VARIOUS

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Содержание

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COUNTING AND MEASURING

Though, from the rapid action of the eye and the mind, grouping and counting by groups appear to be a single operation, yet, as things can be seen in succession only, however rapidly, the counting of things, whether ideal or real, is necessarily one by one. This is the first step of the art. The second step is grouping. The use of grouping is to economize speech in numeration, and writing in notation, by the exercise of the memory. The memorizing of groups is, therefore, a part of the primary education of every individual. Until this art is attained, to a certain extent, it is very convenient to use the fingers as representatives of the individuals of which the groups are composed. This practice led to the general adoption of a group derived from the fingers of the left hand. The adoption of this group was the first distinct step toward mental arithmetic. Previous groupings were for particular numerations; this for numeration in general; being, in fact, the first numeric base,—the quinary. As men advanced in the use of numbers, they adopted a group derived from the fingers of both hands; thus ten became the base of numeration.

Notation, like numeration, began with ones, advanced to fives, then to tens, etc. Roman notation consisted of a series of signs signifying 1, 5, 10, 50, 100, 500, 1000, etc.,—a series evidently the result of counting by the five fingers and the two hands, the numbers signified being the products of continued multiplication by five and by two alternately. The Romans adhered to their mode, nor is it entirely out of use at the present day, being revered for its antiquity, admired for its beauty, and practised for its convenience.

The ancient Greek series corresponded to that of the Romans, though primarily the signs for 50, 500 and 5000 had no place. Ultimately, however, those places were supplied by means of compound signs.

The Greeks abandoned their ancient mode in favor of the alphabetic, which, as it signified by a single letter each number of the arithmetical series from one to nine separately, and also in union by multiplication with the successive powers of the base of numeration, was a decided improvement; yet, as it consisted of signs which by their number were difficult to remember, and by their resemblance easy to mistake, it was far from being perfect.

Doubtless, strenuous efforts were made to remedy these defects, and, apparently as the result of those efforts, the Arabic or Indian mode appeared; which, signifying the powers of the base by position, reduced the number of signs to that of the arithmetical series, beginning with nought and ending with a number of the value of the base less one.

The peculiarity of the Arabic mode, therefore, in comparison with the Greek, the Roman, or the alphabetic, is place value; the value of a combination by either of these being simply equal to the sum of its elements. By that, the value of the successive places, counting from right to left, being equal to the successive powers of the base, beginning with the noughth power, each figure in the combination is multiplied in value by the power of the base proper to its place, and the value of the whole is equal to the sum of those products.

The Arabic mode is justly esteemed one of the happiest results of human intelligence; and though the most complex ever practised, its efficiency, as an arithmetical means, has obtained for it

the reputation of great simplicity,—a reputation that extends even to the present base, which, from its intimate and habitual association with the mode, is taken to be a part of the mode itself.

With regard to this impression it may be remarked, that the qualities proper to a mode bear no resemblance to those proper to a base. The qualities of the present mode are well known and well accepted. Those of the present base are accepted with the mode, but those proper to a base remain to be determined. In attempting to ascertain these, it will be necessary to consider the uses of numeration and of notation.

These may be arranged in three divisions,—scientific, mechanical, and commercial. The first is limited, being confined to a few; the second is general, being common to many; the third is universal, being necessary to all. Commercial use, therefore, will govern the present inquiry.

Commerce, being the exchange of property, requires real quantity to be determined, and this in such proportions as are most readily obtained and most frequently required. This can be done only by the adoption of a unit of quantity that is both real and constant, and such multiples and divisions of it as are consistent with the nature of things and the requirements of use: real, because property, being real, can be measured by real measures only; constant, because the determination of quantity requires a standard of comparison that is invariable; conveniently proportioned, because both time and labor are precious. These rules being acted on, the result will be a system of real, constant, and convenient weights, measures, and coins. Consequently, the numeration and notation best suited to commerce will be those which agree best with such a system.

From the earliest periods, special attention has been paid to units of quantity, and, in the ignorance of more constant quantities, the governors of men have offered their own persons as measures; hence the fathom, yard, pace, cubit, foot, span, hand, digit, pound, and pint. It is quite probable that the Egyptians first gave to such measures the permanent form of government standards, and that copies of them were carried by commerce, and otherwise, to surrounding nations. In time, these became vitiated, and should have been verified by their originals; but for distant nations this was not convenient; moreover, the governors of those nations had a variety of reasons for preferring to verify them by their own persons. Thus they became doubly vitiated; yet, as they were not duly enforced, the people pleased themselves, so that almost every market-town and fair had its own weights and measures; and as, in the regulation of coins, governments, like the people, pleased themselves, so that almost every nation had a peculiar currency, the general result was, that with the laws and the practices of the governors and the governed, neither of whom pursued a legitimate course, confusion reigned supreme. Indeed, a system of weights, measures, and coins, with a constant and real standard, and corresponding multiples and divisions, though indulged in as a day-dream by a few, has never yet been presented to the world in a definite form; and as, in the absence of such a system, a corresponding system of numeration and notation can be of no real use, the probability is, that neither the one nor the other has ever been fully idealized. On the contrary, the present base is taken to be a fixed fact, of the order of the laws of the Medes and Persians; so much so, that, when the great question is asked, one of the leading questions of the age,—How is this mass of confusion to be brought into harmony?—the reply is,—It is only necessary to adopt one constant and real standard, with decimal multiples and divisions, and a corresponding nomenclature, and the work is done: a reply that is still persisted in, though the proposition has been fairly tried, and clearly proved to be impracticable.

Ever since commerce began, merchants, and governments for them, have, from time to time, established multiples and divisions of given standards; yet, for some reason, they have seldom chosen the number ten as a base. From the long-continued and intimate connection of decimal numeration and notation with the quantities commerce requires, may not the fact, that it has not been so used more frequently, be considered as sufficient evidence that this use is not proper to it? That it is not may be shown thus:—A thing may be divided directly into equal parts only by first dividing it into two, then dividing each of the parts into two, etc., producing 2, 4, 8, 16, etc., equal parts, but ten

never. This results from the fact, that doubling or folding is the only direct mode of dividing real quantities into equal parts, and that balancing is the nearest indirect mode,—two facts that go far to prove binary division to be proper to weights, measures, and coins. Moreover, use evidently requires things to be divided by two more frequently than by any other number,—a fact apparently due to a natural agreement between men and things. Thus it appears the binary division of things is not only most readily obtained, but also most frequently required. Indeed, it is to some extent necessary; and though it may be set aside in part, with proportionate inconvenience, it can never be set aside entirely, as has been proved by experience. That men have set it aside in part, to their own loss, is sufficiently evidenced. Witness the heterogeneous mass of irregularities already pointed out. Of these our own coins present a familiar example. For the reasons above stated, coins, to be practical, should represent the powers of two; yet, on examination, it will be found, that, of our twelve grades of coins, only one-half are obtained by binary division, and these not in a regular series. Do not these six grades, irregular as they are, give to our coins their principal convenience? Then why do we claim that our coins are decimal? Are not their gradations produced by the following multiplications: 1 x 5 x 2 x 2-1/2 x 2 x 2 x 2-1/2 x 2 x 2 x 2, and 1 x 3 x 100? Are any of these decimal? We might have decimal coins by dropping all but cents, dimes, dollars, and eagles; but the question is not, What we might have, but, What have we? Certainly we have not decimal coins. A purely decimal system of coins would be an intolerable nuisance, because it would require a greatly increased number of small coins. This may be illustrated by means of the ancient Greek notation, using the simple signs only, with the exception of the second sign, to make it purely decimal. To express $9.99 by such a notation, only three signs can be used; consequently nine repetitions of each are required, making a total of twenty-seven signs. To pay it in decimal coins, the same number of pieces are required. Including the second Greek sign, twenty-three signs are required; including the compound signs also, only fifteen. By Roman notation, without subtraction, fifteen; with subtraction, nine. By alphabetic notation, three signs without repetition. By the Arabic, one sign thrice repeated. By Federal coins, nine pieces, one of them being a repetition. By dual coins, six pieces without a repetition, a fraction remaining.

In the gradation of real weights, measures, and coins, it is important to adopt those grades which are most convenient, which require the least expense of capital, time, and labor, and which are least likely to be mistaken for each other. What, then, is the most convenient gradation? The base two gives a series of seven weights that may be used: 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 lbs. By these any weight from one to one hundred and twenty-seven pounds may be weighed. This is, perhaps, the smallest number of weights or of coins with which those several quantities of pounds or of dollars may be weighed or paid. With the same number of weights, representing the arithmetical series from one to seven, only from one to twenty-eight pounds may be weighed; and though a more extended series may be used, this will only add to their inconvenience; moreover, from similarity of size, such weights will be readily mistaken. The base ten gives only two weights that may be used. The base three gives a series of weights, 1, 3, 9, 27, etc., which has a great promise of convenience; but as only four may be used, the fifth being too heavy to handle, and as their use requires subtraction as well as addition, they have neither the convenience nor the capability of binary weights; moreover, the necessity for subtraction renders this series peculiarly unfit for coins.

The legitimate inference from the foregoing seems to be, that a perfectly practical system of weights, measures, and coins, one not practical only, but also agreeable and convenient, because requiring the smallest possible number of pieces, and these not readily mistaken for each other, and because agreeing with the natural division of things, and therefore commercially proper, and avoiding much fractional calculation, is that, and that only, the successive grades of which represent the successive powers of two.

That much fractional calculation may thus be avoided is evident from the fact that the system will be homogeneous. Thus, as binary gradation supplies one coin for every binary division of the dollar, down to the sixty-fourth part, and farther, if necessary, any of those divisions may be paid

without a remainder. On the contrary, Federal gradation, though in part binary, gives one coin for each of the first two divisions only. Of the remaining four divisions, one requires two coins, and another three, and not one of them can be paid in full. Thus it appears there are four divisions of the dollar that cannot be paid in Federal coins, divisions that are constantly in use, and unavoidable, because resulting from the natural division of things, and from the popular division of the pound, gallon, yard, inch, etc., that has grown out of it. Those fractious that cannot be paid, the proper result of a heterogeneous system, are a constant source of jealousy, and often produce disputes, and sometimes bitter wrangling, between buyer and seller. The injury to public morals arising from this cause, like the destructive effect of the constant dropping of water, though too slow in its progress to be distinctly traced, is not the less certain. The economic value of binary gradation is, in the aggregate, immense; yet its moral value is not to be overlooked, when a full estimate of its worth is required.

Admitting binary gradation to be proper to weights, measures, and coins, it follows that a corresponding base of numeration and notation must be provided, as that best suited to commerce. For this purpose, the number two immediately presents itself; but binary numeration and notation being too prolix for arithmetical practice, it becomes necessary to select for a base a power of two that will afford a more comprehensive notation: a power of two, because no other number will agree with binary gradation. It is scarcely proper to say the third power has been selected, for there was no alternative,—the second power being too small, and the fourth too large. Happily, the third is admirably suited to the purpose, combining, as it does, the comprehensiveness of eight with the simplicity of two.

It may be asked, how a number, hitherto almost entirely overlooked as a base of numeration, is suddenly found to be so well suited to the purpose. The fact is, the present base being accepted as proper for numeration, however erroneously, it is assumed to be proper for gradation also; and a very flattering assumption it is, promising a perfectly homogeneous system of weights, measures, coins, and numbers, than which nothing can be more desirable; but, siren-like, it draws the mind away from a proper investigation of the subject, and the basic qualities of numbers, being unquestioned, remain unknown. When the natural order is adopted, and the base of gradation is ascertained by its adaptation to things, and the base of numeration by its agreement with that of gradation, then, the basic qualities of numbers being questioned, two is found to be proper to the first use, and eight to the second.

