Various

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THE NEW HYPERION

FROM PARIS TO MARLY BY WAY OF THE RHINE.
XIX.—TYING UP THE CLEWS

In leaving Cologne for Aix-la-Chapelle you turn your back to the river—a particular which suited my mood well enough. The railway bore us away from the Rhine-shore at an abrupt angle, and in my notion the noble Germanic goddess or image seemed at this point to recede with grand theatric strides, like a divinity of the stage backing away from her admirers over the billowy whirlpool of her own skirts. As I dreamed we penetrated

the tunnel of Königsdorf, which is fifteen hundred yards long, and which seemed to me sufficiently protracted to contain the slumber of Barbarossa. The thought gave me a useful hint, and I fell into a light sleep, while Charles and Hohenfels pervaded the darkness merely by their perfumes—the former with whiffs at a concealed bottle of Farina, the latter with a pastille counterfeiting the incense of the cathedral. In a couple of hours from the Hôtel de Hollande we reached Aachen, as the fond natives call the burgh so dear to Charlemagne. Deprived of that magnificent mirror, the Rhine, the pretty towns throughout this part of Germany seem but like country belles. We should hardly have paused at Aix but for the sake of affording a rest to Charles, who grew worse whenever lunch-time competed with railway-time. As for the dull little city, for us it was a wilderness, with the blank cleanliness of the desert, except in so far as it was informed and populated by the memory of Charlemagne.

Here he died, and entered his tomb in the church himself had founded. Into this sepulchre the emperor Otho III. dared to penetrate in the year 997, impelled by a motive of vile and varlet-like curiosity. They say the dead monarch confronted his living visitor in the great marble chair in which he had been seated at his own command, haughty and inflexible as in life, the ivory sceptre in his ivory fingers, his white skull crowned with the diadem of gold. The peeping emperor looked upon him with awe, half afraid of the mysterious and penetrating shadows that reached forth out of his rayless eyes. Before he left, however,

he peered about, touched the sceptre and the throne, fingered this and that, and having, as it were, trimmed the nails and combed the beard of the great spectre, retired with a valet's bow. Observing that Charlemagne had lost most of his nose, he caused it to be replaced in gold very delicately chiseled and enchased. The sacrilege was repeated by Frederick Barbarossa in 1165, who went farther and forced Charlemagne to get up from his chair before him. The corpse, in rising, fell in pieces, which have been dispersed through Europe as relics. We saw such of them as remain here at the Chapelle. I was allowed, for about the equivalent of an American dollar, to measure the Occidental emperor's leg—they call it his arm. And then, as a makeweight in the bargain, the venal sacristan placed in my hands the head of Charlemagne.

I thought Hohenfels would have sunk to the ground with disgust. He colored deeply and dragged me into the air. "I am ashamed of every drop of German blood in my veins," he cried. "What are we to think of the commerce of these wretches, for whom the very wounds of Cæsar are the lips of a money-box?"

I had given back the skull, as Hamlet returns the skull of Yorick to the grave-digger, and was dusting my fingers with a handkerchief, as hundreds of Hamlets have dusted theirs. I said, "'Thrift, thrift, Horatio.'"

"At Kreutzberg there are twenty monks on the counter! This morning, at St. Ursula's, it was the eleven thousand virgins, their skulls ranged like Dutch cheeses above our heads or in rows

around the walls, with a battery-full of them in the neighboring apartment, like a cheesemonger's reserved magazine. Here, the very leader of modern ideas, the creator of our form of civilization, is shown for so many pennies to any grocer who wants to weigh the head of a king! Profanation! Barbarians! Philistines!"

I turned rather hastily, while my hands were yet clammy with the skull, thinking that this accusation of Philistinism was aimed at me. But Hohenfels thought of nothing less than of a personality, being in his cloudiest mood of generalization. So I only concealed the handkerchief, while I said, as easily as I might, "You need not accuse your German blood, for I have lived long enough in my American's Paradise to know that civilized Paris is considerably worse in this particular respect, with the addition of a certain goblin levity particularly French. How often have I seen babies frightened by the skulls in the dentists' windows, with their cynical chewing action! It is said that a child sat next a dentist's apprentice once in an omnibus, and was observed to turn rigid, fixed and white, but unable to speak: he had sat on one of these skulls, and it had bitten him. Silver-mounted skulls set as goblets, in imitation of Byron, are to be seen at any of the china-shops rubbing against the chaste cheeks of the old maid's teacup. Skeletons are sold, bleached and with gilded hinges, to the medical students, who buy the pale horrors as openly as meerschaum pipes. Have I not often found young Grandstone supping among his doctors' apprentices of the Ober restaurant

after theatre-hours, a skeleton in the corner filled with umbrellas like a hall-rack, and crowned with the triple or quintuple tiara of the girls' best bonnets? Ay, Mimi Pinson's cap has known what it is to perch on the bony head of Death. The juxtaposition is but an emblem. The sewing-girl, like Hood's shirtmaker, scarcely fears the 'phantom of grisly bone.' Poor Francine! where have you taken *your* artisanne's cap to, I wonder? Are you left alone, all alone again, and thinking of the pretty solitude you have left behind you at Carlsruhe? Who uses those polished keys now?"

Hohenfels interrupted me, complaining that my monologue was uninteresting and diffuse, and was interfering with the railway time-table. But I finished it in the car: "And the railway! What has a person of fixed and independent habits to do with railways but to growl at them? Before I was tempted upon the railway by that impertinent engineer at Noisy, I got up and sat down when I liked, ate wholesome food at my own hours, and was contented at home. Confusion to him who made me the victim of his engineering calculations! Confusion to Grandstone and his nest of serpents at Épernay! Did they not introduce me to Fortnoye, who has doubly destroyed my peace? Where are the conspirators, that I may pulverize them with my maledictions?"

This question—which Hohenfels called peevish as he buried himself in his book—was not answered until we had passed Verviers, Chaudfontaine and Liège. I was aroused from a sulky slumber in the station at Brussels by Hohenfels, who said, in his musical scolding way, like the busy wheeze of a clicking

music-box, "You may say what you like, with your left-handed flatteries, in regard to Fortnoye, and you may praise Ariadnes and widows to the end of the chapter. You are sorry at this moment not to be at Épernay to see the destroyer of your peace married: you had rather assist at the making of a wife than at the making of a widow."

I was just sending Fortnoye to the gloomiest shades of Acheron when a strong hand entered the carriage-door, helped me handsomely down the steps, and then began warmly to shake my own. Fortnoye!—Fortnoye in flesh and blood was before me. While my mouth was yet filled with maledictions he began to pour out a storm of thanks with all his own particular warmth, expressing the most effusive gratitude for the trouble I had taken in forsaking my route to be his wife's bridesmaid. That is what he called it. "She has but one other," said Fortnoye. At the same time I began to recognize other faces not unknown to me, crudely illuminated by the raw colors of the railway-lights. They all had black wedding-suits and enormous buttonhole nosegays of orange-flowers. I picked them out, with a particular recognition for each: 'twas the civil engineer of Noisy; the short gentleman named Somerard; James Athanasius Grandstone, with his saintly aureole upon him in the shape of a Yankee wide-awake; the nameless mutes, or rather chorus, of the champagne-crypt; in short, my nest of serpents in all its integrity. Still entangled with my slumbers, I hesitated to respond to the friendly hands that were everywhere thrust centripetally toward me.

I looked blackly at Hohenfels. He was chuckling.

At Heidelberg, making the acquaintance of M. Fortnoye contemporaneously with my departure, he had become more enthralled than he ever confessed to this radiant traveler—whom he called a packman, but regarded as a Mercury—and his pretty scheme of matrimony in motion. Even now, if I can believe my eyes, he goes up to the "vintner" and "peddler" of his objurgations, and meekly whispers into his ear with the air of a conspirator reporting a plot to his chief. Having engaged to produce me at the wedding of Fortnoye, and finding me unexpectedly recusant, he had adopted a little stratagem for bringing me to the scene while thinking to escape from it.

"Thou too, Brutus!" I said, and gave it up. It only remained for me to return all round, after five minutes of petrified stupidity, the hand-grasps that had been offered from every quarter of the compass-box.

Next morning, at an early hour, I was interrupted by a knock, just as Charles had buttoned my gaiters and the young man from the perruquier's (who had stolen in with that air of delicacy and of almost literary refinement which belongs to his gentle profession) had lathered me. A nick he gave my chin at the shock made my countenance all argent and gules, and the visitor entering saw me thus emblazoned, while the barber and Charles, "like two wild men supporters of a shield," could only stare at the untimely apparition.

"Do you know him, Charles?" I asked, not recognizing my

guest, and putting over my painted face a mask of wet toweling.

"I know him intimately," replied my jester-in-ordinary: "I would thank Monsieur Paul just to tell me his name. Do you remember, monsieur, a sort of beggar, with a wagon and a stylish horse and a pretty wife, who limped a bit with his right hand, or perhaps his left hand? Does monsieur know what I mean? He used to come and see us at Passy; and monsieur even had some traffic with him in a little matter of two chickens."

"Father Joliet!" I cried.

"Present!" shouted the personage thus designated at my appeal to his name. I turned round, toweled, and he grasped my hands. The unusual hour, appropriate as I supposed only to some porter or other stipendiary visitor of my hotel, caused to shine out with startling refulgence the morning splendors in which Papa Joliet had arrayed himself. He wore a courtly dress, appropriate to the most formal possible ceremony; his black suit was glossy; his hat was glossy; his varnished pumps were more than glossy—they were phosphorescent. Gloves only were wanting to his honest hands.

Soaped, napkined and generally extinguished, I could only stammer, "You here in Brussels? What a droll meeting!"

"Wherefore droll?" asked Joliet, with a huge surprise, which lasted him all through his next sentence. "I come here to marry my daughter. Everything is ready; we count on your presence at the wedding; the lawyer has drawn up the contract; and the breakfast is now cooking at the best restaurant in the place."

"Francine's wedding, my dear Joliet!" I exclaimed. And, going back to my apprehensions at her furtive disappearance from Carlsruhe, and to my conjectures of some amorous mystery between her and her Yankee traducer, Kraaniff, I added gravely, "It is very creditable!"

"How, creditable—and droll?" repeated the honest man, evidently much surprised at my own accumulating surprises. "Did not you hear?"

"Not the faintest word," I said, "but I am none the less gratified to find this affair ending, as it should, in the presence of a lawyer. As for your wedding-invitation, my good friend, you are a little tardy in delivering it, for it is exactly to-day that I am obliged to attend at the marriage of one of my friends, M. Fortnoye."

"Ah, that is a good joke!" cried Joliet, breaking into an explosion of laughter and clapping me pleasantly on the shoulder—an action which caused a slight frown on the part of Charles. "You always would have your jest, Monsieur the American! Tease me and scare me as much as you like: I like these hoaxes better before a wedding than after. Hold that," he added, extending his hand as if it were a piece of merchandise.

I "held" it, and he went on, dwelling slowly on his words: "If you are at Henri Fortnoye's wedding you will be at Francine Joliet's also, for both of these persons are to be married at one church."

"Impossible!" I exclaimed, dropping the hand and stepping back.

"What! again?" said Joliet, his manly face visibly darkening. "Droll! and creditable! and impossible! Why impossible?" Then he dropped his head and looked angrily at the floor. "Ah, yes, even you," he said, his eyes still fixed on the boards, "believed that a French girl, trained as French girls are trained, would flirt and expose herself to remark; and all on account of such a man as your compatriot, the other American! Well! well! you ought to know your countrymen best."

