the little code of laws which certain profound and sound-judging philosophers have laid down as the mainsprings of all Madam Nature's deeds and actions; the said philosophers very wisely reducing the good lady's proceedings to matters of maxim and theory, and, by a very neat and pretty compliment to her exalted wisdom and understanding, putting entirely out of sight any considerations of heart, or generous impulse and feeling, as matters totally beneath a female who is acknowledged by universal admission to be so far beyond the numerous little foibles and weaknesses of her sex.

If I wanted any further proof of the strictly philosophical nature of the conduct of these young gentlemen in their very delicate predicament, I should at once find it in the fact (also recorded in a foregoing part of this narrative) of their quitting the pursuit when the general attention was fixed upon Oliver, and making immediately for their home by the shortest possible cut; for although I do not mean to assert that it is the practice of renowned and learned sages at all to shorten the road to any great conclusion, their course indeed being rather to lengthen the distance by various circumlocutions and discursive staggerings, like those in which drunken men under the pressure of a too mighty flow of ideas are prone to indulge, still I do mean to say, and do say distinctly, that it is the invariable practice of all mighty philosophers, in carrying out their theories, to evince great wisdom and foresight in providing against every possible contingency which can be supposed at all likely to affect themselves. Thus, to do a great right, you may do a little wrong, and you may take any means which the end to be attained will justify; the amount of the right or the amount of the wrong, or indeed the distinction between the two, being left entirely to the philosopher concerned: to be settled and determined by his clear, comprehensive, and impartial view of his own particular case.

It was not until the two boys had scoured with great rapidity through a most intricate maze of narrow streets and courts, that they ventured to halt by common consent beneath a low and dark archway. Having remained silent here, just long enough to recover breath to speak, Master Bates uttered an exclamation of amusement and delight, and, bursting into an uncontrollable fit of laughter, flung himself upon a door-step, and rolled thereon in a transport of mirth.

"What's the matter?" inquired the Dodger.

"Ha! ha! ha!" roared Charley Bates.

"Hold your noise," remonstrated the Dodger, looking cautiously round. "Do you want to be grabbed, stupid?"

"I can't help it," said Charley, "I can't help it. To see him splitting away at that pace, and cutting round the corners, and knocking up against the posts, and starting on again as if he was made of iron as well as them, and me with the wipe in my pocket, singing out arter him – oh, my eye!" The vivid imagination of Master Bates presented the scene before him in too strong colours. As he arrived at this apostrophe, he again rolled upon the door-step and laughed louder than before.

"What'll Fagin say?" inquired the Dodger, taking advantage of the next interval of breathlessness on the part of his friend to propound the question.

"What!" repeated Charley Bates.

"Ah, what?" said the Dodger.

"Why, what should he say?" inquired Charley, stopping rather suddenly in his merriment, for the Dodger's manner was impressive; "what should he say?"

Mr. Dawkins whistled for a couple of minutes, and then, taking off his hat, scratched his head and nodded thrice.

"What do you mean?" said Charley.

"Toor rul lol loo, gammon and spinnage, the frog he wouldn't, and high cockolorum," said the Dodger with a slight sneer on his intellectual countenance.

This was explanatory, but not satisfactory. Mr. Bates felt it so, and again said, "What do you mean?"

The Dodger made no reply, but putting his hat on again, and gathering the skirts of his long-tailed coat under his arms, thrust his tongue into his cheek, slapped the bridge of his nose some half-dozen times in a familiar but expressive manner, and then, turning on his heel, slunk down the court. Mr. Bates followed, with a thoughtful countenance.

The noise of footsteps on the creaking stairs a few minutes after the occurrence of this conversation roused the merry old gentleman as he sat over the fire with a saveloy and a small loaf in his left hand, a pocket-knife in his right, and a pewter pot on the trivet. There was a rascally smile on his white face as he turned round, and, looking sharply out from under his thick red eyebrows, bent his ear towards the door and listened intently.

"Why, how's this?" muttered the Jew, changing countenance; "only two of 'em! Where's the third? They can't have got into trouble. Hark!"

The footsteps approached nearer; they reached the landing, the door was slowly opened, and the Dodger and Charley Bates entered and closed it behind them.

"Where's Oliver, you young hounds?" said the furious Jew, rising with a menacing look: "where's the boy?"

The young thieves eyed their preceptor as if they were alarmed at his violence, and looked uneasily at each other, but made no reply.

"What's become of the boy?" said the Jew, seizing the Dodger tightly by the collar, and threatening him with horrid imprecations. "Speak out, or I'll throttle you!"

Mr. Fagin looked so very much in earnest, that Charley Bates, who deemed it prudent in all cases to be on the safe side, and conceived it by no means improbable that it might be his turn to be throttled second, dropped upon his knees, and raised a loud, well-sustained, and continuous roar, something between an insane bull and a speaking-trumpet.

"Will you speak?" thundered the Jew, shaking the Dodger so much that his keeping in the big coat at all seemed perfectly miraculous.

"Why, the traps have got him, and that's all about it," said the Dodger sullenly. "Come, let go o' me, will yer!" and, swinging himself at one jerk clean out of the big coat, which he left in the Jew's hands, the Dodger snatched up the toasting-fork and made a pass at the merry old gentleman's waistcoat, which, if it had taken effect, would have let a little more merriment out than could have been easily replaced in a month or two.

The Jew stepped back in this emergency with more agility than could have been anticipated in a man of his apparent decrepitude, and, seizing up the pot, prepared to hurl it at his assailant's head. But Charley Bates at this moment calling his attention by a perfectly terrific howl, he suddenly altered its destination, and flung it full at that young gentleman.

"Why, what the blazes is in the wind now!" growled a deep voice. "Who pitched that 'ere at me? It's well it's the beer and not the pot as hit me, or I 'd have settled somebody. I might have know'd as nobody but an infernal rich, plundering, thundering old Jew could afford to throw away any drink but water, and not that, unless he done the River company every quarter. Wot's it all about, Fagin. D – me if my neckankecher an't lined with beer. Come in, you sneaking warmint; wot are you stopping outside for, as if you was ashamed of your master. Come in!"

The man who growled out these words was a stoutly-built fellow of about five-and-forty, in a black velveteen coat, very soiled drab breeches, lace-up half-boots, and grey cotton stockings, which enclosed a very bulky pair of legs, with large swelling calves, – the kind of legs which in such costume always look in an unfinished and incomplete state without a set of fetters to garnish them. He had a brown hat on his head, and a dirty belcher handkerchief round his neck, with the long frayed ends of which, he smeared the beer from his face as he spoke; disclosing when he had done so, a broad heavy countenance with a beard of three days' growth, and two scowling eyes, one of which displayed various parti-coloured symptoms of having been recently damaged by a blow.

"Come in, d'ye hear?" growled this engaging-looking ruffian. A white shaggy dog, with his face scratched and torn in twenty different places, skulked into the room.

"Why didn't you come in afore?" said the man. "You're getting too proud to own me afore company, are you. Lie down!"

This command was accompanied with a kick which sent the animal to the other end of the room. He appeared well used to it, however; for he coiled himself up in a corner very quietly without uttering a sound, and, winking his very ill-looking eyes about twenty times in a minute, appeared to occupy himself in taking a survey of the apartment.

"What are you up to? Ill-treating the boys, you covetous, avaricious, in-sa-ti-a-ble old fence?" said the man, seating himself deliberately. "I wonder they don't murder you; I would if I was them. If I'd been your 'prentice I'd have done it long ago; and – no, I couldn't have sold you arterwards, though; for you're fit for nothing but keeping as a curiosity of ugliness in a glass bottle, and I suppose they don't blow them large enough."

"Hush! hush! Mr. Sikes," said the Jew, trembling; "don't speak so loud."

"None of your mistering," replied the ruffian; "you always mean mischief when you come that. You know my name: out with it. I shan't disgrace it when the time comes."

"Well, well, then, Bill Sikes," said the Jew with abject humility. "You seem out of humour, Bill."

"Perhaps I am," replied Sikes. "I should think *you* were rather out of sorts too, unless you mean as little harm when you throw pewter pots about, as you do when you blab and –"

"Are you mad?" said the Jew, catching the man by the sleeve, and pointing towards the boys.

Mr. Sikes contented himself with tying an imaginary knot under his left ear, and jerking his head over on the right shoulder; a piece of dumb show which the Jew appeared to understand perfectly. He then in cant terms, with which his whole conversation was plentifully besprinkled, but which would be quite unintelligible if they were recorded here, demanded a glass of liquor.

"And mind you don't poison it," said Mr. Sikes, laying his hat upon the table.

This was said in jest; but if the speaker could have seen the evil leer with which the Jew bit his pale lip as he turned round to the cupboard, he might have thought the caution not wholly unnecessary, or the wish, at all events, to improve upon the distiller's ingenuity not very far from the old gentleman's merry heart.

After swallowing two or three glassfuls of spirits, Mr. Sikes condescended to take some notice of the young gentlemen; which gracious act led to a conversation in which the cause and manner of

Oliver's capture were circumstantially detailed, with such alterations and improvements on the truth as to the Dodger appeared most advisable under the circumstances.

"I'm afraid," said the Jew, "that he may say something which will get us into trouble."

"That's very likely," returned Sikes with a malicious grin. "You're blowed upon, Fagin."

"And I'm afraid, you see," added the Jew, speaking as if he had not noticed the interruption, and regarding the other closely as he did so, – "I'm afraid that, if the game was up with us, it might be up with a good many more; and that it would come out rather worse for you than it would for me, my dear."

The man started, and turned fiercely round upon the Jew; but the old gentleman's shoulders were shrugged up to his ears, and his eyes were vacantly staring on the opposite wall.

There was a long pause. Every member of the respectable coterie appeared plunged in his own reflections, not excepting the dog, who by a certain malicious licking of his lips seemed to be meditating an attack upon the legs of the first gentleman or lady he might encounter in the street when he went out.

"Somebody must find out what's been done at the office," said Mr. Sikes in a much lower tone than he had taken since he came in.

The Jew nodded assent.

"If he hasn't peached, and is committed, there's no fear till he comes out again," said Mr. Sikes, "and then he must be taken care on. You must get hold of him, somehow."

Again the Jew nodded.

The prudence of this line of action, indeed, was obvious; but unfortunately there was one very strong objection to its being adopted; and this was, that the Dodger, and Charley Bates, and Fagin, and Mr. William Sikes, happened one and all to entertain a most violent and deeply-rooted antipathy to going near a police-office on any ground or pretext whatever.

How long they might have sat and looked at each other in a state of uncertainty not the most pleasant of its kind, it is difficult to say. It is not necessary to make any guesses on the subject, however; for the sudden entrance of the two young ladies whom Oliver had seen on a former occasion caused the conversation to flow afresh.

"The very thing!" said the Jew. "Bet will go; won't you, my dear?"

"Wheres?" inquired the young lady.

"Only just up to the office, my dear," said the Jew coaxingly.

It is due to the young lady to say that she did not positively affirm that she would not, but that she merely expressed an emphatic and earnest desire to be "jiggered" if she would; a polite and delicate evasion of the request, which shows the young lady to have been possessed of that natural good-breeding that cannot bear to inflict upon a fellow-creature the pain of a direct and pointed refusal.

The Jew's countenance fell, and he turned to the other young lady, who was gaily, not to say gorgeously attired, in a red gown, green boots, and yellow curl-papers.

"Nancy, my dear," said the Jew in a soothing manner, "what do *you* say?"

"That it won't do; so it's no use a trying it on, Fagin," replied Nancy.

"What do you mean by that?" said Mr. Sikes, looking up in a surly manner.

"What I say, Bill," replied the lady collectedly.

"Why, you're just the very person for it," reasoned Mr. Sikes: "nobody about here, knows anything of you."

"And as I don't want 'em to, neither," replied Miss Nancy in the same composed manner, "it's rayther more no than yes with me, Bill."

"She'll go, Fagin," said Sikes.

"No, she won't, Fagin," bawled Nancy.

"Yes she will, Fagin," said Sikes.

And Mr. Sikes was right. By dint of alternate threats, promises, and bribes, the engaging female in question was ultimately prevailed upon to undertake the commission. She was not indeed withheld by the same considerations as her agreeable friend, for, having very recently removed into the neighbourhood of Field-lane from the remote but genteel suburb of Ratcliffe, she was not under the same apprehension of being recognised by any of her numerous acquaintance.

Accordingly, with a clean white apron tied over the red gown, and the yellow curl-papers tucked up under a straw bonnet, – both articles of dress being provided from the Jew's inexhaustible stock, – Miss Nancy prepared to issue forth on her errand.

"Stop a minute, my dear," said the Jew, producing a little covered basket. "Carry that in one hand; it looks more respectable, my dear."

"Give her a door-key to carry in her t'other one, Fagin," said Sikes; "it looks real and genivine like."

"Yes, yes, my dear, so it does," said the Jew, hanging a large street-door key on the fore-finger of the young lady's right hand. "There; very good, – very good indeed, my dear," said the Jew, rubbing his hands.