The idea of changing the base of numeration will appear to most persons as absurd, and its realization as impossible; yet the probability is, it will be done. The question is one of time rather than of fact, and there is plenty of time. The diffusion of education will ultimately cause it to be demanded. A change of notation is not an impossible thing. The Greeks changed theirs, first for the alphabetic, and afterwards, with the rest of the civilized world, for the Arabic,—both greater changes than that now proposed. A change of numeration is truly a more serious matter, yet the difficulty may not be as great as our apprehensions paint it. Its inauguration must not be compared with that of French gradation, which, though theoretically perfect, is practically absurd.

Decimal numeration grew out of the fact that each person has ten fingers and thumbs, without reference to science, art, or commerce. Ultimately scientific men discovered that it was not the best for certain purposes, consequently that a change might be desirable; but as they were not disposed to accommodate themselves to popular practices, which they erroneously viewed, not as necessary consequences, but simply as bad habits, they suggested a base with reference not so much to commerce as to science. The suggestion was never acted on, however; indeed, it would have been in vain, as Delambre remarks, for the French commission to have made the attempt, not only for the reason he presents, but also because it does not agree with natural division, and is therefore not suited to commerce; neither is it suited to the average capacity of mankind for numbers; for, though some may be able to use duodecimal numeration and notation with ease, the great majority find themselves equal to decimal only, and some come short even of that, except in its simplest use. Theoretically, twelve should be preferred to ten, because it agrees with circle measure at least, and ten agrees with

nothing; besides, it affords a more comprehensive notation, and is divisible by 6, 4, 3, and 2 without a fraction, qualities that are theoretically valuable.

At first sight, the universal use of decimal numeration seems to be an argument in its favor. It appears as though Nature had pointed directly to it, on account of some peculiar fitness. It is assumed, indeed, that this is the case, and habit confirms the assumption; yet, when reflection has overcome habit, it will be seen that its adoption was due to accident alone,—that it took place before any attention was paid to a general system, in short, without reflection,—and that its supposed perfection is a mere delusion; for, as a member of such a system, it presents disagreements on every hand; as has been said, it has no agreement with anything, unless it be allowable to say that it agrees with the Arabic mode of notation. This kind of agreement it has, in common with every other base. It is this that gives it character. On this account alone it is believed by many to be the perfection of harmony. They get the base of numeration and the mode of notation so mingled together, that they cannot separate them sufficiently to obtain a distinct idea of either; and some are not conscious that they are distinct, but see in the Arabic mode nothing save decimal notation, and attribute to it all those high qualities that belong to the mode only. The Arabic mode is an invention of the highest merit, not surpassed by any other; but the admiration that belongs to it is thus bestowed upon a quite commonplace idea, a misapplication, which, in this as in many other cases, arises from the fact, that it is much easier to admire than to investigate. This result of carelessness, if isolated, might be excused; but all errors are productive, and it should be remembered that this one has produced that extraordinary perversion of truth to be found in the reply to the question, How is all this confusion to be brought into harmony? It has produced it not only in words, but in deed. Was it not this reply that led the French commission to extend the use of the present base from numeration to gradation also, under the delusive hope of producing a perfectly homogeneous system, that would be practical also? Was it not under its influence, that, adhering to the base to which the world had been so long accustomed, instead of attempting to regulate ideal division by real, which might have led to the adoption of the true base and a practical system, they committed the one great error of endeavoring to reverse true order, by forcing real division into conformity with a preconceived ideal? This attempt was made at a time supposed by many to be peculiarly suited to the purpose, a time of changes. It was a time of changes, truly; but these were the result of high excitement, not of quiet thought, such as the subject requires,—a time for rushing forward, not for retracing misguided steps. Accordingly, a system was produced which from its magnitude and importance was truly imposing, and which, to the present day, is highly applauded by all those who, under the influence of the error alluded to, conceive decimal numeration to be a sacred truth: applauded, not because of its adaptation to commerce, but simply because of its beautiful proportions, its elegant symmetry, to say nothing of the array of learning and power engaged in its production and inauguration: imposing, truly, and alike on its authors and admirers; for the qualities they so much admire are not peculiar to the decimal base, but to the use of one and the same base for numeration, notation, and gradation. But if the base ten agrees with nothing, over, on, or under the earth, can it be the best for scientific use? can it be at all suited to commercial purposes? If true order is the object to be attained, and that for the sake of its utility, then agreement between real and ideal division is the one thing needful, the one essential change without which all other changes are vain, the only change that will yield the greatest good to the greatest number,—a change, which, as volition is with the ideal, and inertia with the real, can be attained only by adaptation of the ideal to the real.

A full investigation of the existing heterogeneous or fragmentary system will lead to the discovery that it contains two elements which are at variance with natural division and with each other, and that the unsuccessful issue of every attempt at regulation hitherto made has been the proper result of the mistake of supposing agreement between those elements to be a possible thing.

The first element of discord to be considered is the division of things by personal proportion, as by fathom, yard, cubit, foot, etc. It is obvious at a glance, that these do not agree with binary division,

nor with decimal, nor yet with each other. It is this element that has suggested the duodecimal base, to which some adhere so tenaciously, apparently because they have not ascertained the essential quality of a base.

The second is the numeration of things by personal parts, as fingers, hands, etc.,—suggesting a base of numeration that has no agreement with the binary, nor with personal proportion, neither can it have with any proper general system. Are there any things in Nature that exist by tens, that associate by tens, that separate into tenths? Are there any things that are sold by tens, or by tenths? Even the fingers number eight, and, had there been any reflection used in the adoption of a base of numeration, the thumbs would not have been included. The ease with which the simplest arithmetical series may be continued led our fathers quietly to the adoption, first, of the quinary, and second, of the decimal group; and we have continued its use so quietly, that its propriety has rarely been questioned; indeed, most persons are both surprised and offended, when they hear it declared to be a purely artificial base, proper only to abstract numbers.

The binary base, on the contrary, is natural, real, simple, and accords with the tendency of the mind to simplify, to individualize. In business, who ever thinks of a half as two-fourths, or three-sixths, much less as two-and-a-half-fifths, or three-and-a-half-sevenths? For division by two produces a half at one operation; but with any other divisor, the reduction is too great, and must be followed by multiplication. Think of calling a half five-tenths, a quarter twenty-five-hundredths, an eighth one-hundred-and-twenty-five-thousandths! Arithmetic is seldom used as a plaything. It generally comes into use when the mind is too much occupied for sporting. Consequently, the smallest divisor that will serve the purpose is always preferred. A calculation is an appendage to a mercantile transaction, not a part of the transaction itself; it is, indeed, a hindrance, and in large business is performed by a distinct person. But even with him, simplicity, because necessary to speed, is second in merit only to correctness.

The binary base is not only simple, it is real. Accordingly, it has large agreement with the popular divisions of weights, etc. Grocers' weights, up to the four-pound piece, and all their measures, are binary; so are the divisions of the yard, the inch, etc.

It is not only simple and real, it is natural. On every hand, things may be found that are duplex in form, that associate in pairs, that separate into halves, that may be divided into two equal parts. Things are continually sold in pairs, in halves, and in quantities produced by halving.

The binary base, therefore, is here proposed, as the only proper base for gradation; and the octonal, as the true commercial base, for numeration and notation: two bases which in combination form a binoctonal system that is at once simple, comprehensive, and efficient.

MY LAST LOVE

I had counted many more in my girlhood, in the first flush of blossoming,—and a few, good men and true, whom I never meet even now without an added color; for, at one time or another, I thought I loved each of them.

"Why didn't I marry them, then?"

For the same reason that many another woman does not. We are afraid to trust our own likings. Too many of them are but sunrise vapors, very rosy to begin with, but by mid-day as dingy as any old dead cloud with the rain all shed out of it. I never see any of those old swains of mine, without feeling profoundly thankful that I don't belong to him. I shouldn't want to look over my husband's head in any sense. So they all got wives and children, and I lived an old maid,—although I was scarcely conscious of the state; for, if my own eyes or other people's testimony were to be trusted, I didn't look old, and I'm quite sure I didn't feel so. But I came to myself on my thirty-second birthday, an old maid most truly, without benefit of clergy. And thereby hangs this tale; for on that birthday I first made acquaintance with my last love.

Something like a month before, there had come to Huntsville two gentlemen in search of game and quiet quarters for the summer. They soon found that a hotel in a country village affords little seclusion; but the woods were full of game, the mountain-brooks swarmed with trout too fine to be given up, and they decided to take a house of their own. After some search, they fixed on an old house, (I've forgotten whose "folly" it was called,) full a mile and a half from town, standing upon a mossy hill that bounded my fields, square and stiff and weather-beaten, and without any protection except a ragged pine-tree that thrust its huge limbs beneath the empty windows, as though it were running away with a stolen house under its arm. The place was musty, rat-eaten, and tenanted by a couple of ghosts, who thought a fever, once quite fatal within the walls, no suitable discharge from the property, and made themselves perfectly free of the quarters in properly weird seasons. But money and labor cleared out all the cobwebs, (for ghosts are but spiritual cobwebs, you know,) and the old house soon wore a charming air of rustic comfort.

I used to look over sometimes, for it was full in view from my chamber-windows, and see the sportsmen going off by sunrise with their guns or fishing-rods, or lying, after their late dinner, stretched upon the grass in front of the house, smoking and reading. Sometimes a fragment of a song would be dropped down from the lazy wings of the south wind, sometimes a long laugh filled all the summer air and frightened the pinewood into echoes, and, altogether, the new neighbors seemed to live an enviable life. They were very civil people, too; for, though their nearest path out lay across my fields, and close by the doorway, and they often stopped to buy fruit or cream or butter, we were never annoyed by an impertinent question or look. Once only I overheard a remark not altogether civil, and that was on the evening before my birthday. One of them, the elder, said, as he went away from my house with a basket of cherries, that he should like to get speech with that polyglot old maid, who read, and wrote, and made her own butter-pats. The other answered, that the butter was excellent at any rate, and perhaps she had a classical cow; and they went down the lane laughingly disputing about the matter, not knowing that I was behind the currant-bushes.

"Polyglot old maid!" I thought, very indignantly, as I went into the house. "I've a mind not to sell them another cake of my butter. But I wonder if people call me an old maid. I wonder if I am one."

I thought of it all the evening, and dreamt of it all night, waking the next morning with a new realization of the subject. That first sense of a lost youth! How sharp and strong it comes! That suddenly opened north door of middle life, through which the winter winds rush in, sweeping out of the southern windows all the splendors of the earlier time; it is like a sea-turn in late summer. It has seemed to be June all along, and we thought it was June, until the wind went round to the east, and the first red leaf admonished us. By-and-by we close, as well as we may, that open door, and look

out again from the windows upon blooms, beautiful in their way, to which some birds yet sing; but, alas! the wind is still from the east, and blows as though, far away, it had lain among icebergs.

So I mused all the morning, watering the sentiment with a bit of a shower out of my cloud; and when the shadows turned themselves, I went out to see how old age would look to me in the fields and woods. It was a delicious afternoon, more like a warm dream of hay-making, odorous, misty, sleepily musical, than a waking reality, on which the sun shone. Tremulous blue clouds lay down all around upon the mountains, and lazy white ones lost themselves in the waters; and through the dozing air, the faint chirp of robin or cricket, and ding of bells in the woods, and mellow cut of scythe, melted into one song, as though the heart-beat of the luscious midsummer-time had set itself to tune.