"I know of no harm," I interposed hastily. "I should always have thought Kraaniff hard to swallow as a mere matter of taste. I can but recollect, Father Joliet," I went on more seriously, "that the last time I met you you begged me not to talk of Francine if I would not break your heart. I have to add to this the news brought me from Heidelberg, that this Kraaniff was a serpent who had fascinated some young girl for an approaching meal.—How dare you, Charles," I cried suddenly, recalled to the consciousness of his presence by this souvenir of his oratory, "stand here staring? Show the young man out directly, and pay him."

I will not answer for Charles's having got much farther away than the door. Joliet continued: "But his aunt knows him now for what he is. Kraaniff, say you? I call him Kranich, though he had better change his baptismal record than disgrace one of the best names in Brussels."

"Frau Kranich, then, my old friend, is really his aunt?"

"Madame Kranich, whom I have known in your parlor, is really Francine's godmother. Did you never know of all her secret

kindness? That rigid lady would commit a perjury to deny one of her own good actions. Young Kranich has written her a letter confessing his lies. Don't you know? The very same day when you were determined to fight him in a duel—"

"Certainly, certainly," I said, a little confused. "We will change the subject and leave my ferocity alone. Let us understand one another. In regard to Fortnoye's marriage, was there not some talk of a Madame Ashburleigh?"

"I believe you. Madame Ashburleigh is the very key of the manoeuvre. Madame Ashburleigh—don't you perceive?—lost a child."

"For that matter, she has lost four. I know the lady confidentially, and she told me their histories and present address. Lucia lies in Glasgow, Hannibal at Nice, and Waterloo sleeps somewhere hereabout, as well as another nameless little dear."

"She is a good woman. She has collected all her proofs, and has come hither with them voluntarily—has perhaps already arrived. Brussels, where two of her marmots rest, is one of her most frequent stations. That censorious Madame Kranich made a scene, but she had to yield to conviction."

"A censorious Madame Kranich! Is the young duelist married?"

"What? No, no! It is Francine's guardian I speak of. Of late years she has become a sort of Puritan abbess, seeking the Protestant society which abounds in Belgium, and lamenting her

husband, whom they say she used to drug with opium."

"Then is she not Kranich's aunt?"

"Oh yes, an aunt by marriage; but he is not her nephew: I will die before I call him so."

"Listen," said I, "Father Joliet. You are as full of information as an oracle, but you are not coherent. This month past I have been hunting down a chimaera, a hydra with a dozen heads: each head shows me by turn the portrait of Fortnoye, or Francine, or yourself, or Kranich, or Mrs. Ashburleigh. Ever since Noisy I have been meandering through the folds of a mystery. My head is turning with it. If you want to save me from distraction, sit down in this chair and answer me a long catechism, without saying a word but in reply to my questions."

"I am sure I talk as plain as a professor. Look! You frightened me at first with your doubts and your impossibilities. You have only to make Kranich's aunt agree with Francine's guardian, and at the same time forgive Francine's husband for having assumed the undertaker's bill for Madame Ashburleigh's baby."

"Yes, yes, my dear Joliet, you are clearer than Euclid." And I administered a category of questions. Joliet, with his fatherly joy bursting out of him in the longest of parentheses, kept quiet in his refulgent shoes and answered as well as he could.

Francine, he protested, had never been a flirt (I have met no Frenchmen who were ignorant of that one English word, to which they give a new value by pronouncing it in a very orotund manner, as *flort*). When she came to be ten or twelve, Frau Kranich—

until then a well-preserved lioness with an appetite for society—ceased to give her dolls and promised to give her an education. At the same time, the banker's widow left Paris, and repaired with her charge to Brussels, where the little girl received some good half-Jesuitical, half-English schooling, of the kind suggested in the Brontë novels. Her diploma attained, Francine begged to accompany her English teacher back to London: she wished to become a *meess*, she said, and be competent to teach like a new Hypatia. She had hardly bidden her kind protectress adieu when Frau Kranich's nephew arrived at Brussels, exceedingly dissatisfied with his American business in the bar-rooms of the grand duke of Mississippi. A sordid jealousy of Mademoiselle Joliet's claims upon his aunt took possession of this prudent spirit. He took up a watch-post at a university town on the Rhine. He began to whisper vague exaggerations of her coquetries and liveliness, which the Protestant circle that revolved about Madame Kranich did not fail to bear in to her. This lady admired her nephew, sure that his want of manners was the sign of a noble frankness. She wrote to Francine, bidding her come immediately from London. The girl not replying, the hopeful nephew was put upon her track. He went away. His letters from England reported that Francine was no longer in that country, but was probably come back to Belgium, "I know not in what suburb of Brussels our very independent miss may this instant be hiding," he wrote.

About the same time, in the circle of French exiles at Brussels, a young *romantique* named Fortnoye was reported as weeping

and lavishing statues over the grave of an unknown infant in the churchyard at Laaken. It was a delicious mystery. Kind meddlers approached the sexton, who said that all he knew of the babe's mother was that she was a beautiful lady from London. Kranich carried the story dutifully to his aunt, adding his own ingenious surmise: "Can Francine have become sufficiently Anglicised to contract secret marriages with roving revolutionists, and scamper about the country with ardent young Frenchmen in the style of Gretna Green?" In fact, it was really from London that Mrs. Ashburleigh was proceeding, for the purpose of taking care, in the Rhenish city where he was dying, of her handsome, dissipated, worthless husband. Taken suddenly ill at Brussels, she left her infant to the unequaled chill of a strange, unknown cemetery, hastening thence with tears and despair to the bedside where duty called her.

Has my reader forgotten the dim, tear-swollen story which I heard—not at all improved in the telling—from my generous young friend Grandstone—how an impulsive Frenchman had laid to rest, in flowers and evergreens, the unnamed baby of a woman he had never seen? Jealous as I was of Fortnoye, I never could think without tenderness of this singular action. To make the tomb of this helpless Innocence the young man braved the curiosity of his comrades—despised the rumor, the obloquy, and, hardest of all, the jests. Well has the wise dramatist decided that Ophelia must needs be laid in Yorick's bed!

Poor Francine, gay, frivolous, innocently vain of her little

travesty of English behavior, found her accomplishments and graces received by her guardian's circle with incomprehensible coldness. Hurt and humiliated, she asked to pay a visit to her father. The honest rustic received her with a miserable confusion of doubt and severity, for her escapade to England had never pleased him, and her return from her godmother's home wore to him the air of a repudiation. At her father's house, however, she was discovered by Fortnoye, who had never heard the ingenious Kranich's theory of his own private wedding with Francine, and who thought to find in her the veiled unknown of the cemetery. He saw for the first time, in the flowery home at Noisy, that fresh ingenuous beauty, a little over-cast with disappointment. His generous nature was touched; and, with his talent for administration and planning, he conceived the idea of establishing Francine in the pretty bird's nest at Carlsruhe, distant alike from the strongholds of her calumniators, Belgium and France.

Fortnoye now had an object in life. "There is a very young person in the cemetery of Laaken who is much in need of a chaperone," he said. The frank proofs of his own relations with this churchyard would not only do credit to his own reputation, but would gratify the best friends of Mademoiselle Joliet and at least one other lady. To attain these proofs he had to step over the coiling, writhing bodies of a whole nest of rumors. When he seized by the throat the especial slander that he himself was the husband of the babe's mother, he found written on its

crest the signature of John Kranich. He sought the aunt. This lady gave him several interviews, the Lutheran prayer-book for ever in her hand. "Why does the dear girl not come to me?" she would say, weeping, but she refused to hear a word against her precious nephew, the personification of bluff frankness. As if to make crushing him impossible, young Kranich had now withdrawn to America, leaving his reputation in that best possible protection, the chivalry that is extended toward the absent. Fortnoye was baffled. "I will ask the baby at its tomb for its mother's and father's name," he cried. In the pretty God's Acre he found a fresh harvest of flowers and a new statue over the well-known grave. It was a pretty miniature of Thorwaldsen's Psyche, on which the proud copyist had inscribed his name. A respectful correspondence with Mrs. Ashburleigh, to whom he was guided by the sculptor, and who was now taking the waters at Wildbad, soon put the whole tangled story to rights. Fortnoye had the happiness of conducting Francine, by this time his affianced wife, to the good Frau Kranich, who, convinced that she had wrongly judged her, threw her arms ardently around her recovered jewel, letting the eternal little book fly from her hand like a projectile.

"But the most singular part of the story," concluded Father Joliet, "is the letter which Fortnoye, after two or three quarrels, forced out of young Kranich when the latter had returned to Europe, full of triumph and debts, to take possession of his aunt for the rest of his life. Here it is," added the good man, opening

a pocket-book. "The hand-writing is drunken, but the sense is clear as Seltzer-water. The scholars tell me *in vino veritas est*, but it appears to me that truth really comes out in the repentance and headache that follow."

"MY DEAR AUNT" (ran the letter which Charles had seen forced from the alligator after his unlucky game of dominoes): "You have known me as the soul of candor. It is this happy quality which compels me to state (for I am something of a Rousseau) that if I ever playfully accused your pretty pet Francine of being a flirt, I knew nothing about it. The best proof is that she absolutely refused to join her expectations with mine, though I am something of an Adonis. If you believed that she and the wine-peddler had made a match, I pity your credulity and ignorance of human nature. I am certain that neither the peddler nor myself would touch the enterprise until you had shown exactly what you would (pecuniarily) do. For my part, I have acted throughout on the most exact and advanced scientific principles. Intending to modify the spirit-trade in America, and especially to introduce the exclusive agency of the Farina essences, I found that the sinew particularly needed for this leap was capital. Desiring to absorb your bounties toward Francine, I at first proposed matrimony. This offer was made without any enmity toward the girl, as my next move was without affection, though it seems to be resulting to her benefit. I became her accuser as coolly as I had been her lover. Passion has nothing to do with the combinations of strategic genius: I am something

of a Washington. My theory of her clandestine marriage was one of the most masterly fictions of the age—a plot worthy of Thackeray. If I could have succeeded in mutilating the statue in the graveyard, I might have carried it, while you would have admired my act of iconoclasm with all your Puritan nature. In the momentary abandonment of my plans, owing to the machinations of my enemies, you will conceive that I am not very rich. My college-debts and other expenses I am obliged to leave for your kind attention. The main point of this letter, which M. Fortnoye has persuaded me to set down as distinctly as in my present feeble state I can, is that Francine is a pretty little maid who has never passed by Gretna Green. There! that is my *credo*, and I will subscribe to it,

"Your loving nephew, JOHN.

"P. S. Address, with such an enclosure as your generosity will prompt, JEAN K. FFARINA, sole representative and cosmetical chemist in America on behalf of the Farinas of Cologne, at New Orleans where I am going to beat my adversaries like Old HIC —"

At this point the tipsy scrawl became illegible.

"This is not a very handsome apology. Did Fortnoye accept it?" I asked, turning over the clammy and malodorous epistle. At this inquiry the crack of the door widened and Charles appeared, on fire with enthusiasm, and so possessed with self-importance that he forgot the betrayal of his indiscretion.

"I can reply to that question," said Charles. "When M.

Fortnoye received the paper from the duelist he read it over and said, 'You have meant to impose on me, monsieur, with an incomplete confession. But, in return for your imperfect restoration of Mademoiselle Joliet's portrait, you have unconsciously set down such a masterpiece of yourself that I am certain your aunt will see you as she never did before.'"