"Oh, my brother! my poor, dear, sweet, innocent little brother!" exclaimed Miss Nancy, bursting into tears, and wringing the little basket and the street-door key in an agony of distress. "What has become of him! – where have they taken him to! Oh, do have pity, and tell me what's been done with the dear boy, gentlemen; do, gentlemen, if you please, gentlemen."

Having uttered these words in a most lamentable and heart-broken tone, to the immeasurable delight of her hearers, Miss Nancy paused, winked to the company, nodded smilingly round, and disappeared.

"Ah! she's a clever girl, my dears," said the Jew, turning to his young friends, and shaking his head gravely, as if in mute admonition to them to follow the bright example they had just beheld.

"She's a honor to her sex," said Mr. Sikes, filling his glass, and smiting the table with his enormous fist. "Here's her health, and wishing they was all like her!"

While these and many other encomiums were being passed on the accomplished Miss Nancy, that young lady made the best of her way to the police-office; whither, notwithstanding a little natural timidity consequent upon walking through the streets alone and unprotected, she arrived in perfect safety shortly afterwards.

Entering by the back way, she tapped softly with the key at one of the cell-doors and listened. There was no sound within, so she coughed and listened again. Still there was no reply, so she spoke.

"Nolly, dear?" murmured Nancy in a gentle voice; – "Nolly?"

There was nobody inside but a miserable shoeless criminal, who had been taken up for playing the flute, and who – the offence against society having been clearly proved – had been very properly committed by Mr. Fang to the House of Correction for one month, with the appropriate and amusing remark that since he had got so much breath to spare, it would be much more wholesomely expended on the treadmill than in a musical instrument. He made no answer, being occupied in mentally bewailing the loss of the flute, which had been confiscated for the use of the county; so Miss Nancy passed on to the next cell, and knocked there.

"Well," cried a faint and feeble voice.

"Is there a little boy here?" inquired Miss Nancy with a preliminary sob.

"No," replied the voice; "God forbid!"

This was a vagrant of sixty-five, who was going to prison for *not* playing the flute, or, in other words, for begging in the streets, and doing nothing for his livelihood. In the next cell was another man, who was going to the same prison for hawking tin saucepans without a licence, thereby doing something for his living in defiance of the Stamp-office.

But as neither of these criminals answered to the name of Oliver, or knew anything about him, Miss Nancy made straight up to the bluff officer in the striped waistcoat, and with the most piteous

wailings and lamentations, rendered more piteous by a prompt and efficient use of the street-door key and the little basket, demanded her own dear brother.

"I haven't got him, my dear," said the old man.

"Where is he?" screamed Miss Nancy in a distracted manner.

"Why, the gentleman's got him," replied the officer.

"What gentleman? Oh, gracious heavins! what gentleman?" exclaimed Miss Nancy.

In reply to this incoherent questioning, the old man informed the deeply affected sister that Oliver had been taken ill in the office, and discharged in consequence of a witness having proved the robbery to have been committed by another boy not in custody; and that the prosecutor had carried him away in an insensible condition to his own residence, of and concerning which all the informant knew was, that it was somewhere at Pentonville, he having heard that word mentioned in the directions to the coachman.

In a dreadful state of doubt and uncertainty the agonised young woman staggered to the gate, and then, – exchanging her faltering gait for a good swift steady run, returned by the most devious and complicated route she could think of, to the domicile of the Jew.

Mr. Bill Sikes no sooner heard the account of the expedition delivered, than he very hastily called up the white dog, and, putting on his hat, expeditiously departed, without devoting any time to the formality of wishing the company good-morning.

"We must know where he is, my dears; he must be found," said the Jew, greatly excited. "Charley, do nothing but skulk about, till you bring home some news of him. Nancy, my dear, I must have him found: I trust to you, my dear, – to you and the Artful for every thing. Stay, stay," added the Jew, unlocking a drawer with a shaking hand; "there's money, my dears. I shall shut up this shop to-night: you'll know where to find me. Don't stop here a minute, – not an instant, my dears!"

With these words he pushed them from the room, and carefully double-locking and barring the door behind them, drew from its place of concealment the box which he had unintentionally disclosed to Oliver, and hastily proceeded to dispose the watches and jewellery beneath his clothing.

A rap at the door startled him in this occupation. "Who's there?" he cried in a shrill tone of alarm.

"Me!" replied the voice of the Dodger through the keyhole.

"What now?" cried the Jew impatiently.

"Is he to be kidnapped to the other ken, Nancy says?" inquired the Dodger cautiously.

"Yes," replied the Jew, "wherever she lays hands on him. Find him, find him out, that's all; and I shall know what to do next, never fear."

The boy murmured a reply of intelligence, and hurried down stairs after his companions.

"He has not peached so far," said the Jew as he pursued his occupation. "If he means to blab us among his new friends, we may stop his windpipe yet."

WHAT THOUGH WE WERE RIVALS OF YORE

A ROMANCE. BY HAYNES BAYLY

I

"What though we were rivals of yore,
It seems you the victor have proved,
Henceforth we are rivals no more,
For I must forget I have loved.
You tell me you wed her to-day,
I thank you for telling the worst;
Adieu then! to horse, and away! —
But, hold! — let us drink her health first!

II

"Alas! I confess I was wrong
To cope with so charming a knight;
Excelling in dance, and in song,
Well-dress'd, *debonnaire*, and polite!
So, putting all envy aside,
I take a new flask from the shelf;
Another full glass to the bride,
And now a full glass to yourself.

III

"You'll drink a full bumper to me,
So well I have borne my defeat?
To the nymphs who the bridemaids will be,
And to each of the friends you will meet.
You are weary? — one glass to renew;
You are dozing? — one glass to restore;
You are sleeping? — proud rival, adieu!
Excuse me for locking the door."

IV

There's a fee in the hand of the priest!
There's a kiss on the cheek of the bride!
And the guest she expected the least
Is He who now sits by her side!
Oh, well may the loiterer fail,
His love is the grape of the Rhine;
And the spirit most sure to prevail
Was never the spirit of wine.

LOVE IN THE CITY

TO THE PUBLIC

In the prefatory observations I thought advisable to make when placing "Love in the City" before the world, I stated that my chief aim was the restoration of the drama to its pristine purity by avoiding those unnatural and superhuman agencies which modern writers have so extensively indulged in. Opposing myself thus, to innovation, I have ventured on one of the boldest changes in dramatic arrangement, by postponing the performance of the overture until the commencement of the second act. Having thus admitted my offending, I trust that, when the reasons which induced it are explained and understood, I shall have justified this daring step, and obtained a verdict of public acquittal.

Is there a frequenter of our theatres on a first night whose musical sensibilities have not been lacerated by the noise and tumult incidental to a crowded house? Let him achieve by desperate exertion a favourable place in the undress circle, – suppose the theatre crammed to the pigeon-holes, the orchestra already tuned, and every eye bent upon the leader, awaiting his premonitory tap; – then, when the nervous system should be quiescent, the ear open to receive delicious sounds, the heart ready to expand itself into harmonious ecstasy, – at that very moment of rapturous expectation has not his tranquillity been annihilated by pinching him in the ribs to acquaint him that he is "sitting on her boa!" While, from that "*refugium peccatorum*," the shilling gallery, infernal cries of "Down in the front!" "Music!" "Curse your pedigree!" "Hats off!" "How's your mother?" drown even the double-drums, and render the overture inaudible from the opening crash to the close.

"Some giggling daughter of the queen of love"

To remedy this nuisance, – to allow the excited feelings of an overcrowded house to subside sufficiently to enable the audience, by presenting them with the first act, to judge how far the music of the overture is adapted to the business of the stage, – these considerations have induced me thus to postpone its performance, and with what success the public will best decide.

Another, and a more agreeable duty, now devolves upon me, – to express my ardent thanks to all and every to whom this drama is in any way indebted for its brilliant and unparalleled success. To Messrs. Flight and Robson; the commanding officers of the Foot and Fusileer Guards; the King of the Two Sicilies; the Hereditary Prince of Coolavin; and his serene highness the Duke of Darmstadt, I am eternally grateful. To the performers, male and female, the composers, the orchestra at large, scene-painters and scene-shifters, prompters and property-men, box-keepers and check-takers, sentries and police, I present my heartfelt acknowledgements. And to the most crowded and fashionable audience that ever graced a metropolitan theatre, I shall only say, that the rapturous and reiterated plaudits bestowed upon this drama shall never fade from the recollection of their most devoted, very humble, too fortunate, and ever grateful servant,

The Author.

July 1, 1837.

LOVE IN THE CITY;

OR, ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

A MELODRAMATIC EXTRAVAGANZA

Act II

Grand Overture, – composed jointly by Spohr, Haynes Bayly, Newkom, and Rossini, and performed by the largest orchestra ever collected in a European theatre, assisted by the Duke of Darmstadt's brass band, and the entire drums of the Foot and Fusileer Guards.

In the course of the overture the following novelties will be introduced.

A *duet* upon the *double-drums* with *one stick only*, by Mons. Tambourette, Member of the Legion of Honour, K.T.S., and drum-major to the *King of the Two Sicilies*.

Planxty Mac Swain, and "*What have you got in your jug?*" with brilliant variations for the *Irish pipes*, by *Kalkbrenner*, – Mr. Patrick Halligan, Minstrel in ordinary to the Prince of Coolavin.

A *capriccio* on the *German flute*, by a *distinguished amateur*, who has lost four fingers and a thumb.

A *grand fantasia* (Henry Hertz) on *one piano* by *eight performers*.

Director, Sir George Smart.

Conductor, on *The Apollonicon*, – lent to the lessee for that night only, – Mr. Purkis.

Leader, Mr. T. Cooke,

The overture having been twice encored, bell rings, and curtain draws up

Act II. – Scene I

A public-house, "Black Horse," in the Borough. A tap-room. *Mags* and *Poppleton* discovered drinking "heavy wet." *Mags* rather fresh, and *Poppleton* evidently the worse of liquor. *Mags*, after a long pull, deposits the pot upon the table.

Pop.– Now for your news, *Mags*.

Mags. I told you, worthy *Pop*,

That *Stubs* and *Smith* put keepers on the shop.

Pop.– And how's our missus?

Mags. Why, hearty, when last seen

With a *Life-Guardsman*, crossing *Turnham-green*.

Pop.– And honest *Snags*?

Mags (*with emotion*). Ah! would that epithet were true,

Or I could keep the sad details from you!

Snags is not *honest*!

(Poppleton buttons his coat, and puts himself into a boxing attitude.)

He has robb'd the till,
And lost the money, betting at a mill!

(Noise without. Door opens. Enter Young Clipclose hastily.)

Mr. C.— What, Mags and Pop! the coves I wish'd to see
Above all others. Curse my pedigree!

Air —*Mr. Clipclose.*— ("I've been roaming.")

I've been nabb'd, sirs, — I've been nabb'd, sirs, —
And bundled off direct to jail,
By the villains when they grabb'd, sirs,
And now I'm out upon stag-bail.

(Mr. C. seizes the pewter in his right hand.)

Mr. C.— Is this good stout?
Mags (feelingly). My honest master, quaff!
You'll find it strengthening, real half-and-half.

Air —*Poppleton.*— ("Here we go up, up, up.")

Come, Bob, take a sup, sup, sup!
Let the liquor your stiff neck slide down, boy;
There's nothing like keeping steam up,
When a man's at the worst, and done brown, boy.

(Clipclose starts, looks anxiously at Mags.)

Mr. C.— How's all at home, — I mean on Ludgate-hill, —
And have you heard the winner of the mill?

Mags (with considerable hesitation).— We all, alas! for Fortune's frowns seem fix'd on.

Poor Jerry Scout is bundled off to Brixton;
The shop's done up; and, for your lady wife,
I fear she's joined the Guards, yclept "The Life;"
On other things, barring the fight, I'm barren,
And Owen Swift was beat by Barney Aaron.

(Clipclose staggers across the room, and catches at the chimney-piece.)

Mr. C.— My wife levanted, and the shop done up!

Mags, hand the quart; I need another sup.

Othello like, Bob's occupation's done;

For I back'd Owen freely two to one.

Like Antony at Actium, this fell day

Strips me of all, shop, cash, and lady gay.

Would I had nerve to take myself away!

Pop. (aside.) — I'll watch him close. Although his looks are placid,
He'll take a dose, I fear, of prussic acid.

(Enter Pot-boy.)

Pot-boy.— Is there a gent call'd Mr. Clipclose here?

Mr. C.— I am that wretched man! (*Slaps his forehead.*)

Pot-boy. Who pays the beer?

Pop.— I.

Pot-boy.— Here's a note. (*To Mr. C.*) Lord, but the man looks queer!

(Mr. Clipclose reads it; jumps up, and whistles "Bobbing Joan.")

Quartetto

Mags

Master, are you mad?

Mr. C

No; but I'm distracted

Pot-boy

Times are very bad,

Pop

And I in grief abstracted

Mags

Odds! he'll take his life!

Mr. C. (kissing the billet.)

Sweet note! thou'rt balm and manna!

Mags to Pop. (who is reading it over Mr. C.'s shoulder.)

Is it from his wife?