I walked on to loiter through the woods. No dust-brush for brain or heart like the boughs of trees! There dwells a truth, and pure, strong health within them, an ever-returning youth, promising us a glorious leafage in some strange spring-time, and a symmetry and sweetness that possess us until our thoughts grow skyward like them, and wave and sing in some sunnier strata of soul-air. In the woods I was a girl again, and forgot the flow of the hours in their pleasant companionship. I must have grown tired and sat down by a thicket of pines to rest, though I have forgotten, and perhaps I had fallen asleep; for suddenly I became conscious of a sharp report, and a sharper pain in my shoulder, and, tearing off my cape, I found the blood was flowing from a wound just below the joint. I remember little more, for a sudden faintness came over me; but I have an indistinct remembrance of people coming up, of voices, of being carried home, and of the consternation there, and long delay in obtaining the surgeon. The pain of an operation brought me fully to my senses; and when that was over, I was left alone to sleep, or to think over my situation at leisure. I'm afraid I had but little of a Christian spirit then. All my plans of labor and pleasure spoiled by this one piece of carelessness! to call it by the mildest term. All those nice little fancies that should have grown into real flesh-and-blood articles for my publisher, hung up to dry and shrivel without shape or comeliness! The garden, the dairy, the new bit of carriage-way through the beeches,—my pet scheme,—the new music, the sewing, all laid upon the shelf for an indefinite time, and I with no better employment than to watch the wall-paper, and to wonder if it wasn't almost dinner- or supper-time, or nearly daylight! To be sure, I knew and thought of all the improving reflections of a sick-room; but it was much like a mild-spoken person making peace among twenty quarrelsome ones. You can see him making mouths, but you don't hear a word he says.

A sick mind breeds fever fast in a sick body, and by night I was in a high fever, and for a day or two knew but little of what went on about me. One of the first things I heard, when I grew easier, was, that my neighbor, the sportsman, was waiting below to hear how I was. It was the younger one whose gun had wounded me; and he had shown great solicitude, they said, coming several times each day to inquire for me. He brought some birds to be cooked for me, too,—and came again to bring some lilies he had gone a mile to fetch, he told the girl. Every day he came to inquire, or to bring some delicacy, or a few flowers, or a new magazine for me, until the report of his visit came to be an expected excitement, and varied the dull days wonderfully. Sickness and seclusion are a new birth to our senses, oftentimes. Not only do we get a real glimpse of ourselves, undecked and unclothed, but the commonest habits of life, and the things that have helped to shape them day by day, put on a sort of strangeness, and come to shake hands with us again, and make us wonder that they should be just exactly what they are. We get at the primitive meaning of them, as if we rubbed off the nap of life, and looked to see how the threads were woven; and they come and go before us with a sort of old newness that affects us much as if we should meet our own ghost some time, and wonder if we are really our own or some other person's housekeeper.

I went through all this, and came out with a stock of small facts beside,—as, that the paper-hanger had patched the hangings in my chamber very badly in certain dark spots, (I had got several headaches, making it out,)—that the chimney was a little too much on one side,—that certain boards in the entry-floor creaked of their own accord in the night,—that Neighbor Brown had tucked a few

new shingles into the roof of his barn, so that it seemed to have broken out with them,—and any number of other things equally important. At length I got down-stairs, and was allowed to see a few friends. Of course there was an inundation of them; and each one expected to hear my story, and to tell a companion one, something like mine, only a little more so. It was astonishing, the immense number of people that had been hurt with guns. No wonder I was sick for a day or two afterward. I was more prudent next time, however, and, as the gossips had got all they wanted, I saw only my particular friends. Among these my neighbor, the sportsman, insisted on being reckoned, and after a little hesitation we were obliged to admit him. I say we,—for, on hearing of my injury, my good cousin, Mary Mead, had come to nurse and amuse me. She was one of those safe, serviceable, amiable people, made of just the stuff for a satellite, and she proved invaluable to me. She was immensely taken with Mr. Ames, too, (I speak of the younger, for, after the first call of condolence, the elder sportsman never came,) and to her I left the task of entertaining him, or rather of doing the honors of the house,—for the gentleman contrived to entertain himself and us.

Now don't imagine the man a hero, for he was no such thing. He was very good-looking,—some might say handsome,—well-bred, well educated, with plenty of common information picked up in a promiscuous intercourse with town and country people, rather fine tastes, and a great, strong, magnanimous, physical nature, modest, but perfectly self-conscious. That was his only charm for me. I despise a mere animal; but, other things being equal, I admire a man who is big and strong, and aware of his advantages; and I think most women, and very refined ones, too, love physical beauty and strength much more than they are willing to acknowledge. So I had the same admiration for Mr. Ames that I should have had for any other finely proportioned thing, and enjoyed him very much, sitting quietly in my corner while he chatted with Mary, or told me stories of travel or hunting, or read aloud, which he soon fell into the way of doing.

We did try, as much as hospitality permitted, to confine his visits to a few ceremonious calls; but he persisted in coming almost every day, and walked in past the girl with that quiet sort of authority which it is so difficult to resist. In the same way he took possession of Mary and me. He was sure it must be very dull for both of us; therefore he was going, if we would pardon the liberty, to offer his services as reader, while my nurse went out for a ride or a walk. Couldn't I sit out under the shadow of the beech-trees, as well as in that hot room? He could lift the chair and me perfectly well, and arrange all so that I should be comfortable. He would like to superintend the cooking of some birds he brought one day. He noticed that the girl didn't do them quite as nicely as he had learned to do them in the woods. And so in a thousand things he quietly made us do as he chose, without seeming to outrage any rule of propriety. When I was able to sit in a carriage, he persuaded me to drive with him; and I had to lean on his arm, when I first went round the place to see how matters went on.

Once I protested against his making himself so necessary to us, and told him that I didn't care to furnish the gossips so much food as we were doing.

When I turned him out of doors, he would certainly stay away, he said; but he thought, that, as long as I was an invalid, I needed some one to think and act for me and save me the trouble, and, as no one else seemed disposed to take the office, he thought it was rather his duty and privilege,—especially, he added, with a slight smile, as he was quite sure that it was not very disagreeable to us. As for the gossips, he didn't think they would make much out of it, with such an excellent duenna as Cousin Mary,—and, indeed, he heard the other day that he was paying attention to her.

I thought it all over by myself, when he had gone, and came to the conclusion that it was not necessary for me to resign so great a pleasure as his society had become, merely for the fear of what a few curious people might say. Even Mary, cautious as she was, protested against banishing him for such a reason; and, after a little talking over of the matter among ourselves, we decided to let Mr. Ames come as often as he chose, for the remaining month of his stay.

That month went rapidly enough, for I was well enough to ride and walk out, and half the time had Mr. Ames to accompany me. I got to value him very much, as I knew him better, and as he grew

acquainted with my peculiarities; and we were the best friends in the world, without a thought of being more. No one would have laughed at that more than we, there was such an evident unsuitableness in the idea. At length the time came for him to leave Huntsville; his house was closed, except one room where he still preferred to remain, and his friend was already gone. He came to take tea with us for the last time, and made himself as agreeable as ever, although it evidently required some effort to do so. Soft-hearted Cousin Mary broke down and went off crying when he bade her good-bye, after tea; but I was not of such stuff, and laughingly rallied him on the impression he had made.

"Get your bonnet, and walk over to the stile with me, Miss Rachel," he said. "It isn't sunset quite yet, and the afternoon is warm. Come! it's the last walk we shall take together."

I followed him out, and we went almost silently across the fields to the hill that overlooked the strip of meadow between our houses. There was the stile over which I had looked to see him spring, many a time.

"Sit down a moment, until the sun is quite down," he said, making room for me beside him on the topmost step. "See how splendid that sky is! a pavilion for the gods!"

"I should think they were airing all their finery," I answered. "It looks more like a counter spread with bright goods than anything else I can think of."

"That's a decidedly vulgar comparison, and you're not in a spiritual mood at all," he said. "You've snubbed me two or three times to-night, when I've tried to be sentimental. What's amiss with you?" and he bent his eyes, full of a saucy sort of triumph, upon mine.

"I don't like parting with friends; it sets me all awry," I said, giving back his own self-assured look. I was sorry to have him go; but if he thought I was going to cry or blush, he was mistaken.

"You'll write to me, Miss Rachel?" he asked.

"No, Mr. Ames,—not at all," I said.

"Not write? Why not?" he asked, in astonishment.

"Because I don't believe in galvanizing dead friendships," I answered.

"Dead friendships, Miss Rachel? I hope ours has much life in it yet," he said.

"It's in the last agony, Sir. It will be comfortably dead and buried before long, with a neat little epitaph over it,—which is much the best way to dispose of them finally, I think."

"You're harder than I thought you were," he said. "Is that the way you feel towards all your friends?"

"I love my friends as well as any one," I answered. "But I never hold them when they wish to be gone. My life-yarn spins against some other yarn, catches the fibres, and twists into the very heart"–

"So far?" he asked, turning his eyes down to mine.

"Yes," I said, coolly,—"for the time being. You don't play at your friendships, do you? If so, I pity you. As I was saying, they're like one thread. By-and-by one spindle is moved, the strands spin away from each other, and become strange yarn. What's the use of sending little locks of wool across to keep them acquainted? They're two yarns from henceforth. Reach out for some other thread,—there's plenty near,—and spin into that. We're made all up of little locks from other people, Mr. Ames. Won't it be strange, in that great Hereafter, to hunt up our own fibres, and return other people's? It would take about forty-five degrees of an eternity to do that."

"I shall never return mine," he said. "I couldn't take myself to pieces in such a style. But won't you write at all?"

"To what purpose? You'll be glad of one letter,—possibly of two. Then it will be, 'Confound it! here's a missive from that old maid! What a bore! Now I suppose I must air my wits in her behalf; but, if you ever catch me again,'–*Exit.*"

"And you?" he asked, laughing.

"I shall be as weary as you, and find it as difficult to keep warmth in the poor dying body. No, Mr. Ames. Let the poor thing die a natural death, and we'll wear a bit of crape a little while, and get a new friend for the old."

"So you mean to forget me altogether?"

"No, indeed! I shall recollect you as a very pleasant tale that is told,—not a friend to hanker after. Isn't that good common sense?"

"It's all head-work,—mere cold calculation," he said; "while I"–He stopped and colored.

"Your gods, there, are downright turn-coats," I said, coming down from the stile. "Their red mantles are nothing but pearl-colored now, and presently they'll be russet-gray. That whippoorwill always brings the dew with him, too; so I must go home. Good-night, and good-bye, Mr. Ames."

"I scarcely know how to part with you," he said, taking my hand. "It's not so easy a thing to do."

"People say, 'Good-bye,' or 'God bless you,' or some such civil phrase, usually," I said, with just the least curl of my lip,—for I knew I had got the better of him.

He colored again, and then smiled a little sadly.

"Ah! I'm afraid I leave a bigger lock than I take," he exclaimed. "Well, then, good friend! good-bye, and God bless you, too! Don't be quite so hard as you promise to be."

I missed him very much, indeed; but if any think I cried after him, or wrote verses, or soliloquized for his sake, they are much mistaken. I had lost friends before, and made it a point to think just as little of them as possible, until the sore spot grew strong enough to handle without wincing. Besides, my cousin stayed with me, and all my good friends in the village had to come out for a call or a visit to see how the land lay; so I had occupation enough. Once in a while I used to look over to the old house, and wish for one good breezy conversation with its master; and when the snow came and lay in one mass upon the old roof, clear down to the eaves, like a night-cap pulled down to the eyes of a low-browed old woman, I moved my bed against the window that looked that way. These forsaken nests are gloomy things enough!