Charles, having thus added himself to our cabal without rebuke, took a lively interest in what followed. The proud father continued: "My son-in-law, after some business preliminaries, wrote me a handsome letter demanding what he had already effectively possessed himself of. I wrote to Francine, already returned to her duties, to be a good girl and make her husband obey her in all things."

"That may have been," said I, "what made Francine take to laughing all day and all night, as I heard she did some little time after my departure from her house. The next news of her," I pursued, "was that she had been spirited away by some sly old kidnapper. I almost suspected Kranich."

"The old kidnapper," said Joliet, laughing heartily at the compliment, "is the man now talking to you. I wanted to take Francine to her godmother. I turned the key in the door at Carlsruhe, set the geographers all upon their travels to explore new worlds, and we have been living ever since quite close to Madame Kranich, who treats me like an emperor."

It was easy now to understand why the young Kranich, as soon as he could identify me as a protector of Francine, had been

thrown off his guard and tempted to attack me with his clumsy abuse. It was not very mysterious, even, why he had wished all handsome girls to be drowned in the Rhine. For him a pretty damsel was simply a rival in trade.

Had I stopped at Wildbad with the party of orpheonists, I should have encountered rather sooner the fatal beauties of Mary Ashburleigh. It was to meet her that Fortnoye had paused at that resort, considering her introduction to Frau Kranich almost indispensable to the success of his scheme. She had no hesitation in following the protecting angel of her lost child. "My object in this journey is a happy marriage," she had told me when to my unworthy care her guardianship had been transferred. If I timorously suspected the marriage to be her own, whose fault was it but mine? My heart leaped up at the successive stages of this recital, its hopes confirmed by every additional fact: the Dark Ladye's hand was certainly free. Fortnoye, I should surmise, was not too desirous to abandon this magnificent companion at Schwetzingen; but the serpent, he knew, was left behind, in company with two or three of his and my friends: it was necessary to take the youth by the ear, as it were, and dismiss him from the country, without loss of time, to his future of counter-jumping. His dueling experience may be of some use to him among the bowie-knives of Louisiana. If his subsequent path is not strewn with roses, let him rejoice that it is at least lubricated with cologne-water.

An hour had passed, and into my room from his own adjoining

one now ambled amicably my friend the baron. He greeted Joliet as an old friend. Many a smoking-match had they had in my garden at Marly. But Hohenfels this morning was in robes of state, with shoes that shone even beside old Father Joliet's, and as a concession to elegance he had abandoned his cavernous pipes in favor of cigarettes. A scroll of this description, flavored with his Cologne pastille and very badly rolled, was trying to exhale itself between his lips.

"What a genius for conversation you have to-day, my Flemming! This hour I have rocked back and forth in bed, trying to understand your observations or to cover my ears and go to rest. Your tongue has been like the tongue of a monastery-bell summoning all hands to penance." But I had hardly spoken ten consecutive words. The ears of the baron were this morning quite muffled, I think, with the abundance of his hair, which he had evidently been dressing with an avalanche of soap and water, for the topknot was as harsh and tight as a felt. He had lemon-blossoms on his lappel and lemon kids on his fists.

It was then I remembered that my bags were all in the steamer, where I had left them when surprised by Charles's indisposition. My tin box would possibly yield me a button-nosegay, but otherwise I might beat my breast, like the wedding-guest in the *Ancient Mariner*, for I heard the summons and was unable to attend in right attire. "We two must take you out in the street and dress you," said Hohenfels.

Although I had never been dressed in the street, I yielded. It

was a grand public holiday, and the sounds of festivity, which had floated into my chamber with the entrance of Hohenfels, were in full cadence outside. Everybody was pouring out to the city-gate, or returning from thence, where, in honor of some visit from the king of the Belgians and count and countess of Flanders, a festival was going on in imitation or rehearsal of the grand annual *kermesse*. These festivals, retained in Belgium with a delightful fidelity to the customs of antique Brabant, would fit the brush of Teniers better than the pen of a mere bewildered tourist. Still, I will try, copying principally from the reports of Charles (who contrives to peep at everything, with an interest whose amount is in ratio with the square of his distance from his master), to give a few features of the scene, which he spread in detail before the attentive Josephine during many an evening after.

The principal fair-ground—though the occasion crammed the whole city with revelers—was just outside the gate. It was a veritable town in miniature, with a pattern of checker-board streets—Columbine street, Polichinelle street, Avenue des Parades, Place des Parades, Street of the Chanson, and the like. There were more than five hundred booths, all numbered—shops and restaurants. There were the Salon Curtius, the Ménagerie Bidel, the Bal Mabille, the Café Bataclan, the American Tavern. From one of the little costumers' shops, Charles—with a higher evincement of antiquarian taste than I should have expected—managed to bear away a pattern of wall-paper, which I afterward conferred on Mary Ashburleigh with great applause: it was

Parisian of 1824, the epoch of Charles Dix, and was entirely covered with giraffes in honor of that puissant and elegant monarch. The above establishments were near the entrance, to the right.

At the left were more attractions: another menagerie, a heap of ostensible gold representing the five milliards paid by France, a gallery of astonished wax soldiers representing the Franco-Prussian war, a cook-shop with "mythologic" confectionery. Farther on, in the Théâtre Casti, was exposed the "renowned buffoon Peppino," breveted by His Majesty the "king of Egypt;" then came the Chiarini Theatre; then the Théâtre Adrien Delille, an enchantingly pretty structure, where receptions were given by a little creature who should have sat under a microscope: she was "the Princess Felicia, aged thirteen, born at Clotat, near Marseilles, weighing three kilogrammes and measuring forty-six centimètres—a ravishing figure, admirably proportioned in her littleness and *tout à fait sympathique!"*

The announcements were heard, it was thought by Charles, to the very centre of the city. A low-browed animal with rasped hair was shouting, "Messieurs and ladies, come and see—come and see the theatre of the galleys! The only one in the world! This is the place to view the real instruments of torture used on the prisoners–chains four yards long and balls of thirty-five pounds. All authentic, gentlemen and ladies. You will see the poisoners of Marseilles, Grosjon who killed his father, Madame Cottin who ate her baby. Come in, come in, gentlemen and ladies! Fifteen

centimes! 'Tis given away! You enter and go out when you like. Come in! It is educational: you see vice and crime depicted on the faces of the criminals!"

In another place a malicious Flemish Figaro explained the analogy betwen *een spinnekop* and *eene meisie*, the perspiration streaming over his face; and my ancient minnesinger's blood stirred within me at the report of the pleasantries which were improvised by this Rabelais of the people, and I remembered that I too was a Flemming.

The bands belonging to the different booths tried to play each other down, forming a stupefying charivari, with tributary processions that quite overflowed the city. The house of "confections" yielded me no broadcloth of a cut or dimension suitable to my figure. But my two friends chose me a hat, a light pale-tot (my second purchase in that sort on this eventful journey), a scented cambric handkerchief, a rosebud, and a snowy waistcoat, in which, as in a whited sepulchre, I concealed the decay of my toilet. These changes were judged to be sufficient for my accoutrement. They might have done very well, but on my way back I paused at a lace-shop window to inspect some present for Francine. A band, with many banners and figures in masquerade, swept past, followed by a shouting crowd. My friends lost me in a moment, and I lost my way. I turned into a street which I was sure led to the hotel, gave it up for another, lost that in a blind alley, and finally brought up in a steep, narrow cañon, where I was forced to ask a direction. The

passer-by who obliged me was a man bearing a bag of charcoal. He answered with a ready intelligence that did honor to his heart and his sense of Progressive Geography. But he left on my white waistcoat, alas! a charcoal sketch, full of chiaroscuro and *coloris*, representing his index-finger surrounded with a sort of cloud-effect. My waistcoat had to be given over in favor of the elder garment buttoned up in the all-concealing overcoat.

The ceremonies of the day, I soon found, were to consist in an early and informal breakfast at the house of Frau Kranich; then the civil wedding at the mayor's office, followed by the usual church-service, from which the Protestant godmother of Francine begged to be excused; the day to wind up with a general dinner at a place of resort outside the city at four o'clock, the usual dining-hour in old Brabant.

The early breakfast gave a renewal of my friendship with good Frau Kranich and a glimpse of the bride, with her sweet, patient, dewy face shadowed like a honey-drop in the gauzy calyx of her artisanne cap; for she was in the simplest of morning dresses—something gray, with a clean white apron. The quaint, old-fashioned house where we met was decorated with exquisite trifles, the memorials of the mistress's old fashionable taste, but scattered over the tables also were lecture programmes, hospital reports and photographs of eminent philosophers. As I took up for a plaything a gold pen-case, well used, which rested on a magnificent old fan, the Kranich said, with just a reminiscence of her former vivacity, "You find me much

changed, Mr. Flemming. I used to be the grasshopper in the fable —now I am the ant."

"I bless any change, ma'am," said I, "which increases your kindness toward this charming girl."

"Dear Mr. Flemming," said pretty Francine, "how nice and shabby you look! You will do admirably to stand by a poor girl —so poor that she has hardly a bridesmaid. I hope you are as indigent as you were at Carlsruhe." Upon this I felt very fatherly, and clasped her waist from behind as I kissed her forehead.

The lawyer, a professionally bland old man, with a porous bald head like an emu's egg, said as he was introduced, "Ah, I have heard of you before, monsieur. You are the man of the two chickens."

Joliet was so enchanted with this rare joke, laughing and clapping all his nearer neighbors on the back, that I could not but accept it graciously. For this exceptional day, at least, I must bear my eternal nickname. Was not the maid now present whose dower had been hatched by those well-omened fowls? and was not the dower now coming to use? Hohenfels paired off with the notary, and discussed with that parchment person the music of Mozart, and, what would have been absurd and incredible in any Anglo-Saxon country, the scribe understood it!

Our party had to wait but ten minutes for the groom and his men. Fortnoye, in a grand blue suit, with a wondrous dazzle of frilling on his broad chest, looked a noble husband, but was preoccupied and silent. His chorus supported him—

Grandstone, Somerard, my engineer and the others—in dignified black clothes, official boutonnières and ceremonial cravats: they greeted Frau Kranich with awe, and bowed before the polished head of the lawyer with the parallelism of ninepins. My little group of fellow-travelers was almost complete. The young duelist, of course, was not expected or wanted. The Scotch doctor, Somerard told me, had been obliged to fly to London, where a mammoth meeting of the homoeopathic faith was in progress.

The great feature of the breakfast came on when every crumb of breakfast had been eaten. Charles and the maid cleared away the table, and the notary stood up to read the marriage contract. The reading, ordinarily a dull affair, was in this instance vivified by curious incidents. In the first place, Frau Kranich. amending the injustice her over-credulity had caused, gave her *protègée* a wedding-present of twenty thousand francs, accompanying the gift with some singularly tart remarks about her nephew: this sum was increased by the groom to sixty thousand. The second incident was when Joliet, amid the almost incredulous surprise of the whole table, raised the gift, by the addition of ten thousand, to seventy thousand francs: the money was the product of his former house and garden—that house of shreds and patches which had cost him ten francs. When it came to affixing the signatures, the notary appealed to Joliet for his name. He could not sign it, being gouty and half forgetful of pen-practice, but he responded to the question as bold as a lion: "John Thomas Joliet, baron de

Rouvière," throwing to the lawyer a fine bunch of papers bearing witness to the validity of the title; after which he added, no less proudly, "wine-merchant, wholesale and retail, at the sign of the Golden Chickens, Noisy."

