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MONETARY SENSATIONS.

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THE poorest and most unlucky dog in the world either has or had some small

portion of money. No matter how small, how hardly, or how precariously earned, he has seen, from time to time, a glimpse of the colour of his own cash, and rejoiced accordingly as that colour was brown, white, or yellow. It follows, therefore, that even the poorest and most unlucky dog in the world has experienced monetary sensations. It may appear paradoxical, but it is no less true, that it is the very rich, born to riches, the heirs to great properties, or no end of consolidated stock, who have never enjoyed or feared the sensation to which we allude. To them, money is a thing of course; it pours in upon them with the regularity of the succeeding seasons. Rent-day comes of itself, and there is the money; dividend-day is as sure as Christmas, and there lie the receipts. These are the people who know nothing of the commodity with which they are so well endowed, or, at most, their knowledge is but skin-deep. They take and spend, just as they sit or walk. Both seem natural processes; they have performed them since they were born. Their money is a bit of themselves—an extra and uncommonly convenient limb with which they are endowed. It is only when some sudden catastrophe bursts upon and cuts off the supplies, that this class of ladies and gentlemen experience, like the shock of a thousand freezing shower-baths, their first 'monetary sensation.'

But the men and women who work either with head or hands—who fight their way—who plan to gain and plan to spend, so that the latter shall counterbalance the former—who lie sleepless in their beds, intent on how to make both ends meet—who are lucky and unlucky—who travel the ups and the downs of life, here grasping fortunes, there turning out the linings of penniless pockets: these are the people whose whole lives are one long succession of monetary sensations. Among them mainly is cultivated the art of looking at two sides of a shilling. They know how to value half-crowns and sovereigns in calling up the long arrear of hard-worked hours, which are, as it were, the small-change of quarters' salaries and weeks' wages. How many strokes of the steady-going pen are encircled in those bright yellow disks—how many thumps of the ponderous hammer has it taken to produce this handful of silver. Or on a larger scale—as the successful speculator sweeps to himself the mass of notes and bills, all as good as gold, for which he has set every penny of his worldly means upon the stake, and feels with a thrill which makes him clutch the precious paper, that had things not turned out as, thank Heaven! they have, that then, and then!—He has had a tolerably vigorous monetary sensation.

But the whole of the money-getting classes, and, to some extent, the classes who merely spend what others got and gave them, can look very well back upon a series of monetary sensations which have marked epochs in their lives. Our remembrances of that kind are, of course, most deeply engraved, and most clearly recollected, in the cases in which we are working for ourselves, and have ourselves achieved steps and triumphed over difficulties in life—each step and triumph marked by a lengthening of the purse. But there are early monetary impressions common to almost all the juvenile world, rich and poor—to the children of the duke or of the mechanic, to the boy who has obtained the price of a pony or a watch, and the boy who has been made a present of what will buy him a twopenny story-book, or a twopenny bun. Boys and girls commonly have poses—to adopt a phrase not known south of the Tweed, where it must be explained, that to have a pose, is to possess a little private and secret, or quasi-secret, hoard of treasure. This pose frequently imparts the first monetary sensation. It instils the first distinct idea of the value of money; it gives the first notion of the accumulation of precious things; and the little proprietor or proprietrix comes to rattle the box with the narrow slit as a sort of sly enjoyment. To break into a pose would be quite profane and irreverent. Pose-boxes do not open, and so far read a philosophic lesson to the proprietors. Always save, always add, always hold as a sort of sacred deposit, the mysteriously precious pose-boxes. Occasionally, again, a child gets a present of a sovereign, or an old-fashioned guinea, which it would be dreadful sacrilege to change. Every one will remember how Sophy and Livy Primrose 'never went without money themselves, as my wife always let them have a guinea each to keep in their pockets, but with strict injunctions never to change it.' There are hundreds of thousands of Sophies and Livies possessed of the same sacred store, or having given it to their parents 'to keep,' over whose minds the remembrance of the secret hoard every now and then sends flashing across the mind of the child a sense of importance, or richness, or a general self-complacency which varies with the individuality. Boys and girls in the next stages of their growth care little and think little about money, except as a means of obtaining some trifling passing indulgence. The childish reverence for the pose has passed. The unopenable box has been long since opened, and the unchangeable guinea long since changed. We allude here, of course, to the children of the well-to-do. With the children of the poor, the case is different. They never lose the faculty of monetary sensation. Money is too valuable to them, because as soon as the

mere childish period is past, and sometimes before it, money to the young poor is always translatable into good food and new clothes. There is nothing more sadly frequent in the squalid lanes and alleys of London, than to see a little creature, boy or girl, toddle with a chance-penny, not into the toy-shop or the sweet-shop, but into the cook-shop, and there spend the treasure in food, taking care, with melancholy precocity, to have the full weight, and only a due proportion of gristle or fat. Further on in life, when a poor boy earns a chance-sixpence or a shilling, there is so much added to the store laying up for the new jacket, the new cap, or the new boots; or, not unfrequently, there is so much gained for the family exigencies of Saturday night. Here there are monetary sensations in abundance. The life of such people is full of them. The annuitant or the proprietor who listlessly, and without one additional throb of his pulse, drops hundreds into his purse, has not the ghost of an idea of the thrill of pleasure—invoking, perhaps, a score of delightful associations—with which the boy who holds his horse receives the sixpence, which is tossed him as the capitalist in his normal condition rides coolly and unmovedly away. To experience monetary sensations, you must earn the money first, and have a score of urgent purposes disputing for its application.

But perhaps one of the most vivid monetary sensations which a man experiences, is when he is paid the first instalment of the price of his labours. In an instant, he seems to rise and take a footing in the world. He has struck the first blow in his Battle of Life, and prostrated his antagonist, for whom, however, as soon as he has taken him captive, he conceives a particular affection. The glow of assured independence is a proud and manly feeling. The money is not *given*. That is the overmastering sensation. It is fairly earned. The recipient swells with honest pride as he thinks he is now a man working his way, and strides off a couple of inches higher than he came. This elevation of sentiment of course gradually dies away. The monetary sensation of the first-earned payment is not supported, but it is not forgotten, and insensibly, perhaps, to the recipient, it has at once heightened and deepened the moral qualities and tendencies of his spiritual being. From time to time, as remuneration ascends, a shade, as it were, of the first impression is recalled, particularly when the recipient perceives that at last—that great change in a young man's life—his 'settlement' may be accomplished. Here is another sensational era in his monetary experiences—the realisation of the grand fact that the struggle, always promising, is at length successful, and that he is now enlisted in the regular army of society. The elder Stephenson, when an occasional wage of a shilling per day was raised to a permanent two, flung up his hat, and exclaimed: 'Thank God! I'm a made man for life!' Here was a fine monetary sensation.

But there are also monetary sensations of quite a different species from those to which we have alluded. The sun shines on both sides of the hedge, and blank and dreary, if not dismaying and crushing, is the first trial of monetary difficulty. People, long struggling, get blunted to the *res angustæ*, precisely as people fast prospering do to the steady tide of wealth. The man who leaps heart-struck from his seat, as for the first time he contemplates a quarter's rent due and unprovided for, or the foolish fellow who groans in spirit over a protested bill returned upon the hand which he 'set' to it, merely for the convenience of acquaintance, and who has never thought of stamped paper since—such are two of the negative monetary associations which checker life; of course, their number is legion. The man who found his fairy gold transmuted into oak leaves, experienced a decided monetary sensation; but not more so than fell to the lot of many a speculator, who had bought to his last available penny in the Mississippi or the South-sea Bubbles; or, to come to more recent days, in the stock of fly-away English projected railways. To the mass of monetary sensations of the kind, we fear, must be added at the present day those produced by betting-offices. In these swindling dens, it is by no means uncommon to see children, whose heads hardly come above the counter, staking their shillings; even servant-maids haunt the 'office;' working-men abound, and clerks and shop-boys are great customers. Among these people, there ought to be a good crop of monetary sensations. In success, the little man-boy sees a grand vision of cheap cigars, and copper and paste jewellery; for the urchin early initiated in practical London-life, thinks of such things, and worse, when the country lad of the same age would dream of nothing beyond kites, fishing-tackle, or perhaps a gun. Molly, the housemaid, has her prospects of unbounded 'loves of dresses' and 'ducks of bonnets;' and the clerk and the shopman very possibly count upon their racing gains as the fruitful origin of 'sprees' and 'larks' innumerable. On the other hand, how has the money staked been acquired? The pawnbroker's shop and the till will very frequently figure in the answer. Pilfered half-crowns, or perhaps sovereigns, kept back from collected accounts; or, in domestic service, pledged spoons and forks, are frequently at the bottom of the betting transactions of these 'noble sportsmen.' Then comes the period of

anticipation, and hope and fear. Bright visions of luck, on one hand; a black and down-sloping avenue, stopping at the jail door, on the other. Luck—and the stolen property can be replaced, with a handsome profit; the reverse—and the police-office, the magistrate, and the sessions, float before the tortured imagination of the 'sportsman.' Here, then, are some of the saddest, and—whether the result in any case be winning or losing—the most wearing and degrading of monetary sensations.

We turn, however, to a concluding and a more cheering experience connected with money, and which may be regarded as a sequel to the sensation of the first earnings. We allude to the first interest, to the receipt of the first sum which properly belongs to the recipient, and yet for which he has not immediately and directly toiled. Here another great step has been achieved. To earn money, was the first triumph; to make money earn money, is the second. There is something more significantly pleasing in the sensation with which the young up-struggler of the world receives his first instalment of interest, and yet remembers that all his original investment is still entire, than in all the lazy satisfaction with which a great stockholder—born perhaps to stockholding—gathers in his mighty dividends. For the first time, the former begins to feel a taste, just a taste, of the sweets of property, of the fruits of realisation, and of the double profits which labour, judiciously managed, will at length bestow. It is getting money for which he has worked and yet not worked, it is picking up the returning bread thrown upon the waters; and it is the first experienced sensation of a stable and assured position, of standing upon one's own feet, independent more or less absolutely of the caprices of fortune and the liking of employers. The first received amount of interest, however small it may be, assuredly calls up one of the not easily-forgotten eras of a man's life. There is nothing selfish or miserly in the fact. On the contrary, it is founded upon pure and natural feelings and impulses. The most generous man in the world likes to prosper, and the first received sum which his own money has bred, is a palpable proof that he is prospering. From his childish pose, he can recall the mental results attendant upon each step of his worldly career, and look back with interest and curiosity over what, in the course of his life, may have been his 'Monetary Sensations.'

THE POSTHUMOUS PORTRAIT.

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A COUNTRY TOWN is not a very hopeful arena for the exercise of the portrait-painter's art. Supposing an artist to acquire a local celebrity in such a region, he may paint the faces of one generation, and then, haply finding a casual job once a year or so, may sit down and count the hours till another generation rises up and supplies him with a second run of work. In a measure, the portrait-painter must be a rolling-stone, or he will gather no moss. So thought Mr Conrad Merlus, as he packed up his property, and prepared to take himself off from the town of C—, in Wiltshire, to seek fresh fields and pastures new, where the sun might be disposed to shine upon portrait-painting, and where he might manage to make hay the while. Conrad was a native of C—. In that congenial spot he had first pursued the study of his art, cheered by the praises of the good folks around him, and supported by their demands upon his talents. While, in a certain fashion, he had kept the spirit of art alive in the place, the spirit of art, in return, had kept him alive. But now all the work was done for a long time to come; every family had its great portraits, and would want him no more yet awhile; and Conrad saw, that if he could not turn his hand to something else, and in place of pencils and brushes, work with last, spade, needle, or quill, make shoes, coats, till the ground, or cast up accounts, he should shortly be hardly put to it to keep himself going. He had made and saved a pretty tolerable little purse during his short season of patronage, and determined to turn that to account in seeking, in other places, a continuation of commissions. His father and mother were both dead, and, so far as he knew, he had no near relative alive. Therefore, there were no ties, save those of association, to bind him to his native place—'No ties,' sighed Conrad, 'no ties at all.'