I had no thought of hearing again of him or from him, and was surprised, when, in a month, a review came, and before long another, and afterwards a box, by express, with a finely kept bouquet, and, in mid-winter, a little oil-painting,—a delicious bit of landscape for my *sanctum*, as he said in the note that accompanied it. I heard from him in this way all winter, although I never sent word or message back again, and tried to think I was sorry that he did not forget me, as I had supposed he would. Of course I never thought of acknowledging to myself that it was possible for me to love him. I was too good a sophist for that; and, indeed, I think that between a perfect friendship and a perfect love a fainter distinction exists than many people imagine. I have known likings to be colored as rosily as love, and seen what called itself love as cold as the chilliest liking.

One day, after spring had been some time come, I was returning from a walk and saw that Mr. Ames's house was open. I could not see any person there; but the door and windows were opened, and a faint smoke crept out of the chimney and up among the new spring foliage after the squirrels. I had walked some distance, and was tired, and the weather was not perfect; but I thought I would go round that way and see what was going on. It was one of those charming child-days in early May, laughing and crying all in one, the fine mist-drops shining down in the sun's rays, like star-dust from some new world in process of rasping up for use. I liked such days. The showers were as good for me as for the trees. I grew and budded under them, and they filled my soul's soil full of singing brooks.

When I reached the lawn before the door, Mr. Ames came out to see me,—so glad to meet that he held my hand and drew me in, asking two or three times how I was and if I were glad to see him. He had called at the house and seen Cousin Mary, on his way over, he said,—for he was hungering for a sight of us. He was not looking as well as when he left in the autumn,—thinner, paler, and with a more anxious expression when he was not speaking; but when I began to talk with him, he brightened up, and seemed like his old self. He had two or three workmen already tearing down portions of the finishing, and after a few moments asked me to go round and see what improvements he was to make. We stopped at last at his chamber, a room that looked through the foliage towards my house.

"This is my lounging-place," he said, pointing to the sofa beneath the window. "I shall sit here with my cigar and watch you this summer; so be circumspect! But are you sure that you are glad to see me?"

"To be sure. Do you take me for a heathen?" I said. "But what are you making such a change for? Couldn't the old house content you?"

"It satisfies me well enough; but I expect visitors this summer who are quite fastidious, and this old worm-eaten wood-work wouldn't do for them. What makes you look so dark? Don't you like the notion of my lady-visitors?"

"I didn't know that they were to be ladies until you told me," I said; "and it's none of my business whom you entertain, Mr. Ames."

"There wasn't much of a welcome for them in your face, at any rate," he answered. "And to tell the truth, I am not much pleased with the arrangement myself. But they took a sudden fancy for coming, and no amount of persuasion could induce them to change their minds. It's hardly a suitable place for ladies; but if they will come, they must make the best of it."

"How came you ever to take a fancy to this place? and what makes you spend so much money on it?" I asked.

"You don't like to see the money thrown away," he said, laughing. "The truth is, that I've got a skeleton, like many another man, and I've been trying these two years to get away from it. The first time I stopped to rest under this tree, I felt light-hearted. I don't know why, except it was some mysterious influence; but I loved the place, and I love it no less now, although my skeleton has found a lodging-place here too."

"Of course," I said, "and very appropriately. The house was haunted before you came."

"It was haunted for me afterward," he said softly, more to himself than to me; "sweet, shadowy visions I should be glad to call up now." And he turned away and swallowed a sigh.

I pitied him all the way home, and sat up to pity him, looking through the soft May starlight to see the lamp burning steadily at his window until after midnight. From that time I seemed to have a trouble,—though I could scarcely have named or owned it, it was so indefinite.

He came to see me a few days afterward, and sat quite dull and abstracted until I warmed him up with a little lively opposition. I vexed him first, and then, when I saw he was interested enough to talk, I let him have a chance; and I had never seen him so interesting. He showed me a new phase of his character, and I listened, and answered him in as few words as possible, that I might lose nothing of the revelation. When he got up to go away, I asked him where he had been to learn and think so much since the last autumn. He began to be, I thought and hoped, what a sterner teaching might have made him before.

He seemed a little embarrassed; said no one else had discovered any change in him, and he thought it must be only a reflected light. He had observed that I had "a remarkable faculty for drawing people out. What was my witchcraft?"

I disclaimed all witchcraft, and told him it was only because I quarrelled with people. A little wholesome opposition had warmed him into quite a flight of fancy.

"If I could only,"–he began, hurriedly; but took out his watch, said it was time for him to go, and went off quite hastily. It was very weak in me, but I wished very much to know what he would have said.

The next time, he called a few moments to tell me that his lady-visitors, with a friend of theirs, had come, and had expressed a wish to make my acquaintance. He promised them that he would call and let me know,—though he hoped I would not come, unless I felt inclined. He was very absent-minded, and went off the moment I asked him where he had left his good spirits. This made me a little cold to him when I called on the ladies, for I found them all sitting after tea out at the door. It was a miserably constrained affair, though we all tried to be civil,—for I could see that both ladies were taking, or trying to take, my measure, and it did not set me at ease in the least. But in the mean time

I had measured them; and as experience has confirmed that first impression, I may as well sketch them here. I protest, in the first place, against any imputation of prejudice or jealousy. I thought much more charitably of them than others did.

Mrs. Winslow was one of those pleasant, well-bred ladies, who can look at you until you are obliged to look away, contradict you flatly, and say the most grossly impertinent things in the mildest voice and choicest words. A woman of the world, without nobility enough to appreciate a magnanimous thought or action, and with very narrow, shallow views of everything about her, she had still some agreeable traits of character,—much shrewd knowledge of the world, as she saw it, some taste for Art, and an excellent judgment in relation to all things appertaining to polite society. I had really some pleasant intercourse with her, although I think she was one of the most insulting persons I ever met. I made a point of never letting her get any advantage of me, and so we got along very well. Whenever she had a chance, she was sure to say something that would mortify or hurt me; and I never failed to repay both principal and interest with a voice and face as smooth as hers. And here let me say that there is no other way of dealing with such people. Self-denial, modesty, magnanimity, they do not and cannot understand. Never turn them the other cheek, but give a smart slap back again. It will do them good.

The daughter was a very pretty, artificial, silly girl, who might have been very amiable in a different position, and was not ill-natured as it was. I might have liked her very well, if she had not conceived such a wonderful liking for me, and hugged and kissed me as much as she did. She cooed, too, and I dislike to hear a woman coo; it is a sure mark of inferiority.

We were quite intimate soon, and Miss Lucy fell into the habit of coming early in the morning to ride with me, and after dinner to sit and sew, and after tea for a walk. She showed me all her heart, apparently, though there was not much of it, and vowed that she scarcely knew how she should exist without me. I let her play at liking me, just as I should have indulged a playful kitten, and tried to say and do something that might improve her for Mr. Ames's sake. I saw now what his skeleton was. He was to marry the poor child, and shrunk from it as I should have shrunk from a shallow husband.

He used to come with her sometimes, and I must confess that he behaved admirably. I never saw him in the least rude, or ill-natured, or contemptuous towards her, even when she was silliest and tried his patience most severely; and I felt my respect for him increasing every day. As for Mrs. Winslow, she came sometimes to see me, and was very particular to invite me there; but I saw that she watched both me and Mr. Ames, and suspected that she had come to Huntsville for that purpose. She sought every opportunity, too, of making me seem awkward or ignorant before him; and he perceived it, I know, and was mortified and annoyed by it, though he left the chastisement entirely to me. Once in a while Cousin Mary and I had a real old-fashioned visit from him all alone, either when it was very stormy, or when the ladies were visiting elsewhere. He always came serious and abstracted, and went away in good spirits, and he said that those few hours were the pleasantest he passed. Mrs. Winslow looked on them with an evil eye, I knew, and suspected a great deal of which we were all innocent; for one day, when she had been dining at my house with her daughter, and we were all out in the garden together, I overheard her saying,—

"She is just the person to captivate him, and you mustn't bring yourself into competition with her, Lucy. She can out-shine you in conversation, and I know that she is playing a deep game."

"La, ma!" the girl exclaimed. "An old maid, without the least style! and she makes butter too, and actually climbs up in a chair to scrub down her closets,—for Edward and I caught her at it one day."

"And did she seem confused?" asked Mrs. Winslow.

"No, indeed! Now I should have died, if he had caught me in such a plight; but she shook down her dress as though it were a matter of course, and they were soon talking about some German stuff, —I don't know what it was,—while I had to amuse myself with the drawings."

"That's the way!" retorted the mother. "You play dummy for them. I wish you had a little more spirit, Lucy. You wouldn't play into the hands of this designing"–

"Nonsense, mamma! She's a real clever, good-natured old thing, and I like her," exclaimed the daughter. "You're so suspicious!"

"You're so foolishly secure!" answered mamma. "A man is never certain until after the ceremony; and you don't know Edward Ames, Lucy."

"I know he's got plenty of money, mother, and I know he's real nice and handsome," was the reply; and they walked out of hearing.

I wouldn't have listened even to so much as that, if I could have avoided it; and as soon as I could, I went into the parlor, and sat down to some work, trying to keep down that old trouble, which somehow gathered size like a rolling snowball. I might have known what it was, if I had not closed my eyes resolutely, and said to myself, "The summer will soon be gone, and there will be an end of it all then"; and I winced, as I said it, like one who sees a blow coming.

The summer went by imperceptibly; it was autumn, and still all things remained outwardly as they had been. We went back and forth continually, rode and walked out, sang and read together, and Lucy grew fonder and fonder of me. She could scarcely live out of my presence, and confided to me all her plans when she and Edward should be married,—how much she thought of him, and he of her, all about their courtship, how he declared himself and how she accepted him one soft moonlight night in far Italy, how agitated and distressed he had been when she had a fever, and a thousand other details which swelled that great stone in my heart more and more. But I shut my eyes, until one day when I saw them together. He was listening, intent, and very pale, to something she told him, and, to my surprise, she was pale too, and weeping. Before she could finish, she broke into a passionate rush of tears, and would have thrown herself at his feet; but he caught her, and she sunk down upon his shoulder, and he stooped towards her as he might if he had loved her. Then I knew how I loved him.

I had to bear up a little while, for they were in my house, and I must bid them good-night, and talk idly, so that they should not suspect the wound I had. But I must do something, or go mad; and so I went out to the garden-wall, and struck my hand upon it until the blood ran. The pain of that balanced the terrible pain within for a few moments, and I went in to them calm and smiling. They were sitting on the sofa, he with a perplexed, pale face, and she blushing and radiant. They started up when they saw my hand bandaged, and she was full of sympathy for my hurt. He said but little, though he looked fixedly at my face. I know I must have looked strangely. When they were gone, I went into my chamber and shut the door, with some such feeling as I should have closed the entrance of a tomb behind me forever. I fought myself all that night. My heart was hungry and cried out for food, and I would promise it none at all. Is there anyone who thinks that youth has monopolized all the passion of life, all the rapture, all the wild despair? Let them breast the deep, strong current of middle life.

I never could quite recollect how that last month went away. I know that I kept myself incessantly occupied, and that I saw them almost daily, without departing from the tone of familiar friendship I had worn throughout, although my heart was full of jealousy and a fast-growing hatred that would not be quelled. Not for a thousand happy loves would I have let them see my humiliation. I was even afraid that already he might suspect it, for his manner was changed. Sometimes he was distant, sometimes sad, and sometimes almost tenderer than a friend.

It got to be October, and I felt that I could not bear such a state of things any longer, and questioned within myself whether I had better not leave home for a while. If I had been alone, it would have been easy; but my cousin Mary was still with me, and I could give no good reason for such a step. Before I had settled upon anything, Lucy came to me in great distress, with a confession that Mr. Ames was somehow turned against her, and that she was almost heart-broken about it. If she lost him, she must die; for she had so long looked upon him as her husband, and loved him so well, that life would be nothing without him. What should she do? Would I advise her?