In truth, Joliet's father had rightfully borne the title of baron de Rouvière, but, ruined by '48, had abandoned the practice of signing it. Joliet resumed it for this special occasion, having every warrant for the act, but whispered to me that he should never so call himself in future, greatly preferring the enumeration of his qualities on his business-card.

Poor Francine meanwhile had looked so timid and blushed so that Frau Kranich nodded to her permission of absence. She gave one glance at Fortnoye, buried her face in her hands, laughed a sweet little gurgle, and fled. When her presence was again necessary, she reappeared, drowned in white. We went to the mayor's office, where she lost a pretty little surname that had always seemed to fit her like a glove; then to the church, an obscure one in the neighborhood of Frau Kranich's house. But at the door of the sacred edifice the elder lady said, with much conciliatory grace in her manner, "I claim exemption from witnessing this part of the ceremony; and you, Mr. Flemming, must resume or discover your Protestantism and enter the carriage with me. I must show you a little of the city while these young birds are pairing."

No objection was made to this rather strange proposal. The bride, between her father and husband, forgot that she had no

friend of her own sex to stand near her. We arranged for a general meeting at the dinner.

In the carriage she said, "I brought you away because I am devoured with uneasiness. Mrs. Ashburleigh wrote me that she would certainly be here for at least the principal part of the ceremony. I do not know what to make of it. It may be of no use, but we will scour the city. These throngs, this noise, make me uneasy. I fear some accident, having," she added with a smile, "one lone woman's sympathy for another lone woman."

I peered through the crowds at this, right and left, with inexpressible emotion. Perhaps this accidental sort of quest was that which destiny had arranged for the solution of my life-problem. To light upon Mary Ashburleigh in these festal throngs, perhaps wanting assistance, perhaps calling upon my name even now through her velvet lips, was a chance the mere notion of which made my blood leap.

When Brussels gives herself over to holiday-making, she does it in a whole-souled and self-consistent way that has plenty of attractiveness. The houses seemed to have turned themselves inside out to replenish the streets. People in their best clothes, equipages, processions, bands, troops of children, filled the avenues. Some conjecture that there might have been a mistake about the church took us to the cathedral of St. Gudule. Here, amid the superb spectrums of the stained windows, we searched through the vari-colored throngs that covered the floor, but no familiar face looked upon us. Strange to us as the old,

impassive monumental dukes of Brabant who occupy the niches, the people made way to let us pass from the doorway between the lofty brace of towers to the high altar, which is a juggler's apparatus, and has concealed machinery causing the sacred wafer to come down seemingly of its own accord at the moment when the priest is about to lift the Host. All was unfamiliar and splendid, and we came away, feeling as if our own little wedding-group would have been lost in so magnificent a tabernacle. The Grande Place, on which lay the wedge-like shadow of the high-towered Hôtel de Ville, was perhaps as thronged a honeycomb of buzzing populace as when Alva looked out upon it to see the execution of Egmont and Horn. Among all the good-natured Netherlandish countenances that paved the square there was none that responded to my own.

We drove vaguely through the principal streets, and then, baffled, made our way to the faubourg in which is situated the zoological garden, toward which a considerable portion of the inhabitants was going even as ourselves. At the entrance our carriage encountered that of the bride and groom, and soon the whole party of the breakfast-table assembled by the gate, for the great coffee-rooms at which our meal was laid were close by the garden, and a promenade in this famous living museum was a premeditated part of the day's enjoyment. We entered the grounds in character, frankly putting forward our claims as a wedding-procession. That is the delightful French custom among those who are brought up as Francine had been:

her father would have been heartbroken to have been denied the proud exhibition of his joy, and Fortnoye was too great a traveler, too cosmopolitan, to object to a little family pageant that he had seen equaled or exceeded in publicity in most of the Catholic countries on the globe. Francine, her artisanne cap for ever lost, her gleaming dark hair set, like a Milky Way, with a half wreath of orange-blossoms, the silvery gauzes of her protecting veil floating back from her forehead, strayed on at the head of the little parade. She was wrapped in the delicious reverie of the wedding-day. She was not yellow nor meagre, nor uglier than herself, as so many brides contrive to be. Her air of delicacy and tenderness was a blossom of character, not a canker of ill-health. Her color was hardly raised, though her head was perpetually bent. Fortnoye, holding her on his firm arm, seemed like a man walking through enchantments. Just behind, protecting Madame Kranich with an action of effusive gallantry that must have been seen to be conceived, walked the baron de Rouvière, his brave knotted hands, for which he had not found any gloves, busily occupied in pointing out the animated rarities that to him seemed most worthy of selection. The hilarious hyenas, the seals, the polar bears plunging from their lofty rocks, all attracted his commendation; and we, who walked behind in such order as our friendships or familiarity taught us, were perpetually tripping upon his honest figure brought to a halt before some object more than usually interesting. Exclamations of delight at the bride's beauty, politely wrapped in whispers,

arose on all sides as we penetrated the throng: it was a proud thing to be a part of a procession so distinguished. My good Joliet beamed with complacency, and drove his little herd up and down and across and about till the greater part of the garden was explored. The zoological garden of Brussels has the beauty of not showing too obviously the character of a prison. It is extensive, umbrageous, and the poor captives within its borders have enough air and space around their eyes to give them a semblance of liberty. For the special feast-day on which we visited it the place had been arranged with particular adaptation to the character of the time. There were elephant-races and rides upon the camels free to all ladies who would make the venture. In addition to the zebras, gnus and Shetlands, there was that species of race-horse which never wins and never spoils a course, being of wood and constructed to go round in a tent, and never to arrive anywhere or lose any prizes. The pelicans were in high excitement, for all along their beautiful little river, where it winds through bowery trees, a profusion of living fish had been emptied and confined here and there by grated dams, so that the awkward birds had opportunity to angle in perfect freedom and to their hearts' content. In the more wooded part of the garden a mimic hunt had been arranged, and sportsmen in correct suits of green, with curly brass horns and baying hounds, coursed through the grounds, following a stag which, though mangy and asthmatic, may yet have been a descendant of the fawn that fed Genevieve of Brabant. We had re-entered one of the grand alleys,

and were receiving again the little tribute of encomiums which the greater privacy of the groves had pretermitted—we were parading happily along, conscious of nothing to be ashamed of, our orange-blossoms glistening, our veil flying, our broadcloth and wedding-favors gleaming—when we met another group, which, though more furtively, bore that matrimonial character which distinguished our own.

At the head walked Mr. Cookson & Jenkinson. He still wore that species of shooting-costume which he had made his uniform, but it was decked with roses, and his hands were encased in milk-white gloves: on his hands, besides the gloves, he had the two grammatical ladies from the Rhine steamboat in guise of bridesmaids. Behind him walked Mary Ashburleigh. And emerging from the skirts of Mary Ashburleigh's dress, with the embarrassed happiness of a middle-aged bridegroom, was—no? yes! no, no! but yes—was Sylvester Berkley. I will not expose what I suffered to the curiosity of imperfectly sympathetic strangers. I did not faint, and I believe men in genuine despair never do so. But I felt that weakness and unmanageableness of knee which comes with strong mental anguish, and I sank back impotent upon the baron, whose lingering legs repudiated the pressure, so that we both accumulated miserably upon Grandstone. My eyes closed, and I did not hear the Dark Ladye's salutations to Frau Kranich. But I awoke to see with anguish a sight that drew involuntary applause from all that careless crowd.

It was the salute of the two brides. Imagine, if you can,

two great purple pansies, flushed with all the perfumed sap of an Eden spring-time, threaded with diamonds of myriad-faceted dew,—imagine them leaning forward on their elastic stems until both their soft velvet countenances cling together and exchange mutually their caparisons of honeyed gems; then let them sway gently back, and balance once more in their morning splendor. Such was the effect when these two imperial creatures approached each other and imprinted with lips and palms a sister's salute. Mary Ashburleigh, whom the throng recognized as a natural empress, was arrayed this morning as brides are seldom arrayed, but with a sense of artistic obedience to her own sumptuous nature and personality. The royal purple of her velvets was cut, on skirt and bodice, into one continuous fretwork of heavy scrolls and leafage, and through the crevices of this textile carving shone the robe she carried beneath: it was tawny yellow, for she wore under her outward dress a complete robe of ancient lace, whose cobweb softness was more than – only perceived as the slashes of her velvets made it evident. It was such dressing as queens alone should indulge in perhaps, but Mary Ashburleigh chose for once to do justice to her style and her magnificence.

I was leaning against a tree, stunned in the sick sunshine. I heard, while my eyes were closed, a sort of voluminous cloudy roll, and the Dark Ladye was beside me. She whispered quickly and volubly in my ear, "I tried to confide in you, but I could not get it spoken. Yet I managed to confess that my heart had been touched. It was only this summer—at the Molkencur

over Heidelberg—he lectured about the ruins. 'Twas information —'twas rapture! I found at once he was the Magician. We were quietly united at the embassy this morning. And now he can leave that dreadful consulate and has got his promotion, for he is to be *chargé* here in Brussels. It is sudden, but we were positively afraid to do it in any other way, I am such a timid creature. When I saw the travelers' agent on the steamboat, I was at first struck with his manly British bearing and his resemblance to Sylvester. Then I found he had the matrimonial prospectus, and perceived he might be a link. He has managed everything beautifully. I had no idea—With his assistance you need no more mind being married than going into a shop for a plate of pudding. You must come up and be presented, to show you bear no malice."

I cannot tell how I did it, but I allowed Sylvester and the agent to grasp my hands, one on either side. Berkley, as to his collar, his cravat, his face and his white gloves, presented one general surface of mat silver. He clasped me with some affection, but his intellect had quite gone, and he said it was a fine day.

I did not rally in the least until after my fourth glass of champagne at the dinner. We made one party: indeed, Mrs. Ashburleigh had brought her husband hither in that expectation. Fortnoye vanished a minute to arrange the banquet-room; and as his wife rushed in to find him, followed by the rest of us, he snatched a great damask cloth from the table, and there was such a set-out of flowers and viands as has seldom been seen in Belgium or elsewhere. The table, instead of a cloth, was entirely

laid with; young emerald vine-leaves: our places were marked, and at each plate was a gift for the bride, ostensibly coming from the person who sat there, but really provided by the forethought of Fortnoye. In front of my own cover two pretty downy chicks were pecking in a cottage made of crystal slats and heavily thatched with spun glass—the prettiest birdcage in the world. On the eaves was an inscription: "The Man of the Two Chickens." It happened that the little keepsake I had found for Francine consisted of wheat-ears in pearls and gold, adapted for brooch and eardrops; so I only had to drop them in beside the chickens and the present was appropriate and complete.

I cannot tell of the effect as Mary Ashburleigh swept into that splendid banqueting-room, one long pyramid of velvet pierced with webbed interstices of light. If the largest window of St. Ursula's church had come down and entered the room, the spectacle could not have been so superb. One item struck me: the younger bride, of course, wore orange buds; but for the Englishwoman, a beauty ripe with many summers, buds and blossoms were inappropriate; she wore fruits: in the grand coronal of plaits that massed itself upon her head were set, like gems, three or four small, delicious, amber-scented mandarin oranges. With this piece of exquisite apropos did the infallible Mary Ashburleigh crown the edifice of her good taste. The two brides sat opposite each other. A small watch, which I had happened to buy at Coblenz, I managed to detach and lay on the Dark Ladye's plate as my offering. On a card beside it I merely

wrote, "ANOTHER TIME!"

Who knows? Perhaps Sylvester may fill and founder as the other has done. He looks miserably bilious and frightened.