Pop. (slaps his thigh.)

No! from Miss Juliana!"

Clipclose, when he reads it, rushes out; *Mags* after him. *Poppleton* attempts to follow, but is detained by pot-boy. He forks out tanner, and disappears. Solo —*Apollonicon*. Hurried music descriptive of three cabs: *Clipclose* in 793, at a rapid pace; *Mags*, 1659; *Poppleton* 1847, pursuing. Scene closes.

Scene II

Thompson and Fearon's, Holborn; gin-palace at full work; company less select than numerous, and ladies and gentlemen taking "some'ut short" at the counter. Enter, in full uniform. Captain Connor; O'Toole and Blowhard in shell jackets. They call for a flash of lightning, touch glasses affectionately, and bolt the ruin. The captain stumps down for all.

Glee —*Connor, O'Toole, and Blowhard*

Capt

Gin cures love, my boys, and gin cures the colic;

O'T

Gin fits a man for fight, or fits him for a frolic;

Blow

Come, we'll have another go, then hey for any rollic!

Trio

Come, we'll have another go, and hey then for a rollic!

Blow.— Lass! (to an attendant, whom he chucks under the chin,) some more jacky! Connor, do you still

Bend at the shrine of her on Ludgate-hill?

OT. (contemptuously).— Zounds! a cit's helpmate. That would never do.

One of us Guards, and one of taste like you.
Capt.— Faith, honest Blowhard, and you, my pal, O'Toole,
Tho' fond of flirting, yet your friend's no fool!
Think ye that I could live upon my pay,
And keep four wives on three and six a day?
No. Let me have a monied mistress still,
My El Dorado be a tradesman's till.
Love fed by flimsies, is the love that thrives,
And let the mercers keep the Guardsman's wives.
O'T.— I see how matters stand, my trump; enough.
Blow. (*to O'T.*) — He's wide awake, Tim. (*To the Capt.*) Con. you're up
to snuff!
Capt.— Come, one more round of jacky, and we part, —
I, to the peerless lady of my heart
In Stamford-street; — to Knightsbridge barrack you;
And mind don't split that I was out at Kew.

(They take each another johnny, shake hands, and separate. The scene closes.)

Scene III

A drawing-room; doors in the flat; one opening into Miss Juliana Smashaway's boudoir, and the other to her bed-chamber. She is discovered standing at the window in a pensive attitude. She sighs heavily, and rubs her temples with "eau de Cologne."

Miss S.— He comes not — half-past four! Ah, fickle Connor!
Is this thy plighted faith, and thrice-pledged honour?
Was it for this, I waived a grocer's hand,
And twice refused a counter in the Strand,
Sent back an offer from a Tenth Hussar,
And without warning left Soho bazaar,
Rejected Griskin, that rich man of mutton;
Shy'd Lincoln Stanhope, and cut Manners Sutton?

(Sudden noise. Voices without.)

1st voice.— Fare's sixteen-pence, and with one bob I'm shamm'd! Fork out the four-pence!

2nd voice. First I'd see you d — d!

(Door opens. Clipclose rushes in, and embraces Miss Smashaway.)

Miss S. (with considerable spirit.) – Unhand me, fellow! Whence this bold intrusion?

I think I'll faint, I feel in such confusion.

Duet —*Clipclose and Miss S.*– ("Pray Goody.")

Mr. C

Oh, come, Juliana, lay aside your anger and surprise;
One trifling kiss you'll scarcely miss, you know.
I saw a ready pardon seal'd already in your eyes,
Else, 'pon my soul! I scarce had ventur'd so.

Miss S

True, sir; but you, sir,
Should recollect what's due, sir,
To one so young and innocent

Mr. C

As pretty Missus Ju –

Oh, come, Miss S. do lay aside your anger and surprise;

A trifling kiss you'll scarcely miss, you know.
I saw a ready pardon seal'd already in your eyes,
Else, 'pon my soul! I had not ventur'd so.

**(Cab stops suddenly at the door. Miss S.
looks out alarmed. Loud knocking. Alarum.)**

Miss S.– Lost – lost for ever!

Mr. C. Pray, madam, what's the matter?

Miss S.— Heard ye no broadsword on the pavement clatter?

Mr. C.— A broadsword! Zounds! My teeth begin to chatter!

Miss S.— Where shall I hide him? — (*Opens the chamber door.*) — In, sir, or you 're dead.

Mr. C.— Can nothing save me?

Miss S. Creep beneath the bed.

(Door opens. Mags peeps in.)

Mags.— She's quite alone. Oh, happy Matthew Mags!

(Maid-servant enters.)

Maid.— A chap's below who says he's Samuel Snags.

Mags.— I'm a done man; for that 'ere cove will blow me.

Miss S.— Follow me in, and I will safely stow ye.

(Enter Snags.)

Snags.— Divine Miss Smashaway, I humbly kneel

To plead a passion you can never feel;

A smile will save, a frown as surely kill,

One who for you has robb'd his master's till.

Miss S.— Well, after that the man deserves some pity. —
Knocking again! and here comes my maid Kitty.

(Enter Maid.)

Maid.— One Mr. Poppleton.

Miss S. Was ever one so courted?

Snags.— All's up with me; for life I'll be transported!

Ma'am, could you save a lover?

Miss S. Let me see.

Oh, yes; the bed will surely cover three.

(Puts Snags into bed-chamber. Enter Poppleton.)

Pop.— Where is my charmer?

(Enter Maid, hastily.)

Maid (to Pop.) Sir, you're dead as mutton;
The Captain's come. Your life's not worth a button.
Pop.— Where shall I hide?
Miss S. (to the Maid.) Put him with t'other three;
They're the same firm, "Clipclose and company."

(A heavy footstep is heard, and a sword strikes against the stairs. Enter the Captain, whistling "Darby Kelly.")

Miss S. (flies into his arms.) — My own loved Guardsman, and my fancy beau.
Oh, Terence Connor! (*Kissing him.*)
Capt. (embracing her.) — Sweet Juliana, O!
Miss S.— Why did you dally, dearest; tell me all?
Were you on guard?
Capt. Yes, sweetest, at Whitehall.
Miss S.— Ah, you false man, — (*taps his cheek playfully,*) — I'll watch you close.

(Somebody sneezes within.)

Capt. What's that?
Miss S.— Nothing, dear Terence, but the landlord's cat.

(Somebody coughs twice.)

Capt.— A cough! — another! Do cats cough so, my fair?
Ha! her cheeks redden! Tell me who is there?
That guilty look! Zounds! If my fears be true,
He'll curse the hour he dared to visit you!

(Draws his sword, and rushes into the bed-chamber. Miss S. faints. Voices within.)

Capt.— A man! — my eyes! another! — and another!
A fourth one still!
Snags. I'm dead with fright!

Pop. I smother!

(Capt. drives them before him into the drawing-room.)

Capt. (in a frenzy.) – Why, hell and Tommy! the maid whom I adore
To prove untrue, and play me false with four!
But all shall die!

**(Captain Connor cuts No. 6. with his sword, while
Clipclose and company fall upon their knees.)**

Mags. Oh, Lord! I'm dead already!
Capt. – Prepare for death!
Snags and Pop. Indeed, sir, we an't ready.
Mr. C. – Probably, sir, affection for my wife
Might plead my pardon, and relieve my life.

(Enter, hastily, Mrs. Clipclose and Annette.)

Mrs. C. – Why, what's all this? What do my eyes discover?
An errant husband, and a truant lover!
(Aside to Mr. C.) – Was it for this I gave my faith to you?
(Aside to Capt. C.) – Was it for this I drove you out to Kew,
Paid cab and lunch, brown stout, and ruin blue?

**(Capt. C. drops the point of his sword, and evinces great contrition for attempting
the lives of the company, when enter an elderly piman with a juvenile dealer
in "all-hots," attended by two policemen. Piman identifies Miss Smashaway.)**

Piman. – That 'ere flash madam hit me in the withers.
All-hot (pointing to Mr. Clipclose). – And that cove knock'd my kitchen-
range to shivers!
Mr. C. (to Policeman.) – Let me explain, sir.
Miss S. Pray, sir, let me speak.
Policeman. – Silence! and keep your gammon for the beak.

(A rumbling noise heard underneath, attended by a disagreeable vapour.)

Policeman. – Zounds! what is this? it smothers me almost.

Is it the gas-pipe?
Capt. C. No, dash my wig! a ghost!

**(Slow music. Apparition of Old Clipclose rises through
the stage, dressed in a white shirt, and scarlet nightcap.)**

Roundelay —*Ghost and Company.*
("Good morrow to you, Madam Joan.")

Ghost

All in the family way,
Whack-fal-li, fal-la-di-day!
Are you met here to take tea?
Whack-fal-li, &c.
Or is it love-making you're come?
Tol-de-re-lol, &c.
Or to keep clear away from a bum?
Whack-fal-li, &c.

Miss S

Oh, no, sir! we're going to jail,
Whack-fal-li, &c.
Unless, Mister Ghost, you'll go bail,
Whack-fal-li, &c.

Policeman

A spectre, Miss S. will not do,
Whack-fal-li, &c.

(To the Ghost.)

Where the blazes! should we look for you?
Whack-fal-li, &c.

(Enter Capt. C's four wives.)

1st Wife

Ah, Terry, you traitor, you're there!
Whack-fal-li, &c.

2nd Wife

As usual, deceiving the fair!
Whack-fal-li, &c.

3rd Wife

You'll pay dear enough for your pranks!
Whack-fal-li, &c.

4th Wife

You're broke, and reduced to the ranks!
Whack-fal-li, &c.

**(Capt. C. seems thunderstruck, grinds his teeth
passionately, then strikes his forehead, and sings.)**

Air —*Capt. C.*— ("The night before Larey was stretch'd.")

Capt. C

By St. Patrick, I'm done for, at last!
From a captain come down to a private.
Terry Connor, your glory is past;
A very nice pass to arrive at!

(To the Ghost.)

I say, you old rum-looking swell,
I would deem it a favour, and civil,
In spite of your sulphur'ous smell,
To take me down stairs to the devil,
And get me a troop in his guards.

Ghost (to the Capt.) – Shut your potato-trap! we still refuse —
The corps's so moral – Life-Guardsmen and Blues.

4th Wife. – Cheer up, my Connor; 'twas in jest I spoke,
When I affirm'd my best beloved was broke.

Ghost (addressing the company). – Ladies and Gemmen, give the ghost
a hearance,

As this, his first, must be his last appearance.

(To Mr. and Mrs. Clipclose) – Bent upon wedlock, and an heir, to vex
ye,

If toasted cheese had not brought apoplexy,
I died asleep, and left my hard-won riches;
Search the left pocket of my dark drab breeches;
Open the safe, and there you'll find my will;
Deal for cash only and stick to Ludgate-hill;
Watch the apprentices, and lock the till;
And quit the turf, the finish, and the mill;
Turn a new leaf, and leave off former sins;
Pay the pieman, and mend young "All-hot's" tins.

Mr. C. (doubtfully.) – Did you die rich, dad?

Ghost. Rich as any Jew;

And half a plum, son Bob, devolves on you.

Mrs. C. – What a dear ghost, to die when he was wanted!

Will you forgive me?

Ghost. Ma'am, your pardon's granted.

My time's but short; but still, before I go,

With Miss Juliana I would sport a toe.

Miss S. – With all my heart. What would your ghostship order?

Ghost. – Tell them to play, "Blue bonnets o'er the border."

Apollonicon strikes up the country-dance. *Ghost* leads off with *Miss Smashaway*; the *Captain* follows with *Mrs. Clipclose*; *Clipclose*, *Mags*, *Snags*, and *Poppleton* each choose one of the *Captain's Wives*; the *Police* dance with the *Ladies' Maids*; and the *Pieman* with "All-hot." Twice down the middle, poussette, and form hands round. At the end of the dance, the *Ghost* vanishes, and the remainder of the *dramatis personæ* take hands, and advance to the stage-lights.

Grand Finale – ("There's nae luck about the house.")

Dad's away, and we may play,
Nor dread Old Grumpy's frown;
Well may we say, "thrice happy day
When Square-toes toddled down!"
There's now luck about the house,
There's now luck to a';
There's now luck about the house
Since grumpy dad's awa!

(Curtain falls amid tremendous applause, and a call for the author.)

CRITICAL REMARKS BY AN M.P

"I am not in the habit of frequenting the theatres, nor indeed any public house, except the House of Commons; neither do I pretend to be particularly conversant with the drama: but, by general consent, this play has been declared not inferior to the happiest effort of the bard of Avon, as player-people call William Shakspeare. I have not seen it represented; for, the free list being suspended, prudence would not permit me to attend. Had half-price been taken, I think I should have gone to the two-shilling gallery; but this question is irrelevant.

"The author deserves well of his country. Indeed, his is a double claim; and the debt consequently due by the public would amount to a large *tottle*. No doubt the restoration of the drama is a matter of some importance; but surely the diminution of drumsticks is one of infinitely greater consideration!