I didn't know, until long afterward, that it was a consummate piece of acting, dictated by the mother, and that she was as heartless as it was possible for a young girl to be; and while she lay weeping at my feet, I pitied her, and wondered if, perhaps, there might not be some spring of generous feeling in her heart, that a happy love would unlock. The next morning I went out alone, for a ride, in a direction where I thought I could not be disturbed. Up hill and down, over roads, pastures, and streams, I tore until the fever within was allayed, and then I stopped to rest, and look upon the beauties of the bright October day. All overhead and around, the sky and patches of water were of that far-looking blue which seems all ready to open upon new and wonderful worlds. Big, bright drops of a night-shower lay asleep in the curled-up leaves, as though the trees had stretched out a million hands to catch them. And such hands! What comparison could match them? Clouds of butterflies, such as sleep among the flowers of Paradise,—forgotten dreams of children, who sleep and smile,—fancies of fairy laureates, strung shining together for some high festival,—anything most rich or unreal, might furnish a type for the foliage that was painted upon the golden blue of that October day. I could almost have forgotten my trouble in the charmed gaze.

"You turn up in strange places, Rachel!" said a voice behind me.

This was what I had dreaded; but I swallowed love and fear in one great gulp, and shut my teeth with a resolution of iron. I would not be guilty of the meanness of standing in that child's way, if she were but a fool; so I answered him gayly.

"'The same to yourself,' as Neighbor Dawkins would say. Why didn't you all go to the lake, as you planned last night?"

"For some good reasons. Were you bewitched, that you stood here so still?" He looked brightly into my face, as he came up.

"No,—but the trees are. Shouldn't you think that Oberon had held high court here over-night?"

"And that they had left their wedding-dresses upon the boughs? Yes, they are gay enough! But where have you been these four weeks, that I haven't got speech with you?"

"A pretty question, when you've been at my house almost every day! Where are your senses, man?"

"I know too well where they are," he said. "But I've wanted a good talk with you, face to face,—not with a veil of commonplace people between. You're not yourself among them. I like you best when your spirits are a little ruffled, and your eye kindles, and your lip curls, as it does now,—not when you say, "No, Sir," or "Yes, Ma'am," and smile as though it were only skin-deep."

I started my horse.

"Let's be going, Jessie," I said. "It's our duty to feel insulted. He accuses your mistress of being deceitful among her friends, and says he likes her when she's cross."

He laughed lightly, and walked along by my side.

"How are your ladies? and when will Miss Lucy come to ride out with me?" I asked, fearing a look into his eyes.

This brought him down. I knew it would.

He answered that she was well, and walked along with his head down, quite like another man. At length he looked up, very pale, and put his hand on my bridle.

"I want to put a case to you," he said. "Suppose a man to have made some engagement before his mind was mature, and under a strong outside pressure of which he was not aware. When he grows to a better knowledge of the world and himself, and finds that he has been half cheated, and that to keep his word will entail lasting misery and ruin on himself, without really benefiting any one else, is he bound to keep it?"

I stopped an instant to press my heart back, and then I answered him.

"A promise is a promise, Mr. Ames. I have thought that a man of honor valued his word more than happiness or life."

He flushed a moment, and then looked down again; and we walked on slowly, without a word, over the stubbly ground, and through brooklets and groves and thickets, towards home. If I could only reach there before he spoke again! How could I hold out to do my duty, if I were tempted any farther? At last he checked the horse, and, putting his hand heavily on mine, looked me full in the face, while his was pale and agitated.

"Rachel," he said, huskily, "if a man came to you and said, 'I am bound to another; but my heart, my soul, my life are at your feet,' would you turn him away?"

I gasped one long breath of fresh air.

"Do I look like a woman who would take a man's love at second hand?" I said, haughtily. "Women like me *must* respect the man they marry, Sir."

He dropped his hand, and turned away his head, with a deep-drawn breath. I saw him stoop and lift himself again, as though some weight were laid upon his shoulders. I saw the muscles round and ridgy upon his clenched hand. "All this for a silly, shallow thing, who knows nothing of the heart she loses!" some tempter whispered, and passionate words of love rushed up and beat hard against my shut teeth. "Get thee behind me!" I muttered, and resolutely started my horse forward. "Not for her,—but for myself,—for self-respect! The best love in the world shall not buy that!"

He came along beside me, silent, and stepping heavily, and thus we went to the leafy lane that came out near my house. There I stopped; for I felt that this must end now.

"Mr. Ames, you must leave this place, directly," I said, with as much sternness as I could assume. "If you please, I will bid you good-bye, now."

"Not see you again, Rachel?" he exclaimed, sharply. "No! not that! Forgive me, if I have said too much; but don't send me away!"

He took my hand in both his, and gazed as one might for a sentence of life or death.

"Will you let a woman's strength shame you?" I cried, desperately. "I thought you were a man of honor, Mr. Ames. I trusted you entirely, but I will never trust any one again."

He dropped my hand, and drew himself up.

"You are right, Rachel! you are right," he said, after a moment's thought. "No one must trust me, and be disappointed. I have never forgotten that before; please God, I never will again. But must I say farewell here?"

"It is better," I said.

"Good-bye, then, dear friend!—dear friend!" he whispered. "If you ever love any better than yourself, you will know how to forgive me."

I felt his kiss on my hand, and felt, rather than saw, his last look, for I dared not raise my eyes to his; and I knew that he had turned back, and that I had seen the last of him. For one instant I thought I would follow and tell him that he did not suffer alone; but before my horse was half turned, I was myself again.

"Fool!" I said. "If you let the dam down, can you push the waters back again? Would that man let anything upon earth stand between him and a woman that loved him? Let him go so. He'll forget you in six months."

I had to endure a farewell call from Lucy and her mother. Mr. Ames had received a sudden summons home, and they were to accompany him a part of the way. The elder scrutinized me very closely, but I think she got nothing to satisfy her; the younger kissed and shed tears enough for the parting of twin sisters. How I hated her! In a couple of days they were gone, Mr. Ames calling to see me when he knew me to be out, and leaving a civil message only. The house was closed, the faded leaves fell all about the doorway, and the grass withered upon the little lawn.

"That play is over, and the curtain dropped," I said to myself, as I took one long look towards the old house, and closed the shutters that opened that way.

You who have suffered some great loss, and stagger for want of strength to walk alone, thank God for work. Nothing like that for bracing up a feeble heart! I worked restlessly from morning till

night, and often encroached on what should have been sleep. Hard work, real sinewy labor, was all that would content me; and I found enough of it. To have been a proper heroine, I suppose I should have devoted myself to works of charity, read sentimental poetry, and folded my hands very meekly and prettily; but I did no such thing. I ripped up carpets, and scoured paint, and swept down cobwebs, I made sweetmeats and winter clothing, I dug up and set out trees, and smoothed the turf in my garden, and tramped round my fields with the man behind me, to see if the fences needed mending, or if the marshes were properly drained, or the fallow land wanted ploughing. It made me better. All the sickliness of my grief passed away, and only the deep-lying regret was left like a weight to which my heart soon became accustomed. We can manage trouble much better than we often do, if we only choose to try resolutely.

I had but one relapse. It was when I got news of their marriage. I remember the day with a peculiar distinctness; for it was the first snow-storm of the season, and I had been out walking all the afternoon. It was one of those soft, leaden-colored, expectant days, of late autumn or early winter, when one is sure of snow; and I went out on purpose to see it fall among the woods; for it was just upon Christmas, and I longed to see the black ground covered. By-and-by a few flakes sauntered down, coquetting as to where they would alight; then a few more followed, thickening and thickening until the whole upper air was alive with them, and the frozen ridges whitened along their backs, and every little stiff blade of grass or rush or dead bush held all it could carry. It was pleasant to see the quiet wonder go on, until the landscape was completely changed,—to walk home *scuffing* the snow from the frozen road on which my feet had ground as I came that way, and see the fences full, and the hollows heaped up level, and the birches bent down with their hair hidden, and the broad arms of the fir-trees loaded, like sombre cotton-pickers going home heavily laden. Then to see the brassy streak widen in the west, and the cold moon hang astonished upon the dead tops of some distant pine-trees, was to enjoy a most beautiful picture, with only the cost of a little fatigue.

When I got home, I found among my letters one from Mr. Ames. He could not leave the country without pleading once more for my esteem, he wrote. He had not intended to marry until he could think more calmly of the past; but Lucy's mother had married again very suddenly into a family where her daughter found it not pleasant to follow her. She was poor, without very near relatives now, and friends, on both sides, had urged the marriage. He had told her the state of his feelings, and offered, if she could overlook the want of love, to be everything else to her. She should never repent the step, and he prayed me, when I thought of him, to think as leniently as possible. Alas! now I must not think at all.

How I fought that thought,—how I worked by day, and studied deep into the night, filling every hour full to the brim with activity, seems now a feverish dream to me. Such dead thoughts will not be buried out of sight, but lie cold and stiff, until the falling foliage of seasons of labor and experience eddies round them, and moss and herbs venture to grow over their decay, and birds come slowly and curiously to sing a little there. In time, the mound is beautiful with the richness of the growth, but the lord of the manor shudders as he walks that way. For him, it is always haunted.

Thus with me. I knew that the sorrow was doing me good, that it had been needed long, and I tried to profit by it, as the time came when I could think calmly of it all. I thought I had ceased to love him; but the news of her death (for she died in two years) taught me better. I heard of him from others,—that he had been most tender and indulgent to a selfish, heartless woman, who trifled with his best feelings, and almost broke his heart before she went. I heard that he had one child, a poor little blind baby, for whom the mother had neither love nor care, and that he still continued abroad. But from himself I never heard a word. No doubt he had forgotten me, as I had always thought he would.

More than two years passed, and spring-time was upon us, when I heard that he had returned to the country, and was to be married shortly to a wealthy, beautiful widow he had found abroad. At first we heard that he was married, and then that he was making great preparations, but would not marry until autumn. Even the bride's dress was described, and the furniture of the house of which

she was to be mistress. I had expected some such thing, but it added one more drop of bitterness to the yearning I had for him. It was so hard to think him like any other man!

However, now, as before, I covered up the wound with a smiling face, and went about my business. I had been making extensive improvements on my farm, and kept out all day often, overseeing the laborers. One night, a soft, starlight evening in late May, I came home very tired, and, being quite alone, sat down on the portico to watch the stars and think. I had not been long there, when a man's step came up the avenue, and some person, I could not tell who in the darkness, opened the gate, and came slowly up towards me. I rose, and bade him good-evening.

"Is it you, Rachel?" he said, quite faintly. It was his voice. Thank Heaven for the darkness! The hand I gave him might tremble, but my face should betray nothing. I invited him into the parlor, and rang for lights.

"He's come to see about selling the old house," I thought; there was a report that he would sell it by auction. When the lights came, he looked eagerly at me.

"Am I much changed?" I said, with a half-bitter smile.

"Not so much as I," he answered, sighing and looking down;—he seemed to be in deep thought for a moment.

He was much changed. His hair was turning gray; his face was thin, with a subdued expression I had never expected to see him wear. He must have suffered greatly; and, as I looked, my heart began to melt. That would not do; and besides, what was the need of pity, when he had consoled himself? I asked some ordinary question about his journey, and led him into a conversation on foreign travel.

The evening passed away as it might with two strangers, and he rose to go, with a grave face and manner as cold as mine,—for I had been very cold. I followed him to the door, and asked how long he stayed at Huntsville.

Only a part of the next day, he said; his child could not be left any longer; but he wished very much to see me, and so had contrived to get a few days.

"Indeed!" I said. "You honor me. Your Huntsville friends scarcely expected to be remembered so long."

"They have not done me justice, then," he said, quietly. "I seem to have the warmest recollection of any. Good-night, Miss Mead. I shall not be likely to see you again."

