Title: The Youth of Jefferson

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Release date: November 1, 2007 [eBook #23283]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by David Edwards, Christine P. Travers and the
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THE YOUTH OF JEFFERSON

or

A CHRONICLE OF COLLEGE SCRAPES

AT WILLIAMSBURG, IN VIRGINIA, A.D. 1764

"Dulce est desipere in loco."

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1854

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Illustrations.

TO THE READER.

This little tale is scarcely worth a preface, and it is only necessary to say, that it was written as a relaxation after exhausting toil. If its grotesque incidents beguile an otherwise weary hour with innocent laughter, the writer's ambition will have been fully gratified.

THE YOUTH OF JEFFERSON.

CHAPTER I.

HOW THREE PERSONS IN THIS HISTORY CAME BY THEIR NAMES.

On a fine May morning in the year 1764,—that is to say, between the peace at Fontainebleau and the stamp act agitation, which great events have fortunately no connection with the present narrative,—a young man mounted on an elegant horse, and covered from head to foot with lace, velvet, and embroidery, stopped before a small house in the town or city of Williamsburg, the capital of Virginia.

Negligently delivering his bridle into the hands of a diminutive negro, the young man entered the open door, ascended a flight of stairs which led to two or three small rooms above, and turning the knob, attempted to enter the room opening upon the street.

The door opened a few inches, and then was suddenly closed by a heavy body thrown against it.

"Back!" cried a careless and jovial voice, "back! base proctor—this is my castle."

"Open! open!" cried the visitor.

"Never!" replied the voice.

The visitor kicked the door, to the great damage of his Spanish shoes.

"Beware!" cried the hidden voice; "I am armed to the teeth, and rather than be captured I will die in defence of my rights—namely, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness under difficulties."

"Tom! you are mad."

"What! that voice? not the proctor's!"

"No, no," cried the visitor, kicking again; "Jacquelin's."

"Ah, ah!"

And with these ejaculations the inmate of the chamber was heard drawing back a table, then the butt of a gun sounded upon the floor, and the door opened.

The young man who had asserted his inalienable natural rights with so much fervor was scarcely twenty—at least he had not reached his majority. He was richly clad, with the exception of an old faded dressing gown, which fell gracefully like a Roman toga around his legs; and his face was full of intelligence and careless, somewhat cynical humor. The features were hard and pointed, the mouth large, the hair sandy with a tinge of red.

"Ah, my dear forlorn lover!" he cried, grasping his visitor's hand, "I thought you were that rascally proctor, and was really preparing for a hand-to-hand conflict, to the death."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, sir! could I expect anything else, from the way you turned my knob? You puzzled me."

"So I see," said his visitor; "you had your gun, and were evidently afraid."

"Afraid? Never!"

"Afraid of your shadow!"

"At least I never would have betrayed fear had I seen you!" retorted the occupant of the chamber. "You are so much in love that a fly need not be afraid of you. Poor Jacquelin! poor melancholy Jacques! a feather would knock you down."

The melancholy Jacques sat down sighing.

"The fact is, my dear fellow," he said, "I am the victim of misfortune: but who complains? I don't, especially to you, you great lubber, shut up here in your den, and with no hope or fear on earth, beyond pardon of your sins of commission at the college, and dread of the proctor's grasp! You are living a dead life, while I—ah! don't speak of it. What were you reading?"

"That deplorable Latin song. Salve your ill-humor with it!"

And he handed his visitor, by this time stretched carelessly upon a lounge, the open volume. He read:

"Orientis partibus
Adventavit asinus,
Pulcher et fortissimus,
Sarcinis aptissimus.

"Hez, sire asne, car chantez
Belle bouche rechignez,
Vous aurez du foin assez,
Et de l'avoine a plantez."

"Good," said the visitor satirically; "that suits you—except it should be '*occidentis* partibus:' our Sir Asinus comes from the west. And by my faith, I think I will in future dub you *Sir Asinus*, in revenge for calling me—me, the most cheerful of light-hearted mortals—the 'melancholy Jacques.'"

"Come, come!" said the gentleman threatened with this sobriquet, "that's too bad, Jacques."

"*Jacques!* You persist in calling me *Jacques*, just as you persist in calling Belinda, *Campana in die—Bell in day*. What a deplorable witticism! I could find a better in a moment. Stay," he added, "I have discovered it already."

"What is it, pray, most sapient Jacques?"

"Listen, most long-eared Sir Asinus."

And the young man read once again;

"Hez, sire asne, car chantez,
BELLE BOUCHE rechignez;
Vous aurez du foin assez,
Et de l'avoine a plantez."

"Well," said his friend, "now that you have mangled that French with your wretched pronunciation, please explain how my lovely Belinda—come, don't sigh and scowl because I say 'my,' for you know it's all settled—tell me where in these lines you find her name."

"In the second," sighed Jacques.

"Oh yes!—bah!"

"There you are sneering. You make a miserable Latin pun, by which you translate Belinda into *Campana in die*—Bell in day—and when I improve your idea, making it really good, you sneer."

"Really, now!—well, I don't say!"

"Belle-bouche! Could any thing be finer? 'Pretty-mouth!' And then the play upon *Bel*, in Belinda, by the word *Belle*. Positively, I will in future call her nothing else. Belle-bouche—pretty-mouth! Ah!"

And the unfortunate lover stretched languidly upon the lounge, studied the ceiling, and sighed piteously.

His friend burst into a roar of laughter. Jacques—for let us adopt the sobriquets all round—turned negligently and said:

"Pray what are you braying at, Sir Asinus?"

"At your sighs."

"Did I sigh?"

"Yes, portentously!"

"I think you are mistaken."

"No!"

"I never sigh."

And the melancholy Jacques uttered a sigh which was enough to shatter all his bulk.

The consequence was that Sir Asinus burst into a second roar of laughter louder than before, and said:

"Come, my dear Jacques, unbosom! You have been to see——"

"Belle-bouche—Belle-bouche: but I am not in love with her."

"Oh no—of course not," said his friend, laughing ironically.

Jacques sighed.

"She don't like me," he said forlornly.

"She's very fond of me though," said his friend. "Only yesterday—but I am mad to be talking about it."

With which words Sir Asinus turned away his head to hide his mischievous and triumphant smile.

Poor Jacques looked more forlorn than ever; which circumstance seemed to afford his friend extreme delight.

"Why not pay your addresses to Philippa, Jacques my boy?" he said satirically; "there's no chance for you with Belle-bouche, as you call her."

"Philippa? No, no!" sighed Jacques; "she's too brilliant."

"For you?"

"Even for me—me, the prince of wits, and coryphæus of coxcombs: yes, yes!"

And the melancholy Jacques sighed again, and looked around him with the air of a man whose last hope on earth has left him.

His friend chokes down a laugh; and stretching himself in the bright spring sunshine pouring through the window, says with a smile:

"Come, make a clean breast of it, old fellow. You were there to-day?"

"Yes, yes."

"Have a pleasant time?"

"Can't say I did."

"Were there any visitors?"

"A dozen—you understand the description of visitors."

"No; what sort?"

"Fops in embryo, and aspirants after wit-laurels."

"It is well you went—they must have been thrown in the shade. For you, my dear Jacques, are undeniably the most perfect fop, and the greatest wit—in your own opinion—of this pleasant village of Devilsburg."

"No, no," replied his companion with well-affected modesty; "I a fop! I a pretender to wit? No, no, my dear Sir Asinus, you do me injustice: I am the simplest of mortals, and a very child of innocence. But I was speaking of Shadynook and the fairies of that domain. Never have I seen Belinda, or rather Belle-bouche, so lovely, and I here disdainfully repel your ridiculous calumny that she's in love with you, you great lump of presumption and overweening self-conceit! Philippa too was a pastoral queen—in silk and jewels—and around them they had gathered together a troop of shepherds from the adjoining grammar-school, called William and Mary College, of which I am an aspiring bachelor, and you were an ornament before your religious opinions caught from Fauquier drove you away like a truant school-boy. The shepherds were as usual very ridiculous, and I had no opportunity to whisper so much as a single word into my dear Belle-bouche's ear. Ah! how lovely she looked! By heaven, I'll go to-morrow and request her to designate some form of death for me to die—all for her sake!"

With which words the forlorn Jacques gazed languidly through the window.

At the same moment a bell was heard ringing in the direction of the College; and yawning first luxuriously, the young man rose.

"Lecture, by Jove!" he said.

"And you, unfortunate victim, must attend," said his companion.

"Yes. You remain here?"

"To the end."

"Still resisting?"

"To the death!"

"Very well," said Jacques, putting on his cocked hat, which was ornamented with a magnificent feather. "I half envy you; but duty calls—I must go."

"If you see Ned Carter, or Tom Randolph of Tuckahoe, tell them to come round."

"To comfort you? Poor unfortunate prisoner!"

"No, most sapient Jacques: fortunately I do not need comfort as you do."

"I want comfort?"

"Yes; there you are sighing: that 'heigho!' was dreadful."

"Scoffer!"

"No; I am your rival."

"Very well; I warn you that I intend to push the siege; take care of your interests."

"I'm not afraid."

"I am going to see Belle-bouche again to-morrow.

"Faith, I'll be there, then."

"Good; war is opened then—the glove thrown?"

"War to the death! Good-by, publican!"

"Farewell, sinner!"

And with these words the melancholy Jacques departed.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER II.

JACQUES SHOWS THE ADVANTAGE OF BEING LED CAPTIVE BY A CROOK.

It was a delicious day, such a day as the month of flowers alone can bring into the world, and all nature seemed to be rejoicing. The peach and cherry blossoms shone like snow upon the budding trees, the oriole shot from elm to elm, a ball of fire against a background of blue and emerald, and from every side came the murmuring flow of streamlets, dancing in the sun and filling the whole landscape with their joyous music.

May reigned supreme—a tender blue-eyed maiden, treading upon a carpet of young grass with flowers in their natural colors; and nowhere were her smiles softer or more bright than there at Shadynook, which looks still on the noble river flowing to the sea, and on the distant town of Williamsburg, from which light clouds of smoke curl upward and are lost in the far-reaching azure.

Shadynook was one of those old hip-roofed houses which the traveller of to-day meets with so frequently, scattered throughout Virginia, crowning every knoll and giving character to every landscape. Before the house stretched a green lawn bounded by a low fence; and in the rear a garden full of flowers and blossoming fruit trees made the surrounding air faint with the odorous breath of Spring.

Over the old house, whose dormer windows were wreathed with the mosses of age, stretched the wide arms of two noble elms; and the whole homestead had about it an air of home comfort, and a quiet, happy repose, which made many a wayfarer from far countries sigh, as he gazed on it, embowered in its verdurous grove.

In the garden is an arbor, over which flowering vines of every description hover and bloom, full of the wine of spring. Around the arbor extend flower plats carefully tended and fragrant with violets, crocuses, and early primroses. Foliage of the light tender tint of May clothes the background, and looking from the arbor you clearly discern the distant barn rising above the trees.

In this arbor sits or rather reclines a young girl—for she has stretched herself upon the trellised seat, with a languid and careless ease, which betrays total abandon—an abandon engendered probably by the warm languid air of May, and those million flowers burdening the air with perfume.

This is Miss Belle-bouche, whom we have heard the melancholy Jacques discourse of with such forlorn eloquence to his friend Tom, or Sir Asinus, as the reader pleases.

Belle-bouche, Pretty-mouth, Belinda, or Rebecca—for this last was the name given her by her sponsors—is a

young girl of about seventeen, and of a beauty so fresh and rare that the enthusiasm of Jacques was scarcely strange. The girl has about her the freshness and innocence of childhood, the grace and elegance of the inhabitants of that realm of fairies which we read of in the olden poets—all the warmth, and reality, and beauty of those lovelier fairies of our earth. Around her delicate brow and rosy cheeks fall myriads of golden "drop curls," which veil the deep-blue eyes, half closed and fixed upon the open volume in her hand. Belle-bouche is very richly clad, in a velvet gown, a satin underskirt from which the gown is looped back, wide cuffs and profuse lace at wrists and neck; and on her diminutive feet, which peep from the skirt, are red morocco shoes tied with bows of ribbon, and adorned with heels not more than three inches in height. Her hair is powdered and woven with pearls—she wears a pearl necklace; she looks like a child dressed by its mother for a ball, and spoiled long ago by "petting."

Belle-bouche reads the "Althea" of Lovelace, and smiles approvingly at the gallant poet's assertion, that the birds of the air know no such liberty as he does, fettered by her eyes and hair. It is the fashion for Lovelaces to make such declarations, and with a coquettish little movement she puts back the drop curls, and raises her blue eyes to the sky from which they have stolen their hue.

She remains for some moments is this reverie, and is not aware of the approach of a gallant Lovelace, who, hat in hand, the feather of the said hat trailing on the ground, draws near.

Who is this gallant but our friend of one day's standing, the handsome, the smiling, the forlorn, the melancholy—and, being melancholy, the interesting—Jacques.

He approaches smiling, modest, humble—a consummate strategist; his ambrosial curls and powdered queue tied with its orange ribbon, shining in the sun. He wears a suit of cut velvet with gold buttons; a flowered satin waistcoat reaching to his knees; scarlet silk stockings, and high-heeled worsted shoes. His cuffs would enter a barrel with difficulty, and his chin reposes upon a frill of irreproachable Mechlin lace.

Jacques finds the eyes suddenly turned upon him, and bows low. Then he approaches, falls upon one knee, and presses his lips gallantly to the hand of the little beauty, who smiling carelessly rises in a measure from her recumbent position.

"Do I find the fair Belinda reading?" says the gallant; "what blessed book is made happy by the light of her eyes?"

Which remarkable words, we must beg the reader to remember, were after the fashion of the time and scarcely more than commonplace. The fairer portion of humanity had even then perfected that sovereignty over the males which in our own day is so very observable. So, instead of replying in a tone indicating surprise, the little beauty answers quite simply:

"My favorite—Lovelace."

Jacques heaves a sigh; for the music of the voice has touched his heart—nay, overwhelmed it with a new flood of love.

He dangles his bonnet and plume, and carefully arranges a drop curl. He, the prince of wits, the ornament of ball rooms, the star of the minuet and reel, is suddenly quite dumb, and seems to seek for a subject to discourse upon in surrounding objects.

A happy idea strikes him; a thought occurs to him; he grasps at it with the desperation of a drowning man. He says:

"'Tis a charming day, fairest Belle-bouche—Belinda, I mean. Ah, pardon my awkwardness!"

And the unhappy Corydon betrays by his confusion how much this slip of the tongue has embarrassed him—at least, that he wishes her to think so.

The little beauty smiles faintly, and bending a fatal languishing glance upon her admirer, says:

"You called me—what was it?"

"Ah, pardon me."

"Oh certainly!—but please say what you called me."

"How can I?"

"By telling me," says the beauty philosophically.

"Must I?" says Jacques, reflecting that after all his offence was not so dreadful.

"If you please."

"I said Belle-bouche."

"Ah! that is——?"

"Pretty-mouth," says Lovelace, with the air of a man who is caught feloniously appropriating sheep; but unable to refrain from bending wistful looks upon the topic of his discourse.

Belle-bouche laughs with a delicious good humor, and Jacques takes heart again.

"Is that all?" she says; "but what a pretty name!"

"Do you like it, really?" asks the forlorn lover.

"Indeed I do."

"And may I call you Belle-bouche?"

"If you please."

Jacques feels his heart oppressed with its weight of love. He sighs. This manœuvre is greeted with a little laugh.

"Oh, that was a dreadful heigho!" she says; "you must be in love."

"I am," he says, "desperately."

A slight color comes to her bright cheek, for it is impossible to misunderstand his eloquent glance.

"Are you?" she says; "but that is wrong. Fie on't! Was ever Corydon really in love with his Chloe—or are his affections always confined to the fluttering ribbons, and the crook, wreathed with flowers, which make her a pleasant object only, like a picture?"

Jacques sighs.

"I am not a Corydon," he says, "much less have I a Chloe—at least, who treats me as Chloes should treat their faithful shepherds. My Chloe runs away when I approach, and her crook turns into a shadow which I grasp in vain at. The shepherdess has escaped!"

"It is well she don't beat you," says the lovely girl, smiling.

"Beat me!"

"With her crook."

"Ah! I ask nothing better than to excite some emotion in her tender heart more lively than indifference. Perhaps were she to hate me a little, and consequently beat me, as you have said, she might end by drawing me towards her with her flowery crook."

The young girl laughs.

"Would you follow?"

"Ah, yes—for who knows——?"

He pauses, smiling wistfully.

"Ah, finish—finish! I know 'tis something pretty by the manner in which you smile," she says, laughing.

"Who knows, I would say, but in following her, fairest Belle-bouche—may I call you Belle-bouche?"

"Oh yes, if you please—if you think it suits me."

And she pours the full light of her eyes and smiles upon him, until he looks down, blinded.

"Pity, pity," he murmurs, "pity, dearest Miss Belle-bouche——"

She pretends not to hear, but, turning away with a blush at that word "dearest," says, with an attempt at a laugh:

"You have not told me why you would wish your Chloe to draw you after her with her crook."

"Because we should pass through the groves——"

"Well."

"And I should wrap her in my cloak, to protect her from the boughs and thorns."

"Would you?"

"Ah, yes! And then we should cross the beautiful meadows and the flowery knolls——"

"Very well, sir."

"And I should gather flowers for her, and kneeling to present them, would approach near enough to kiss her hand——"

"Oh goodness!"

"And finally, fairest Belle-bouche, we should cross the bright streams on the pretty sylvan bridges——"

"Yes, sir."

"And most probably she would grow giddy; and I should take her in my arms, and holding her on my faithful bosom——"

Jacques opens his arms as though he would really clasp the fair shepherdess, who, half risen, with her golden curls mingled with the flowers, her cheeks the color of her red fluttering ribbons, seeks to escape the declaration which her lover is about to make.

"Oh, no! no!" she says.

He draws back despairingly, and at the same moment hears a merry voice come singing down the blossom-fretted walk, upon which millions of the snowy leaves have fallen.

"One more chance gone!" the melancholy Jacques murmurs; and turning, he bows to the new comer—the fair Philippa.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER III.

AN HEIRESS WHO WISHES TO BECOME A MAN.

Philippa is a lady of nineteen or twenty, with the air of a duchess and the walk of an antelope. Her brilliant eyes, as black as night, and as clear as a sunny stream, are full of life, vivacity and mischief; she seems to be laughing at life, and love, and gallantry, and all the complimentary nothings of society, from the height of her superior intellect, and with undazzled eyes. She is clad even more richly than Belle-bouche, for Philippa is an heiress—the mistress of untold farms—or plantations as they then said;—miles of James River "low grounds" and uncounted Africans. Like the Duke of Burgundy's, her sovereignty is acknowledged in three languages—the English, the African or Moorish, and the Indian: for the Indian settlement on the south side calls her mistress, and sends to her for blankets in the winter. In the summer it is not necessary to ask for the produce of her estate, such as they desire—they appropriate it.

Philippa is a cousin of Belle-bouche; and Belle-bouche is the niece of Aunt Wimple, who is mistress of the Shadynook domain. Philippa has guardians, but it cannot be said they direct her movements. They have given up that task in despair, some years since, and only hope that from the numerous cormorants always hovering around her, she may select one not wholly insatiable—with some craw of mercy.

"There, you are talking about flowers, I lay a wager," she says, returning the bow of Jacques, and laughing.

"I was speaking neither of yourself nor the fair Belinda," replies Jacques, with melancholy gallantry.

"There! please have done with compliments—I detest them."

"You detest every thing insincere, I know, charming Philippa—pardon me, but your beautiful name betrays me constantly. Is it not—like your voice—stolen from poetry or music?"

"Ah, sir, you are insufferable."

"Pardon, pardon—but in this beautiful and fair season, so full of flowers——"

"You think it necessary to employ flowers of speech: that is what you were going to say, but for heaven's sake have done."

Jacques bows.

"I have just discarded the twentieth, Bel," she adds, laughing; "he got on his knees."

And Philippa laughs heartily.

Jacques is used to his companion's manner of talking, and says:

"Who was it, pray, madam—Mowbray?"

A flush passes over Philippa's face, and she looks away, murmuring "No!"

"I won't go over the list of your admirers," continues Jacques, sadly, "they are too numerous; for who can wonder at such a fairy face as yours attracting crowds of lovers?"

"My fairy face? Yes, and my unhappy wealth, sir. I wish I was poor! I can never know when I am loved truly. Oh, to know that!"

And a shadow passes over the face, obliterating the satire, and veiling the brilliant eyes. Then with an effort

Philippa drives away her preoccupation, and says:

"I wish Heaven had made me a man!"

"A man?" says Jacques.

"Yes, sir."

"Pray why? Is there any young lady you would like to marry? Ah," he murmurs, "you need not go far if that is the case."

And he glances tenderly at Belle-bouche, who smiles and blushes.

"I wish to be a man, that my movements may not be restricted. There is my guardian, who murmurs at my travelling about from county to county with only Jugurtha to drive me—as if Jugurtha couldn't protect me if there were any highwaymen or robbers."

Jacques laughs.

"But there are disadvantages connected with manhood," he says. "You are ignorant of them, and so think them slight."

"The prominent ones, if you please."

"You would have to make love—the active instead of passive, as at present."

"I would enjoy it."

"How would you commence, pray?"

"Oh, easily—see now. I would say,'My dear Bel! I am at your service! If *you* love *me*, *I'll* love *you*!' And then with a low bow I would kiss her hand, and her lips too, if she would permit me."

Jacques sighs.

"Do you think that would succeed, however?" he says.

"I don't know, and I don't care—I'd try."

Jacques sighs again, and looks wistfully at Belle-bouche, who smiles.

"I'm afraid such a cavalier address—at the pistol's mouth as it were—at forty paces—like those highwaymen you spoke of but now—would only insure failure."

"You are mistaken."

"I doubt the propriety of such a 'making love.'"

"If I were a man, you would see my success. I'd have any woman for the asking."

"Well, fancy yourself a man."

"And who will be my lady-love?"

"Fancy my sex changed also—make love to me, my charming Madam Philippa."

"Forsooth! But I could win your heart easily."

"How, pray," says Jacques, sighing, "granting first that 'tis in my possession?"

"By two simple things."

"To wit?"

"I would talk to you of flowers and shepherdesses, and crooks and garlands——"

"Oh!"

"And I would adopt, if I had not naturally, that frank, languid, graceful, fatal air which—which—shall I finish?"

"Yes, indeed."

"Which Bel has! What a beautiful blush!"

And Philippa claps her hands.

Jacques tries very hard not to color, thus forfeiting all his pretensions to the character of a self-possessed man of the world and elegant coxcomb; but this is equally forlorn with his attempt not to observe the mischievous glance and satirical lip of the fair Philippa.

He seeks in vain for a word—a jest—a reply.

Fortune favors him. A maid from the house approaches Philippa, and says:

"Mr. Mowbray, ma'am."

A blush, deeper than that upon the face of Jacques, mantles Philippa's cheeks as she replies:

"Say I am coming."

"Before you go," says Jacques with odious triumph, "permit me to say, Madam Philippa, that I begin to see some of the advantages you might enjoy were you a man."

"What are they, pray—more than I have mentioned?" she says coolly.

"You might have more liberty."

"I said as much."

"You might go and see your friends."

"You repeat my words, sir."

"Yes—you might even go and see us at college; listen to my philosophical discussions after lecture; and take part in Mowbray's merry jests—an excellent friend of yours, I think."

Philippa looks at him for a moment, hesitating whether she shall stay and take her revenge. She decides to go in, however; and Jacques and Belle-bouche follow. We are bound to say that the proposition did not come from Jacques.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER IV.

A POOR YOUNG MAN, AND A RICH YOUNG GIRL.

In the drawing-room sat a gentleman turning over the leaves of a book.

The apartment was decorated after the usual fashion of the olden time. On the floor was a rich carpet from Antwerp, in the corner a japanned cabinet; everywhere crooked-legged tables and carved chairs obstructed the floor, and on the threshold a lap-dog snapped at the flies in his dreams. Besides, there were portraits of powdered dames, and hideous china ornaments on the tall narrow mantlepiece; and an embroidered screen in the recess next the fireplace described with silent eloquence the life of Arcady.

Mowbray was a young man of twenty-five or six, with a high pale forehead, dark eyes full of thoughtful intelligence; and his dress was rather that of a student than a man of the world. It was plain and simple, and all the colors were subdued. He was a man for a woman to listen to, rather than laugh with. His manner was calm, perfectly self-possessed, and his mind seemed to be dwelling upon one dominant idea.

"Good morning, sir," said Philippa, inclining her head indifferently; "we have a very pleasant day."

Mowbray rose and bowed calmly.

"Yes, madam," he said; "my ride was quite agreeable."

"Any news, sir?"

"None, except a confirmation of those designs of the ministry which are now causing so much discussion."

"What designs?"

A faint smile passed over Mowbray's calm face.

"Are you quite sure that politics will amuse you?" he said.

"Amuse? no, sir. But you seem to have fallen into the fashionable error, that ladies only require amusement."

He shook his head.

"You do me injustice," he said; "no man has so high an opinion of your sex, madam, as I have."

"I doubt it—you deceive yourself."

"Excuse me, but I do not."

"You are one of the lords of creation," said Philippa satirically.

"A very poor lord," he replied calmly.

"Are you poor?" asked Philippa as coolly.

"Yes, madam."

"But you design being rich some day?"

"Yes, madam, if my brain serves me."

"You aspire perhaps to his Majesty's council?"

"No, madam," he replied, with perfect coolness; "were I in public life, I should most probably be in the opposition."

"A better opening."

"No; but better for one who holds my opinions—better for the conscience."

"And for the purse?"

"I know not. If you mean that public life holds out pecuniary rewards, I think you are mistaken."

"Then you will not become rich by politics?"

"I think, madam, that there is little chance of that."

"Still you would wish to be wealthy?"

"Yes, madam."

"You are fond of luxury?"

"Yes, madam."

"Horses, wines, carriages?"

"Excuse me—no."

"What then?"

"The luxury of seeing my orphan sister surrounded with every comfort."

A flush passed over Philippa's face, and she turned away; but she was not satisfied.

"There is a very plain and easy way to arrive at wealth, sir," she said; "law is so slow."

"Please indicate it."

"Marry an heiress."

There was a silence after these words; and Philippa could scarcely sustain the clear fixed look which he bent upon her face.

"Is that your advice, madam?" he said coldly. "I thank you for it."

His tone piqued her.

"Then follow it," she said.

"Excuse me again."

"Is it not friendly?"

"Possibly, but not to my taste."

"Why, sir?"

"First, because the course you suggest is not very honorable; secondly, and in another aspect, it is very disgraceful; again, it is too expensive, if I may be permitted to utter what seems to be, but is not, a very rude and cynical speech."

"Not honorable—disgraceful—too expensive! Indeed! Why, sir, you at once exclude heiresses from matrimony."

"Not so, madam."

"Not honorable!"

"I think it is not honorable to acquire wealth, for the best purpose in the world, by giving the hand and not the heart."

"The hand and the heart!—who speaks of heart in these days? But you say it is even disgraceful to marry an heiress."

"Not at all; but if a man does not love a woman, is it not disgraceful in the full sense of that word, madam, to unite himself to her, or rather to her money bags, only that he may procure the means of living in luxury, and gratifying his expensive tastes and vices?"

"If he does not *love* her, you say. *Love!* that is a very pretty word, and rhymes, I believe, to *dove*! Well, sir, you have endeavored to establish your point by the aid of two delightful phrases, 'the hand and not the *heart*'—'the man who does not *love* a woman'—beautiful words, only I don't believe in them. Now be good enough to explain your third point:—how is it too 'expensive' to marry a wealthy woman? I know you gentlemen at the college are inveterate logicians, and find little difficulty in proving that twice two's five, and that black is irreproachable white—that fire is cold—ice, hot—smoke, heavy—and lead light as thistle-down. Still I imagine you will find it difficult to show that 'tis *expensive* to marry, let us say, fifty thousand pounds a year!"

Mowbray looked at her face a moment, and sighed; a great hope seemed to be leaving him; when he spoke, it was with manifest repugnance.

"Let us dismiss this singular subject, madam," he said calmly; "I spoke too thoughtlessly. See that lovely humming-bird around the honeysuckle, searching in vain for honey."

"As I do for your reasons, sir," said Philippa curtly.

"My reasons?"

"You refuse to explain——"

"Well, well—I see you will compel me to speak. Well, madam, my meaning is very simple. When I say that it is too 'expensive' to unite oneself to a woman solely because that woman has for her portion a great fortune, a large income, every luxury and elegance to endow her husband with—I mean simply that if this woman be uncongenial, if her husband care nothing for her, only her fortune, then that he will necessarily be unhappy, and that unhappiness is cheaply bought with millions. Money only goes a certain way—tell me when it bought a heart! Mine, madam, it will never buy at least—if you will permit me to utter a sentence in such bad taste. And now let us abandon this discussion, which leads us into such serious moods."