It was Monday evening, and the next day, Tuesday, was to behold his departure. His rent was paid, his traps were all packed up in readiness, and he had nothing to think about, saving whither he should proceed. He walked out, for the last time, into the little garden behind the modest house in which he had dwelt, pensive and somewhat *triste*; for one cannot, without sorrowful emotions of some sort, leave, perhaps for ever, a spot in which the stream of life has flowed peacefully and pleasantly for many years, and where many little enjoyments, successes, and triumphs have been experienced. Even a Crusoe cannot depart from his desolate island without a pang, although he

goes, after years of miserable solitude, to rejoin the human family. It was the month of August, and the glory of the summer was becoming mellowed and softened. The nights were gradually growing longer and the days shorter, the reapers were in the harvest-fields, the woods and groves were beginning to shew the autumn tint, the sun sank behind the hills earlier and earlier day by day, and the broad harvest-moon reigned throughout the sweet and fragrant nights. Conrad felt the influence of the season, and though he had for some time contemplated his departure from his home with all the cheerfulness which the spirit of adventure imparts to young men, he now, as the time arrived, felt inclined to weep over the separation. He was indulging in reveries of a mournful complexion, when he observed his landlady leave the house, and, entering the garden, bustle towards him in a great hurry. Assured by the manner of the worthy old lady that he was wanted, and urgently, by some one or other, he rose from the rustic seat on which he had been sitting, and went to meet her. A gentleman had called to see him, in a phaeton, and was waiting in the parlour in a state of impatience and excitement which Mrs Farrell had never seen the like of. Wondering who the visitor could be, Conrad hastened into the parlour. He found there an elderly individual of gentlemanly appearance, who was walking to and fro restlessly, and whose countenance and demeanour bore affecting evidences of agitation and sorrow. He approached Conrad quickly.

'You are a portrait-painter, Mr Merlus?'

'Yes, sir.'

'The only one, I believe, in this neighbourhood?'

'Yes.'

'I am anxious,' continued the gentleman, speaking in a low tone, and with a tremulous earnestness that rendered his speech peculiarly emphatic—'I am anxious to have painted the portrait of one who is—who was—very very dear to me, immediately—*immediately*, for a few hours may make such a performance impossible. May I beg that you will submit to some sacrifice of convenience—that you will be good enough to set aside your arrangements for a day or two to execute this work? Do so, and you shall find that you have lost nothing.'

'Without entertaining any consideration of that sort, sir,' answered Conrad, deeply touched by the manner of his visitor, which betokened recent and heavy affliction, 'my best abilities, such as they are, are immediately at your service.'

'Many thanks,' answered the gentleman, pressing his hand warmly. 'Had you declined, I know not what I should have done; for there is no other of the profession in this neighbourhood, and there is no time to seek further. Come; for Heaven's sake, let us hasten.'

Conrad immediately gave the necessary intimation to his landlady; his easel, pallet, and painting-box were quickly placed in the phaeton; the gentleman and himself took their places inside; and the coachman drove off at as great a pace as a pair of good horses could command.

Twilight was deepening into dusk when, after a silent and rapid ride of some ten miles, the phaeton stopped before the gates of a park-like demesne. The coachman shouted; when a lad, who appeared to have been waiting near the spot, ran and opened the gates, and they resumed their way through a beautiful drive—the carefully-kept sward, the venerable trees, and the light and elegant ha-has on either side, testifying that they were within the boundaries of an estate of some pretensions. Half a mile brought them to the portal of a sombre and venerable mansion, which rose up darkly and majestically in front of an extensive plantation of forest-like appearance. Facing it was a large, level lawn, having in the centre the pedestal and sundial so frequently found in such situations.

A footman in livery came forth, and taking Conrad's easel and apparatus, carried them into the house. The young artist, who had always lived and moved among humble people, was surprised and abashed to find himself suddenly brought into contact with wealth and its accompaniments, and began to fear that more might be expected of him than he would be able to accomplish. The occasion must be urgent indeed, thought he nervously, which should induce wealthy people to have recourse to him—a poor, self-taught, obscure artist—merely because he happened to be the nearest at hand. However, to draw back was impossible; and, although grief is always repellent, there was still an amount of kindness and consideration in the

demeanour of his new employer that reassured him. Besides, he knew that, let his painting be as crude and amateur-like as any one might please to consider it, he had still the undoubted talent of being able to catch a likeness—indeed, his ability to do this had never once failed him. This reflection gave him some consolation, and he resolved to undertake courageously whatever was required of him, and do his best.

When they had entered the house, the door was softly closed, and the gentleman, whose name we may here mention was Harrenburn, conducted Conrad across the hall, and up stairs to an apartment on the second storey, having a southern aspect. The proportions of the house were noble. The wide entrance-hall was boldly tessellated with white and black marble; the staircase was large enough for a procession of giants; the broad oaken stairs were partly covered with thick, rich carpet; fine pictures, in handsome frames, decorated the walls; and whenever they happened in their ascent to pass an opened door, Conrad could see that the room within was superbly furnished. To the poor painter, these evidences of opulence and taste seemed to have something of the fabulous about them. The house was good enough for a monarch; and to find a private gentleman of neither rank nor title living in such splendour, was what he should never have expected. Mr Harrenburn placed his finger on his lips, as he opened the door of the chamber already indicated; Conrad followed him in with stealthy steps and suppressed breath. The room was closely curtained, and a couple of night-lights shed their feeble and uncertain rays upon the objects within it. The height of the apartment, and the absorbing complexion of the dark oaken wainscot, here and there concealed by falls of tapestry, served to render such an illumination extremely inefficient. But Conrad knew that this must be the chamber of death, even before he was able to distinguish that an apparently light and youthful figure lay stretched upon the bed—still, motionless, impassive, as death alone can be. Two women, dressed in dark habiliments—lately nurses of the sick, now watchers over the dead—rose from their seats, and retired silently to a distant corner of the room as Mr Harrenburn and Conrad entered. Where does the poor heart suffer as it does in the chamber of the dead, where lies, as in this instance, the corpse of a beloved daughter? A hundred objects, little thought of heretofore, present themselves, and by association with the lost one, assume a power over the survivor. The casual objects of everyday life rise up and seize a place in the fancy and memory, and, become invested with deep, passionate interest, as relics of the departed. There is the dress which lately so well became her; there the little shoes in which she stepped so lightly and gracefully; there the book which she was reading only yesterday, the satin ribbon still between the pages at which she had arrived when she laid it down for ever; there the cup from which she drank but a few hours back; there the toilet, with all its little knick-knacks, and the glass which so often mirrored her sweet face.

Thus Conrad instinctively interpreted the glances which Mr Harrenburn directed at the objects around him. The bereaved father standing motionless, regarded one thing and then another with a sort of absent attention, which, under other circumstances, would have appeared like imbecility or loss of self-command, but now was full of a deeply-touching significance, which roused the sympathies of the young painter more powerfully than the finest eloquence could have done. He seemed at first to shun the bed, as if the object lying there were too powerful a source of grief to bear—seemed to be anxious to discover in some minor souvenirs of sorrow, a preparatory step, which should enable him to approach with seemly and rational composure the mute wreck of his beloved child—the cast-shell of the spirit which had been the pride and joy, the hope and comfort of his life. But presently he succeeded in mastering this sensibility, and approaching the bed, motioned Conrad to follow him. He gently drew aside the curtain which had concealed the face of the figure that was lying there. Conrad started. Could that be death? That hair, so freshly black and glossy; those slightly-parted lips, on which the light of fancy still seemed to play; the teeth within, so white and healthy-looking; the small, well-shapen hand and arm, so listlessly laid along the pillow: could these be ready for the grave? It seemed so much like sleep, and so little like death, that Conrad, who had never looked upon the dead before, was amazed. When he saw the eyes, however, visible betwixt the partly-opened lids, his scepticism vanished. The cold, glazed, fixed unmeaningness of them chilled and frightened him—they did really speak of the tomb.

'My daughter,' said Mr Harrenburn, to whose tone the effort of self-command now communicated a grave and cold severity. 'She died at four this afternoon, after a very short illness—only in her twentieth year. I wish to have her represented exactly as she lies now. From the window there, in the daytime, a strong light is thrown upon this spot; so that I do not think it will be needful to make any new disposition either of the bed or its poor burden. Your easel and

other matters shall be brought here during the night. I will rouse you at five in the morning, and you will then, if you please, use your utmost expedition.'

Conrad promised to do all he could to accomplish the desire of the afflicted parent, and after the latter had approached the bed, leaned over it, and kissed the cold lips of his child, they left the room to the dead and its silent watchers.

After a solemn and memorable evening, Conrad was shewn to his bedroom, and there dreamed through the livelong night—now, that he was riding at frightful speed through woods and wilds with Mr Harrenburn, hurrying with breathless haste to avert some catastrophe that was about to happen somewhere to some one; now, that he was intently painting a picture of the corpse of a beautiful young lady—terribly oppressed by nervousness, and a fretful sense of incapacity most injurious to the success of his labours—when suddenly, O horror! he beheld the body move, then rise, in a frightful and unnatural manner, stark upright, and with opened lips, but rigidly-clenched teeth, utter shriek upon shriek as it waved its white arms, and tore its streaming hair; then, that his landlady, Mrs Farrell, came up to him, as he crouched weeping and trembling by, and bade him be comforted, for that they who were accustomed to watch by the dead often beheld such scenes; then that Mr Harrenburn suddenly entered the room, and sternly reproached him for not proceeding with his work, when, on looking towards the bed, they perceived that the corpse was gone, and was nowhere to be seen, upon which Mr Harrenburn, with a wild cry, laid hands upon him, as if to slay him on the spot.

'You do not sleep well.' A hand was gently laid upon his shoulder; a kind voice sounded in his ear: he opened his eyes; Mr Harrenburn was standing at his bedside. 'You have not slept well, I regret to find. I have knocked at your door several times, but, receiving no reply, ventured to enter. I have relieved you from an unpleasant dream, I think.'

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Conrad, somewhat embarrassed by the combined influence of the nightmare, and being awakened suddenly by a stranger in a strange place, informed his host that he always dreamed unpleasantly when he slept too long, and was sorry that he had given so much trouble.

'It is some minutes past five o'clock,' said Mr Harrenburn. 'Tea and coffee will be waiting for you by the time you are dressed: doubtless, breakfast will restore you, and put you in order for your work; for really you have been dreaming in a manner which appeared very painful, whatever the experience might have been.'

Conrad rose, dressed, breakfasted, and did undoubtedly feel much more comfortable and lighthearted than during the night. He was shortly conducted to the chamber in which he had received so many powerful impressions on the preceding evening, and forthwith commenced the task he had engaged to perform. Conrad was by no means a young man of a romantic or sentimental turn, but it is not to be wondered at, that his present occupation should produce a deep effect upon his mind. The form and features he was now endeavouring to portray were certainly the most beautiful he had as yet exercised his art upon—indeed, without exception, the most beautiful he had ever beheld. The melancholy spectacle of youth cut off in the first glow of life's brightest season, and when surrounded by everything that wealth and education can contribute towards rendering existence brilliant and delightful, can never fail to excite deep and solemn emotion. As the artist laboured to give a faithful representation of the sweetly serene face, the raven hair, the marble forehead, the delicately arched brow, the exquisitely formed nose and mouth, and thought how well such noble beauty seemed to suit one who was fit to die—a pure, spotless, bright being—he had more than once to pause in his work while he wiped the tears from his eyes. Few experiences chasten the heart so powerfully as the sight of the early dead; those who live among us a short while, happy and good, loving and beloved, and then are suddenly taken away, ere the rough journey of life is well begun, leaving us to travel on through the perilous and difficult world by ourselves; no more sweet words for us, no more songs, no more companionship, no more loving counsel and assistance—nothing now, save the remembrance of beauty and purity departed. How potent is that remembrance against the assaults of evil thoughts! How impressive the thought of virtue in the shroud!