He gave me his hand, but it was very cold, and I let it slip as coldly from mine. He went down the gravel-walk slowly and heavily, and he certainly sighed as he closed the gate. Could I give him up thus? "Down pride! You have held sway long enough! I must part more kindly, or die!" I ran down the gravel-walk and overtook him in the avenue. He stopped as I came up, and turned to meet me.

"Forgive me," I said, breathlessly. "I could not part with old friends so, after wishing so much for them."

He took both my hands in his. "Have you wished for me, Rachel?" he said, tenderly. "I thought you would scarcely have treated a stranger with so little kindness."

"I was afraid to be warmer," I said.

"Afraid of what?" he asked.

My mouth was unsealed. "Are you to be married?" I asked.

"I have no such expectation," he answered.

"And are not engaged to any one?"

"To nothing but an old love, dear! Was that why you were afraid to show yourself to me?"

"Yes!" I answered, making no resistance to the arm that was put gently round me. He was mine now, I knew, as I felt the strong heart beating fast against my own.

"Rachel," he whispered, "the only woman I ever did or ever can love, will you send me away again?"

A SHETLAND SHAWL

It was made of the purest and finest wool,
As fine as silk, and as soft and cool;
It was pearly white, of that cloud-like hue
Which has a shadowy tinge of blue;
And brought by the good ship, miles and miles,
From the distant shores of the Shetland Isles.

And in it were woven, here and there,
The golden threads of a maiden's hair,
As the wanton wind with tosses and twirls
Blew in and out of her floating curls,
While her busy fingers swiftly drew
The ivory needle through and through.

The warm sun flashed on the brilliant dyes
Of the purple and golden butterflies,
And the drowsy bees, with a changeless tune,
Hummed in the perfumed air of June,
As the gossamer fabric, fair to view,
Under the maiden's fingers grew.

The shadows of tender thought arise
In the tranquil depths of her dreamy eyes,
And her blushing cheek bears the first impress
Of the spirit's awakening consciousness,
Like the rose, when it bursts, in a single hour,
From the folded bud to the perfect flower.

Many a tremulous hope and care,
Many a loving wish and prayer,
With the blissful dreams of one who stood
At the golden gate of womanhood,
The little maiden's tireless hands
Wove in and out of the shining strands.

The buds that burst in an April sun
Had seen the wonderful shawl begun;
It was finished, and folded up with pride,
When the vintage purpled the mountain-side;
And smiles made light in the violet eyes,
At the thought of a lover's pleased surprise.

The spider hung from the budding thorn
His baseless web, when the shawl was worn;
And the cobwebs, silvered by the dew,

With the morning sunshine breaking through,
The maiden's toil might well recall,
In the vanished year, on the Shetland Shawl.

For the rose had died in the autumn showers,
That bloomed in the summer's golden hours;
And the shining tissue of hopes and dreams,
With misty glories and rainbow gleams
Woven within and out, was one
Like the slender thread by the spider spun.

As fresh and as pure as the sad young face,
The snowy shawl with its clinging grace
Seems a fitting veil for a form so fair:
But who would think what a tale of care,
Of love and grief and faith, might all
Be folded up in a Shetland Shawl?

ROBA DI ROMA

[Continued.]

CHAPTER VI.
GAMES IN ROME

Walking, during pleasant weather, almost anywhere in Rome, but especially in passing through the enormous arches of the Temple of Peace, or along by the Colosseum, or some wayside *osteria* outside the city-walls, the ear of the traveller is often saluted by the loud, explosive tones of two voices going off together, at little intervals, like a brace of pistol-shots; and turning round to seek the cause of these strange sounds, he will see two men, in a very excited state, shouting, as they fling out their hands at each other with violent gesticulation. Ten to one he will say to himself, if he be a stranger in Rome, "How quarrelsome and passionate these Italians are!" If he be an Englishman or an American, he will be sure to congratulate himself on the superiority of his own countrymen, and wonder why these fellows stand there shaking their fists at each other, and screaming, instead of fighting it out like men,—and muttering, "A cowardly pack, too!" will pass on, perfectly satisfied with his facts and his philosophy. But what he has seen was really not a quarrel. It is simply the game of *Mora*, as old as the Pyramids, and formerly played among the host of Pharaoh and the armies of Cæsar as now by the subjects of Pius IX. It is thus played.

Two persons place themselves opposite each other, holding their right hands closed before them. They then simultaneously and with a sudden gesture throw out their hands, some of the fingers being extended, and others shut up on the palm,—each calling out in a loud voice, at the same moment, the number he guesses the fingers extended by himself and his adversary to make. If neither cry out aright, or if both cry out aright, nothing is gained or lost; but if only one guess the true number, he wins a point. Thus, if one throw out four fingers and the other two, he who cries out six makes a point, unless the other cry out the same number. The points are generally five, though sometimes they are doubled, and as they are made, they are marked by the left hand, which, during the whole game, is held stiffly in the air at about the shoulders' height, one finger being extended for every point. When the *partito* is won, the winner cries out, "*Fatto!*" or "*Guadagnato!*" or "*Vinto!*" or else strikes his hands across each other in sign of triumph. This last sign is also used when Double *Mora* is played, to indicate that five points are made.

So universal is this game in Rome, that the very beggars play away their earnings at it. It was only yesterday, as I came out of the gallery of the Capitol, that I saw two who had stopped screaming for "*baiocchi per amor di Dio*," to play pauls against each other at *Mora*. One, a cripple, supported himself against a column, and the other, with his ragged cloak slung on his shoulder, stood opposite him. They staked a paul each time with the utmost *nonchalance*, and played with an earnestness and rapidity which showed that they were old hands at it, while the coachmen from their boxes cracked their whips, and jeered and joked them, and the shabby circle around them cheered them on. I stopped to see the result, and found that the cripple won two successive games. But his cloaked antagonist bore his losses like a hero, and when all was over, he did his best with the strangers issuing from the Capitol to line his pockets for a new chance.

Nothing is more simple and apparently easy than *Mora*, yet to play it well requires quickness of perception and readiness in the calculation of chances. As each player, of course, knows how many fingers he himself throws out, the main point is to guess the number of fingers thrown by his opponent, and to add the two instantaneously together. A player of skill will soon detect the favorite numbers of his antagonist, and it is curious to see how remarkably clever some of them are in divining, from the movement of the hand, the number to be thrown. The game is always played with great vivacity, the hands being flung out with vehemence, and the numbers shouted at the full pitch of the voice, so as to be heard at a considerable distance. It is from the sudden opening of the fingers, while the hands are in the air, that the old Roman phrase, *micare digitis*, "to flash with the fingers," is derived.

A bottle of wine is generally the stake; and round the *osterias*, of a *festa*-day, when the game is played after the blood has been heated and the nerves strained by previous potations, the regular volleyed explosions of "*Tre! Cinque! Otto! Tutti!*" are often interrupted by hot discussions. But these are generally settled peacefully by the bystanders, who act as umpires,—and the excitement goes off in talk. The question arises almost invariably upon the number of fingers flashed out; for an unscrupulous player has great opportunities of cheating, by holding a finger half extended, so as to be able to close or open it afterwards according to circumstances; but sometimes the losing party will dispute as to the number called out. The thumb is the father of all evil at *Mora*, it being often impossible to say whether it was intended to be closed or not, and an unskilful player is easily deceived in this matter by a clever one. When "*Tutti*" is called, all the fingers, thumb and all, must be extended, and then it is an even chance that a discussion will take place as to whether the thumb was out. Sometimes, when the blood is hot, and one of the parties has been losing, violent quarrels will arise, which the umpires cannot decide, and, in very rare cases, knives are drawn and blood is spilled. Generally these disputes end in nothing, and, often as I have seen this game, I have never been a spectator of any quarrel, though discussions numberless I have heard. But, beyond vague stories by foreigners, in which I put no confidence, the vivacity of the Italians easily leading persons unacquainted with their characters to mistake a very peaceable talk for a violent quarrel, I know of only one case that ended tragically. There a savage quarrel, begun at *Mora*, was with difficulty pacified by the bystanders, and one of the parties withdrew to an *osteria* to drink with his companions. But while he was there, the rage which had been smothered, but not extinguished, in the breast of his antagonist, blazed out anew. Rushing at the other, as he sat by the table of the *osteria*, he attacked him fiercely with his knife. The friends of both parties started at once to their feet, to interpose and tear them apart; but before they could reach them, one of the combatants dropped bleeding and dying on the floor, and the other fled like a maniac from the room.

This readiness of the Italians to use the knife, for the settlement of every dispute, is generally attributed by foreigners to the passionateness of their nature; but I am inclined to believe that it also results from their entire distrust of the possibility of legal redress in the courts. Where courts are organized as they are in Naples, who but a fool would trust to them? Open tribunals, where justice should be impartially administered, would soon check private assassinations; and were there more honest and efficient police courts, there would be far fewer knives drawn. The Englishman invokes the aid of the law, knowing that he can count upon prompt justice; take that belief from him, he, too, like Harry Gow, would "fight for his own hand." In the half-organized society of the less civilized parts of the United States, the pistol and bowie-knife are as frequent arbiters of disputes as the stiletto is among the Italians. But it would be a gross error to argue from this, that the Americans are violent and passionate by nature; for, among the same people in the older States, where justice is cheaply and strictly administered, the pistol and bowie-knife are almost unknown. Despotism and slavery nurse the passions of men; and wherever law is loose, or courts are venal, public justice assumes the shape of private vengeance. The farther south one goes in Italy, the more frequent is violence and the more unrepressed are the passions. Compare Piedmont with Naples, and the difference is immense. The dregs of vice and violence settle to the south. Rome is worse than Tuscany, and Naples worse than Rome,—not so much because of the nature of the people, as of the government and the laws.

But to return to *Mora*. As I was walking out beyond the Porta San Giovanni the other day, I heard the most ingenious and consolatory periphrasis for a defeat that it was ever my good-fortune to hear; and, as it shows the peculiar humor of the Romans, it may here have a place. Two of a party of *contadini* had been playing at *Mora*, the stakes being, as usual, a bottle of wine, and each, in turn, had lost and won. A lively and jocose discussion now arose between the friends on the one side and the players on the other,—the former claiming that each of the latter was to pay his bottle of wine for the game he lost, (to be drunk, of course, by all,) and the latter insisting, that, as one loss offset the other, nothing was to be paid by either. As I passed, one of the players was speaking. "*Il primo*

partito," he said, "*ho guadagnato io; e poi, nel secondo*,"—here a pause,—"*ho perso la vittoria*": "The first game, I won; the second, I–*lost the victory*." And with this happy periphrasis, our friend admitted his defeat. I could not but think how much better it would have been for the French, if this ingenious mode of adjusting with the English the Battle of Waterloo had ever occurred to them. To admit that they were defeated was of course impossible; but to acknowledge that they "lost the victory" would by no means have been humiliating. This would have soothed their irritable national vanity, prevented many heart-burnings, saved long and idle arguments and terrible "kicking against the pricks," and rendered a friendly alliance possible.