"I perceive by the playbills, – one of which I was enabled to obtain *gratis*, – that a gentleman called Tambourette performs upon two drums with a single stick. Now, I call the public attention to this important discovery; and, in these times of retrenchment and reform, the introduction of this system into our military establishment should be at once insisted on. The saving would be immense. Assuming that there are one hundred and three battalions of foot, and, on an average, twelve drums to each regiment, – a shameful waste of public money, by-the-bye, one drum and fife being quite sufficient for each corps, as they only alarm an enemy in war-time, and, in peace, destroy the utility of servant-maids by seducing them eternally to the windows. Well, even permitting this extravagant number to remain; by adopting Mr. Tambourette's system of performance, one thousand two hundred and thirty-six drumsticks would be saved to the country. Now, averaging the cost of the smaller-sized drumstick at sixpence, and the larger at one shilling, a reduction in the army estimates might be effected of *one thousand one hundred and thirty-three small and one hundred and three large ones*; making a *tottle* to the credit of the nation of 33*l.* 9*s.* 6*d.*!!!

"If the author will furnish me with the necessary information to enable me to frame a bill, I will move for a return of the drummers attached at present to the army: specifying their respective names, weights, heights, and ages, and take the earliest opportunity of bringing the matter before parliament.

"J.H.

"July 1, 1837.

"P.S. If one thousand two hundred and thirty-six drumsticks be dispensed with, it follows that a similar number of drummers' hands will then remain unoccupied. Might not a *one-handed fife* be introduced, or a pandean pipe substituted, and fifers totally abolished? I see no reason why the same man should not play the drum and fife together. This, indeed, would be a reduction worthy a reformed parliament, and a tremendous saving to the public purse.

"J.H."

THREE NOTCHES FROM THE DEVIL'S TAIL; OR, THE MAN IN THE SPANISH CLOAK

A TALE OF "ST. LUKE'S."

I had often met with him before in my travels, and had been much struck with the peculiar acumen of his remarks whenever we entered into conversation. His observations were witty, pungent, and sarcastic; but replete with knowledge of men and things. He seemed to despise book-knowledge of every kind, and argued that it only tended to mislead. "I have good reason to be satisfied on this point," he said to me one day at Vienna. "History is not to be relied on; a fact is told a hundred different ways; the actions of men are misrepresented, their motives more so; and as for travels, and descriptions of countries, manners, customs, &c. I have found out that they are the most absurd things in the world, – mere fables and fairy tales. Never waste your time on such trash!"

I again met this gentleman in Paris; it was at a *salon d'écarté*; and he amused me much by informing me of the names and circumstances of the most distinguished persons present. Whether English, French, or Germans, he knew something of the private history of each, some ridiculous adventure or silly *contre-tems*. I marvelled how he could have collected so great a store, such as it was, of anecdote and information; how he carried it all in remembrance; and, still more, at the perfect *sang-froid* with which he detailed these things under the very noses of the persons concerned, who would, had they heard them, no doubt have made as many holes in his body with "penetrating lead" as there are in a cullender.

To avoid getting into any scrape myself, I invited this *well-informed* gentleman to spend an evening with me at my hotel, where, over a bottle of claret, we might discuss some of those amusing matters, more, at least, to my own ease. Before we separated, I pointed out a certain Englishman to him, who was playing high, and did not notice us: I asked him "If he knew anything respecting that gentleman?" I had my private reasons for asking this question, unnecessary now to mention, and was pleased to find my colloquial friend knew, as they say, "all about him;" so we parted, with a promise on his side that on the following evening he would visit me, and give me every particular.

He came punctually to appointment, but I could not prevail on him to put off his large Spanish cloak, what they call technically "*an all-rounder*;" he complained of cold, said he had been accustomed to a *warm climate*, and sat down just opposite to me, when, without hesitation, in a sort of business-like way, he entered at once into the details I most wished to know respecting the young Englishman we had left at the *salon d'écarté*; and left no doubt on my mind, from some circumstances I already knew respecting him, that the account was most veracious. I fell into a fit of musing in consequence of his narration, which he did not interrupt by a single remark; but, fixing his eyes upon me, seemed to be amusing himself with watching the progress of my thoughts.

"It will never do!" said I, forgetting I was not alone; "he is not worthy of her."

I stopped, and the stranger rose, gave me a peculiar significant look, and was retiring, but I would not permit it; and, apologising for my abstraction, insisted that he should finish the bottle with me: so he sat down again, and we tried to converse as before, but it would not do.

There we sat, facing each other, and both nearly silent; and now it was that I remembered I had never once seen this stranger without this same Spanish cloak, – a very handsome one it is true, richly embroidered, and decorated with Genoese velvet, and a superb clasp and chain of the purest gold and finest workmanship. I pondered on this circumstance, as I recollected that even in Italy and the Ionian

islands, where I had before met him by some extraordinary chance, as well as at Constantinople and at Athens, he had always been enveloped in this same most magnificent mantle. At last I thought of the fable of the man, the sun, and the wind; so concluded that he wore this Spanish cloak to guard him equally from heat and cold, to exclude the sun's rays and the winter's winds; or, perhaps, I argued, he wears it to conceal the seedy appearance of his inner garments, or sundry deficiencies of linen, &c. "Things will wear out, and linen will lose its snowy whiteness, but what the devil have I to do with the matter? Let him wear his cloak, and sleep in it too, if it please him; why should I trouble my head about it?"

"You are returning to England soon, sir," said, at length, the cloaked stranger (but I am certain that I had not intimated such intention to him); "I am proceeding there myself on some pressing business, and will do myself the honour of there renewing our acquaintance."

I paused and hesitated ere I replied to this proposition. It is one thing to invite an agreeable stranger to drink a bottle of claret with you at an hotel in Paris, and another to bring him to the sanctuary of your home, to the fireside of an Englishman, to the board of your ancestors, to suffer him to gaze freely on the faces of your sisters, and to pay his court at his ease to every other female relative beneath the paternal roof!

The stranger saw my embarrassment, and seemed to penetrate the cause. He gave me a smile of most inexplicable expression as he said,

"Your late father, Sir George F – , and myself, were old acquaintances. We spent some months together at Rome, and met with a few adventures there, which I dare say have never reached the ears of his son."

This was said in his usual sarcastic way; but I could not endure that he should allude in the slightest manner of disrespect to my deceased father; so I answered, with much reserve, and some sign of displeasure, "That I did not wish to pry into the youthful follies of so near a relative; at the same time I thought it odd I never should have heard my father mention that he had formed any particular intimacy with any one at Rome, but, on the contrary, had even been given to understand that all his recollections of the Eternal City were rather of an *unpleasing* nature."

"Did he never mention to you the baths of Caracalla?" demanded my strange guest; "but it matters little, for the son of Sir George F – merits every attention from me *on his own account*, as well as for the sake of *another*– " He did not finish the sentence; but, folding his cloak more closely round him, he made me a profound bow, something between an Eastern salaam and the bow of a dancing-master, and politely took his leave.

For two or three days I thought much of this extraordinary man; but after that time I became so deeply interested in a Platonic *liaison* with Madame de R – , the beautiful wife of a Parisian banker, that I forgot him altogether. I had to read, as well as to write, sentimental *billets-doux* sometimes twice a day, for so often they passed between my fair Platonist and myself. I had to select all her books, her flowers, and to choose her ribbons. I know not how it might have ended, for affairs began to wear a very critical aspect; but I was summoned to England by an express. My beloved mother was dangerously ill. I tore myself away, disregarding the tears that gathered in the brightest pair of eyes in the world, and travelled post-haste to Calais.

Scarcely had I put my foot on the deck of the vessel ere I perceived my acquaintance of the Spanish cloak. There he was, walking up and down the deck, – tall, erect, gentlemanly; there was his magnificent cloak, without a wrinkle or a spot, the gloss still on it. I sat still, and watched him, not without a sensation of annoyance, as I was not at all in the humour just then to enter into conversation. I was uneasy respecting the life of an only parent, and I had just parted with one of the prettiest women in France, at the moment, too, when we both wished Platonism in the same place its founder was, dead and buried; but I might have saved myself the trouble of being annoyed, for the stranger did not seem to recognise me, nor wish to speak to any one. His carriage was lofty and reserved; his eye was proud, and sought to *overlook* the rest of the passengers as unworthy of its notice; and so

marked was his avoidance of myself, that I began to feel piqued, and to imagine that my own personal appearance, if not our former knowledge of each other, might have gained for me the honour of his notice. Never before did I see so imperious an eye, or so magnificent a cloak!

The passage was a very boisterous one; and all the passengers, both male and female, began to show evident signs enough that the human animal was never intended by Nature to ride upon the ocean's billows. Strange sounds were heard from the very depths of human stomachs, as if in response to the roaring of the winds and the dashing of the waves! I began to sympathise most sincerely with the unhappy sufferers; for such sights and sounds are sure to affect the feelings of those who both see and hear. In short, I began to look grave, and become squeamish. I saw nothing but livid lips and blue cheeks around me, – a perfect pandæmonium of wretchedness; yet there walked the stately man in the cloak, perfectly unmoved in countenance and stomach. I perceived he had lighted a cigar, which glowed of a bright red colour, and threw a glow over his handsome features.

I grew still worse, and my disorder was coming to its climax, when the eye of the stranger for the first time condescended to notice me, and he bowed ceremoniously, with a smile which seemed to say, "I wish you joy, young man, of your sea-sickness!" I turned from him, and sincerely wished him in the same condition as myself and the other victims of the wrath of Neptune. He advanced towards me.

"You look ill, sir!" he exclaimed. "Take the advice of an old sailor; only try one of my cigars; *they are not of common use*; one or two whiffs will drive away your nausea. I never knew them fail."

Now I loathe smoking at all times; it is a vulgar and idle amusement, fit only, as a modern writer says, for "the swell-mob;" but at this moment the thought of it was execrable. I could have hurled the stranger, when he offered me one of his cigars already ignited, into the sea.

"I never smoke, sir," said I, pettishly, "and I always get as far away as I can from those who do. May I thank you to go a little to the windward?"

"My dear sir, do not be obstinate," said the pertinacious stranger; "we have many hours before we shall touch the shore, for you see both wind and tide are against us. I assure you the remedy is always efficacious;" and he handed me a lighted cigar, immediately under my nose.

I snatched at the burning preparation, and flung it overboard, with an exclamation of no gentle kind; it dropped into the boiling waves, making a noise like a hissing red-hot iron, as it is put by the smith into the water of the stone cistern.

"It is not of the slightest consequence," said my tormentor, affecting to believe I had dropped the cigar by accident, "I have plenty more in my case;" and with the most provoking coolness he lighted another from his own, and presented it to me. I was puzzled what to do, for the courtesy of this man was extreme. I was exceedingly sick, and wished to get rid of him; for who likes to have a witness during the time of Nature's distress? I therefore accepted his cigar, and turned from him, with a very equivocal bow of acknowledgement.

There was something of a very refreshing nature in the smell of this extraordinary-looking cigar, which was burning steadily in my hand. I resolved to try its boasted efficacy; and accordingly put it to my lips, and inhaled its fragrance. In a moment I was well, more than well; for a delicious languor seized me. After that, my nerves were braced, invigorated; I felt as a hunter does after a long day's sport, hungry almost to famine, and I descended to the saloon, and called lustily to the steward to bring me a cold fowl, a plate of ham, and a bottle of porter. No more nausea, no more livid lips and blue cheeks. All of a sudden I became eloquent, poetical, and brimful of the tender passion. I wished to console some of my fair companions who were languishing around me, and offered my cigar to all who would accept it. Had it not been for an occasional thought of my mother's illness, which would intrude upon me whether I wished it or not, what folly and entanglement might I have got into with a pretty milliner on board, just returned from Paris, with fashions in her head, and French levity in her heart!

I ought to have acknowledged my obligation to the stranger for his remedy; but I had conceived so insuperable a dislike to him, that I could not account for it, and my only wish was to escape from his society at Dover, as I feared he would offer to accompany me to London, and I could hardly refuse him after the service he had rendered me. I therefore lingered below some few minutes when we arrived, and looked cautiously around me when I ascended the companion-ladder; but the stranger was gone. I saw no trace of his august person then, or his superb Spanish cloak.

I hastened on with four horses to – Square, and met my weeping sisters. My mother still breathed; but that was all. The physicians could not comprehend her malady, but agreed to call it a general debility, an exhaustion of the vital energies, without any particular complaint. She was extremely weak, but knew me instantly, and smiled her welcome as I knelt and kissed her hand.

My mother was only of the middle age, which made it more strange that physical weakness should thus overpower her. I inquired at what time she was first seized; and on reference to my notebook, found out that her first appearance of illness was at the *precise hour* when the stranger in the Spanish cloak was sitting with me at my hotel, and talking to me of my father. Well! what of that? it was a mere chance!

It is no use disguising it. I am naturally superstitious. We can no more help the frailties of our minds than the blemishes of our features. As I sat by my declining mother's side, I pondered again and again on this mysterious stranger. I recollected how he had cured me of my sickness in a moment; how wonderfully he knew the private history of every individual; and I ended by believing that there was something of a supernatural agency about him. "Perhaps," thought I, starting up suddenly, and speaking aloud, "perhaps this wonderful cigar of his might recover my beloved mother." I searched every pocket, hoping that a remnant of it might have remained: but, no; it had been whiffed away by the ladies in the cabin, and I had not a vestige left.