With one or two necessary intervals, Conrad worked throughout the day, and until the declining light warned him to desist. The next morning he resumed his pallet, and in about four or five hours brought his task to a conclusion, taking, in addition to the painting he was commissioned to make, a small crayon sketch for himself. It was his wish to preserve some memento of what he regarded as the most remarkable of his experiences, and likewise to

possess a 'counterfeit presentment' of a face the beauty of which he had never seen equalled. Mr Harrenburn expressed himself highly gratified by the manner in which Conrad had acquitted himself—he only saw the painting, of course—and taking him into his study, bade him persevere in his art, and paid him fifty guineas; a sum which almost bereft the young man of his senses, it seemed so vast, and came so unexpectedly, after all his misgivings, especially in the presence of one who, to judge from the taste he had exhibited in his collection, must be no ordinary connoisseur.

It is difficult to describe the remarkable influence which this adventure exercised upon the young artist. His susceptible mind received an impression from this single association with a scene of death on the one hand, and an appreciating patron on the other, which affected the whole of his future life. He returned to C—, bade adieu to his landlady and friends, and, placing himself and his luggage upon the London coach, proceeded to the metropolis. Here, after looking about him for some time, and taking pains to study the various masters in his art, he made a respectful application to one who stood among the highest in repute, and whose works had pleased his own taste and fancy better than any he had seen. After much earnest pleading, and offering very nearly all the little wealth he possessed, he was accepted as a pupil, to receive a course of ten lessons. With great assiduity he followed the instructions of the master, and learned the mysteries of colouring, and a great number of artistic niceties, all tending to advance him towards perfection of execution. He was really possessed of natural talents of a high order, and in the development of these he now evinced great acuteness, as well as industry. His master, an artist who had made a reputation years before, and who had won high patronage, and earned for himself a large fortune, thus being beyond the reach of any feelings of professional jealousy, was much delighted with Conrad's progress, was proud to have discovered and taught an artist of really superior talent; and generously returning to him the money he had lately received with so much mistrust and even nausea—for a raw pupil is the horror of *cognoscenti*—he forthwith established him as his protégé. Thanks to his introduction, Conrad shortly received a commission of importance, and had the honour of painting the portrait of one of the most distinguished members of the British aristocracy. He exerted all his powers in the work, and was rewarded with success; the portrait caused some sensation, and was regarded as a *chef-d'œuvre*. Thus auspiciously wooed, Fortune opened her arms, and gave him a place among her own favoured children. The first success was succeeded by others, commission followed commission; and, to be brief, after four years of incessant engagements and unwearied industry, he found himself owner of a high reputation and a moderate independence.

During all this time, and throughout the dazzling progress of his fortunes, the crayon sketch of poor Miss Harrenburn was preserved and prized, and carried wherever he went with never-failing care and solicitude. Sanctified by indelible associations, it was to him a sacred amulet—a charm against evil thoughts, a stimulant to virtue and purity—this picture of the young lady lying dead, gone gently to the last account in the midst of her beauty and untainted goodness. Its influence made him a pure-minded, humble, kind, and charitable man. Living quietly and frugally, he constantly devoted a large proportion of his extensive earnings to the relief of the miseries of the unfortunate; and such traits did not pass without due recognition: few who knew him spoke of his great talents without bearing testimony to the beauty of his moral character.

But everything may be carried to excess; even the best feelings may be cherished to an inordinate degree. Many of the noblest characters the world has produced have overreached their intentions, and sunk into fanaticism. Conrad, in the fourth year of his success, was fast merging from a purist into an ascetic; he began to weary of the world, and to desire to live apart from it, employing his life, and the fortune he had already accumulated, solely in works of charity and beneficence. While in this state of mind, he determined to proceed on a continental tour. After spending some time in France, where many an Hôtel Dieu was benefited by his bounty, he travelled into Switzerland. At Chamouni, he made a stay of some days, residing in the cottage of an herbalist named Wegner, in preference to using the hotels so well known to tourists.

[pg 166] One evening, he had walked some distance along the road towards Mont Blanc, and, in a tranquil and contemplative mood, had paused to watch the various effects of sunset. He leaned against a tree by the roadside, at the corner of a path which led from the highway to a private residence. Again it was August, exactly four years since he had quitted C—, exactly four years since the most singular event of his life had occurred. He took from his breast the little crayon sketch, carefully preserved in a black morocco-case, and,

amid the most beautiful scenery in the world, gave way to a reverie in which the past blended with the future—his thoughts roaming from the heavenly beauty of the death-bed scene to the austere sanctity of St Bernard or La Trappe. Strange fancies for one who had barely completed his twenty-seventh year, and who was in the heyday of fame and fortune! Suddenly, the sound of approaching footsteps was heard. Conrad hastily closed the morocco-case, replaced it in his breast, and was preparing to continue his walk, when an elegant female figure abruptly emerged from the bypath; and the features, turned fully towards him—O Heavens!—who could mistake? The very same he had painted!—the same which had dwelt in his heart for years! The shock was too tremendous: without a sigh or exclamation, Conrad fell senseless to the ground.

When he revived, he found himself lying upon a sofa in a well-furnished chamber, with the well-remembered form and features of Mr Harrenburn bending over him. It seemed as if the whole course of the last four years had been a long dream—that Mr Harrenburn, in fact, was rousing him to perform the task for which he had sought him out at C—. For awhile Conrad was dreadfully bewildered.

'I can readily comprehend this alarm and amazement,' said his host, holding Conrad's hand, and shaking it as if it were that of an old friend, newly and unexpectedly met. 'But be comforted; you have not seen a spirit, but a living being, who, after undergoing a terrible and perilous crisis four years ago, awoke from her death-sleep to heal her father's breaking heart, and has since been his pride and joy as of yore—her health completely restored, and her heart and mind as light and bright as ever.'

'Indeed!—indeed!' gasped Conrad.

'Yes,' continued Mr Harrenburn, whose countenance, Conrad observed, wore an appearance very different from that which affliction had imparted to it four years previously. 'The form on the bed which your pencil imitated so well, remained so completely unchanged, that my heart began to tremble with a new agony. I summoned an eminent physician the very day on which you completed the sad portrait, and, detailing the particulars of her case, besought him to study it, hoping—I hardly dared to confess what. God bless him! he did study the case: he warned me to delay interment; and, three days after, my daughter opened her eyes and spoke. She had been entranced, catalepted, no more—though, had it not been for this stubborn unbelief of a father's heart, she had been entombed! But it harrows me to think of this! Are you better now, and quite reassured as to the object of your alarm? I have watched your career with strong interest since that time, my young friend, and let me congratulate you on your success—a success which has by no means surprised me, although I never beheld more than *one* of your performances.'

Mr Harrenburn had passed the summer, with his daughter, at Chamouni, in a small but convenient and beautifully situated château. He intended to return to England in a few weeks, and invited Conrad to spend the interim with him—an invitation which the latter accepted with much internal agitation. For three weeks he lived in the same house, walked in the same paths, with the youthful saint of his reveries—heard her voice, marked her thoughts, observed her conduct, and found with rapture that his ideal was living indeed.

After a sequence, which the reader may easily picture to himself, Conrad Merlus and Julia Harrenburn were married. Among the prized relics at Harrenburn House, in Wiltshire, where he and his wife are living, are the 'posthumous' portrait and the crayon sketch; and these, I suppose, will be preserved as heirlooms in the family archives.

SAMPLES OF UNCLE SAM'S 'CUTENESS.

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IN some respects, Uncle Sam and Brother Jonathan are 'familiar as household words' on the lips of John Bull; but it may be safely affirmed, notwithstanding, that the English know less of the Americans than the Americans know of the English. We are in the way of meeting with our transatlantic cousins very frequently, and never without having our present affirmation abundantly confirmed. This mingled ignorance and indifference on the part of Englishmen to what is going on in Yankeedom, besides being discreditable, will soon be injurious, as any one may satisfy himself by a perusal of a couple of pleasant

volumes from the pen of Captain Mackinnon,^[2] who travelled through the States lately, with his eyes open, not to their faults only, as might have been expected in an officer of Her Majesty's navy, but to their virtues, attainments, and enterprises. He has been out spying the land, and brings back a report which, though not new to those in the habit of reading American newspapers, and talking with American visitors, will be both new and interesting—we should hope stimulative—to the majority of our countrymen. We shall fulfil a duty, and confer benefit as well as pleasure, by picking out of the captain's log-book some of the choicest samples of Uncle Sam's 'cuteness, which will serve to shew, at the same time, the progress and prospects of that great commonwealth.

Captain Mackinnon believes the mind of the Americans to be the keenest and most adaptable in the world. They acquire information of any kind so rapidly, and have such ready dexterity in mechanical employments, that the very slightest efforts put them on a par with Europeans of far greater experience. After describing New York—which we shall return to, if we have space—the author gives the results of a visit to the dockyards at Brooklyn, Boston, and other places. Brooklyn 'contains perhaps the finest dry-dock in the world.' Here he saw all the latest English improvements improved! He was informed, on unquestionable authority, that no new instrument of war is elaborated in England, without being immediately known to the authorities in the United States; and that the commission of naval officers, now sitting at Washington to re-organise the navy ordnance and gunnery exercise, are assisted materially by the experience of men educated in Her Majesty's ship *Excellent*.

The first object of interest in approaching the Fulton Ferry was a large ship, which was loading with wheat for Europe. To accelerate the introduction of the cargo, a grain-elevator was employed. This novel machine pumped the grain from barges or canal-boats, on one side, in a continuous stream into the ship's hold, at the rate of 2000 bushels per hour. It was not only passed into the vessel at this prodigious rate, but likewise accurately measured in the operation. American naval officers have taken a hint from this ingenious labour-saving contrivance, and successfully adapted it to the purpose of supplying powder with great speed and regularity to the batteries of large ships.

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What are those huge castles rushing madly across the East River? Let us cross in the *Montauk* from Fulton Ferry, and survey the freight. There are fourteen carriages; and the passengers are countless—at least 600. Onward she darts at headlong speed, until, apparently in perilous proximity to her wharf, a frightful collision appears inevitable. The impatient Yankees press—each to be the first to jump ashore. The loud 'twang' of a bell is suddenly heard; the powerful engine is quickly reversed, and the way of the vessel is so instantaneously stopped, that the dense mass of passengers insensibly leans forward from the sudden check. These boats cost about L.6000. In economy, beauty, commodiousness, and speed, they form a striking contrast to the steam-ferry from Portsmouth to Gosport, which cost, it is said, L.20,000. The author strongly advises persons in Europe, who have any intention of projecting steam-ferries, to take a leaf out of the Yankee book. As an example: If the Portsmouth Ferry had been conducted on the same principles as the Fulton Ferry, a very large profit would have ensued, instead of the concern being overwhelmed in debt.

Here is another sample of Yankee *go-aheadism*. A launch! We are in Webb's shipbuilding-yard. Look around. Five huge vessels are on the stocks: three are to be launched at highwater. The first is a liner of 1708 tons, built for running, and, with a fair wind, it will outsail any man-of-war afloat. The second is a steamer of 2500 tons. The third is a gigantic yacht of 1500 tons, nearly as sharp as any yacht in England. Five thousand seven hundred and eight tons were launched from one builder, and within thirty minutes!

The clipper-ships, although certainly the finest class of vessels afloat, are very uneasy in a sea. Mr Steers, the builder of the far-famed yacht *America*, is very sanguine that he will produce a faster vessel than has yet ploughed the seas, and Captain Mackinnon is inclined to believe that he will. His new clipper-vessels will be as easy in motion as superior in sailing. The great merit of Mr Steers, as the builder of the *America*, is in his having invented a perfectly original model, as new in America as in Europe. He informed our author that the idea, so successfully carried out in the *America's* model, struck him when a boy of eight years old. He was looking on at the moulding of a vessel by his father (an Englishman), when suddenly it occurred to him that a great improvement might be made in the construction; and the *modus operandi* speedily took possession of his mind. Mr Steers thinks that a shallow vessel, with a sliding keel, can be built to outsail any vessel even on his improved

model. This is likely to be tested next summer in England, as a sloop, the *Silvia*, built by Steers on this construction, is preparing to try her speed at Cowes next season. The author carefully noted this craft when on the stocks alongside the *America*,^[1] and he believes, 'that no vessel in England has the ghost of a chance against her.'