She turned away, and looked through the window.

Two birds were playfully contending in the air, and filling the groves with their joyous carolling.

"How free they are!" she murmured.

"The birds? Yes, madam, they live in delightful liberty, as we of America will, I trust, some day."

"I wonder if they're married," said Philippa laughing, and refusing to enter upon the wrongs of England toward the colonies; "they are fighting, I believe, and thus I presume they are united in marriage—by some parson Crow!"

Mowbray only smiled slightly, and looked at his watch.

"What! not going!" cried Philippa.

"Pardon," he said; "I just rode out for an hour. We have a lecture in half an hour."

"And you prefer the excellent Dr. Small or some other reverend gentleman to myself—the collegiate to the sylvan, the male to the female lecturer?"

He smiled wearily.

"Our duties are becoming more exacting," he said; "the examination is approaching."

"I should suppose so—you have not been to see me for a whole week."

A flush passed over Mowbray's brow; then it became as pale as before.

"Our acquaintance has not been an extended one," he said; "I could not intrude upon your society."

"Intrude!"

And abandoning completely her laughing cynical manner, Philippa gave him a look which made him tremble. Why was that excitement? Because he thought he had fathomed her; because he had convinced himself that she was a coquette, amusing herself at his expense; because he saw all his dreams, his illusions, his hopes pass away with the fleeting minutes. He replied simply:

"Yes, madam—even now I fear I am trespassing upon your time; you probably await my departure to betake yourself to your morning's amusement. I was foolish enough to imagine that I had not completely lost my

powers of conversation, buried as I have been in books. I was mistaken—I no longer jest—I am a poor companion. Then," he added, "we are so uncongenial—at least this morning. I will come some day when I am gay, and you sad—then we shall probably approximate in *mood*, and until then farewell."

She would have detained him; "Don't go!" was on her lips; but at the moment when Mowbray bowed low, a shout of laughter was heard in the passage, and three persons entered—Jacques, Belle-bouche, and Sir Asinus.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER V.

IN WHICH SIR ASINUS MAKES AS IGNOMINIOUS RETREAT.

Sir Asinus was apparently in high spirits, and smoothed the nap of his cocked hat with his sleeve—the said sleeve being of Mecklenburg silk—in a way which indicated the summit of felicity.

He seemed to inhale the May morning joyously after his late imprisonment; and he betook himself immediately to paying assiduous court to Miss Belle-bouche, who, the sooth to say, did not seem ill-disposed to get rid of Jacques.

Poor Jacques, therefore, made an unsuccessful attempt to engage Philippa in conversation. This failing—for Philippa was watching Mowbray disappearing toward Williamsburg—the melancholy Jacques made friends with the lap-dog, who at first was propitious, but ended by snapping at his fingers.

"A delightful day, my dear madam," he said to Philippa, once more endeavoring to open an account current of conversation.

Philippa, with bent brows, made no reply.

"The birds are having a charming time, it seems."

Poor Jacques! Philippa is buried in thought, and with her eyes fixed on the receding horseman, does not hear him.

"You seem preoccupied, madam," he said.

"Yes, a charming day, sir," she said, rising; "did you say it was pleasant? I agree with you. If I dared!" she added to herself, "if I only dared! But what do I not dare!"

And she abruptly left the room, to the profound astonishment of Jacques, who sat gazing after her with wide-extended eyes.

"I told you he was in love with her, my dear Miss Belle-bouche, since you say that will in future be your name—it is either with you or Madam Philippa."

These words were uttered in a confidential whisper to Belle-bouche by Sir Asinus, who was leaning forward gracefully in a tall carven-backed chair toward his companion, who reposed luxuriously upon an ottoman covered with damask, and ornamented *quoad* the legs with satyr heads.

Belle-bouche suffered her glance to follow that of her companion. Jacques was indeed, as we have said, gazing after the lady who had just departed, and for this purpose had opened his eyes to their greatest possible width. He resembled a china mandarin in the costume of Louis Quatorze.

"Am I mistaken?" said Sir Asinus.

Belle-bouche sighed.

"A plain case: he is even now saying to himself, my dear Miss Belle-bouche,

'Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus
Jam cari capitis——'

which means, 'How can I make up my mind to see you go up stairs?'"

Belle-bouche cast a tender glance at Jacques. Sir Asinus continued:

"Yes, yes, I see you pity him. But you should pity me."

"Why?"

"Your watch-paper—you remember; the one which you cut for me?"

"Yes."

"Well, last night I placed my watch on my window—before retiring, you know; and in the night," continued

Sir Asinus, "it commenced raining——"

"That was last night?"

"Yes, Madam Belle-bouche. Well, the roof leaked, and presto! when I rose I found my watch swimming in water—your watch-paper all soaked and torn—that is to say, my fingers tore it; and a dozen minuets I had bought for you shared the same fate, not to mention my jemmy-worked garters! My ill luck was complete—*me miserum*!"

"Was it at college?"

"Oh no," said Sir Asinus; "you know I am temporarily absent from the *Alma Mater*."

"Indeed!"

"Yes. I have taken up my residence in town—in Gloucester street, where I am always happy to see my friends. Just imagine a man persecuted by the professors of the great University of William and Mary for the reason I was."

"What was it?"

"Because I uttered some heresies. I said the Established Church was a farce, and that women, contrary to the philosophy of antiquity, really had souls. The great Doctor could pardon my fling at the church; but being an old woman himself, could not pardon my even seeming to revive the discussion of the heresy in relation to your sex. What was the consequence? I had to flee—the enemy went about to destroy me; behold me now the denizen of a second floor in old Mother Bobbery's house, Gloucester street, city of Williamsburg."

"Rusticating you call it, I think," says Belle-bouche, smiling languidly, and raising her brow to catch the faint May breeze which moves her curls.

"Yes; rusticating is the very word—derived from *rus*, a Latin word signifying *main street*, and *tike*, a Greek word meaning to *live in bachelor freedom*. It applies to me exactly, you see. I live in bachelor freedom on Gloucester street, and I only want a wife to make my happiness complete."

Belle-bouche smiles.

"You are then dissatisfied?" she says.

"Yes," sighs Sir Asinus; "yes, in spite of my pipes and books and pictures, and all appliances and means to boot for happiness, I am lonely. Now suppose I had a charming little wife—a paragon of a wife, with blue eyes and golden curls, and a sweet languishing air, to chat with in the long days and gloomy evenings!"

Belle-bouche recognises her portrait, and smiles.

Sir Asinus continues:

"Not only would I be happier, but more at my ease. To tell you the humiliating truth, my dear Miss Belle-bouche, I am in hourly fear of being arrested."

"Would a wife prevent that?"

"Certainly. What base proctor would dare lay hands upon a married man? But this all disappears like a vision—it is a dream: *fuit Ilium, ingens gloria Teucrorumque*; which means, 'Mrs. Tom is still in a state of single blessedness,' that being the literal translation of the Hebrew."

And Sir Asinus smiles; and seeing Jacques approach, looks at him triumphantly.

Jacques has just been bitten by the lap dog; and this, added to his melancholy and jealousy, causes him to feel desolate.

"Pardon my interrupting your pleasant conversation," he says.

"Oh, no interruption!" says Sir Asinus triumphantly.

"But I thought I'd mention——

"Speak out, speak out!" says Sir Asinus, shaking with laughter, and assuming a generous and noble air.

"I observed through the window a visitor, fairest Belinda."

"Ah! I was so closely engaged," says Sir Asinus, "like a knight of the middle ages, I thought only of my 'ladye faire.' Nothing can move me from her side!"

"Indeed?" says Jacques.

"Nothing!"

"Well, well, at least I have not counselled such desertion on your part. The visitor at the gate there is Doctor Small from college. I only thought I'd mention it!"

Like an electric shock dart the words of Jacques through the frame of the chivalric Sir Asinus. He starts to his feet—gazes around him despairingly, seeking a place of refuge.

The step of worthy Doctor Small is heard upon the portico; Sir Asinus quakes.

"Are you unwell, my dear friend?" asks Jacques with melancholy interest.

"I am—really—come, Jacques!" stammers Sir Asinus.

"Are you indisposed?"

"To meet the Doctor? I rather think I am. Mercy! mercy! dear *Campana in die*," cries the knight; "hide me! hide me!—up stairs, down stairs—any where!"

The footstep sounded in the passage.

Belle-bouche laughed with that musical contagious merriment which characterized her.

"But what shall we say?" she asks; "I can't tell the Doctor you are not here."

"Then I must go. Can I escape? Oh heavens! there is his shadow on the floor! Jacques, my boy, protect my memory—I must retire!"

And Sir Asinus rushed through the open door leading into the adjoining room, just as Doctor Small entered with his benevolent smile and courteous inclination.

He had been informed in town, he said, that his young friend Thomas, withdrawn now some days from college, was at Shadynook; and taking advantage of his acquaintance with Mrs. Wimple, and he was happy to add with Miss Rebecca, he had come to find and have some friendly conversation with Thomas. Had he been at Shadynook, or was he misinformed?

The reply was easy. Sir Asinus had disappeared through a door leading into the garden some moments before, and Belle-bouche could reply most truthfully—as she did—that the truant *had* visited her that morning, but was gone.

The worthy Doctor smiled, and said no more.

He exchanged a few words on the pleasant weather—smiled benevolently on the young girl—and with a sly glance asked Jacques if he designed attending lecture that morning.

The melancholy Jacques hesitated: a look from Belle-bouche would have caused him to reply that he regretted exceedingly his inability to honor his Alma Mater on that particular occasion; but unfortunately the young girl said nothing. Was she afraid of a second private interview, wherein the subject should be crooks and shepherdesses, and the hopes of Corydons? At all events, Belle-bouche played with her lace cuff, and her countenance wore nothing more than its habitual faint smile.

Jacques heaved a sigh, and said he believed he ought to go.

The Doctor rose, and pressing Belle-bouche's hand, kindly took his leave—followed by Jacques, who cast a last longing, lingering look behind.

As for Sir Asinus, we regret to speak of him. Where were now all his chivalric thoughts—his noble resolutions—his courage and devotion to his lady fair? Alas! humanity is weak: we are compelled to say that the heroic knight, the ardent lover, the iron-hearted rebel, suddenly changed his device, and took for his crest a lion no longer, only a hare.

From the back room he emerged into the garden, quaking at every sound; once in the garden, he stole ignominiously along the hedge; then he sallied forth into the road; then he mounted his horse, and fled like the wind.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER VI.

HOW SIR ASINUS STAKED HIS GARTERS AGAINST A PISTOLE, AND LOST.

Sir Asinus fled like the wild huntsman, although there was this slight difference between the feelings of the two characters:—the German myth was himself the pursuer, whereas Sir Asinus imagined himself pursued.

He looked around anxiously from time to time, under the impression that his worthy friend and pedagogue was on his heels; and whenever a traveller made his appearance, he was complimented with a scrutiny from the flying knight which seemed to indicate apprehension—the apprehension of being made a prisoner.

Just as Sir Asinus reached the outskirts of the town, he observed a chariot drawn by six milk-white horses approaching from a county road which debouched, like the highway, into Gloucester street; and when this

chariot arrived opposite, a head was thrust through the window, and a good-humored voice uttered the words:

"Give you good day, my dear Tom!"

Sir Asinus bowed, with a laugh which seemed to indicate familiarity with the occupant of the carriage, and said:

"Good morning, your Excellency—a delightful day."

"Yes," returned the voice, "especially for a race! What were you scampering from? Come into the chariot and tell me all about it. I am dying of weariness."

The movement was soon accomplished. His Excellency's footman mounted the horse, and Sir Asinus entered the chariot and found himself opposite an elderly gentleman, very richly clad, and with a smiling and rubicund face which seemed to indicate a love of the best living. This gentleman was Francis Fauquier, Governor of his Majesty's loyal colony of Virginia; and he seemed to be no stranger to the young man.

"Now, what was it all about?" asked the Governor, laughing.

And when our friend related the mode of his escape from the worthy Doctor, his Excellency shook the whole carriage in the excess of his mirth.

They came thus to the "Raleigh Tavern," before the door of which the Governor stopped a moment to say a word to the landlord, who, cap in hand, listened. The Governor's conversation related to a great ball which was to be held in the "Apollo room" at the Raleigh very soon; and the chariot was delayed fully half an hour.

At last it drove on, and at the same moment his Excellency inclined his head courteously to a gentleman mounted on horseback who was passing.

"Ah, worthy Doctor Small!" he said, "a delightful day for a ride!"

Sir Asinus shrunk back into the extremest corner, and cast an imploring look upon the Governor, who shook with laughter.

"Yes, yes, your Excellency," said the Doctor; "I have been inhaling this delightful May morning with quite a youthful gusto."

"Riding for exercise, Doctor? An excellent idea."

"No, sir; I went a little way into the country to see a pupil."

"You saw him?"

"No, your Excellency."

"Why, that was very hard—a great reprobate, I fear."

"No; a wild young man who has lately deserted his Alma Mater."

"A heinous offence! I advise you to proceed against him for holding out *in contumaciam*."

"Ah!" said the Doctor, "we must follow the old receipt for cooking a hare in the present instance. We must first catch the offender."

And the good Doctor smiled.

"Well, Doctor, much success to you. Will you not permit me to convey you to the college?"

The hair upon Sir Asinus's head stood up; then at the Doctor's reply he breathed freely again. That reply was:

"No, I thank you; your Excellency is very good, but it is only a step."

And the Doctor rode on with a bow.

Behind him rode Jacques, who had recognised his friend's horse, caught a glimpse of him through the window, and now regarded him with languid interest.

The chariot drew up at the gate of the palace. A liveried servant offered his arm to the Governor; and passing along the walk beneath the Scotch lindens which lined it, they entered the mansion.

The Governor led the way to his study, passing through two large apartments ornamented with globe lamps and portraits of the King and Queen.

Once in his favorite leather chair, his Excellency ordered wine to be brought, emptied two or three glasses, and then receiving a pipe from a servant, lit it by means of a coal respectfully held in readiness, and commenced smoking.

Sir Asinus declined the pipe proffered to him, but applied himself to the old sherry with great gusto—much to his Excellency's satisfaction.

"You were near being discovered," said Fauquier, smiling; "then you would have been made an example."

"*Ex gracia exempli*," said Sir Asinus, emptying his glass, and translating into the original respectfully.

"Ah, you wild college boys! Now I wager ten to one that you were not only playing truant at Shadynook, but making love."

"That is perfectly correct, your Excellency."

"See, I was right. You are a wild scamp, Tom. Who's your Dulcinea?"

"I decline answering that question, your Excellency. But my rival—that is different."

"Well, your rival?"

"The dandified Adonis with the Doctor."

"Your friend, is he not?"

"Bosom friend; but what is the use of having friends, if we can't take liberties with them?"

"As, courting their sweethearts!" said his Excellency, who seemed to enjoy this sentiment very much.

"Yes, sir. I always put my friends under contribution. They are not fit for any thing else. My rule is always to play off my wit on friends; it coruscates more brilliantly when we know a man's foibles."

"Good—very profound!" said the Governor, laughing; "and I suppose the present difficulty arises from the fact, that some of these coruscations, as you call them, played around the person or character of the worthy Doctor Small?"

"No, no, your Excellency. I left my country for my country's good—I mean the college. My ideas were in advance of the age."

"How?"

"I suggested, in the Literary Society, the propriety of throwing off the rule of Great Britain; I drew up a constitutional argument against the Established Church in favor of religions toleration; and I asserted in open lecture that all men were and of right should be equally free."

The Governor shook with laughter.

"Did you?" he said.

"Yes," said Sir Asinus, assuming a grand tone.

"Well, I see now why you left your college for its good; this is treason, heresy, and barbarism," said the Governor, merrily. "Where has your Traitorship taken up your residence?"

"In Gloucester street," said Sir Asinus; "a salubrious and pleasant lodging."

"Gloucester street! Why, your constitutional civil and religious emancipation is not complete!"

"No, my dear sir—no."

"Come and live here with me in the palace; I'll protect you in your rights with my guards and cannon."

"No, your Excellency," said Sir Asinus, laughing. "You are the representative of that great system which I oppose. I am afraid of the Greeks and their gifts."

"Zounds! let me vindicate myself. I an opponent of your ideas!" cried the Governor, laughing.

"You are the representative of royalty."

"No, I am a good Virginian."

"You are an admirer of the Established Church."

The Governor whistled.

"That's it!" he said.

"You are the front of the aristocracy."

"My dear friend," said his Excellency, "ever since a blackguard in Paris defeated me in a fair spadille combat—breast to breast, card to card, by pure genius—I have been a republican. That fellow was a *canaille*, but he won fifteen thousand pounds from me: he was my superior. But let us try a game of cards, my dear boy. How are your pockets?"

"Low," said Sir Asinus, ruefully.

"Never mind," said his Excellency, whose whole countenance had lighted up at the thought of play; "I admire your garters—a pistole against them."

"Done!" said Sir Asinus with great readiness; and they sat down to play.

In two hours Sir Asinus was sitting at spadille in the exceedingly undress costume of shirt, pantaloons, and silk stockings.

His coat was thrown on a chair; his worsted shoes were in one corner of the room; and his cocked hat lay upon his waistcoat at the Governor's feet.

The Governor took extreme delight in these practical jokes. He had won these articles of Sir Asinus's clothing one after another; and now he was about to commence with the remainder.

"Look! spadille, the ace!" he cried; "I have your neckcloth."

And his Excellency burst into a roar of laughter.

Sir Asinus slowly and sadly drew off his neckcloth, and deposited it on the pile.

"Good!" cried his Excellency; "now for your short clothes!"

"No, no!" Sir Asinus remonstrated; "now, your Excellency!—mercy, your Excellency! How would I look going through the town of Williamsburg breechless?"

"You might go after night," suggested his Excellency, generously.

"No, no!"

"Well, well, I'll be liberal—my servant shall bring you a suit of clothes from your apartment; of course these are mine."

A sudden thought struck Sir Asinus.

"I'll play your Excellency this ring against ten pistoles," he said; "I lost sight of it."

"Done!" said his Excellency.

Sir Asinus won the game; and Fauquier, with the exemplary honesty of the confirmed gambler, took ten pistoles from his purse and handed them across the table.

"Nine pieces for my coat and the rest," said Sir Asinus persuasively; "it is really impolite to be playing with your Excellency in such deshabille as this."

"Willingly," said Fauquier, shaking with merriment.

And he pocketed the nine pistoles while Sir Asinus was making his toilet at a Venetian mirror.

They then commenced playing again—Sir Asinus staking his pistole. He won, and continued to win until night; when candles were brought, and they commenced again.

By ten o'clock Sir Asinus had won fifteen thousand pistoles from the Governor.

By midnight Fauquier, playing with the nerve of a great gambler, had won them all back—laughing, careless, but not more careless than when he lost.

At fifteen minutes past twelve he had won a bond for two hundred pistoles from Sir Asinus; at sixteen minutes past twelve his Excellency rose, and taking the cards up with both hands, threw them out of the window.

Then rolling up the bond which Sir Asinus had executed a moment before, he gracefully lit with it a pipe which he had just filled; and, first telling a servant "to carry lights to the chamber next to his own," said to Sir Asinus:

"My dear boy, I have done wrong to-night; but this is my master passion. Cards have ruined me three distinct times; and if you play you will inevitably follow my example and destroy your prospects. Take my advice, and never touch them. If you have no genius for chance, twelve months will suffice to ruin you. If you turn out a great player, one half the genius you expend upon it will conquer a kingdom or found an empire. If you prefer oxygen to air—gamble! If you think *aquafortis* healthier than water—*gamble*! If you consider fever and fire the proper components of your blood—*gamble*! Take my advice, and never touch a card again—your bond is ashes. Come, Tom, to bed!"

And his Excellency, laughing as good-humoredly as ever, led the way up the broad staircase, preceded by a servant carrying a flambeau.

Sir Asinus found a magnificent apartment prepared for him—a velvet fauteuil, silk-curtained bed, wax candles in silver candelabra; and seeing that his guest was comfortably fixed, Governor Fauquier bade him

good night.

As for Sir Asinus, he retired without delay, and dreamed that he ruined his Excellency at cards; won successively all his real and personal estate; and lastly, having staked a thousand pistoles against his commission as Governor, won that also. Then, in his dream, he rose in his dignity, lit his pipe with the parchment, and made his Excellency a low and generous bow.

As he did so, the day dawned.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER VII.

JACQUES BESTOWS HIS PATERNAL ADVICE UPON A SCHOOLGIRL.

Just a week after the practical lesson given by his Excellency Governer Fauquier to Sir Asinus, and on a bright fine morning, the melancholy Jacques issued from the walls of his Alma Mater, and took his way along Gloucester street toward the residence of his friend and rival.

Jacques was dressed with unusual splendor. His coat was heavy with embroidery—his waistcoat a blooming flower-plat, upon whose emerald background roses, marigolds, and lilies flaunted in their satin bravery—and his scarlet silk stockings were held up by gold-colored garters. His narrow-edged cocked hat drooped with its feather over his handsome features, and in his delicately gloved hand he held a slight cane, which, from time to time he rested on the point of his high-heeled shoes, bending the lithe twig with irreproachable elegance.

Not far from the residence of the rebel he encountered and saluted with melancholy courtesy a very lovely young girl of about fifteen, who was tripping along to school, a satchel full of books upon her arm, and, covering her bright locks, a sun-bonnet such as school-girls wore at that time, and indeed in our own day.

"Good morning, my dear Miss Merryheart," said Jacques, removing his glove and holding out his jewelled hand.

The girl laughed artlessly, and gave him her hand, saying:

"Good morning, sir; but you have mistaken my name."

"Mistaken your name?"

"Yes, sir; it is Martha."

"And not Merryheart; but you are not responsible. Merryheart is your real name—not Martha, who was 'cumbered,' you know."

"But I *am* 'cumbered,'" replied the girl with a laugh.

"How, my dear madam?" asked the courteous Jacques.

"By my satchel."

"Ah! let me carry it for you."

"No, no."

"Why not?"

"I won't trouble you."

"No trouble in the world—I shall leave you in a street or two. Come!"

And he took the satchel, and passing his cane through the handles, gracefully deposited it behind his shoulders, as a beggar does his bundle.

The girl laughed heartily; and this seemed to afford the melancholy lover much satisfaction.

"Do they teach laughing at the Reverend Mrs. White's?" he asked.

"Laughing, sir?"

"Yes; I thought you had been taking lessons."

"Oh, sir!"

"Come! no fine-lady airs. I never compliment—we are too intimate."

And Jacques shifted his packet to the other shoulder.

"Just go to the ball and laugh in that way," he said, "and you'll slay all the hearts in a circle of ten feet."

The girl repeated the fatal ceremony with more energy than ever. The street echoed with it.

"I'm going to the ball, sir," she said; "Bathurst—you know Bathurst—he says he will go with me."

"Little innocent!"

"Sir?"

"I was reflecting, my dear little friend," said the melancholy Jacques, "upon the superiority of your sex before they reach the age of womanhood."

"How, sir?"

"Why, thus. Suppose I had addressed that question to a fine lady—'Are you going to the ball, madam?'—what would her reply have been?"

"I don't know," laughed the girl, pushing back a stray lock from her forehead.

"I'll tell you," continued Jacques. "With a negligent and careless air she would have said, 'Really, sir—I do not know—I have scarcely made up my mind—if I decide to go—I shall not go, however, I think—if I go, it will be with Mr. Blank—I have half promised him;' and so forth. How wearisome! You, on the contrary, my little friend, clap your hands and cry, 'Oh! I am going! Bathurst says he'll go with me!' Bathurst is a good boy; isn't he your sweetheart?"

The girl blushed and laughed.

"No, indeed, sir!" she said.

"That is well; choose some elderly admirer, my dear child—like myself."

The laughter was louder than ever.

"It wouldn't do for you to have two," she said with a merry glance.

Jacques recoiled.

"Every body knows it!" he murmured ruefully.

"They do so," replied the merry girl, who caught these half-uttered words; "but she's a very sweet lady."

Jacques sighed.

"Are you not tired, sir?" asked the girl.

"No, no! my dear child; but I believe I must return your little bulrush receptacle, for yonder is my journey's end. Look, Sir Asinus beholds us—see! there at the window!"

In fact, Sir Asinus was at his open window, inhaling the bright May morning joyously.

"Sir Asinus? Who is he?" asked the girl, with a puzzled look.

"The great rebel, who tried to assassinate Doctor Small and the Governer. Have you not heard of it?"

"Oh no, indeed, sir! Did he?"

"Well, principles are men, they say; and that makes what I said quite true. Look at him: don't he resemble a murderer?"

"I don't know, sir; I hardly know what one looks like."

"Look at his red hair."

"It *is* red."

"And his sharp features."

"Yes, sir."

"He has a real assassin's look, my dear little friend; but he is a great thinker. That is the sort of beau I recommend you to get instead of Bathurst."

The girl laughed.

"But Bathurst is a great deal handsomer," she said; "then he promised to take me to the ball——"

"While Sir Asinus has not promised."

"Oh, *he* wouldn't think of *me*. I am very much obliged to you for carrying my satchel, sir," added the young

girl, swinging it again on her arm.

"Not at all. See how Sir Asinus is staring at you—a very ill-bred fellow!"

The young girl raised her head, for they were now under the window at which sat Sir Asinus; and she found the eyes of that gentleman fixed upon her in truth with great pleasure and admiration.

She laughed and blushed, looking down again.

"Good-by, my dear young lady," said the melancholy Jacques with a paternal air; "continue on your way, and present my most respectful regards to Mrs. White and every body. Learn your lessons, jump the rope, and never conjugate the verb *amo*, *amas*; get a poodle dog, and hideous china, and prepare yourself for the noble state of elderly maidenhood: so shall you pass serenely through this vale of tears, and be for ever great, glorious, and happy."

With which friendly counsel the melancholy Jacques sighed again—possibly from the thought that had he followed the last piece of advice, his mind had not been troubled—and so bade his young friend farewell, and mounted the staircase leading to the chamber of his friend.

As for the young girl, she followed him for a moment with her eyes, and then laughing merrily continued her way, swinging her satchel and humming an old ditty. We shall meet with her again.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW SIR ASINUS INVENTED A NEW ORDER OF PHILOSOPHERS, THE APICIANS.

Sir Asinus was clad as usual in a rich suit of silk, over which fell in graceful folds his old faded dressing gown. His red hair was unpowdered—his garters were unbuckled, and one of them had fallen to the floor—his feet were lazily thrust into ample slippers run down deplorably at the heel.

He had been meditating strictly the unwilling muse; for on the table lay a number of sheets of paper covered with unfortunate verses, which obstinately refused to rhyme. He seemed to have finally abandoned this occupation in despair—flying for refuge to his window, from which he had seen his friend coming down Gloucester street.

When Jacques entered, he retained his seat with an appearance of great carelessness, and extending two fingers negligently, drawled out:

"Good day, my boy. You perceive I have banished those ignoble fears of proctors. I no longer shiver when I hear a footstep on the staircase."

Jacques smiled languidly.

"Only when you hear it on the portico—at Shadynook or elsewhere," he said.

"No more of that, Hal, an thou lovest me," said Sir Asinus cheerfully. "The greatest men are subject to these sudden panics, and I am no exception. Ah! what news?"

Jacques sat down sighing.

"None," he said, "except that we have a new student at college—Hoffland is his name, I believe—a friend of Mowbray's apparently. Let's see your bad verses."

"No, no!" cried Sir Asinus, rolling them up. "*Minerva was invited*, as our friend Page used to say, but did not attend."

"That reminds me of the ball."

"At the 'Raleigh?'"

"Yes," sighed Jacques.

"This week, eh?"

"Yes; and every body is discussing it. It will be held in the *Apollo*——"

"A capital room."

"For a ball—yes."

"For any thing—a meeting of conspirators, or patriots, which might amount to the same thing," said Sir Asinus.

"Well, will your knightship attend the ball?"

"Of course."

"Pray, with whom!"

"Belle-bouche."

Jacques smiled with melancholy triumph.

"I think you are mistaken," he said, sadly.

"How?"

"She has engaged to go with me."

"Base stratagem—unfaithful friend! I challenge you on the spot."

"Good! I accept."

"Take your foil!" cried Sir Asinus, starting up.

"Pardon me, most worthy knight—hand it to me. I can easily prick you without rising."

Sir Asinus relented.

"Well, let us defer the combat," he said; "but when were you at Shadynook—which, by the by, should be called Sunnybower?"

"Yesterday!"

"And maligned me?"

"Very well—war to the death in future. What news there?"

"Philippa is gone."

"Ah?"

"Yes; she suddenly announced her intention some days ago, and with a nod to me, drove off in her chariot."