When once an idea seizes hold on the mind, it scarcely ever lets go its hold. I began to consider myself mad, yet could not prevent myself from going out I knew not whither, to make inquiries for the cloaked stranger, and request him to give me another of his marvellous cigars. As I passed Louisa and Emily, my sisters, and – , now no more, they were alarmed by the wildness of my looks, and endeavoured to arrest my progress.

"I go to seek a remedy for my mother," exclaimed I, breaking from them, and I darted from the house.

I made inquiries at all the principal hotels and club-houses for the stranger in the magnificent cloak. The waiters at the Oriental, the Travellers, and the Albion, had all seen him, but knew not his address or name. I sought him in the parks, at the exhibitions; but could not find him. At length I thought of the British Museum, but *why* I did so appears to me most mysterious; I drove instantly thither, and ran through all the rooms with the most searching gaze. In George the Fourth's splendid library there, seated at his ease by special permission from Sir Henry Ellis, I beheld the man I sought, with a large folio volume of Eastern learning spread open before him.

I felt ashamed to address him; for, had I not been most uncourteous, most repulsive to him? and now I wanted another favour. I stood before the table at which he sat, and watched his countenance as he seemed engrossed with his Oriental literature; but it was only for a moment, for he raised his eyes by some sudden impulse, and fixed them straight upon me.

The stranger acknowledged me not even by a bow or a look of recognition. I knew not what to say to him, yet the case was urgent.

"Pardon me, sir," I stammered out, "I fear I interrupt you; but –"

"Proceed, sir," said the stranger, coldly. "I am always ready to listen to the son of Sir George F – , for I owe to the father some obligation."

"You possess the power of allaying the most tormenting sickness by some mysterious drug or preparation," I said, hesitating as I spoke: "that was no common cigar. Have you other remedies?"

"A thousand," replied the stranger. "Pray go on."

"My mother lies dangerously ill; can you restore her?"

"May I behold the patient?" demanded the stranger, and an inexpressible glance flashed from his brilliant eyes.

What made me tremble at this natural request? for such it might have been deemed, since every medical man has free liberty to inquire into the symptoms of the case before he prescribes.

Fixedly did his eyes rest on mine; they seemed as if turned to stone, for they moved not in the slightest degree.

"I will *describe* my mother's case to you, sir," I said, evasively.

He made me no answer; but, casting down his eyes, he calmly resumed his reading, and I walked up and down the spacious apartment, in which there were not above a dozen other persons, in a state of mind resembling a chaos, occasionally glancing with angry eyes at the reading stranger, who seemed perfectly composed, and unconscious of my presence.

"What a fool am I!" said I, mentally; "what *harm* can this man do my dying mother? but, then, *she* may see him – this being that resembles a demi-god – and *she* too of so peculiar a mind, so enamoured of all that is great and wonderful; so romantic, too! Wretch that I am! is my beloved mother's life to be sacrificed – at least the chance of saving her – to a wild and jealous fantasy? No!" and I walked up again to the table.

The stranger was rising as I approached him, had closed his book, and returned it to the librarian. He would have passed me, but I laid my hand upon his arm.

"Most extraordinary being!" said I, "*come*, I conjure you, and save my mother!"

He entered my carriage without saying a word, and silently followed me to the apartment of my languishing parent, who was dozing in a sort of lethargic stupor, that appeared to be the precursor of death. My two sisters stood gazing on her pale features, and – was holding her thin white hand in one of hers, and bathing it with her tears.

The stranger took my mother's hand from hers, and – I cannot be mistaken, for I watched every movement – some strong agitation, some convulsive spasm, passed over his countenance as he looked upon that face which never had its equal yet on earth; but, whatever was his emotion, he soon mastered it, and desired that a silver plate and lamp might be brought to him.

From a small crystal box the stranger took out a brown preparation, and, breaking it in two, placed them on the silver plate; then with a slip of paper lighted from the lamp he ignited the substance so placed, which sent up a pale blue flame, and a most intoxicating odour. He desired that my mother should be raised in bed, even to a sitting posture, when he placed the blazing plate immediately beneath her nostrils, and some portion of the actual flame entered and curled about her face. My sisters shrieked, but – spake not a word, and I waited the result with agonised impatience.

"She revives! she revives!" exclaimed the latter, "and my blessed aunt will live!"

It was true. Years have gone by, and *my mother is still alive*. Never has she had an hour's illness from that hour. Was I grateful to the stranger for saving a life so prized? No. In my heart I loathed him at the very time he was heaping benefits upon me. And why? I detected a look of wonder, and admiration, and gratitude, and a smile of ineffable beauty directed towards him by one who —

Disguising as well as I was able the hatred that swelled within my heart, I offered to place on the finger of this mysterious visitant a ring of great value, that belonged once to my father. He started as he saw it, and, pressing a secret spring in it that I knew not of, restored it to me.

"It was a present from myself to him at Rome," he said, and his voice faltered, "for a signal benefit conferred. Behold! there is my own miniature!"

And it was so. Most exquisitely painted was there concealed, a minute resemblance of himself. I now perceived, and I cursed him in my heart for it, that – retained the ring, after having expressed her astonishment at the fidelity of the likeness. I rudely snatched it from her hand, and threw the ring from me.

"Theodore," said my mother, "give me that ring. I know full well who it was presented that ring to him who is now no more. Marquis! I must speak to you alone, but not now. Come hither to-morrow. Now, I beseech you, retire!"

How dreadful is it to bear about with us the seeds of insanity. I have felt them shoot and grow within me from my childhood. The fibres had twined about my very being. *I knew* that madness must some time or other scorch my brain; I was full of delusions; I could behold nothing clear with my mental vision. I once heard a learned physician say to my father, "Take care of him, sir. Excitement may drive that boy mad. Do not let him study too much; and, above all, I trust he will never meet with disappointment in any affair of the heart."

Have I met with such? Let me not think about it, or — *And yet I am not mad now.*

From this time I became gloomy and morose, and always worse whenever this accursed man in the Spanish cloak came to the house, which now was very often. He charmed all but myself. I hated the sound of his voice. My sisters would come and try to soothe me into sociability and calmness. I repelled them with harshness and severity; and even when my gentle cousin tried each soft persuasive art to lead me to his presence, I taunted her in the cruellest manner with her hypocrisy, as I chose to call her blandishments, and bade her "go to the fascinating marquis, and heap her witcheries on him." Nothing could exceed the patience of this devoted being, her sweetness of temper, her angelic forbearance, but my own ferocity and hellish brutality; yet how did I love her, even when I bitterly reviled her! Once, when I observed that ring upon her finger, which my mother had permitted her to wear, — that ring, bearing the portrait of *that man*, — I absolutely spurned her from my presence, and wonder now that I did not murder her.

Cloud after cloud obscured the light of reason in my brain, and it was deemed advisable by those who loved me still, notwithstanding my growing malady, to have some one with me night and day, lest I should lay violent hands upon myself, as if a life like mine were worth the caring for.

An intelligent young man, one of my tenants, accepted this painful task, and he performed it with gentleness and fidelity. He soon perceived that I grew more furious when the voice or the name of the Marquis — met my ears. He mentioned this circumstance to my mother, and from that time the marquis was not permitted to enter the house. I heard of this at first with incredulity, then with complacency. By degrees I grew calmer. I was afterwards shown a letter from the cloaked stranger, dated Rome; and it confirmed their assertions. I once more enjoyed the society of my family, and basked in the smiles of my beloved cousin. She was all kindness, all attention; and I began to flatter myself that the ardent love I had borne her from my very boyhood was returned. It was her reserve that before drove me from my country.

To my great astonishment and delight, that young Englishman who had interested me so much in the *salon d'écarté* at Paris, was formally refused by her who was dearer to me than life. He was of ancient family, and of great possessions; I knew he loved her, and feared he would gain her: but on my saying one day, as if by accident, in her presence, "that I feared S — gamed high, and consequently was not worthy of the regard of any woman of discretion," she gave me a smile of ineffable sweetness, and told me, "It was of little consequence to her his frailties or his virtues; for she had long determined to give him a refusal, and, in fact, had done so before he went to Paris."

I considered the *manner* of my cousin, more than her mere words, as encouragement to myself, and with all the ardour of my nature declared to her my passion. These were her words in reply: "Theodore, I pretend not to misunderstand you; and, if it be any comfort to you, believe that I most tenderly return your affection. But, oh, my beloved cousin! think how you have been afflicted, — and then ask yourself whether I ought to listen to your proposals? whether you ought to marry? Theodore, I solemnly promise you that, for your sake, never will I wed another; but, oh! ask me not to become your wife whilst you are subject to such a fearful malady."

In vain I represented to her that my late mental affliction had been caused wholly by my fear of losing her, as I believed that detested foreigner was exactly the man to charm her, and thus I considered her lost to me for ever.

"This, dear Theodore," she answered, "is one of your delusions. You had no cause why you should form such a preposterous notion, – a man old enough to be my father, and – "

"That is true," said I, "there is disparity of years; but, then, what a splendid being!"

"Yes," she replied coldly, "he wears a most magnificent cloak."

"Not always, sure?" I asked inquiringly, for I had never entered the room where he was, since he had cured my mother. "Did he not remove it when he dined and drank tea with you so often, and stayed so late, that I could have torn him to pieces for it?"

"Softly, my beloved cousin," said the sweet girl, placing her soft hand before my lips; "why are you so excited now when talking of this stranger? *Your* mother, Theodore, has been restored by him; and for that service what do we not all owe him?"

"Was it for this," I said, "from gratitude alone, you wore that ring?"

"Yes, from gratitude only. Are you now satisfied?"

"Blessings on you, dearest, for your kindness!" I continued. "But say, did you ever see him without that cloak?"

"Never, Theodore, never. It was always too hot or too cold; or he was poorly, or some excuse or other. We never could persuade him to take off that cloak."

I fell into a long reverie after this; nor could I blame her for her decision. I knew myself that my brain was not steady, and consequently I had no right to marry, to entail on my innocent offspring such a calamity. But then this inexplicable stranger; – perhaps he had the power to cure me, – he had already performed almost a miracle; if he could but settle my head, my beloved cousin would become mine, and I should be free from those fears that were constantly besetting me of becoming incurably mad.

Nothing would now do but my immediately setting out for Rome to seek the stranger with the large Spanish cloak. My mother did not think it advisable that I should go alone; so it was determined that she, with Louisa and Emily, accompanied by our sweet relative, should bear me company to Italy, and thither we accordingly went. We lingered not on our progress to look at curiosities, or paintings, or prospects. We journeyed as fast as four horses could carry us, and arrived quite safe at imperial Rome.

I was sorry to learn that the Marquis – was now at Naples; and, after settling my family in an elegant villa a few miles from modern Rome, I set off in quest of the man for whom I had an antipathy, powerful, incurable; and for what purpose? To request his aid, mysterious, perhaps sinful, to cure me of a disorder, of which the consciousness was part of its calamity. The raving madman, at least, is saved from *knowing* his own misery.

I had not been an hour at Naples, attended by my favourite servant, the young man who once acted to me as my keeper, when I saw from the window of my hotel the cloaked stranger pass with a lady on his arm. But I hesitated not, – I might lose him for ever; so I ran into the street, and hastily accosted him.

What I said to him I know not, for my words were wild and ambiguous; but he promised that he would dine with me the following day, although his manners were even more reserved than when I spoke to him at the Museum.

Our instincts ought ever to be attended to; the brute creation follow nothing else, and *they* commit no sin. The first time I saw this stranger, he was looking at an inscription at Athens, and I felt a secret desire to get from his presence; but he entangled me with his talk, his knowledge of everything around, his high bearing, his intelligent eyes, and his superb Spanish cloak.

Again we were seated at the same table, and I again requested him to remove his mantle.

"Not yet," he said significantly; "but after the cloth is removed I will, if you still wish it, take off this upper clothing."

Oh how sarcastically were these words pronounced! My heart beat violently; I could not eat, and became abstracted and melancholy; not a word was said respecting my request to him, nor did he ask me why I sought him. He ate in silence, and seemed to have forgotten he was not alone.

When the table was cleared, the stranger coolly took a book from under his cloak, and began to read; whilst I, pondering on all I had ever known of him, began to feel the most burning desire to see this man once *without* his cloak, and was determined to do my utmost to effect it.

"The cloth *is* now removed, signor," said I, "and you promised *then* you would take off that everlasting garment."

"It displeases you, then?" retorted my companion. "*Is it not unsafe to penetrate below the exterior of all things?* Is not the surface ever the most safe? Is not the *outer* clothing of nature ever the most beautiful to the eye? What deformity dwells in mines, in caverns, at the bottom of the ocean! Nature wears a cloak as beautiful as mine: do you wish also to strip off her covering as well as mine?"

"At this moment, signor," said I gloomily, "I was not thinking of Nature at all, but of the strangeness of your ever wearing that cloak."