The English ship-builders have a great deal to learn from Brother Jonathan, not only in the fashion of build, but likewise in the 'fitting and rigging.' An American London liner is sailed with half the number of men required by an English ship of the same size, and yet the work is got through as well and as expeditiously. The various mechanical contrivances to save labour might be beneficially copied by English ships.

A merchant-vessel, on the clipper principle, can be turned out by a Baltimore builder for from L.10 to L.12 a ton, complete in all her fittings. This is much cheaper than in England, which appears unaccountable, considering the rate of wages; but so much more work is done by the workmen for their wages, that labour is as cheap, if not cheaper, there than here. 'Cotton-duck' sails are almost exclusively used by American vessels under 300 tons, which for such vessels, as well as for yachts, is much better and cheaper than canvas. Another circumstance which struck the author at Baltimore—and which is equally striking to hear of to those who are accustomed to the sight of the Thames barges ascending and descending the river, in all their ugliness and filth, with the flow and ebb of each tide—was, that the vessels intended for the lowest and most degrading offices, such as carrying manure, oysters, and wood, were of 'elegant and symmetrical proportions!'

The most potent proofs of Uncle Sam's 'cuteness are to be found in the patent office at Washington. Inventions pour in in such abundance, that already the space allotted to them is so completely crammed, as to preclude the possibility of any close investigation. The dockyard at Washington furnished matter for fresh reflection; the iron for cables, furnished by contract, being so superior to the old, that the testing-links were all broken on the first trial, the model-anchors being 'an immense improvement,' &c.

'And to whom do you suppose we are indebted for all these improvements, and many more too tedious to mention?' asked the officer. 'Why, to an English dockyard-master from Devonport.'

So much for their progress on the eastern coast: now let us turn westward, ascending the Hudson by one of the river—steamers. Without doubt, these steam—vessels are the swiftest and best arranged known; but the speed and size are improving so rapidly, that what is correct now, may be far behind the mark a year hence. The *Isaac Newton* is at present the largest. The saloon, which is gorgeously decorated, is 100 yards long. In this vast, vaulted apartment, the huge mirrors, elegant carving, and profuse gilding, absolutely dazzle the eye. On first entering one of these magnificent floating saloons, it is difficult for the imagination to realise its position. All comparison is at once defied, as there is nothing like it afloat in the world.

The extent of the lake-trade is prodigious. Its aggregate value for 1850, imports and exports, amounts to 186,484,905 dollars, which is more by 40,000,000 dollars than the whole foreign export-trade of the country! The aggregate tonnage employed on the lakes is equal to 203,041 tons, of which 167,137 tons are American, and 35,904 British. The passenger-trade is not included in the preceding sum; it is valued at 1,000,000 dollars. 'The mind is lost in astonishment at so prodigious a commerce. It is not ten years since the first steamer ran round the chain of lakes. Population, and its commercial concomitants, are increasing so rapidly, that before twenty years, the lake-trade alone will be of greater extent and importance than the whole trade of any other nation on the globe!' The number of emigrants from Europe and the eastern states annually passing through Buffalo for the Far West is now one million, and likely, by and by, to increase to two millions! Cities are consequently rising up with extraordinary rapidity. The population of Detroit, for example, has increased, during the last ten years, from 11,000 to 26,000—an advance which is mainly owing to the facilities afforded by the Michigan Central Railway, for concentrating on their passage the westward-bound emigrants. An absurd spirit of speculation has likewise contributed to the increase. A building and farming mania, similar to the railway mania in England six years ago, has seized the people. The only salvation for the speculators is the continued increase of vast swarms of emigrants from Europe. Chicago is another example of rapid increase—namely, from 3000 in 1840, to above 20,000 in 1850; a growth which it mainly owes to its advantageous site at the head of the navigation of the chain of lakes. Milwaukee is also a wonderful instance of progress. In 1838, there was not a

single house on the spot: in 1840, there was a village with 1700 inhabitants; in 1850, there was a city of 20,000! Twenty years ago, the land on which it stands was not worth more than the government price, which is about 5s. 5d. per acre: at present, the lots are valued, in good locations, at L.40 a foot frontage. The result is speculation; with sudden fortunes on the one hand, and sudden ruin on the other. Emigrants, as well as citizens themselves, have to 'move on' further west; and hence they are covering Wisconsin, Minnesota, and other territories. Nothing can now arrest the flowing tide till it dash against the Rocky Mountains, and meet the counter-tide setting in from the coast of the Pacific.

The district around Lake Winnebago seems, according to our author's account, to be a tempting spot for emigrants; and as there cannot be the least suspicion of his having an interest in trumpeting it up, it may be as well that the reader should know where 'Paradise Restored' is to be found. Lake Winnebago is not one of those huge inland oceans, with winds and waves, storms and shipwrecks upon it, but a quiet, snug sheet of water like Loch Lomond, which it resembles in size, and, if we may judge from a paper-description, in appearance. 'It is about thirty miles long, and ten to twelve broad. A high ridge of limestone bounds it on the east, sloping gradually down to the edge of the water. Numerous natural clearings or prairies relieve the sameness of the luxuriant forests. On the western side, the land invades the lake in long, low capes and peninsulas. The fragrance of the air, the exquisite verdure of the trees, the gorgeous colours of the prairie flowers, and the artist-like arrangements of the "oak openings," and wild meadows, are delights never to be forgotten. The most elaborate and cultivated scenery in Europe falls into insignificance in comparison. I was struck with astonishment that such "a garden of Eden" should be so little known, even in the eastern states—that such extraordinary advantages should be neglected. After a careful examination of many places in the western portion of the United States, I advisedly assert, that Lake Winnebago District is the most desirable and the finest in the world for emigrants.'

His reasons for this opinion are briefly, that it has communication with the Atlantic on each border of the state—by the Mississippi on the west, and Lake Michigan on the east; that the soil is very fertile, and the climate remarkably healthy, being more equable than the same latitude on sea-board, and quite free from fever or ague. With great glee, the captain details a sporting excursion in this romantic district, in the course of which he fell in with an old acquaintance in the shape of an under-keeper from one of the Scottish moors. He had emigrated two years, and become a 'laird.' His remarks displayed great 'cuteness, and as it was on Uncle Sam's soil, it must be placed to Uncle Sam's credit. Their conversation was so amusing as well as instructive, that we quote it.

"Ah, sir," said the Scotchman, "if the quality in England only knew there was a place like this, do you think they would go and pay such extravagant rents for the mere shooting in Scotland? No, sir, not they. My old master paid five hundred pounds a year for his moor adjacent to Loch Ness."

"And pray what did he get for it?"

"Why, not half such sport as he can get here," replied he.

"Truly," I rejoined; "but remember the distance, and expense of coming here."

"As for the distance, you can, at present, be here from London in fourteen days. In two years, the rail will be finished to Fond-du-Lac, and you will be enabled to get here in eleven days. The expense, as I will prove, will not only be far less, but it may be turned into a positive gain."

'I pricked up my ears at this assertion, and requested my old acquaintance, the ex-keeper, to proceed.

"Well, sir, look 'ee here: suppose a party of five gentlemen subscribe five hundred pounds apiece, that will be two thousand five hundred pounds. With one thousand five hundred pounds, they can purchase a quantity of land, and build an excellent house, stable, and offices on Doty Island, in a position which, in ten years' time, will increase greatly in value as an eligible site for building allotments. The very fact of such an establishment by wealthy English gentlemen will cause the land to rise in value enormously; and I will warrant that in five years it will be worth ten times the present cost. From their location on Doty Island, they would have the finest fresh-water fishing in the world. They would have thirty miles lake-shore for deer-shooting; and dense woods, forty miles back to Lake Michigan, where bears, and catamounts, and other wild animals are plentiful. Abundance of wild fowl,

quail, and wood-cocks would be found everywhere."

"Stop," exclaimed I, interrupting him; "what are we to do about the main point—the grouse-shooting? Besides, remember there is another thousand pounds to account for."

"Don't interrupt, please sir; I am coming to that. I know several districts of country in this neighbourhood with natural boundaries, such as creeks, rivers, thick belts of trees, &c. These districts vary from five thousand to twenty thousand acres, and are so fertile that Europeans cannot even imagine such richness. Five hundred pounds you could lend to the farmers at twelve per cent. per annum. Many of them pay from two to eight per cent. *per month*. You would thus, by accommodating the farmers, have the best-stocked preserves, and the most friendly occupiers of the soil that can be found. The remaining five hundred pounds you might keep to improve your lands, or invest at twelve per cent. as the other half. If thus invested, you would get twelve per cent. on one thousand pounds, nearly equal to five per cent. upon the whole sum laid out, and the land increasing in value in a prodigious ratio."

"Wonderful!" thought I, with enthusiasm. "I will pop you in print, my lad."

We 'pop him in print' with similar good-will. His scheme would be an admirable one, save and except that there is an ocean to cross before reaching Doty Island. We commend it to the New Yorkers and gentlemen of the eastern states, who wish to have a hunting-field such as the old monarchs of Europe would have envied. The scheme, notwithstanding, does credit to the ingenuity of its propounder, who thereby proves himself the right sort of man for the country he has chosen to call his own.

Another conversation which our author relates, affords an unequivocal sample of real aboriginal 'cuteness. Captain Mackinnon impresses us, as he did the Americans, as a frank, hearty fellow, who can make himself at home at once, anywhere, and with any one. During his short sporting excursion, he seems to have picked acquaintance with nearly all the happy inhabitants of that western Eden with which he had become so enraptured. Strolling along one day, he met with a tall, gaunt Yankee, who knew him, and invited him into his log-cabin for a social glass and a 'crack' after it. This semi-savage-looking fellow had been a soldier, and delighted, like his guest, in the title of captain. He had been fighting in Mexico and California with the 'Injuns.' As he of Doty Island had a proposal to make to British sportsmen, so Captain Ezekiah Conclin Brum had 'a proposal to make to the British government.' He had heard of our Cape and Caffre war, and wondering how and why we did not make a shorter work of that awkward business, he sent to England for a British infantry musket, which he produced. 'Well, captin, did ever you see such a clumsy varment in all your born days? Now, captin, look out of the doorway: do you see that *blazed* stump? It is seven feet high, and broader than any man. It's exactly one hundred and fifty yards from my door. I have fired that clumsy varment at the stump till my head ached and my shoulder was quite sore, and have hardly hit it once. Now, then, captin, look 'ee here (taking up his seven-barrelled revolving rifle, and letting fly one barrel after the other): I guess you will find seven bullets in the *blazed* stump. I will, however, stick seven playing cards on the stump, in different places, and, if you choose, hit them all.' After sundry but unaccepted offers to his English brother-militant for a trial of mutual destructiveness, he made his offer to the British government through its representative, but which that loyal subject, in a fit of mortification, declined to convey, on the ground that if he 'made the finest offer in the world to the British government, they would only sneer' at him. However (to give, as before, the substance of what is here detailed with amusing effect), the offer of Captain Brum was to enlist 5000 Yankee marksmen, each armed with a seven-barrelled revolving rifle, and kill 'all the Injuns' at the Cape in six months for the sum of 5,000,000 dollars! 'We should be ekal,' quoth he, 'to thirty thousand troops with such tarnal, stiff, clumsy consarns as them reg'lation muskets is. We should do it slick, right away.' This may seem only a piece of fun, but such it does not appear to the author, who turns from fun to facts and figures, and calculates what would be the result of an encounter between English and American men-of-war, if the latter had ten men in each top handling Captain Brum's weapon with Captain Brum's skill; and the result he comes to is, that they could, in one minute and a half, dispose of 210 men on the opposite deck. *This would amount to the destruction of the whole crew stationed on the upper deck!* The undoubted *possibility* of such a summary mode of annihilating an enemy, must soon change the system of warfare, and at least demands grave consideration. We make no comment upon this, as we should be inclined to do were we not announcing the forebodings of a naval officer, who must be supposed to see cause of apprehension before he would venture to express it.