"A fine girl."

"Why don't you court her, if you admire her so much?"

"My friend," said Sir Asinus, "you seem not to understand that I am 'tangled by the hair and fettered by the eye' of Belle-bouche the fairy."

Jacques sighed.

"Then I flatter myself she likes me," said Sir Asinus, caressing his red whiskers in embryo. "I am in fact pledged exclusively to her. I can't espouse both."

"Vanity!" said Jacques languidly; "but you could build a feudal castle—a very palace—in the mountains with Philippa's money."

"There you are, with your temptations—try to seduce me, a republican, into courtly extravagance—me, a martyr to religious toleration, republican ideas, and the rights of woman!"

"Very well, Sir Asinus, I won't tempt you further; but I think it would be cheap for you to marry on any terms—if only to extricate yourself from your present difficulties. Once married, you would of course leave college."

"Yes; but I wish to remain."

"What! in this attic?"

"Even so."

"A hermit?"

"Who said I was a hermit? I am surrounded with friends! Ned Carter comes and smokes with me until my room is one impervious fog, all the while protesting undying friendship, and asking me to write love verses for him. Tom Randolph is a faithful friend and companion. Stay, look at that beautiful suit of Mecklenburg silk which Belle-bouche admired so much—I saw she did. Tom gave me that—in return for my new suit of embroidered cloth. Who says human nature is not disinterested?"

"Cynic!"

"Yes, I would be, were I not a Stoic."

"You are neither—you are an Epicurean."

"Granted: I am even an Apician."

"What's that? Who was Apicius?"

"There, now, you are shockingly ignorant; you really don't know what *apis* means in Sanscrit—bah!"

"In Sanscrit? True; but in Latin it is—"

"Bee: I'll help you out."

"Very well, you are an *Apician*, you say: expound."

"Why! do I not admire Belle-bouche?"

"I believe so."

"Pretty mouth—that is the translation?"

"Yes."

"A mouth like Suckling's lady-love's—stay, was it Suckling? Yes: Sir John. 'Some bee had stung it newly,' you know. Well, Belle-bouche has honey lips—a beautiful idea—and bees love honey, and I love Belle-bouche: there's the syllogism, as you tiresome logicians say. Q. E. D., I am an *Apician*!"

Jacques stands astounded at this gigantic philological joke, to the great satisfaction of his friend, who caresses his sandy whiskers with still greater self-appreciation.

"Now call me Sir Asinus any longer, if you dare!" he says; and he begins chanting from the open book:

"Saltu vincit hinnulos,
Damas et capreolos,
Super dromedarios,
Velox Madianeos!
Dum trahit vehicula
Multa cum sarcinula,
Illius mandibula
Dura terit pabula!"

"Translate now!" cries Sir Asinus, "and bear testimony to my worth."

Jacques takes the book and reads over the Latin; then he extemporizes:

"In running he excels
Doctor Smalls and antelopes;
Swift beyond the camels.
Or Midianitish proctors.
While he drags his dulness
In verse along his pages,
His asinarian jaw-bones
Make havoc with the rhymes!"

Having modestly made this translation, Jacques closes the book and rises.

Sir Asinus tears his hair, and declares that his friend's ignorance of Latin is shocking.

"The ordinary plea when the rendering of disputed passages is not to our taste," says Jacques. "But I must go. By the by, the worthy Doctor came near seeing you in the Governor's chariot."

"It was more than he dared to recognise me," said Sir Asinus grandly.

"Dared, eh?"

"Certainly; if he had bowed to me, I should have cut his acquaintance. I would have refused to return his salute. I carefully avoided even looking at him, to spare his feelings."

"I appreciate your delicacy," said his friend; "you commenced your system even at Shadynook. Did you win any thing from Fauquier?"

"How did you know we played?"

"Why, returning past midnight, I saw lights."

"Very well—that proved nothing. We did play, however, friend Jacques, and I lost; which gave his Excellency an opportunity to perform a very graceful act. But enough. Before you go, tell me whom you were conversing with just now."

"A maiden," said Jacques.

"No! a perfect fairy."

"See the effect of seclusion! You are getting into such a state of disgust with your books, that you'll end by espousing Mother Bobbery, you unfortunate victim of political ideas."

"*I* disgusted—*I* tired of my books—*I* tired, when I have this glorious song to sing!"

And at the top of his voice Sir Asinus chanted:

"Aurum de Arabia,
Thus et myrrhum de Saba,
Tulit in ecclesia
Virtus asinaria!"

"Excellent dog Latin," said Jacques; "and literally translated it signifies:

'Gold from the Governor,
Tobacco from the South Side,
Asinarian strategy
Has brought into his chambers.'

That is to say, asinarian strategy has made the attempt."

But Sir Asinus, disregarding these strictures, began to sing the chorus:

"Hez, Sire Asne, car chantez,
Belle bouche rechignez;
Vous aurez du foin assez,
Et de l'avoine a plantez."

"Good," said Jacques; "that signifies:

Strike up, Sir Asinus,
With your braying mouth;
Never fear for hay,
The crop of oats is ample.'

But on reflection the translation is bad—'belle bouche is not 'braying mouth;' which reminds me that I must take my departure."

"Where are you going, unhappy profaner of ecclesiastical psalmody?"

"To see Belle-bouche," sighed Jacques.

Sir Asinus tore his hair.

"Then I'll go too," he cried.

"I've the last horse at the Raleigh," observed Jacques with melancholy pleasure. "Good morning, my dear friend. Take care of yourself."

And leaving Sir Asinus with a polite bow, Jacques went down the staircase. As for Sir Asinus, in the excess of his rage he sat down and composed a whole canto of an epic—which luckily has not descended to our day. The rats preserved humanity.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER IX.

THE LUCK OF JACQUES.

Belle-bouche was busily at work upon a piece of embroidery when Jacques entered; and this embroidery was designed for a fire-screen. It represented a parroquet intensely crimson, on a background uniformly emerald; and the eyes of the melancholy lover dwelt wistfully upon the snowy hands selecting the different colors from a tortoise-shell work-box filled with spools of silk.

Belle-bouche greeted the entrance of her admirer with a frank smile, and held out her hand, which poor Jacques pressed to his lips with melancholy pleasure.

"I find Miss Belle-bouche always engaged in some graceful occupation," he said mournfully; "she is either reading the poets, or writing poetry herself in all the colors of the rainbow."

The beauty treated this well-timed compliment with a smile.

"Oh, no," she said; "I am only working a screen."

"It is very pretty."

"Do you think so?"

"Yes."

And then Jacques paused; his conversation as usual dried up like a fountain at midsummer. He made a desperate effort.

"I thought I heard you singing as I entered," he said.

"Yes, I believe I was," smiled Belle-bouche.

"What music was so happy?" Jacques sighed.

Belle-bouche laughed.

"A child's song," she said.

"Pray what!"

"'Lady bird, lady bird, fly away home.'"

"A most exquisite air," sighed Jacques; "please commence again."

"But I have finished."

"Then something else, my dearest Miss Belle-bouche; see how unfortunate I am—pray pardon me."

"Willingly," said Belle-bouche, smiling with a roseate blush.

"I always fancy myself in Arcady when I am near you," he said tenderly.

"Why? because you find me very idle?"

"Oh, no; but Arcady, you know, was the abode of sylvan queens—dryads and oreads and naiads," said the classic Jacques; "and you are like them."

"Like a dryad?"

"They were very beautiful."

Belle-bouche blushed again; and to conceal her blushes bent over the screen. Jacques sighed.

"Chloes are dead, however," he murmured, "and the reed of Pan is still. The fanes of Arcady are desolate."

And having uttered this beautiful sentiment, the melancholy Jacques was silent.

"Do you like 'My Arcady?'" asked Belle-bouche; "I think it very pretty."

"It is the gem of music. Ah! to hear you sing it," sighed poor Corydon.

Belle-bouche quite simply rose, and going to the spinet, sat down and played the prelude.

Jacques listened with closed eyes and heaving bosom.

"Please hand me the music," said Belle-bouche; "there in the scarlet binding."

Jacques started and obeyed. As she received it, the young girl's hand touched his own, and he uttered a sigh which might have melted rocks. The reason was, that Jacques was in love: we state the fact, though it has probably appeared before.

Belle-bouche's voice was like liquid moonlight and melodious flowers. Its melting involutions and expiring cadences unwound themselves and floated from her lips like satin ribbon gradually drawn out.

As for Jacques, he was in a dream; one might have supposed that his nerves were steeped in the liquid melody—or at times, when he started, that the music came over him like a shower bath of perfume.

His sighs would have conciliated tigers; and when she turned and smiled on him, he almost staggered.

"Now," said Belle-bouche smiling softly, "suppose I sing something a little merrier. You know the minuet always gives place to the reel."

Jacques uttered an expiring assent, and Belle-bouche commenced singing with her laughing voice the then popular ditty, "Pretty Betty Martin, tip-toe fine."

If her voice sighed before, it laughed out loudly now. The joyous and exhilarating music sparkled, glittered, fell in rosy showers—rattled like liquid diamonds and dry rain. It flashed, and glanced, and ran—and stumbling over itself, fell upwards, showering back again in shattered cadences and fiery foam.

When she ended, Jacques remained silent, and was only waked, so to speak, by hearing his name pronounced.

"Yes," he said at random.

Belle-Bouche laughed.

"You agree with me, then, that my voice is wretchedly out of tune?" she said mischievously.

Poor Jacques only sighed and blushed.

"Betty Martin was a foolish girl," said Belle-bouche, laughing to hide her embarrassment.

"How?" murmured Jacques.

Belle-bouche found that she was involved in a delicate explanation; but thinking boldness the best, she replied:

"Because she could not find just the husband she wanted. You know the song says so—'some were too coarse and some too fine.'"

"Yes," murmured Jacques; "and 'tis often the case with us poor fellows. We seldom find the Chloe we want—she flies us ever spite of our attempts to clasp her to our hearts."

"That is not because Chloe is fickle, but because Corydon is so difficult to please," Belle-bouche replied, with a sly little smile.

"Ah! I am not!" he sighed.

"Indeed, you are mistaken; I'm sure you are a very fastidious shepherd."

"No, no. True, I may never find my Chloe; but when I do, then I shall no longer be my own master."

Belle-bouche hesitated, blushed, and said quickly:

"Perhaps you long to meet with an angel."

"Oh, no—only a woman," said Jacques; "and if you will listen, I will describe my ideal in a moment."

"Yes," said Belle-bouche, looking away; for his eyes were fixed upon her with such meaning that she could not return his gaze.

"First," said Corydon, sighing, "she should be young—that is to say, she should unite the grace and innocence of childhood with the splendor and fascination of the fully-developed woman. This is most often found at seventeen—therefore she should be just seventeen."

Belle-bouche was scarcely more than seventeen, as we know. The cunning Jacques went on.

"She should be a blonde, with light golden hair, eyes as azure as the heavens, and, as one great poet said of another, 'with a charming archness' in them."

"Yes," murmured Belle-bouche, whom this description suited perfectly.

"Her voice should not be loud and bold, her manner careless," Jacques went on; "but a delicious gentleness, and even at times a languor, should be diffused through it—diffused through voice and manner, as a perfume is diffused through an apartment, invisible, imperceptible almost, filling us with quiet pleasure."

"Quite a poetical description," said Belle-bouche, trying to laugh.

"She should be soft and tender—full of wondrous thoughts, and ever standing like a gracious angel," sighed the rapturous Jacques, "to bless, console, and comfort me."

"Still prettier," said Belle-bouche, blushing.

"Now let me sum up," said Jacques. "Golden hair, blue eyes, a rosy face full of childlike innocence, at times steeped in dewy languor, and those melting smiles which sway us poor men so powerfully; and lastly, with a heart and soul attuned to all exalted feelings and emotions. There is what I look for—ah, to find her! Better still to dream she could love me."

"Well, can you not find your Chloe?" Belle-bouche murmured, almost inaudibly.

"Never, I fear," said Jacques; "or else," he continued with a sigh, "when we do find her, we always find that some other discoverer claims possession."

Belle-bouche blushed.

"Suppose it is without the consent of the aborigines," she said, attempting to laugh.

Jacques looked at her; then shook his head.

"'Tis the strong hand, not the true heart, which conquers."

"Oh no, it is not!" said Belle-bouche.

"What then?"

"The good, kind heart, faithful and sincere."

Jacques fixed his eyes upon her blushing face, which leaned upon one of her fair hands—the other hand meanwhile being an object of deep interest to her eyes, cast down toward it.

"And should such a heart be wounded?" he said.

"Oh, no!" murmured Belle-bouche, blushing.

"Then do not wound mine!" cried Jacques; "dearest Belle-bouche! light of my heart—that was your portrait! Listen to your faithful——"

Poor, poor Jacques! Fate played with him. For at the very moment when he was about to fall upon his knees—just when his fate was to be decided—just when he saw an Arcadian picture spread before him, in its brilliant hues, all love and sunshine—that excellent old lady Aunt Wimple entered, calmly smiling, and with rustling silk and rattling key basket, dispelled all his fond romantic dreams.

Belle-bouche rose hastily and returned to her embroidery; Aunt Wimple sat down comfortably, and commenced a flood of talk about the weather; and Jacques fell back on an ottoman overcome with despair.

In half an hour he was slowly on his way back to town—his arms hanging down, his head bent to his breast, his dreamy eyes fixed intently upon vacancy.

Jacques saw nothing around him; Belle-bouche alone was in his vision—Belle-bouche, who by another chance was snatched from him.

The odor of the peach blossoms seemed a weary sort of odor, and the lark sang harshly.

As he passed through a meadow, he heard himself saluted by name—by whom he knew not. He bowed without looking at the speaker; he only murmured, "One more chance gone." As he passed the residence of Sir Asinus, he heard that gentleman laughing at him; he only sighed, "Belle-bouche!"(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER X.

MOWBRAY OPENS HIS HEART TO HIS NEW FRIEND.

Instead of following the melancholy Jacques to his chamber, let us return to the meadow in which he had been saluted by the invisible voice. A brook ran sparkling like a silver thread across the emerald expanse, and along this brook were sauntering two students, one of whom had spoken to the abstracted lover.

He who had addressed Jacques was Mowbray; the other was Hoffland, the young student who had just arrived at Williamsburg.

Hoffland is much younger than his companion—indeed, seems scarcely to have passed beyond boyhood; his stature is low, his figure is slender, his hair flaxen and curling, his face ornamented only with a peach-down mustache. He is clad in a suit of black richly embroidered; wraps a slight cloak around him spite of the warmth of the pleasant May afternoon; and his cocked hat, apparently too large for him, droops over his face, falling low down upon his brow.

They walk on for a moment in silence.

Then Hoffland says, in a musical voice like that of a boy before his tone undergoes the disagreeable change of manhood:

"You have not said how strange you thought this sudden friendship I express, Mr. Mowbray, but I am afraid you think me very strange."

"No, indeed," replies Mowbray; "I know not why, but you have already taken a strong hold upon me. Singular! we are almost strangers, but I feel as though I had known you all my life!"

"That can scarcely be, for I am but seventeen or eighteen," says Hoffland smiling.

"A frank, true age. I regret that I have passed it."

"Why?"

"Ah, can you ask, Mr. Hoffland?"

"Please do not call me Mr. Hoffland. We are friends: say Charles; and then I will call you Ernest. I cannot unless you set me the example."

"Ernest? How did you discover my name?"

"Oh!" said Hoffland, somewhat embarrassed, "does not every body know Ernest Mowbray?"

"Very well—as you are determined to give me compliments instead of reasons, I will not persist. Charles be it then, but you must call me Ernest."

"Yes, Ernest."

The low musical words went to his heart, and broke down every barrier. They were bosom friends from that moment, and walked on in perfect confidence.

"Why did you regret your youth, Ernest?" said Hoffland. "I thought young men looked forward impatiently to their full manhood—twenty-five or thirty; though I do not," he added with a smile.

"They do; but it is only another proof of the blindness of youth."

"Is youth blind?"

"Blind, because it cannot see that all the delights of ambition, the victories of mind, the triumphs and successes of the brain, are mere dust and ashes compared with what it costs to obtain them—the innocence of the heart, the illusions of its youthful hope."

"Ah! are illusions to be desired?"

"At least they are a sweet suffering, a bitter delight."

"Even when one wakes from them to find every thing untrue—despair alone left?"

"You paint the reverse truly; but still I hold that the happiness of life is in what I have styled illusions. Listen, Charles," he continued, gazing kindly at the boy, who turned away his head. "Life is divided into three portions—three stages, which we must all travel before we can lie down in that silent bed prepared for us at our journey's end. In the first, Youth, every thing is rosy, brilliant, hopeful; life is a dream of happiness which deadens the senses with its delirious rapture—deadens them so perfectly that the thorns Youth treads on are such no longer, they are flowers! stones are as soft as the emerald grass, and if a mountain or a river rise before it, all Youth thinks is, What a beautiful summit, or, How fair a river! and straightway it darts joyously up the ascent, or throws itself laughing into the bright sparkling waters. The mountain and the river are not obstacles—they are delights. Then comes the second portion of life, Manhood, when the obstacles are truly what they seem—hard to ascend, trying to swim over. Then comes Age, when the sobered heart hesitates long before commencing the ascent or essaying the crossing—when *duty* only prompts. Say that duty is greater than hope, and you are right; but say that duty carries men as easily over obstacles as joy, which loves those obstacles, and you are mistaken. Well, all this prosing is meant to show that the real happiness of life is in illusions. Doubtless you are convinced of it, however: already one learns much by the time he has reached eighteen."

Hoffland mused.

Mowbray drove away his thoughts, and said, smiling sadly:

"Have you ever loved, Charles?"

"Never," murmured the boy.

"That is the master illusion," sighed Mowbray.

"And is it a happy one?"

"A painful happiness."

These short words were uttered with so much sadness, that the boy stole a look of deep interest at his companion's face.

"Do not be angry with me, Ernest," he said, "but may I ask you if you have ever loved?"

His head drooped, and he murmured, "Yes."

"Deeply?"

"Yes."

"Were you disappointed?"

"Yes."

And there was a long pause. They walked on in silence.

"It is a beautiful afternoon," said Mowbray at length.

"Lovely," murmured the boy.

"This stream is so fresh and pure—no bitterness in it."

"Is there in love?"

Mowbray was silent for a moment. Then he raised his head, and said to his companion:

"Charles, listen! What I am going to tell you, may serve to place you upon your guard against what may cause you great suffering. I know not why, but I take a strange interest in you—coming alone into the great world a mere youth as you are, leaving in the mountains from which you say you come all those friends whose counsel might guide you. Listen to me, then, as to an elder brother—a brother who has grown old early in thought and feeling, who at twenty-five has already lived half the life of man—at least in the brain and heart. Listen. I was always impulsive and sanguine, always proud and self-reliant. My father was wealthy. I was told from my boyhood that I was a genius—that I had only to extend my hand, and the slaves of the lamp, as the Orientals say, would drop into it all the jewels of the universe. Success in politics, poetry, law, or letters—the choice lay with me, but the event was certain whichever I should select. Well, my father died—his property was absorbed by his debts—I was left with an orphan sister to struggle with the world.

"I arranged our affairs—we had a small competence after all debts were paid. We live yonder in a small cottage, and in half an hour I shall be there. I seldom take these strolls. Half my time is study—the rest, work upon our small plot of ground. This was necessary to prepare you for what I have to say.

"I had never been in love until I was twenty-four and a half—that is to say, half a year ago. But one day I saw upon a race-course a young girl who strongly attracted my attention, and I went home thinking of her. I did not know her name, but I recognised in her bright, frank, bold face—it was almost bold—that clear, strong nature which has ever had an inexpressible charm for me. I had studied that strange volume called Woman, and had easily found out this fact: that the wildest and most careless young girls are often far more delicate, feminine, and innocent than those whose eyes are always demurely cast down, and whose lips are drawn habitually into a prudish and prim reserve. Do you understand my awkward words?"

"Yes," said the boy quietly.

"Well," pursued Mowbray, "in forty-eight hours the dream of my life was to find and woo that woman. I instinctively felt that she would make me supremely happy—that the void which every man feels in his heart, no matter what his love for relatives may be, could be filled by this young girl alone—that she would perfect my life. Very well—now listen, Charles."

"Yes," said the boy, in a low tone.

"I became acquainted with her—for when did a lover ever fail to discover the place which contained his mistress?—and I found that this young girl whom I had fallen so deeply in love with was a great heiress."

"Unhappy chance!" exclaimed the boy; "I understand easily that this threw an ignoble obstacle in the way. Her friends——"

"No—there you are mistaken, Charles," said Mowbray "the obstacle was from herself."

"Did she not love you?"

Mowbray smiled sadly.

"You say that in a tone of great surprise," he replied; "there is scarcely ground for such astonishment."

"I should think any woman might love you," murmured the boy.

Mowbray smiled again as sadly as before, and said:

"Well, I see you are determined to make me your devoted friend, by reaching my heart through my vanity. But let me continue. I said that the obstacles in my way were not objections on the part of Philippa's friends—that was her name, Philippa: do not ask me more."

"No," said the boy.

"The barrier was her own nature. I had mistaken it; in the height of my pride I had dreamed that my vision had pierced to the bottom of her nature, to the inmost recesses of her heart: I was mistaken. I had gazed upon the woman, throwing the heiress out of the question; you see I was hopelessly enslaved by the woman before dreaming of the heiress," he added, with a melancholy smile.

Hoffland made no reply.

"Now I come to the end, and I shall not detain you much longer from the moral. I visited her repeatedly. I found more to admire than I expected even—more to be repelled by, however, than my mind had prepared me for. I found this young girl with many noble qualities—but these qualities seemed to me obscured by her eternal consciousness of riches: her suspicion, in itself an unwomanly trait, was intense."

"Oh, sir!" cried the boy, "but surely there is some excuse! Of course," he added, with an effort to control his feelings, "I do not know Miss Philippa, but assuredly a young girl who is cursed with great wealth must discriminate between those who love her for herself and those who come to woo her because she is wealthy. Oh, believe me, it is, it must be very painful to be wealthy, to have to suspect and doubt—to run the hazard of

wounding some noble nature, who may be by chance among the sordid crowd who come to kneel to her because she is an heiress—who would turn their backs upon her were she portionless. Indeed, we should excuse much."

"Yes," said Mowbray, "and you defend the cause of heiresses well. But let me come back to my narrative. The suspicion of this young girl was immense—as her fortune was. That fortune chilled me whenever I thought of it. I did not want it. I could have married her—I had quite enough for both. Heaven decreed that she should be wealthy, however—that the glitter of gold should blind her heart—that she should suspect my motives. Do not understand me to say that she placed any value upon that wealth herself. No; I believe she despised, almost regretted it: but still, who can tell? At least I love her too much still to hazard what may be unjust—ah! the cinder is not cold."

And Mowbray's head drooped. They walked on in silence.

"Well, well," he continued at length, "I saw her often. I could not strangle my feelings. I loved her—in spite of her wealth—not on account of it. But gradually my sentiment moderated: like a whip of scorpions, this suspicion she felt struck me, wounding my heart and inflaming my pride. I tried to stay away; I dragged through life for a week without seeing her; then, impelled by a violent impulse, I went to her again, armed with an impassible pride, and determined to converse upon the most indifferent subjects—to test her nature fully, and—to make the test complete—bend all the energies of my mind to the task of weighing her words, her looks, her tones, that I might make a final decision. Well, she almost distinctly intimated, fifteen minutes after our interview commenced, that I was a fortune-hunter whom she regarded with a mixture of amusement and contempt."

"Oh, sir! could it have been that you——"

The boy stopped.

"How unhappy she must be—to have to suspect such noble natures as your own," he added in a low voice.

Mowbray turned away his head; then by a powerful effort went on.

"You shall judge, Charles," he said in a voice which he mastered only by a struggle; "you shall say whether I am correct in my opinion of her thoughts. She asked me plainly if I was poor; to which question I replied with a single word—'Very.' Next, did I hope to become rich! I did hope so. Her advice then was, she said, that I should marry some heiress, since that was a surer and more rapid means than law or politics. She said it very satirically, and with a glance which killed my love——"

"Oh, sir!" the boy murmured.

"Yes; and though I was calm, my face not paler, I believe, than usual, I was led to say what I bitterly regret—not because it was untrue, for it was not, rather was it profoundly true—but because it might have been misunderstood. It was disgraceful to marry for mere wealth, I said; and I added, 'too expensive'—since unhappiness at any price was dear. I added that money would never purchase my own heart—school-boy fashion, you perceive; and then I left her—never to return."

A long silence followed these words. Mowbray then added calmly:

"You deduce from this narrative, Charles, one lesson. Never give your affections to a woman suddenly; never make a young girl whom you do not know the queen of your heart—the fountain of your illusions and your dreams. The waking will be unpleasant; pray Heaven you may never wake as I have with a mind which is becoming sour—a heart which is learning to distrust whatever is most fair in human nature. Let us dismiss the subject now. I am glad I felt this impulse to open my heart to you, a stranger, though a friend. We often whisper into a strange ear what our closest friends would ask in vain. See, there is his Excellency's chariot with its six white horses, and look what a graceful bow he makes us!"

Mowbray walked on without betraying the least evidence of emotion. He seemed perfectly calm.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XI.

HOW HOFFLAND FOUND THAT HE HAD LEFT HIS KEY BEHIND.

They entered the town in silence, and both of the young men seemed busy with their thoughts. Mowbray's face wore its habitual expression of collected calmness; as to Hoffland, he was smiling.

Mowbray at last raised his head, and chasing away his thoughts by a strong effort, said to his companion:

"You have no dormitory yet, I believe—I mean, that you are not domiciled at the college. Can I assist you?"

"Oh, thank you; but I am lodged in town."

"Ah?"

"Yes; Doctor Small procured permission for me."

"Where is your room, Charles?—I shall come and see you."

"Just down there, somewhere," said Hoffland dubiously.

"On Gloucester street?"

"No; just around there," replied the student, pointing in the direction of the college.

"Well," said Mowbray, "we shall pass it on our way, and I will go up and see if you are comfortably fixed. I may be able to give you some advice—I am an old member of the commissary department.

"Oh, thank you," said Hoffland quickly; "but I believe every thing is very well arranged."

"Can you judge?" smiled Mowbray.

"Yes, indeed," Hoffland said, turning away his head and laughing; "better than you can, perhaps."

"I doubt it."

"You grown lords of the creation fancy you know so much!" said Hoffland.

Mowbray caught the merry contagion, and smiling, said:

"Nevertheless, I insist upon going to see if my new brother Charles is comfortably established."

Hoffland bit his lip.

"This is the place, is it not?" asked Mowbray.

Hoffland hesitated for a moment, and then replied with an embarrassed tone:

"Yes—but—let us go on."

"No," Mowbray said, "I am very obstinate; and as Lucy will not expect me now until tea-time, I am determined to devote half an hour to spying out your land. Come, lead the way!"

Hoffland wrung his hands with a nettled look, which made him resemble a child deprived of its plaything.

"But—" he said.

"Come—you pique my curiosity; go on, Charles."

A sudden smile illumined the boy's face.

"Well," he said, "if you insist, so be it."

And he led the way up a staircase which commenced just within the open door of the house. The lodging of Sir Asinus was in one of those buildings let out to students; this seemed more private—Hoffland alone dwelt here.

The student searched his pockets one after the other.

"Oh me!" he cried, "could I have left my key at the college?"

"Careless!" said Mowbray, with a smile.

"I think I am very unfortunate."

"Well, then, my domiciliary visit is rendered impossible. Come, Charles, another time!"

And Mowbray descended, followed by the triumphant Hoffland, who, whatever his motive might be, seemed to rejoice in the accident, or the success of his ruse, whichever the reader pleases.

"Come! I am just going to see Warner Lewis a moment," said Mowbray, "and then I shall return to the 'Raleigh Tavern,' get my horse, and go to Roseland——"

"Roseland! Is that your sister's home?"

"Yes, we live there—no one but Lucy and myself; that is to say, except one single servant reserved from the estate."

"Roseville?" murmured Hoffland; "I think I have passed it."

"Very probably; it is just yonder, beyond the woods—a cottage embosomed in trees, and with myriads of roses around it, which Lucy takes great pleasure in cultivating."

"I think I should like to know your sister," said Hoffland.

"Why, nothing is easier: come with me this evening."

"This evening?"

"Why not?"

"How could I?" laughed Hoffland; "your house is so small, that without some warning I should probably incommode you."

"Oh, not at all—we have a very good room for you. You know in Virginia we always keep the 'guest's chamber,' however poor we are."

"Hum!" said Hoffland.

"Come!" said Mowbray.

Hoffland began to laugh.

"How could I go?" he asked.

"Why, ride."

"Ride?"

"Certainly."

"In what manner, pray?"

"On horseback," said Mowbray; "I can easily procure you a horse."