"Was it for this you came from England, Sir Theodore?" inquired the marquis, "and sought me at Naples? The knowledge, I should deem, could never compensate you for the loss of your cousin's society so many days."

"It was not for this I sought you, noble marquis," I replied, piqued at his irony; "but, when a man ever wears a cloak, it must be for some purpose."

"Granted," slowly said my companion; "I have such purpose."

"Which you promised to unfold!" I exclaimed, with pertinacity. "Is it still your pleasure so to do?"

"*It is necessary first that we should have no intruders,*" he answered, with a tone that froze me to the heart. Oh, how cutting, how sarcastic did it sound in my ears!

"No person will enter this apartment save my faithful servant, Hubert; therefore – "

"I promised to enlighten the master, and not the servant. If you insist on this strange request, the door must be securely locked; there must be no chance of interruption."

"Oh, what a fuss," I thought, "about a mantle! Why, *he* must be mad too! How can he cure me of an evil he has himself? Lock the door, forsooth, because he takes off his cloak! But I must humour him, I suppose, or he will find an excuse for breach of promise." As I thought this, I walked to the door, locked it, and, placing the key upon the table, merely said, "Now, signor, your promise?"

"Would it not be prudent, young gentleman," he observed, laying his finger on my sleeve, "that you should speak of your request, – that one that brought you hither, and which I should conceive of more importance than the satisfying an idle curiosity, – would it not be wiser of you to mention this previously to my taking off my cloak."

"Oh, what importance he attaches to so trifling a thing!" thought I; "but, after all, the man is right; I had better attend to the most essential, nor was I wise to couple two requests together."

"Signor Marquis," said I, "have you any cure for insanity?"

"*I cured your father,*" was the answer, "and this your mother knows. He in return did *me* a service; he presented me with – this excellent cloak."

I was more puzzled than ever; I had never before *heard* that my poor father had unsettled reason, but many circumstances made me now believe it. I fancied too that my youngest sister gave indications of the same disorder; she was growing melancholy and reserved. "Oh, heavens!" thought I, "there will be more work for this man to do; I had better invite him at once to England, and make him physician in ordinary to our family."

"I have an engagement at nine," said the stranger; "have you any other inquiries to make?"

"But, if you *cured* my father, Signor Marquis," I observed, "how is it that I have inherited the disease? Should not the *cure* have eradicated it for ever from him and his posterity?"

"Is it not enough that I prevented the display of such a malady during his life? that I drove away the cloud that obscured his day, so that the sun of reason shone brightly on him until his death? What had I to do with future generations? with a race of men then unborn? *I performed my contract*, and he was satisfied. Shall the son be more difficult to please than the father?"

I interrupted him, "Oh, mysterious man! canst thou not cure the *root* of this disease? stop its fatal progress? prevent the seed from partaking of the nature of the plant?"

"Young man!" solemnly returned the marquis, "was not thy first progenitor, the man who resided in Paradise, *mad*— essentially mad? and has not his disease been carried on, in spite of all physicians, down, down to the present hour? It is woven into man's very nature; the warp and woof of which he is composed. I can check its open manifestation in a single individual; but the evil will only be dammed up during his time, to give it an increased impetus and power to those who follow him. Art thou not an instance of this fact? Hast thou not been madder than thy father?"

I groaned aloud. I remembered my own wild delusions, my sudden bursts of passion. I even began to think that madness ruled me at that very hour; that all I saw and heard was the coinage of a distempered brain.

At length I said, dejectedly, unknowing that I spoke aloud, "Then I must never marry; my children will become worse than myself. Farewell then — "

"Or rather," interrupted the cloaked stranger, "farewell to human marriages altogether, if those who marry must be free from madness. Why, 'tis the very sign they are so, their wishing to rivet fetters on themselves; but, no matter. What have I to do with all the freaks and frenzied institutions of such a set of driveling idiots?"

"Art thou not a man?"

"Thou shalt judge for thyself, thou insect of an hour!" and he unclasped his cloak, and stood erect before me. Coiled around him like a large boa-constrictor, reaching to his very throat, — But I sicken as I write! The remembrance of that moment, how shall it be effaced? Time deadens thousands of recollections, but has never weakened the impression made upon me at that appalling moment!

The immense mass that wound its lengthy fibres round him, like a cable of a ship, now became sensibly animated by life! I beheld it move, and writhe, and unfold itself! I heard its extremity drop upon the floor! I saw it extend itself, and creep along! More — more still descended; fewer coils were round him! He turned himself to facilitate its descent; and, when the enormous whole encircled him, still undulating on the ground, that being looked towards me with one of those smiles, that Satan might be supposed to use.

"Behold!" said he, pointing to the dark undulation on the floor, "*behold the reason why I wear a cloak!*"

Insensibility closed up my senses. I could behold no more. When I recovered, I was alone. The stranger had departed, leaving the door ajar; but he had written on a slip of paper, and placed it just before me, these words:

"The remedy I bestowed upon the father, for *his* sake I will give unto the son. *Three notches of the devil's tail* will perfectly restore you; but it must be cut off by the hand of *the purest person that you know on earth. It will grow again!!*"

I hastily caught up this paper on hearing the step of my attendant, and placed it in my bosom. I think he saw the action, for he looked mournfully on me, and shook his head. I told him I was ready to set off instantly for Rome: his simple answer was,

"I wish we had remained there!"

"And *why*, Hubert?"

"You are pale as a sheeted corpse, and the boards of the floor are *singed*, yet there has been no fire in the room!"

I looked where he pointed; and, in a serpentine form, I beheld the traces of that enormous tail I had seen fall from the body of the cloaked stranger, coiled round him as an immense serpent twines itself around a tree. I shuddered at the sight. I felt my brain working; yet I wrestled with the spirit of darkness within. I tried to persuade myself that I had been overtaken only by a dream; that my whole acquaintance with the pretended marquis was nothing but an illusion, a vision of the imagination, an optic delusion, an hallucination of an excited state of mind; but it would not do. There were the dark and calcined marks, which it was my duty to account for to my host, who cared very little how they were occasioned, so as he received an ample sum to have the boards removed, and others in their place.

Our accounts were soon arranged, and I returned to my anxious family; but my disorder was increasing hourly. The wildest imaginations haunted and perplexed me. My beloved mother looked at me with tears swimming in her eyes. My eldest sister strove, by a hundred stratagems, to dispel the gloom that arose amongst us all. Emily sat, absorbed in her own melancholy thoughts, a fellow-sufferer, I fancied, with myself. My lovely, innocent, affectionate cousin held my fevered hand in one of hers, and imploringly asked me to be tranquil; said she would sing to me if I would try to sleep. I felt the gentle charm, and gave myself up to it. I laid myself upon the sofa; and she, whose name I cannot utter, sitting on a low stool by my side, sought to soothe me with her voice.

THE SONG OF –

"Come from Heaven, soft balmy Sleep,
Since thou art an angel there!
Come, and watch around him keep —
Watch that I with thee will share.

Strew thy poppies o'er his head,
Calm the fever of his mind;
All thy healing virtues shed,
That he may composure find!"

"Oh, God!" I cried, jumping up; "and must I never call this angel mine? Better to die at once, or lose all consciousness of what a wretch I am!"

"Hush, my dearest cousin! I have invoked an angel from the skies to visit you; drive her not away by ill-timed violence; here, let me hold your hand;" and she began again to murmur in a low tone, and so I fell asleep.

"Strew thy poppies o'er his head,
Calm the fever of his mind."

When I awoke, my gentle cousin, (more constant than my heavenly visitant, Sleep,) was still seated by my side; all the rest were gone; candles burned on the table – it was midnight; I had slept for hours, she yet retained my hand. I looked at her, and burst into tears.

"We are alone, Theodore," said my beloved; "tell me, I beseech you, what is labouring on your mind. You have spoken strange things during your sleep. You have declared that I had the power to restore you; can I do this? Theodore, be candid! Were it to cost my life, I would gladly lay it down to be of benefit to you."

I could not answer her; but I clasped my arms round that pure, angelic form, and wept like an infant on her bosom.

"Can I do you service, Theodore? You deny not what your lips murmured in sleep."

"You can restore my reason, for you are the purest person that I know on earth."

"By what means? But, alas! you are wandering still; this is one of your delusions! Would that it were in my power to heal thy mind, my dearest cousin."

"In this, my heart's treasure, I am at least perfectly sane. *You have the power to cure me.*"

"Tell me the means."

I related to – the whole of my adventures at Naples. I hid nothing from her excepting that our children might be infected with the same disease. Many reasons prevented my naming this. She was too delicate for me to allude to such a circumstance; I was willing to run all hazards of my posterity inheriting so dreadful a disease. My father had done as I intended to do; and the remedy was as open to *my* offspring as to myself, for had not the cloaked stranger told me that "the tail would grow again"? Even without such growth, had it not notches enough for a whole line of my posterity, supposing them all in want of such a restorative.

There was a pause of a full minute ere she spoke; her cheek was blanched, and her hand trembled in mine.

"Theodore, I know not what to think, whether from madness or from sanity comes your wondrous tale; but I will go through it, come what may. I will see this being; and, should he be indeed the author of all evil, out of evil shall come good, for I have courage, for your dear sake, to take from him the horrid remedy; but speak not of it, even to your mother or your sisters. Ah, poor Emily! she too may need such help! I will procure enough for her also."

Every thing was arranged. I was in that state that all I demanded was granted to me, for they feared to oppose my wishes. I entered the travelling carriage with my beautiful betrothed.

We had no attendants. We drove to the same hotel in which I had been before. We were shown into the same room; but the marks upon the floor were gone, – new boards were there. We ordered dinner *for three*; and I went out in search of the cloaked stranger.

It may seem strange that those who seek the devil, should seek in vain; but what is so perverse as the Origin of Evil?

Towards the close of day I however brought him in, as lofty, proud-looking, and handsome as ever; his features bore the stamp of angelic beauty; but, alas! the expression was —*the fallen angel*. He saluted with much politeness, nay, even kindness, my lovely friend; and we entered at once upon the business.

When he heard *who* was to perform the operation, he absolutely turned pale, and made a thousand objections. Some other person might be found; but I, fool that I was! overruled them all, and insisted on it, that she was the purest person that I knew on earth.

He then endeavoured to intimidate her; but she was resolute, though her lip quivered. We had a long argument about it, and most subtle was his reasoning. Yet he seemed as if he had no power absolutely to refuse. Reluctantly he drew from a secret pocket in his cloak a small steel hatchet, with many figures inscribed upon it. She received it at his hands; but I observed a fixedness in her beautiful eyes, and a rigidity about her mouth, that I did not like; still she grasped the shining instrument, and hesitated not. But, when his cloak fell off, oh, what a look of horror did those dear eyes assume!

Slowly descended the voluminous appendage; its extreme end fell on the chair on which he had been sitting. She flew like lightning thither, raised the glittering tool, marked the precise spot, and severed at a blow "three notches of the devil's tail!"

"Take – take your remedy, dear Theodore!" she whispered, "for I cannot touch it."

I stooped, and took the severed quivering part, *but could not hold it for its heat*; so thrust it into my coat-pock; I then turned to congratulate my deliverer, *but she was a lifeless corpse at my feet*; and the stranger had vanished, I knew not and I cared not whither.

How often have I called on madness, or on death, to take from me the memory of her loss! Neither would come! I have had no return of my malady, but I have experienced anguish fourfold!

The only benefit derived has been that my sister Emily has been totally cured by the specific that was so dearly purchased, for it proved efficacious in both cases.

Perchance it may prove useful for the future members of our family, should they be infected with this hereditary complaint; for myself, I shall never need it for my offspring, my affections are buried in the grave; but I have bequeathed it to my beloved sisters – with my hopes, more than my belief, that it may prove effective, – "the *three notches of the devil's tail!*"

TRANSLATION FROM UHLAND

THE SERENADE

What soft low strains are these I hear
That come my dreams between?
Oh! mother, look! who may it be
That plays so late at e'en?

"I hear no sound, I see no form;
Oh! rest in slumber mild:
They'll bring no music to thee now,
My poor, my sickly child!"

It is not music of the earth
That makes my heart so light;
The angels call me with their songs,
Oh! mother dear, good night!

THE PORTRAIT GALLERY. – No. III

My friend was proceeding to relate many curious anecdotes of Sir Ruby Ratborough, when a row of several portraits of persons I had seen abroad struck me. The librarian informed me that they were those of the Cannon family, who had long resided on the Continent; and I immediately recognised a most eccentric set of people, met so often, and at various places, with such a rapidity of locomotion, that many fancied they were gifted with ubiquity. The portraits, my conductor informed me, were taken at Florence; and their history might serve as a hint to artists. The painter had, unfortunately, commenced with the handsomest of the girls; and, having somewhat flattered the likeness, of course the family were delighted with his performance: but, when the older and the uglier Cannons came to sit, no flattery could render their portraits tolerable to them. The consequence was, that they were considered as bad resemblances, and left on the painter's hand; the more favoured young ones, of course, not being allowed by their indignant elders to take theirs away. I had heard so much of this family that I requested my friend to postpone our review of the political character, to give me some account of these wandering emigrants; and he gratified my curiosity by putting into my hands the following MS. containing a sketch of their adventures at home and abroad, drawn out by Quintilian Quaint.