Turning now to a more civil aspect of affairs than the picture of thirty death-dealing demons in the tops of a Yankee frigate, let us see how they manage their aggressions upon the untamed field and forest. During his various rambles, our traveller's free-and-easy manner gained him the confidence of several able and energetic men—an advantage which enabled him to peep behind the scenes in many of the western movements. The following incident, which came under his own knowledge, comes within the design of this article, which is to illustrate the go-aheadism of our transatlantic cousins, and how they find the ways and means where other men fail.

Near Green Bay (in the aforesaid Garden of Eden), a small village suddenly peers out from the woods. The site was chosen by one of those extraordinary men (educated pioneers), who had silently selected a position, and established himself as proprietor before any one was acquainted with his object. Once fixed, the working pioneers, well aware of the sagacity and ability of their forerunner, begin to drop in likewise. In a few months, a town is laid out, and a population makes its appearance. A plank-road is necessary, a charter is obtained, and a meeting summoned of all interested in the said road. About a hundred persons attend; the charter is read; and before it can become a valid instrument, 500 shares must be subscribed for, and one dollar each paid up. The whole capital required is L.10,000—a sum which, probably, could not be mustered in cash within a hundred miles. One citizen believes he can get the 500 dollars from a relative in the Genessee Valley. Who, then, is to take stock, and supply the sinews of war? There is not ten dollars (cash) in the township. Up starts another, who has credit with a provision-merchant down east, and offers to supply the workmen with pork, molasses, tea, and sugar, out of his friend's store; making a speech at the same time. Others similarly pledged their credit for shoes, soap, clothing, &c. The bulk of the meeting, consisting of hard-working 'bonnet-lairds,' undertake to go to work immediately; taking for part-payment the necessaries of life, and receiving road-stock for the balance. Without a cent of capital, they began a work which would eventually cost 50,000 dollars, in full confidence that something would turn up to procure the wherewithal. The beauty of the matter is, that the project succeeded. The road has not only quadrupled the value of property all around, but it bids fair to pay a dividend in five years of 50 per cent. If a steam-boat is wanted, it is acquired in the same way. Large vessels have been completely built and equipped, without the owners possessing one farthing, and they have not only paid for themselves, but have made handsome fortunes for the lucky and enterprising projectors. Speculation of this kind, which would be justly deemed dishonourable in a settled country, is apt to be less rigidly considered in the pioneers of a new world. What country can attempt to cope with such energy and enterprise as this? It is frequently a subject of remark, that men born in England, and educated in the States, are among the foremost in these enterprising projects.

There are many other facts in these interesting volumes which we should like to call attention to; but the reader who has accompanied us through this sketch cannot do better than read the volumes themselves—only remembering, that the enthusiasm of his guide might have been considerably moderated had he been an emigrant instead of a gentleman traveller.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] *Atlantic and Transatlantic Sketches, Afloat and Ashore.* By Captain Mackinnon, R.N. 2 vols. Colburn & Co. 1852.

[2] The *America* lost her laurels at Cowes a few weeks ago.

MRS GRIMSHAW'S TREATISE ON HOLDFASTS.

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I AM ready to maintain, against all assailants of the position, that the person who can feel so deep an interest in any of the works of God as to find, in the investigation of them, employment for time which might otherwise hang a little heavily on hand, and occupation of an innocent and even of a useful nature for an active mind, has a decided advantage over one who has no such resource. And I further maintain, that there is not one single object in created nature, from the drop of ditch-water which occupies the attention of Herr von Creep-crawl, up to the 'serried host' of angels and archangels who inhabit the realms of light, which does not present matter worthy of the study and attention of an inquiring and intelligent mind. Having delivered this defiance, I shall now ask my readers to take another walk round my garden, and

examine the climbers which cover my walls, and listen to my Treatise on Holdfasts, as I call those appendages of plants which assist them in climbing. [3]

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The very first specimen to which we come, is one of that very pretty tribe the *Clematideæ*, the *Clematis montana*, which is closely covering a wall of ten feet high, and at least twenty in width, thence throwing out its branches, extending itself over the adjacent wall of the house, and occasionally sending a stray shoot or two to adorn my neighbour's garden. Now, how do those slight, long stems, which stretch, some of them twenty or thirty feet from the parent stalk, support and arrange themselves so as to preserve a neat and ornamental appearance without my having had the least trouble in training them? If you gather one of those loose branches, you will see that it has no tendril of any kind, or other apparent means of support; but this, like all others of the clematideæ or clematis tribe, possesses a power of twisting the leaf-stalk round a wire, twig, or anything else that comes in its way, so as to tie the plant to the support with as firm a knot as could be made with a piece of string; and after thus encircling the wire, it returns the leaf to its former position, with the upper side outwards, exactly as it was before. Some of the clematis tribe make this fulcrum from one part of the leaf-stalk, and some from another. In that which we are examining, it is formed from the lowest part next the main stalk of the plant. In the wild clematis (*C. vitalba*)—that kind which runs so freely over hedges and thickets in the southern counties, adorning the country in winter with snowy tufts of feathers, formed by its seed-vessels—a part of the stalk between two pair of the leaflets forms this twist; whilst in the sweet-scented garden-clematis, other parts of the stem give the support: but it is always by means of some portion or other of this member, that plants of this tribe are sustained in their rapid and extensive climbing. It is curious to observe what instinctive aptitude to curve towards suitable objects, and towards them only, is exhibited in the holdfasts of climbing-plants. They never bend towards a wall, board, or other flat substance, when there is nothing to lay hold of; but the moment they touch a suitable object, they instantly fix on it, forming closely compacted rings, which can be untwisted only when young. As the plant rises from one height to another, the little green shoots above send out fresh leaves, each having the same prehensile properties, which they keep in reserve till called on to apply them to their proper use; whilst at the same time, the lower rings are becoming indurated, so that, as the plant grows longer and heavier, its supports become stronger and harder. There are other plants besides the clematideæ which thus support themselves, of which the *Maurandya Barclayana* and the *Canariensis* are examples; and the manner in which these accommodate themselves to the exact form of the object on which they seize, is very remarkable. If the support is round, the ring is also round; but if they fix on a square lath, or other angular thing, the stem forms to it, so that when the prop is removed, the ring retains the exact form of that prop, every angle being as sharp and true, as if it were moulded in wax.

Now, the next plant which greets us is the ivy (*Hedera helix*), and this differs wholly in its means of support from almost any other creeper; yet there is none that takes firmer hold, or maintains more strongly its position, than this beautiful creeper, whose ceaseless verdure well deserves the name of ivy—a word derived from the Celtic, and signifying *green*. It is supported by means of a whitish fringe of fibres, that are thrust out from one side of every part of the stem which comes in contact with any wall or other supporting object to which it can cling. Should a foreign substance, such as a leaf, intervene between it and that object, the fibres lengthen until they extend beyond the impediment; and then they fix on the desired object, and cease to grow.

These fibres, however; are not true roots—a branch with only such roots, would not grow if planted in the earth—they are mere holdfasts, and the plant does not receive any portion of its nourishment through them. The upper part of the plant, where it has mounted above the wall and become arborescent, is wholly devoid of such fibres, which never appear but when they have some object to fix upon.

And now, let us look at that which is the very pride of my garden, and which well deserves the name bestowed on it by a poetic-minded friend—'the patrician flower:' I mean the beautiful *Cobea scandens*; and here we are introduced to quite a different class of holdfasts from either of those which we have examined. The blossom of the cobea is formed of a curious and elegantly-formed calyx of five angles, exquisitely veined, and of a tender green—itself a flower, or, at least, when divested of its one bell-shaped petal, *looking* like one. From this calyx slowly unfolds a noble bell, at first of a soft, creamy green; but the second day of its existence it becomes tinged and veined with a delicate plum colour, which on the third day is its prevailing

hue. The blossom is then in its full perfection; the vigorous green filaments supporting the anthers curve outwards; the long anthers, in the same manner as those of the white lily, open lengthways, and disclose rich masses of yellow pollen; whilst the single pistil stands gracefully between its five supporters, crowned with a globular purple style. On the last day or two of its existence, the bell is of a full, deep puce colour, and then drops, leaving the calyx bare, from which in due time is developed a handsome fruit, something like that of the passion-flower. The flower-stalk is from four to six inches long, and stands finely out from the wall, many blossoms being exhibited at the same time in different stages of development.

But now of the holdfast, which is our special subject. And this needs to be of a strong kind, for the branches of this plant have been known, in an English conservatory, to run to the length of 200 feet in one summer; and no doubt, in its native Mexico, where it has nothing to impede its growth, its shoots run even more freely. Behold, then, at distances of from three to four inches, all up the main stem; and also, on every shoot and branch which that stem throws out, grows a leaf, composed of three pair of leaflets, beautifully veined, and tinted with reddish purple, from between the last pair of which springs a tendril of extreme elegance. Indeed, noble as is this plant in every part, I think this tendril is the crowning grace of the whole: it is exceedingly slender, throwing off side-branches, which, again, repeatedly fork off at acute angles in pairs, and each extremity of each branch is furnished with a minute and delicate hook, so small as to be scarcely perceptible, but so strong and sharp-pointed as to lay hold of every object in its way—which hold it retains, when once well fixed, in spite of wind or weather. If this tendril remains long unattached, it becomes elongated to ten or twelve inches, or even more; and certainly a more elegant object than it presents when in this state can scarcely be seen, nor one which forms a more graceful ornament to a vase of flowers, if introduced as it grows, depending from one of the vigorous young purple shoots, itself shining with a sort of metallic lustre, and richly coloured with green and purple. But it is only on the loose young shoots that it assumes this very graceful appearance. If it is sufficiently near to a wall, or other support, instead of thus hanging pendent, its main stalk nearest the leaf contracts into a spiral form, thus shortening the tendril, and giving it greater power than so frail and slight a thing could otherwise possess; and the elasticity produced by the convolutions enables the branch slightly to yield to the influence of the wind, which makes it less likely to be torn down. Each extremity, as I have said, is armed with a hook, which hook, as soon as it touches, lays firm hold on the wall; and these tendrils occurring close together, and a large proportion of them fixing on some object, a wonderfully strong support is afforded to the plant. This plant is called by some people, 'the violet-bearing ivy,' although no leaf or blossom can be less like the ivy or the violet than that of the cobeia.

And now, let us pass onwards. There is another tendriled plant, the passion-vine; and this has a cirrus or tendril quite of a different kind from that we have just examined. It is simple and unbranched, springing from the axil of the leaf, straight when young, but speedily becoming spiral, and forming a very close twist round whatever object it seizes. It is spiral to within an inch, or less, of its root, and encircles its support with six or seven circlets like a corkscrew, thus clasping it with great firmness. This has no hook or other appendage which would enable it to fix on a wall or other flat substance; and therefore, unless there are wires, or some other extraneous supports near, it must be nailed until it reaches a certain height, when its own stalks supply the requisite props on which the tendrils may lay hold. The grape and many other vines are furnished with tendrils, which spring from the root of the leaf-stalk; that of the grapevine is slightly branched, but not furnished with any hook. One of its tendrils usually grows close to the stem of the fruit, and thus sustains the heavy bunch of grapes which must otherwise, when it increases to a weight of many pounds, either break from its stem, or else pull down the branch on which it grows.