No game has a better pedigree than *Mora*. It was played by the Egyptians more than two thousand years before the Christian era. In the paintings at Thebes and in the temples of Beni-Hassan, seated figures may be seen playing it,—some keeping their reckoning with the left hand uplifted,—some striking off the game with both hands, to show that it was won,—and, in a word, using the same gestures as the modern Romans. From Egypt it was introduced into Greece. The Romans brought it from Greece at an early period, and it has existed among them ever since, having suffered apparently no alteration. Its ancient Roman name was *Micatio*, and to play it was called *micare digitis*,—"to flash the fingers,"—the modern name *Mora* being merely a corruption of the verb *micare*. Varro describes it precisely as it is now played; and Cicero, in the first book of his treatise "De Divinatione," thus alludes to it:—"*Quid enim est sors? Idem propemodum quod* micare, *quod talos jacere, quod tesseras; quibus in rebus temeritas et casus, non ratio et consilium valent.*" So common was it, that it became the basis of an admirable proverb, to denote the honesty of a person:—"*Dignus est quicum in tenebris mices*": "So trustworthy, that one may play *Mora* with him in the dark." At one period they carried their love of it so far, that they used to settle by *micatio* the sales of merchandise and meat in the Forum, until Apronius, prefect of the city, prohibited the practice in the following terms, as appears by an old inscription, which is particularly interesting as containing an admirable pun: "*Sub exagio potius pecora vendere quam digitis concludentibus tradere*": "Sell your sheep by the balance, and do not bargain or deceive" (*tradere* having both these meanings) "by opening and shutting your fingers at *Mora*."

One of the various kinds of the old Roman game of *Pila* still survives under the modern name of *Pallone*. It is played between two sides, each numbering from five to eight persons. Each of the players is armed with a *bracciale*, or gantlet of wood, covering the hand and extending nearly up to the elbow, with which a heavy ball is beaten backwards and forwards, high into the air, from one side to the other. The object of the game is to keep the ball in constant flight, and whoever suffers it to fall dead within his bounds loses. It may, however, be struck in its rebound, though the best strokes are before it touches the ground. The *bracciali* are hollow tubes of wood, thickly studded outside with pointed bosses, projecting an inch and a half, and having inside, across the end, a transverse bar, which is grasped by the hand, so as to render them manageable to the wearer. The balls, which are of the size of a large cricket-ball, are made of leather, and are so heavy, that, when well played, they are capable of breaking the arm, unless properly received on the *bracciale*. They are inflated with air, which is pumped into them with a long syringe, through a small aperture closed by a valve inside. The game is played on an oblong figure, marked out on the ground, or designated by the wall around the sunken platform on which it is played; across the centre is drawn a transverse line, dividing equally the two sides. Whenever a ball either falls outside the lateral boundary or is not struck over the central line, it counts against the party playing it. When it flies over the extreme limits, it is called a *volata*, and is reckoned the best stroke that can be made. At the end of the lists is a spring-board, on which the principal player stands. The best batter is always selected for this post; the others are distributed about. Near him stands the *pallonaio*, whose office is to keep the balls well inflated with air, and he is busy nearly all the time. Facing him, at a short distance, is the *mandarino*, who gives ball. As soon as the ball leaves the *mandarino's* hand, the chief batter runs forward to meet it, and strikes it as far and high as he can, with the *bracciale*. Four times in succession have I seen a good player strike a

volata, with the loud applause of the spectators. When this does not occur, the two sides bat the ball backwards and forwards, from one to the other, sometimes fifteen or twenty times before the point is won; and as it falls here and there, now flying high in the air and caught at once on the *bracciale* before touching the ground, now glancing back from the wall which generally forms one side of the lists, the players rush eagerly to hit it, calling loudly to each other, and often displaying great agility, skill, and strength. The interest now becomes very exciting; the bystanders shout when a good stroke is made, and groan and hiss at a miss, until, finally, the ball is struck over the lists, or lost within them. The points of the game are fifty,—the first two strokes counting fifteen each, and the others ten each. When one side makes the fifty before the other has made anything, it is called a *marcio*, and counts double. As each point is made, it is shouted by the caller, who stands in the middle and keeps the count, and proclaims the bets of the spectators.

This game is as national to the Italians as cricket to the English; it is not only, as it seems to me, much more interesting than the latter, but requires vastly more strength, agility, and dexterity, to play it well. The Italians give themselves to it with all the enthusiasm of their nature, and many a young fellow injures himself for life by the fierceness of his batting. After the excitement and stir of this game, which only the young and athletic can play well, cricket seems a very dull affair.

The game of *Pallone* has always been a favorite one in Rome; and near the summit of the Quattro Fontane, in the Barberini grounds, there is a circus, which used to be specially devoted to public exhibitions during the summer afternoons. At these representations, the most renowned players were engaged by an *impresario*. The audience was generally large, and the entrance-fee was one paul. Wonderful feats were sometimes performed here; and on the wall are marked the heights of some remarkable *volate*. The players were clothed in a thin, tight dress, like *saltimbanchi*. One side wore a blue, and the other a red ribbon, on the arm. The contests, generally, were fiercely disputed,—the spectators betting heavily, and shouting, as good or bad strokes were made. Sometimes a line was extended across the amphitheatre, from wall to wall, over which it was necessary to strike the ball, a point being lost in case it passed below. But this is a variation from the game as ordinarily played, and can be ventured on only when the players are of the first force. The games here, however, are now suspended; for the French, since their occupation, have not only seized the post-office, to convert it into a club-room, and the *piano nobile* of some of the richest palaces, to serve as barracks for their soldiers, but have also driven the Romans from their amphitheatre, where *Pallone* was played, to make it into *ateliers de génie*. Still, one may see the game played by ordinary players, towards the twilight of any summer day, in the Piazza di Termini, or near the Tempio della Pace, or the Colosseo. The boys from the studios and shops also play in the streets a sort of mongrel game called *Pillotta*, beating a small ball back and forth, with a round bat, shaped like a small *tamburello* and covered with parchment. But the real game, played by skilful players, may be seen almost every summer night outside the Porta a Pinti, in Florence; and I have also seen it admirably played under the fortress-wall at Siena, the players being dressed entirely in white, with loose ruffled jackets, breeches, long stockings, and shoes of undressed leather, and the audience sitting round on the stone benches, or leaning over the lofty wall, cheering on the game, while they ate the cherries or *zucca*-seeds which were hawked about among them by itinerant peddlers. Here, towards twilight, one could lounge away an hour pleasantly under the shadow of the fortress, looking now at the game and now at the rolling country beyond, where olives and long battalions of vines marched knee-deep through the golden grain, until the purple splendors of sunset had ceased to transfigure the distant hills, and the crickets chirped louder under the deepening gray of the sky.

In the walls of the amphitheatre at Florence is a bust in colored marble of one of the most famous players of his day, whose battered face seems still to preside over the game, getting now and then a smart blow from the *Pallone* itself, which, in its inflation, is no respecter of persons. The honorable inscription beneath the bust, celebrating the powers of this champion, who rejoiced in the surname of Earthquake, is as follows:—

"Josephus Barnius, Petiolensis, vir in jactando repercutiendoque folle singularis, qui ob robur ingens maximamque artis peritiam, et collusores ubique devictos, Terræmotus formidabili cognomento dictus est."

Another favorite game of ball among the Romans is *Bocce* or *Boccette*. It is played between two sides, consisting of any number of persons, each of whom has two large wooden balls of about the size of an average American nine-pin ball. Beside these, there is a little ball called the *lecco*. This is rolled first by one of the winning party to any distance he pleases, and the object is to roll or pitch the *boccette* or large balls so as to place them beside the *lecco*. Every ball of one side nearer to the *lecco* than any ball of the other counts one point in the game,—the number of points depending on the agreement of the parties. The game is played on the ground, and not upon any smooth or prepared plane; and as the *lecco* often runs into hollows, or poises itself on some uneven declivity, it is sometimes a matter of no small difficulty to play the other balls near to it. The great skill of the game consists, however, in displacing the balls of the adverse party so as to make the balls of the playing party count, and a clever player will often change the whole aspect of affairs by one well-directed throw. The balls are thrown alternately,—first by a player on one side, and then by a player on the other. As the game advances, the interest increases, and there is a constant variety. However good a throw is made, it may be ruined by the next. Sometimes the ball is pitched with great accuracy, so as to strike a close-counting ball far into the distance, while the new ball takes its place. Sometimes the *lecco* itself is suddenly transplanted into a new position, which entirely reverses all the previous counting. It is the last ball which decides the game, and, of course, it is eagerly watched. In the Piazza di Termini numerous parties may be seen every bright day in summer or spring playing this game under the locust-trees, surrounded by idlers, who stand by to approve or condemn, and to give their advice. The French soldiers, once free from drill or guard or from practising trumpet-calls on the old Agger of Servius Tullius near by, are sure to be rolling balls in this fascinating game. Having heated their blood sufficiently at it, they adjourn to a little *osteria* in the Piazza to refresh themselves with a glass of *asciutto* wine, after which they sit on a bench outside the door, or stretch themselves under the trees, and take a *siesta*, with their handkerchiefs over their eyes, while other parties take their turn at the *bocce*. Meanwhile, from the Agger beyond are heard the distressing trumpets struggling with false notes and wheezing and shrieking in ludicrous discord, while now and then the solemn bell of Santa Maria Maggiore tolls from the neighboring hill.

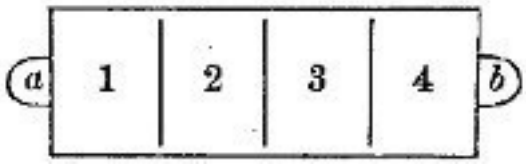
Another favorite game in Rome and Tuscany is *Ruzzola*, so called from the circular disk of wood with which it is played. Round this the player winds tightly a cord, which, by a sudden cast and backward jerk of the hand, he uncoils so as to send the disk whirling along the road. Outside the walls, and along all the principal avenues leading to the city, parties are constantly to be met playing at this game; and oftentimes before the players are visible, the disk is seen bounding round some curve, to the great danger of one's legs. He whose disk whirls the farthest wins a point. It is an excellent walking game, and it requires some knack to play the disk evenly along the road. Often the swiftest disks, when not well-directed, bound over the hedges, knock themselves down against the walls, or bury themselves in the tangled ditches; and when well played, if they chance to hit a stone in the road, they will leap like mad into the air, at the risk of serious injury to any unfortunate passer. In the country, instead of wooden disks, the *contadini* often use *cacio di pecora*, a kind of hard goat's cheese, whose rind will resist the roughest play. What, then, must be the digestive powers of those who eat it, may be imagined. Like the peptic countryman, they probably do not know they have a stomach, not having ever felt it; and certainly they can say with Tony Lumpkin, "It never hurts me, and I sleep like a hound after it."

In common with the French, the Romans have a passion for the game of Dominos. Every *caffè* is supplied with a number of boxes, and, in the evening especially, it is played by young and old, with a seriousness which strikes us Saxons with surprise. We generally have a contempt for this game, and look upon it as childish. But I know not why. It is by no means easy to play well, and requires a

careful memory and quick powers of combination and calculation. No *caffè* in Rome or Marseilles would be complete without its little black and white counters; and as it interests at once the most mercurial and fidgety of people and the laziest and languidest, it must have some hidden charm as yet unrevealed to the Anglo-Saxon.

Beside Dominos, Chess (*Scacchi*) is often played in public in the *caffès*; and there is one *caffè* named *Dei Scacchi*, because it is frequented by the best chess-players in Rome. Here matches are often made, and admirable games are played.

Among the Roman boys the game of *Campana* is also common. A parallelogram is drawn upon the ground and subdivided into four squares, which are numbered. At the top and bottom are two small semicircles, or *bells*, thus:—



Each of the players, having deposited his stake in the semicircle (*b*) at the farthest end, takes his station at a short distance, and endeavors to pitch some object, either a disk or a bit of *terracotta*, or more generally a *baiocco*, into one of the compartments. If he lodge it in the nearest bell, (*a*,) he pays a new stake into the pool; if into the farthest bell, (*b*,) he takes the whole pool; if into either of the other compartments, he takes one, two, three, or four of the stakes, according to the number of the compartment. If he lodge on a line, he is *abbrucciato*, as it is termed, and his play goes for nothing. Among the boys, the pool is frequently filled with buttons,—among the men, with *baiocchi*; but buttons or *baiocchi* are all the same to the players,—they are the representatives of luck or skill.

