VARIOUS

BLACKWOOD'S EDINBURGH MAGAZINE, VOLUME 56, NUMBER 347, SEPTEMBER, 1844

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Содержание

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M. LOUIS BLANC [1]

M. Louis Blanc, a democratic journalist, with all, and perhaps more than the usual talents of the Parisian journalist—with all, and more than the usual faults of one—has undertaken to write the history of his country, during and since the revolution of 1830. What can we expect to be the result of such an undertaking? What can we expect from a man who sits down to a task of this description, animated with all the party virulence which gives zest to a democratic newspaper? It is not a history, but a scandal, that he will write. M. Louis Blanc has distilled the bile of journalism; he has paused over the hasty sarcasm which political animosity deals forth, not to correct, or moderate, or abate, but merely to point and envenom it. His appreciation of men, their character, their talents, their designs—all bear the hue of the atrabilious journalist. There is this difference only between

[1] *Histoire de Dix Ans*, 1830-1840. Par M. Louis Blanc.

his history and the daily portion of envy and malignity which a democratic newspaper pours forth, that the dye is more deeply engrained. In the mind of the author, the stain of his party has become ineffaceable. Those who are pleased—and the number is not few—with having high names and established reputations laid at their feet, soiled, trod upon, will meet here with ample gratification. To be sure they will be occasionally required, in lieu of such as they have thrown down, to set up the bust of some democratic celebrity, whose greatness, or whose genius, they were not previously aware of. But, not to say that the justice of party requires this substitution, it is a penalty which writers of this description will invariably impose upon them. It is the common trick of the envious, and the mock magnanimity with which they seek to conceal their true nature—to exalt the lowly, while they debase the exalted. Since some idol there must be, let it be one of their raising. Even while helping to raise it, they enjoy, too, the secret consciousness that it is of brittle metal.

But in the composition of a history, the spirit of party, however eager it may be, cannot always guide the pen. The mere interest of the narrative, the strangeness and peculiarity of circumstances, will claim their share of the author's mind. The politician must sometimes be absorbed in the chronicler; and so it happens with M. Louis Blanc. His narrative often interests by its details; and if it has the partiality, it has also the vivacious colouring, of a contemporary. It possesses, also, a richness of anecdote—the fruit, probably, of his position

as a journalist; add to which, that M. Louis Blanc is not without a species of off-hand, dashing eloquence. He can say daring things in a daring manner, and give the pungency of epigram to his political paradoxes. He has a full share of that rhetoric of journalism which is so well calculated to make an impression on the careless reader, but which requires that the reader should continue careless, in order to retain the impression he has received. It results from all this, that while we constantly distrust our guide, while we perpetually refuse the appreciation he offers to us of men and events, we still read on with interest a work which is, at least, relieved from the charge of insipidity or dulness; and indeed, if we had not derived some entertainment from its perusal, we should not have thought of bringing it under the notice of our readers. To have engaged ourselves merely in combating its errors and misrepresentations, would have been a dreary and an endless task.

To enable the reader at once to judge of the tone and temper of M. Louis Blanc's politics, we present him the following passage. It is the object of the long Introduction which precedes his history, to show that the events which have transpired in France since 1793, have had, for their great result, the establishment of the government of the middle classes through a Chamber of Deputies—a view which we think is incontestably right. That France has its House of Commons, is the great fruit of all its struggles, its calamities, and its victories. It must not be supposed, however, that this is a result in which M. Louis Blanc rejoices.

Nothing he so much detests as this government of the middle classes; nor is there any portion of society he vilifies more cordially than the *bourgeoisie*. Hear how he speaks of them. After relating the history of the Carbonari, who troubled by their plots the reign of Louis XVIII., he says:—"This *Carbonarism* never descended into the depths of society; it never moved the lower strata. How, then, could it be preserved from the vices of the middle class—egoism, littleness of ideas, extreme love of a mere material happiness, gross instincts!"—(P. 115.) So that he finds Carbonarism to have lacked in virtue, because it had not descended, for its disciples, sufficiently low in the scale of society!—to have grown corrupt, by reason of its not having penetrated to the "lower strata!" And yet the duties of the Carbonari seem to have been precisely calculated for these lower strata. These were, he had already told us himself, "to have a gun and fifty cartridges, to be ready to devote one's-self, and to obey blindly the orders of unknown leaders."—(P. 101.)

When we describe M. Louis Blanc as a democrat, it is rather for want of a better and more accurate title, than because this exactly describes him. A democrat is generally understood to be one who has a large faith in the lowest class of the people, such as they really exist; our author has a faith only in the future of this class. He does not fail to give vent, when the occasion prompts him, to his compassion or contempt for the ignorant mass of mankind. The democracy he worships is one to be established in some distant age, by a people very different, and

living under some modification of the law of property, which he has not thought fit to explain. It is a democracy which has nothing distinct but its hatreds—a shadowy monster, peculiarly disagreeable to deal with. Our historian writes with overflowing gall against kings, against aristocracies, against the middle class. You would say he is a stanch republican, and that the people are to be his depositaries of power. But no; a lamentation, which escapes him from time to time—as bitter as any which Tory or Legitimist would utter—over the *blindness* of the people, their passions and their ignorance, contradicts this conclusion. Where is the power, and in whom lodged, that M. Louis Blanc would willingly obey, or see obeyed? It exists nowhere. Society is corrupt, is chaotic; nor can it, by any organ it possesses, exercise a sound or rational power. A new era must arise—how, whence, when, we are not instructed.

It is the peculiar characteristic of French democracy, that there is always mixed up with it the principle, more or less distinctly avowed, of the community of goods. Perhaps the vagueness we complain of in M. Louis Blanc, is dictated by mere prudence; perhaps there is no vagueness to the eye of a propagandist. One sentiment of French democracy he certainly expresses with sufficient hardihood. It is not often we meet with the principle of intervention between state and state, asserted in these days with so much boldness as in the following passage: —"Men have stigmatized the war in Spain, calling the principle of intervention an oppressive principle. Puerile accusation! All

people are brothers, and all revolutions cosmopolite. When a government believes that it represents a just cause, let it make it triumph wherever a triumph is possible. This is its right; it is more—it is its duty."—(*Introduction*, p. 120.)

How exactly analogous to this is the reasoning which leads to persecution in religion—to the Holy Inquisition, and all its philanthropic schemes *of intervention!* The conviction in a good cause allowed to overrule the fundamental principles of justice between man and man—to overrule them, not occasionally and by way of exception, but systematically—this is the very essence of persecution. But let no one think that, by any such representation, he would gain an advantage over the republican propagandist. He no longer fears religious persecution—it is a thing past: he braves it. He would adopt his favourite principle, and all its consequences. He would probably admit that it was the duty of the priest, according to his priestly intelligence, to ban and persecute. Not mutual toleration, but reciprocal compulsion, would be his principle. Combat thou for thy truth—let me fight for mine; such would be his formula.

In a writer bent upon startling and surprising us, there is often a sort of premeditated haste, a voluntary forgetfulness, which it is curious to remark. One who weighs his matter well before he speaks, will often end, alas! in having something very tame and moderate to propound—something which, after all his turmoil and reflection, may sound very like a good old commonplace. Now this approximation to commonplace is the great horror

of shallow writers; and the way to avoid it appears to be this: —Proclaim your thought at once, in all its crude candescence, before it has had time to cool and shape itself; then, in order to save your credit with the more captions and scrutinizing, give, at some convenient interval, such an explanation or modification as will show that, after all, you were as wise as your reader. State your paradox in all the startling force of unmitigated diction, and refute it yourself afterwards, or say enough to prove that you could have done so. This, well managed, gives two occasions for brilliant display; a sober statement has been converted into a couple of bold and glancing propositions. Truth, it is well proved, like the diamond, shines the more by being cut into surfaces.

M. Louis Blanc, for instance, makes a startling remark on the incompatibility of royalty and a representative chamber. The two powers are represented to us as flatly irreconcilable. "Can society," he asks, "have two heads? Is the sovereignty divisible? Between the government of a king and the government of an assembly, is there not a gulf which every day makes wider? And wherever this dualism exists, are not the people condemned to fluctuate miserably between a 10th of August and an 18th Brumaire?"—(*Int.*, p. 64.) And a little further on, speaking of the times of Louis XVIII., he writes—"Meanwhile Europe began to be disquieted on the state of things in France. Foreign sovereigns had thought to establish peace in our country, by establishing the empire of the charter, and the political dualism which it consecrates. The error was great, and they ended by discovering

it. M. de Richelieu, who had been present at the congress at Aix-la-Chapelle, brought back with him a very lively apprehension of the future fate of the monarchy in France. A change of the electoral law was proposed. Unhappily, it was not in the law of the 5th February that lay the danger which occupied the congress of Aix-la-Chapelle. To consolidate the throne, and raise it above the storms which threatened it, not this or that electoral law, but the electoral power itself, should, if possible, be abolished. For in whatever hands this formidable lever was placed, it was impossible that royalty could long resist its action. To shift the elective power was only to give the monarchy other enemies, not to save it. * * * The aim of the new ministry was to preserve the electoral law; which amounted to this—the monarchy chose ministers whose programme was the destruction of monarchy."

On reading such passages, we naturally set about recalling certain old-fashioned political truisms, bearing on the character and interest of that middle class of society in which the electoral power is generally lodged. We recollect that the middle classes have been held to have an interest as well in preserving, as in checking and controlling the monarchy. Alone, they could not govern society; and they have a larger share in the government, as partners with the monarchy, than if they were absorbed in the general mass of the population. They have every thing to lose by the abolition of a royalty which they have ceased to fear, and which they have bound by laws. Such a royalty, with its sway over the imagination of the multitude, with its strong hand of military

power—hand in which the sword is allowed always to rest, as pomp in time of peace, as weapon in time of war—such a royalty they feel to be their best protection. Why, then, should they, in their electoral capacity, be thrust on by a blind rage to destroy it? But all this train of reflection we might have spared ourselves. M. Louis Blanc knows it all, and, if you will wait a reasonable time, he will show you that he knows it. He will put it to you very forcibly—in another place. Accordingly, some ninety pages off, he tells us:—"At bottom, the middle class (*la bourgeoisie*) sees in the monarchy a permanent obstacle to democratic aspirations: it would have subjected royalty, but not destroyed it."

For the enlightenment of those who may wish to write history in the most captivating manner, and at the least possible expense to themselves, we will reveal another fruitful expedient. There are two ways of writing history. You may either deduce its great events from certain wide and steadily-operating causes, as the growing wealth or intelligence of a people, or you may raise a vulgar wonder by describing them as the result of some quite trivial incident. In the one case, you appeal to a philosophic taste; in the other, to a popular love of the marvellous. A revolution may be represented as the inevitable outbreak of the discontent and misery of the people; or it may be traced, with all its disasters, to the caprice of a courtier, or perhaps the accidental delay of a messenger. For want of a nail, the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe, the horse was lost; for want of a horse, the man —and so all was owing to the want of a nail!

The two manners seem incompatible. Never mind. Use them both—both freely, independently—just as occasion prompts, and the effect requires. Flatter the philosophic taste that delights in generalities, and please the childish wonder which loves to fancy that the whole oak—trunk, branches, leaves—lay in the acorn. M. Louis Blanc has certainly no idea of forfeiting either of these attractions by laying claim to the other. Observe the ease and boldness with which he embraces them in his narrative of the fall of Napoleon, and the restoration of the Bourbons. He commences in the generalizing mood.

"The fall of Napoleon lay in the laws of the development of the middle classes. Can a nation be at the same time essentially commercial and essentially warlike? Napoleon must have renounced his great part of military chieftain, or he must have broken with the spirit of citizenship and commerce. It was madness to think of reigning by the sword, and continuing the Constituent Assembly. France could not have, at the same time, the destinies of Rome and Carthage. Napoleon succumbed, and must have succumbed, to the Carthaginian party of the people of France. But if the necessary development of the middle classes called for the overthrow of the empire, it demanded also the return of the Bourbons. To prove this, we have only to present, in its instructive simplicity of detail, that narrative of the restoration which so many historians have distorted."—(*Int.*, p. 18.)

Well, he proceeds with this simple and instructive detail; and his first object is evidently to deprive Talleyrand, to whom on

all occasions he manifests a singular bitterness, of the credit generally given him of having aided materially in the recall of the Bourbons in 1814. But does he effect this by showing, as from this exordium we might expect, that his countrymen of the middle class, wearied of the costly triumphs and disasters of the empire, had begun to sigh for peace and their old kings? Not at all. He transfers the personal share in the drama from Prince Talleyrand to Baron de Vitrolles. The Duke d'Alberg had introduced the baron to Talleyrand, whose intention was to employ him merely to sound the views of the Allies. Talleyrand was to have accredited him by some lines of his own writing, but ultimately refused to commit himself. How was Baron de Vitrolles, who by no means limited himself to the subordinate part designed for him, and on whom it will be seen so much really depended, to get accredited to the Allies?

The Duke d'Alberg was intimately acquainted with the Count de Stadion, representative of Austria at the congress. Now these two friends had formerly, at Munich, had a certain tender intimacy with two young girls, whose names the Duke d'Alberg remembered; he wrote them on the leaf of a pocket-book, and they served as a letter of credence to the adventurous ambassador. "Such," exclaims our lately generalizing historian —"such is the manner in which God disposes of the fate of nations!—*Voilà de quelle sorte il plait à Dieu de disposer du sort des peuples!*"

The Baron de Vitrolles, we are told, found the Emperor

Alexander possessed with a strong repugnance against the Bourbons. It cost him three hours' conversation to gain him over. But he succeeded. It was he who did gain him over. On the 31st of March, when the Emperor of Russia entered Paris, Talleyrand stepped forward to receive him.

"Well," said Alexander, "it seems that France recalls the Bourbons."

These words occasioned M. Talleyrand a profound surprise, which, however, he was too skilful a diplomatist to betray. From that moment, he was a convert to what he considered the successful cause. "Thus," continues our historian, "this restoration took place contrary to the will of the people, to whom the Bourbons in 1814 were unknown; contrary to the sympathies of Alexander, who feared the dangers of a reaction; contrary, in fine, to the opinion of M. Talleyrand, who had never thought it possible, and had desired only the regency of *Marie Louise*!"