And now we approach the beautiful *Ipomœa*, or major convolvulus, which affords us a specimen of quite a different mode of progression from that displayed in any creeper we have as yet looked at, for it has neither tendril nor fibrous roots. 'Oh, that *must* be a mistake!' says some fine lady. 'My last Berlin pattern was of convolvuli, and that lovely group of flowers I copied had several blossoms in it, and I am sure there were *plenty* of tendrils in both.' No doubt, fair lady; but convolvuli in Berlin patterns, and those which are wrought in 'nature's looms,' differ wonderfully. In the former, not only the climbing convolvulus, but the common blue one (*C. minor*), is richly furnished with tendrils, whilst those of Dame Nature display no such appendage. Now, take a real flower of this tribe—the common bind-weed from the hedge will do as well as any other—and you will see that the means provided for it to run up

any stick or stem it may meet, is a peculiar property it has, of twining its *stem* round and round that of any other plant near it; and so strong is this necessity to assume a spiral coil, or rather to twist and unite itself with some other stem, that you may often see two, three, or four sister-stalks of the same plant inwreathed into one stout cable, which union, though it does not enable the feeble stems to ascend, yet seems to increase their strength. But supply the young shoot with a stick or wire, or even a bit of twine, and see how rapidly it will then climb, and clasp, and throw out longer and stronger shoots, and overspread your wall with its large bell-shaped flowers, so brilliant with every tint of white, lilac, pink, and rose colour, and so exquisitely delicate in their texture, expanding at earliest dawn, and closing, never to reopen, when the fervid rays of the noonday sun fall on them! But I must not attempt to depict every variety of holdfast, or every provision for climbing with which it has pleased God to invest and beautify the different kinds of creeping-plants: it would detain us far too long; yet Mrs Grimshawe owes it to herself, to justify her devotion to the holdfast of the Virginian creeper (*Ampelopsis hederacea*), and that must be described.

Every one knows this plant, for although a native of North America, it is now one of the commonest coverings of our walls, as well as one of the prettiest we see. Its beautiful cut leaves are divided into five lobes, which, when first developed, are of a bright light-green, while the whole of the young stem and shoot is red; those take, by degrees, a deeper hue of green, and early in the autumn assume a brilliant scarlet tint, at which time they are very lovely. The means by which this plant takes so firm a hold of whatever supports it, is highly curious. From the stem of the tree is sent out on one side a leaf, and exactly opposite to it a shining, thread-like tendril, tinged with red, from one to one and a half inches long, dividing into five branches, and each terminating in a little hook. When one of these little hooks touches a wall, or comes in contact with anything it is able to cling to, it begins to thicken, expands into a granulated mass of a bright-red hue, loses the form of a hook and assumes that of a club, from the edges of which club a thin membrane extends, and attaches itself firmly to the wall after the manner of a sucker. If all five of the extremities happen to touch, they all go through the same process; and when all are spread out on the wall, each with its extension complete, the tendril looks much like the foot of a bird; but none of the hooks change in this way, unless they are so situated as to be able to fix on the wall. One of these strong holdfasts occurs at about every two inches on every stem and branch; and as a very large proportion of them get hold of some substance or other, the vine becomes more strongly fixed in its place than those which have been nailed or otherwise artificially fastened; and if the wall on which it climbs is at all rough, it must be very boisterous weather indeed that can dislodge its pretty covering. If by any means a branch is forced away from the wall, you will generally find either that it has brought away a portion of the stucco with it, or else that the stems of the tendril have broken, and left the sucker-like extremities still adhering. The appearance of one of these tendrils when young is beautiful; and if you place it under a microscope while it is assuming its knobby form, you will admire its exquisite texture and colouring. This, like the ivy, when it rises above the wall, becomes arborescent, and ceases to throw out tendrils.

There are many other provisions for aiding plants in climbing. Some ascend simply by means of the friction which the hairy or gummy cuticle of their stems affords—that sort of *Galium* commonly called 'cleavers' or 'cliver,' and the wild madder (*Rubia pelegrina*), are instances of this—then there are others which send out simple tendrils from the point of each leaf. There is also a plant called the 'heartseed' or 'balloon vine,' from its inflated membranous capsule, in which the tendrils grow from the flower-stalks; and another, one of the custard-apple tribe (*Annona hexapetala*), of which Smith tells us—'the flower-stalk of this tree forms a hook, and grasps the neighbouring branch, serving to suspend the fruit, which is very heavy, resembling a bunch of grapes.' The pea and vetch tribe, the pompion and cucumber, and various other plants, afford instances of provisions of these and similar kinds. But as I hope I may have succeeded in leading some of my readers to see what abundant subjects of interest may be found in the contemplation of even the appendages of plants, I shall now take my leave, only strongly advising all who wish to find a country life profitable and agreeable, to endeavour to supply themselves with some simple natural pursuit, such as gardening or botany, either of which may lead to investigations that will well repay their trouble, even should they refer to nothing more than the structure of the leaves or tendrils of the trees and shrubs which grow around their dwelling.

FOOTNOTES:

[3] See 'Mrs Grimshawe's Garden,' No. 413.

A DAY'S PLEASURING IN INDIA.

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PARELL^[4] was full of guests; and in order to afford them a greater diversity of amusement than the daily routine of a monotonous Eastern life affords, our excellent host resolved on a day's excursion to the island of Salsette, accepting an invitation to rest for an hour on his return at the house of a wealthy Parsee, whose liberality and zeal for the interests of the Company had won him the favour of the merchant princes' representative. In order to be ready for our departure at daybreak, we were called at three o'clock. In this country, such an hour sounds uncomfortable; we are all inclined to sympathise with the writer of the old Scotch ballad, and declare—

'Up in the morning's no for me,
Up in the morning early;'

[pg 172] but in India, it is a luxurious theft from sleep; and even now the remembrance of my starlit bath of that Indian morning comes pleasantly across my mind. The bath was literally taken by starlight; for the tumbler of oil, with its floating wick—which is the ordinary lamp of the country—was hardly seen in its far-off corner, when I unclosed the jalousies, and admitted the solemn, silvery planet-light. The window above the bath opened into the garden; and it is scarcely possible to conceive greater physical enjoyment than reclining in the warm element, listening to the soft sounds proceeding from without—the castanet music of the singing-tree, the rustling of the fan-palm, the trickling of the fountain: even the distant cry of the retiring jackal was pleasant; whilst above the giant palms, I could see the dark violet of the sky, on which the

—'Ship of Heaven
Came sailing from Eternity,'

and from whence Canopus threw its laughing lustre full on the water in which I was immersed, and kept me for a time motionless, lest I should break or mar its beautiful reflection. But every enjoyment has its dark shadow: as life has its 'insect cares,' so Eastern night has its mosquitoes; and a sore contest one has with them on issuing from the bath at such an hour. How they flit about, imps of evil as they are, and sound their horn of defiance in our ear!—a very marvellous sound to proceed from such tiny creatures, and, to persons of irritable nerves, worse even than their sting, or at least an additional horror. They proved strong incentives to a hasty toilette; and the whole gipsying-party was speedily assembled in the hall, where coffee and biscuits were handed round. Then followed a pleasant drive through the fresh morning air; and it was not without regret that we exchanged the open carriages for the close imprisonment of the palanquins, in which shortly after we threaded the mazes of the jungle. It was still early morning when we reached the cave in which we purposed remaining during the heat of the day. Outside, a tent had been pitched for the servants; within, a splendid breakfast was spread for ourselves—tables, chairs, food, and cooks having preceded the party thither. Books and prints were also provided, to beguile the tedium of our inevitable seclusion, and pleasant companionship promised a still greater resource against *ennui*.

The caves of Salsette have been already so often described—once by the pen of Heber—that I shall not attempt a repetition, but content myself with informing my readers, that we occupied the large one, dedicated to the ancient worship of the Buddhists; a gloomy temple, but cool, and possessing a certain interest from having been the scene of superstitious horrors round which hang the mystery of an almost unknown past.

After dinner, we prepared to mount the hill, and explore the smaller cells in which the hermits of Buddhism had formerly dwelt. The ascent, though very steep, was not difficult, and, once gained, afforded a glorious view of the island and the distant sea. The caves, with their singular stone-carvings and reliefs, were also very interesting, and must have been pleasant abodes for the worthy men who there had aimed at a pleasanter saintship than that attained by the tortures to which the followers of Brahma, and of his legion of subordinate deities, often subject themselves. We amused ourselves for some time examining these cells, and not till the sun was sinking behind the taller trees of the jungle below, did we think of returning. Our descent, however, was to be effected by another and far more difficult pathway than that by which we had mounted the hill—steps or niches irregularly cut in the mountain's side, offering the only means of reaching the cave below. My head turns at the very recollection! The chief of the hamals had followed us; I looked at his naked feet, that with such a charming certainty grasped the

rock, and resolved on making him my *cavalier servente*, backing my gracious intimation to that effect with the promise of a rupee for guerdon, at which he appeared more pleased than at the honour of the selection; and thus grasping the arm of my black knight, I began the terrible task before me, having purposely lingered out of sight till the rest of the party were at the bottom.

But, alas! a very kind, very good-natured, very stout gentleman in tight boots—I had not observed how *very* tight they were!—perceived my incongruous escort, and hastened back to take his place. In vain I represented my partiality for my companion of shoeless feet and steady eye; he was as incredulous as Desdemona's father was of her love for the Moor. In vain I deprecated 'giving him so much trouble;' his politeness was resolute; and I was compelled to accept the assistance of his hand, and with a beating heart to make the first step. Alas! in this instance it was not only *la premier pas qui coute*; the fourth and fifth were worse; at the sixth my courage failed me utterly, and I felt an insane desire to throw myself over the precipice, and thus terminate the horror of fear and giddiness that distracted me. I begged my companion to let me go, but he good-naturedly suggested that I might as well try to live a little longer, and therefore advised me to shut my eyes, and let him lift my feet from step to step. I was obliged to comply, and thus, to the great amusement of the party beneath, we made our tedious way down the hillside. If any of my readers have ever felt the kind of panic I have tried to describe, they will understand and sympathise with me on the occasion. The precipice below was really very alarming, and there was nothing on the bare side of the mountain that could soothe the imagination with the hope of something to clutch at. Still, I felt more ridiculous than I had ever thought I could be, when, on reaching the foot, I received the bantering congratulations of the others; and my assistant, with a bow, assured me 'that we had effected our descent with the agility and grace of two antelopes!'

We returned to the principal cave to have coffee, and then, re-entering our palanquins, were soon again in the depth of the jungle. I was tired—one soon wearies in that climate; the light was dim and solemn; and the chant of the bearers, by its monotony, helped to lull me into a sound slumber, for which the palanquin is always an agreeable cradle; and thus, in deep sleep, I was borne onwards, till the halt, to which my bearers at last came, roused me; and with a very dim recollection of where I was, I started and awoke. For a single instant, I thought myself still dreaming, however, for an unexpected and surprising vision was before me.