Hoffland turned his head aside to conceal his laughter.

"No, I thank you," he said.

"You refuse?"

"Point-blank."

Mowbray looked at him.

"You are a strange person, Charles," he said; "you seem half man, half child—I might almost say half girl."

"Oh, Ernest, to hurt my feelings so!" said the boy, turning away his face.

Mowbray found himself reflecting that he had uttered a very unkind speech.

"I only meant that there was a singular mixture of character and playfulness in you, Charles," he said; "you are as changeable as the wind—and quite as pleasant to my weary brow," he added, with a smile; "you smooth its wrinkles."

"I'm very glad I do," said Hoffland; "but do not again utter such unfeeling words—*I* like a girl!"

"No, I will not—pray pardon me," replied Mowbray.

Hoffland's lip was puckered up, until it resembled a rose-leaf rumpled by the finger of a school-girl.

"Then there is another objection to my going out this evening, Ernest," he said: "you see I return to the subject."

"What objection?"

"You ought to tell your sister what a fascinating young man I am, and put her upon her guard——"

"Charles!" cried Mowbray, with a strong disposition to laugh; "you must pardon my saying that your vanity is the most amusing I have ever encountered."

"Is it!" asked Hoffland, smiling; "but come, don't you think me fascinating?"

"Upon my word," said Mowbray, "were I to utter the exact truth, I should say yes; for I have never yet found myself so completely conciliated by a stranger. Just consider that we have not known each other a week yet ——"

"But four days!" laughed Hoffland; "be accurate!"

"Well, that makes it all the stronger: we have known each other but four days, and here we are jesting with every word—'Charles' here, 'Ernest' there—as though we had been acquainted twenty years."

"Such an acquaintance might be possible for you—it is not for me," Hoffland said, laughing; "but I find you

very generous. You have not added the strongest evidence of my wayward familiarity—that I advised you to put your sister on her guard against my fascinations. Let her take care! Else shall she be a love-sick girl—the most amusing spectacle, I think, in all the world!"

With which words Hoffland laughed so merrily and with such a musical, ringing, contagious joy, that Mowbray's feeling of pique at this unceremonious allusion to his sister passed away completely, and he could not utter a word.

They passed on thus to the college, conversing about a thousand things; and Mowbray saw with the greatest surprise that his companion possessed a mind of remarkable clearness and justness. His comments upon every subject were characterized by a laughing satire which played around men and things like summer lightning, and by the time they had reached Lord Botetourt's statue, Mowbray was completely silent. He listened.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XII.

HOW HOFFLAND CAUGHT A TARTAR IN THE PERSON OF MISS LUCY'S LOVER.

The day was not to end as quietly as Mowbray dreamed, and we shall now proceed to relate the incidents which followed this conversation.

Upon the smooth-shaven lawn, at various distances from each other, were stretched parties of students, who either bent their brows over volumes of Greek or Latin—or interchanged merry conversation, which passed around like an elastic ball—or leaning their heads upon overturned chairs, suffered to curl upward from their lazy lips white wreaths of smoke which turned to floods of gold in the red sunset, while the calm pipe-holders dreamed of that last minuet and the blue eyes shrining it in memory, then of the reel through which she darted with such joyous sparkling eyes and rosy cheeks—and so went on and dreamed and sighed, then sighed and dreamed again. We are compelled to add that the devotees of conversation and the dreamers outnumbered the delvers into Greek and Latin, to a really deplorable degree.

It is so difficult to study out upon the grass which May has filled with flowers—so very easy to lie there and idly talk or dream!

Through these groups Mowbray and his friend took their way, noticed only with a careless glance by the studious portion when their shadows fell upon the open volumes—not at all by the talkers—and scarcely more by the dreamers, who lazily moved their heads as smokers only can—with a silent protest, that is to say, at having their reveries disturbed, and being compelled to take such enormous trouble and exertion.

As Mowbray was about to ascend the steps beyond the statue, a young man came down and greeted him familiarly.

Mowbray turned round and said:

"Mr. Denis, are you acquainted with Mr. Hoffland?"

And then the new-comer and the young student courteously saluted each other, smiled politely, and shook hands.

"Stay till I come back, Charles," said Mowbray; "you and Denis can chat under the tree yonder—and he will tell you whether Roseland can accommodate a guest. He has staid with me more than once."

With which words Mowbray passed on.

Hoffland looked at his companion; and a single glance told him all he wished to know. Jack Denis—for he was scarcely known by any other name—was an open-hearted, honest, straight-forward young fellow of twenty, with light-brown hair, frank eyes, and a cordial bearing which at once put every body at their ease. Still there was a latent flash in the eye which denoted an excitable temper—not seldom united, as the reader must have observed, with such a character.

The young men strolled across to the tree which Mowbray had indicated, and sat down on a wicker seat which was placed at its foot.

"Mr. Mowbray said you could tell me about Roseland," Hoffland said, raising his dark eyes as was his habit beneath his low-drooping hat; "I am sure it is a pretty place from his description—is it not?"

"Oh, beautiful!" said Denis warmly; "you should go and see it."

"I think I will."

"It is not far, and indeed is scarcely half an hour's ride from town—there to the west."

"Yes; and Miss Lucy is very pretty, is she not?"

Denis colored slightly, and replied:

"I think so."

Hoffland with his quick eye discerned the slight color, and said somewhat maliciously:

"You know her very well, do you not?"

"Why, tolerably," said Denis.

"I must make her acquaintance," continued Hoffland, "for I am sure from Mowbray's description of her she is a gem. He invited me to come this evening."

"You refused?"

"Yes."

"You should not have done so, sir: Mowbray is not prodigal of such invitations."

Hoffland laughed.

"But I had a reason," he said mischievously.

"What, pray—if I may ask?"

"Oh, certainly, you may ask," Hoffland replied, smiling; "though it may appear very vain to you—my reason."

"Hum!" said Denis, not knowing what to think of his new acquaintance, whose quizzing manner, to use the technical word, did not please him.

"I told Mowbray very frankly, however, why I could not come this evening," pursued Hoffland, with the air of one child teasing another; "and I think he appreciated my reason. I was afraid on Miss Lucy's account."

"Afraid!"

"Yes."

"On Lucy's account!"

"On *Miss* Lucy's account," said Hoffland, emphasizing the "Miss."

"Oh, well, sir," said Denis, with a slight air of coldness; "I don't deny that I was wrong in so speaking of a lady, but I don't see that *you* had the right to correct me."

"Why, Mr. Denis," said Hoffland smiling, "you take my little speeches too seriously."

"No, sir; and if I showed some hastiness of temper, excuse me—I believe it is my failing."

"Oh, really now! no apologies," said Hoffland laughing; "I am not aware that you were out of temper—though that is not an unusual thing with men. And now, having settled the question of the proper manner to address or speak of Miss Lucy, I will go on and tell you—as you seemed interested—why I did not feel myself at liberty to accept Mr. Mowbray's invitation—or Ernest's: I call him Ernest, and he calls me Charles."

"You seem to be well acquainted with him," said Denis.

"Oh, we are sworn friends!—of four days' standing."

Denis looked at his companion with great curiosity.

"Mowbray—the most reserved of men in friendship!" he muttered.

"Ah," replied Hoffland, whose quick ear caught these words; "but I am not a common person, Mr. Denis. Remember that."

"Indeed?" said Denis, again betraying some coolness at his companion's satirical manner: his manner alone was satirical—the words, as we may perceive, were scarcely so.

"Yes," continued Hoffland, "and I am an exception to all general rules—just as Crichton was."

"Crichton?"

"Yes; the admirable Crichton."

And having uttered this conceited sentence with a delightful little toss of the head, Hoffland laughed.

Denis merely inclined his head coldly. He was becoming more and more averse to this companion every moment.

"But we were speaking of Roseland, and my reasons for not accepting Mowbray's invitation," pursued

Hoffland, smiling; "the reason may surprise you."

"Possibly, if you will tell me what it is," said Denis.

"Why, it is the simplest thing in the world. I come from the mountains, you know."

"No, I did not know it before, sir," replied Denis.

"Well, such at least is the fact. Now, in the mountains, you know, the girls are prettier, and the men handsomer."

"I know nothing of the sort," replied Denis coldly.

"Very well," Hoffland replied; "as I have just said, such is nevertheless the fact."

"Indeed, sir?"

"Certainly. Now I am a fair specimen of the mountain men."

Denis looked at his companion with an expression of contempt which he could not repress. Hoffland did not appear to observe it, but went on in the same quizzing tone—for we can find no other word—which he had preserved from the commencement of the interview.

"Feeling that Miss Lucy had probably not seen any one like myself," he said, "I was naturally anxious that her brother should prepare her."

"Mr. Hoffland!"

"Sir?"

"Nothing, sir!"

And Denis choked down his rising anger. Hoffland did not observe it, but continued as coolly as ever:

"You know how much curiosity the fair sex have," he said, "and my plan was for Mowbray to describe me beforehand to his sister—as I know he will."

"Pardon me, sir," said Denis coldly; "but I do not perceive your drift. Doubtless it arises from my stupidity, but such is the fact, to use your favorite expression."

"Why, it is much plainer than any pikestaff," Hoffland replied, laughing; "listen, and I will explain. Mowbray will return home this evening, and after tea he will say to his sister, 'I have a new friend at college, Lucy—the handsomest, brightest, most amiable and fascinating youth I ever saw.' You see he will call me a 'youth;' possibly this may excite Miss Lucy's curiosity, and she will ask more about me; and then Mowbray will of course expatiate on my various and exalted merits, as every warm-hearted man does when he speaks of his friends. Then Miss Lucy will imagine for herself a *beau ideal* of grace, elegance, beauty, intelligence and wit, far more than human. She will fall in love with it—and then, when she is hopelessly entangled in this passion for the creation of her fancy, I will make my appearance. Do you not understand now, sir?"

Denis frowned and muttered a reply which it had been well for Hoffland to have heard.

"I think it very plain," continued the young man; "with all those graces of mind and person which a kind Providence has bestowed upon me, I still feel that I could expect nothing but defeat, contending with the ideal of a young girl's heart. Oh, sir, you can't imagine how fanciful they are—believe me, women very seldom fall in love with real men: it is the image of their dreams which they sigh over and long to meet. This is all that they really love."

"Ah?" said Denis, in a freezing tone.

"Yes," Hoffland said; "and applying this reasoning to the present subject, you cannot fail to understand my motives for refusing Mowbray's kind invitation. Once in love with my shadow, Lucy will not fall in love with me. To tell you the truth, I could not afford to have her——"

"Mr. Hoffland!"

"Why, Mr. Denis—did any thing hurt you? Perhaps——"

"It was nothing, sir!" said Denis, with a flushed face.

"Well, to conclude," said Hoffland; "I could not accept Lucy's love were she to offer it to me, and for this reason I have staid away. I am myself fettered by another object; I could not marry her were she to fall sick for love of me, and beg me on her knees to accept her hand and heart—I really could not!"

Denis rose as if on springs.

"Mr. Hoffland!" he said, "you have basely insulted a young girl whom I love—the sister of my friend—the best and purest girl in the world. By Heaven, sir! you shall answer this! But for your delicate appearance, sir, I would personally chastise you on the spot! But you do not escape me, sir! Hold yourself in readiness to receive a challenge from me to-morrow morning, sir!"

"Mr. Denis!" murmured Hoffland, suddenly turning pale and trembling from head to foot.

"Refuse it, and I will publish you as a coward!" cried Denis, in a towering rage; "a poltroon who has insulted a lady and refused to hold himself responsible!"

With which words Denis tossed away; and passing through the crowd of students, who, hearing angry voices, had risen to their feet, he entered the college.

Hoffland stood trembling and totally unable to reply to the questions addressed to him by the crowd. Suddenly he felt a hand upon his shoulder; and raising his eyes he saw Mowbray.

He uttered a long sigh of relief; and drawing his hat over his eyes, apparently to conceal his paleness and agitation, took his friend's arm and dragged him away.

"What in the world is all this about?" asked Mowbray.

"Oh!" said Hoffland, trying to smile, but failing lamentably, "Mr. Denis is going to kill me!"

And Mowbray felt that the hand upon his arm was trembling.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XIII.

HOFFLAND MAKES HIS WILL.

When they had reached the open street, and the crowd of curious students were no longer visible, Hoffland, growing gradually calmer, and with faint smiles, related to his companion what had just occurred; that is to say, in general terms—rather in substance, it must be confessed, than in detail. Mr. Denis and himself, he said, had at first commenced conversing in a very friendly manner, the conversation had then grown animated, and Mr. Denis had become somewhat excited; then, at the conclusion of one of his (Hoffland's) observations, he had declared himself deeply offended, and farther, announced his intention of dispatching a mortal defiance to him on the ensuing morning.

Mowbray in vain endeavored to arrive at the particulars of the affair. Hoffland obstinately evaded detailing the cause of the quarrel.

"Well, Charles," said Mowbray, "you are certainly unlucky—to quarrel so quickly at college; but——"

"Was it my fault?" replied the boy, in a reproachful tone.

"I don't know; your relation is so general, you descend so little to particulars, that I have not been able to form an opinion of the amount of blame which attaches to each."

"Blame!" said Hoffland. "Oh, Ernest! you are not a true friend."

"Why, Charles?"

"You do not espouse my part."

Mowbray uttered a sigh of dissatisfaction.

"Do you know," he said, "that my place is rather yonder, as the friend and adviser of Denis?"

"Well, sir," said Hoffland, in a hurt tone, "as you please."

Mowbray said calmly:

"No, I will not embrace your advice; I will not leave you, a mere youth, alone, to go and range myself on the side of Denis, though we have been intimate friends for years. He has numbers of acquaintances and friends; you could count yours upon the fingers of one hand."

"On the little finger of one hand, say," Hoffland replied, regaining his good humor.

"Well," Mowbray said calmly, "then there is all the more reason for my espousing your cause—since you hint that I am the little finger."

"No, I will promote you," Hoffland answered, smiling; "you shall have this finger, one rank above the little finger, you see."

And he held up his left hand, touching the third finger.

Then the boy turned away and laughed as merrily and carelessly as before the disagreeable events of the evening.

Mowbray looked at him with a faint smile.

"Youth, youth!" he murmured; "youth, so full of joy and lightness—so careless and gay-hearted! Here is a man—or a child—who in twenty-four hours may be lying cold in death yonder, and he smiles and even laughs. Hoffland," he added, "let us cease our discussions in relation to the origin of this unhappy affair, and endeavor to decide upon the course to be pursued. With myself the matter stands thus: I have known Denis for years; he is one of my best friends; no one loves me more, I think——"

"Except one," said Hoffland, laughing.

"My dear Charles," said Mowbray seriously, "let us speak gravely. This affair is serious, since it involves two lives—especially serious to me, since it involves the life of a friend of many years' standing, and no less the life of one I have promised to assist, advise, and guide—yourself."

"Oh," said Hoffland, with a hurt expression, "you call Mr. Denis your friend, while I—I am only 'one you have promised to advise.' Ernest, that is cruel; you have not learned yet how sensitive I am!"

And Hoffland turned away.

"Really, I am dealing with a child," murmured Mowbray; "let me summon all my patience."

And he said aloud:

"My dear Hoffland, I am not one of those men who make violent protestations and feel sudden and excessive friendships. Friendship, with me, is a tree of slow growth; and I even now wonder at the position you have been able to take in my regard, upon such a slight acquaintance. There is a frank word—all words between friends should be frank. There, I call you my friend—you are such: does that please you?"

"Oh, very much," said Hoffland, smiling and banishing his sad expression instantly; "I know you are the noblest and most sincere of men."

And the boy held out to his companion a small hand, which returned the pressure of Mowbray's slightly, and was then quietly withdrawn.

"Well, now," said Mowbray, "let us come back to this affair. Denis will send you a challenge?"

"He says so."

"Well; then he will keep his promise."

"Or course he will act as a man of honor throughout," said Hoffland, laughing; "I am sure of that, because he is your friend."

"Pray drop these polite speeches, and let us talk plainly."

"Very well, Ernest; but Denis is a good fellow, eh?" asked Hoffland, smiling.

"Yes."

"Brave?"

"Wholly fearless."

"A good swordsman!"

"Very."

"And with the pistol?" asked Hoffland, laughing.

"The best shot in college," returned Mowbray, pleased in spite of himself at finding his companion so calm and smiling.

Hoffland placed his thumb absently upon his chin—leaned upon it, and after a moment's reflection said in a business tone:

"I think I'll choose swords."

"You fence?"

"I? Why, my dear Ernest, have you never seen me with a foil in my hand?"

"Never."

"Indeed? Well, I fence like the admirable Crichton himself. It was some allusion to that celebrated gentleman, in connection with myself, by the by, which excited Mr. Denis's anger."

"How, pray?"

"Well, well, it would embarrass me to explain. Let us dismiss Mr. Crichton. My mind is made up—I choose short-swords, for I was always afraid of pistols."

Mowbray looked with curiosity at his companion.

"Afraid?" he said.

"Yes, indeed," replied Hoffland; "you will not believe me, but I never could fire a pistol or a gun without shutting my eyes, and dropping it when it went off!"

With which words Hoffland burst into laughter.

Mowbray saw that it would be necessary to check the mercurial humor of his companion. He therefore suppressed the smile which rose unconsciously to his lips when Hoffland laughed so merrily, and said gravely:

"Charles, are you prepared for a mortal duel?"

"Perfectly," said Hoffland, with great simplicity.

"Have you made your will?"

"My will! Fie, Mr. Lawyer! Why, I am a minor."

"Minors make wills," said Mowbray; "and I advise you, if you are determined to encounter Mr. Denis, to make your will, and put in writing whatever you wish done."

"But what have I to leave to any one?" said Hoffland, affecting annoyance. "Ah, yes!" he added, "I am richer than I supposed. Well, now, this terrible affair may take place before I can make my arrangements; so I will, with your permission, make a nuncupative will—I believe *nuncupative* is the word, but I am not sure."

Mowbray sighed; he found himself powerless before this incorrigible light-heartedness, and had not the resolution to check it. He began to reflect wistfully upon the future: he already saw that boyish face pale and bloody, but still smiling—that slender figure stretched upon the earth—a mere boy, dead before his prime.

Hoffland went on, no longer laughing, but uttering sighs, and affecting sudden and profound emotion.

"This is a serious thing, Ernest," he said; "when a man thinks of his will, he stops laughing. I beg therefore that you will not laugh, nor interrupt me, while I dispose of the trifling property of which I am possessed."

Mowbray sighed.

Hoffland echoed this sigh, and went on:

"First: As I have no family, and may confine my bequests wholly to my present dear companions, acquaintances, and friends—first, I leave my various suits of apparel, which may be found at my lodgings, to my dear companions aforesaid; begging that they may be distributed after the following fashion. To the student who is observed to shed the most tears when he receives the intelligence of my unhappy decease, I give my suit of silver velvet, with chased gold buttons, and silk embroidery. The cocked hat and feather, rosetted shoes with diamond buckles, and the flowered satin waistcoat, go with this. Also six laced pocket-handkerchiefs, which I request my dear tender-hearted friend to use on all occasions when he thinks of me, to dry his eyes with.

"*Item:* My fine unit of Mecklenburg silk, with silver buttons, I give to the friend who expresses in words the most poignant regret. I hold that tears are more genuine than words, for which reason the best weeper has been preferred, and so has received the velvet suit. Nevertheless, the loudest lamenter is not unworthy; and so I repeat that he shall have the silk suit. If there be none who weep or lament me, I direct that these two suits shall be given to the janitor of the college, the old negro Fairfax, whose duty ever thereafter shall be to praise and lament me.

"Second: I give my twelve other suits of various descriptions, more or less rich, to the members of the 'Anti-Stamp-Act League,' of which I am a member. This with my love; and I request that, whenever they speak of me, they may say, 'Hoffland, our lamented, deceased brother, was a man of expanded political ideas, and a true friend of liberty.'

"Third: I give all my swords, pistols, guns, carbines, short swords, broad swords, poniards, and spurs, to my friend Mr. Denis, who has had the misfortune to kill me. It is my request that he will not lament me, or feel any pangs of conscience. So far from dying with the thought that he has been unjust to me, I declare that his conduct has been worthy of the Chevalier Bayard; and I desire that the above implements of war may be used to exterminate even the whole world, should they give him like cause of quarrel.

"Fourth: I give my books to those I am most intimately acquainted with:—my Elzevir Horace to T. Randolph—he will find translations of the best odes upon the fly leaves, much better than any he could make; my Greek books, the Iliad, Græca Minora, Herodotus, etc., which are almost entirely free from dog-ears and thumb-marks, as I have never opened them, I give to L. Burwell, requesting that he will thenceforth apply himself to Greek in earnest. My Hebrew books I give to Fairfax, the janitor, as he is the only one in the college who will not pretend to understand them; thus, much deception will be warded off and prevented.

"Fifth: I give and bequeath to the gentleman who passed us this afternoon on horseback, and who is plainly deep in love with some one—I believe he is known as Mr. Jacques—I bequeath to him my large volume of love-songs in manuscript, begging him to read them for his interest and instruction, and never, under any

circumstances, to copy them upon embossed paper and send them to his lady-love, pretending that they are original, as I have known many forlorn lovers to do before this.

"Sixth: I bequeath to Miss Lucy Mowbray, the sister of my beloved friend, my manuscript 'Essay upon the Art of Squeezing a Lady's Hand;' begging that she will read it attentively, and never suffer her hand to be squeezed in any other manner than that which I have therein pointed out.

"Seventh: I bequeath my 'Essay upon the Hebrew Letter Aleph' to the College of William and Mary, requesting that it shall be disposed of to some scientific body in Europe, for not less than twenty thousand pounds—that sum to be dedicated to the founding of a new professorship—to be called the *Hoffland Professorship* for the instruction of young men going to woo their sweethearts. And the professor shall in all cases be a woman.

"Eighth: Having disposed of my personal, I now come to add a disposition also of my invisible and more valuable property remaining. I bequeath my memory to the three young ladies to whom I am at present engaged—begging them to deal charitably with what I leave to them; and if harsh thoughts ever rise in their hearts, to remember how beautiful they are, and how utterly impossible it was for their poor friend to resist yielding to that triple surpassing loveliness. If this message is distinctly communicated to them, they will not be angry, but ever after revere and love my memory, as that of the truest and most rational of men.

"Ninth: I leave to my executor a lock of my hair, which he shall carry ever after in his bosom—take thence and kiss at least once every day—at the same time murmuring, 'Poor Charles! he loved me very much!'

"Tenth, and last: I bequeath my heart to Mr. Ernest Mowbray. I mean the spiritual portion—my love. And if I should make him my executor, I hereby declare that clause ninth shall apply to him, and be carried out in full; declaring that he may utter the words therein written with a good conscience; and declaring further, that my poverty alone induces me to make him so trifling a bequest as this, in the tenth clause expressed. Moreover, he had full possession of it formerly during my life-time; and, finally, I make him my executor.

"That is all," said Hoffland, laughing and turning away his head; "a capital will, I think!"

Mowbray shook his head.

"I have listened to your jesting in silence, Charles," he said, "because I thought it best to let your merry mood expend itself——"

"I was never graver in my life!"

"Then you were never grave at all. Now let us seriously consult about this unhappy affair. Ah, duelling, duelling! how wicked, childish, illogical, despotic, bloody, and at the same time ludicrous it is! Come, you have lost your key, you say—we cannot go to your lodgings: let us find a room in the 'Raleigh,' and arrange this most unhappy affair. Come."

And, followed by Hoffland, Mowbray took his way sadly toward the "Raleigh."(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XIV.

HOSTILE CORRESPONDENCE.

We regard it as a very fortunate circumstance that the manuscript record of what followed, or did not follow, the events just related, has been faithfully preserved. A simple transcription of the papers will do away with the necessity of relating the particulars in detail; and so we hasten to present the reader with the correspondence, prefacing it with the observation that the affair kept the town or city of Williamsburg in a state of great suspense for two whole days.

I.

"Mr. Hoffland:

"You insulted a lady in my presence yesterday evening, and I demand from you a retraction of all that you uttered. I am not skilled in writing, but you will understand me. The friend who bears this will bring your answer.

I am your obed't serv't,
"J. Denis."

II.

"Mr. Denis:

"For you know you begin 'Mr. Hoffland!' as if you said, 'Stand and deliver!'—I have read your note, and I am sure I shan't be able to write half as well. I am so young that, unfortunately, I have never had an *affair*, which

is a great pity, for I would then know how to write beautiful long sentences that no one could possibly fail to understand.

"You demand a retraction, your note says. I don't like 'demand'—it's such an ugly word, you know; and if you change the letters slightly, it makes a very bad, shocking word, such as is used by profane young men. Then 'retraction' is so hard. For you know I said I was handsome: must I take back that? Then I said that I could not marry the lady we quarrelled about: must I say I can? I can't tell a story, and I assure you on my honor—yes, Mr. Denis! on my sacred word of honor as a gentleman!—that I cannot marry Lucy!

"You see I can't take it back, and if you were to eat me up I couldn't say I didn't say it.

"To think how angry you were!

"In haste,
"CHARLES HOFFLAND."

III.

"MR. HOFFLAND:

"Your note is not satisfactory at all. I did not quarrel with your opinion of yourself, and you know it. I was not foolish enough to be angry at your declaring that you were engaged to some lady already. You spoke of a lady who is my friend, and what you said was insulting.

"I say again that I am not satisfied.

"Your obed't serv't,
"J. DENIS."

IV.

"MR. DENIS:

"Stop!—I didn't say I was engaged to any lady: no misunderstanding.

"Yours always,
"CHARLES HOFFLAND."

V.

"MR. HOFFLAND:

"I do not understand your note. You evade my request for an explanation. I think, therefore, that the shortest way will be to end the matter at once.

"The friend who brings you this will make all the arrangements.

"I have the honor to be,
"J. DENIS."

VI.

"Oh, Mr. Denis, to shoot me in cold blood! Well, never mind! Of course it's a challenge. But who in the world will be *my* 'friend'? Please advise me. You know Ernest ought not to—decidedly. He likes you, and you seemed to like Miss Lucy, who must be a very sweet girl as she is Ernest's sister. Therefore, as I have no other friend but Ernest, I should think we might arrange the whole affair without troubling him. I have been talking with some people, and they say I have 'the choice of weapons'—because you challenged me, you know. I would rather fight with a sword, I think, than be shot, but I think we had better have pistols. I therefore suggest pistols, and I have been reading all about fighting, and can lay down the rules.

"1. The pistols shall be held by the principals with the muzzles down, not more than six inches from the right toe—pointing that way, I mean.

"2. The word shall be 'Fire! One, Two, Three!' and if either fire before 'one' or after 'three,' he shall be immediately killed. For you know it would be murder, and ours is a gentlemanly affair of honor.

"3. The survivor, if he is a bachelor, shall marry the wife of the one who falls. You are a bachelor, I believe, and so am I: thus this will not be very hard, and for my part I'm very glad; I shouldn't like to marry a disconsolate widow. I think we could fight on the college green, and Dr. Small might have a chair placed for him under the big tree to look on from—near his door, you know.

"I have the honor to be,
"Yours truly,
"CHARLES HOFFLAND.

VII.

"MR. HOFFLAND:

"Your note is very strange. You ask me to advise you whom to take as your second; and then you lay down rules which I never heard of before. I suppose a gentleman can right his grievances without having to fight first and marry afterwards. What you write is so much like joking, that I don't know what to make of it. You seem to be very young and inexperienced, sir, and you say you have no friend but Mowbray.

"I'm obliged to you for your delicacy about Mowbray, but I cannot take it upon myself to advise any one else.—I hardly know how to write to you, for the whole thing seems a joke to you. If you were jesting in what you said, say so, sir, and we can shake hands. I don't want to take your blood for a joke, and especially as you are a stranger here.

"Your obed't serv't,
"J. DENIS."

VIII.

"Joking, my dear fellow? Of course I was joking! Did you think I really was in earnest when I said that I was so handsome, and was engaged already, et cetera, and so forth, as one of my friends used to say? I was jesting! For on my sacred word of honor, I am not engaged to any one—and yet I could not marry Lucy. I am wedded already—to my own ideas! I am not my own master—and yet I have no mistress!

"But I ought not to be tiring you in this way. Why didn't you ask me if I was joking at first? Of course I was! I was laughing all the time and teasing you. It's enough to make me die a-laughing to think we were going to murder each other for joking. I was plaguing you! for I saw at once from what you said that you were hopelessly in——well, well! I won't tell your secrets.

"Yours truly,
"CHARLES HOFFLAND."

IX.

"MR. HOFFLAND:

"I am very glad you were joking, and I am glad you have said so with manly courtesy—though I am at a loss to understand why you wished to 'tease' me. But I don't take offence, and am sure the whole matter was a jest. I hope you will not jest with me any more upon such a subject—I am very hasty; and my experience has told me that most men that fall in duels, are killed for this very jesting.