What particle of truth there may be in this narrative, we do not stop to enquire; we refer to it only as an example of the bold union of the two historic manners. The restoration of the Bourbons was "in the laws of the development of the middle classes!" It was all owing to the Baron de Vitrolles, and that lucky little intrigue at Munich!

It is one of the boasts and privileges of history to reverse the judgment that contemporaries have formed of the character of the actors in it. This privilege M. Louis Blanc, since he writes history, is determined at all events to seize upon; and he can

boast, perhaps, of having reversed more judgments of this kind than any other historian, however voluminous. M. Talleyrand has obtained his reputation for ability—his moral reputation it would be too commonplace a matter to attack—by "speaking in monosyllables one half his life, and saying nothing the other half." M. Guizot is a man "whose talent consists in concealing, under the solemnity of expression and the pomp of *formulæ*, an extreme poverty of views, and sentiments without grandeur." M. Dupin, the elder, is "skilful in concealing, under an affectation of rudeness, the pusillanimity of his heart." Cuvier, whose scientific reputation is untouched, probably because no motive led him to assail it, is "*homme plus grand par l'intelligence que par le cœur*." Of Metternich he writes—"A lover of repose from selfishness, he sought it also from incapacity. He wished to enjoy a reputation easily usurped, the falsehood of which the least complication of events would have exposed." And the picture he gives throughout of Casimir Perier is that of an "illustrious charlatan," in whom nothing was genuine but his pride, his hate, and his physical infirmities.

The ministers of Charles X. meet with a much fairer appreciation than those of Louis Philippe. Towards them, one might even say that he is indulgent. This is easily accounted for: in the war of party, those with whom we come into the closest and most frequent collision, must, of course, excite the largest share of our animosity. M. de Polignac seems to have been aware that he had little to fear from the fierce democrat: he has not

disdained a sort of literary participation in the work, having contributed some manuscript notes of his own, explanatory of his share in the transactions of 1830. Altogether, we may presume that the history, so far as it relates to the ministers of Charles X., is not unfairly written. Let us approach the narrative by this quarter.

It is a singular picture that M. de Polignac presents to the imagination, with his unruffled serenity, his extreme audacity, his violent measures, his negligent preparation, his strong will, his weak intelligence. The minister is always smiling, and, in the midst of disaster and ruin, is still beaming with self-confidence; he seems to have thought that self-confidence wrought like magic, or like faith, and could of itself remove mountains. If difficulties occurred, his resource was to be still more self-confident. He was well aware of the hostility his ordonnances would create; he was well aware that the army must be their veritable support: yet observe with what a sublime air of nonchalance he prepares himself for the subjection of a people. "How many men," asked M. d'Haussez, as the ministers sat round the council-table, "can you reckon on at Paris?—have you twenty-eight or thirty thousand?" "More," said the premier; "I have forty-two thousand;" and, rolling up a paper which he held in his hands, he threw it across the table to d'Haussez. "But," said the latter, as he looked over the statement that had been given to him, "I see here only thirteen thousand. Thirteen thousand men on paper—that amounts to about seven or eight thousand actually

ready to fight your battles. And the other twenty-nine thousand to complete your number, where are they?" M. de Polignac assured him that they were spread about the neighbourhood of Paris, and in ten hours, if it were necessary, could be assembled in the capital. The ministers felt, adds our historian, that they were entering into a dreadful game blindfold.

M. de Polignac appears to have relied upon the army, much in the same way that a speculative writer, theorizing upon government, rests upon his great abstraction, the military power. He treated it as if it were a principle, an idea, that developed itself without his aid, and not a palpable fact of there being a certain number of armed men, then and there, to fight for his ordonnances.

There is no virtue so much applauded in the present day as resolution—*will*; and there are who regard a strong will as the essence of all virtue. But the history of M. de Polignac proves, (if this needed proof,) that the weak can have will enough. Your strong will may be purchased at the sole expense of reason. Let there be one idea in a brain that cannot hold two, and you have a strong will. M. de Polignac never wavered once; he was always seen with a smiling countenance, calm, radiant with hope and self-approval. When others around him began to despond, when the Duke of Ragusa, commander of the forces, writing to the king, said that it was not a riot, but a revolution, and advised him to retreat while he could still retreat with honour, the minister had, for all answer, but one word—"Fire!" It was still, Fire! But

what if the troops, it was asked, desert to the people? “Then fire on the troops!”

On the publication of the ordonnances, the members of the Chamber who were in Paris met at each others’ houses to discuss measures of resistance. But it was not from the members of the Chamber that the movement was to emanate. Those who had any position to compromise looked on, for the most part, with anxiety and astonishment, waiting to see what current the disturbed waters would finally take. “On the evening of the 27th, a man, name unknown, appeared on the Quai d’Ecole, and paraded the banks of the river with the tri-coloured flag, which had been folded up and hidden away for fifteen years.” The symbol was adopted by the people. The revolution had commenced.

Then followed all those strange scenes of levity and blood, buffoonery and heroism, which the history of Parisian revolutions has familiarized to the imagination, but which, nevertheless, have an inexhaustible interest. The people arm themselves wheresoever and howsoever they can. One brings into the Place de la Bourse two large hampers, full of muskets and accoutrements. They come from the Théâtre du Vaudeville, where a piece had been played, a few days before, which required that a number of actors should be armed. To command men thus equipped there were extemporary generals, whose epaulets were obtained from the wardrobe of the Opera Comique. The students of the Polytechnic were, as usual, on the alert to practise whatever they had learned of military science; the younger sort

entering into the war with the same spirit that other schoolboys partake of any minor mischief that is going forward. A student of the Polytechnic is standing on the left bank of the river; he has a musket, but no ammunition. A fellow-student, a lad of fifteen, has a packet of cartridges, but no musket: "You shall share them," said he, showing his treasure, "if you will lend me the gun to shoot my half." A party of the royal guard were coming over the bridge. He started with the gun *to have his shots*. He was swept off with others by the fire of the military.

On one side comes a party led by a violin, women applauding. But the women do more than applaud. They carry great paving-stones to the top of the house, to be thence precipitated on the heads of the soldiers; they tend the wounded, they bruise charcoal for gunpowder.

There was, no doubt, some severe fighting during the Three Days; but, generally speaking, the military seem to have entered into the contest with reluctance. Some instances are here given of singular forbearance on their part. At a time when, in certain quarters of Paris, each house was converted into a sort of fortress whence the military was assailed, three men had placed themselves behind a stack of chimneys, and had, from this shelter, directed a destructive fire on the troops. They were at length discovered, and a cannon was levelled against the chimney. But, before firing, the gunner made signal to the men to escape, contenting himself with demolishing their breastwork. As another company of soldiers, led by its officer, was marching

through the streets, one of the mob rushed forward, and, with a mad audacity, struck the officer on the head with a bar of iron. He staggered, and his face overflowed with blood; but he still had strength enough to raise his sword to put aside the muskets of his men, who were in the act of firing on the assailant.

We have here a vivid description of the taking of the Tuileries by the populace. Some amused themselves by mutilating the statues of kings, or by firing at the portraits of such of the marshals as they considered to have been guilty of treason to Napoleon. A number of artisans installed themselves in the chamber of the throne; they sat, each in his turn, upon the royal seat, afterwards they placed a corpse in it. Some of them drew, over shirts stained with blood, the court-dresses which had circled the waist of royal princesses, and strutted about in this masquerade. Riot and destruction as much as you please, but no theft—such was the order of the day. A young man was bearing off a hat, decorated with plumes of a costly description. "Where are you going," cried his companions, "with that hat?" "It is only a souvenir," said he of the hat. "Ha! good; but in that case the value is nothing." So saying, they took the hat and trampled it under their feet, and then returned it to him—doubly valuable as a souvenir. Many striking traits of honesty were exhibited. One man brought a vase of silver to the prefect of police, and did not even leave his name. Another found a bag of three thousand francs in the Louvre, and hastened with the money to the Commune. The next day he was probably amongst

the number who were wandering about Paris without bread and without work, driven out of employment by the commercial panic of their own glorious revolution.

A scene of a like grotesque description took place, at a later period, on the return of the mob from Rambouillet, where they had gone in search of the unhappy Charles X. The king had left Rambouillet before the mob reached it, so that they had nothing to do but to return, unless any work of demolition should invite them to stay. M. Degoussée, at that moment the man in authority, in order to save the royal carriages from destruction, bethought him of the expedient of offering a ride home in them to the most violent and redoubtable of the mob. In a moment these gilded vehicles, blazoned with the royal arms, were filled with the lowest of the rabble, who projected their pipes and their bayonets from the windows. These state carriages, drawn by eight horses, and driven by silken postilions, were heaped up, inside and out, with this riotous crew, who entered Paris in triumph, amidst the responsive jests and shouts of the populace. Driven up to the Palais Royal, they there descended from their splendid vehicles, and delivered them over to their new owner. "*Tenez—voilà vos voitures!*" they shouted, as they alighted under the windows of the Duke of Orleans.

It is curious to remark the contrast between the thoughtless, reckless bravery of the combatants of July, and the watchful timidity of the politicians who were ultimately to profit by their courage and infatuation. The soldiers had, at many

points, fraternized with the people—all was success for the popular party—and the drawing-room of M. Lafitte was full of distinguished men of that party.

"The court of the hotel," continues M. Blanc, "was now full of soldiers. Five of the royal officers entered the saloon. M. Lafitte, who had been wounded in the leg, received them sitting in an arm-chair. He received them with great blandness and dignity. 'Gentlemen,' said he, 'keep your arms, but swear never to turn them against the people.' The officers extended their hands, as if to take an oath. 'No oath, gentlemen,' said M. Lafitte with much emotion; 'kings have dishonoured oaths. The word of the brave is sufficient.' This was received with universal applause, and every one present resigned himself to the excitement of the hour; when suddenly a discharge of musketry was heard. How describe the tumult that in a moment filled the apartment! The royal guard was certainly victorious—the enemy would be down on them —every one fled. They rushed into the hall, they pushed, they struggled for egress. Some jumped through the windows of the ground-floor into the garden. Two deputies were found hiding in the stables. In an instant, M. Lafitte was abandoned by all those who had besieged his arm-chair. His nephew was the only person who remained with him. And what had happened? The soldiers of the 6th had followed the example of their comrades of the 55th, and, gained over to the cause of the people, they had fired their muskets in the air!"

Already, at the first outbreak of the revolution, some one had

remarked—"here were a good game for the Duke of Orleans, if he has the courage to play it." Courage he had, but equal caution it seems, equal prudence. A deputation had proceeded from the house of Lafitte to Neuilly, the residence of the Duke, to invite him to the throne; but it was the Duchess who received them. The Duke himself had taken refuge at Raincy. To Raincy messengers were sent. The Duke of Orleans ordered his carriage. Those who were waiting his arrival at Neuilly heard the wheels approach—heard them suddenly recede. The carriage had turned, and was regaining Raincy with all the speed possible. The resolution was not quite taken, or the pear was not quite ripe.

His entry into Paris, according to M. Blanc, was made on foot in the evening, and he clambered like a common citizen over the barricades. Arrived at the Palais Royal, he sent to notify his presence to Lafitte and Lafayette—representatives, the one of the Chamber, and the other of the Hotel de Ville—and also to the Duke de Mortemart, minister of Charles X. The interview with this last took place the same evening, and had for its apparent object to proclaim, in the presence of the minister, his attachment and unalterable fidelity to the elder branch of the Bourbons. When De Mortemart arrived, he was ushered into a little cabinet on the right, which looks upon the court, not ordinarily used as an apartment of the family.

The Duke of Orleans was stretched upon the floor, lying on a mattrass, in his shirt. His forehead was bathed in sweat;[2] the

[2] As well it might, if he had been clambering over barricades in those hot days of

glare of his eyes, and every thing about him, betrayed a great fatigue, and a singular state of excitement. On seeing the Duke de Mortemart enter, he began to speak with great rapidity. He expressed himself with much volubility and ardour, proclaiming his attachment to the elder branch, and protesting that he came to Paris only to save the town from anarchy. At this moment a great noise was heard in the court, and the cry was raised of *Vive le Duc d'Orleans!* "You hear that cry," said the minister; "it is you the people call for." "No, no!" answered the Duke with increasing energy. "They shall kill me before I accept the crown."

The next morning the deputation from the Chamber presented itself at the Palais Royal; and so far was resolved, that the Duke of Orleans was proclaimed lieutenant-general of the kingdom.

M. Louis Blanc gives several anecdotes respecting the King of the French, and his successive ministers, which we should be disposed to extract, but that his political antipathies lying exactly in this quarter, we have not felt sufficient confidence in their authority. For this reason we will pass on abruptly to a portion of the work where the political bias of the writer is harmless, or where it may have induced him to inform himself more accurately on his subject than the generality of persons.

This last is evidently the case in his account of the doctrines and practices of the St Simonians. One who felt no sympathy with any portion of their creed, would not have taken the trouble to obtain accurate information, or an intimate knowledge on this

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July; for the three glorious days were remarkable for their heat.

subject. Not that M. Blanc is a St Simonian; to do him justice, he has argued with ability and clearness against their leading tenets or maxims; but being a man devoted to a new order of things of some kind or other, he has given naturally a more than usual attention to this sect, and we think our readers will hold themselves obliged to us, if we abridge some portion of his account of St Simon and his disciples.

"The founder of the St Simonian school had been deceased five years when the revolution of July broke out. He belonged to one of the noblest houses of France, bearing the name and arms of that famous Duke de St Simon, the historian of the reign of Louis XIV., and the last of our veritable *grands seigneurs*. Yet it was the privilege of birth that he attacked, and the impiety of war that he proclaimed. He was a man of singular independence of mind, and of extreme moral courage. Convinced that, before dictating a code for the regulation of human life, it was necessary to have attentively analysed that life as it actually exists, he spent the first half of his days in studying society under all its aspects; recoiling from no experience, practising, in the character of an observer, even vice as well as virtue; drawing a lesson from his own frailties, and making a study of his own follies. He dissipated his fortune in premeditated prodigality, and terminated a studious opulence in excessive poverty; living on the miserable salary of a copyist, when in idea he was governing the world. In the estimation of some, a sage—of others, a madman; at one time sanguine to enthusiasm, at another discouraged to the

point of attempting suicide; reduced at last to the condition of a mendicant, after having so often united round his table, in order to observe and judge them, the most celebrated men in art and literature. Such was St Simon in life and character: it remains to see what were the intellectual results he arrived at."—(Vol. III. p. 96.)