I had rather partake of a rare dinner than describe one. The wines alone represented all the cellars of the Rhine and the whole champagne country. Fortnoye, who gave the feast, entertained both Sylvester's party and his own with regal good cheer. Think not that Henri Fortnoye was the ordinary obfuscated, superfluous, bewildered bridegroom. On the contrary, assuming immediately the head of his own table, he took the responsibility of the party's merriment, and made the good humor flow like the wine. I know not how it was, but ere the meal was over I found myself joining in one of his choruses; Frau Kranich forgot her asceticism and exhumed all her youthful air of gayety; James Athanasius Grandstone promised the host to set his wines running in every State of America. But the prettiest moment was when the two brides rose and touched glasses, mutually and to the health of the company, apropos of a little wedding-song which Fortnoye had composed and was trolling at the head our willing chorus.

CONCLUSION

I have arrived at Marly, and, with the ssistance of much sarcasm from Hohenfels, am getting on with considerable spirit at my Progressive Geography. When man's Hope ceases temporarily to take a merely Human aspect, may it not suffer a fresh avatar and begin in a new and Geographical form its beneficent career? The Dark Ladye has sunk beneath my horizon, but speculations over the Atlantean and Lunar Mountains are still succulent and vivifying.

I fled, lashed by a hundred despairs and by many symptoms of headache and dyspepsia, from the wedding-feast at Brussels. Charles and the baron of Hohenfels accompanied me. It was a night-train. The spectacle of so much wedded happiness was too much for me, too much for Hohenfels. The effect was, contrarily, rather stimulating to Charles, who has made a match with Josephine, and with her assistance is now listening, the tear of sensibility in his eye, to Mendelssohn's "Wedding March" as executed by the village organ!

We passed Valenciennes, Somain, Donai, Arras, Amiens, Clermont, Criel, Pontoise—the last points of merely bodily travel that I shall ever make: here-after my itineracy shall be entirely theoretical. We took a carriage at Pontoise, and traversed the woods of Saint-Germain. As I neared home I bowed right and left to amicable and smiling neighbors, who waved me good-day

from their doors. So did my Newfoundland, who broke his chain and leaped upon my shoulders, flourishing his tail—overjoyed to salute the returning Ulysses.

In the British Museum, among the Elgin Marbles, Phidias has carved a pile of heaped-up marble waves, and out of them rise the arms of Hyperion—the most beautiful arms in the world. Homesick for heaven, those weary arms try to free themselves of the clinging foam. Another minute and surely the triumphant god will leap from his watery couch and guide with unerring hands the coursers of the Dawn! But that reluctant minute is eternal, and the divinity still remains incapable, clogged and wrapped in the embrace of marble waves. Yet the real sun every morning succeeds in equipping himself for his journey, and arrives, glad, at his welcome bath in the western sea.

The inference I draw is: If you want a career to be eternal instead of transitory, hand it over to Art.

The true moral of it all is, that we are all savage myths of the Course of the Sun. We disappear any number of times, but we rise and trail new clouds of glory, and our readers or our audiences perceive that it is the same old Hyperion back again. The youth who by the faithful hound, half buried in the snow, is found far up on the most inaccessible peaks of imagination, is perceived to grasp still in his hand of ice that Germanesque and strange device—*Auf Wiedersehen*.

FOLLOWING THE TIBER

TWO PAPERS.—1

"Ecce Tiberum!" cried the Roman legions when they first beheld the Scottish Tay. What power of association could have made them see in the clear and shallow stream the likeless of their tawny Tiber, with his full-flowing waters sweeping down to the sea? Perhaps those soldiers under whose mailed and rugged breasts lay so tender a thought of home came from the northerly region among the Apennines, where a little bubbling mountain-brook is the first form in which the storied Tiber greets the light of day. One who has made a pilgrimage from its mouth to its source thus describes the spot: "An old man undertook to be our guide. By the side of the little stream, which here constitutes the first vein of the Tiber, we penetrated the wood. It was an immense beech-forest.... The trees were almost all great gnarled veterans who had borne the snows of many winters: now they stood basking above their blackened shadows in the blazing sunshine. The little stream tumbled from ledge to ledge of splintered rock, sometimes creeping into a hazel thicket, green with long ferns and soft moss, and then leaping once more merrily into the sunlight. Presently it split into numerous little rills. We followed the longest of these. It

led us to a carpet of smooth green turf amidst an opening in the trees; and there, bubbling out of the green sod, embroidered with white strawberry-blossoms, the delicate blue of the crane's bill and dwarf willow-herb, a copious little stream arose. Here the old man paused, and resting upon his staff, raised his age-dimmed eyes, and pointing to the gushing water, said, *'E questo si chiama il Tevere a Roma!'* ('And this is called the Tiber at Rome!') … We followed the stream from the spot where it issued out of the beech-forest, over barren spurs of the mountains crested with fringes of dark pine, down to a lonely and desolate valley, shut in by dim and misty blue peaks. Then we entered the portals of a solemn wood, with gray trunks of trees everywhere around us and impenetrable foliage above our heads, the deep silence only broken by fitful songs of birds. To this succeeded a blank district of barren shale cleft into great gullies by many a wintry torrent. Presently we found ourselves at an enormous height above the river, on the ledge of a precipice which shot down almost perpendicularly on one side to the bed of the stream.... A little past this place we came upon a very singular and picturesque spot. It was an elevated rock shut within a deep dim gorge, about which the river twisted, almost running round it. Upon this rock were built a few gloomy-looking houses and a quaint, old-world mill. It was reached from the hither side by a widely-spanning one-arched bridge. It was called Val Savignone."[1] Beyond this, at a small village called Balsciano, the hills begin to subside into

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[1] *The Pilgrimage of the Tiber*, by Wm. Davies.

gentler slopes, which gradually merge in the plain at the little town of Pieve San Stefano.

Thus far the infant stream has no history: its legends and chronicles do not begin so early. But a few miles farther, on a tiny branch called the Singerna, are the vestiges of what was once a place of some importance—Caprese, where Michael Angelo was born exactly four hundred years ago. His father was for a twelvemonth governor of this place and Chiusi, five miles off (not Lars Porsenna's Clusium, which is to the south, but Clusium Novum), and brought his wife with him to inhabit the *palazzo communale*. During his regency the painter of the "Last Judgment," the sculptor of "Night and Morning," the architect of St. Peter's cupola, first saw the light. Here the history of the Tiber begins—here men first mingled blood with its unsullied waves. On another little tributary is Anghiara, where in 1440 a terrible battle was fought between the Milanese troops, under command of the gallant free-lance Piccinino, and the Floren-tines, led by Giovanni Paolo (commonly called Giampaolo) Orsini; and a little farther, on the main stream, Città di Castello recalls the story of a long siege which it valiantly sustained against Braccio da Montone, surnamed Fortebraccio (Strongarm), another renowned soldier of fortune of the fifteenth century.

As the widening flood winds on through the beautiful plain, a broad sheet of water on the right spreads for miles to the foot of the mountains, whose jutting spurs form many a bay, cove and

estuary. It was in the small hours of a night of misty moonlight that our eyes, stretched wide with the new wonder of beholding classic ground, first caught sight of this smooth expanse gleaming pallidly amid the dark, blurred outlines of the landscape and trees. The monotonous noise and motion of the train had put our fellow-travelers to sleep, and when it gradually ceased they did not stir. There was no bustle at the little station where we stopped; a few drowsy figures stole silently by in the dim light, like ghosts on the spectral shore of Acheron; the whole scene was strangely unreal, phantasmal. "What can it be?" we asked each other under our breaths. "There is but one thing that it can be—Lake Thrasimene." And so it was. Often since, both by starlight and daylight, we have seen that watery sheet of fatal memories, but it never wore the same shadowy yet impressive aspect as on our first night-journey from Florence to Rome.

Not far from here one leaves the train for Perugia, seated high on a bluff amid walls and towers. We had been told a good deal of the terrors of the way—how so steep was the approach that at a certain point horses give out and carriages must be dragged up by oxen. It was with some surprise, therefore, that we saw ordinary hotel omnibuses and carriages waiting at the station. But we did not allow ourselves to feel any false security: by and by we knew the tug must come. We set off by a wide, winding road, uphill undoubtedly, but smooth and easy: however, this was only the beginning; and as it grew steeper and steeper, we waited in trepidation for the moment when the heavy beasts should be

hitched on to haul us up the acclivity. We crawled up safely and slowly between orchards of olive trees, which will grow wherever a goat can set its foot: beneath us the great fertile vale of Umbria spread like a lake, the encircling mountains, which had looked like a close chain from below, unlinking themselves to reveal gorges and glimpses of other valleys. Thus by successive zigzags we mounted the broad turnpike-road, now directly under the fortifications, now farther off, until we saw them close above us, with the old citadel and the new palace. And now surely the worst had come, but the carnage turned a sharp corner, showing two more zigzags, forming a long acute angle which carried us smoothly to the rocky plateau on which the city stands, and we bowled in through the old gate-way at a round trot, with the usual cracking of whips and rattling and jingling of harness which announces the arrival of travelers at minor places on the Continent.

We were not comfortable at Perugia—and let no one think to be so until there is a new hotel on a new principle—but it is a place where one can afford to forego creature comforts. Of all the towns on the Tiber, so rich in heirlooms of antiquity and art, none can boast such various wealth as this. The moment one leaves the centre of the town, which is built on a table of rock, the narrow streets plunge down on every side like dangerous broken flights of stairs: they disappear under deep cavernous arches, so that if you are below they seem to lead straight up through the darkness to the soft blue heaven, while from above they seem to go straight

down into deep cellars, but cellars full of slanting sunshine. And whether you look up or down, there is always a picture in the dark frame against the bright background—a woman in a scarlet kerchief with a water-vessel of antique form, or a ragged brown boy leading a ragged brown donkey, or a soldier in gay uniform striking a light for his pipe. As soon as you leave the live part of the town, with the few little *caffès* and shops, and the esplanades whence the thrice-lovely landscape unfolds beneath your gaze, you wander among quiet little paved *piazzas* with a bit of daisied grass in their midst, surrounded by great silent buildings, whence through some opening you descry a street which is a ravine, and the opposite cliff rising high above you piled close with gray houses overhung with shrubs and creepers, and little gardens in their crevices like weeds between the stones of a wall; or you come out upon a secluded gallery with tall, deserted-looking mansions on one hand—except that at some sunny window there is always to be seen a girl's head beside a pot of carnations or nasturtiums—and on the other a parapet over which you lean to see the town scrambling up the hillside, while a great breadth of valley and hill and snow-covered mountain stretches away below.