But the game of games in Rome is the Lottery. This is under the direction of the government, which, with a truly ecclesiastic regard for its subjects, has organized it into a means of raising revenue. The financial objection to this method of taxation is, that its hardest pressure is upon the poorest classes; but the moral and political objections are still stronger. The habit of gambling engendered by it ruins the temper, depraves the morals, and keeps up a constant state of excitement at variance with any settled and serious occupation. The temptations to laziness which it offers are too great for any people luxurious or idle by temperament; and the demon of Luck is set upon the altar which should be dedicated to Industry. If one happy chance can bring a fortune, who will spend laborious days to gain a competence? The common classes in Rome are those who are most corrupted by the lottery; and when they can neither earn nor borrow *baiocchi* to play, they strive to obtain them by beggary, cheating, and sometimes theft. The fallacious hope that their ticket will some day bring a prize leads them from step to step, until, having emptied their purses, they are tempted to raise the necessary funds by any unjustifiable means. When you pay them their wages or throw them a *buona-mano*, they instantly run to the lottery-office to play it. Loss after loss does not discourage them. It is always, "The next time they are to win,—there was a slight mistake in their calculation before." Some good reason or other is always at hand. If by chance one of them do happen to win a large sum, it is ten to one that it will cost him his life,—that he will fall into a fit, or drop in an apoplexy, on hearing the news. There is a most melancholy instance of this in the very next house,—of a Jew made suddenly and unexpectedly rich, who instantly became insane in consequence, and is now the most wretched and melancholy spectacle that man can ever become,—starving in the midst of abundance, and moving like a beast about his house. But of all ill luck that can happen to the lottery-gambler, the worst is to win a small prize. It is all over with him from that time forward; into the great pit of the lottery everything that he can lay his hands on is sure to go.

There has been some difference of opinion as to whether the lottery was of later Italian invention, or dated back to the Roman Empire,—some even contending that it was in existence in Egypt long before that period; and several ingenious discussions may be found on this subject in the journals and annals of the French *savans*. A strong claim has been put forward for the ancient Romans, on the ground that Nero, Titus, and Heliogabalus were in the habit of writing on bits of wood and shells the names of various articles which they intended to distribute, and then casting them to the crowd to be scrambled for.[1] On some of these shells and billets were inscribed the names of slaves, precious vases, costly dresses, articles of silver and gold, valuable beasts, etc., which became the property of the fortunate persons who secured the billets and shells. On others were written absurd and useless articles, which turned the laugh against the unfortunate finder. Some, for instance, had inscribed upon them ten pieces of gold, and some ten cabbages. Some were for one hundred bears, and some for one egg. Some for five camels, and some for ten flies. In one sense, these were lotteries, and the Emperors deserve all due credit for their invention. But the lottery, according to its modern signification, is of Italian origin, and had its birth in Upper Italy as early as the fourteenth or fifteenth century. Here it was principally practised by the Venetians and Genoese, under the name of *Borsa di Ventura*,—the prizes consisting originally, not of money, but of merchandise of every kind,—precious stones, pictures, gold and silver work, and similar articles. The great difference between them and the ancient lotteries of Heliogabalus and Nero was, that tickets were bought and prizes drawn. The lottery soon came to be played, however, for money, and was considered so admirable an invention, that it was early imported into France, where Francis I., in 1539, granted letters-patent for the establishment of one. In the seventeenth century, this "*infezione*," as an old Italian writer calls it, was introduced into Holland and England, and at a still later date into Germany. Those who invented it still retain it; but those who adopted it have rejected it. After nearly three centuries' existence in France, it was abolished on the 31st of December, 1835. The last drawing was at Paris on the 27th of the same month, when the number of players was so great that it became necessary to close the offices before the appointed time, and one Englishman is said to have gained a *quaterno* of the sum of one million two hundred thousand francs. When abolished in France, the government was drawing from it a net revenue of twenty million francs.

In Italy the lottery was proscribed by Innocent XII., Benedict XIII., and Clement XII. But it was soon revived. It was not without vehement opposers then as now, as may be seen by a little work published at Pisa in the early part of the last century, entitled, "L'Inganno non conosciuto, oppure non voluto conoscere, nell'Estrazione del Lotto." Muratori, in 1696, calls it, in his "Annals of Italy," "*Inventione dell' amara malizia per succiare il sangue dei malaccorti giuocatori*." In a late number of the "Civiltà Cattolica," published at Rome by the Jesuits, (the motto of which is "*Beatus Populus cujus Dominus Deus est*,") there is, on the other hand, an elaborate and most Jesuitical article, in which the lottery is defended with amusing skill. What Christendom in general has agreed to consider immoral and pernicious in its effects on a people seems, on the contrary, to the writer of this article, to be highly moral and commendable.

The numbers which can be played are from one to ninety. Of these only five are now drawn. Originally the numbers drawn were eight, (*otto*,)—and it is said that the Italian name of this game, *lotto*, was derived from this circumstance. The player may stake upon one, two, three, four, or five numbers,—but no ticket can be taken for more than five; and he may stake upon his ticket any sum, from one *baiocco* up to five *scudi*,—but the latter sum only in case he play upon several chances on the same ticket. If he play one number, he may either play it *al posto assegnato*, according to its place in the drawing, as first, second, third, etc.,—or he may play it *senza posto*, without place, in which case he wins, if the number come anywhere among the five drawn. In the latter case, however, the prize is much less in proportion to the sum staked. Thus, for one *baiocco* staked *al posto assegnato*, a

[1] See Dessault, *Traité de la Passion du Jeu*.

scudo may be won; but to gain a *scudo* on a number *senza posto*, seven *baiocchi* must be played. A sum staked upon two numbers is called an *ambo*,—on three, a *terno*,—on four, a *quaterno*,—and on five, a *cinquino*; and of course the prizes increase in rapid proportion to the numbers played,—the sum gained multiplying very largely on each additional number. For instance, if two *baiocchi* be staked on an *ambo*, the prize is one *scudo*; but if the same sum be staked on a *terno*, the prize is a hundred *scudi*. When an *ambo* is played for, the same two numbers may be played as single numbers, either *al posto* or *senza posto*, and in such case one of the numbers alone may win. So, also, a *terno* may be played so as to include an *ambo*, and a *quaterno* so as to include a *terno* and *ambo*, and a *cinquino* so as to include all. But whenever more than one chance is played for, the price is proportionally increased. For a simple *terno* the limit of price is thirty-five pauls. The ordinary rule is to play for every chance within the numbers taken; but the common people rarely attempt more than a *terno*. If four numbers are played with all their chances, they are reckoned as four *terni*, and paid for accordingly. If five numbers are taken, the price is for five *terni*.

Where two numbers are played, there is always an augment to the nominal prize of twenty per cent.; where three numbers are played, the augment is of eighty per cent.; and from every prize is deducted ten per cent., to be devoted to the hospitals and the poor. The rule creating the augments was decreed by Innocent XIII. Such is the rage for the lottery in Rome, as well as in all the Italian States, and so great is the number of tickets bought within the year, that this tax on the prizes brings in a very considerable revenue for eleëmosynary purposes.

The lottery is a branch of the department of finance, and is under the direction of a Monsignore. The tickets originally issue from one grand central office in the Palazzo Madama; but there is scarcely a street in Rome without some subsidiary and distributing office, which is easily recognized, not only by its great sign of "*Prenditoria di Lotti*" over the door, but by scores of boards set round the windows and doorway, on which are displayed, in large figures, hundreds of combinations of numbers for sale. The tickets sold here are merely purchased on speculation for resale, and though it is rare that all are sold, yet, as a small advance of price is asked on each ticket beyond what was given at the original office, there is enough profit to support these shops. The large show of placards would to a stranger indicate a very considerable investment; yet, in point of fact, as the tickets rarely cost more than a few *baioicchi*, the amount risked is small. No ticket is available for a prize, unless it bear the stamp and signature of the central office, as well as of the distributing shop, if bought in the latter.

Every Saturday, at noon, the lottery is drawn in Rome, in the Piazza Madama. Half an hour before the appointed time, the Piazza begins to be thronged with ticket-holders, who eagerly watch a large balcony of the sombre old Palazzo Madama, (built by the infamous Catharine de' Medici,) where the drawing is to take place. This is covered by an awning and colored draperies. In front, and fastened to the balustrade, is a glass barrel, standing on thin brass legs and turned by a handle. Five or six persons are in the balcony, making arrangements for the drawing. These are the officials,—one of them being the government officer, and the others persons taken at random, to supervise the proceedings. The chief official first takes from the table beside him a slip of paper on which a number is inscribed. He names it aloud, passes it to the next, who verifies it and passes it on, until it has been subjected to the examination of all. The last person then proclaims the number in a loud voice to the populace below, folds it up, and drops it into the glass barrel. This operation is repeated until every number from one to ninety is passed, verified by all, proclaimed, folded, and dropped into the barrel. The last number is rather sung than called, and with more ceremony than all the rest. The crowd shout back from below. The bell strikes noon. A blast of trumpets sounds from the balcony, and a boy dressed in white robes advances from within, ascends the steps, and stands high up before the people, facing the Piazza. The barrel is then whirled rapidly round and round, so as to mix in inextricable confusion all the tickets. This over, the boy lifts high his right hand, makes the sign of the cross on his breast, then, waving his open hand in the air, to show that nothing is concealed, plunges it into the barrel, and draws out a number. This he hands to the official, who names it, and

passes it along the line of his companions. There is dead silence below, all listening eagerly. Then, in a loud voice, the number is sung out by the last official, "*Primo estratto, numero 14*," or whatever the number may be. Then sound the trumpets again, and there is a rustle and buzz among the crowd. All the five numbers are drawn with like ceremony, and all is over. Within a surprisingly short space of time, these numbers are exhibited in the long frames which are to be seen over the door of every *Prenditoria di Lotti* in Rome, and there they remain until the next drawing takes place. The boy who does the drawing belongs to a college of orphans, an admirable institution, at which children who have lost both parents and are left helpless are lodged, cared for, and educated, and the members of which are employed to perform this office in rotation, receiving therefor a few *scudi*.

It will be seen from the manner in which the drawing of the lottery is conducted, that no precaution is spared by the government to assure the public of the perfect good faith and fairness observed in it. This is, in fact, absolutely necessary in order to establish that confidence without which its very object would be frustrated. But the Italians are a very suspicious and jealous people, and I fear that there is less faith in the uprightness of the government than in their own watchfulness and the difficulty of deception. There can be little doubt that no deceit is practised by the government, so far as the drawing is concerned,—for it would be nearly impossible to employ it. Still there are not wanting stories of fortunate coincidences which are singular and interesting; one case, which I have every reason to believe authentic, was related to me by a most trustworthy person, as being within his own knowledge. A few years ago, the Monsignore who was at the head of the lottery had occasion to diminish his household, and accordingly dismissed an old servant who had been long in his palace. Often the old man returned and asked for relief, and as often was charitably received. But his visits at last became importunate, and the Monsignore remonstrated. The answer of the servant was, "I have given my best years to the service of your Eminence,—I am too old to labor,—what shall I do?" The case was a hard one. His Eminence paused and reflected;—at last he said, "Why not buy a ticket in the lottery?" "Ah!" was the answer, "I have not even money to supply my daily needs. What you now give me is all I have. If I risk it, I may lose it,—and that lost, what can I do?" Still the Monsignore said, "Buy a ticket in the lottery." "Since your Eminence commands me, I will," said the old man; "but what numbers?" "Play on number so and so for the first drawing," was the answer, "*e Dio ti benedica*

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.