His first project of a code for human life was sufficiently ridiculous. In a work entitled *Letters from an Inhabitant of Geneva to his Contemporaries*, he addressed himself to the learned portion of the world, inviting them to undertake the government of the human race. The programme was as follows. A subscription was to be opened before the tomb of Newton. Every one was called upon to subscribe according to his means, rich and poor, man and woman; and each subscriber was to have a voice in the selection of—three mathematicians, three natural philosophers, three chemists, three physiologists, three men of letters, three painters, and three musicians. These several threes, amounting to twenty-one, besides having the produce of the subscription, were to form a council, called the *Council of Newton*, and undertake the spiritual government of the world, directing the efforts of the several nations of the globe towards one common end.

The learned portion of the world made no response to this invitation; he therefore next addressed himself to the operatives, declaring that the time was come to tear the crown from the brow of idleness, and establish the reign of labour. The king

was now to be the chief of artisans, his ministers enlightened workmen; and the electoral right was to be so placed as to transfer all power from the proprietor of the soil to the cultivator, from the capitalist to the journeyman. One would say that, piqued with the indifference of the most literate portion of mankind, he was determined to offer the government of the world to the most illiterate. Since the Royal Society would not accept the ball and sceptre which he had placed at its disposal, he gave them over to the Trades' Union.

But neither would this satisfy him. He who appeals to the lowest order of minds must confine himself to what is intelligible to, and influential on the lowest; and this would hardly accord with one who, at all events, had led an intellectual life, of however wild an order. He again reverted to the thinking classes, and to some modification of his first idea; and his *New Christianity*—his last and most complete effort—has for its object to erect an intellectual and spiritual government of the world. Taking his analogy from the spiritual dominion of the church of Rome, but finding that that power was too restricted in its exercise, inasmuch as the material interests and scientific labours of mankind were not embraced by it, he called for the foundation of "a religious power, which, embracing humanity in all its interests, should conduct it towards a Christian purpose—the amelioration of the lot of the great multitude of mankind; by their *sentiments* employing *artists*, by their *reason* employing the *learned*, and by their *activity* employing the *operative*."

Whatever may be the importance of this conception, it answered one purpose—it satisfied the builder's mind. St Simon died full of faith and hope. When he bade his eternal adieus to the few disciples who surrounded his dying bed, he regarded his work as completed, his mission as fulfilled. "The fruit is ripe," said he; "you will gather it."

The disciples of St Simon still further elaborated and disseminated his doctrines; and a school was formed which recognised MM. Enfantin and Buzard for its chiefs. It need hardly be said, that the new order of society was to be founded on universal benevolence—no war, and no rivalry—and the industry of mankind organized in such sort, *that to each man would be assigned according to his capacity, and to each capacity according to its works*.

We quote with pleasure the remarks (tinctured though they are by his own peculiar opinions) which M. Blanc makes on this famous formula:—"In preaching a universal association of men, founded on benevolence—in demanding that industry should be regularly organized, and that she should establish her empire on the ruins of a system of violence and war, the St Simonians showed a thorough intelligence of the laws which will one day govern humanity. But they overthrow with one hand the edifice they erect with the other, when they announce this famous formula—*To each according to his capacity; to each capacity according to its works*—a formula wise and equitable in appearance, but in reality subversive and unjust.

"If we say that a man, in virtue of his intellectual superiority, is to adjudge to himself a larger share than others of the goods of this world, what right have we to censure the sturdy barbarian, who, in virtue of his physical superiority, was wont to take the lion's share to himself? We have changed the basis on which the tyranny rested—the tyranny remains. The St Simonians, it is true, justify their formula on the grounds of public utility; it is well, say they, to stimulate talent by recompense. But is it necessary that the recompense of talent be of this gross and material kind? that it be counted down in so much wealth? Thank Heaven! man has other and more energetic motives. With a piece of riband to be attached to the buttonhole, Napoleon could make an army of a million of men rush forward upon danger and death. The word *glory*, well or ill understood, has always decided the destinies of the world. What is amply sufficient when the work of destruction is in hand, by what disastrous fatality does it become incompetent when the task is to produce and to create? Is it not true that great men have always sought and found their principal recompense in the very exercise of their high faculties? If society had wished to recompense Newton, it would have been utterly powerless to do so; there was for Newton, in all the world, no other or sufficient recompense, but the joy he must have felt when his genius discovered the laws which govern the planets. * * * The greater the intelligence, the greater the sphere of action; but not necessarily the greater the material recompense. The inequality of capacities can legitimately conduct to the inequality

only of duties."

The revolution of 1830 gave a wonderful stimulant to the little society of St Simon. It extended rapidly, and adjourned its sittings from a private house to an ample theatre, where three tiers of boxes held the admiring or ironical auditory. Fêtes, and the presence of charming women, increased the number of proselytes; artists, physicians, advocates, poets, flocked to share in the generous hopes of the new era. The capital and the provinces were portioned out into new departments, to accord with the new administration of affairs, and St Simonism had also its map of France. The two chiefs, or fathers, took upon themselves the ambitious title of popes. They already cast their eyes upon the Tuileries. Louis-Philippe was summoned by letter to yield his place to MM. Enfantin and Buzard. St Simonism was already a government destined to replace the authority of the Catholic church.

But there were schisms in this new church—Pope Enfantin thinking one thing and Pope Buzard another; and that, too, on the important topic of matrimony. The principal adepts of the sect met together, and held strange fanatical discussions for the discovery of the truth on these controverted points. It is worthy of remark, that St Simonism, as well as Irvingism or Mesmerism, could boast of its convulsions and its prophecies.

"At this time there passed in the Rue Monsigny, in the midst of this sceptical and mocking France, scenes so extraordinary, that, to find their parallel, we must revert to the history of

the Anabaptists. Those who had hitherto resisted the extreme doctrines of Father Enfantin, felt as if impelled against their will to the borders of some immense abyss. With the rest, it was an accession of fervour altogether indescribable, an exaltation which ended in delirium. There, in a room, the doors of which were carefully closed, and whose thick walls betrayed no sound, discussions were continued whole days and whole nights without interruption, without relief, without repose. It sometimes happened that a young man, incapable of sustaining these consuming vigils, reeled and fainted; they removed the apparently lifeless body without suspending the discussion. M. Caseaux was in an ecstasy for an hour, and began to prophesy. Another day, M. Olinde Rodrigues was struck as if by apoplexy; because, asking each of the members in turn whether it was not true that the Holy Spirit was in him, (M. Olinde Rodrigues,) one of the persons interrogated had the temerity to answer by certain expressions of incredulity. The fit was extremely violent, and Dr Fuster, in order to save the patient, had recourse to a formal retractation from the inconsiderate respondent, who, on his part, was full of affliction for the mischief he had occasioned. Such, even on men of serious thought and elevated understanding, may be the effect produced by a belief carried to a certain point of excitement."

Such, too, may be the danger of contradicting a prophet; and we intend to take the hint, and never be guilty of so great an imprudence. These dissensions, accompanied with certain

financial difficulties, led to a rupture, and the family of the Rue Monsigny were compelled to dissolve.

"In this crisis, the profound calm of Enfantin never deserted him. He possessed, at Ménilmontant, a house and garden; here he resolved to seek a place of retreat, of study, and of labour, for himself and his more faithful disciples. Forty of these followed him to this retreat, and there commenced the life in common, combined always with a just sentiment of the true hierarchy of society. Poets, artists, officers, musicians, all devoted themselves in turn to the rudest and coarsest labours. They repaired the house, they swept the courts, they cleaned the chambers and polished the floors; they dug up the uncultivated soil, they covered the walks with gravel, extracted from a pit which they themselves had excavated. To prove that their ideas on the nature of marriage, and the emancipation of women, were pure from any selfish or sensual calculations, they imposed upon themselves the law of celibacy. Morning and evening they nourished their mind with the words of the father, or, in the lives of the Christian saints read aloud, they found example, encouragement, and precept. Hymns, the music of which one of their members had composed, served to elevate their minds and charm their labours. At five o'clock, dinner was announced by the sound of a horn. Then these philosophic workpeople piled up their tools, arranged their wheel-barrows symmetrically, and took their place, after having first sung 'the prayer before repast.'"

In this retreat they adopted a distinctive dress, of which one

portion, the waistcoat, was symbolical; it was so made that it could not be put on without the help of a brother—and thus was calculated perpetually to call to mind the necessity of mutual aid. On the day of the institution of this habit, Enfantin declared that he and his followers had renounced all rights to property according to the existing law, and had duly qualified themselves to receive "the honourable wages" of labour.

But this fantastical experiment was cut short by the interference of the law. A public prosecution was instituted against the St Simonians; and Père Enfantin, and other chiefs of the sect, were brought before the tribunal at Paris. It will be easily understood that the court that day was crowded with spectators, eager to see the St Simonians, especially Enfantin, who appeared in a violet-coloured robe, with the words Le Pére written in large letters on his breast. When asked by the president, whether he did not style himself the Father of Humanity—whether he did not profess to be the Living Law—he answered, "Yes!" with perfect calmness and assurance. The discourse he delivered in his own defence was chiefly remarkable for the long pauses he made from time to time, occupying himself with looking steadfastly at the president, or the advocate-general. He said he wished to make them feel "the power of the flesh." But this species of animal magnetism appears to have had no other effect than that of irritating the court. He and some others were condemned to pay a fine, and suffer a year's imprisonment. The family was dispersed. For the present there was an end to St Simonism.

A history is hardly complete without a plague, or pestilence, or famine, or some such wide-spreading calamity, on which the historian can spend the dark colours of his descriptive eloquence. Considering that M. Louis Blanc had but the space of ten years under him, he must have regarded himself as very fortunate in meeting with the cholera, which figures here as a very respectable pestilence. The carrying forth the dead, naked and uncoffined, in open carts, is an image often presented to us in descriptions of this nature; but it is perhaps surpassed in terrible effects by the one here offered to us, of the bodies of those who had died of the cholera piled up in carts and tumbrils, in coffins so hastily and slightly constructed, that, as they rattled over the stones, there was constant danger of their horrible contents being poured upon the pavement. But the strange reports that were afloat amongst this credulous and passionate populace, form the most striking feature in the picture. It was reported in Paris, as our readers will probably remember, that there was, in reality, no cholera, but that poison had been poured into the fountains of the metropolis, and had been mingled with the wine and the flour; and thus it was that the people were dying. It was dangerous to be found with a phial in the hand, or to be seen sitting, without any ostensible cause, near one of the public fountains. A young man was looking into a well; he was massacred. Another met the same fate, who was leaning over the door of a dealer in wine and spirits, in order to see what o'clock it was. A Jew in the market-place was thought to have a sinister laugh; they searched him, found a packet of

white powder—it was camphor—they killed him, and set on the dogs to tear the body.

And then that insurrection against the mud-carts—what an insight does it give into the wide-spreading and tangled interests of a modern capital! It was impossible to touch the mud of Paris without periling the subsistence of eighteen hundred persons. What more fit, what more innocuous to all parties, it would seem, than to clear away the mud from the streets—to clear it away as soon as possible, that it should not lie there, exhaling pestilence during the heat of the day? But stop—there are in Paris some eighteen hundred persons who gain their bread out of this mud, groping in it, and extracting from it every article of the least commercial value. With a basket slung upon their back, and a crook in their hand to facilitate their search, these *chiffoniers* are to be seen in every quarter of the city, congregating wherever there is dirt. And now, if all that is thrown out of the houses of Paris is taken away before these industrious persons have had time to search it, what is to become of the whole profession of *chiffonerie*? These new mud-carts, with their ruthless sweepers, traversing the city at dawn of day, must be broken up and thrown into the Seine; and it was done so accordingly.

There is a peculiar charm, we think, in having related to us, for the first time, in the shape of history, what we remember to have read and talked over as the news and gossip of the day. We seem to be present at the making of history. We see facts, as the death of princes, which made so much stir and confusion, sink into the

commonplace of the historical record; while anecdotes, which were repeated and forgotten, may stand forward as instructive proofs of the temper of the times, and the spirit of the past age. More than one such anecdote we think we could select from the pages before us; but it is possible we might draw them from a purer source than the work of M. Louis Blanc, to which our readers will perhaps think that we have already given more than sufficient space.

A NIGHT ON THE BANKS OF THE TENNESSEE

"Can you tell us how far we are from Brown's ferry?" said I to a man, who came suddenly and silently upon us from a narrow side-path.

We were on the banks of the Tennessee: the evening was drawing in; the fog, that hung over land and river, was each moment thickening. The landscape had a wild chaotic appearance, and it was scarcely possible to distinguish objects at five paces distance.

The horseman paused some moments before answering my question. At last he replied, accompanying his words with an ominous shake of the head—

"To Brown's ferry? Perhaps you mean Cox's ferry?"

"Well, then—Cox's ferry," said I, rather impatiently.

"Ay, old Brown is dead," continued the man, "and Betsy has married young Cox. Ain't it him you mean?"

"That we know nothing about," replied I; "but what we wish to learn is, whether we are far from the ferry, and if this is the right road to it."

"Ah! the way to the ferry—that's the rub, man! You're a good five miles off, and might just as well turn your horse's head another way. I guess you're strangers in these parts?"

"Heaven preserve us!" whispered my friend Richards, "we are in the hands of a Yankee; he is guessing already."[3]

Meantime the horseman had drawn nearer to us, in spite of the thorns and of the wet boughs, that each moment slapped and slashed him across his face; and he was now close to our horse. As far as we could distinguish through the rapidly-increasing gloom, he was a middle-aged man, bony and long-legged, with a sallow unprepossessing physiognomy surmounting his long ungainly carcass, and metal buttons upon his coat.

"And so you've lost your way?" said the stranger after a long pause, during which the thick fog had had the kindness to convert itself into a close penetrating rain. "That's queer too, seein' that the ferry ain't fifteen paces from the road, which runs right along the side of the river. A very queer mistake to be goin' up the stream, instead of followin' yer nose and the run of the water."

"What do you mean?" cried Richards and I in a breath.

"That you're goin' up the Tennessee instead of down it, and are on the road to Bainbridge. That's all!" replied the supposed Yankee.