Then what historical associations, straggling away across three thousand years to when Perugia was one of the thirty cities of Etruria, and kept her independence through every vicissitude until Augustus starved her out in 40 B.C.! Portions of the wall, huge smooth blocks of travertine stone, are the work of the vanished Etruscans, and fragments of several gateways, with

Roman alterations. One is perfect, imbedded in the outer wall of the castle: it has a round-headed arch, with six pilasters, in the intervals of which are three half-length human figures and two horses' heads. On the southern slope of the hill, three miles beyond the walls, a number of Etruscan tombs were accidentally discovered by a peasant a few years ago. The outer entrance alone had suffered, buried under the rubbish of two millenniums: the burial-place of the Volumnii has been restored externally after ancient Etruscan models, but within it has been left untouched. Descending a long flight of stone steps, which led into the heart of the hill, we passed through a low door formerly closed by a single slab of travertine, too ponderous for modern hinges. At first we could distinguish nothing in the darkness, but by the uncertain flaring of two candles, which the guide waved about incessantly, we saw a chamber hewn in the rock, with a roof in imitation of beams and rafters, all of solid tufa stone. A low stone seat against the wall on each hand and a small hanging lamp were all the furniture of this apartment, awful in its emptiness and mystery. On every side there were dark openings into cells whence came gleams of white, indefinite forms: a great Gorgon's head gazed at us from the ceiling, and from the walls in every direction started the crested heads and necks of sculptured serpents. We entered one by one the nine small grotto-like compartments which surround the central cavern: the white shapes turned out to be cinerary urns, enclosing the ashes of the three thousand years dead Volumnii. Urns, as we understand the

word, they are not, but large caskets, some of them alabaster, on whose lids recline male figures draped and garlanded as for a feast: the faces differ so much in feature and expression that one can hardly doubt their being likenesses: the figures, if erect, would be nearly two feet in height. The sides of these little sarcophagi are covered with *bassi-rilievi*, many of them finely executed: the subjects are combats and that favorite theme the boar-hunt of Kalydon; there was one which represented the sacrifice of a child. The Medusa's head, as it is thought to be, recurs constantly, treated with extraordinary power: we were divided among ourselves whether it was Medusa or an Erinnys with winged head. The sphinx appears several times: there are four on the corners of an alabaster urn in the shape of a temple, exquisite in form and features, and exceedingly delicate in workmanship. Bulls' heads, with garlands drooping between them, a well-known ornament of antique altars, are among the decorations. But far the most beautiful objects were the little hanging figures, which seemed to have been lamps of a green bronze color, though we were assured that they are *terra-cotta*: they are male figures of exquisite grace and beauty, with a lightness and airiness commonly given to Mercury; but these had large angel pinions on the shoulders, and none on the head or feet. There was not a scholar in the party, so we all returned unenlightened, but profoundly interested and impressed, and with that delightful sense of stimulated curiosity which is worth more than all Eurekas. With the exception of a few weapons and

trinkets, which we saw at the museum, this is all that remains of the mighty Etruscans, save the shapes of the common red pottery which is spread out wholesale in the open space opposite the cathedral on market-days—the most graceful and useful which could be devised, and which have not changed their model since earlier days than the occupants of those tombs could remember.

The conquering Roman has left his sign-manual everywhere, but one is so used to him in Italy that the scantier records of later ages interest us more here. Like every other old Italian town, Perugia had its great family, the Baglioni, who lorded it over the place, sometimes harshly and cruelly enough, sometimes generously and splendidly—protectors of popular rights and patrons of art and letters. Their mediaeval history is full of picturesque incident and dramatic catastrophe: it would make a most romantic volume, but a thick one. At length the Perugians, master and men, grew too turbulent, and Pope Paul III. put them down, and sat upon them, so to speak, by building the citadel.

But time would fail us to tell of the Baglioni, or Pope Paul the Borghese, or Fortebraccio, the chivalric *condottiere* who led the Perugians to war against their neighbors of Todi, or even the still burning memories of the sack of Perugia by command of the present pope. We can no longer turn our thoughts from the treasures of art which make Perugia rich above all cities of the Tiber, save Rome alone. We cannot tarry before the cathedral, noble despite its incompleteness and the unsightly alterations of later times, and full of fine paintings and matchless wood-

carving and wrought metal and precious sculptures; nor before the Palazzo Communale, another grand Gothic wreck, equally dignified and degraded; nor even beside the great fountain erected six hundred years ago by Nicolo and Giovanni da Pisa, the chiefs and founders of the Tuscan school of sculpture; nor beneath the statue of Pope Julius III., which Hawthorne has made known to all; for there are a score of churches and palaces, each with its priceless Perugino, and drawings and designs by his pupil Raphael in his lovely "first manner," which has so much of the Eden-like innocence of his master; and the Academy of Fine Arts, where one may study the Umbrian school at leisure; and last, but not least, the Sala del Cambio, or Hall of Exchange, where Perugino may be seen in his glory. It is not a hall of imposing size, so that nothing interferes with the impression of the frescoes which gaze upon you from every side as you enter. Or no; they do not gaze upon you nor return your glance, but look sweetly and serenely forth, as if with eyes never bent on earthly things. The right-hand wall is dedicated to the sibyls and prophets, the left to the greatest sages and heroes of antiquity. There is something capricious or else enigmatical in the mode of presenting many of them—the dress, attitude and general appearance often suggest a very different person from the one intended—but the grace and loveliness of some, the dignity and elevation of others, the expression of wisdom in this face, of celestial courage in that, the calm and purity and beauty of all, give them an indescribable charm and potency.

At the end of the room facing the door are the "Nativity" and "Transfiguration," the latter, infinitely beautiful and religious, full of quiet concentrated feeling. We were none of us critics: none of us had got beyond the stage when the sentiment of a work of art is what most affects our enjoyment of it; and we all confessed how much more impressive to us was this Transfiguration, with its three quiet spectators, than the world-famous one at the Vatican. Although there are masterpieces of Perugino's in nearly every great European collection, I cannot but think one must go to Perugia to appreciate fully the limpid clearness, the pensive, tranquil suavity, which reigns throughout his pictures in the countenances, the landscape, the atmosphere.

We found it hard to rob Perugia even of a day for a pilgrimage to the tomb of Saint Francis at Assisi, yet could not leave the neighborhood without making it. We took the morning-train for the little excursion, meaning to drive back, and crossed the Tiber for the first time on the downward journey at Ponte San Giovanni. We got out at the station of Santa Maria degli Angeli, so named from the immense church built over the cell where Saint Francis lived and died and the little chapel where he prayed. The Porzionuncula it was called, or "little share," being all that he deemed needful for man's abode on earth, and more than needful. It was hither that he came in the heyday of youth, forsaking the house of his wealthy father, the love of his mother, a life of pleasure with his gay companions, and dedicated himself to poverty and preaching the word of God. One of our party

had said that she considered Saint Francis the author of much evil, and as having done irreparable harm to the Italian people in sanctifying dirt and idleness. But apostles are not to be judged by the abuse of their doctrine; and although it cannot be denied that Saint Francis encouraged beggary by forbidding his followers to possess aught of their own, he enjoined that they should labor with their hands for several hours daily. And to me it seemed as if out of Palestine there could be no spot of greater significance and sacredness to any Christian than this, where in a sanguinary and licentious age a young man suddenly broke all the bonds of self, and taught in his own person humility, renunciation and brotherly love as they had hardly been taught since his Master's death. The sternness of his personal self-denial is only equaled by his sweetness toward all living things: not men alone, but animals, birds, fishes, the frogs, the crickets, shared his love, and were called brother and sister by him. The great and instantaneous movement which he produced in his own time was no short-lived blaze of fanaticism, for its results have lasted from the twelfth century to our own; and although we may well believe that the day is past for serving Christ by going barefoot and living on alms, the spirit of Saint Francis's doctrine, charity, purity, self-abnegation, might do as much for modern men as for those of six hundred years ago. Believing all this, we were not sorry that our uncompromising friend had stayed behind, and it was in a reverent mood that we left the little stone chamber—which shrinks to lowlier proportions by contrast with the enormous

dome above it—and turned to climb the long hill which leads to the magnificent monument which enthusiasm raised over him who in life had coveted so humble a home.

The cliff on which Assisi stands rises abruptly on the side toward the Tiber: long lines of triple arches, which look as if hewn in the living stone, stretch along its face, one above another, like galleries, the great mass of the church and convent, with its towers and gables and spire-like cypress trees, crowning all. It is this marriage of the building to the rock, these lower arcades which rise halfway between the valley and the plateau seeking the help of the solid crag to sustain the upper ones and the vast superimposed structure, that makes the distant sight of Assisi so striking, and almost overwhelms you with a sense of its greatness as the winding road brings you close below on your way up to the town. It is a triple church. The uppermost one, begun two years after the saint's death, has a magnificent Gothic west front and high steps leading from the piazza, and a rich side-portal with a still higher flight leading from a court on a lower level. As we entered, the early afternoon sun was streaming in through the immense rose-window and flooding the vast nave, illumining the blue star-studded vault of the lofty roof and the grand, simple frescoes of Cimabue and Giotto on the walls. Thence we descended to the second church, in whose darkness our vision groped, half blind from the sudden change; but gradually through the dusk we began to discern low vaults stretching heavily across pillars which look like stunted giants,

so short are they and so tremendously thick-set, the high altar enclosed by an elaborate grating, the little side-chapels like so many black cells, and through the gloom a twinkle and glimmer of gold and color and motes floating in furtive sunbeams that had strayed in through the superb stained glass of the infrequent windows. The frescoes of Giotto and his school enrich every spandril and interspace with their simple, serious forms—no other such place to study the art of that early day—but a Virgin enthroned among saints by Lo Spagna, a disciple of Perugino's, made a pure light in the obscurity: it had all the master's golden transparency, like clear shining after the rain. From this most solemn and venerable place we went down to the lowest church, the real sepulchre: it was darker than the one we had left, totally dark it seemed to me, and contracted, although—it is in the form of a Greek cross—each arm is sixty feet: in fact, it is only a crypt of unusual size; and although here were the saint's bones in an urn of bronze, we were conscious of a weakening of the impression made by the place we had just left. No doubt it is because the crypt is of this century, while the other two churches are of the thirteenth.

There are other things to be seen at Assisi; and after dining at the little Albergo del Leone, which, like every part of the town except the churches, is remarkably clean, my companion set out to climb up to the castle, and I wandered back to the great church. As I sat idly on the steps a monk accosted me, and finding that I had not seen the convent, carried me through labyrinthine

corridors and galleries, down long flights of subterranean stone steps, one after another, until I thought we could not be far from the centre of the earth, when he suddenly turned aside into a vast cloister with high arched openings and led me to one of them. Oh, the beauty, the glory, the wonder of the sight! We were halfway down the mountain-side, hanging between the blue heaven and the billowy Umbrian plain, with its verdure and its azure fusing into tints of dreamy softness as they vanished in the deep violet shadows of thick-crowding mountains, on whose surfaces and gorges lay changing colors of the superbest intensity. Poplars and willows showed silvery among the tender green of other deciduous trees in their fresh spring foliage and the deep velvet of the immortal cypresses and the blossoming shrubs, which looked like little puffs of pink and white cloud resting on the bosom of the valley. A small, clear mountain-stream wound round the headland to join the Tiber, which divides the landscape with its bare, pebbly bed. It was almost the same view that one has from twenty places in Perugia, but coming out upon it as from the bowels of the earth, framed in its huge stone arch, it was like opening a window from this world into Paradise.