"As to what you say about my admiring Miss Mowbray, it is true in some degree, and I am not offended. As far as my part goes, we are as good friends as ever.

"Yours truly,
"J. DENIS."

X.

"DEAR JACK:

"Your apology is perfectly satisfactory.—But I forgot! I made the apology myself! Well, it's all the same, and I am glad we haven't killed each other—for then, you know, we would have been dead now.

"Come round this evening to my lodging—one corner from Gloucester street, by the college, you know—and we'll empty a jolly bottle, get up a game of ombre with Mowbray, and make a night of it. Oh! I forgot!—my key has disappeared: I don't see it any where, and so, to my great regret, your visit must be deferred. What a pity!

"We shall meet this evening, when we shall embrace each other—figuratively—and pledge everlasting friendship.

"Devotedly till death,
"CHARLES HOFFLAND."

Thus was the great affair which agitated all Williamsburg for more than forty-eight hours arranged to the perfect satisfaction of all parties: though we must except that large and influential body the quidnuncs, who, as every body knows, are never satisfied with any thing which comes to an end without a catastrophe. The correspondence, as we have seen, had been confined to the principals, and the only public announcement was to the effect that "both gentlemen were satisfied"—which we regard as a very gratifying circumstance.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XV.

SENTIMENTS OF A DISAPPOINTED LOVER ON THE SUBJECT OF WOMEN.

Hoffland had just met and made friends with Jack Denis—"embraced him figuratively," to use his expression; and he and Mowbray were walking down Gloucester street, inhaling the pleasant air of the fine morning joyously.

Hoffland was smiling as usual. Mowbray's countenance wore its habitual expression of collected calmness—his clear eye as usual betrayed no emotion of any description.

"I feel better than if I was dead," said Hoffland, laughing, "and I know *you* are glad, Ernest, that I am still alive."

"Sincerely," said Mowbray, smiling.

"Wasn't it a good idea of mine to carry on all the correspondence?"

"Yes; the result proves it in this instance. I thought that I could arrange the unhappy affair, but I believe you were right in taking it out of my hands—or rather, in never delivering it to me. Well, I am delighted that it is over. I could ill spare you or Denis; and God forbid that you should ever fall victims to this barbarous child's play, duelling."

"Ah! my dear fellow," replied Hoffland, "we men must have some tribunal above the courts of law; and then you know the women dote upon a duellist.

"Yes, Hoffland, as they dote upon an interesting monstrosity—the worse portion. Women admire courage, because it is the quality they lack—I mean animal courage, the mere faculty of looking into a pistol-muzzle calmly; and their admiration is so great that they are carried away by it. They admire in the same way a gay wild fellow; they do not dislike even a 'poor fellow—ah! very dissipated!' and this arises from the fact that they admire decided 'character' of any description, more than the want of character—even when the possesser of *character* is led into vice by it."

"A great injustice!—a deep injustice!" said Hoffland "I wonder how you can say so!"

"I can say so because I believe it to be true—nay, I know it."

"Conceited!—you know women indeed!"

"Not even remotely; but listen. I was about to add that women admire reckless courage and excessive animal spirits. But let that courage lead a man to shed another's blood for a jest, or let that animal spirit draw a man into degrading and bestial advice—presto! they leave him!"

"And they are right!"

"Certainly."

"Well, sir?"

"But they are not the less wrong at first: the importance they attach to courage leads many boys and young men into murderous affrays—just as their satirical comments upon 'milky dispositions' lead thousands into vice."

"Oh, Ernest!"

"Do you deny it?"

"Wholly."

"Well, that only proves to me once more that you know nothing of women."

"Do you think so?" said Hoffland, smiling.

"Yes: what I have said is the tritest truth. That women admire these qualities excessively, and that men, especially young men, shape their conduct by this feminine feeling, is as true as that sunlight."

"I deny it."

"Very well; that proves further, Charles, that you have not observed and studied much."

"Have you?"

"Extensively."

"And you are a great master in the wiles of women by this time, I suppose," said Hoffland satirically.

"No, you misunderstand me," replied Mowbray, without observing the boy's smile. "I never shall pretend to

understand women; but I can use my eyes, and I can read the open page before me."

"The open page? What do you mean?"

"I mean that the history of the modern world, the social history, has a great key-note—is a maze unless you keep constantly in view the existence of this element—women."

"I should say it was: we could not well get on without them."

"The middle age originated the present deification of woman," continued Mowbray philosophically, "and the old knights left us the legacy. We have long ago discarded for its opposite the scriptural doctrine that the man is not of the woman, but the woman of the man; and we justify ourselves by the strange plea, 'they are so weak.'"

"Well, are they not?"

"Woman weak? Poor Charles! Parliaments, inquisitions, secret tribunals and executioners' axes are straws compared to them. They smile, and man kneels; they weep, and his moral judgment is effaced like a shadow: he is soft clay in their hands. One caress from a girl makes a fool of a giant. Have you read the history of Samson?"

"Vile misogynist!" said Hoffland, "you are really too bad!"

Mowbray smiled sadly.

"Do not understand me to say that we should return to barbarous times, and make the women labor and carry burdens, while we the men lounge in the sun and dream," he said; "not at all. All honor to the middle age! The knight raised up woman, and she made him a reproachless chevalier in return; but it did not end there. He must needs do more—he loved, and love is so strong! Divine love is strongest—he must deify her."

"You are a great student, forsooth!"

"Deny it if you can: but you cannot, Charles. The central idea of the middle age—the age of chivalry—is woman. That word interprets all; it is the open sesame which throws wide the portals. Without it, that whole era is a mere jumble of bewildering anomalies—events without causes—actions without motives. Well, see how truly we are the descendants of those knights. To this day our social god is woman."

"Scoffer!"

"No; what I say is more in sorrow than anger. It will impede our national and spiritual growth, for I declare to you that one hundred years hence, women in my opinion will not be satisfied with this poetic and chivalric homage: they will demand a voice in the government. They will grow bolder, and learn to regard these chivalric concessions to their purity and weakness as their natural rights. Woman's rights!—that will be their watchword."

"And I suppose you would say they have no rights."

"Oh, many. Among others, the right to shape the characters and opinions of their infant children," said Mowbray with a grave smile.

"And no more, sir?"

"Far more; but this discussion is unprofitable. What I mean is simply this, Charles: that the middle age has left us a national idea which is dangerous—the idea that woman should, from her very weakness, rule and direct; especially among us gentlemen who hold by the traditions of the past—who reject Sir Galahad, and cling to Orlando and Amadis—who grow mad and fall down worshipping and kissing the feet of woman—happy even to be spurned by her."

"Really, sir!—but your conversation is very instructive Who, pray, was Sir Galahad?—for I have read Ariosto, and know about Orlando."

"Sir Galahad is that myth of the middle age, Charles, who went about searching for the holy Graal—the cup which our Saviour drank from in his last supper; which Joseph of Arimathea collected his precious blood in. You will understand that I merely repeat the monkish tradition."

"Well, what sort of a knight was this Sir Galahad; and why do you hold him up as superior to Orlando and Amadis?"

"Because he saw the true course, and loved woman as an earthly consoler, did not adore her as a god. Read how he fought and suffered many things for women; see how profoundly he loved them, and smiled whenever they crossed his path; how his whole strength and every thing was woman's. Was she oppressed? Did brute strength band itself against her? His chivalric arm was thrown around her. Was she threatened with shame, or hatred and wrong? His heart, his sword, all were hers, and he would as willingly pour out his blood for her as wander on a sunny morning over flowery fields."

"Well," said Hoffland, "he was a true knight. Have you not finished?"

"By no means. With love for and readiness to protect the weak and oppressed woman—with satisfaction in

her smiles, and rejoicing in the thanks she gave him—the good knight's feelings ended. He would not give her his heart and adore her—he knelt only to his God. He refused to place his arm at her disposal in all things, and so become the tool of her caprice; he would not sell himself for a caress, and hold his hands out to be fettered, when she smiled and offered him an embrace. A child before God, and led by a grand thought, he would not become a child before woman, and be directed by her idle fancies. He was the 'knight of God,' not of woman; and he grasped the prize."

Hoffland listened to these earnest words more thoughtfully.

"Well," he said, "so Sir Galahad is your model—not the mad worshipper of woman, Orlando!"

"A thousand times."

"Ah! we have neither now."

"We have no Galahads, for woman has grown stronger even than in the old days. She would not tolerate a lover who espoused her cause from duty: she wants adoring worship."

"No! no!—only love!" said Hoffland.

"A mistake," said Mowbray; "she does not wish a mere knightly respect and love—that of the real knight; she demands an Amadis, to grow mad for her—to be crazed by her beauty, and kneel down and sell himself for a kiss. She wishes power, and scouts the mere chivalric smile and homage. She claims and exacts the fullest obedience, and her claim is pronounced just. She says to-day—returning to what we commenced with—she says, 'Go and murder that man: he has uttered a jest;' or, 'On penalty of my pity and contempt, make yourself the slave of my caprice, and kill your friend, who has said laughing that I am not an angel.' The unhappy part of all this is," said Mowbray, "that the men, especially young men, obey. And then, when the blood is poured out, the tragedy consummated; when the body which was a breathing man is taken from the bloody grass where it lies like a wounded bird, its heart-blood welling out—when it is home cold and pale before her, and the mother, sister, daughter wail and moan—then the beautiful goddess who has gotten up this little drama for her amusement, finds her false philosophy broken in her breast, her deity overthrown, her supreme resolution crushed in presence of this terrible spectacle; and she wrings her hands, and sobs and cries out at the evil she has done; but cries much louder, that the hearts of men are horrible and bloody; that their instincts are barbarous and terrible; that she alone is tender and soft-hearted and forgiving; that she would never have plunged the sword into the bosom, or sent the ball tearing its way through the heart; that man alone is horrible and cruel and depraved; that she is noble and pure-hearted, true and innocent; that woman is above this miserable humanity—great like Diana of the Ephesians, pure and strong and immaculate—without reproach! That is a tolerably accurate history of most duels," added Mowbray coldly; "you will not deny it."

Hoffland made no reply.

"You will not deny it because it is true," said Mowbray; "it is what every man knows and feels and sees. You think it strange, then, that they act as they do, in this perfect subservience to woman, knowing what I have said is true. It is not more strange than any other ludicrous inconsequence which men are guilty of. Look at me! I know that what I have said is as true as the existence of this earth; and now, what would I do? I will tell you. Were I in love with a woman, I would make myself a child, and adore her, and sell my soul for her caresses; and make my brain the tool of my infatuation by yielding to her false, fatal sophistry, because that sophistry would be uttered by red lips, and would become truth in the dazzling light of her seductive smiles. Do you expect me, because I know it is all a lie, to resist sighs and murmurs, and those languid glances, which women employ to gain their ends? If you wish me to resist them, give me a lump of ice instead of a heart—a freezing stream instead of a warm current in my veins—make me a thinking machine, all brain; but take care how you leave one particle of the man! That particle will fire all; for the age tells me that woman is all pure, all-knowing, all true—how can I go astray? I am not a machine—the atmosphere of that old woman-worshipping world has nourished me, because I breathe it now; and if the woman I loved madly wished a little murder enacted for the benefit of her enemies, why, I cannot, dare not say, I would not go and murder for her, thinking I was serving nothing but the cause of purity and justice."

Hoffland listened to these coldly uttered words with some agitation, but made no reply. They walked on for some moments in silence, and Mowbray then said:

"The discussion is getting too grave, Charles; and I am afraid I have spoken very harshly of women—led away in the discussion of this subject. But remember that most of these unhappy affairs indirectly arise from this fatal philosophy; and I have reason to suppose that the present one, which has so nearly taken from me one or both of my dearest friends, originated indirectly in such a source. Do not understand me as undervaluing the fine old chivalrous devotion to women: the hard task is for me to believe that any devotion to a good and pure woman is exaggerated. They are above us, Charles, in all the finer and nobler traits, and we are responsible for this weakness in them. What wonder if they believed us when we told them that they were more than human, something angelic? Their duty was to listen to us, and act by our judgment; and when we have told them now for ages that our place is at their feet, the hem of their garments for our lips, their smiles brighter than the sunshine of heaven, should we feel surprise at their acquiescing in our *dicta*, and assuming the enormous social influence which we yield to them, beg them upon our knees to take? For my part, I rejoice that man has not a power as unlimited; and if one sex must rule, spite of every thing, I am almost ready to give up to the women. They go right oftener; and if this tyranny must really exist, I know not that Providence has not mercifully placed the sceptre in her hands. See where all my great philosophy ends—I can't help loving while I speak against them. The sneer upon my lips turns to a smile—my indignation to

good-humor. Oh, Charles! Charles! right or wrong, they rule us; and if we must have sexual tyranny, it is best in the hands of mothers. But rather let us have no tyranny at all: let the man take his place as lord without, the woman her sovereignty over the inner world. Let her grace perfect his strength; her bosom hold his rude head and dusty brow; let her heart crown his intellect—each fill the void in each. Vain thought, I am afraid; and this, I fear, is scarcely more than dreaming. Let us leave the subject."

And Mowbray sighed; nodding, as he passed on, to a young gentleman on horseback. This was Jacques.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XVI.

ADVANCE OF THE ENEMY UPON SIR ASINUS.

Instead of listening further to the conversation of Mowbray and Hoffland, let us follow Jacques, who, mounted as we have seen on a beautiful horse, is gaily passing down the street.

Jacques is clad as usual like a lily of the field, with something of the tulip; he hums a melancholy love song of his own composition, not having yet come into possession of Hoffland's legacy; he smiles and sighs, and after some hesitation, draws rein before the domicile of our friend Sir Asinus, and dismounting, ascends to the apartment of that great political martyr.

Sir Asinus was sitting in an easy chair tuning a violin; his pointed features wearing their usual expression of cynical humor, and his dress wofully negligent.

He had been making a light repast upon crackers and wine, and on the floor lay a tobacco pipe with an exceedingly dirty reed stem, which Jacques, with his usual bad fortune, trod upon and reduced to a bundle of splinters.

"There!" cried Sir Asinus, "there, you have broken my pipe, you awkward cub!"

"Ah," sighed Jacques, gazing upon the splinters with melancholy curiosity; "what you say is very just."

And sitting down, he gazed round him, smiling sadly.

"Nothing better could be expected from you, however, you careless fop!"

And giving one of the violin pegs a wrench, Sir Asinus snapped a string.

"There!" he cried, "you bring bad fortune! whenever you come, I have the devil's own luck."

Jacques laughed quietly, and stretching out his elegant foot, yawned luxuriously.

"You are naturally unlucky, my dear knight," he said. "Hand me a glass of wine—or don't trouble yourself: the exercise of rising will do me good."

And leaning over, he poured out a glass of wine and sipped it.

"I was coming along, and thought I would come in," he said. "How is your Excellency to-day?"

"Dying of weariness!"

"What! even your great Latin song——"

"Is growing dull, sir. How can a man live on solitude and Latin? No girls, no frolics, no fun, no nothing, if I may use that inelegant expression," said Sir Asinus.

"Go back, then."

"Never!"

"Why not?"

"Do you ask? I am a martyr, sir, to my great and expanded political ideas; my religious opinions; my theory of human rights."

"Ah, indeed? Well, they ought to appreciate the compliment you pay them, and console you in your exile."

"They do, sir," said Sir Asinus.

"Delighted to hear it," sighed Jacques, setting down his glass. "Has Doctor Small called on you yet?"

"No. I fervently desire that he will call. We could sing my Latin song together—he would take the bass; and in three hours I should make of him a convert to my political ideas."

"Indeed? Shall I mention that you wish to see him?"

"No, I believe not," said Sir Asinus; "I am busy at present."

"At what—yawning?"

"No, you fop! I am framing a national anthem for the violin."

"Tune—the 'Exile's Return,' eh?"

"Base scoffer! But what news?"

"A great piece."

"What?"

"I am too indolent to tell it."

"Come, Jacques—I'm dying for news."

"I really couldn't. You have no idea how weakly I am growing; and as it deals in battle and blood, I cannot touch upon it."

"Ah! that is the character of a man's friends. In the sunshine all devotion; in adversity——"

"And exile——"

"All hatred."

"Very well," said Jacques, "I can afford to labor under your injustice. You are systematically unjust. But I just dropped in as I passed—and, my dear Sir Asinus, there is a visitor coming. I shall intrude——"

"No; stay! stay!"

"Very well."

Sir Asinus laid down his violin; and stretching himself, said carelessly:

"I shouldn't be surprised if you had brought some dun in your train. Decidedly you possess the *gettatura*—that faculty called the Evil Eye."

The step ascended.

"Who is it—whose heavy step can that be?" said Sir Asinus, rising; "it is not Randolph: it might be yours coming from Belle-bouche's——"

Sir Asinus caught sight of a large cocked hat rising from beneath, followed by a substantial person.

"O Heaven!" he cried, "it's Doctor Small! The door—the door!"

"Too late!" said Jacques, laughing; "the Doctor will find the stairs suddenly darkened if you close the door; and then he will know you are not absent, only playing him a trick!"

"True! true!" cried Sir Asinus in despair; "where shall I go? I am lost!"

"The refuge of comedy-characters is left," said Jacques—"the closet!"

"You will betray me!"

"No, no," sighed Jacques reproachfully; "bad as you are, Sir Asinus——"

But the worthy knight had disappeared in the closet, and Jacques was silent.

The cocked hat, as we have said, was succeeded by a pair of shoulders; the shoulders now appeared joined to a good portly body; and lastly, the well-clad legs of worthy Doctor Small appeared; and passing along the passage, he entered the room.

"Good morning, my young friend," he said politely; "a very beautiful day."

And he sat down.

"Exceedingly beautiful, Doctor," said Jacques sadly; "and I was just thinking how pleasant my ride would be. Did you pass our friend going out?"

"No; I was anxious to see him."

"He was in the room a few minutes since," said Jacques; "what a pity that you missed him."

"I regret it; for this is, I think, the third time I have attempted to find him. He is a wild young man—a very wild young man," said the Doctor, shaking his head.

"Yes, yes," sighed Jacques, imitating the Doctor's gesture; "I am sometimes anxious about him."

And Jacques sighed and touched his forehead.

"Here, you know, Doctor."

"Ah?" asked the Doctor, wiping his face with a silk handkerchief, and leaning on his stick.

"Yes, sir; he has betrayed unmistakable evidences of lunacy of late."

The closet door creaked.

"It's astonishing how many rats there are in this place," said Jacques; "that closet seems to be their head-quarters."

"Indeed?" said the Doctor; "but you surprise me by saying that Thomas has a tendency to insanity. I thought his one of the justest and most brilliant minds in college. Idle, yes, very idle, and procrastinating; but still he is no common young man."

The closet murmured: there was no ground for charging the rats with this; so Jacques observed that "the winds here were astonishing—they were stirring when all else was still."

"I did not remark it," said the Doctor, "but this——"

"Affair of Tom's lunacy, sir?"

The Doctor nodded with a benevolent smile, and restored his handkerchief to the pocket of his long, heavy, flapped coat.

"Why, sir," said Jacques, "there is a very beautiful young lady in the immediate vicinity of town, who has smiled on Tom perhaps as many as three times; and would you believe it, sir, the infatuated youth thinks she is in love with him."

"Ah! ah!" smiled the Doctor; "a mere youthful folly."

"She cares not one pinch of snuff for him," said Jacques, "and he believes that she is dying for him."

The Doctor smiled again.

"Oh," he said, shaking his head, "I fear your charge of lunacy will not stand upon such ground as that. 'Tis a trifle."

"I do not charge him with it," said Jacques generously; "Heaven forbid! I always endeavor to conceal it, and never allude to it in his presence. But I thought it my duty. You know, sir, there are a number of things which may be told to one's friends which should not be alluded to in their presence."

"Yes, yes—of this description: it would be cruel; but you are certainly mistaken."

"I hope so, sir; but I consider it my duty further to inform you that I fear Tom is following evil courses."

"Evil courses?"

"Yes, sir!"

The door creaked terribly.

"You pain me," said the Doctor; "to what do you allude?"

"Ah, sir, it is terrible!"

"How? But observe, I do not ask you to speak, sir. If it be your pleasure, very well, and I trust what I shall do will be for Thomas's good. But I do not invite your information."

"It is my duty to tell, sir; and I must speak."

With which words Jacques paused a moment, enjoying the dreadful suspense of the concealed gentleman, who seemed about to verify the proverb that listeners never hear any good of themselves. The closet groaned.

"I refer to political courses," said Jacques, "and I have heard Tom speak repeatedly lately of going to Europe."

"To Europe?"

"Yes, sir; in his yacht, armed and prepared."

"Prepared for what?"

"That I don't know, sir; but you may judge yourself. It seems to me that the arms on board his yacht, the 'Rebecca,' might very well be used to murder his most gracious Majesty George III., or the great Grenville Townsend, or other friends of constitutional liberty."

The Doctor absolutely laughed.

"Why, you are too suspicious," he said, "and I cannot believe Thomas is so bad. He has adopted many of the new ideas, and may go great lengths; but assassination—that is too absurd. Excuse my plain speaking," said the worthy Doctor, rising; "and pardon my leaving you, my young friend. I have some calls to make, and especially to go and see the young gentlemen who came near fighting a duel yesterday. What a terribly wild set of youths! Ah! they give me much trouble, and cause me a great deal of anxiety! Well, sir, good day. I am sorry I did not see Thomas; please say that I called to speak with him—he is wrong to hold out against the authorities thus. Good day—good day!"

And the worthy Doctor, who had uttered these sentences while he was putting on his hat and grasping his stick, issued from the door and descended.

Jacques put on his hat and followed him—possibly from a desire to escape the thanks and blessings of Sir Asinus.

In vain did the noble knight charge him, *sotto voce*, from the closet with perfidy and fear; Jacques was not to be turned back. He issued forth and mounted his horse.

Sir Asinus appeared at the window like an avenging demon.

"Oh! you villain!" he cried, first assuring himself that Dr. Small had disappeared; "I will revenge myself!"

"Ah?" said Jacques, settling himself in the saddle and smiling languidly.

"Yes; you're afraid to remain."

"No, no," remonstrated Jacques.

"You are, sir! I challenge you to return; you have basely maligned my character. And that duel! You have not condescended to open your mouth upon that great event of the day, knowing as you did, all the time, that circumstances render it necessary that I should remain in retirement!"

"Didn't I mention the duel?" sighed Jacques, gathering up his reins and looking with languid interest at the martingale.

"No."

"Ah, really—did I not?"

"No. Come now, Jacques! tell me how it was," said Sir Asinus in a coaxing tone, "and I'll forgive all; for I'm dying of curiosity."

"I would with pleasure," said Jacques, "but unfortunately I haven't time."

"Time? You have lots!"

"No, no—she expects me, you know."

"Who—not——!"

"Yes, Belle-bouche. Take care of yourself, my dear knight," said Jacques with friendly interest; "good-by."

And touching his horse with the spurs, he went on, pursued by the maledictions of Sir Asinus. He had cause. Jacques had charged him with lunacy; said he designed assassinating the King; kept from him the very names of the combatants; and was going to see his sweetheart!(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XVII.

CORYDON GOES A-COURTING.

Have you never, friendly reader, on some bright May morning, when the air is soft and warm, the sky deep azure, and the whole universe filled to the brim with that gay spirit of youth which spring infuses into this the month of flowers, as wine is squeezed from the ripe bunch of grapes into the goblet of Bohemian glass, all red and blue and emerald—at such times have you never suffered the imagination to go forth, unfettered by reality, to find in the bright scenes which it creates, a world more sunny, figures more attractive than the actual universe, the real forms around you? Have you never tried to fill your heart with dreams, to close your vision to the present, and to bathe your weary forehead in those golden waters flowing from the dreamland of the past? The Spanish verses say the old times were the best; and we may assert truly that they are for us at least the best—for reverie.

This reverie may be languid, luxurious, and lapped in down—enveloped in a perfume weighing down the very senses, and obliterating by its drowsy influence every sentiment but languid pleasure; or it may be fiery

and heroic, eloquent of war and shocks, sounding of beauteous battle, and red banners bathed in slaughter. But there is something different from both of these moods—the one languid and the other fiery.

There is the neutral ground of fancy properly so called: a land which we enter with closed eyes and smiling lips, a country full of fruits and flowers—fruits of that delicious flavor of the Hesperides, sweet flowers odorous as the breezy blossoms which adorn the mountains. Advance into that brilliant country, and you draw in life at every pore—a thousand merry figures come to meet you: maidens clad in the gay costumes of the elder time, all fluttering with ribbons, rosy cheeks and lips!—maidens who smile, and with their taper fingers point at those who follow them; gay shepherds, gallant in silk stockings and embroidered doublets, carrying their crooks wreathed round with flowers; while over all, the sun laughs gladly, and the breezes bear away the merry voices, sprinkling on the air the joyous music born of lightness and gay-heartedness.

All the old manners, dead and gone with dear grandmother's youth, are fresh again; and myriads of children trip along on red-heeled shoes, and agitate the large rosettes, and glittering ribbons, and bright wreaths of flowers which deck them out like tender heralds of the spring. And with them mingle all those maidens holding picture-decorated fans with which they flirt—this is the derivation of our modern word—and the gay gallants with their never-ending compliments and smiles. And so the pageant sweeps along with music, joy, and laughter, to the undiscovered land, hidden in mist, and entered by the gateway of oblivion.

You see all this in reverie, gentle reader—build your pretty old chateau to dream in, that is; and it swarms with figures—graceful and grotesque as those old high-backed carven chairs—slender and delicate as the chiselled wave which breaks in foam against the cornice. And then you wake, and find the flowers pressed in the old volume called the Past, all dry—your castle only a castle of your dreams. Poor castle made of cards, which a child's finger fillips down, or, like the frost palace on the window pane, faints and fails at a breath!

Your reverie is over: nothing bright can last, not even dreams; and so your figures are all gone, your fairy realm obliterated—nothing lives but the recollection of a shadow!

The reader is requested to identify our melancholy lover Jacques with the foregoing sentences; and forgive him in consideration of his unfortunate condition. Lovers, as every body knows, live dream-lives; and what we have written is not an inaccurate hint of what passed through the heart of Jacques as he went on beneath peach and cherry blossoms to his love.

Poor Jacques was falling more deeply in love with every passing day. That fate which seemed to deny him incessantly an opportunity to hear Belle-bouche's reply to his suit, had only inflamed his love. He uttered mournful sighs, and looked with melancholy pleasure at the thrushes who skipped nimbly through the boughs, and did their musical wooing under the great azure canopy. His arms hung down, his eyes were very dreamy, his lips were wreathed into a faint wistful smile. Poor Jacques!

As he drew near Shadynook, the sunshine seemed growing every moment brighter, and the flowers exhaled sweeter odors. The orchis, eglantine, sad crocus burned in blue and shone along the braes, to use the fine old Scottish word; and over him the blossoms shook and showered, and made the whole air heavy with perfume. As he approached the gate, set in the low flowery fence, Jacques sighed and smiled. Daphnis was near his Daphne—Strephon would soon meet Chloe.

He tied his horse to a sublunary rack—not a thing of fairy land and moonshine as he thought—and slowly took his way, across the flower-enamelled lawn, towards the old smiling mansion. Eager, longing, dreaming, Jacques held out his arms and listened for her voice.

He heard instead an invisible voice, which he soon, however, made out as belonging to an Ethiopian lady of the bedchamber; and this voice said:

"Miss Becca's done gone out, sir!"

And Jacques felt suddenly as if the sunshine all around had faded, and thick darkness followed. All the light and joy of smiling Shadynook was gone—*she* was not there!

"Where was she?"

"She and Mistiss went out for a walk, sir—down to the quarters through the grove."

Jacques brightened up like a fine dawn. The accident might turn to his advantage: he might see Mrs. Wimple safely home, then he and Belle-bouche would prolong their walk; and then she would be compelled to listen to him; and then—and then—Jacques had arranged the whole in his mind by the time he had reached the grove.

He was going along reflecting upon the hidden significance of crooks, and flowers, and shepherdesses—for Jacques was a poet, and more still, a poet in love—when a stifled laugh attracted his attention, and raising his head, he directed his dreamy glances in the direction of the sound.

He saw Belle-bouche!—Belle-bouche sitting under a flowering cherry tree, upon the brink of a little stream which, crossed by a wide single log, purled on through sun and shadow.

Belle-bouche was clad, as usual, with elegant simplicity, and her fair hair resembled gold in the vagrant gleams of sunlight which stole through the boughs, drooping their odorous blossoms over her, and scattering the delicate rosy-snow leaves on the book she held.

That book was a volume of Scotch songs, and against the rough back the little hand of Belle-bouche resembled a snow-flake.

Jacques caught his breath, and bowed and fell, so to speak, beside her.