"On the road to Bainbridge!" repeated we, in voices in which astonishment and vexation were tolerably evident.

"You hadn't a mind to go to Bainbridge, then?"

"How far is the infernal place from here?" asked I.

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[3] There is no surer way of ascertaining the State from which an American comes, than by his thinkings and guessings. The New-Englander guesses, the Virginians and Pennsylvanians think, the Kentuckian calculates, the man of Alabama reckons.

"How far, how far?" repeated the man with the metal buttons. "It's not to say very far, nor yet so very near, as I may guess. Perhaps you know Squire Dimple?"

"I wish you and Squire Dimple were at the devil!" muttered I. But Richards, who took things more quietly, replied—

"No, we have not the honour of his acquaintance."

"Humph! And whereaway may you be goin'?" enquired our tormentor, who was apparently waterproof.

"To Florence in Alabama," answered Richards, "and thence down the Mississippi."

"Ah, fine city, Florence! such as one only finds in this country. Ain't it now? And a good market, too. Talkin' of that, what's the price of flour in the north? You're come from thereaway, I guess. I did hear it was six and four levies, and Injun corn five and a fip—butter three fips."

"Are you mad?" cried I, losing all patience, and unconsciously raising my whip as I spoke—"are you stark staring mad, to keep us talking here about flour and butter, and fips and levies, while the rain is falling by bucketsfull?"

"Hallo, stranger!" cried the man, raising himself for the first time out of his lounging position on the saddle. "Guess you're gettin' wolfish. I'm for you—stick, fist, or whiphandle, rifle or bowie-knife. Should like to see the man as could leather Isaac Shifty!"

"The road, the road, Mister Isaac Shifty!" interrupted friend Richards in a conciliating tone. There was another long pause.

"I guess you're traders," said the fiend at last.

"No, man."

"And what may you be, then?"

Our answer was followed by another long inspection of our persons and physiognomies. He gazed at us for a couple of minutes or more, examining us from head to foot; at last he spoke.

"And so you've a mind to go down the Mississippi?"

"Yes, in the Jackson, which starts to-morrow, we are told."

"Ah, the Jackson! a mighty good steamboat too—ain't it now? But I guess you ain't a thinkin' of takin' that thing and your horse with you?" continued the Yankee, pointing to our gig.

"Yes, we are."

"Oh, you are! Well.—You haven't seen two women in a dearborn on the road, have you?"

"No, we have not."

"Well, then," continued the man in the same indifferent tone, "it's a'most too late now to get to Bainbridge; and yet you might try it, too. Better turn your horse round, and follow the road till you come to a big walnut-tree; there it divides. Take to the right hand for half a mile, till you come to neighbour Dims's hedge; then you must go through the lane; and then, for about forty rods, right through the sugar-field; keep to your left till you come to some rocks, but then turn to your right, if you don't want to break your necks. There's a bit of a stream there; and when you are over that, the left-hand road will take you straight to Cox's ferry. You

can't miss it," concluded he, in a self-satisfied tone, striking his horse a blow with his riding-whip. The animal broke into a smart trot, and in ten seconds our obliging friend had disappeared into the fog.

My countenance, during the Yankee's interminable directions, must have somewhat resembled that of a French recruit, to whom some scarred and mustached veteran is relating his Egyptian campaigns, and telling him wonderful stories of snakes and crocodiles at least half a mile long—monsters who made nothing of swallowing a drum-major to their breakfast, bearskin cap, cane, and whiskers, included. I was so completely bothered and confounded with the rights and lefts, that the metal-buttoned individual was out of sight and hearing before I thought of explaining to him, that, dark as it then was, we should never be able to find even the walnut-tree, let alone neighbour Dims's hedge and the break-neck rocks. Patience is by no means one of my virtues; but the man's imperturbable phlegm and deliberation, in the midst of the most pouring rain that ever wetted poor devil to the skin, tickled my fancy so exceedingly, that the sound of his horse's hoofs had hardly died away, when I burst into an almost interminable fit of laughter. "First right, then left—look out for the big walnut-tree, and don't break your neck over the crags!" repeated I, in a tone between merriment and despair. Richards, however, saw nothing to laugh at.

"The devil take the Yankee!" cried he. "May I be hanged if I know what you find so amusing in all this!"

"And hang me if I know how you manage to look so grave!" was my answer.

"How could we possibly have missed the ferry?" cried Richards; "and, what is still more stupid, to come back instead of going forward!"

"Not very astonishing," replied I, "considering the multitude of by-roads and cross-roads, and waggon-tracks and cattle-paths, and the swamp into the bargain. It is quite impossible to see which way the river runs. And then you have been sleeping all the afternoon, and I had to find the way by myself."

"And you found it after an extraordinary fashion—retracing your own steps," said Richards in a vexed tone. "It is really too stupid."

"Very stupid," said I—"to sleep."

As may be seen, we were on the verge of a quarrel; but we were old and sincere friends, and stopped in time. The discussion was dropped. The fact was, that our mistake was by no means a very surprising one. The country in which we were, seemed made on purpose to lose one's-self in. The road winds along at some distance from the river, frequently out of sight of it; the shore is uneven, covered with crags and hillocks; nothing like a landmark to be seen, or a mountain to guide one's-self by, except occasionally, when one gets a peep at the Appalachians rising out of the blue distance. The fog, however, had hidden them from us, and that just at the time when we most wanted them as guides. We found ourselves in a long low clearing—a sort of

bottom, as they call it in that country—which was laid out in sugar-fields, and through which there ran nearly as many cart-roads as there were owners to the land. The morning had been bright and beautiful; but, towards noon, a grey mist had begun to rise in the south-western corner of the horizon, and had gone on, thickening and advancing, till it spread like a pall over the Tennessee. With a grey wall of fog on one side, and the swamp, intersected with a hundred cross-paths, on the other, we had gone on for about a mile; until it got so thick and dark, that it was quite as possible we should find our way into the marsh as over the Mussel shoals.[4] So certain was I, however, of the proximity of the latter, that I pushed on, expecting each moment to find the ferry, until the unlucky Yankee brought all my hopes to a termination.

It was now quite night—one of those dreary pitch-dark nights that are of no unfrequent occurrence in the south-western states. I would as soon have been on the banks of Newfoundland as in this swamp, from which nothing was more probable than that we should carry away a rattling fever. The Yankee's directions concerning the road were, as may be supposed, long since forgotten; and even had they not been so, it would have required cat's eyes to have availed ourselves of them. Even the owls, the nightingales of that neighbourhood, seemed puzzled by the extreme darkness. We could hear them whooping and screaming all around us; and now and then one flew against us, as if it had

[4] The Mussel shoals are broad ridges of rocks, above Florence, which spread out into the Tennessee.

lost its way as well as ourselves. The road we were now following ran close to the bank of the river; so close, indeed, that a single stumble of our horse might have precipitated us into the water, which was then very high.

"I think we should do our best to get out of the gig," said I to my companion; "or else we have a very good chance of passing the night in the Tennessee."

"No danger," replied Richards, "Cæsar is an old Virginian."

A shock that made our very ribs crack again, and as nearly as possible threw us backwards out of the gig, came rather opportunely to interrupt this eulogium on Cæsar, who had suddenly reared furiously up on his hind-legs.

"There must be something in the path," cried Richards. "Let us see what it is."

We got out, and found a huge walnut-tree lying right across the road. Here was an end to our journey. It was an absolute impossibility to get the gig over the enormous trunk; the boughs, which spread out full twenty yards in every direction, had given Cæsar timely warning of the impediment to our further progress. The road, moreover, was so narrow that it was impossible to turn. There was nothing for it but to back out. Richards began hunting about for a cross-road, where we might turn; I set to work to back the gig. I had no sooner, however, set one foot out of the road, than my cloak was almost torn from my shoulders by a thorn half a yard long. To get through this detestable wilderness with a whole skin, one ought to have been cased in complete

armour. I had only just taken my unfortunate garment off this new-fashioned cloak-peg, when Richards returned.

"This is the most infernal wilderness in all the west!" said he. "Neither road nor path, mud up to the ears, and, to add to my enjoyment, I have left one of my boots in the swamp."

"And, for my part, there are as many holes in my cloak as thorns on that cursed acacia-tree," replied I by way of consolation.

These were the last words we spoke in any thing like a jesting tone; for we were now wet to the skin: and of all situations, I believe a damp one to be the least favourable to jocularity. I confess a certain partiality for adventures, when they are not carried too far. There is nothing I detest like a monotonous wearisome Quaker's journey, with every thing as tame, and dull, and uniform, as at a meeting of broad-brims; but to be overtaken by darkness and a deluge in the middle of a maple-swamp, to be unable to go three steps on one side without falling into the Tennessee, with an impenetrable morass and thicket on the other hand, a colossal walnut-tree barring the way in front, and no possibility of turning back—this was, even to my taste, rather too much of an adventure.

"Well, what is to be done now?" said Richards, who had placed himself in a sort of theatrical posture—his bootless foot on the gig-step, the other sticking fast in the mud.

"Take out the horse, and draw the gig back," suggested I.

Easily said, but rather more difficult to accomplish. We set to

work, however, with a will; and pushed, and tugged, and pulled, till at last, after much labour, we got the gig about thirty paces backwards, where the road became wider. We then turned it, and were putting Cæsar into the shafts, when, to our inexpressible delight, a loud hallo was given quite close to us.

Reader, if you were ever at a hard contested election, where you had bet your fifty or a hundred dollars on your favourite candidate, and just when you made sure of losing, and your five senses were almost extinguished by noise, brandy, and tobacco smoke, you heard the result proclaimed that secured you your stake, and a hundred per cent to boot; if you have ever been placed in such circumstances, then, and then only, can you form an idea of the joyful feeling with which we heard that shout. After such a thorough Yankee fashion was it given, that it caused the fog to break for a moment, and roused the obscene inhabitants of the neighbouring swamp from their mud-pillowed slumbers. They set up a screeching, and yelling, and croaking, that was lovely to listen to.

"And now have patience, for Heaven's sake!" whispered Richards to me, "and hold your tongue for a quarter of an hour, or you will spoil all with this infernal Yankee."

"Do not be afraid," replied I; "I am dumb."

My blood was certainly tolerably cooled by the shower-bath I had had—to say nothing of the prospect of passing the night in this vile hole; and I would willingly have given the tenacious Yankee information concerning the prices of flour and butter in

every state of the Union, upon the sole condition that he should afterwards help us out of this reservoir of fever.

It was, as we had at once conjectured, our friend Mr Isaac Shifty, in soul, body, and buttons. In true Connecticut fashion, he stood a couple of minutes close to us without saying a word. It almost looked as if he took a delight in our difficulties, and was in no particular hurry to extricate us from them. For our part, we kept very much on our guard. The cross-grained scarecrow might likely enough have left us to our fate again, if we had said any thing that did not exactly chime in with his queer humour. Richards at last broke silence.

"Bad weather," said he.

"Well, I don't know. I shouldn't say it was though, exactly," returned the Yankee.

"You have not met the two women you were looking for, have you?"

"No. Guess they'll have stopped at Florence, with cousin Kate."

"You are not thinking of going there too, are you?" said Richards.

"No. I'm goin' home. I thought you were at the ferry by this time."

"Perhaps we should have been, if your roads were better, and the holes in them filled up with stones instead of walnut-trees," returned Richards, laughing.

"Guess you ain't inclined to go to the ferry to-day?"

"Inclined we are, but able we are not," replied Richards; "and you will acknowledge, my friend, that is a pretty strong reason for not going."

"Well, so it is," replied the man sententiously. "It ain't very agreeable lyin' out in the swamp; and so, stranger, if you like to go to Bainbridge, you can come with me. Better let me drive, and my mare can follow behind."

It took at least five minutes before the wearisome, pedantical fellow had finished his arrangements and preparations. At last, to the infinite satisfaction of Richards and myself, we sat three in the gig. After undergoing a questioning and cross-questioning that would have done honour to an experienced diplomatist, we had succeeded in striking up a sort of alliance with Mr Isaac Shifty, and were on our way to one of the hundred famous cities of Alabama—cities which have decidedly not their match in the whole of the United States.

I do not know how it happens, but I am constantly finding myself disappointed in my expectations. I had hoped that the distance between the infernal maple swamp and the place to which we were going, would have borne some sort of relative proportion to the agreeableness of our situation—that is to say, that it would not be very great. It nevertheless appeared to me enormous, and Horace's impatience during his celebrated walk was trifling compared to mine. Our Yankee, like the Roman babbler, had abundance of time to discourse on fifty different subjects. The first which he brought before our notice was

naturally his own worthy person. From the interesting piece of biography with which he favoured us, we learned that he was originally from Connecticut, and that his first occupation had been that of usher in a school; which employment he had, after a short trial, exchanged for the less honourable but more independent one of a pedlar. From that he had risen to be a trader and shop-keeper, and was now, as he modestly informed us, a highly respectable and well-to-do man. He next gave us an account of all the varieties of merchandise in which he dealt, or ever had dealt; intermixing the details with an occasional side-blow at a certain Mr Bursicut, who had dared to set up an opposition store, and whom Providence had punished for his presumption by the loss of sundry dozen knives and forks, and pairs of shoes, upon the Mussel shoals. He then found occasion to talk of the thousand and one mishaps that had occurred upon the aforesaid Mussel shoals; and thence branched off into the various modes of water-carriage which the enlightened inhabitants of Alabama were accustomed to employ. After amusing us for some time with long histories concerning steam-boats and keel-boats, barks and flat-boats, broad-horns, dug-outs, and canoes, he glided into some canal-making scheme, which was to connect the waters of the Tennessee with Heaven knows what others. It was a most monstrous plan—that I remember; but whether the junction was to be made with Raritan bay or Connecticut river, I have clean forgotten. At last we came to the history of Bainbridge—a sure sign, as I thought, with much inward

gratulation, that we were approaching the end of our journey; yet the accomplishment of this hope, reasonable as it was, was doomed to be deferred a long time. We had first to listen to the whole history and topographical description of that celebrated city; how it had sprung up in the right corner, he reckoned; and how flourishing and industrious it was; and whether we had not a mind to settle there—because if we had, he, Mr Isaac Shifty, had some almighty fine building land to sell; and how the town already boasted of three taverns, just the right proportion to the ten houses of which Bainbridge consisted. We should find two of the taverns chokeful of people, he said, because there was a canvass going on for the Florence election; as to the third, it was a poor place, hardly habitable indeed.