Slowly and lingeringly I left the cloister, and panted up the many steps back to the piazza to await my companion and the carriage which was to take us back to Perugia. The former was already there, and in a few minutes a small omnibus came clattering down the stony street, and stopping beside us the driver informed us that he had come for us. Our surprise and wrath

broke forth. Hours before we had bespoken a little open carriage, and it was this heavy, jarring, jolting vehicle which they had sent to drive us ten miles across the hills. The driver declared, with truly Italian volubility and command of language and gesture, that there was no other means of conveyance to be had; that it was excellent, swift, admirable; that it was what the signori always went from Assisi to Perugia in; that, in fine, we had engaged it, and *must* take it. My companion hesitated, but I had the advantage here, being the one who could speak Italian; so I promptly replied that we would not go in the omnibus under any circumstances. The whole story was then repeated with more adjectives and superlatives, and gestures of a form and pathos to make the fortune of a tragic actor. I repeated my refusal. He began a third time: I sat down on the steps, rested my head on my hand and looked at the carvings of the portal. This drove him to frenzy: so long as you answer an Italian he gets the better of you; entrench yourself in silence and he is impotent. The driver's impotence first exploded in fury and threats: at least we should pay for the omnibus, for his time, for his trouble; yes, pay the whole way to Perugia and back, and his *buon' mano* besides. All the beggars who haunt the sanctuary of their patron had gathered about us, and from playing Greek chorus now began to give us advice: "Yes, we would do well to go: the only carriage in Assisi, and excellent, admirable!" The numbers of these vagrants, their officiousness, their fluency, were bewildering. "But what are we to do?" asked my anxious companion. "Why, if it comes to the

worst, walk down to the station and take the night-train back." He walked away whistling, and I composed myself to a visage of stone and turned my eyes to the sculptures once more. Suddenly the driver stopped short: there was a minute's pause, and then I heard a voice in the softest accents asking for something to buy a drink. I turned round—beside me stood the driver hat in hand: "Yes, the signora is right, quite right: I go, but she will give me something to get a drink?" I nearly laughed, but, biting my lips, I said firmly, "A drink? Yes, if it be poison." The effect was astounding: the man uttered an ejaculation, crossed himself, mounted his box and drove off; the beggars shrank away, stood aloof and exchanged awestruck whispers; only a few liquid-eyed little ragamuffins continued to turn somersets and stand on their heads undismayed.

Half an hour elapsed: the sun was beginning to descend, when the sound of wheels was again heard, and a light wagon with four places and a brisk little horse came rattling down the street. A pleasant-looking fellow jumped down, took off his hat and said he had come to drive us to Perugia. We jumped up joyfully, but I asked the price. "Fifty francs"—a sum about equivalent to fifty dollars in those regions. I smiled and shook my head: he eagerly assured me that this included his *buon mano* and the cost of the oxen which we should be obliged to hire to drag us up some of the hills. I shook my head again: he shrugged and turned as if to go. My unhappy fellow-traveler started forward: "Give him whatever he asks and let us get away." I sat down again on the

steps, saying in Italian, as if in soliloquy, that we should have to go by the train, after all. Then the new-comer cheerfully came back: "Well, signora, whatever you please to give." I named half his price—an exorbitant sum, as I well knew—and in a moment more we were skimming along over the hard, smooth mountain-roads: we heard no more of those mythical beasts the oxen, and in two hours were safe in Perugia.

THE PARADOX

I wish that the day were over,
The week, the month and the year;
Yet life is not such a burden
That I wish the end were near.

And my birthdays come so swiftly
That I meet them grudgingly:
Would it be so were I longing
For the life that is to be?

Nay: the soul, though ever reaching
For that which is out of sight,
Yet soars with reluctant motion,
Since there is no backward flight.

CHARLOTTE F. BATES.

A NIGHT AT COCKHOOLET CASTLE

I

Cockhoolet was the name of the place: it was a farm of which the Ormistons were and had been tenants for several generations. A father, mother and five olive-branches made up the family. A healthy, happy, united, thriving family they were, and as such much respected. There were two sons and three daughters, the eldest of whom was Bessie, the "Rose of Cockhoolet," as she was called; for that she had all the beauty and sweetness of the rose was generally allowed, although there were people who could not be made to see this—people who were probably idiopts; not idiots—although they might have a streak of idiocy in them, too, perhaps—but idiopts, or persons who were color-blind. None of the young men of the district were color-blind.

The clergyman of the parish in which Cockhoolet was situated, and at whose church the Ormistons attended, was an old man comparatively, whose sermons were old-fashioned, and not given forth with the fire of youth: he was not one you would have expected to be very popular, especially with the young; yet various young men from considerable distances were attracted

to his church, and, generally speaking, they settled themselves in pews opposite the gallery in front of which sat Mr. Ormiston and his family. Any person who chanced to be in the vicinity, if of discerning powers, might have been conscious of the electricity in the air. Dull people neither saw nor felt it.

Bessie Ormiston was not dull, but, being a modest girl, she would rather not have been stared at; and, being a good girl, she thought people might be better employed in church: still, she was only a girl, and it would not be the truth to say she was mortally offended. Did the person ever exist who was offended at an honest compliment? If he ever did, he ought to have been fed on sarcasm for the rest of his days.

Not only was Bessie pretty—she was also rich. A grand-uncle had left her five thousand pounds, her brothers and sisters getting only one thousand each. There is no use in asking reasons for this: simply, the Rose was born with a silver spoon in her mouth. Perhaps, indeed, the old man did not know he had so much money, for it was as residuary legatee that Bessie got the five thousand pounds, and it was not thought she would get anything like that: people remarked, in the language of the district, which was apt occasionally to be strong and graphic rather than elegant, —people remarked that "old Ormiston had cut up well." Five thousand charms added to those Bessie already possessed—not to mention that her father was a rich man—made her most miraculously charming: like Tibby Fowler of the Glen, whose perplexities of this kind have been embalmed in song, she had

wealth of wooers, and wealth, it is well known, makes wit waver.

It is a saying that an Englishman's house is his castle, but the phrase is understood to be figurative: Mr. Ormiston's house was his castle without a figure. Cockhoolet Castle is very old, at least one part of it is, having been built probably about the year 1400. A more modern part was built in 1527, while the most modern part of all was added in 1726: this last division of it is used as the farm-house. The rooms have been painted and papered in the present style of house decoration, and in the sitting-rooms, in addition to the little old windows, the thick walls have been pierced and a large bow-window put in with fine effect. There are three narrow stone staircases leading up the three divisions of the castle; there are long passages; there are sudden short flights of steps taking you up or down into all manner of cornered rooms; there is a hall which might hold the population of the county. Keeping up one of the spiral staircases, you come out on the roof, round which there is a walk guarded by a low stone coping: should you want to fling yourself over, you have ample opportunity. There are stone sentry-boxes where you can sit hidden from the wind and everything else, and look far and wide over the country, and down into the garden if you can do so without growing giddy. There is also a dungeon tenanted by nothing more subject to suffering than potatoes and other roots, for which it is a most favorable receptable, the walls being so thick and the roof so low that cold cannot get in in winter nor heat in summer: there is only a single narrow slit in the wall for the

admission of light, but it is comforting to know that the doomed wretches who inhabited it in past ages had at least a temperate climate.

There is the room Queen Mary Stuart slept in when she occasionally visited in the vicinity. The reader is perhaps not familiar with Queen Mary's name in connection with Cockhoolet Castle, but there may be other facts about her of which he is also ignorant. Does he know, for instance, that she had a daughter by her third marriage, whom, as an infant, she despatched to France to be reared in a nunnery, "that she may not," said the unhappy queen, "run the risk of having such a lot as I have"? Does he know that John Knox was possessed by a mad passion of love for Mary Stuart? It has always been thought otherwise—that in point of fact he held her in contempt; but as it is proverbial that "nippin' and scartin' (figurative of course) is Scotch folks' wooin'," there may be truth in the new discovery. But true or not true, it is enough to make the bold Reformer blush standing on the top of his pillar in the necropolis of Glasgow: perhaps he *is* blushing, if he were near enough to see.

Be that as it may, there is no manner of doubt that Mary Stuart honored Cockhoolet Castle by abiding under its roof when it suited her to do so. Have not I, the present writer, stood in the room she slept in—looked from the small windows set in the ten-foot thick wall from which she looked? Have I not gazed over the same country, up to the same skies, into the same moon at which she gazed? Could her face be more fair than that of the present

Rose of Cockhoolet, her thoughts more innocent, her reveries more sweet, than those of Bessie Ormiston, who in the course of time had succeeded to the room which had been consecrated by royal slumbers?

It is a matter of certainty that Mary Stuart planted a tree fast by Cockhoolet Castle—she would not have been herself if she had not done that—and a magnificent tree it is, very old and quite big enough for its age. The queen must have been fond of planting trees, and, considering the number she planted, it is astonishing how she found time for so many less innocent employments: she must have improved each shining hour, and, poor woman! she had not too many of these.

There is a walk also, called the Lady's Walk, leading away from the castle up a bosky dell, where a burn amuses itself playing at hide-and-seek, but, like a little child, betrays its hiding-places by its voice, and comes out into the light again and laughs at its own joke. Did the queen ever wander here? did she ever "paidle in the burn when summer days were fine"? did its murmur ever soothe her ear? did she ever see her fair face in its pools, or drop bitter tears to mingle and; flow on with its waters?

The burn has kept trotting through the dell for six thousand years, singing its song all the time, and its speed is as good and its voice as clear and musical as when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Many a wild story it could tell if its murmur could be understood; but it is a murmur only—a murmur which crept into the ears of Cæsar's

legions, of Queen Mary, of Bessie Ormiston, and will creep into yours, O reader! if you like to go and explore the Lady's Walk, when you can interpret the murmur for yourself, as all your predecessors no doubt did. In days of old it fed the moat, traces of which are to be seen round the castle still, although it has long since been filled up and covered, like the park of which it forms part, with rich natural pasture, soft, thick and velvety. In short, Cockhoolet had everything that a castle ought to have, and wanted nothing that a castle ought not to want, not even a ghost.

It was not the ghost of Mary Stuart: that would have been too shocking—a ghost without a head, or having a head and a broad vivid ray of red encircling its neck. Such a ghost would have made every one who saw it lose his senses. Cockhoolet Castle had a ghost: so much was certain, but hitherto no one had ever either seen or heard it. How, then, was it certain? Why ask a question like that? Is it reasonable to pin a human being down to prove a ghost? Will not presumptive evidence do? Strange things had happened, must have happened, at the castle: is it for a moment to be supposed that these things had happened and all gone scot free?—in other words, that not one of them had left a ghost? It is not to be supposed.

II

It was Christmas Day. Christmas Day is not solemnized and festivalized in Scotland as it is in England; still, the observance of it in some shape is creeping in more and more. It was Christmas, and Mr. and Mrs. Ormiston had gone to be present at a feast from which they were not expected to return till the following day. There were left at home the Rose, as head of the family for the time being; her sisters, Bell and Jessie, supposed to be little girls still, although the supposition made them very indignant; and her two brothers, John and William. A guest aad two servants made up the known inhabitants of the house.

The guest was a young man who had arrived before the heads of the house left, and had been laughingly charged by them to see that the children did not work mischief. He was an old friend of the family; at least as old a friend as he was a man, and she had been in the world a quarter of a century. We shall call him Edwin: that name will do as well as another; indeed, better, for he might not like his own made public. It need hardly be said that among the rest young Edwin loved, and, like his namesake in the ballad, he never talked of love. This might be stupid, but the stupidity which springs from true modesty is not to be classed with the stupidity which springs from want of brains, even when, as is quite likely, the consequences are to the full as disastrous. Now, how is a young lady to understand or bring things to a bearing

in a case like this? The Rose could not go up to Edwin and tell him she was not a goddess; neither could she say, "Although I have five thousand pounds—and you know it, and I know that you know it, and you know that I know that you know it—I am quite ready to believe that you love me, and would love me if I hadn't a farthing:" she could not say this, but she thought it, she worried herself thinking over it, and, being a sensible girl with a humble opinion of herself, she came to the conclusion that she had been altogether mistaken—that Edwin did not care for her, at least not as she cared for him, otherwise why should he not say so? "If," she thought—"if I were in his place and he in mine, neither money nor pride, nor anything else, would keep me silent." And the roses in her face deepened in color as she thought of her own silly folly in allowing her feelings to be drawn in, and she determined her folly should cease from that hour; which determination had the effect of bringing sharp, short speeches about Edwin's ears tinged with sarcasm that were meant to convey to him the conviction that she did not care a pin about him; and they answered the purpose admirably.