"You came near walking into the brook," said Belle-bouche, with her languishing smile; "what, pray, were you thinking of?"

"Of you," sighed Jacques.

The little beauty blushed.

"Oh, then your time was thrown away," she said; "you should not busy yourself with so idle a personage."

"Ah!" sighed Jacques, "how can I help it?"

"What a lovely day!" said Belle-bouche, in order to divert the conversation. "Aunt and myself thought we'd come down to the quarters and see the sick. I carried mammy Lucy some nice things, and aunt went on to see about some spinning, and I came here to look over this book of songs, which I have just got from London."

"Songs?" said Jacques, with deep interest, and bending down until his lips nearly touched the little hand; "songs, eh?"

"Scottish songs," laughed Belle-bouche; "and when you came I was reading this one, which seems to be the chronicle of a very unfortunate gentleman."

With which words Belle-Bouche, laughing gaily, read:

"Now Jockey was a bonny lad
As e'er was born in Scotland fair;
But now, poor man, he's e'en gone woad,
Since Jenny has gart him despair.

"Young Jockey was a piper's son,
And fell in love when he was young;
But a' the spring that he could play
Was o'er the hills and far away!"

And ending, Belle-bouche handed the book, with a merry little glance, to Jacques, who sighed profoundly.

"Yes, yes!" he murmured, "I believe you are right—true, it *is* about a very unfortunate shepherd—all lovers are unfortunate. These seem to be pretty songs—very pretty."

And he disconsolately turned over the leaves; then stopped and began reading.

"Here is one more cheerful," he said; "suppose I read it, my dear Miss Belle-bouche."

And he read:

"'Twas when the sun had left the west,
  And starnies twinkled clearie, O,
I hied to her I lo'e the best,
  My blithesome, winsome dearie, O.

"Her cherry lip, her e'e sae blue,
  Her dimplin' cheek sae bonnie, O,
An' 'boon them a' her heart sae true,
  Hae won me mair than ony, O."

"Pretty, isn't it?" sighed Jacques; "but here is another verse:

"Yestreen we met beside the birk,
  A-down ayont the burnie, O,
An' wan'er't till the auld gray kirk
  A stap put to our journie, O.

"Ah, lassie, there it stans! quo' I——"

With which words Jacques shut the book, and threw upon Belle-bouche a glance which made that young lady color to the roots of her hair.

"I think we had better go," murmured Belle-bouche, rising; "I have to fix for the ball——"

"Not before——!"

"No, not before Tuesday, I believe," said Belle-bouche; "I am glad they changed it from Monday."

Jacques drew back, sighing; but returning to the attack, said in an expiring voice:

"What will my Flora wear—lace and flowers?"

"Who is she?" said Belle-bouche, putting on her light chip hat and tying the ribbon beneath her dimpled chin.

Poor Jacques was for a moment so completely absorbed by this lovely picture, that he did not reply.

"Who is Flora!—can you ask?" he stammered.

"Oh, yes!" said Belle-bouche, blushing; "you mean Philippa, do you not? But I can't tell you what she will wear. She has returned home. Let us go back through the orchard."

And Belle-bouche, with that exquisite grace which characterized her, crossed the log and stood upon the opposite bank of the brook, looking coquettishly over her shoulder at the melancholy Jacques, who was so absorbed in gazing after her that he had scarcely presence of mind enough to follow.

"What a lovely day; a real lover's day!" he said, with a sigh, when he had joined her, and they were walking on.

"Delightful," said Belle-bouche, smelling a violet.

"And the blossoms, you know," observed Jacques disconsolately.

"Delicious!"

"To say nothing of the birds," continued Jacques, sighing. "I believe the birds know the twentieth of May is coming."

"Why—what takes place upon the twentieth?" said Belle-bouche, with a faint smile.

"That is the day for lovers, and I observed a number of birds making love as I came along," sighed Jacques. "I only wish they'd teach me how."

Belle-bouche turned away, blushing.

"On the twentieth of May," continued Jacques, enveloping the fascinating countenance of Belle-bouche with his melancholy glance, "the old lovers in Arcadia—the Strephons, Chloes, Corydons, Daphnes, and Narcissuses—always made love and married on that day."

"Then," said Belle-bouche, faintly smiling, "they did every thing very quickly."

"In a great hurry, eh?" said Jacques, sighing.

"Yes, sir."

"Do not call me sir, my dearest Miss Belle-bouche—it sounds so formal and unpoetical."

"What then shall I call you?" laughed Belle-bouche, with a slight tremor in her voice.

"Strephon, or Corydon, or Daphnis," said Jacques; "for you are Phillis, you know."

Belle-bouche turned the color of a peony, and said faintly:

"I thought my name was Chloe the other day."

"Yes," said the ready Jacques, "but that was when my own name was Corydon."

"Corydon?"

"Yes, yes," sighed Jacques, "the victim of the lovely Chloe's beauty in the old days of Arcady."

Belle-bouche made no reply.

"Ah!" sighed Jacques, "if you would only make that old tradition true—if——"

"Oh!" said Belle-bouche, looking another way, "just listen to that mocking-bird!"

"If love far greater than the love of Corydon—devotion——"

"I could dance a reel to it," said Belle-bouche, blushing; "and we shall have some reels, I hope, at the ball. Oh! I expect a great deal of pleasure."

"And I," said Jacques, sadly, "for I escort you."

"Then you have not forgotten your promise!"

"Forgotten!"

"And you really will take charge of me?" said Belle-bouche, with a delightful expression of doubt.

"Take charge of you?" cried Jacques, overwhelmed and drowned in love; "take charge of you! Oh Belle-bouche! dearest Belle-bouche!—you are killing me! Oh! let me take charge of your life—see Corydon here at

your feet, the fondest, most devoted——"

"Becca! will you never hear me?" cried the voice of Aunt Wimple; "here I am toiling after you till I am out of breath—for Heaven's sake, stop!"

And smiling, red in the face, panting Aunt Wimple drew near and bowed pleasantly to Jacques, who only groaned, and murmured:

"One more chance gone—ah!"

As for Belle-bouche, she was blushing like a rose. She uttered not one word until they reached the house. Then she said, turning round with a smile and a blush:

"Indeed, you must excuse me!"

Poor Jacques sighed. He saw her leave him, taking away the light and joy of his existence. He slowly went away; and all the way back to town he felt as if he was not a real man on horseback, rather a dream mounted upon a cloud, and both asleep. Poor Jacques!(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XVIII.

GOING TO ROSELAND.

As the unfortunate lover entered Williamsburg, his hands hanging down, his eyes dreamy and fixed with hostile intentness on vacancy, his shoulders drooping and swaying from side to side like those of a drunken man,—he saw pass before him, rattling and joyous, a brilliant equipage, which, like a sleigh covered with bells, seemed to leave in its wake a long jocund peal of merriment and laughter.

In this vehicle, which mortals were then accustomed to call, and indeed call still, a curricle, sat two young men who were conversing; and as the melancholy Jacques passed on his way, the younger student—for such he was—said, laughing, to his companion:

"Look, Ernest, there is a man in love!"

Mowbray raised his head, and seeing Jacques, smiled sadly and thoughtfully; then his breast moved, and a profound sigh issued from his lips: he made no reply.

"Why!" cried Hoffland, "you have just been guilty, Ernest, of a ceremony which none but a woman should perform. What a sigh!"

Mowbray turned away his head.

"I was only thinking," he said calmly.

"Thinking of what?"

"Nothing."

"I see that you think one thing," said Hoffland, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye; "to wit, that I am very prying."

"No; but my thoughts would not interest you, Charles," said Mowbray.

And a sigh still more profound agitated his lips and breast.

"Suppose you try me," his companion said; "speaking generally, your thoughts do interest me."

"Well, I was thinking of a woman," said Mowbray.

"A woman! Oh! then your time, in your own opinion at least, was thrown away."

"Worse," said Mowbray gloomily; "worse by far."

"How?"

"It is useless, Charles, to touch upon the subject; let it rest."

"No; I wish you to tell me, if I am not intrusive, what woman you were at the moment honoring with a sigh."

Mowbray raised his head calmly, and yielding like all lovers to the temptation to pour into the bosom of his friend those troubled thoughts which oppressed his heart, said to his companion:

"The woman we were speaking of the other day."

"You have not told me her name," said Hoffland.

"It is useless."

"Why?"

"Because she is lost to me."

"Lost?"

"For ever."

And after this gloomy reply, Mowbray looked away.

Hoffland placed a hand upon his arm, and said:

"Upon what grounds do you base your opinion that she is lost to you?"

"It is not an opinion; I know it too well."

"If you were mistaken?"

"Mistaken!" said Mowbray; "mistaken! You think I am mistaken? Then you know nothing of what took place at our last interview; or you did not listen rather—for if my memory does not deceive me, I told you all."

"I did listen."

"And you now doubt that she is lost to me?"

"Seriously."

"Charles, you are either the most inexperienced or the most desperately hopeful character that has ever been created."

"I am neither," said Hoffland smiling. "I am rational, and I know what I say."

Mowbray suppressed an impatient gesture, and said:

"Did I not tell you that she made me the butt for her wit and sarcasm——"

"Are you sure?"

"Yes; and more! She scoffed at me, as a mere fortune-hunter, and gave me the most ironical advice——"

"You are convinced it was ironical?"

"Convinced? Have I eyes—have I ears? Truly, if I had failed to be convinced, I should have verified the scriptural saying of those who have eyes and see not—who have ears and do not hear."

"Are the eyes always true?" said Hoffland, smiling.

"No: you have not succeeded, nevertheless, in showing me that I saw wrong."

"Are the ears invariably just?"

"For Heaven's sake, cease worrying me with general propositions!" said Mowbray.

Then, seeing that his companion was hurt by his irritated tone, he added:

"Forgive me, Charles! I lose my equanimity upon this subject; let us dismiss it."

"Very well," said Hoffland, smiling mischievously; "but remember what I now say, Ernest, and remember well. The eyes are deceptive—the ears worse than deceptive. You truly have eyes and see not, ears and hear not! I think it highly probable that your lady-love, who is an excellent-hearted girl, I am convinced, intended merely to apply a last test; and if you have bounded like an impulsive horse under the spur, and tossed from her, the blame does not rest with her. And remember this too, Ernest," Hoffland went on sadly; for one of the strange peculiarities of this young man was his habit of abrupt transition from merriment to sadness, from smiles to sighs; "remember, Ernest, that your determination to see her no more has probably inflicted on this young girl's heart a cruel pang: you cannot know that she is not now shedding bitter tears at the result of her trial of your feelings! Oh! remember that it is not the poor and afflicted only who weep—it is the rich and joyous also; and the hottest tears are often shed by the eyes which seem made to dispense smiles alone!"

Mowbray listened to the earnest voice in silence. A long pause followed, neither looking at the other; then Mowbray said:

"You deceive yourself, Charles, if you imagine that this beautiful and wealthy young girl spends a second thought upon myself. I was to her only a passing shadow—another name to add to her long list of captives. Well! I gave her the sincere love of an honest heart, such a love as no woman has the right to spurn. She did spurn it. Well! I am not a child to sob and moan, and go and beg her on my knees to love me—no! I love her

more than ever, Charles; all my boasting was mere boasting and untrue—I love her still—but that heart, and it shall not issue forth but with my life. I love her! but I will never place myself in the dust before a woman who has scorned me. Silence and self-control I have, and these will sustain me."

"Oh, Ernest! Ernest!"

"You seem strangely moved by my words," said Mowbray; "but you should not fancy my love so fatal. It is a delirium at times, but Heaven be thanked, it cannot drive me mad. Now let us stop speaking of these things. When I think of that young girl, all my calmness leaves me. Oh, she was so frank and true a soul, I thought!—so sincere and bold!—so lovely, and with such a strength of heart! I was deceived. Well, well—it seems to be the fate of men, to find the ideal of their hearts unworthy. Let us speak of it no further."

And suppressing his emotion by a violent effort, Mowbray added in a voice perfectly calm and collected:

"There is our cottage, Charles—Roseland; and I see Lucy waiting for us under the roses on the porch—she always looks for me, I believe."(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XIX.

HOFFLAND EXERTS HIMSELF TO AMUSE THE COMPANY.

Lucy was a young girl of nineteen or twenty, with the brightest face, the most sparkling eyes, and the merriest voice which ever adorned woman entering her prime. Her laughter was contagious, and the listener must perforce laugh in unison. Her face drove away gloom, as the sun does; her smile was pure merriment, routing all cares; and Mowbray's sad countenance became again serene, his lips smiled.

Lucy bowed demurely to the boy, who held out his hand laughing.

"Oh! Ernest and myself are sworn friends," he said; "and the fact is, Miss Lucy, I had serious doubts whether I should not kiss you—I love you so much—for Ernest's sake!"

And Hoffland pursed up his lips, prepared for all things.

Lucy was so completely overcome by laughter at this extraordinary speech, that for a moment she remained perfectly silent, shaking with merriment.

Hoffland conceived the design to take advantage of this astonishment, and modestly "held up his mouth," as children say. The consequence was that Miss Lucy extricated her hand from his grasp, and drew back with some hauteur; whereupon Hoffland assumed an expression of such mortification and childlike dissatisfaction, that Mowbray, who had witnessed this strange scene, could not suppress a smile.

"I might as well tell you frankly at once, Lucy," he said, "that Charles is the oddest person, and I think the most perfect boy, at times, I have ever known."

"I a boy!" cried Hoffland; "I am no such thing!—am I, Lucy—*Miss* Lucy, I mean, of course? I am not so young as all that, and I see nothing so strange in wanting a kiss. But I won't misbehave any more; come now, see!"

And drawing himself up with a delightful expression of dignified courtesy, Hoffland said, solemnly offering his arm to Lucy:

"Shall I have the honor, Miss Mowbray, of escorting you into the garden for the purpose of gathering some roses to deck your queenly brow?"

Lucy would have refused; but overcome with laughter, and unable to resist the ludicrous solemnity of Hoffland's voice and manner, she placed her finger on his arm, and they walked into the garden.

Roseland was a delightful little cottage, full of flowers, and redolent of spring. It fronted south, and seemed to be the favorite of the sun, which shone through its vine-embowered windows and lit up its drooping eaves, as it nowhere else did.

A little passage led quite through the house, and by this passage Hoffland and his fair companion entered the garden.

Mowbray sat down and examined some papers which he took from his pocket; then trained a flowering vine from the window-sill to a nail in the wall without, for he was very fond of flowers; then, bethinking himself that Hoffland was his guest, turned to go into the garden.

As he did so, he caught sight of a horseman approaching the cottage; and soon this horseman drew near enough to be recognised. It was Mr. John Denis, whose admiration for Miss Lucy Mowbray our readers have possibly divined from former pages of this true history.

Mr. Denis dismounted and entered the grounds of the cottage, sending before him a friendly smile. Denis

was one of those honest, worthy fellows, who are as single-minded as children, and in whose eyes all men and things are just what they seem: hypocrisy he could never understand, and it was almost as difficult for the worthy young man to comprehend irony. We have seen an exemplification of this in his affair with Hoffland; and if our narrative permitted it, we might, by following him through his after life, find many more instances of the same singleness of heart and understanding.

Denis was very tastefully dressed, and his face was, as we have said, full of smiles. He held out his hand to Mowbray with honest warmth, and they entered the cottage.

The reader may imagine that Denis inquired as to the whereabouts of Miss Lucy—his wandering glances not having fallen upon that young lady. Not at all. For did ever lover introduce the subject of his lady-love? When we are young, and in love, do we go to visit Dulcinea or her brother Tom? Is not that agreeable young gentleman the sole attraction which draws us; do we not ride a dozen miles for his sake, and has Dulcinea any thing to do with the rapturous delight we experience in dreaming of the month we shall spend with Tom in August? Of course not; and Denis did not allude in the remotest manner to Lucy. On the contrary, he became the actor which love makes of the truest men, and said, with careless ease:

"A lovely evening for a ride."

"Yes," said Mowbray, driving away his sad thoughts; "why didn't you come with us, Jack?"

"With you?"

"Myself and Hoffland."

"Hoffland!"

"Yes; what surprises you?"

"Is Hoffland here?"

Mowbray nodded.

Denis looked round; and then his puzzled glance returned to the face of his friend.

"I do not see him," he said.

"He went into the garden just now," explained Mowbray.

Denis would have given thousands to be able to say, "Where is Lucy?" It was utterly impossible, however. Instead of doing so, he asked:

"You came in a buggy?"

"Yes," said Mowbray.

"Is Hoffland agreeable—I mean a pleasant fellow?"

"I think so: rather given to jesting—and I suppose this was the origin of your unhappy difficulty. Most quarrels spring from jests."

"True. I believe he was jesting; in fact I know it," said poor Jack Denis, wiping his brow and trying to plunge his glance into the depths of the garden, where Lucy and Hoffland were no doubt walking. "Still, Ernest, I could not have acted differently; and you would be the first person to agree with me, were I to tell you the subject of his jests."

And Denis frowned.

"What was it?" said Mowbray. "Hoffland refused point-blank to tell me, and I am perfectly ignorant of the whole affair."

Denis hesitated. Was it fair and honest to prejudice Mowbray against the boy? but on the contrary, was not the whole affair now explained as a simple jest, and would there be harm in telling what the young student had said to provoke him? The young man hesitated, and said:

"I don't know—it was a mere jest; there is no use in opening the subject again——"

"Ah, Jack!" said Mowbray, "I see that I am to live and die in ignorance, for I repeat that Hoffland would not tell me. With all the carelessness of a child, he seems to possess the reserve of a politician or a woman."

"A strange character, is he not?" said Denis.

"Yes; and yet he has won upon me powerfully."

"Your acquaintance is very short," said poor Denis, his heart sinking at the thought of having so handsome and graceful a rival as the boy.

"Very," returned Mowbray; "but he positively took me by storm."

"And you like him?"

"To be sincere—exceedingly."

"Why?" muttered Denis.

"Really, I can scarcely say," replied his friend; "but he is a mere boy; seems to be wholly without friends; and he has virtually yielded to me the guidance of all his affairs. This may seem an absurd reason for liking Hoffland; but that is just my weak side, Jack. When any one comes to me and says, 'I am weak and inexperienced, you are in a position to aid and assist me; be my friend;' how can I refuse?"

"And Hoffland——"

"Has done so? Yes."

"Humph!"

"Besides this, he is a mere boy; and to speak frankly, is so affectionate and winning in his demeanor toward me, that I really have not the courage to repel his advances. Strange young man! at times I know not what to think of him. He is alternately a child, a woman, and a matured man in character; but most often a child."

"Indeed?" said Denis, whose heart sunk at every additional word uttered by Mowbray; "how then did he display such willingness to fight—and I will add, such careless bravado?"

"Because fighting was a mere word to him," said Mowbray; "I believe that he no more realized the fact that you would direct the muzzle of a pistol toward his breast, than that you would stab or poison him."

Denis wiped his brow.

"I didn't want to fight," he said; "but I was obliged to do something."

"Was the provocation gross?"

"Pardon my question. I did not mean to return to the subject, inasmuch as some reason for withholding the particulars of the interview seems to exist in your mind."

Denis hesitated and muttered something to himself; then, raising his head suddenly, he added with some bitterness:

"Perhaps you may have your curiosity satisfied from another source, Ernest. I see Mr. Hoffland approaching the house with Miss Lucy—from the garden, there. No doubt he will tell you."

In fact, Miss Lucy and Hoffland were sauntering in from the garden in high glee. Lucy from time to time burst into loud and merry laughter, clapping her hands, and expressing great delight at something which Hoffland was communicating; and Hoffland was bending down familiarly and whispering in her ear.

No sooner, however, had the promenaders caught sight of Mowbray and Denis looking at them, than their manner suddenly changed. Hoffland drew back, and raising his head with great dignity, solemnly offered his arm to the young girl; and Lucy, choking down her merriment and puckering up her lips to hide her laughter, placed her little finger on the sleeve of her cavalier. And so they approached the inmates of the cottage, with quiet and graceful dignity, like noble lord and lady; and entering, bowed ceremoniously, and sat down with badly smothered laughter.

"Really," said Mowbray smiling, "you will permit me to say, Charles, that you have a rare genius for making acquaintance suddenly: Lucy and yourself seem to be excellent friends already."

And he looked kindly at the boy, who smiled.

"Friends?" said Hoffland; "we are cousins!"

"Cousins? Indeed!"

"Certainly, my dear fellow," said Hoffland, with a delightful ease and *bonhomie*. "I have discovered that my great-grandmother married the cousin of an uncle of cousin Lucy's great-grandfather's wife's aunt; and moreover, that this aunt was the niece of my great-uncle's first wife's husband. That makes it perfectly plain—don't it, Mr. Denis? Take care how you differ with me: cousin Lucy understands it perfectly, and she has a very clear head."

"Thank you, sir," said Lucy, laughing; "a great compliment."

"Not at all," said Hoffland; "some women have a great deal of sense—or at least a good deal."

"Indeed, sir!"

"Yes; but it is not their failing generally. I have taken up that impression of you, cousin Lucy, from our general conversation; not from your ability to comprehend so simple a genealogical table as that of our relationship."

"Upon my word, *I* don't understand it," said Mowbray, smiling.

"Is it possible, Ernest? Listen again, then. My great-grandfather—recollect him, now—married the uncle of a cousin—observe, the uncle of a cousin——"

"What! your great-grandfather married the *uncle* of somebody's cousin? Is it possible?"

"Now you are laughing at me," said Hoffland, pouting; "what if I did get it a little wrong? I meant that my great-grandmother married the uncle of a cousin of cousin Lucy's wife's great-grandfather's aunt—who——"

"Lucy's wife is then involved, is she, Charles?" asked Mowbray; "but go on."

"No, I won't!" said Hoffland; "you are just trying to confuse and embarrass me. I will not tell you any more: but cousin Lucy understands; don't you, Miss Lucy?"

"Quite enough to understand that we occupy a closer relationship than we seem to," said Lucy, threatening to burst into laughter.

Hoffland gave her a warning glance; and then assuming a polite and graceful smile, asked:

"Pray, what were you and Mr. Denis talking of, my dear Ernest? Come, tell a fellow!"

Lucy turned away and covered her face, which was crimson with laughter.

"We were speaking of the quarrel which we were unfortunate enough to have, sir," said poor Denis coldly; "and I referred Mr. Mowbray to you for an account of it."

"To me?" said Hoffland smiling; "why not tell him yourself?"

"I did not fancy it, sir."

"Why, in the world?"

"Come! come!" said Mowbray smiling, and wishing to nip the new altercation in the bud; "don't let us talk any more about it. It is all ended now, and I don't care to know——"

"Why, there's nothing to conceal," said Hoffland, laughing.

Denis colored.

"I'll tell you in an instant," laughed the boy.

Lucy turned toward him; and Denis looked out of the window.

"We were talking of women first," continued Hoffland; "a subject, cousin Lucy, which we men discuss much oftener than you ladies imagine——"

"Indeed!" said Lucy, nearly choking with laughter.

"Yes," continued the boy; "and after agreeing that Miss Theorem the mathematician was charming; Miss Quartz the geologist lovely; that Miss Affectation was very *piquante*, and Mrs. Youngwidow exceedingly fine-looking in her mourning; after having amicably interchanged our ideas on these topics, we came to discuss the celebrated lunar theory."

"What is that?" asked Lucy.

"Simply the question, what the moon is made of."

"Indeed?"

"Certainly. Mr. Denis took the common and erroneous view familiar to scientific men; I, on the contrary, supported the green-cheese view of the question; and this was the real cause of our quarrel. I am sure Mr. Denis and myself are the most excellent friends now," said Hoffland, turning with a smile towards Denis; "and we will never quarrel any more."

A pause of some moments followed this ridiculous explanation; and this pause was first broken by Miss Lucy, who burst into the most unladylike laughter, and indeed shook from head to foot in the excess of her mirth. Mowbray looked with an amazed and puzzled air at Hoffland, and Denis did not know what to say or how to look.

Lucy, after laughing uninterruptedly for nearly five minutes, suddenly remembered the indecorum of this strange exhibition; so, drying her eyes, and assuming a demure and business-like air, she took a small basket of keys, and apologizing for her departure, went to attend to supper. Before leaving the room, however, she gladdened honest Jack Denis's heart with a sweet smile, and this smile was so perfect a balm to the wounded feelings of the worthy fellow, that his discontent and ill-humor disappeared completely, and he was almost ready to give his hand to his rival, Hoffland. The same arrow had mortally wounded Jacques and Denis.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XX.

AT ROSELAND, IN THE EVENING.

Seated on the vine-embowered porch of the cottage, with the pleasant airs of evening blowing from the flowers their rich fragrant perfume, the inmates of Roseland and their guests passed the time in very pleasant converse.

From time to time Hoffland and Miss Lucy exchanged confidential smiles, and on these occasions Mr. Jack Denis, whose love-sharpened eyes lost nothing, felt very unhappy. Indeed, throughout the whole evening this gentleman displayed none of that alacrity of spirit which usually characterized him; his whole manner, conversation, and demeanor betraying unmistakable indications of jealous dissatisfaction.

Lucy had always been very kind and gentle to him before; and though her manner had not changed toward him, still her evident preference for the society and conversation of the student Hoffland caused him a bitter pang. Denis sincerely loved the bright-faced young girl, and no one who has not loved can comprehend the sinking of the heart which preference for another occasions. The last refinement of earthly torture is assuredly jealousy—and Denis was beginning to suffer this torture. More than once Lucy seemed to feel that she was causing her lover pain; and then she would turn away from Hoffland and gladden poor Denis with one of her brilliant smiles, and with some indifferent word, nothing in itself, but full of meaning from its tone. Then Hoffland would laugh quietly to himself, and touching the young girl's arm, call her attention, to some beauty in the waning sunset, some quiet grace of the landscape; and Denis would sink again into gloom, and look at Hoffland's handsome face and sigh.

Mowbray was reading in the little sitting-room, and from time to time interchanged words with the party through the window. Perhaps *studying* would be the proper word; for it was a profound work upon politics which Ernest Mowbray, with his vigorous and acute intellect, was running through—grasping its strong points, and throwing aside its fallacies. He needed occupation of mind; in study alone could he escape from the crowding thoughts which steeped his brow in its habitual shadow of melancholy. He had lost a great hope, as he had told Hoffland; and a man does not see the woman whom he loves devotedly pass from him for ever without a pang. He may be able to conceal his suffering, but thenceforth he cannot be gay; human nature can only control the heart to a certain point; we may be calm, but the sunshine is all gone.

Thus the hours passed, with merry laughter from Hoffland and Lucy, and very forced smiles on the part of Denis. Mowbray observed his silence, and closing the volume he was reading, came out and joined the talkers.

"What now?" he said, with his calm courtesy. "Ah, you are speaking of the ball, Lucy?"

"Yes, Ernest; and you know you promised to take me."

"Did you?" asked Hoffland; "I am afraid this is only a ruse on cousin Lucy's part to get rid of me."

"Are you not ashamed, sir, to charge me with untruth?" said Lucy, nearly bursting into laughter.

"Untruth!" cried Hoffland; "did any body ever! Why, 'tis the commonest thing in the world with your charming sex, Miss Lucy, to indulge in these little ruses. There must be a real and a conventional code of morals; and I hope you don't pretend to say, that if a lady sends word that she is gone out when a visitor calls, she is guilty of deception?"

"I think she is," said Lucy.

"Extraordinary doctrine!" cried Hoffland; "and so Ernest has really engaged to go with you?"

"Yes, sir; it was my excuse to Mr. Denis, who very kindly offered to be my escort."

And Lucy gave Jack Denis a little smile which elevated that gentleman into upper air.

"Well," said Hoffland, "I suppose then I am to go and find somebody else—a forlorn young man going to find a lady to take care of him. Come, Miss Lucy, cannot you recommend some one?"

"Let me see," said Lucy, laughing gleefully; "what acquaintances have you?"

"Very few; and I would not escort any of those simpering little damsels usually seen at assemblies."

"What description of damsel do you prefer?" asked Lucy, smiling.

"A fine, spirited, amusing young lady like yourself," said Hoffland; "the merrier and more ridiculous the better."

"Ridiculous, indeed! Well, sir," said Lucy mischievously, "I think I have found the very one to suit you."

"Who is it, pray?"

"Miss Philippa——"

"Stop!" cried Hoffland. "I never could bear that name. I am determined never to court, marry, or even

escort a *Philippa*. Dreadful name! And I hope you won't mention this Miss Philippa Somebody again!"

With which words Hoffland laughed.

"Very well," said Lucy; "suppose you come and amuse me at the ball—going thither alone?"

"Oh! myself and Mr. Denis will certainly pay our respects to you, Miss Lucy. But do not expect me until about twelve."

Lucy smiled, and said:

"Do you think the ball will be handsome, Ernest?"

"I think so."

"Well, now, I am going to enslave all hearts. I shall wear my pink satin."