At the word *canvass*, Richards and I looked aghast.

"An election coming on!" stammered Richards.

"An election!" repeated I, the words dying away upon my tongue from consternation at this unwelcome news. An election in Alabama, which even in old Kentucky is considered as backwoods! Farewell, supper and sleep, and comfortable bed and clean linen! every thing, in short, which we had flattered ourselves with obtaining, and which we stood so much in need of, after such a hard day's journey.

Before we had time to make any further enquiries, Cæsar, who had for some time been splashing through a sea of mud, stood suddenly still. The light of a tallow candle, glimmering and flaring through an atmosphere of tobacco-smoke, and the hoarse

and confused sounds of many voices, warned us that we had reached the haven. We sprang out of the gig; and whilst Richards was tying Cæsar to a post, I hurried to the door, when I felt myself suddenly seized by the skirt of my cloak.

"Not there—not there! This is the house where you are to stop," exclaimed Mr Isaac Shifty, pointing anxiously to an adjacent edifice, that looked something between a house and a pigsty.

"Don't go with him," whispered I to Richards, heartily glad to be at last independent of the insupportable Yankee, and to be able to vex him a little in my turn. My hand was already on the latch; I opened the door, and we entered.

There sat the burgesses of Bainbridge, with their heels upon the table—those, at least, for whom there were chairs; while those for whom there were none, made shift with tubs, or stood up in various elegant attitudes. There was a prodigious amount of talking, shouting, drinking, and laughing going on; and my first feeling was, that I would rather have been any where else than in that worshipful assembly. Richards, however, stepped boldly forward, in spite of his bootless foot; and luckily the men appeared disposed to be upon their best behaviour with us. They pressed back right and left, forming a lane about a foot wide, enclosed between living palisades, six feet and upwards in height, through which we passed, subjected, as we did so, to a searching inspection. Richards stepped smartly up to the table, then turned round, and confronted the group of half-horse, half-

alligator visages there assembled.

"A hurra for old Alabama!" cried he, "and the devil take the Bainbridge roadmaster!"

"Are you mad?" I whispered to him.

"May I be scalped if you don't soon feel the weight of these five bones upon your carcass, stranger!" growled a voice, proceeding from a sort of mammoth that had just filled itself a half-pint tumbler of Monongahela. Before the double-jointed Goliath put his threat into execution, he swallowed the whisky at a gulp, and then, striding forwards, laid his open hand upon my companion's shoulder, with a force that threw the poor fellow on one side, and gave him the appearance of being crooked. At the same time the giant stared Richards in the face, with an expression which the natural hardness of his features, and the glimmer of his owl-like eyes, rendered any thing but agreeable.

"The devil take the Bainbridge roadmaster—I repeat it!" cried Richards, half in earnest and half laughing, raising his muddy and bootless foot as he spoke, and placing it on a chair. "See there, men! I may thank him for the loss of my boot. The cursed swamp between here and the ferry was kind enough to pull it off for me."

The roar of laughter that responded to these words would inevitably have broken the windows, had there been any glass in them. Fortunately the latter luxury was wanting; its place being supplied by fragments of old inexpressibles, and of *ci-devant* coats and waistcoats.

"Come, lads!" continued Richards, "I mean no offence; but of

a surety I have to thank your bad roads for the loss of my boot."

Richard's jest, exactly adapted to the society in which we found ourselves, was the most fortunate *impromptu* that could have been hit upon. It seemed at once to have established us upon a footing of harmony and friendship with the rough backwoodsmen amongst whom we had fallen.

"May I be shot like a Redskin, if that ain't Mister Richards from Old Virginny, now of the Mississippi," suddenly exclaimed the same colossus who had so recently had his hand upon Richards's shoulder, twisting, as he spoke, his wild features into a sort of amicable grin. "May I never taste another drop of rale Monongahela, if you sha'n't drink a pint with Bob Snags the roadmaster!"

It was the very dignitary whom Richards had insulted with such imminent risk to his shoulder-blade.

"A hurra for old Virginny!" shouted the master of the roads, biting, as he spoke, into a piece of tobacco from that famous state. "Come, mister—come, doctor!" continued the man, offering Richards with one hand a roll of tobacco, with the other a pint glassful of whisky.

"Doctor!" repeated the whole assembly—"a doctor!"

A man possessing power over gin and whisky, and whose word is an indisputable veto against even a *smaller*, is no unimportant personage in that feverish neighbourhood. In this instance, Richards's doctorship was of the double utility of delivering us from the threatened pint-glasses, and of causing

us to be considered as privileged guests—no small advantage in a backwoods' tavern, occupied as the headquarters of an electioneering party. Cæsar, however, was the first to derive a positive profit from the discovery. Bob left the room for a minute or two, and we could hear the horse walking into the stable. When the roadmaster returned, he had assumed a patronizing sort of look.

"Mister Richards!" said he confidentially, "Mister Richards! May I be shot if you ain't continually a sensible man, with more rale blood in your little finger than a horse could swim in. Yes, and I'll show you that Bob Snags is your friend. I say, doctor, what countryman is your horse?"

"A thorough-bred Virginian," replied Richards.

"The devil he is!" cried Bob. "Well, doctor, to prove to you that I'm your friend, and that I ain't forgotten old times, I'll swop with you without lookin' at him. May I be shot if I ain't reg'larly cheatin' myself. Well, I'm uncommon glad to see you again. Bob Snags has no reason to fear lookin' a rale gemman in the face. Come, lads, none of yer jimmaky, and slings, and poorgun,[5] and suchlike dog's wash, but ginu*ine* Monongahela—that's the stuff. Hurra for Old Virginny! Well, doctor, it's a deal—ain't it?"

"No, Bob," said Richards, laughing; "your generosity is so truly Alabamian, that I cannot make up my mind to accept it. For the present, at least, I must keep my Virginian. It is my wife's saddle-horse."

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[5] A corruption of Bourgogne, Burgundy wine.

"But Swiftfoot," replied Bob, in a cordial confidential manner —"Swiftfoot is a famous trotter."

"It won't do, Bob," was the answer. "I should not dare show myself at home without Cæsar."

Bob bit his lips, a little vexed at not being able to make a deal; but another half-pint of whisky, which he poured down as if it had been spring water, seemed to restore him to good humour. Meanwhile my wet clothes were beginning to hang heavy upon me, and to steam in the hot atmosphere in which we were. Bob, who had already cast several side-glances at me, now turned to Richards.

"And who may the mister be?" said he.

The mention of my name and condition, procured me a welcome that I could willingly have dispensed with. After the shake of the hand with which Bob favoured me, I looked at my finger-nails, to see if the blood was not starting from under them. The fellow's hands were as hard and rough as bear's paws.

"Very glad that you're come, boys," said Bob in a low confidential tone. "I'm just makin' a try for the next Assembly; and it's always good, you know, to have somebody to speak to one's character. How long is it, Mister Richards, since I left Blairsville."

"Eight years," replied my friend.

"No, Harry," whispered the roadmaster; "may I be shot if it's more than five."

"But," replied Richards, "I have been living five years by the

Mississippi, and you know"–

"Ah, nonsense!" interrupted Bob. "Five years—not an hour more. D'ye understand?" added he cautiously—"five years, if you're asked."

The facts were thus. This respectable candidate for the representation of his fellow-citizens, had made his escape from his previous residence, the birthplace of Richards, on account of certain misdeeds, of which the sheriff and constables had taken cognizance, and after wandering about for a few years, had settled in Bainbridge county, where he seemed to have thriven—as far, at least, as whisky and human weakness had allowed him. We could hardly help laughing outright at the importance which Bob thought proper to attribute to us before his companions, the independent electors, whose votes he was desirous of securing. Æsculapius himself was a mere quacksalver compared to Squire Richards, whose twenty-five negroes were rapidly multiplied into a hundred; while my poor neglected plantation was, between brothers, well worth five hundred thousand dollars. We allowed Mr Bob to have it his own way; for it might have been dangerous to contradict a giant of his calibre, who was always ready to support his arguments with his huge cocoa nut-coloured fists. At last Richards was able to slip in a word.

"You are not going to make your speech now, are you?"

"May I be shot if I ain't, though! I'll begin at once."

"Cannot we manage to change our clothes, and get some supper first?" said Richards.

"Change your clothes!" said Bob contemptuously. "And what for, man? Not on our account; you're quite smart enough, quite good enough for us—no occasion to bother yourselves. If it's for your own pleasure, however, you can do it. Hallo, Johnny!"

And he commenced a negotiation with Johnny, the host, who, to our great joy, took up a candle, and led the way into a sort of back parlour, with a promise that we should have our supper before very long.

"Is there no other room where we can dress ourselves?" said I.

"To be sure there is," was the answer. "There's the garret—only there's my daughter and a dozen gals sleepin' there; then there's the kitchen, if you like it better."

I looked round the room. A servant girl was beginning to lay the table; and, unluckily, the apartment was connected by an open door with the kitchen, in which there was a loud noise of voices. I would have given a good deal for a quarter of an hour's undisturbed possession of the room. I looked about for our portmanteaus, but could see nothing of them.

"Six smalls it ain't buffalo hide!" vociferated a young Stentor in the kitchen.

"Six smalls its cow hide!" roared another.

"If I am not very much mistaken," said Richards, "it is our portmanteaus that those fellows are betting about."

"That would really be too bad," said I.

Nevertheless, it was as Richards had said. We had little occasion to fear that the portmanteaus would be lost or injured;

but we knew very well that the only way to get them out of the claws of these rough backwoodsmen would be by some well-contrived joke. And those jokes were exactly what I feared; for one had often to risk breaking an arm or a leg by them. There was a crowd of men in the kitchen. One young fellow, upwards of six feet high, held a lighted candle; and they were all busily engaged examining something which lay in the middle of the floor.

"No," cried a voice, appealing apparently from a decision that had been given, "I won't pay without I see the inside."

They were debating whether the portmanteaus were of buffalo or cow hide. They had caught sight of them as they were being carried through the kitchen into the back-room, and had at once seized upon them as good subjects for a bet. It was time for us to interfere, if we did not wish to see our trunks ripped open, for the sake of ascertaining the quality of the leather.

"Sixteen smalls," cried Richards, "that it's deer hide!"

"Done!" thundered half a score voices, with loud peals of laughter.

"It is a bet, then," said my friend; "but let us see what we are betting about."

"Make way for the gemmen!" cried the men.

"Our portmanteaus!" exclaimed Richards, laughing. "No, certainly, they are not deer hide. Here is my bet."

A loud hurra followed the payment of the dollar which my friend handed over; and we now found ourselves in undisputed possession of our baggage. The next thing to be done was to

endeavour to get the room to ourselves for a few minutes.

"We wish to be left alone for a short time," said I to the help, who was bustling in and out, and covering the table with innumerable plates of preserved fruits, cucumbers, beet-root, and suchlike edibles.

I shut the door.

"That is the surest way to have it opened again," said Richards.

He had hardly uttered the words, when, sure enough, the door flew open, amidst a peal of uproarious laughter.

"Tail!" cried one fellow.

"Head!" shouted another.

"They want another dollar," said Richards. "Well, they must have it, I suppose. Head!" cried he.

"Lost!" roared the fellows in chorus.

"There is something for you to drink," said my friend, whose wonderful patience and good-humour was bringing us so fortunately through the shoals and difficulties of this wild backwoods' life. We now shut the door, and had time enough to change our wet clothes for dry ones. We were nearly dressed, when a gentle tapping at the only pane of glass of which the room window could boast attracted our attention. On looking in the direction of the sound, we distinguished the amiable features of Mr Isaac Shifty, who, upon our entering the tavern, had thought proper to part company.

"Gentlemen," whispered he, removing the remains of an old waistcoat, which supplied the place of one of the absent panes,

and then applying his face to the aperture—"Gentlemen, I was mistaken. Our spies say you are not come to the election, but that you are from lower Mississippi."

"And if we are, what then?" replied I dryly. "Didn't we tell you as much at first?"

"So you did, but I wasn't obliged to believe it; and d'ye see, they're a-canvassing here for next election, and we've got an opposition in the other tavern; and as we knew that Bob Snags's people were expectin' two men from down stream, we thought you might be they."

"And so, because you thought we should vote against you, you allowed us to stick in the mud, with the agreeable prospect of either breaking our necks or tumbling into the Tennessee?" said Richards laughing.

"Not exactly that," replied the Yankee; "though if you had been the two men that were expected, I guess we shouldn't have minded your passing the night in the swamp; but now we know how matters stand, and I'm come to offer you my house. There'll be an almighty frolic here to-night, and p'r'aps somethin' more. In my house you can sleep as quiet as need be."

"It won't do, Mr Shifty," said Richards, with a look that must have shown the Yankee pretty plainly that his object in thus pressing his hospitality upon us was seen through; "it won't do, we will stop where we are."

The latch of the door leading into the kitchen was just then lifted, which brought our conversation to a close. During

the confabulation, our Yankee's sharp grey eyes had glanced incessantly from us to the door; and hardly was the noise of the latch audible, when his face disappeared, and the old waistcoat again stopped the aperture.

"He wants to get us away," said Richards, "because he fears that our presence here will give Bob too much weight and respectability. You see they have got their spies. If Bob and his people find that out, there will be a royal row. A nice disreputable squatter's hole we have fallen into; but, bad as it is, it is better than the swamp."

The table was now spread; the tea and coffee-pots smoking upon it. The supper was excellent, consisting of real Alabama delicacies. Pheasants and woodcocks, and a splendid haunch of venison, which, in spite of the game-laws, had found its way into Johnny's larder—wheat, buckwheat, and Indian-corn cakes; the whole, to the honour of Bainbridge be it spoken, cooked in a style that would have been creditable to a Paris *restaurateur*. By the help of these savoury viands, we had already, to a considerable extent, taken the edge off our appetite, when we heard Bob's voice growling away in the next room. He had begun his speech. It was high time to make an end of our supper, and go and listen to him under whose protecting wings we were, and to whom we probably owed it, that we had got so far through the evening with whole heads and unbroken bones. Backwoods' etiquette rendered our presence absolutely necessary; and we accordingly rose from table, and rejoined the assemblage of electors.