> Love is a fickle game, which they
> Whose stakes are deepest worst can play,

Edwin was at Cockhoolet that Christmas Day by the same fatality that causes a moth to hover round a brilliant light; and when her sister told Bessie that Edwin had come and was putting

his horse into the stable, she said, "Is Mr. Forrester here again? He must surely be dull at home." But of course she received him with friendly civility.

Edwin employed the forenoon out of doors with the boys and two other visitors. A Mr. and Mrs. Parker arriving unexpectedly, who were anxious to see the castle, the afternoon was spent in going through every part of it from dungeon to roof.

Bessie carried the keys: she was châtelaine, seneschal and cicerone, all rolled in one.

Going up the narrow stairs, the party had to climb Indian file: in the passages they could spread out a little, and in some of the rooms in the uninhabited portion they had to walk circumspectly, as if they were crossing water on stepping-stones, for the flooring was wanting in some places, leaving a stretch of bare rafters. Bessie tripped lightly over them, and then turned to wait for the others. "Don't be frightened," she said: "these rafters are as sound as the day they were laid down. The flooring has not rotted: it must have been taken up for some purpose. They did not know how to scamp work in those days."

"If we fall through, where shall we go?" inquired Mrs. Parker, looking down into what seemed deep mysterious darkness.

"Oh, not very far; but don't fall: it won't be pleasant," said Bessie: "you would alight on very hard stones."

Mr. Forrester got on the roof first, and handed up the ladies; and they all stood looking out over the country. It was not a cold, bleak, snowy day, as Christmas in northern latitudes has a right

to be. The winter had been mild—one of a series of mild winters, overturning the old traditions of frosts and snow-storms that lasted for months, and to a great extent stopped traffic and labor, and made traveling difficult and wearisome. This Christmas was different. The year was dying with calmness and dignity, and with a smile on its face, as you might take the pale gleam of sunshine to be; and if you were a little sad in mood you could suppose there was a wistfulness in the smile that was spread over the still, soft face of Nature. Cockhoolet stood high, and the country immediately round it was flat, and much of it moorland.

> If you climb to our castle's top,
> I don't see where your eye can stop;
> For when you've passed the corn-field country,
> Where vineyards leave off flocks are packed,
> And sheep-range leads to cattle-tract,
> And cattle-tract to open chase,
> And open chase to the very base
> O' the mountain.

Strike out the vineyards and that description will apply very well to Cockhoolet; and in addition you ought to have seen from its roof Edinburgh and the sea; but on this day the sea wore a garment of mist, and had wrapped the metropolis in it also, as it not unfrequently does. You ought to have seen more than one range of hills too, yet except by eyes well acquainted with them their outlines could hardly be distinguished from the leaden gray

clouds lying in bands along the horizon.

But as the party stood on the roof the clouds began to rise, tower upon tower, against the sky, and the sun, who retires early at this season, went behind them, when, instead of the pale, wistful gleam he had been keeping up all day, he suddenly threw a deep bright golden border on all the edges of the dark misty battlements which had piled themselves like castles of the Titans: a big rift appearing at their base, there poured through it, filling up the space, a great belt of crimson rays streaked with gray, as if from burning ashes falling into it, and like the dense glow from a furnace, giving the idea that the cloud-building was on fire, and that the flames from below, shooting up inside the dark walls, were the cause of the brilliant illumination that shone round every pinnacle and coign of vantage. It was a grand and a curious sight. You could fancy the sun looking across to the old Castle of Edinburgh standing on its rock, and saying, "Can you do anything like this with all the gas and paddelle you can lay your hands on?" Precisely this idea struck Mrs. Parker, for she said, "I think that is as good a sight as the castle the night the prince was married."

"That was a very good sight in its way," said Mr. Parker, "but we can hardly hope to compete with the sun, my dear: he has all his materials within himself, and we have to pay for them."

"Do you know, Miss Ormiston," said Mrs. Parker, "one of the buildings they said had such a fine effect put me in mind of a trunk studded with brass nails—the initials of the happy pair in gas-jets looked like the name of the owner of the trunk. All the

time I was on the street I could not get that notion out of my head; and I was sorry, for I am sure it cost a great deal of money to light it up, and I really wished to think it grand."

"We were all in town that night," said John Ormiston—"papa and mamma, and the whole of us, and Mr. Forrester, who made eight."

"I thought it a beautiful sight," said Bessie.

"I never enjoyed anything more in my life," said Mr. Forrester, who on that occasion had been Miss Ormiston's escort through the streets, in which they lost their party, and had the supreme bliss of wandering together in the crowd, when Mr. Forrester almost forgot that Miss Ormiston was a goddess with five thousand earthly charms, and Miss Ormiston had compared his merits as a guide and protector with those of her brothers, and found he was much more considerate, and made her wish law, which they were often far from doing. In point of fact, a thaw had been very imminent, but, alas! since then a sharp frost had set in between them, as unaccountably as frosts frequently do set in.

"I think, now," said Mrs. Parker, "a fine old castle like this ought to have had a grander name: don't you think so, Miss Ormiston?"

"Yes, I do, and it had, originally. There was a monastery here at one time, over in that field with the trees in the corner of it: it was called the abbey of Cakeholy, and when the castle was built it got the name of Cakeholy Castle, after the abbey. The name Cakeholy, tradition says, arose from the fact that an extraordinary

saint, whose wants had been relieved at the monastery, blessed all the bread that should ever be baked there, and the bread ever after had a great sustaining power in it; so that pilgrims from Edinburgh and the North, going to the southern shrines, all passed this way to get themselves supplied with the holy cakes. At the Reformation the abbey was destroyed, and became a ruin haunted by owls, so that, partly in derision and partly as suiting the altered circumstances, the common people corrupted the name into Cockhoolet; and in process of time it was given to the castle also, and stuck to it. That is the history of a name which is certainly neither romantic, nor high-sounding."

"How interesting!" said Mrs. Parker. "If I were you, I would go back to the old name: there is a reverence about it there is not about the other. Only think of bands of pilgrims coming across the moor there!"

"Yes, in their gowns and rope girdles, with wallets and scallop-shells," said Bessie. "It must have been a curious old world then: one could sit here and muse by the hour on all that has come and gone. I often bring up my work or my book here in summer and think of it."

"I do like old things," said Mrs. Parker, "and old families and old names. Our name, for instance, has no smack of age about it, and it is so short and perky: it must have been given to some one who had to do with parks."

"But parks may be a very old institution," said Bessie, "if we looked into the thing, though not so old as Forrester: that is an

ancient name," glancing at Edwin, who was leaning against a sentry-box listening and watching the sun putting out the lights in his bed-chamber; "yet not nearly so ancient as Ormiston. I always feel it is fitting we should live in an old castle, we are so ancient ourselves."

"Are we?" said John: "I never knew that before."

"Ormiston," she said, "is perhaps as pure a Saxon word as now exists. It was during the Roman invasion our ancestor led an army through a dense mist against the invaders: just as he came up with them the sun shone out and the mist. The legions were taken by surprise, for the advancing enemy had been hidden by the mist, and they were utterly routed. The Saxon king—"

"What was his name?" asked John.

"John," she said, "don't seek to be wise above what is revealed. The king called our ancestor to the front and made him earl of Ormiston on the spot—'Gold-Mist-on;' that is, 'Be ever in the van;' and a proud race were the earls of Ormiston, and well they answered to the name. But their fortunes waned when the modern upstart, the Norman William, laid his greedy hands on everything for himself and his mob of pirates, and at present we are only middle-class people, but our blood must be the bluest of the blue."

"Mine must be as blue," said Edwin, "for the Forresters came in with the trees, and the trees were early settlers."

"But the mists were first by a very long time," answered Bessie.

"I don't believe that story," said John. "I have read about the Cakeholy business somewhere, but you have made that Or-Mist-on affair out of your own head: isn't that true, Bessie?"

"I am not bound to answer unbelievers, John."

"Besides," said John, "Ormiston is far; liker French than Saxon."

"Mr. Parker," said Bessie, "there was an abbot John of Cakeholy who flourished in the thirteenth century: his ghost is said to revisit its old habitation, or rather the place where it stood. I should like to meet it and have a talk over things; it would be very interesting."

"Would you not be terrified?" asked Mrs. Parker.

"If I saw what I believed to be a ghost, I should die of terror," said Bessie; "especially if I was alone and it was the dead of night; but I have no faith whatever in ghosts."

"It is getting rather chilly," said Mrs. Parker.

"Perhaps we had better go down now, then," Miss Ormiston said. "Mr. Forrester, would you come out of your brown study and let us pass?"

"Certainly. I'll see you all safe off the battlements. I wasn't in a brown study: I was in a mist."

"Then take care: people in a mist always think they are going the right way when they are going directly wrong."

"If I only knew the right way!" he said.

"That's true, Mr. Forrester," said Mrs. Parker. "If we only knew the right way; and people tell you to be guided by

Providence, but I say I never know when it is Providence and when it is myself;" and she threaded her way down the narrow stairs, followed by the rest of the party.

III

The dining-room, with its low roof, its crimson walls, dark furniture and handsome fire (the fires at Cockhoolet were always handsome: Bessie was the architect and superintended the building herself; they never looked harum-scarum nor meaningless nor thoughtless, nor as if they were not meant to burn; they combined taste, comfort, and, as a consequence, economy; everything tasteful and comfortable is in the long run economical), its table-cloth, glistening like the summit of the Alps and laden with good things, looked a place where people even not in love with each other might, unless naturally perverse, be very happy.

Mrs. Parker, being from town, was in raptures with every country eatable, especially the scones, which she found were manufactured by Miss Ormiston herself.

"And have they," asked Mr. Parker, "the sustaining power that the cakes made here of old had?"

"If you eat enough of them you may get to Edinburgh to-night before you are very hungry," said John.

"The abbey cakes were unleavened," Bessie explained, "which these are not, so that they are less substantial fare."

"What do you raise them with?" asked Mrs. Parker.

"Butter, milk and carbonate of soda," said Miss Ormiston.

"We call Bessie a doctor of the Carbon," said John: "she

makes very good scones, although you would hardly go from here to Canterbury on the strength of one of them."

"Mr. Forrester, are you dull?" asked Jessie: "you are not saying anything."

"I am too busy eating the holy cakes, Jessie," said Edwin: "your sister is a master in her art."

"I say," Jessie went on, "are you ever dull at home? When I told Bessie that you had come she was surprised, and said that you must surely be dull at home. I am sorry for you if you are: you should come here oftener—we are never dull here."

"Perhaps," said Edwin, "your sister thinks I come too often, as it is."

Bessie was so deeply engaged pressing Mr. Parker to eat strawberry jam, with cheeks the color of the fruit, that of course she could not have heard what her sister had been saying.

"Oh no, I don't think she thinks that at all," Jessie said: "we never think any one can come too often. Bessie, can Mr. Forrester come too often?"

But still Miss Ormiston was so occupied with Mr. Parker that she did not hear.

And Mrs. Parker said, "It is a most intensely interesting old place, this: do not people come to look at it?"

"Oh yes," replied Bessie, "especially in summer: we generally have several parties every week. One of the servants takes them over the castle—grand people often, with carriages and livery servants."

"Do you not keep a book for them to write their names in?"

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