The palanquin had stopped in a large garden, or rather grove, which was brilliantly illuminated with coloured lamps; even the lofty cocoa-nut trees were not without a crown of rainbow tinted light. As I was assisted in my exit from the palanquin, two young Parsee boys, in flowing white robes, girt with a scarlet shawl round the waist, advanced and presented me, the one with a large bouquet of roses, tied, after their usual fashion, round a slender stick, and dripping with rose-water; the other, with a thin long chip of sandal-wood, having at the end a small piece of white cotton, steeped in delicious attar of roses. After receiving their gifts, I was conducted by them to the house, where the owner, a Parsee merchant, met and welcomed me with the ordinary salutation, pressing his hand to his head and heart, and then offering it to me. My palanquin had arrived last, and I found all the rest of the party seated round a table covered with a splendid repast—a regular hot supper, intermingled with fruit and flowers in profusion. The chief ornament of the table was a handsome silver vase, presented to our host by the East India Company, of which he appeared very proud, lifting it from the table, to shew the inscription on it to each of the party individually. At the end of the banquet, the quiet attendants moved round with a very elegant silver flagon of rose-water, the neck of which was very long, and as thin as the tube of a china pipe; from it they poured a few drops on the head of each of the guests. The sensation produced by this sudden trickling of cold rose-water is very pleasant, though a little startling to strangers. We had so recently had refreshment, that we were not inclined to do justice to the hospitality proffered, and the supper was scarcely tasted; but on rising to go, our host explained to the 'Governor Sahib,' 'that the feast was his: it had been prepared for him; he had looked on it! it was his!' These polite assertions were a little mystifying, till one of the staff-officers, well versed in the manners of the natives, explained that the governor was expected to carry off what remained of the entertainment. It was really difficult to help laughing at the whimsical notion of carrying away the roast turkeys, kid, fruit, &c., which was before us; but all was actually the perquisite of the train of attendant servants, and I suppose they took possession of it. The gifts offered to the governor when travelling are also theirs, when not too valuable; that is to say, when they only consist—as they generally do in mere villages—of fruit, eggs, nuts, and sweetmeats. If the present be, as it occasionally is, a camel, with its

head painted green or red, it is usual to accept it, re-paint it blue or yellow, and make a return present of it, to the original donor, who, of course, feigns to be totally unacquainted with the animal thus 'translated.' Gifts made to the governor become the property of the East India Company, as no servant of the Company is permitted to receive a private present; and it would be the height of discourtesy to refuse the wanted and time-honoured 'offering' made on the occasion of a visit to the Burra Sahib.

After many courteous salaams and farewells on the part of our host, we resumed our journey, gratified at this glimpse of the interior of a native home. The Parsees are generally rich, and their houses or *bungalows* are large and handsome. Their adoration of light tends greatly to the embellishment of their dwellings, as to every upper panel of the wainscoting they attach a branch for wax-candles, which are lighted every night, and give to the building the appearance of being illuminated. These 'children of the light' are a fine race, very handsome and intelligent. The upper servants at Parell were all Parsees; one, named Argiesia was an especial favourite with us all, having always a shrewd and amusing answer for every question put to him. We remember on the occasion of a total eclipse of the sun, which took place during our stay in Bombay, asking him why the people of the village near the house made such a noise with their tom-toms. His reply was:

'Because ignorant people, Ma'am Sahib, think great serpent is swallowing the sun, and they try to frighten him away with big noise.'

'And what do you think the shadow is, Argiesia?' we asked. He looked grave for a minute—one never sees an Oriental look puzzled!—and then answered:

'Sun angry men are so wicked. In anger, him hide his face.' This ready-witted and poetical Ghebir met his death, not long after, in one of his own sacred elements, being drowned in the Mahr River, 'where ford there is none.' He once expressed great surprise to me that a nation possessing Regent Street—a description of which he had received from his father—'should come to live in India.'

It was night when we reached Parell after our day's pleasuring; and we all agreed that the climate of India, during the winter months, is of all others the best adapted for picnics, which are so often marred in England by ill-timed showers or gloom; and yet, certain memories came back half reproachfully as we spoke, painting to our mental vision the pretty lanes and fresh green dells and dingles of England, the soft cool breeze, the varied and flitting shadows, the open-air enjoyment of many a past summer-day, when in our own merry island we

'Went a gipsying a long time ago,'

and we gave an involuntary sigh for the country of our birth.

FOOTNOTES:

[4] Residence of the governor of the Bombay presidency.

THE LONDON PRISONS OF THE LAST CENTURY.

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IN the year 1728, an opinion was entertained that much cruelty and rapacity were exercised by the keepers of the great prisons in London. It was known that they had almost unlimited power in their hands, that they were not subject to regular inspection, and that it was scarcely possible to bring them to justice for their treatment of those committed to their charge. It was argued, that it is impossible to depend upon the lenity of men who have such powers over their fellow-creatures, and that these officers must be supposed more than human if they did not occasionally abuse their authority. Of their having actually done so, many rumours had from time to time reached parliament. But in making out a case for inquiry, its strongest supporters had but a very slight forecast of the horrors it was to divulge. It may here be remarked, that before the proper arrangements for official responsibility and regular systematic management in such matters as prison discipline or the custody of the insane were devised, our free parliament did incalculable service by its inquiries and exposures. In that august assembly, every tale of formidable injustice or oppression was sure to receive a ready auditory; and its power was so transcendent, that every door flew open at its command, and

no influence could protect the wrong-doer from its sweeping vengeance. With such a body in existence, even the worst governments which Britain has known could not keep up those mysterious agents of tyranny, secret state-prisons, which continue to be the curse of every despotic country. Yet it will be seen, that for want of some more immediate and direct responsibility, the abuses in the prisons even of this country had risen to a very dreadful height.

The member who headed the inquiry was Colonel Oglethorpe. He was a man of literary talent—a dashing and intrepid soldier, but still more renowned for his wide and active benevolence. It is to him that Pope alludes in the lines:

One driven by strong benevolence of soul,
Shall fly like Oglethorpe from pole to pole.

A committee obtained by his influence, did not conduct its inquiry in easy state in St Stephen's, but appalled the guilty parties by immediately repairing to the prisons, and diving to the furthest recesses of their dungeons. In the Marshalsea, it found that even those who paid excessive fees for their lodgings, were laid in lairs above each other on boards set on tressels, where they were packed so close together, that many were believed to have died from mere deficiency of air. There was no doubt that many others, debtors, had come to a miserable end by starvation. Some were found in the last stage of attenuation. Those who could not provide for themselves, had nothing to feed on but a scanty charity-allowance from the benevolence of individuals, which, when distributed among the whole, furnished each with sometimes only a few peas in the day; and at intervals of several days, an ounce and a half of meat. 'When the miserable wretch,' say the committee in their report, 'hath worn out the charity of his friends, and consumed the money which he hath raised upon his clothes and bedding, and hath ate his last allowance of provisions, he usually in a few days grows weak for want of food, with the symptoms of a hectic fever; and when he is no longer able to stand, if he can raise 3d. a day to pay the fee of the common nurse of the prison, he obtains the liberty of being carried into the sick-ward, and lingers on for about a month or two, by the assistance of the above-mentioned prison portion of provision, and then dies.' The committee made more lifelike this horrible description of the state of the prison by describing the results of their efforts to relieve the sufferers. They said: 'On the giving food to these poor wretches—though it was done with the utmost caution, they being only allowed the smallest quantities, and that of liquid nourishment—one died; the vessels of his stomach were so disordered and contracted for want of use, that they were totally incapable of performing their office, and the unhappy creature perished about the time of digestion.' These prisoners were debtors, not criminals. We make our extracts from the reports, just after having heard in a scientific society an examination of the dietary of a large district of prisons. The difficulty appeared to be, to find the medium that would preserve health without making the criminal's living in some measure luxurious; and it appeared that, by almost every dietary in actual use in the district, the prisoners fattened; in fact, they profited so much in constitution by sobriety, good air, and regular food, however simple, that it was found a difficult matter to give them what might be considered a bare sufficiency, without raising their physical condition, and sending them out of prison with improved constitutions. So different is imprisonment for crime in the present age, from imprisonment for debt a hundred and twenty years ago.

The condition of many of the prisoners for debt in England, though few knew the actual extent of its horrors, was well known to be wretched, and several humane persons had made charitable bequests for their support. Colonel Oglethorpe's Committee made inquiry as to the employment of these charities, and disclosed incidents of singular villainy. It appeared, for instance, that in the Marshalsea there were several charities; and that the prisoners might be sure of benefiting by them, it was arranged that they should elect six constables, and that these constables should choose a steward, who was to receive and disburse the charities. Like a corporation, the steward had a seal which he appended to the receipts for the money received for the charities. The officers of the prison had carried on a systematic perversion of these charities, either through connivance of the steward elected by the constables, or by imposing on him. In the year 1722, however, it happened that a man named Matthew Pugh, an active, clever exponent of abuses, was chosen steward. He discovered several charities, the knowledge of which had been entirely suppressed, the proceeds being drawn by the officers of the prison. He found, that to facilitate their fraud, they had got a counterpart of the common seal, with which they certified the receipts. Pugh got a new seal made; and to prevent a new system of fraud being carried out, he got a safety-chest fixed to the prison wall, with six locks, requiring for opening it six separate keys, which were put into the hands of

the six constables. The committee, in describing how audaciously these precautions were defeated, shew distinctly how slight were the checks on the conduct of prison-officers in the reign of George II. They say: 'But this public and just manner of receiving and disbursing the charities was disliked by the keeper and his servants; and they complained to the judge of the Palace Court, and gave information that the said Pugh was a very turbulent fellow, and procured a rule by which it was ordered, that Matthew Pugh should no longer be permitted to have access to the said prison or court; and the prisoners are allowed to choose another steward; and accordingly, John Grace, then clerk to the keeper, was chosen steward by those in the keeper's interest; but the constables, in behalf of the prisoners, refused to deliver up the keys of the chest, where their seal was, insisting that all receipts should be sealed as usual in a public manner, that they might know what money was received; and thereupon the said chest was broke down, and carried away by the said William Acton (the keeper) and John Grace.'—*Parliamentary History*, viii. 736. Hence the deaths from starvation reported by Colonel Oglethorpe's Committee.

The reports of the committee were varied by statements of atrocious cruelties committed on the prisoners, by their committal, whenever the prison-officers thought fit, to damp and loathsome dungeons full of filth, by heavy irons being forced on them, and even by the application of the thumbkins, and other such tortures as were applied in the previous century to the Covenanters. Thus, after narrating an attempt made to escape, and the severities used on those who had participated in it, the committee say: 'One of them was seen to go in (to the keeper's lodge) perfectly well, and when he came out again, he was in the greatest disorder; his thumbs were much swollen, and very sore; and he declared that the occasion of his being in that condition was, that the keeper, in order to extort from him a confession of the names of those who had assisted him and others in their attempt to escape, had screwed certain instruments of iron upon his thumbs, so close, that they had forced the blood out of them with exquisite pain. After this, he was carried into the strong room, where, besides the other irons which he had on, they fixed on his neck and hands an iron instrument called a collar, like a pair of tongs; and he being a large lusty man, when they screwed the said instrument close, his eyes were ready to start out of his head, the blood gushed out of his ears and nose, he foamed at the mouth, and he made several motions to speak, but could not: after these tortures, he was confined in the strong room for many days with a heavy pair of irons called sheers on his legs.'

It is not to be denied that some of the charges made by the committee were not ultimately confirmed. It is natural for humane men, becoming for the first time acquainted with extensive cruelties, to tinge their narrative with the indignation they feel, and thus give it a prejudiced and exaggerated tone. Even committees of the House of Commons are not entirely exempt from such failings. But for our purpose, which is that of noticing the progress of civilisation and humanity in the period that has elapsed since the inquiry, it is sufficient to know, that there must have been an extensive foundation in facts for the horrors detailed by the committee. If it could not be distinctly proved that an individual officer had murdered any prisoner by the use of a particular torture, yet the instruments of torture described in the above extract were in the prisons—they were seen and handled by the committee, who were not to suppose that they were kept for no use. They state, that it had become the practice for the keepers 'unlawfully to assume to themselves a pretended authority as magistrates, and not only to judge and decree punishments arbitrarily, but also to execute the same unmercifully.'

In the exercise of this authority, the keepers seem to have imitated the cruelties of the classical tyrant Mezentius, commemorated by Virgil as chaining the living to the dead, for the committee say: 'The various tortures and cruelties before mentioned not contenting these wicked keepers in their said pretended magistracy over the prisoners, they found a way of making within the prison a confinement more dreadful than the strong room itself, by coupling the living with the dead; and have made a practice of locking up debtors who displeased them in the yard with human carcasses. One particular instance of this sort of inhumanity, was of a person whom the keepers confined in that part of the lower yard which was then separated from the rest, whilst two dead bodies had lain there four days; yet was he kept there with them six days longer; in which time the vermin devoured the flesh from the faces, ate the eyes out of the heads of the carcasses, which were bloated, putrid, and turned green during the poor debtor's dismal confinement with them.'