At the upper end of the table, next to the bar, stood Bob Snags, in his various capacity of president, speaker, and candidate. A thickset personage, sitting near him, officiated as secretary—to judge at least from the inkstand with which he was provided. Bob looked rather black at us as we entered, no doubt on account of our late arrival; but Cicero pleading against Catiline could not have given a more skilful turn to his oration than did Bob upon the occasion of our entrance.

"And these gemmen," continued he, "could tell you—ay, and put down in black and white—no end of proofs of my respectability and character. May I be shot by Injuns, if it ain't as good as that of the best man in the state."

"No better than it should be," interposed a voice.

Bob threw a fierce look at the speaker; but the smile on the face of the latter showing that no harm was meant, the worthy candidate cleared his throat and proceeded.

"Yes," said he, "we want men as know what's what, and who won't let themselves be humbugged by the 'Ministration, but will defend our nat'ral born sovereign rights. I know their 'tarnal rigs, inside and out. May I be totally swallowed by a b'ar, if I give way an inch to the best of 'em; that is to say, men, if you honour me with your confidence and"–

"You'll go the whole hog, will you?" interrupted one of the free and independent electors.

"The whole hog!" repeated Bob, striking his fist on the table with the force of a sledge-hammer; "ay, that will I! the whole hog

for the people! Now lads, don't you think that our great folks cost too much money? Tarnation to me if I wouldn't do all they do at a third of the price. Why, half a dozen four-horse waggons would have enough to do to carry away the hard dollars that Johnny[6] and his 'Ministration have cost the country. Here it is, lads, in black and white."

Bob had a bundle of papers before him, which we had at first taken for a dirty pocket-handkerchief, but which now proved to be the county newspapers—one of which gave a statement of the amount expended by the first magistrate of the Union during his administration, reduced, for the sake of clearness, into waggon-loads. Bob was silent, while his neighbour the secretary put on his spectacles, and began to read this important document. He was interrupted, however, by cries of "Know it already! Read it already! Go on, Bob!"

"Only see here now," continued Bob, taking up the paper. "Diplomatic missions! what does that mean? What occasion had they to send any one there? Then they've appointed one General Tariff, who's the maddest aristocrat that ever lived, and he's passed a law by which we ain't to trade any more with the Britishers. Every stocking, every knife-handle, that comes into the States, has to pay a duty to this infernal aristocrat. Where shall we get our flannel from now, I wonder?"

"Hear, hear!" cried a youth in a tattered red flannel shirt, to whose feelings this question evidently went home.

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[6] John Quincy Adams, then president of the United States.

"Moreover," continued Bob, "it's a drag put upon our ships, to the profit of their Yankee manyfacters. Manyfacters, indeed! Men! free sovereign citizens! to work in manyfacters!"

"Hear, hear!" in a threatening tone from the audience.

"But that ain't all," continued Bob, nodding his head mysteriously. "No, men—hear and judge! You, the enlightened freemen of Alabama, listen and judge for yourselves! Clever fellows, the 'Ministration and the Yankees! D'ye know what they've been a-doin'?"

"No, no. Tell us!" repeated twenty voices.

"You don't know?" said Bob, with a fine oratorical movement. "I'll tell you then. They've been a-sendin' clothes, powder, rifles, flour, and whisky to the Creeks! Two full shiploads have they sent. Here it is!" yelled Bob, taking another paper from his pocket, and dashing it upon the table.[7]

A breathless silence reigned during the reading of the important paragraph, while Richards and myself were making almost superhuman efforts to restrain our laughter. Bob continued—

"You see, men, they want to get the scalpin' plunderin' thieves back ag'in over the Mississippi into Georgia—ay, and perhaps into Alabama too. And they're holdin' meetin's and assemblies in their favour, and say that we owe our independence to these

[7] The Greeks, who at that time were struggling for their independence, had received various succours from the United States. The Creeks are a well-known tribe of Indians on the frontiers of Georgia.

Creeks; and talk about their chiefs—one Alexander the Great, and Pericles, and Plato, and suchlike names that we give our niggers. And the cussed Redskins are fightin' against another chief whom they call Sultan, and who lives upon Turk's island. Where shall we get our salt from now, I should like to know?"[8]

The storm that had been for some time brewing, now burst forth with a roar that shook the rafters of the log-built tavern. Although immeasurably tickled by Bob's speech, Richards and I had struggled successfully with our disposition to laugh. At this moment, however, a stifled giggling was heard behind us, which immediately attracted the attention of Bob and his friends. "A spy! a spy!" shouted they; and there was a sudden and general rush to the door, through which an unfortunate adherent of the opposite party had sneaked in to witness their proceedings. The poor devil was seized by a dozen hands, and dragged, neck and heel, before Bob's tribunal, to account for his intrusion. He set up a howl of terror, and probably pain, that immediately brought to his assistance a whole regiment of his friends, who were assembled in the adjacent tavern. A furious fight began, from which Richards and myself hastened to escape. We made our way into the kitchen, and thence into a court at the back of the house.

"Stop!" said a whispering voice, as we were groping about in the darkness; "you are close to a pool that would drown an ox. I

[8] Turk's island is a small island from which the Western States, North and South Carolina, Georgia, &c., get their salt.

guess you won't refuse my invitation now?"

It was no less a person than Mr Isaac Shifty; and we began to consider whether it would not really be better to put ourselves under his guidance. Indoors we could hear the fight raging furiously. We paused to think what was best to be done. Suddenly, to our great astonishment, the noise of the contest ceased, and was replaced by a dead silence. We hurried through the kitchen to the field of battle, and found that the charm which had so suddenly stilled the fury of an Alabamian election fight, was no other than the arrival of the constable and his assistants, who had suddenly appeared in the midst of the combatants. Their presence produced an effect which scarcely any amount of mere physical force would have been able to bring about; and a single summons in the name of the law to keep the peace, had caused the contending parties to separate—the intruding one retiring immediately to its own headquarters.

We passed a quiet and tolerably comfortable night, except that Bob thought proper to favour us with his society, so that we lay three in one bed. Before break of day he got up, and went away. Tired as we were, it was much later before we followed his example. Upon entering the common room of the tavern, we found it empty, but bearing pretty evident marks of the recent conflict. Chairs, benches, and tables, lay in splinters upon the floor, which was, moreover, plentifully sprinkled with fragments of broken jugs and glasses; and even the bar itself had not entirely escaped damage. On repairing to the stable, to

pay Cæsar a visit, I found my gig, to my no small mortification, plastered all over with election squibs—"Hurras for Bob Snags!" and the like; while poor Cæsar's tail was shorn of every hair, as close and clean as if it had been first lathered and then shaved. Our breakfast, however, was excellent—the weather fine; and we set out upon our journey to Florence under decidedly more favourable auspices than those that attended us on the preceding day.

THE EXECUTION OF MONTROSE

The most poetical chronicler would find it impossible to render the incidents of Montrose's brilliant career more picturesque than the reality. Among the devoted champions who, during the wildest and most stormy period of our history, maintained the cause of Church and King, "the Great Marquis" undoubtedly is entitled to the foremost place. Even party malevolence, by no means extinct at the present day, has been unable to detract from the eulogy pronounced upon him by the famous Cardinal de Retz, the friend of Condé and Turenne, when he thus summed up his character:—"Montrose, a Scottish nobleman, head of the house of Grahame—the only man in the world that has ever realized to me the ideas of certain heroes, whom we now discover nowhere but in the Lives of Plutarch—has sustained in his own country the cause of the King his master, with a greatness of soul that has not found its equal in our age."

But the success of the victorious leader and patriot, is almost thrown into the shade by the noble magnanimity and Christian heroism of the man in the hour of defeat and death. It is impossible now to obliterate the darkest page of Scottish history, which we owe to the vindictive cruelty of the Covenanters—a party venal in principle, pusillanimous in action, and more than dastardly in their revenge; but we can peruse it with the less disgust, since that very savage spirit which planned the woful

scenes connected with the final tragedy of Montrose, has served to exhibit to the world, in all time to come, the character of the martyred nobleman in by far its loftiest light.

There is no ingredient of fiction in the historical incidents recorded in the following ballad. The indignities that were heaped upon Montrose during his procession through Edinburgh, his appearance before the Estates, and his last passage to the scaffold, as well as his undaunted bearing, have all been spoken to by eyewitnesses of the scene. A graphic and vivid sketch of the whole will be found in Mr Mark Napier's volume, "The Life and Times of Montrose"—a work as chivalrous in its tone as the Chronicles of Froissart, and abounding in original and most interesting materials; but, in order to satisfy all scruple, the authorities for each fact are given in the shape of notes. The ballad may be considered as a narrative of the transactions, related by an aged Highlander, who had followed Montrose throughout his campaigns, to his grandson, shortly before the splendid victory of Killiecrankie:—

I

Come hither, Evan Cameron,
Come, stand beside my knee—
I hear the river roaring down
Towards the wintry sea.

There's shouting on the mountain side,
There's war within the blast—
Old faces look upon me,
Old forms go trooping past.
I hear the pibroch wailing
Amidst the din of fight,
And my old spirit wakes again
Upon the verge of night!

II

'Twas I that led the Highland host
Through wild Lochaber's snows,
What time the plaided clans came down
To battle with Montrose.
I've told thee how the Southrons fell
Beneath the broad claymore,
And how we smote the Campbell clan
By Inverlochy's shore.
I've told thee how we swept Dundee,
And tamed the Lindsays' pride;
But never have I told thee yet
How the Great Marquis died!

III

A traitor sold him to his foes;[9]
O deed of deathless shame!
I charge thee, boy, if e'er thou meet
With one of Assynt's name—
Be it upon the mountain's side,
Or yet within the glen,
Stand he in martial gear alone,
Or back'd by armed men—
Face him, as thou would'st face the man
Who wrong'd thy sire's renown;
Remember of what blood thou art,
And strike the caitiff down!

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[9] "The contemporary historian of the Earls of Sutherland records, that (after the defeat of Invercarron) Montrose and Kinnoull 'wandered up the river Kyle the whole ensuing night, and the next day, and the third day also, without any food or sustenance, and at last came within the country of Assynt. The Earl of Kinnoull, being faint for lack of meat, and not able to travel any further, was left there among the mountains, where it was supposed he perished. Montrose had almost famished, but that he fortuned in his misery to light upon a small cottage in that wilderness, where he was supplied with some milk and bread.' Not even the iron frame of Montrose could endure a prolonged existence under such circumstances. He gave himself up to Macleod of Assynt, a former adherent, from whom he had reason to expect assistance in consideration of that circumstance, and, indeed, from the dictates of honourable feeling and common humanity. As the Argyle faction had sold the King, so this Highlander rendered his own name infamous by selling the hero to the Covenanters, for which 'duty to the public' he was rewarded with four hundred bolls of meal."—Napier's *Life of Montrose*.

IV

They brought him to the Watergate[10]
Hard bound with hempen span,
As though they held a lion there,
And not a fenceless man.

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[10] "*Friday, 17th May.*—Act ordaining James Grahame to be brought from the Watergate on a cart, bareheaded, the hangman in his livery, covered, riding on the horse that draws the cart—the prisoner to be bound to the cart with a rope—to the Tolbooth of Edinburgh, and from thence to be brought to the Parliament House, and there, in the place of delinquents, on his knees, to receive his sentence—viz., to be hanged on a gibbet at the Cross of Edinburgh, with his book and declaration tied on a rope about his neck, and there to hang for the space of three hours until he be dead; and thereafter to be cut down by the hangman, his head, hands, and legs to be cut off, and distributed as follows—viz., His head to be affixed on an iron pin, and set on the pinnacle of the west gavel of the new prison of Edinburgh; one hand to be set on the port of Perth, the other on the port of Stirling; one leg and foot on the port of Aberdeen, the other on the port of Glasgow. If at his death penitent, and relaxed from excommunication, then the trunk of his body to be interred, by pioneers, in the Greyfriars; otherwise, to be interred in the Boroughmuir, by the hangman's men, under the gallows."—Balfour's *Notes of Parliament*.It is needless to remark that this inhuman sentence was executed to the letter. In order that the exposure might be more complete, the cart was constructed with a high chair in the centre, having holes behind, through which the ropes that fastened him were drawn. The author of the *Wigton Papers*, recently published by the Maitland Club, says, "the reason of his being tied to the cart was in hope that the people would have stoned him, and that he might not be able by his hands to save his face." His hat was then pulled off by the hangman, and the procession commenced.

They set him high upon a cart—
The hangman rode below—
They drew his hands behind his back,
And bared his lordly brow.
Then, as a hound is slipp'd from leash,
They cheer'd the common throng,
And blew the note with yell and shout,
And bade him pass along.

V

It would have made a brave man's heart
Grow sad and sick that day,
To watch the keen malignant eyes
Bent down on that array.
There stood the Whig west-country lords
In balcony and bow,
There sat their gaunt and wither'd dames,
And their daughters all a-row;
And every open window
Was full as full might be,
With black-robed Covenanting carles,
That goodly sport to see!

VI

But when he came, though pale and wan,
He look'd so great and high,[11]

So noble was his manly front,
So calm his steadfast eye;—
The rabble rout forbore to shout,
And each man held his breath,
For well they knew the hero's soul
Was face to face with death.
And then a mournful shudder
Through all the people crept,
And some that came to scoff at him,
Now turn'd aside and wept.

VII

[11] "In all the way, there appeared in him such majesty, courage, modesty—and even somewhat more than natural—that those common women who had lost their husbands and children in his wars, and who were hired to stone him, were upon the sight of him so astonished and moved, that their intended curses turned into tears and prayers; so that next day *all the ministers preached against them for not stoning and reviling him*."—*Wigton Papers.*

But onwards—always onwards,
In silence and in gloom,
The dreary pageant labour'd,
Till it reach'd the house of doom:
But first a woman's voice was heard
In jeer and laughter loud,[12]
And an angry cry and a hiss arose
From the heart of the tossing crowd:
Then, as the Græme look'd upwards,
He caught the ugly smile
Of him who sold his King for gold—
The master-fiend Argyle!