THE CANNON FAMILY

Who has not seen the Cannons in their Continental excursions? or, to use Mrs. Cannon's malapropic expression, their *incontinental* tours? Whoever has strolled, or lounged, or lurked in a French *promenade*, a Spanish *alameda*, or an Italian *corso*, has fallen upon some branch of the family; nay, more properly, on two or three of them; for, if a body perchance hits upon one individual of that numerous race, he is sure to be rebounded on a brother or a sister, illustrating their name by making what is called a *canon* in billiard-room parlance.

So very *répandu* is this moving train of curious ordnance, and the young ladies have been so walked about, and stalked about, and dragged about in pick-nicks, *déjeuners champêtres*, gipsy-parties, marooning-parties, through woods and forests, hills and dales, brushwood and underwood, that the witty Lady A – called them *the field-pieces*.

What took this family from their delightful box at Muckford, in Shropshire, to visit France, and Italy, and Germany; to paddle in the Seine, dabble in the Arno, and stroll with the rabble along the Rhine? Surely it must have been love of the fine arts, or the cultivation of foreign tongues, with the ladies; or pursuits of political economy, statistics, or the study of men and manners, with the gentlemen. Not in the least degree. The only paintings the fair part of the family admired were their own lovely faces. All foreign tongues were as foreign to them as Sanscrit. The only pursuit of polity that occupied Messrs. Cannons', senior and juniors, was where to find cheap wines and parsimonious amusements; their statistics, a census of the geese and turkeys, turbot and mullets, brought to market; and their study of the "varying shore o' the world" was, congregating with their countrymen, who, like themselves, disported their nonentity in gambling-houses and *restaurants*.

What was it then that induced the Cannons to quit their delightful box in Shropshire? Simply because Lord Wittington and his family had purchased the estate of Myrtle-Grove, near unto Wick-Hall, – the name given by Mr. Cannon to his aforesaid delightful box. Now the motives that induced Mr. Commodus Cannon to bestow upon this box the euphonious appellation of *Wick-Hall*, arose from a natural association of ideas and a proper sense of gratitude; for, be it known, that Mr. Commodus Cannon had once been a tallow-chandler of great renown in the ward of Candlewick, in which business he had realised a large fortune; therefore, without much perplexity of the various

ramifications of the brain, its circumvolutions and ventricles, it may be conjectured why his rural residence was denominated, despite all the arguments of the ladies, *Wick-Hall*.

The next question that arose in the curious and impertinent minds of those who must know the causation of all causes, was, how did it come to pass that the arrival of the Earl of Wittington at Myrtle-Grove should have induced, in a manner direct or indirect, the family of an ex-tallow-chandler to migrate from a comfortable residence; to have left Muckford and their Penates, their well-trimmed lawns, their well-stocked gardens, their orchards and their paddocks, their dairy, and their brew-house, and their wash-house, and their ice-house, and their hot-house, their cosey fire-side and their snug bed-rooms, to wander about the world, and dwell in cold and dreary, or in broiling and stewing lodgings; drink sour *ordinaire* wine instead of port, sherry, gooseberry, and nut-brown October; be cheated and laughed at by foreign servants, instead of being attended by worthy, homely, and honest domestics; and become the ridicule of strangers, instead of being respected and liked by their neighbours? How did it come to pass that the Earl of Wittington's arrival should have driven the Cannons away from their Eden? The reader who cannot guess it at once, – who gives it up, like a hard riddle or a puzzling conundrum, – must be stultified, unread, unsophisticated, never have subscribed to a circulating library. However, as dulness of intellect is more a misfortune than a fault, we shall kindly condescend to inform him.

Myrtle-Grove had long been untenanted. Mr. Cannon was the wealthiest resident in or near the village; therefore was *Wick-Hall* called "the squire's mansion." Now, stupid, do you take?

Everybody has read Joe Miller. Now it may be recollected that, in that valuable vade-mecum of *very delightful and charming fellows*, there is recorded the strange vanity of an ugly scholar in the College of Navarre, who maintained most strenuously and syllogistically, – nay, would have met any modern Crichton with a thesis on the subject to show and prove, that he was the greatest man in the world; and he argued that Europe being the finest part of the creation, France the most delightful country in Europe, Paris the most splendid city in France, the College of Navarre the most enlightened and precious establishment in Paris, his room unquestionably the best chamber in the college, and he most undoubtedly the greatest ornament in his room, *ergo*, he was the greatest man in the world.

In the same train of ratiocination did the Cannons come to the conclusion that they were the magnates, the top-sawyers, the leaders of fashion of the village of Muckford. They patronised the Rev. Mr. Muzzle, the curate, whose meek back was suited to the burthen of a wife and eight little ones on fifty pounds a year; Mr. Hiccup, M.R.C.S., who, to the duties of his profession in the attendance of man and beast, added the pursuits of rat and mole-catcher, perfumer, stationer, and tobacconist; and Mr. Sniffnettle, the attorney, solicitor, conveyancer, proctor, appraiser, auctioneer, poet-laureat and parish-clerk. A *hop* at Wick-Hall was anticipated with as much delight by all the young and old ladies as the opening of Almacks; a game at loo or twopenny long-whist offered all the attractions of Crockford's; and the Sunday visits after church were as distinguished for figure and fashion as a St. James's drawing-room on a birth-day.

This high patrician stand in society unfortunately made the Cannons proud, – some say haughty, supercilious, and arrogant. It might have been so; such is the nature of frail mortality, for, alas!

"Pride has no other glass
To show itself but pride; for supple knees
Feed arrogance!"

and Mr. Muzzle, and Dr. Hiccup, and Mr. Sniffnettle, had their *vertebræ* and their articulations so greased, and oiled, and anti-attributed, that they would bob, and bend, and curl, and coil like a tom-cat's tail, whenever they visited the mansion.

And strange dreams, and visions, and fantasies would be brewing in the brains of Mr. Cannon, both when sleeping and awake. He was wealthy; the Cannons had a dragon rampant for their crest, and

Crepo for their motto, – a motto that was traced to the discovery of a bronze figure of the Egyptian god *Crepitus* in the tomb of one of his noble ancestors. To this proud circumstance the family also owed the Christian-name of "Commodus," which the elder Cannon always bore, – Commodus being of Gallic origin. Sometimes Mr. Commodus Cannon thought that he might purchase a peerage by paying some damages incurred by indiscreet influential personages; sometimes he fancied that he might be created a baronet upon a mortgage, or a marriage of one of the Miss Cannons to some broken-down nobleman.

But, alas! how transient are the visions of glory! of worldly greatness! Greatness – that gaudy torment of our soul!

"The wise man's fetter, and the rage of fools!"

Lord Wittington arrived, and the Countess of Wittington, and the Ladies Desdemona Catson, and Arabella Catson, and Celestina Catson, and Euripida Catson, and the Hon. Tom Catson, and the Hon. Brindle Catson, with their aunt, Lady Tabby Catson; and all Muckford was in a state of commotion, of effervescence, of ebullition, boiling over with hope and fear. A comet wagging its tail over their steeple, – an eclipse, which would have set all the Muckfordians smoking bits of glass, and picking up fragments of broken bottles for astronomical observations, – could not have occasioned such a stir as the arrival of four travelling carriages, with dickeys and rumbles crowded with ladies' women, and gentlemen's gentlemen, rattling away with four post-horses to Myrtle-Grove.

And now were speculations busily at work. The minds of Mahomet and Confucius, of Galileo and Copernicus, of Locke and Bacon, were idle when compared to the brains of the Muckfordians. What was the point in question? Was it the increase of business and of profit that would accrue from the consumption of these wealthy visitors? – No. Was it the advantages that might be derived from their parliamentary connexions and ministerial interest? – No. Was it the hopes that their residence might induce other rich families to inhabit the neighbourhood? – No – no – no! If the reader cannot guess, he must have lived at the antipodes, or in a desert, or never lived *in life*. The question was, "I wonder if his lordship and her ladyship will visit Wick-Hall?" No treaty of alliance, of commerce, of peace – no protocol that ever issued from the most perfect cerebral organ in Downing-street – was ever weighed with more momentous disquietude than this question, "I wonder if his lordship and her ladyship will visit Wick-Hall?"

"I should think not," observed Mrs. Curate Muzzle; "the Wittingtons are great folks, and the Cannons were chandlers!"

"Tallow-chandlers, my dear madam," remarked Mrs. Doctor Hiccup.

"Had they even been wax-chandlers," added Mrs. Sniffnettle.

"Or corn-chandlers," replied Mrs. Hiccup.

"But a tallow-chandler," exclaimed Mr. Sniffnettle, who, as we have seen, was the laureat of Muckford, "as Gay says,

'Whether black, or lighter dies are worn,
The Chandler's basket, on his shoulders borne,
With tallow spots thy coat.'

This appropriate quotation not only drew forth a loud laugh of approbation, but illumined the minds of the party as brightly as two pounds of fours might have enlightened Mr. Hiccup's back-shop parlour on a long-whist and welsh-rabbit night.

"I'm sure I wish them no harm," remarked Mrs. Muzzle, with a benevolent smile; "but pride is a sad failing, which deserves to be brought down."

"Oh, the deuce mend them!" rejoined Mrs. Sniffnettle; "if they're brought to their proper bearings a peg or two."

"Because they had a little dirty cash – the Lord knows how they made it! – they were as pert as a pear-monger's horse!" exclaimed Mr. Hiccup.

"Pride comes first, shame comes after," added Mr. Sniffnettle.

"The priest forgets that he was a clerk," professionally observed Mrs. Muzzle.

"I could put up with pride, now," said Mr. Hiccup, "from the Wittingtons."

"Ay!" replied the poet, quoting Byron,

'The vile are only vain, the great are proud.'

"Exactly!" observed Mrs. Hiccup, who, like most persons doting upon poesy, did not understand what she most admired.

Is it not strange that none of these ladies or gentlemen ever said "I wonder if *we* shall be invited to Myrtle-Grove?"

Whoever expected or fancied that on such an occasion such a thought could have entered any well-disposed and educated mind must be an ass. Who cares, if they are at the foot of the ladder, if those who are climbing up are properly rolled down? There is no need of crying "Heads below!" the grovellers will all get out of the way, and let the tumblers roll in the mire to their hearts' content. I mean the hearts' content of the lookers-on.

Now, while this most important point was discussed by the chief authorities of Muckford, a question of still greater importance was agitated at Wick-Hall.

"I wonder if we ought to call first upon the Wittingtons, or wait until they call upon us?" said Mrs. Cannon, after dinner.

Mr. Commodus Cannon halted a glassful of port that was marching towards his mouth, and kept it suspended in air like Mahomet's tomb.

Miss Molly Cannon delayed the cracking of a nut she had just introduced between two ivory grinders.

Miss Biddy Cannon kept her hand under a roasted chestnut napkin, unconscious of its temperature, without withdrawing it.

Miss Lucy Cannon cut into an orange she was carefully peeling with a steel knife; a circumstance that would have produced a galvanic thrill under other circumstances.

Miss Kitty Cannon filled a bumper of cherry brandy instead of "just the least drop in the world."

Mr. Cannon, junior, drove a toothpick in his gums instead of his teeth.

George Cannon started, and trod on the cat's tail.

Cornelius Cannon (commonly called Colcannon, having had an Irish godfather,) made a horrible mistake, by drinking out of his finger-glass instead of his tumbler.

Peter Cannon used his damask napkin instead of a pocket-handkerchief; and Oliver Cannon, who had been lolling and rocking his chair, rolled off his centre of gravity.

A dead silence followed the important question. The ghost of Chesterfield ought in mercy to have burst from his cerements to have answered it. Mr. Cannon first ventured to give an opinion – a judicious opinion.

"Why, as to the matter of that," he said, scratching his brown wig, – which was, by-the-bye, an action which might have been called manual tautology, since it was a scratch already, – "as to the matter of that, it is clear that, if we are to be acquainted with his lordship, they must call upon us, or we must call upon them."

Now, it is a matter worthy of consideration, that, in difficult and knotty points, perspicuity of language seldom or ever elucidates the business. Nothing could be more clear, more lucid, nay, more pellucid, than Mr. Commodus Cannon's remark, – more self-evident, more conclusive, – yet

it only tended to make darkness visible. Mrs. Cannon, who possessed greater powers of eloquence, was therefore imperiously called upon for a rejoinder.

"If you could think, Mr. Cannon, of waiting until my Lord What-do-you-call-him thinks proper to *honour* us with a call, you are a mean-spirited, petty-minded fellow. I'd have you to know we are every inch as good as they are."

"To be sure we are!" replied all the Cannons in one simultaneous and spontaneous roar, one well-fired volley of approbation without a straggling shot, – all but Mr. Cannon senior, who remained as still as a target.

"We owe nothing to nobody," added the speaker; "and can hold up our heads as high as anybody that ever wore one."

This reloaded the Cannons, and another fire of coincidence was let off.