"Ah!" laughed Mowbray; "that is very interesting to myself and these gentlemen."

"Well, sir," said Lucy, pretending to be angry, "just as you please; but you are a very unfeeling brother. Isn't he, Mr. Hoffland?"

"A most unreasonable person, and a disgrace to our sex," said Hoffland. "To tell a young lady that the manner in which she proposes appearing at a ball is uninteresting, sounds like Ernest."

Mowbray smiled; the pleasant banter of the boy pleased him, and diverted his thoughts.

"But Ernest is not such a perfect ogre, Mr. Hoffland," said Lucy; "are you, Ernest? He is very kind, and is going to spend all day to-morrow with me."

Mowbray shook his head.

"Now, brother!" said Lucy; "you know you can."

Mowbray hesitated.

"Won't you?"

"Well, yes, Lucy," said Mowbray, smiling; "I can refuse you nothing."

"Good!" cried Hoffland, with the sonorous voice of a man-at-arms; "when ladies once determine to have their own way, it is nearly impossible to stop them; is it not, Mr. Denis?"

"I will answer for Mr. Denis, and repel your assault, sir," said Lucy, smiling; "I think that there is nothing very wrong in what I ask, and why then should I not have my way?"

"Excellent!" cried Hoffland, with a well-satisfied expression, and a glance of intelligence directed toward Lucy. "I believe that we men may study all our lives and break our heads with logic before we can approach the acuteness of one of these ladies. Study is nothing compared with natural instinct and genius!"

Denis rose with a sigh.

"You remind me, Mr. Hoffland," he said, "that I have a long chapter in Blackstone to study; and it is already late."

"And I also have my studies," said Hoffland; "I think I will return with you, Mr. Denis."

"You came to stay, Charles! You shall both stay," said Mowbray, "and I will give you Blackstone's——"

"No, really, Ernest," said Hoffland, with a business air which made Lucy laugh.

"And indeed I must return," said Denis, sighing.

"Ah, gentlemen, gentlemen!" said Mowbray, "you pay a fashionable call. Why, Charles, you absolutely promised to stay."

"Yes, but I have changed my mind," said the boy, looking toward Lucy; "and if Mr. Denis will ride with me in your curricle, or whatever it is, you might ride his horse in, in the morning.

"Very well," said Mowbray.

"Willingly," said Denis.

"Then it is all arranged; and I return. Don't press me, Ernest, my good fellow. When duty calls, every man must be at his post. I can't stay."

And Hoffland laughed.

In fifteen minutes the vehicle was brought round, and the two young men rose.

Denis bowed with some constraint to Lucy; but she would not see this expression, and holding out her hand bade him good-bye with a smile which lighted his path all the way back to town.

Hoffland shook hands with Lucy too; and a laughing glance of free masonry passed between them.

Then, entering the vehicle, the two young men set forth toward Williamsburg, over which a beautiful moon was rising like a crimson cart-wheel. Ernest Mowbray stood for a moment on the porch of the cottage following the receding vehicle with his eyes. At last it disappeared—the sound of the wheels was no longer heard, and Mowbray entered the cottage.

"Strange!" he murmured, "that memory still haunts me. What folly!"

And pressing his lips to Lucy's forehead, he retired to his study.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XXI.

DISGRACEFUL CONDUCT OF SIR ASINUS.

Mowbray was an early riser; and the morning had not long looked upon the fresh fields, when he was on his way to Williamsburg. With a hopeful spirit, which banished peremptorily all those gloomy thoughts which were accustomed to harass him, he pressed on to commence his day of toil at the college.

As he entered Williamsburg, he came very near being overturned by a gentleman who was leaving that metropolitan city, at full gallop.

"Hey!" cried this gentleman, reining up; "why, good day, Mowbray!"

And Sir Asinus made a bow of grotesque respect.

"Whither away, my dear fellow—to that den of iniquity, the grammar school, eh?"

"Yes," said Mowbray, smiling; "and you?"

"I go to other fields and pastures new—to those Hesperian gardens famed of old, and so forth. Come with me!"

"No, thank you. I suppose you are going to see a lady?"

"Precisely; and now do you still refuse?"

"Yes."

"You are an ungallant book-worm, a misogynist—and that is the next thing to a conspirator. Leave your books, and come and taste of sylvan joys."

"Where are you going?"

"To see Dulcinea."

"Who is she?"

"Her other name is Amaryllis."

"Well, sing to her," said Mowbray; "for my part, I am going to visit Plato, Justinian, Blackstone, whose lectures are better than Virgil's heroics, and Coke, who is more learned, if not more agreeable, than any Hesperians. Farewell."

And Mowbray saluted Sir Asinus with a smile, and rode on. The knight returned his salute, and continued his way in the opposite direction.

Now, as our history concerns itself rather with Amaryllis than Plato or Coke, we shall permit Mowbray to go on, and retracing our steps, follow Sir Asinus to his destination.

Sir Asinus on this morning is magnificent, and finds the air very pleasant after his long imprisonment. He inhales it joyously, and in thought, nay, often in words, invokes confusion on the heads of proctors. He is in full enjoyment of those three great rights for which he has sacrificed so much—namely, life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

He is joyous, for he has stolen a march upon the watchful guardians of the college; he revels in the sentiment of freedom; and believes himself in pursuit of that will o' the wisp called happiness.

He sings, as he goes onward on his hard-trotting courser, the words of that song which we have heard him sing before:

"Hez! sire asne! car chantez
Belle bouche rechignez;"

and is not mortified when a donkey in the neighboring meadow brays responsively.

He bends his steps toward Shadynook, where he arrives as the matutinal meal is smoking on the board; and this Sir Asinus partakes of with noble simplicity. One would have imagined himself in presence of Socrates dining upon herbs, instead of Sir Asinus comforting his inner man with ham and muffins.

After breakfast, Aunt Wimple, that excellent old lady whose life was completely filled by a round of domestic duties, banished her visitor to the sitting-room. To make his exile more tolerable, however, she gave him Belle-bouche for a companion.

Belle-bouche had never looked more beautiful, and the tender simplicity of her languishing eyes almost made the poetical Sir Asinus imagine himself in love. He found himself endeavoring to recollect whether he had not been induced to pay this visit by the expectation of beholding her; but with that rigid truth which ever characterized the operations of his great intellect, was compelled to come to the conclusion that the motive causes of his visit were the hope of a good breakfast, and a morning lounge in country quarters, unalarmed by the apprehension of invading deans and proctors.

In a word, our friend Sir Asinus had coveted a cool morning at pleasant Shadynook, in company with Belle-bouche or a novel; and this had spurred him to such extraordinary haste, not to mention the early rising.

"Ah!" said Belle-bouche, as she sat down upon a sofa in the cool pleasant apartment, whose open windows permitted the odors of a thousand flowers to weigh the air down with their fragrance, "what a lovely morning! It is almost wrong to remain in the house."

"Let us go forth then, my dear Madam Belle-bouche," said Sir Asinus.

"I see you retain that funny name for me," said the young girl with a smile.

"Yes: it is beautiful, as all about Shadynook is—the garden most of all—yourself excepted of course, madam."

"It was very adroitly done, that turn of the sentence," Belle-bouche replied, smiling again pleasantly. "Let us go into the garden, as you admire it so much."

And she rose.

Sir Asinus hastened to offer his arm, and they entered the beautiful garden, alive with flowers.

Sir Asinus uttered a number of beautiful sentiments on the subject of flowers and foliage, which we regret our inability to report. After spending an hour or more among the trees, they returned to the house.

Just as they entered, a gentleman was visible at the gate—evidently a visitor. This gentleman had dismounted, and as he stood behind his horse arranging the martingale, he was for the moment unrecognisable.

"Will you permit me to remain in the garden, my dear Miss Belle-bouche, until your visitor has departed?" said Sir Asinus. "I find myself suddenly smitten with a love of nature—and I would trouble you not to mention the fact of my presence. It will be useless."

"Certainly I will not, sir," said Belle-bouche.

And Sir Asinus, seeing the gentleman move, precipitately entered the garden, where he ignominiously concealed himself—having snatched up a volume of poems to console him in his retirement.

The visitor was Jacques.

He entered with his soft melancholy smile, and approaching Belle-bouche, pressed her hand to his lips.

"I am glad to see you so bright," he said; "but you always look blooming."

And he sat down and gazed around sadly.

Perhaps Jacques had never before so closely resembled a tulip. His coat was red, his waistcoat scarlet, his lace yellow, his stockings white; his shoes, lastly, were adorned with huge rosettes, and his wig was a perfect snow-storm of powder.

Belle-bouche casts down her eyes, and a roseate bloom diffuses itself over her tender cheek. Jacques arrays his forces, and gracefully smooths his Mechlin lace cravat. Outwardly he is calm.

Belle-bouche raises her eyes, and gently flirts her fan, covered with shepherds and shepherdesses in silks and satins, who tend imaginary sheep by sky-blue waters, against deeply emerald trees.

Jacques sighs, remembering his discourse on crooks, and Belle-bouche smiles. He gathers courage then, and says:

"I think I have never seen a more beautiful morning."

"Yes," says Belle-bouche in her soft tender voice, "I have been out to take my customary walk before breakfast."

"An excellent habit. The fields are the true abodes of the Graces and Muses; all is so fresh."

Belle-bouche smiles at this graceful and classic compliment; but strange to say, does not feel disposed to criticise it. Jacques has never seemed to her so intellectual a man, so true a gentleman as at this moment. The reason is that Belle-bouche has caught a portion of her visitor's disease—a paraphrase which we are compelled to make use of, from the well-known fact that damsels are never what is vulgarly called "in love," until the momentous question has been asked; after which, as we all know, this sentiment floods their tender hearts with a sudden rush, as of unloosed waters.

Jacques sees the impression he has made, and in his secret heart is flushed with anticipated conquest. He smooths his frill, and gently arranges a drop curl.

"Love, I think, should inhabit the green fields," he says with melancholy grace; "for love, dearest Miss Belle-bouche, is the essence of freshness and delight."

"The—fields?" says Belle-bouche, thoughtfully gazing upon her fan.

"Yes; and the shepherd's life is certainly the happiest. Ah! to love and be loved under the skies—in Arcady! But Arcady is everywhere when the true heart is near. To love and be loved!" says Jacques with a sad sigh; "to know there is one near you whose whole heart is yours—whose bosom would willingly support the weary head; to have a heart to bring all your sorrows to; to feel that the sky was brighter, and all the stars more friendly and serene, if she were by you; to love and love, and never change, and live a life of happy dreams, however active it might be, when the dear image swept across the horizon! To give the heart and mind out in a sigh, and seal the vow of faith and truth upon loving lips! In a word—one word speaks it all—to love! Yes, yes! to love! To feel the horizon expand around you till it seems to embrace every thing; to love innocently, purely, under the holy heavens; to love till the dying hour, and then, clasped in a pure embrace, to go away together to another world!—Only to love!"

And Jacques raises his eyes to the blushing face of Belle-bouche.

"Is it not fair to think of?" he says sadly.

She tries to smile, and can only murmur, "Yes."

"I fear it is but a dream," says Jacques.

She does not reply: she wishes a moment to collect her thoughts and regain her calmness.

"A dream," he continues, "which many poor fellows dream, and live in, and make a reality of—alas! never to be realized."

"Perhaps the world has changed since the old Arcadian days," murmurs Belle-bouche, gazing down with rosy cheeks, and a bad attempt at ease. "You know the earth has become different."

"Yes, yes," sighs Jacques; "I very much fear all this is folly."

"Who knows but——"

She pauses.

Jacques raises his eyes, and their glances meet. She stops abruptly, and looks away. It is not affectation in her. That deep blush is wholly irrepressible.

Jacques seizes her hand, and says:

"Give me the assurance that such things can be! Tell me that this dream could be realized!"

She turns away.

"Tell me!" he continues, bending toward her, "tell me, if *I* were to love any one thus—say it were yourself—tell me, beautiful Belle-bouche! could I hope——"

"Oh, sir! I cannot now——"

"Belle-bouche! dearest Belle-bouche!—my picture was a reality—I love as I have painted—and upon my knees——"

"——car chantez,
Belle bouche rechignez,"

sang the voice of Sir Asinus, entering from the garden; and our unfortunate friend Jacques had just time to drop Belle-bouche's hand, when Sir Asinus entered.

"You're a pretty fellow!" said that worthy, "to frighten me, and make me believe you were the—Well; let us keep up appearances before the ladies. How goes it, my dear Jacques?"

Jacques does not answer; he feels an unchristian desire to exterminate his friend Sir Asinus from the face of the earth—to blot that gentleman forcibly from the sum of things.

Actuated by these friendly feelings, he gives the knight a look which nearly takes his breath away.

"Why, what is the matter?" says Sir Asinus.

Jacques sees the false position which he occupies, and groans.

"Why, dear Jacques, you distress me," says Sir Asinus with great warmth; "did I tread upon your toes?"

Jacques might very justly reply in the affirmative, but he only turns away muttering disconsolately, "One more chance!"

"I thought you were the proctor," says Sir Asinus pleasantly.

"Did you? I am going back soon, and will send him," replies Jacques with sad courtesy.

"No! don't trouble yourself!" cries Sir Asinus; "it is not necessary."

"It is no trouble," says Jacques; "but as you are probably about to return to town yourself, I will not send him."

"To town? Indeed, I am about to do no such thing. It is not every day that one gets a taste of the country."

"You stay?"

"Yes."

Jacques groans, and imprecates—sleep to descend upon his friend.

He sits down wofully. Sir Asinus scenting the joke, and determined to revenge himself, does the same joyfully. Jacques sighs, Sir Asinus laughs. Jacques directs an Olympian frown at his opponent, but Sir Asinus answers it with smiles.

Belle-bouche all this time has been endeavoring to produce the impression that she is looking over a book of engravings—being interested in Heidelberg, and fascinated with the Alhambra. From time to time her timid glance steals toward Jacques, who is sighing, or toward Sir Asinus, who is laughing.

Sir Asinus glories in his revenge. Jacques refused to tell him the news, and maligned his character to the Doctor, and forced him to listen in silence to that abuse. He takes his promised revenge—for he understands very well what he interrupted.

Jacques stays all the morning, hoping that Sir Asinus will depart; but that gentleman betrays no intention of vacating the premises. Finally, in a paroxysm of internal rage, and a perfect outward calmness, the graceful Jacques retires—with a last look for Belle-bouche.

One thought consoles him. He will escort her to the ball, and on his return in his two-seated curriculum defy the interruption of all the Asinuses that ever lived.

Poor Jacques! as he goes sadly back, the cloud rising upon the dream is more asleep than ever.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XXII.

HOW HOFFLAND PREFERRED A GLOVE TO A DOZEN PISTOLES.

One of the most beautiful walks in the neighborhood of Williamsburg was known to the fair dames and gallant cavaliers of that epoch as the "Indian Camp."

To this spot, on the morning of the day fixed for the ball at the *Raleigh*, did Mowbray and the young student Hoffland direct their steps, conversing pleasantly, and glad of the occasion to enjoy the fresh beauties of nature, which presented so agreeable a contrast to the domains of study at the good College of William and Mary. Let it not, however, be imagined that the boy Hoffland was in the habit, as Panurge said, of "breaking his head with study." Not at all. The remissness of that young gentleman in his attendance upon the lectures of the professors, had become by this time almost a proverb. Indeed, his attendance was the exception—his absence the rule. Buried in his quarters, in the neighborhood of Gloucester street, he seemed to exist in a pleasant disregard of all the rules and regulations of the college; and when the professors attempted to reason with him—which, was seldom, inasmuch as they scarcely ever saw him—he would acknowledge his sins very readily, and as readily promise amendment; and then, after the well-known fashion of sinners, return to his evil courses, and become more remiss than ever.

Mowbray would often remonstrate with him on this neglect of his studies; but Hoffland always turned aside

his advice with some amusing speech, or humorous banter. When the elder student said, "Now, Charles, as your friend I counsel you not to throw away your time and dissipate your mind;" to this Hoffland would reply, "Yes, you are right, Ernest; the morning, as you say, is lovely." Or when Mowbray would say, "Charles, you are incorrigible;" "Yes," Hoffland would reply, with his winning smile, "I knew how much you liked me."

On the fine morning to which we have now arrived, the conversation of the friends took exactly this direction. Hoffland for two or three days had obstinately kept away from the college, and "non est inventus" was the substance of the proctor's return when he was sent to drum up the absent student.

"Indeed, Charles," said Mowbray, with his calm sadness, "you should not thus allow your time to be absorbed in indolent lounging. A man has his career in the world to run, and college is the threshold. If you enter the world ignorant and awkward—and the greatest genius is awkward if ignorant—you will find the mere fops of the day pass you in the course. They may be superficial, shallow, but they have cultivated their natural gifts, while you have not done so. They enter gracefully, and succeed; you will enter awkwardly, and fail."

"A fine Mentor you are!" replied Hoffland; "and I ought to be duly grateful for your excellent advice."

"It is that of a friend."

"I know it."

"A very true friend."

"Yes," Hoffland said, "I am convinced that your friendship for me is very true. Strange you should like me so!"

"I think not: you are by yourself here, and I am naturally attracted always by inexperience. I find great freshness of thought and feeling in you, Charles——"

"Do you?"

"And more still," said Mowbray, smiling sadly; "I think you love me."

"Indeed?" said Hoffland, turning away his face.

"Yes; you gravitated toward me; but I equally to yourself. And now I think you begin to have a sincere affection for me."

"*Begin*, indeed!"

Mowbray smiled.

"I am glad you liked me from the first then," he said. "I am sure I cannot explain my sudden liking for yourself."

"But I can," said Hoffland, laughing; "we were congenial, my dear fellow—chips of the same block—companions of similar tastes. You liked what was graceful and elegant, which, of course you found in me. I have always experienced a passionate longing for truth and nobility; and this, Ernest, I find in you!"

Hoffland's tone had lost all its banter as he uttered these words; and if Mowbray had seen the look which the boy timidly cast upon his pale countenance, he would have started.

But Hoffland regained his lightness almost immediately; his earnestness passed away, and he was the same light-hearted boy.

"Look!" he cried, "that oriole is going to die for joy as he swings among the cherry blossoms! How green the grass is—what a lovely landscape!"

And Hoffland gazed rapturously at the green fields, and blossom-covered trees, and the distant river flowing on in gladness to the sea, with the kindling eye of a true poet.

"And here is the 'Indian Camp!'" he cried; "grassy, antique, and romantic!"

"Let us sit down," said Mowbray.

And seating himself upon a moss-covered stone, he leaned his head upon his hand and pondered.

"Now, I'll lay a wager you are thinking about me!" cried Hoffland; "perhaps you still revolve in your mind my various delinquencies."

"No," said Mowbray.

"I know I am very bad—very remiss. I ought to have been at college this morning, but I was not able to come."

"Why, Charles?" said Mowbray, raising his head.

"I was busy."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, reading."

"Ah! not studying?"

"No; unless Shakspeare is study."

"It is a very hard study, but not the sort which I would have you apply yourself to. What were you reading?"

"'As You Like It,'" said Hoffland; "and I was really charmed with the fair Rosalind."

"Yes," said Mowbray indifferently; "a wonderful character, such as Shakspeare only could draw."

"And as good as she was wild—as maidenly as she was pure."

Mowbray shook his head.

"That foray she made into the woods *en cavalier* was a very doubtful thing," he said.

"Why, pray?" Hoffland asked, pouting. "I should like to know what there was wrong in it."

Mowbray smiled, but made no reply.

"Answer me," said Hoffland.

"That is easy. Do you think it wholly proper, perfectly maidenly, for a woman to assume the garb of our sex?"

"Certainly; why not, sir?"

Mowbray smiled again.

"I fear any argument would only fortify you in your convictions, as our rebel student says," he replied. "True, Rosalind was the victim of circumstances, but her example is one of an exceedingly doubtful nature, or rather it is not at all doubtful."

"Pray, how?"

"Really, Charles, you make me give a reason for every thing. Well then, I think that it is indelicate in women to leave their proper sphere and descend to the level of men, and this any woman must do in assuming the masculine garb. If I am not mistaken, the common law bears me out, and inflicts a penalty upon such deviations from established usage. None but an inexperienced youth like yourself would uphold Rosalind."

Hoffland colored, and said with bitter abruptness:

"I believe you despise me, sir!"

"Despise you! Why?" said the astonished Mowbray.

"Because—because—you call me an inexperienced youth; and—and—Ernest, it is not friendly in you!—no, it is not!—it is unjust—to treat me so!"

And Hoffland turned away like a child who is about to "have a cry."

Mowbray looked at the averted face for a moment, and saw two large tears clinging to the long dusky lashes. He experienced a strange sensation in the presence of this boy which he could not explain; it was half pity for his nervous weakness of temperament, half regret at having uttered he knew not what, to move him.

"Well, well, Charles," he said, "yours is a strange character, and I never know how to shape my discourse in your presence. You fly off at every thing, and I believe you are really shedding tears——"

"No, no," said Hoffland, hastily brushing away the pearly drops; "don't look at me."

"I was wrong."

Hoffland sobbed.

"Forgive me, Charles—I will endeavor in future to avoid these occasions of dispute; forgive my harshness."

"You are forgiven," murmured Hoffland; and his sad face became again cheerful.

"I am not a very pleasant companion, I know," said Mowbray, smiling; "my own thoughts oppress me; but if I cannot be merry with you, I may at least forbear to wound your feelings."

"My feelings are not wounded, Ernest," Hoffland said, with a bright glance which shone like the sun after an April shower; "I only—only—thought you were not right in abusing Rosalind; and—and calling me 'an inexperienced youth!' I am not an inexperienced youth," he laughed; "but let us dismiss the subject. What oppresses you, Ernest? I can't bear to see you sad."

"My thoughts," said Mowbray.

"That is too general."

"It is useless to particularize."

And Mowbray's head drooped. As the pleasant May breeze raised the locks of his dark hair, his face looked very pale and sad.

"The subject of our discourse in the fields some days since?" asked Hoffland in a low tone.

"Yes," said Mowbray calmly.

A long silence followed this reply. Then Hoffland said:

"Why should that still annoy you? Men should be strong."

"Yes, yes."

"And yet you are weak."

"In my heart, very weak."

"You love her still?"

"Yes, yes; deeply, passionately, far more than ever!" said Mowbray, unable to repress this outburst.

Hoffland seemed to be frightened by the vehemence of his companion, for he turned away his head, and colored to the temples.

"Can you not conquer your feelings?" he said at length.

"No."

"Make the attempt."

"I have made it."

"Why not go and see her again then? You will lose nothing."

"Go and see her? What! after being repelled with so much insult and coldness!—after being charged with base and mercenary motives!—after having my heart struck by a cruel and unfeeling accusation—my pride humbled by a misconception as humiliating as it was unjust! Never, Charles! My heart may break—I may feel through life the bitterness of the fate which separates us for ever—I may groan and rebel and struggle with my heart—but never again will I address one syllable to that proud girl, who has trampled on me, as she would upon a worm, and told me how degraded a being I was in her eyes—no, never!"

And pale, his forehead bathed with perspiration, his frame agitated, his eyes full of fire and regret, Mowbray turned away his head and rose.

Hoffland was silent, and yet the deep color in his cheeks betrayed the impression which his companion's passionate words had made upon him.

In a few moments Mowbray had regained his calmness.

"Pardon me, Charles, for annoying you with these things," he said, with a last tremor in his voice; "but your question prompted me to speak. Let us not return to this subject; it afflicts me to speak of it, and there is no good reason why I should revive my sufferings. Let us go back, and endeavor in the pleasant sunshine to find some balm for all our grief. I do not despair of conquering my passion, for all things are possible to human energy—this far at least. Come, let us return."

Calmly buttoning his coat, Mowbray took Charles's arm, and they bent their way back to town.

As for Hoffland, he seemed overcome by the vehemence of his companion, and for some time was completely silent. He seemed to be thinking.

As they approached the town, however, his spirits seemed to regain their customary cheerfulness, and he smiled.

"Well, well, Ernest," he said, "perhaps your grief may be cured in some other way than by strangulation. Let us not speak further of it, but admire the beautiful day. Is it not sweet?"

"Very," said Mowbray calmly.

"It is getting warm."

"Yes, Charles; summer is not far distant."

"Summer! I always liked the summer; but we have not then those beautiful blossoms—look how they cluster

on the boughs, and what a sweet perfume!"

"Very sweet."

"Then another drawback of summer is its dust. I hate dust; and it is already beginning to invade my hands."

"Wear gloves then, Charles," said Mowbray, smiling at the boyish *naïveté* of his companion's tone.

"I'd like to know how I can, without the money to buy them," said Hoffland; "you are very unreasonable, Mr. Mowbray!"

Mowbray smiled.

"Have you none?" he said.

"Not a penny—at the moment. My supplies have not reached my new address."

And Hoffland laughed.

"Let me lend you some. How much will you have? We are friends, you know, Charles, and you can have no feelings of delicacy in borrowing from me. See," said Mowbray, taking out his purse, "I have a plenty of pistoles. Take a dozen."

"And how many will you have left?"

"Let me see—there are thirteen. I shall still have enough. There are twelve, Charles."

And he counted them out, leaving the single coin in his purse.

Hoffland, however, drew back, and obstinately closed his hands.

"You ought to be ashamed to tempt an inexperienced youth to go in debt," he said; "that is your fine guardianship, Mr. Mowbray."

"Come, Charles; this is folly. You do not become my debtor; I do not want the money. Take it, and repay it when your own comes."

"No, I will not. But still I want a pair of gloves. Do me a greater favor still, Ernest. Give me those pretty fringed gloves you wear, and which are plainly too small for your huge hands. I know Miss Lucy gave them to you, for she said as much the other day—I asked her!—and now I want them. Don't refuse me, Ernest; my hand is much smaller and handsomer than yours, and they will just fit me."

Mowbray took off the gloves, asking himself, with a sad smile, what charm this boy exercised over him.

"There they are then, Charles," he said; "I can refuse you nothing."

"Suppose I asked for the hand as well as the gloves?"

"The hand? Perfectly at your service," said Mowbray, holding out his hand; "I can only give it to you in a friendly spirit, however, and there it is."

"No," said Hoffland, drawing back; "I will not accept it upon those terms—but I have the gloves. Thank you, Ernest. Perhaps some day I may ask you to accept a present from me; or at least I promise not to refuse you if you ask what I have this moment refused."

And laughing heartily, Hoffland cried:

"Just look at those flowers! and there is the great city of Williamsburg! We pass from Indian Camps to learned halls—from barbarism to civilization. Come! let us get into Gloucester street—that promenade of elegance and fashion! Come on, Ernest!"

And they entered the town.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XXIII.

HOW SIR ASINUS FISHED FOR SWALLOWS, AND WHAT HE CAUGHT.

Gloucester Street was alive with a motley crowd of every description, from the elegant dame who drove by in her fine four-horse chariot with its outriders, to the most obscure denizen of the surrounding old field, come on this particular day to Williamsburg, in view of the great ball to be held at the *Raleigh* tavern.

Mowbray and Hoffland gazed philosophically upon the moving crowd, but threaded their way onward, without much comment. Hoffland was anxious to reach his lodging, it seemed; the culminating sun had already made his face rosy with its warm radiance, and he held a white handkerchief before his eyes to

protect them.

"It is growing very warm," he said; "really, Ernest, I think your present will come into active use before the summer."

"My gloves?"

"No, mine."

"Ah, well, Charles," continued Ernest, "we ought to rejoice in the warmth, inasmuch as it is better for the poor than cold—the winter. Let us not complain."

"I do not; but I see precious few poor about now: they all seem to be rejoicing, without needing any assistance therein from us. Look at that fine chariot."

"At Madam Finette's door?"

"Yes."

"I think I recognise the driver—Tom, from Mrs. Wimple's," said Mowbray calmly.

"Mrs. Wimple—who is she?"

"A lady, at whose house I suffered one of my cruellest disappointments," said Mowbray with a shadowed brow; "let us not speak of that!"

"Of what?"

"You do not understand?"

"I? Of course not."

"It was there that I was told, by the woman I loved, how despicable I was," said Mowbray with a cruel tremor of his pale lip.

"Oh—yes—pardon me," Hoffland said; and turning aside his head, he murmured, "Men—men! how blind you are! yes, high-gravel blind!" and looking again at Mowbray, Hoffland perceived that his face had become calm again.

"I promised Lucy to bring home some little articles from this place," he said calmly; "go in with me a moment, Charles."

Hoffland drew back.

"No," he said; "I believe—I have—I think I'd rather not."

"I will detain you but a moment."

Hoffland's glance plunged itself into the interior of Madam Finette's emporium; and the consequence was that the young gentleman retreated three steps.

"I don't think I have time," he said laughing; "but I'll wait for you here: the sun is warm, but I can easily protect my face by holding my handkerchief to it."