VIII

The Marquis gazed a moment,
And nothing did he say,
But the cheek of Argyle grew ghastly pale,
And he turn'd his eyes away.
The painted harlot at his side,

[12] "It is remarkable, that of the many thousand beholders, the Lady Jean Gordon, Countess of Haddington, did (alone) publicly insult and laugh at him; which being perceived by a gentleman in the street, he cried up to her, that it became her better to sit upon the cart for her adulteries."—*Wigton Papers.* This infamous woman was the third daughter of Huntly, and the niece of Argyle. It will hardly be credited that she was the sister of that gallant Lord Gordon, who fell fighting by the side of Montrose, only five years before, at the battle of Aldford!

She shook through every limb,
For a roar like thunder swept the street,
And hands were clench'd at him,
And a Saxon soldier cried aloud,
"Back, coward, from thy place!
For seven long years thou hast not dared
To look him in the face."[13]

IX

Had I been there with sword in hand
And fifty Camerons by,
That day through high Dunedin's streets
Had peal'd the slogan cry.
Not all their troops of trampling horse,
Nor might of mailéd men—
Not all the rebels in the south
Had borne us backwards then!
Once more his foot on Highland heath
Had stepp'd as free as air,

[13] "The Lord Lorn and his new lady were also sitting on a balcony, joyful spectators; and the cart being stopt when it came before the lodging where the Chancellor, Argyle, and Warristoun sat—that they might have time to insult—he, suspecting the business, turned his face towards them, whereupon they presently crept in at the windows: which being perceived by an Englishman, he cried up, it was no wonder they started aside at his look, for they durst not look him in the face these seven years bygone."—*Wigton Papers.*

Or I, and all who bore my name,
Been laid around him there!

X

It might not be. They placed him next
Within the solemn hall,
Where once the Scottish Kings were throned
Amidst their nobles all.
But there was dust of vulgar feet
On that polluted floor,
And perjured traitors fill'd the place
Where good men sate before.
With savage glee came Warristoun[14]

[14] Archibald Johnston of Warristoun. This man, who was the inveterate enemy of Montrose, and who carried the most selfish spirit into every intrigue of his party, received the punishment of his treasons about eleven years afterwards. It may be instructive to learn how *he* met his doom. The following extract is from the MSS. of Sir George Mackenzie:—"The Chancellor and others waited to examine him; he fell upon his face, roaring, and with tears entreated they would pity a poor creature who had forgot all that was in the Bible. This moved all the spectators with a deep melancholy; and the Chancellor, reflecting upon the man's great parts, former esteem, and the great share he had in all the late revolutions, could not deny some tears to the frailty of silly mankind. At his examination, he pretended he had lost so much blood by the unskilfulness of his chirurgeons, that he lost his memory with his blood; and I really believe that his courage had been drawn out with it. Within a few days he was brought before the parliament, where he discovered nothing but much weakness, running up and down upon his knees, begging mercy; but the parliament ordained his

To read the murderous doom,
And then uprose the great Montrose
In the middle of the room.

XI

"Now by my faith as belted knight,
And by the name I bear,
And by the red Saint Andrew's cross
That waves above us there—
Ay, by a greater, mightier oath—
And oh, that such should be!—
By that dark stream of royal blood
That lies 'twixt you and me—
I have not sought in battle field
A wreath of such renown,

Nor dared I hope, on my dying day,
To win the martyr's crown!

XII

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former sentence to be put to execution, and accordingly he was executed at the cross of Edinburgh."

"There is a chamber far away
Where sleep the good and brave,
But a better place ye have named for me
Than by my father's grave.
For truth and right, 'gainst treason's might,
This hand has always striven,
And ye raise it up for a witness still
In the eye of earth and heaven.
Then nail my head on yonder tower—
Give every town a limb—
And God who made shall gather them.—
I go from you to Him!"[15]

XIII

The morning dawn'd full darkly,
The rain came flashing down,
And the jagged streak of the levin-bolt
Lit up the gloomy town:
The heavens were speaking out their wrath,
The fatal hour was come,
Yet ever sounded sullenly

[15] "He said he was much beholden to the parliament for the honour they put on him; 'for,' says he, 'I think it a greater honour to have my head standing on the port of this town, for this quarrel, than to have my picture in the king's bedchamber. I am beholden to you, that, lest my loyalty should be forgotten, ye have appointed five of your most eminent towns to bear witness of it to posterity.'"—*Wigton Papers.*

The trumpet and the drum.
There was madness on the earth below,
And anger in the sky,
And young and old, and rich and poor,
Came forth to see him die.

XIV

Ah, God! That ghastly gibbet!
How dismal 'tis to see
The great tall spectral skeleton,
The ladder, and the tree!
Hark! hark! It is the clash of arms—
The bells begin to toll—
He is coming! he is coming!
God's mercy on his soul!
One last long peal of thunder—
The clouds are clear'd away,
And the glorious sun once more looks down
Amidst the dazzling day.

XV

He is coming! he is coming!

Like a bridegroom from his room,[16]

Came the hero from his prison
To the scaffold and the doom.
There was glory on his forehead,
There was lustre in his eye,
And he never walk'd to battle
More proudly than to die:
There was colour in his visage,
Though the cheeks of all were wan,
And they marvell'd as they saw him pass,
That great and goodly man!

XVI

He mounted up the scaffold,
And he turn'd him to the crowd;
But they dared not trust the people,
So he might not speak aloud.

[16] "In his downgoing from the Tolbooth to the place of execution, he was very richly clad in fine scarlet, laid over with rich silver lace, his hat in his hand, his bands and cuffs exceeding rich, his delicate white gloves on his hands, his stockings of incarnate silk, and his shoes with their ribands on his feet; and sarks provided for him with pearling about, above ten pund the elne. All these were provided for him by his friends, and a pretty cassock put on upon him, upon the scaffold, wherein he was hanged. To be short, nothing was here deficient to honour his poor carcase, more beseeming a bridegroom than a criminal going to the gallows."—Nicholl's *Diary*.

But he look'd upon the heavens,
And they were clear and blue,
And in the liquid ether
The eye of God shone through:
Yet a black and murky battlement
Lay resting on the hill,
As though the thunder slept within—
All else was calm and still.

XVII

The grim Geneva ministers
With anxious scowl drew near,[17]

[17] The Presbyterian ministers beset Montrose both in prison and on the scaffold. The following extracts are from the diary of the Rev. Robert Traill, one of the persons who were appointed by the commission of the kirk "to deal with him:"—"By a warrant from the kirk, we staid a while with him about his soul's condition. But we found him continuing in his old pride, and taking very ill what was spoken to him, saying, 'I pray you, gentlemen, let me die in peace.' It was answered, that he might die in true peace, being reconciled to the Lord and to his kirk."—"We returned to the commission, and did show unto them what had passed amongst us. They, seeing that for the present he was not desiring relaxation from his censure of excommunication, did appoint Mr Mungo Law and me to attend on the morrow on the scaffold, at the time of his execution, that, in case he should desire to be relaxed from his excommunication, we should be allowed to give it unto him in the name of the kirk, and to pray with him, and for him, *that what is loosed in earth might be loosed in heaven*." But this pious intention, which may appear somewhat strange to the modern Calvinist, when the prevailing theories of the kirk regarding the efficacy of absolution are considered, was

As you have seen the ravens flock
Around the dying deer.

He would not deign them word nor sign,
But alone he bent the knee;
And veil'd his face for Christ's dear grace
Beneath the gallows-tree.
Then radiant and serene he rose,
And cast his cloak away:
For he had ta'en his latest look
Of earth, and sun, and day.

XVIII

A beam of light fell o'er him,
Like a glory round the shriven,
And he climb'd the lofty ladder
As it were the path to heaven.[18]

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not destined to be fulfilled. Mr Traill goes on to say, "But he did not at all desire to be relaxed from his excommunication in the name of the kirk, *yea, did not look towards that place on the scaffold where we stood*; only he drew apart some of the magistrates, and spake a while with them, and then went up the ladder, in his red scarlet cassock, in a very stately manner."

[18] "He was very earnest that he might have the liberty to keep on his hat; it was denied: he requested he might have the privilege to keep his cloak about him—neither could that be granted. Then, with a most undaunted courage, he went up to the top of that prodigious gibbet."—"The whole people gave a general groan; and it was very

Then came a flash from out the cloud,
And a stunning thunder roll,
And no man dared to look aloft,
For fear was on every soul.
There was another heavy sound,
A hush and then a groan;
And darkness swept across the sky—
The work of death was done!

W. E. A.

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observable, that even those who at his first appearance had bitterly inveighed against him, could not now abstain from tears."—*Montrose Redivivus.*

THE WITCHFINDER

Part I

It was towards the close of an autumnal evening, in the commencement of the sixteenth century, that a crowd of human beings was dispersing from the old market-place of Hammelburg, an ancient and, at that time, considerable town of Franconia, after witnessing the performance of a hideous and living tragedy. The Ober-Amtmann, or governor of the town, who had presided over the awful occasion, had left, attended by his *schreibers*, or secretaries, the small balustraded terrace which advanced out before the elevated entrance of the old Gothic town-hall. The town-guard were receding in various directions, warning the crowd to seek their homes, and sometimes aiding with a gentle admonition of their pike-heads those who lingered, as, slowly retreating, they moved down the different narrow streets that led from the central market-place, like streams flowing off in different channels after an inundation. Window after window was closing in the quaintly-carved and strangely-decorated gables of the houses; and many a small casement had been pulled to, over sundry withered old faces, that, peering from the dark and narrow aperture, and illumined by the glaring light that had filled the market-place, had resembled some darkly-

traced picture placed against the opening. In the middle of the square still smoked, in a heavy volume of cloud, the last gleaming ashes of a lately blazing pile, still filling the air with a noisome stench. The night was closing darkly in, and one human being alone seemed yet to linger in the market-place.

It would have been difficult, indeed, to discover that the dark object just discernible upon the edge of the blackened mass of smoking cinders really was a human being, so shapeless was the form, so strangely was it crouched down before the spot where the pile had been consumed. From time to time only an upward-flung movement of two thin arms, as if in the violent emotion of earnest prayer or deprecation, showed that this object was a living thing; until, when the moon rose from behind the old town-hall, disengaging itself, ever and anon, from among the heavy clouds of a gathering storm, its light fell full upon this indistinct apparition, and revealed the form of a man, curiously bent together in a half-squatting, half-kneeling position. His head was bare. His long tangled black locks hung around a swarthy face, young still in years, but worn and withered, and prematurely aged by sickness, sorrow, or violence of passion—perhaps by the constant operation of all three. At this moment it was ghastly pale, and bore the marks of the faintness and exhaustion attendant upon a reaction after intense excitement. The dress of this creature was not the usual costume of the lower classes, and consisted almost entirely of a ragged and soiled garment of coarse brown linen, made somewhat in the shape of

a modern *blouse*, and bound round his waist by a coarse leathern band. Around his neck hung a square bag, or satchel, which at once designated his calling to be that of a common beggar, privileged by the religious authorities of the place. The stoop of his broad shoulders, between which the head was deeply sunk, told a tale of long sickness, which had broken a frame originally bold and strong, and given a peculiarly ill-favoured appearance to a form naturally well built; and when he arose from his squatting posture, the bent and withered appearance of his crooked legs, which no longer possessed sufficient strength to support the bulkier frame above, gave painful evidence that the wretched man had suffered cruelly from those common scourges of his class at that period—rheumatism and ague. Clasped between his hands was a rosary of wood; and, as he rose, he pressed it to his lips, and then deposited it in the upper part of his garment.

"No, no!" exclaimed the cripple aloud, when he had staggered to his feet. "No, it is not vengeance—it is not, God knows; although the malevolence of those hideous and accursed hags, those lemans of Satan"—and he spat upon the ground—"have made me the wretched outcast of humanity I am. The blood of the foul one has been shed for His glory only, and that of the blessed Virgin, to the destruction of the arch-enemy of mankind and his delusions!"

"Thou knowest it is so," he added, again clutching forth the rosary from his bosom, which, after gazing upon a rude personification of the Virgin, stamped upon a tiny plate of

copper at the end of the string of beads, and devoutly making the sign of the cross, he returned to its usual depository.

"I have cried against the handmaid of Beelzebub—uttering cry for cry as she shrieked out her wretched soul. I have prayed earnestly and long, and I am athirst," continued the cripple, as he dragged his distorted limbs with difficulty over the rough stones towards a large covered well, which occupied the lower part of the market-place.

As the beggar approached the parapet of the well, to drink from one of the buckets which reposed upon its edge, he became first aware of the presence of another human being. Half-concealed behind one of the twisted columns that supported the Gothic pavilion above, sat upon the parapet a female figure, dressed in a black garb of such a form and nature, that, without being the exact costume of any known religious order, it bore a monastic character. Her face, as she sat with her head bent down over her clasped hands, in an attitude of mournful humiliation, was fully concealed by a black hood. But when, upon the approach of the beggar, she started up hastily, as if impelled by feelings of horror and disgust, the moon shone full upon her, and revealed the features of a woman of an advanced period of life, who formerly might have possessed much beauty, although now so washed out by tears, and furrowed by sorrow, that the whole character of her face was changed. Her years, too, were probably very much fewer than her appearance denoted, for the signs of age upon her face bore less the marks of time than of mental

suffering. The symptoms of aversion which her manner displayed upon the beggar's approach, although instinctive and involuntary, and almost immediately restrained, had not escaped his eye. His features expressed the bitter resentment of his heart at this insult, and worked with ill-repressed feelings of anger and spite.

"Ha! Mother Magdalena—it is thou! Why flinchest thou at my approach? Hast thou cause to fear me, then?" exclaimed the cripple with a sneer, as he drew nearer.

The female thus addressed shuddered at the sound of his voice; and, hastily pulling her dark hood more closely over her face, endeavoured to pass on without reply; but the beggar caught her by the arm.

"Not so fast, beldam!" he cried. "I would have a word with thee. Dost thou not know me?"

"Not know thee!" exclaimed the dark female. "Who in this wretched town does not know Schwartzer Claus, the witchfinder? What wouldst thou with me? Let me go!"

"Why dost thou tremble, then, and turn away thy head?" continued the cripple. "Why does Black Claus, the witchfinder —since such thou callest me—make thee shudder thus in every limb? The innocent have no cause to fear."

"Thou askest me why I shudder?" said Magdalena in an excited tone, forgetting in her agitation her purpose of self-control. "Thou hast forced me to speak, and I will tell thee. Is not thy hand yet reeking with the bloody ashes of thy last victim? Has not a seventh unhappy woman suffered this very day a cruel

death at the stake upon thy hideous denunciation; and thou askest me why I shudder?"