Some of the accounts given by the committee are as grotesque, without being so horrible. A certain Captain John M'Phaedris had been a person of

considerable fortune, and, like many of his contemporaries, had been a victim to the South-sea speculation, which appears to have made all the debtors' prisons more than usually full between the years 1720 and 1725. He refused to pay the exorbitant fees demanded by the keeper for accommodation, and maintained that they were illegal. To silence so troublesome a person, he was turned, unsheltered, into the yard, where he had to remain exposed to the weather day and night. 'He sat quietly,' said the committee, 'under his wrongs, and, getting some poor materials, built a little hut to protect himself as well as he could from the injuries of the weather.' The keeper, seeing this ingenious abode, exclaimed with an oath that the fellow made himself easy, and ordered the hut to be pulled down. 'The poor prisoner,' we are told, 'being in an ill state of health, and the night rainy, was put to great distress.'

In another instance, a prisoner had been committed to a cell so damp, as the witnesses described it, that they could sweep the water from the wall like dew from the grass. A feather-bed happened by some odd accident to be in the place, and the prisoner tore it up, and, for warmth, buried himself in the contents. Being covered with cutaneous sores, the feathers stuck to him, as if he had been subject to the operation of tarring and feathering. One Sunday, the door of the cell being left open, he rushed out, and entered the prison chapel during divine service—a horribly ludicrous figure. The committee, on the conclusion of the incident, say, 'he was immediately seized and carried back into the sad dungeon; where, through the cold, and the restraint, and for want of food, he lost his senses, languished, and perished.'

Such were the features of the system of mistreatment pursued in the London prisons, thirty years after the general liberties of the subject had been secured by the Revolution. We may in a subsequent paper advert to some of the particular cases which came under the attention of courts of justice.

LIFE-ASSURANCE OFFICES OF RECENT DATE.

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THE remarkable prosperity of life-assurance business in these realms—where alone it is a flourishing business—has naturally had the effect of causing 'offices' to multiply very fast. In the last eight years, 241 were projected, being at the rate of one for every twelve days nearly. Two or three bustling persons thereby obtain situations; there is a show of business for a time; but such concerns are often exceedingly weak, and the interests of the public are much imperiled by them. In consequence of an order of parliament, returns of the accounts of a large proportion of the recent offices have been made and published; so that the public may now form some opinion of the stability of these institutions. The general fact resulting is, that the greater number appear to have been started with small means, and are not now in hopeful circumstances. The business they have obtained is generally small in proportion to the expenses incurred; so that many of them are much behind the point at which they started.

Mr Robert Christie, of Edinburgh, has done the public the good service of publishing a small pamphlet in which the leading features of the accounts are presented in an intelligible form.^[5] Here it appears that a life-assurance company will launch into business with an imposing name, a flourishing prospectus, and—L.3000! After three years, it will have received L.4000 of premiums. In that time, L.1300 will have been spent in salaries, L.600 in establishing agencies, L.700 in rent; in all, in expenses of management, upwards of L.5000, leaving little more than half the premium receipts to stand against the obligations towards the assured. There is one which has been in business upwards of four years, and which only possesses L.2869 of funds, out of which to pay policies represented by L.3094 of premiums, L.2379 of moneys received for investment, and L.1895 of deposits on shares. Another, which makes no small bustle in the world, received in two years and a half L.13,219 of premiums, spent in the same time L.6993, whereof L.1213 was for advertising, and L.539 for directors and auditors, and at the end of the period possessed, to make good its obligations, only L.7045, nearly one-half of which was composed of the original guarantee fund.

It is very likely that few or none of these establishments were commenced with a fraudulent design; but they were not required by the public, and their expenses have eaten them up. By most, if not all of them, loss and disappointment will be incurred. It is therefore highly desirable that the public should be warned against new offices generally. While there are so many old ones of perfectly established character both in England and Scotland—and we have some pride in remarking, that there is not one

dangerous office known to us in the latter country—it is quite unnecessary to resort to any other.

FOOTNOTES:

[5] *Letter to the Right Hon. Joseph W. Henley, M.P., President of the Board of Trade, regarding Life-Assurance Institutions.* By Robert Christie, Esq. Edinburgh: Constable & Co.

ANECDOTE OF BURNS IN THE '93.

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A public library had been established by subscription among the citizens of Dumfries in September 1792, and Burns, ever eager about books, had been from the first one of its supporters. Before it was a week old, he had presented to it a copy of his poems. He does not seem to have been a regularly admitted member till 5th March 1793, when 'the committee, by a great majority, resolved to offer to Mr Robert Burns a share in the library, free of any admission-money [10s. 6d.] and the quarterly contributions [2s. 6d.] to this date, out of respect and esteem for his abilities as a literary man; and they directed the secretary to make this known to Mr Burns as soon as possible, that the application which they understood he was about to make in the ordinary way might be anticipated.' This is a pleasing testimony to Burns as a poet, but still more so to Burns as a citizen and member of society. His name appears in September as a member of committee—an honour assigned by vote of the members.

On the 30th of this month, the liberal poet bestowed four books upon the library—namely, *Humphry Clinker*, *Julia de Roubigné*, *Knox's History of the Reformation*, and *Delolme on the British Constitution*. The present intelligent librarian, Mr M'Robert, reports, respecting the last-mentioned work, a curious anecdote, which he learned directly from the late Provost Thomson of Dumfries. Early in the morning after *Delolme* had been presented, Burns came to Mr Thomson's bedside before he was up, anxiously desiring to see the volume, as he feared he had written something upon it 'which might bring him into trouble.' On the volume being shewn to him, he looked at the inscription which he had written upon it the previous night, and, having procured some paste, he pasted over it the fly-leaf in such a way as completely to conceal it.

The gentleman who has been good enough to communicate these particulars, adds: 'I have seen the volume, which is the edition of 1790, neatly bound, with a portrait of the author at the beginning. Some stains of ink shine through the paper, indicating that there is something written on the back of the engraving; but the fly-leaf being pasted down upon it, there is nothing legible. On holding the leaf up to the light, however, I distinctly read, in the undoubted manuscript of the poet, the following words:—

"Mr Burns presents this book to the Library, and begs they will take it as a creed of British liberty—until they find a better. R. B."

'The words, "until they find a better," are evidently those which the poet feared "might bring him into trouble." Probably, if the inscription had not been written on the back of the engraving, he might have removed it altogether: at all events, his anxiety to conceal it shews what trivial circumstances were in those days sufficient to constitute a political offence.' Ay, and to think of this happening in the same month with the writing of *Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled!*

Fully to appreciate the feelings of alarm under which Burns acted on this occasion, it must be kept in view that the trial of Mr Thomas Muir for sedition had taken place on the 30th of August, when, in the evidence against him, appeared that of his servant, Ann Fisher, to the effect that he had purchased and distributed certain copies of Paine's *Rights of Man*. The stress laid upon that testimony by the crown-counsel had excited much remark. It might well appear to a government officer like Burns, that his own conduct at such a crisis ought to be in the highest degree circumspect. We do not know exactly the time when the incident which we are about to relate took place, but it appears likely to have been nearly that of Muir's trial. Our poet one day called upon his quondam neighbour, George Haugh, the blacksmith, and, handing him a copy of Paine's *Common Sense* and *Rights of Man*, desired him to keep these books for him, as, if they were found in his own house, he should be a ruined man. Haugh readily accepted the trust, and the books remained in possession of his family down to a recent period.—*Chambers's Life and Works*

CURIOUS EXPERIMENT IN WOOL-GROWING.

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The following is worthy of notice, as exemplifying what may be done, by judicious attention, to improve an important national staple:—

'In a lecture recently delivered by Mr Owen at the Society of Arts, the learned professor detailed the particulars of a highly interesting experiment, which resulted in the establishment of one of the very few instances in which the origination of a distinct variety of a domestic quadruped could be satisfactorily traced, with all the circumstances attending its development well authenticated. We must premise it by stating, that amongst the series of wools shewn in the French department of the Great Exhibition, were specimens characterised by the jury as a wool of singular and peculiar properties; the hair, glossy and silky, similar to mohair, retaining at the same time certain properties of the merino breed. This wool was exhibited by J. L. Graux, of the farm of Mauchamp, Commune de Juvincourt, and the produce of a peculiar variety of the merino breed of sheep, and it thus arose. In the year 1828, one of the ewes of the flock of merinos in the farm of Mauchamp, produced a male lamb, which, as it grew up, became remarkable for the long, smooth, straight, and silky character of the fibre of the wool, and for the shortness of its horns. It was of small size, and presented certain defects in its conformation which have disappeared in its descendants. In 1829, M. Graux employed this ram with a view to obtain other rams, having the same quality of wool. The produce of 1830 only included one ram and one ewe, having the silky quality of the wool; that of 1831 produced four rams and one ewe with the fleece of that quality. In 1833, the rams, with the silky variety of wool, were sufficiently numerous to serve the whole flock. In each subsequent year the lambs have been of two kinds—one preserving the character of the ancient race, with the curled elastic wool, only a little longer and finer than in the ordinary merinos; the other resembling the rams of the new breed, some of which retained the large head, long neck, narrow chest, and long flanks of the abnormal progenitor, whilst others combined the ordinary and better-formed body with the fine silky wool. M. Graux, profiting by the partial resumption of the normal type of the merino in some of the descendants of the malformed original variety, at length succeeded, by a judicious system of crossing and interbreeding, in obtaining a flock combining the long silky fleece with a smaller head, shorter neck, broader flanks, and more capacious chest. Of this breed the flocks have become sufficiently numerous to enable the proprietor to sell examples for exportation. The crossing of the Beauchamp variety with the ordinary merino has also produced a valuable quality of wool, known in France as the "Mauchamp Merino." The fine silky wool of the pure Mauchamp breed is remarkable for its qualities, as combining wool, owing to the strength as well as the length and fineness of the fibre. It is found of great value by the manufacturers of Cashmere shawls, being second only to the true Cashmere fleece in the fine flexible delicacy of the fabric, and of particular utility when combined with the Cashmere wool in imparting to the manufacture qualities of strength and consistence, in which the pure Cashmere is deficient. Although the quantity of the wool yielded by the Mauchamp variety is less than in the ordinary merinos, the higher price which it obtains in the French market—25 per cent. above the best merino wools—and the present value of the breed, have fully compensated M. Graux for the pains and care manifested by him in the establishment of the variety, and a council medal was awarded to him.'

We find the above abstract in the *Critic* (London Literary Journal); and our chief object in making the quotation, is to bring the subject under the notice of wool-growers in the home country, as well as in Australia. What, it may be asked, could not be done by every store-farmer following the example of M. Graux?

A DIRGE OF LOVE.

BY W. E. L.

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YES! she is dead: the splendour of her eyes
Sleeps 'neath the lids for ever; on my sight
Never again shall flash their high delight,

Tender and rich with love's sweet ecstasies.

Never again, deep down from vulgar ken,
Shall the pure gushing of her soul rejoice,
And we stand silent, as to hear the voice
Of waters falling to a soundless glen.

And scarce again from other lips shall come
Such beauteous truths, such fresh
imaginings,
As, like the warm south-wind, upon their
wings
Bear off our fancy to their own bright home.

Yet am I calm: though hard it be to smooth
Waters upshaken from the deepest deep;
Though it be hard to watch, yet never weep,
The darkening cynosure of passionate youth;

Yet am I calm. The heart I had to bring
Was marred with imperfection and decay,
Now the free spirit, riven from the clay,
Drinks at the fountain whence all love must
spring.

O passed from earthly to celestial love!
O reft from me and from my clinging grasp,
And circled straightway by the close, warm
clasp
Of seraph bosoms in the land above!

I will not weep thee more. But if I long
Too sorrowfully for thy presence here,
Not vainly on thy turf shall fall the tear,
But thy dead name shall blossom into song.

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