"If your nobility give themselves airs with us, let me tell you, Mr. Cannon, just look at your crest and your motto, and show them that you can let fly at them hollow."

All applauded except Mr. Cornelius Cannon, who was a good Latin scholar.

"For my part I wouldn't give a brass farthing – no, that's what I wouldn't – to know them, as it's ten to one they will be shortly wanting to borrow money from us; but, as we are neighbours, and we are longer resident at Muckford, it's our business to leave our cards with them, more especially as there's no *quality* whatever in this here neighbourhood but ourselves."

There was no necessity of putting this proposition to the vote; it was carried by *nem. diss.* acclamations, and the visit fixed upon that day week.

Now, strange to say, by one of those singular anomalies in the human mind that puzzle metaphysicians, psychologists, materialists, and immaterialists, although this acquaintance with the family of Myrtle-Grove was not, to use Mrs. Cannon's expression, "worth a brass farthing," everything in the house, from the furniture to the young ladies, was turned topsy-turvy for a week. There was nothing but dusting, and polishing, and furbishing, and scrubbing, and rubbing, and bees'-waxing, and varnishing, and tweezing, and plucking, and puffing, and blowing at all ends; and swearing, and cursing, and shouting from the top of the stairs to come up, and bellowing from the foot of the stairs to come down; and souls, and eyes, and blood, and bones were sent the Lord knows where by the impatient gentlemen, while the ladies, who were too well bred to pronounce the vulgar name of the infernal regions, only wished every servant in the house a visit to the monarch of that grilling kingdom every hour of the day; and every horse, and every ass, nay, the very colts and fillies, shod and unshod, broken or unbroken, were sent to and fro from Wick-Hall to the neighbouring town, like buckets up and down a well, for silks, and ribands, and bobbins, and laces, and caps, and bonnets, and feathers, furs, and furbelows, and rouge-pots, and cold cream, and antique oil, and pomatum, and washes, and lotions, Circassian and Georgian, that were ever employed since the days of Jezebel to scrub out freckles and wrinkles, fill up pits and creases, pucker relaxed fibres and relax puckerings, eradicate warts, pimples, blossoms, excrescences, efflorescences, and effluences; with collyria for red eyes, and ointments for crusty eye-lids, liniments for gummy ankles, with odoriferous and balsamic tooth-powders, and gargles; with stores of swan and goose down for gigots, and rear-admirals, and polissons, and bussels; not to mention the means of throwing out various forms that distinguish the *beau idéal* of the undulating line from the rigid severity of the straight line and the acute angle; while all the wigs, tops, toupets, fronts, tresses, plaits, curls, ringlets, black, brown, auburn, fair, and foxy, were put into requisition.

It was not only physical brushing up that was resorted to; the mind received a proper frizzing; and Debrett's Peerage and Joe Miller, the Racing-calendar and the Court-guide, were studied during every leisure moment; while all the scandal-registering Sunday papers were devoured with avidity.

Various were the accidents that arose in this confusion. Biddy Cannon broke a blood-vessel in straining her voice to *D alt.* in practising a fashionable Italian song. A pet cat of the same (who had been trodden on by George Cannon) was well nigh scalded to death by the overboiling of a pipkin

of oil of cucumber for Lucy Cannon's sunburns; and Kitty Cannon caught a desperate sore-throat in trying to catch a hint of a fashionable walking-dress one rainy morning that the Ladies Catsons were riding out, peeping at them under a heavy shower from behind a holly hedge. Poor Kitty Cannon was in a most piteous plight from having made a trifling mistake in the use of some medicines sent her by Mr. Hiccup; for, in a very great hurry to try on an invisible corset, she rubbed her throat with some palma Christi oil, and swallowed a hartshorn liniment that had been intended for external use. In her burning agonies she of course kept the whole house in hot water, for everybody was so busy that nobody could attend upon the poor sufferer; who, unable to call out, and having torn up her bell by the roots, was only able to attract attention to her wants by throwing every thing she could lay hands on about the room, more especially water-jugs, basins, physic bottles, and every vessel within her reach. Mrs. Cannon swore she was an unnatural child; and her sisters accused her of being ill-natured and jealous when she disturbed them in their important occupations. In short, the Tower of Babel, or the Commons on an Irish question, were nothing to Wick-Hall, in-doors and out-of-doors, where the young Cannons were grooming, and docking, and trimming, and figging their horses.

Mr. Commodus Cannon was the wisest of the party; he smoked his pipe, muddled over a bowl of punch, and only ordered his scratch wig to be *curled tight*, with the not unfrequent vulgar wish that the whole family might be *blown* to the same exiguous dimensions. He was ambitious, but he did not like to be *bothered* with any schemes but his own.

The day, the great day, big with the fate of the Cannons, was drawing nigh, and impatiently looked for, as a circumstance had taken place which gave the Wick-Hall family much to think of and inwardly digest.

Lady Tabby Catson, his lordship's aunt, was subject to night-mare and sleep-walking when in bed, and liable to fearful hysterics when out of it. Her case was altogether most distressing, since, according to her account, she could not lie on either side, was in agony when on her back, and distracted in any other position. A physician was called in, but, as he could only pay occasional visits, Mr. Hiccup was in constant attendance; and as the Ladies Catsons were well supplied with novels, and were of a most amiable disposition, Hiccup carried various new publications to his daughters, who immediately ran to show them to the Miss Cannons, calling the ladies by their Christian names with singular impertinence, – such a book having been lent by the beautiful Lady Arabella, – such a review by the lovely Lady Celestina. Moreover, Lady Tabby Catson, during the intermissions of her ailments, had fits of devotion that took her like stitches in the side, when Mr. Muzzle was instantly sent for in one of the carriages. Thus were the curate and the surgeon in constant attendance, and many little acts of kindness shown to them by the family, such as presents of fruits and flowers, all of which passed under the windows of Wick-Hall like the fearful regal apparitions to Macbeth; and, what was still more offensive, the favoured families, even the attorney, Sniffnettle, began to grow rigid in their vertebræ though in the heat of summer, walking past the Cannons with a mere nod of recognition, and preserving an insulting perpendicularity.

There was no time to lose in recovering their lost ground, and the day for commencing a campaign that would terminate in the utter discomfiture of these vulgar intruders was fast approaching. But, alas for human and mortal hopes! one hour, – nay, one half-hour, – one quarter, – the time of reading a letter on foolscap paper, on letter paper, on note paper, only a few lines written in an intelligible unauthor-like hand, that required neither time nor spectacles, a hand that could be read running, – and all the airy fabric of the Cannons' visions was dissolved.

It was on a Friday morning, the day previous to the intended visit, – one of those unlucky days in the calendar of human disappointments, the fifth day of the month, which, according to Hesiod, is inevitably calamitous; a day that gave birth to Pluto and the Eumenides; a day when the earth brought forth the monster Typhon, and those vile giants who dared the Father of the gods, – on this day did Mr. Commodus Cannon draw on his stockings the wrong side, the eldest Miss Cannon – I know not why or wherefore – took a morning walk among the nettles, and her sister Biddy spilled

salt at breakfast, forgetting to propitiate the angry heavens by casting some over her left shoulder. A thundering rap at the hall-door made the whole family jump, start, and stare. A footman in the Wittington livery was at the door! he delivered a letter! Oh! how all the young hearts did beat and leap! and how the old fount of circulation of Mrs. Cannon did palpitate, as in days of yore! Scarcely had the door been closed, when the whole family, with the exception of Mr. Cannon, who was buttering toast, rushed like a torrent, or a cataract, or any thing else you like, to secure the missive, anxious as they were to ascertain its contents. Much time was lost in scrambling for possession of the letter, snatched alternately from hand to hand without any regard to filial duty or the rights of primogeniture. At last the letter, be-buttered, be-honeyed, be-marmaladed, and be-egged, fell into the possession of Miss Cannon. But oh! horror! instead of the broad armorial seal of the noble earl, the note was wafered! – ay, gentle reader, wafered! – moreover, the wafer, still damp, had been broken, and bent, and divided, exhibiting evident marks of having been moistened by an abundant secretion of the salivary glands! Oh, fie, my Lord W.!

Philosophers and naturalists tell us there is a method in roasting eggs; now there is a method in closing letters, which has lately been adopted by a nobleman whom I have the honour to know, which may be considered a wrinkle in politeness. To his superiors, such as emperors, kings, popes, and newspaper editors, his lordship writes on coloured, perfumed, ornamented, and gilt-edged satin paper, and he closes his epistle with his armorials, six of which usually consume a stick of odoriferous wax. To his equals, though they are but few, he writes on paper somewhat inferior, with a smaller seal. To his titled inferiors, plain note paper, with a crest and motto. To his untitled correspondents, half a sheet of letter paper (it must be cut in an uneven and ragged manner), with a fancy seal, that his noble blazon may not be polluted by vulgar eyes. To people in business, cits, snobs, a wafer – but still a wafer – gently dipped in water. But to solicitors, postulants, petitioners, and humble applicants, he actually spits in their faces in the same manner as the Earl of Wittington spat in the crimson phiz of all the Cannons. But the offence did not rest there. Mr. Cannon was on the superscription! ay, a plain Mr.! a *Mr.* that could only be washed out in blood! a *Mr.* that would even make a respectable tailor jump from his shopboard, and grasp his goose with proper indignation.

"Lord Wittington, wishing to become the purchaser of Mr. Cannon's paddock under Breakneck-Cliff, part of his domain, is willing to treat with him, and will direct his steward to call upon him. His lordship has been led to understand that Mr. Cannon's young men have been in the practice of shooting on his grounds; now his lordship wishes it to be distinctly understood that his keepers have received instructions to proceed with all the severity of the laws against trespassers."

Mrs. Cannon of course fell into fits; Commodus Cannon cast his scratch *jasey* into the fire; some of the young ladies rushed out of the room; others, in whom no rush had been left, drooped in or on various supporting parts of the furniture. The *young men*, as his lordship had dared to call Mr. Cannon's promising and amiable sons, bore the insult with all the calm dignity of men wantonly offended; they only bit their lips, turned pale and red, clenched their fists, and paced about the room at the rate of fourteen miles per hour, while the words "young men" were muttered and murmured in deadly indignation.

"I'll be d – d if the fellow ever gets my paddock! sooner see him, and all his seed, breed, and generation, tumbling off Breakneck-Cliff!"

The allocution of Leonidas to his Spartan heroes at the Thermopylæ could not have been more spirit-stirring than this short and pithy speech of Commodus Cannon; even Mrs. Cannon, forgetting, in a moment of just indignation, that female discretion that ought to characterise a lady's language, could not help supporting the vote by an amendment, exclaiming, "Ay, and doubly d – d too!"

"And, moreover," added Mr. Cannon, "I'll be blown if I don't stick my paddock chokefull of buck-wheat, and not leave the fellow a pheasant or a partridge, – that's what I will!"

It is difficult to say what dire plans of destruction and desolation might not have been suggested in the family council, had not another rap at the door, louder, if possible, and more authoritative

than the footman's, interrupted the discussion. All and every one ran to the windows. Mr. Carrydot, Lord Wittington's steward, was at the entrance of Wick-Hall, and desired a private interview with Mr. Cannon.

Mrs. Cannon reluctantly swept out of the room, followed by all the young ladies and the *young men*.

Mr. Carrydot was a smart, dapper, little man, with a bald head, ferret eyes, aquiline nose tipped with purple, and with a prying countenance that would have picked out flaws in Magna Charta or the Bill of Rights. His costume sable; but coat, waistcoat, and unavoidables to match, were all of a different black, more or less rusty and shining; his coat-sleeves, or rather cuffs, were short, and allowed his duty wristbands to be seen puckered up above his hairy and meagre hands, and bony, long, crooked fingers, with hooked nails in half mourning. How comes it that the coat-sleeves of certain petty attorneys and apothecaries are generally too short, save and excepting when they have donned their Sabbath and visiting raiment? It surely must arise from the usual practice of extending the arms beyond the limits of their restrictions whenever a body is going to perform some dirty business, possibly and probably that the said dirty business may not stain the cloth they wear, since a cloth may be respectable although the wearer may be as spotted as a panther. Mr. Carrydot walked, or rather stalked in; and, without a bow or a preamble, seated himself, without being asked to take a seat.

Cannon looked an encyclopedia of indignation.

"His lordship has directed me to call upon you, Mr. Cannon, regarding the approaching county election. You can command several votes, sir?"

"Of course, sir," replied Mr. Cannon, with a proper emphasis and conciseness.

"You are aware, sir, that his lordship intends to put up Mr. Elfin Eelback, of Stoop-Lodge?"

"Well, sir! what's that to me? What do I care for his lordship's candidate?"

Bravo, Cannon! Mrs. Cannon would have inflicted a kiss had she been present.

Mr. Carrydot's eyes glared with indignation, and beamed with *ousters* and *ejectments*, as he repeated the words, "What's that to you, sir!"

"Ay!" replied Cannon, giving the table a liberal thump. "What the devil is it to me?"

"Why, his lordship desires that you will vote for Mr. Eelback."

"Then tell his lordship that I'd sooner see Mr. Eelback skinned alive!"

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