"Beware, woman—beware!" cried the witchfinder, lifting up his long right arm with a gesture of menace. "Those who defend the evil-doer, and malign the just and heaven-directed accuser, are not far from being arraigned as accomplices themselves!"

"What! thou seekest already another innocent sacrifice, wretched man!" continued the female, tearing away her arm, which the beggar still held clenched in his left hand. "Thou art not sated with the innocent blood thy false witness has this day shed?"

"It is a lie!—it is a damning lie!" screamed the cripple, foaming with passion. "I have borne no false witness! Besides, did not she avow her deeds of darkness? did she not confess her complicity with the spirits of hell, and her harlotries with the arch-deceiver of mankind?"

"Ay! when, tortured in mind and body, her poor weak old head gave way, and she unconsciously affirmed all that her torturers had for hours past been pressing upon her wavering understanding. Ye had driven her mad, poor wretch!"

"'Tis false again!—'tis false!" repeated the witchfinder. "The truth spoke out of her at last, when her treacherous paramour, the demon, had deserted her. God's glory and that of the holy church, for which I work, had triumphed over the powers of darkness."

"Thou serve the holy church! Hear not the blasphemy, O Lord!" cried the excited woman, raising up her hands to heaven.

"Thou, miserable wretch! who, for the favour of the Amtmann or the priest, for the pittance bestowed on thee in reward of thy discovery of the supposed foul practices of witchery and magic, art ever ready to sell the innocent blood of the aged, helpless, and infirm!"

"For the lucre of gain!" screamed the cripple, but in a tone as much of despair at this accusation as of wrath. "For the lucre of gain! No—no; as God is my judge, it is not! My motives are pure; God and the Holy Virgin know they are! It is not even a spirit of revenge that instigates me. No—no! it cannot be; it *is* not! If the words of my mouth have condemned and killed, it is because my voice was uplifted in the cause of religion, and to the confusion of the prince of evil!" But as he spoke, the beggar covered his face with his hands, with a shudder, as though there passed in his soul a struggle with himself—a doubt of his own real motives.

Magdalena was about to quit in haste her dangerous companion, when a sentiment of pity at the sight of the cripple's evident emotion seemed to mingle strangely with her disgust and aversion to the witchfinder. It was even with an uncontrollable feeling of interest that she stopped for a moment to look upon the wretched man.

After a pause, the beggar removed his hands from his face, and uttering in a low tone the words, "I thirst," staggered to the edge of the well, and seized the bucket within his hands. He bent over it but for a moment to drink, and could scarcely have swallowed

many mouthfuls, before, flinging back the bucket into the well, he started up, and spat the water from his mouth.

"Horror!" he said, with a look of mingled terror and insanity —"it tastes of blood!"

"It is thy own conscience, poor man, that troubles the taste of the fresh element," said Magdalena solemnly; "the water is pure and sweet!"

"Thou hast done this, old hag!" cried the witchfinder wildly; unheeding her remark. "Thou hast corrupted the waters at the source. Why did I find thee sitting here, cowering over the surface of the well, if it were not to cast malefick spells upon the water, and turn it into poison—in order to give ills, and ails, and blains, and aches, and pains, and sickness, and death to thy fellow-creatures? Ha! ha! I have long thought it. Thou also art one of the accursed ones!"

"Thou ravest, miserable wretch!" replied the female; "thou knowest not what thou utterest. God forgive thee, cripple, thy wicked thought, and change thy perverted mind!"

She was again about to turn away, and leave her angry questioner, when, fearing the result of the evil feeling now fully excited in the witchfinder's mind, she again paused to excuse herself in the eyes of the dangerous man, and added—

"Thou canst not mean what thou sayest, Claus; I sat by the well but to cool my heated brow in the night-air, and taste the breath of heaven; for my mind was saddened, and my head whirled, with the horrors that this day has witnessed."

But her words were but oil upon the flame, and only served to augment the wild infatuation of the witchfinder.

"Ah! thy mind was saddened! Thou hadst pity for that vile hag of hell! Was she thy comrade? Perchance thou hadst fear for thyself? Thou thought'st thy own time might come? Thy own time *will* come, old Magdalena. My eye is upon thee and thy dark practices; it has been upon thee since thou camest, unknown and unacknowledged, to this place, none could tell when, and whence, and how. Ay, my eye is upon thee, and—beware!"

Willingly would the woman now have shrunk away before the maddened witchfinder's objurgation; but the wild accusation thus thundered against her froze her with terror, and riveted her to the spot.

"I have marked thee well," continued the frantic man, "and I have seen thee pause upon the threshold of the holy house of God, and kneel in mockery upon the steps before it: but thou hast never dared to enter it. Thou knewest well that the devil thou servest would have torn thee in pieces hadst thou done it. Ha! do I catch thee there?" he continued, as at these words the woman buried her face between her hands.

"Thou canst not deny it!" shouted the witchfinder with an air of triumph.

"God best judges the motives of the heart," murmured Magdalena.

"I will tell thee more, vile hag, and thou shalt hear it face to

face," pursued the cripple, seizing the poor woman's arms with his long bony fingers, and dragging her hands from before her face, in spite of her efforts at resistance. "Thou watchest at street corners and in doorways, on the bridge or on the causeway, to see fair Fraulein Bertha, the Ober-Amtmann's daughter, ride past upon her ambling jennet, or mount the church-steps, her missal in her hand. Thou watchest her to cast thy spells upon her. Thou hatest her for her youth and beauty and spotless purity, like all thy wretched tribe, whom the sight of innocence and brightness sickens to the heart's core. Thou wouldst fascinate her with thy eye of evil and thy deadly incantations."

The moon, the light of which still struggled faintly through the fast-accumulating clouds, shone for a moment upon the face of old Magdalena, as the cripple pronounced these words. Her features were more deadly pale than usual, and convulsed with an excess of agitation at this mention of Bertha's name, which she evidently struggled to control in vain.

"Ah! I have thee there again!" screamed Claus in triumph a second time. "Already have I seen her cheek grow pale, her head bow down like a blighted flower, her walk become weary with faintness. Hast thou already been at thy filthy machinations? But Black Claus, the witchfinder, is there to wrestle with the powers of evil. And hear me! That fair sweet girl is the only comfort of my wretched life. My soul grows calm and soothed when I look upon that lovely face. A ray of sunshine gleams upon the darkness of my path when her smile beams upon me. My heart leaps

within me for joy when her small white hand drops an offering into my beggar's bowl. She is my only life, my only joy, and my guardian angel. And couldst thou harm her, woman, no torment should be too horrible for thee, body and soul. The chains of the stake still lie upon the market-place—the ashes of yon pile still reek with heat; and the pile shall rise again, the chains shall bind once more. Wretched hag! I bid thee again beware!"

As with one hand the raving witchfinder pointed to the spot where one unhappy woman had already perished that day, a victim to the superstition of the times, Magdalena, who, during his praise of the fair girl, had again looked at him with awakened interest, disengaged herself from the other. "God's will be done!" she said with humility. "I am prepared for all. But thou, unhappy man!" she continued, "beware in turn, lest, before thou hast time to repent thee of the hardness and cruelty of thy heart, His judgement fall on thee, and his justice punish thee."

She spoke with hand upraised to heaven; and then, pulling her hood over her face, hurried from the market-place.

The witchfinder gazed after her, fixed to the spot, and for a moment awe-struck by her words. As he still stood struggling with his various passions, the storm, which had been gathering ever since sunset, began to burst over his head. The rain came down in torrents.

"Ah! was it that?" screamed the beggar, with a fit of wild laughter. "The miserable old beldam! she stretched out her finger to the sky, and it was to bring down these waterspouts upon my

head. Curses on the foul malicious fiend!" And he spat upon the ground, as if to exorcise the evil spirit.

"But I must find shelter," he murmured. "Already pains rack my limbs; my bones ache; a shudder runs through my frame! The old hag has worked her spell upon me. *Apage, Sathanas!* Anathema!"

Speaking thus, the wretched man shuffled along as fast as the crippled state of his limbs, and the acute pains of rheumatism, which the damp night-air had again brought upon him, would allow him to proceed. He staggered to the shelter of a doorway, which was placed under the advancing terrace of the town-hall, and between two staircases which descended on either side on to the market-place. The protruding vault of the Gothic archway afforded him some refuge from the storm, which now burst down with increased violence. But the excited witchfinder's brain seemed to wander, as he caught an indistinct vision of the gaping jaws of the dragons and other grotesque monsters, which protruded as waterspouts from the roofs of the surrounding houses, and now disgorged torrents of rain.

"Spit, spit, ye devils all!" he shouted aloud. "Ye cannot reach me here. Ha! ha! rage, storm, spew forth your venom, do the bidding of your mistress—I defy you!" And as the wind swept round the corners of the building, and spattered some of the water of the gushing cataracts in his face, he cried, "Avaunt!" as if speaking to a living thing, and, clinging to the bars of an aperture in the upper part of the door, turned away his face.

As he thus came to look upon the strongly-barred opening in the door, the current of his ideas changed. Within was the small and wretched prison of the town, which just occupied the space of the terrace above—a miserable hole.

"There she lay this morning," he murmured, looking into the interior, which was now in utter darkness, and quite empty —"there she lay, old Martha Dietz, and called in vain upon the demon who deserted her. There have lain all the foul hags who tortured my poor aching limbs. There shall *she* lie also, the scoffer and reviler, the worker of evil. The witchfinder will be revenged. Revenge! no, no! He will do the work of the holy church. Who shall say the contrary? Not thou, old Martha—nor thou—nor thou. If ye say so, ye lie in death, as ye have lied in life. Ay! glare upon me with your lack-lustre eyes. Ye are powerless now, though ye are there, and make mouths at me. One—two—three—God stand by me! There they are—*all seven!*"

With a wild scream of horror, the cripple covered his eyes with his hands, and rushed forth into the tempest.

Situated in the picturesque and fertile valley of the Saale, the town of Hammelburg stands upon a gentle declivity, commanding one of the numerous windings of the river, and sloping downwards to its banks. A part of the old walls of the town is thus bathed by the waters of the stream, which, calm and peaceful in the summer months, become tumultuous, and even dangerous, during rainy weather, or after the melting of the snows. From the ancient gateway of the town on the river side,

a triple bridge of great length and many arches, which, in the dry season, seems to occupy a most unnecessary space across the narrower waters, but which, at other times, scarce suffices to span the extent of the invading inundation, affords a communication with the high-road.

At the commencement of the sixteenth century, this bridge was only constructed of wood, and although put together with rude strength, ill-sufficed to resist the force of the torrents, and had been repeatedly swept before them.

Not far from the town gateway that commanded this bridge, stood a huge mansion, constructed as a palace for the Prince Bishops of Fulda, the sovereign rulers of the district; although, at the period in question, it had been ceded to the Ober-Amtmann, a near relation of the reigning bishop, as his official dwelling. On the side of this ancient palace furthest removed from the town gate, ran, along the river's banks, its spacious gardens, abutting at their extremity upon the premises of an extensive Benedictine monastery, from which they were only separated by a narrow lane, that led from the town to the river. At the very angle of this lane, where it opened by a small water-gate upon a narrow towing-path, skirting alike the town-walls and the banks of the stream, there stood a low building attached to the monastery, the upper story of which thus overlooked the old gardens of the palace on the one hand, and, on the other, the river banks.

At one of the windows of this humble dwelling, that which overlooked the palace gardens, stood a young man, intently

gazing through its small octagon panes. Two or three times he turned away with a heavy sigh, as if wearied with long and vain watching, and as often returned again to his previous occupation. At length the opening of the door of the room startled him from his position; and as if ashamed of being caught in the act of looking out, he hurried to a table in the middle of the room, and flung himself into an old chair.

The various objects with which the table was covered, as well as those which filled and littered the room in all directions, clearly designated the young man's employment to be that of a sculptor and colourer of images for the ornament of churches, as well as an illuminator of missals and manuscripts —an occupation at that time still pursued, although gradually falling into disuse since the invention of printing. Scattered about upon the table were several old parchment manuscripts, which had served as models for the artist's use, or had been confided to his hands to clean. Old illuminated missals, some of the gorgeous illustrations of which were open, as if lately retouched by the hand of the young painter, lay here and there. At the further end of the table stood a small figure of a Virgin and Child, delicately and exquisitely carved, and painted with the richest colours. The group was bright with its fresh finish, and evidently had not long been completed by the hand of the artist. Upon an elevated bench or dresser were littered the tools of the sculptor and wood-carver, with a few unfinished trials of small saintly figures; and around the room were fragments of wooden images of saints, some

discoloured, some broken, a few in tolerable preservation, which were either destined to be restored and repainted, or had served as studies for the artist. Upon the walls hung a few pictures of female saints, bedecked with garlands of flowers, which showed them to be objects of devotion and respect in the eyes of the possessor. Among all this confusion, space was scarcely left, in the small chamber of the artist, for the pallet-bed and cumbrous press that formed his only furniture.

Immediately before the chair into which the young man so hastily flung himself, lay a rich missal, upon the adornment of which he had been employed, before other thoughts and feelings had sent him to the window; and when he again resumed his work, it was upon the face of a fair saint, which formed the headpiece of a chapter, peering out from among the various graceful arabesques that twined in the brightest colours along the margin of the leaf.

In truth, the face of the young artist was almost as fair as that of the bright being he was engaged in painting. His light brown hair was parted in the middle, over a high white forehead, and fell in faintly waving curls almost to his neck, forming a frame to the soft oval face, to which his violet-blue melancholy-looking eyes, his calm, finely-chiselled features, and the serious repose of his imaginative mouth, imparted an air of gentleness and thoughtfulness combined. His dark, sober-coloured, simple dress, although somewhat too severe to suit his youthful figure, accorded well with the character of his physiognomy. His falling

collar displayed a full white throat, which might have served as a model for a statue of Antinous, had it not borne more the stamp of genius in its proportions than of physical voluptuousness. The hands, which now hastily resumed their neglected occupation, had all the fairness and well-moulded contour of a woman's, without that delicacy of size which would have stamped them as effeminate. Had he been aware of his own beauty, he might have copied his own graceful form for a personification of the lily-bearing angel in a group of the Annunciation.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.