And taking up his position in the vestibule, so to speak, of the shop, Hoffland placed himself as much out of view as possible, and waited. Spite of the fact that the sun's rays did not penetrate to the spot which he occupied, the white handkerchief was still used as a shade.

Mowbray entered and approached Madam Finette.

But that lady was busy; her counter was covered with magnificent silks, ribbons, velvets and laces, which she was unrolling, folding up, drawing out, and chattering about, as fast as her small hands and agile tongue would permit. Before her stood a lady, who, accompanied by her cavalier, was engaged in the momentous task of making up her mind what colors of velvet and satin ribbon she should select.

The lady was young and smiling—cheerful and graceful. When she laughed, the musical chime of the timepiece overhead was drowned, and died away; when she smiled, the sunlight seemed to have darted one of its brightest beams into the shop. The gentleman was elegant and melancholy: he looked like Endymion on Latmos trying to recall his dream, or like Narcissus fading into shadow. His costume resembled a variegated Dutch tulip; his hair was powdered to excess; he sighed and whispered sadly, and looked at the lady.

The lady was called Belle-bouche, Belinda, or Rebecca.

The gentleman was familiarly known as Jacques.

"I think that would suit you," sighed Jacques.

"This ribbon?" asked Belle-bouche, with a gay smile.

"Yes; it is yours by right. It is the prettiest of all."

"I am glad you like it—I do."

"It would suit the mythologic Maia."

"Then it will not me."

"Yes, yes," sighed Jacques, in a whisper; "you are May incarnate—with its tender grace, and lovely freshness, and Arcadian beauty."

Belle-bouche smiled, and yet did not laugh at the oft repeated Arcadian simile.

"Methinks," said Jacques, with a species of melancholy grace, "these ribbons would suit your costume at the Arcadian festival, which you have honored me with the management of——"

"At Shadynook? Oh, yes! would they now?"

"I think so, madam. Imagine the crooks wreathed with these ribbons and with flowers—the shepherds would go mad with delight."

"Then I will get a large roll of this."

"No, no—that is my affair; but you must wear something else."

"I? What, pray?"

"Pink: it is the color of youth, and joy, and love—worn by the Graces and the Naiads, Oreads and Dryads;—the color of the sea-shell, and the autumn leaves and flowers—something like it at least," Jacques added, finding himself mounting into the realms of imagination.

Belle-bouche blushed slightly, and turned away. Her eyes fell upon Mowbray, who bowed.

"Oh, sir, I am very glad to see you," said the cheerful young girl, holding out her hand; "you must come to our party at Shadynook."

"Madam, I am afraid—" commenced Mowbray, with a bow.

But Belle-bouche interrupted him:

"No! I really will take no refusal! It will be on Thursday, and Aunt Wimple wishes you to come. I am manageress, and I have masculine assistance to compel all invited to be with us."

With which words she glanced at Jacques, who saluted Mowbray with a sad smile.

"And you must bring your sister Lucy, Mr. Mowbray. I am sorry we know each other so slightly; but I am sure we shall be intimate if she comes. Do not refuse to bring her now."

Belle-bouche enforced her requests with such a wealth of smiles, that Mowbray was compelled to yield.

He promised to come, and then suddenly remembered that Philippa would be there, and almost groaned.

Belle-bouche finished her purchases, and went out.

As she passed Hoffland she dropped her handkerchief. That young gentleman, however, declined to pick it up and restore it, though the absent Jacques did not perceive it. Jacques assisted the young girl into her carriage, pressed her hand with melancholy affection, and went away sighing.

Mowbray, having procured what Lucy wished, came forth again and was joined by Hoffland. That gentleman held a magnificent lace handkerchief in his hand.

"See," he said, "what that languishing little beauty dropped in passing to her carriage. What a love of a handkerchief!"

"What an odd vocabulary you have collected," said Mowbray, smiling. "Well, you should have restored it to her, Charles."

"Restored it!"

"Yes."

"Ernest, you astonish me!" cried Hoffland, laughing; "address a young lady whom I have not the pleasure of knowing?"

"It would be to do her a simple service, and nothing could be more proper."

"You are a pretty guide for youth, are you not? No, sir! I never intrude!"

"Suppose this young lady were asleep in a house which was burning—would you not intrude to inform her of that fact?"

"Never, sir! Enter a lady's bower? Is it possible you counsel such a proceeding?"

Mowbray smiled sadly. "You have excellent spirits, Charles," he said; "I almost envy you."

"No, indeed, I have not," said Hoffland, with one of his strange transitions from gaiety to thoughtfulness; "I wear more than one mask, Ernest."

"Are you ever sad?"

"Yes, indeed," said Hoffland, with a little sigh.

"Well, well, I fancy 'tis not frequently. If you feel so to-day, the ball to-night will restore your spirits; and there you may restore your handkerchief with perfect propriety."

"How?"

"Get an introduction."

Hoffland's lip crimped; but nodding his head—

"Yes," said he, "I think I shall be introduced, for I wish very much to be present at that Arcadian festival."

"You heard, then?"

Hoffland colored.

"N—o," he said; "but I believe a number of invitations are out—for Denis, and others;—a good fellow, Denis."

"Excellent; and I suppose, therefore, you will be at the Raleigh this evening?"

"Yes, about twelve—I have my studies to attend to," said Hoffland, laughing; "you have no idea how much the character of *Rosalind* has interested me lately. I think it never seized so strongly upon my attention. If ever we have any private acting, I shall certainly appear in that character!"

Mowbray smiled again.

"Your person would suit the forest page very well," he said; "for you are slender, and slight in figure. But how would you compass the scenes where Rosalind appears in her proper character—in female dress?"

"Oh!" laughed Hoffland, with some quickness, "I think I could easily act that part."

"I doubt it."

"You don't know my powers, Ernest."

"Well, perhaps not; but let us dismiss the ball, and Rosalind, and all. How motley a crowd! I almost agree with Jacques, that 'motley's the only wear.'"

"Jacques! that reminds me of the melancholy fellow we saw just now, sighing and languishing with that little Belle-bouche——"

"Why, you know her familiar name—how, Charles?"

Hoffland laughed.

"Oh" he said, "did I not leave my MS. love songs to Jacques; and can you imagine that I was ignorant of—but we are throwing away words. Everybody's in love, I believe—Jacques is not singular. Look at this little pair of lovers—school-girl and school-boy, devoted to each other, and consuming with the tender passion. Poor unfortunate creatures!"

With which words Hoffland laughed, and pointed to a boy and girl who were passing along some steps in advance of them.

The girl was that young lady who received, as the reader may possibly recollect, so much excellent and paternal advice from Jacques. She was not burdened with her satchel on this occasion, but carried, in the same careless and playful fashion, a small reticule; while her cavalier took charge of her purchases, stored in two or three bundles, and kindly relinquished to the gentleman by the lady, as is still the custom in our own day.

The boy was a fine manly young fellow of sixteen, with a bright kind face, rosy and freckled. There seemed to be quite an excellent understanding between himself and his companion, and they went on conversing gaily.

But in this world we know not when the fates will interrupt our pleasures;—a profound remark which was verified on this occasion.

Just as the girl was passing the residence of Sir Asinus, her feet dancing for joy, her curls illuminated, her reticule describing the largest possible arc of a circle—just then, little Martha, or Puss, as she was called,

found herself suddenly arrested, and the over-skirt of her silk dress raised with a sudden jerk. The reticule ceased to pendulate, the conversation stopped abruptly, the boy and girl stood profoundly astonished.

"Oh, me!" cried the child, clasping her hands; "what's that?"

"Witchcraft!" suggested her companion, laughing.

"No, my dear young friends," here interposed a voice from the clouds—figuratively speaking—really from an upper window; "it is not witchcraft, but a simple result of natural laws."

The child raised her head quickly at these words, and saw leaning out of a dormer window of Mrs. Bobbery's mansion, that identical red-haired gentleman whom she had seen upon a former occasion; in a word, Sir Asinus: Sir Asinus dressed magnificently in his old faded dressing-gown; his sandy hair standing erect upon his head; his features sharper than ever; and his eyes more eloquent with philosophical and cynical humor. As he leaned far out of the window, he resembled a large owl in a dressing-gown, with arms instead of legs, fingers instead of claws.

"I repeat, sir and miss," he said blandly—"or probably it would be more proper to say, miss and sir—I repeat that this is not witchcraft, and your dress is simply caught by a hook, which hook contained a grain of wheat, which wheat has been devoured. Wait! I will descend."

And disappearing from the window, Sir Asinus soon made his appearance at the door, and approached the boy and girl. The girl was laughing.

"Oh, sir! I think I understand now—you were fishing for swallows, and the hook——"

"Caught in your dress! Precisely, my beautiful little lady, whom I have the pleasure of seeing for the fiftieth time, since I see you passing every morning, noon and evening—precisely. Immured in my apartment for political reasons, I am reduced to this species of amusement; and this hook attached to this thread contained a grain of wheat. It floated far up, and some cormorant devoured it; then the wind ceasing, it had the misfortune to strike into your dress."

With which words Sir Asinus made an elegant bow, wrapping his old dressing-gown about him with one hand, while he extricated the hook with the other.

"There! you are free!" he said; "I am very sorry, my dear little lady——"

"Oh, indeed, sir! it is very funny! I'm almost glad it caught me, Bathurst laughed so much."

"I have the pleasure of making Mr. Bathurst's acquaintance," said Sir Asinus politely; and in spite of little Martha's correction, that Mr. Bathurst was not his name, he added, "Your cavalier at the ball to-night, I presume?"

"Oh, sir, you are laughing," said the girl, with her bright face; "but we are going to the ball."

"And will you dance with me?"

"If *you* will, sir."

"Extraordinary innocence!" muttered the knight, "not common among young ladies;" then he added, "I assure you, Miss—you have not told me——"

"My name is Martha, sir."

"Well, Miss Martha, I shall dance with you most delightedly. Asinus is my name—I am descended from a great Assyrian family; and this is my lodging. Looking up any morning, my dear Miss Martha, you will receive the most elegant bow I have—such as is due to a Fairy Queen, and the empress of my soul.—Good morning, Mowbray."

And saluting the students who passed, laughing, Sir Asinus ascended again, muttering and wrapping his old dressing-gown more tightly around him.

"Yes," he said, "there's no doubt about the fact in my own mind;—I am just as much in love with that pretty young girl who has left me laughing and joyous, as that ridiculous Jacques is with his beauty at Shadynook. I thought at one time I was in love with Belle-bouche myself, but I was mistaken. I certainly was convinced of it, however, or why did I name my sail-boat the 'Rebecca'—that being the actual name of Miss Belle-bouche? Yet I was not in love with that young lady—and *am* in love with this little creature of fifteen and a half, who has passed me every morning and evening, going to school. Going to school! there it is! I, the great political thinker, the originator of ideas, the student, the philosopher, the cynic—I am in love with a school-girl! Well, I am not aware that the fact of acquiring a knowledge of geography and numbers, music, and other things, has the effect of making young ladies disagreeable. Therefore I uphold the doctrine that love for young ladies who attend school is not wholly ridiculous—else how could those who go on studying until they are as old as the surrounding hills, be ever loved with reason? I am therefore determined to fall deeper still in love, and write more verses, and abolish that old dull scoundrel Coke, and become a sighing, languishing, poetic Lovelace. I'll go and dance, and feel my pulse every hour, and look at the weather-glass of my affections, and at night, or rather in the morning, report to myself the result. What a lucky lover I am! I will write a sonnet to that thread, and an ode to the hook;—I will expand the affair into an epic!"

With which gigantic idea Sir Asinus kicked aside a volume of Coke which obstructed his way, seized a pen, and frowning dreadfully, began to compose.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XXIV.

HOFFLAND IS WHISKED AWAY IN A CHARIOT.

"What an oddity!" said Hoffland, as leaving the domain of Sir Asinus behind them, the two students passed on, still laughing at the grotesque appearance of the knight; "this gentleman seems to live in an atmosphere of jests and humor."

"I think it is somewhat forced."

"Somewhat forced?"

"At times."

"How?"

"I mean that he is as often sad as merry; and more frequently earnest and serious than careless."

"Is it possible, Ernest?"

"I think I am right."

"Sir Asinus—as I have heard him called—a serious man?"

"Yes, and a very profound one."

"You surprise me!"

"Well, I think that some day he will surprise the world: he is a most profound thinker, and has that dangerous trait for opponents, a clearness of perception which cuts through the rind of a subject, and eviscerates the real core of it with extraordinary ease. You know——"

"Now you are going to talk politics," said Hoffland, laughing.

"No," said Ernest.

"I do not like politics," Hoffland continued; "they weary me, and I would much rather talk of balls.—What a funny figure Sir Asinus will cut with that little creature—in reel or minuet!"

And Hoffland complimented his own conception with a laugh.

"I scarcely fancy he will go in his old dressing-gown," said Mowbray with his sad smile; "that would be a poor compliment to his Excellency, and the many beautiful dames who will meet him."

"Is it to be a large ball?"

"I believe so."

"And very gay?"

"No doubt."

"You escort Miss Lucy?"

"Yes."

"And do you anticipate much pleasure?"

"Can you ask me, Charles?"

"Why—I thought you might throw off—this feeling you have——"

"I cannot," Mowbray said, shaking his head; "time only can accomplish that—not music, and gay forms, and laughter! Ah, Charles!" he added with a deep and weary sigh, "you plainly know nothing of my feeling. I cannot prevent myself from speaking of it—it makes me the merest boy; and now I say that it is far too strong to be dispelled in any degree by merriment. Mirth and joy and festive scenes obliterate some annoyances—those vague disquietudes which oppress some persons; they are scarcely a balm for sorrow, real sorrow."

Hoffland held down his head and sighed.

"I shall see her there to-night, I doubt not," Mowbray went on, striving to preserve his calmness; "our

glances will meet; her satirical smile will rise to her lips, and she will turn away as indifferently as if she had not cruelly and wantonly wounded a heart which loves her truly—deeply. This I shall suffer—this I anticipate: can you ask me then if I look forward to the ball with pleasure?"

Hoffland raised his head; his face was full of smiles.

"But suppose she does not look thus at you?" he said.

"I do not understand——"

"Suppose Philippa—was not that her name?—suppose she smiles when you bow to her: for you will bow, won't you, Ernest?"

"Assuredly; but to reply to your question. I should know perfectly well that her smile was the untrue manœuvre of a coquette. Ah! Charles! Charles! may you never know what it is to see a false smile in woman—cold and chilling—the glitter of sunlight upon snow. It is worse than frowns!"

"Ernest, you are a strange person," said Hoffland; "you seem determined to misjudge this young girl, who is not as bad as you think her, my life upon it! So, frown or smile, you are determined to hate her?"

"I do not hate her! Would to Heaven I could get as far from love for her, as the neutral ground of indifference."

"Unhappy man!" said Hoffland; "you pray to be delivered from love!"

"Devoutly."

"It is our greatest happiness."

"And deepest misery."

"Misanthrope!"

"No, Charles, I neither hate men nor women; I do not permit this disappointment to sour my heart. But I cannot become an advocate of the feeling which has caused me such cruel suffering. Let us say no more. We shall meet at the ball, and then you will be able to judge whether I am mistaken in the estimate I place upon this young girl's character. She is beautiful, haughty, suspicious, and unfeeling: it tears my heart to say it, but it is true. You will never after this evening doubt my unhappiness, or charge me with error."

"Probably not," said Hoffland, turning away his head; "I will make your error plain to you—but promise to speak of it no more."

"What do you mean by 'make my error plain to me'?"

"You will see."

"Charles!" said Mowbray suddenly, "you cannot have designed to approach this lady upon the subject which I have spoken to you of, as friend to friend? That is not possible!"

"I shall not say one single word to your lady-love."

"Explain then."

"Never—I am a Sphinx, an oracle: until the time comes I am dumb."

"You only strive to raise my spirits," said Mowbray with his sad smile; "that is very kind in you, but I fear it is even more than you could do."

"By which I suppose you mean that I could 'raise your spirits' if any body could."

"I may say yes—for you have a rare cheerfulness. It is almost contagious."

Hoffland looked sidewise at his companion for a moment with a curious smile, and said:

"Ernest."

"Well, Charles."

"How would you like to have—but it is too foolish."

"Go on: finish your sentence."

"No, you will laugh."

"Perhaps I shall: I hope so," Mowbray said, sadly smiling.

There was so much sadness in his tones, spite of the smile, that Hoffland's eyes filled with tears.

"What I was about to say was very ridiculous," the boy said, with a slight tremor in his voice; "but you know almost every thing I say is ridiculous."

"No, indeed, Charles; you are a singular mixture of excellent sense and fanciful humor."

"Well, then, attribute my question to humor."

"Willingly."

"I was about to ask you—as you were kind enough to say that I could make you laugh if any one could—I was about to ask, how would you like to have a wife like me?"

And Hoffland burst out laughing. Ernest sighed.

"I think I should like it very well—to reply simply to your question."

"Indeed!"

"Yes."

"What do you admire so much in me?"

"I love more than I admire, Charles."

"Do you?" And the boy's head drooped.

"Yes," said Mowbray; "you possess a childlike ingenuousness and simplicity which is exceedingly refreshing to me after intense study. I would call your conversation at times prattle, but for the fear of offending you."

"Oh, you will not."

"Prattle is very engaging, you know," said Mowbray, "and I often feel as if my weary head would be at rest upon your friendly shoulder."

"Why don't you rest it there then?"

Mowbray smiled.

"You may answer that question better than myself," he said: "for some strange reason, you always avoid me when I approach you."

"Avoid you!"

"Yes, Charles."

"Why, my dear follow," said Hoffland, with a free-and-easy air, "come as near as you choose; here, let us lock arms! Does that look like avoiding you?"

Mowbray smiled.

"It is very different here in the street," he said; "but let us dismiss this idle subject. It is an odd way of throwing away time to debate whether you would make a good wife."

"I don't think it is," said Hoffland, and he laughed. "If I would make a good wife, I would make a good husband; and as I have natural doubts upon the latter point, I wish to have them solved. But I weary you—let us part. *Good-bye*," added Hoffland, with a strange expression of face and tone of voice; "here is my lodging, and you go on to the college."

"No, I think I will go up and sit down a moment."

Hoffland stood still.

"It is strange, but true, that I have never paid you visit," continued Mowbray, "and now I will go and see your quarters."

"Really, my dear Ernest—the fact is—I assure you on my honor—there is nothing to attract——"

Mowbray smiled.

"Never mind," he said, "I will go up, if from nothing else, from simple curiosity."

The singular young man looked exceedingly vexed at this, and did not move.

Mowbray was about to pass with a smile up the steps leading to the door, when an acquaintance came by and stopped a moment to speak to him. Mowbray seemed interested in what he said, and half turned from Hoffland.

No sooner had he done so than the boy placed one cautious foot upon the stone step, looked quickly around, saw that he was unobserved; and entering the house with a bound, ran lightly up the steps, opened the door of his apartment, entered it, closed the door, and disappeared. The sound of the bolt in moving proved that he had locked himself in.

In two minutes Mowbray turned round to speak to his companion: he was no where to be seen. The friend

with whom he had been conversing had observed nothing, and suggested that Mr. Hoffland must have gone on.

No; he had, however, gone to his room probably. And ascending the stairs, Mowbray knocked at the door. No voice replied.

"Strange boy!" he murmured; "he cannot be here, however—and yet that singular objection he seemed to have to my visiting him—singular!"

And Mowbray, finding himself no nearer a conclusion than at first, descended, and slowly passed on toward the college.

No sooner had he disappeared within its walls than a slight noise at Hoffland's window proved that he had been watching Mowbray. All then became silent. In an hour, however, the door was cautiously opened, and the boy issued forth. He carefully closed the door, re-locked it, put the key in his pocket, descended, and commenced walking rapidly toward the southern portion of the town, depositing as he went by a letter in the post.

He passed through the suburbs, continued his way over the open road leading toward Jamestown, and in half an hour arrived at a little roadside ordinary—one of those houses of private entertainment which are wholly different from the great public taverns.

Fifty paces beyond this ordinary a chariot with four horses was waiting in a glade of the forest, and on catching sight of it Hoffland hastened his steps, and almost ran.

He reached the chariot breathless from his long walk and the rapidity with which he had passed over the distance between the ordinary and the vehicle; threw open the door before the coachman knew he was near; entered, said in a low voice, "Home!" and sank back exhausted.

As though only waiting for this single word, the chariot began to move, and the horses, drawing the heavy vehicle, disappeared at a gallop.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XXV.

SIR ASINUS GOES TO THE BALL.

Upon the most moderate calculation, Sir Asinus must have tied his lace cravat a dozen times before he finally coaxed his smoothly shaven chin to rest in quiet grace upon its white folds. Having accomplished this important matter, and donned his coat of Mecklenburg silk, the knight took a last survey of himself in the mirror, carefully reconnoitred the street below for lurking proctors, and then brushing the nap of his cocked hat and humming his favorite Latin song, stepped daintily into the street and bent his way toward the Raleigh.

Sir Asinus thought he had never seen a finer ball; for, to say nothing of the chariots and coachmen and pawing horses and liveries at the door—of the splendid gentlemen dismounting from their cobs and entering gay and free the spacious ball-room—there was the great and overwhelming array of fatal beauty raining splendor on the noisy air, and turning every thing into delight.

The great room—the *Apollo* famed in history for ever—blazed from end to end with lights; the noble minstrels of the festival sat high above and stunned the ears with fiddles, hautboys, flutes and fifes and bugles; the crowd swayed back and forth, and buzzed and hummed and rustled with a well-bred laughter;—and from all this fairy spectacle of brilliant lights and fair and graceful forms arose a perfume which made the ascetic Sir Asinus once more happy, causing his lips to smile, his eyes to dance, his very pointed nose to grow more sharp as it inhaled the fragrance showering down in shivering clouds.

Make way for his Excellency!—here he comes, the gallant gay Fauquier, with a polite word for every lady, and a smile for the old planters who have won and lost with him their thousands of pounds. And the smiling Excellency has a word for the students too, and among the rest for Sir Asinus, his prime favorite.

"Ah, Tom!" he says, "give you good evening."

"Good evening, your Excellency," said Sir Asinus, bowing.

"From your exile?"

"Yes, sir."

"Ah, well, *carpe diem*! be happy while you may—that has been my principle in life. A fine assembly; and if I am not mistaken, I hear the shuffle of cards yonder in the side room."

"Yes, sir."

"Ah, you Virginians! I find your thirst for play even greater than my own."

"I think your Excellency introduced the said thirst."

"What! introduced it? I? Not at all. You Virginians are true descendants of the cavaliers—those long-haired gentlemen who drank, and diced, and swore, and got into the saddle, and fought without knowing very accurately what they were fighting about. See, I have drawn you to the life!"

Sir Asinus smiled.

"We shall some day have to fight, sir," he said, "and we shall then falsify our ancestral character."

"How?"

"We shall know what we fight about!"

"Bah! my dear Tom! there you are beginning to talk politics, and soon you will be rattling the stamp act and navigation laws in my ears, like two pebbles shaken together in the hand. Enough! Be happy while you may, I say again, and forget your theories. Ah! there is my friend, Mrs. Wimple, and her charming niece. Good evening, madam."

And his Excellency made a courtly bow to Aunt Wimple, who was resplendent in a head-dress which towered aloft like a helmet.

And passing on, the Governor smiled upon Miss Belle-bouche, and saluted Jacques.

On former occasions we have attempted to describe the costume of this latter gentleman; on the present occasion we shall not. It is enough to say that the large tulip bed at Shadynook seemed to have left that domain and entered the ball-room of the Raleigh, with the lady who attended to them.

This was Belle-bouche, as we have said; and the tender languishing face of the little beauty was full of joy at the bright scene.

As for poor Jacques, he was oceans deep in love, and scarcely looked at any other lady in the room. This caused much amusement among his friends who were looking at him; but what does a lover care for laughter?

"Ah!" he says, "a truly Arcadian scene! Methinks the Muses and the Graces have become civilized, and assembled here to dance the minuet. You will have a delightful evening."

"Oh, I'm sure I shall!" says Belle-bouche, smiling.

"And I shall, because I am with you."

With which words, Jacques smiles and sighs; and his watchful friends follow his eyes, and laugh more loudly than ever.

They say to him afterwards: "Well, old fellow, the way you were sweet upon your lady-love on that occasion, was a sin! You almost ate her up with your eyes, and at one time you looked as if you were going to dissolve into a sigh, or melt into a smile. At any rate, you are gone—go on!"

Belle-bouche receives the tender compliments of Jacques with a flitting blush, and says, in order to divert him from the subject of herself:

"There is Mr. Mowbray, entering with his sister Lucy. She is very sweet——"

"But not——"

"And must be at our May-day," adds Belle-bouche, quickly. "Good evening, Mr. Mowbray and Miss Lucy; I wanted to see you." With which words Belle-bouche gives her hand to Lucy. "You must come to our May-day at Shadynook;—promise now. Mr. Mowbray delivered my message?"

"Yes; and I will certainly come—if Ernest will take me," says Lucy, smiling.

The pale face of Mowbray is lit up for a moment by a sad smile, and he replies:

"I will come, madam—if I have courage," he murmurs, turning away.

"You must; we shall have a merry day, I think. What a fine assembly!"

"Very gay."

"Oh, there's Jenny——"

"A friend?"

"Oh, yes!"

And while this conversation proceeds, Jacques is talking with Lucy. He interrupts himself in the middle of a sentence, to bow paternally to a young lady who has just entered.

"Good evening, my dear Miss Merryheart," he says.

"Oh, sir! that is not my name," says little Martha, laughing.

"What is?"

"Martha."

"And are you not desirous of changing it?"

The girl laughs.

"Say, for Mrs. Jacques?"

"Oh!" cries Martha, with a merry glance and a pleasant affectation of reserve, "that is too public."

"The fact is," replies Jacques, smiling, "you are looking so lovely, that I could not help it."

"Oh, sir!" says the girl blushing, but delighted. Which expression makes her companion—a youthful gentleman called Bathurst—frown with jealousy.

Lucy is admiring the child, when she finds herself saluted by Sir Asinus, who has made her acquaintance some time since.

"A delightful evening, Miss Mowbray," says that worthy; "and I find you admiring a very dear friend of mine."

"Who is that, sir?" says Lucy, smiling.

"Little Miss Martha."

"She is your friend?"

"Are you not?" says Sir Asinus, bowing with great devotion to Martha; "you caught me this morning, you know."

"Oh no, sir! you caught me!"

"Indeed!" cried Sir Asinus; "I thought 'twas the lady's part!"

And he relishes his joke so much and laughs so loud, that the girl discovers her mistake and blushes, which increases her fresh beauty a thousand-fold.

Sir Asinus heaves a sigh, and contemplates a declaration immediately. He asks her hand for a quadrille instead.

"Oh, yes, sir!"

Whereupon Bathurst revolves gloomy thoughts of revenge in the depths of his soul.

Sir Asinus, seeing his rival's moodiness, smiles; but this smile disappears like a sunbeam. He sees Doctor Small approaching, and turns to flee.

In doing so, he runs up against and treads on the toes of Mr. Jack Denis, who laughs, and bowing to Lucy, presses toward her and takes his place at her side.

Sir Asinus makes his way through the crowd, paying his respects to every body.

He arrives, at length, at the door of the side room where the devotees of cards are busy at tictac. He is soon seated at one of the tables by the side of Governor Fauquier, and is playing away with the utmost delight.

In this way the ball commenced; and so it went on with loud music, and a hum of voices rising almost to a shout at times, until the supper hour. And then, the profuse supper having been discussed with that honorable devotion which ever characterizes Virginians, the dancing recommenced, more madly than ever.

But let not the reader imagine that the dances of the old time were like our own. Not at all. They had no waltzes, polkas, or the like, but dignified quadrilles, and stately minuets; and it was only when the company had become perfectly acquainted with each other, at the end of the assembly, that the reel was inaugurated, with its wild excessive mirth—its rapid, darting, circling, and exuberant delight.

Poor Sir Asinus! he had not been well treated by his lady-love—we mean the little Martha. That young lady liked the noble knight, but Brutus-like, loved Bathurst more. The worthy Sir Asinus found his graces of mind and person no match for the laughing freckled face of her youthful admirer, and with all the passing hours he grew more sad.

He ended by offering his heart and hand, we verily believe, in the middle of a quadrille; but on this point we are not quite certain. Sure are we that on this night the great politician found himself defeated by a boy—this we may assert from after events.

In the excess of his mortification he betook himself to cards, and was soon sent away penniless. He rose from the card-table feeling, like Catiline, ripe for conspiracy and treason. He re-entered the ball-room and strolled about disconsolate—a stalking ghost.

Just as he made his appearance a lady entered from the opposite door, and Sir Asinus felt the arm of a gentleman, against whom he was pressed by the crowd, tremble. He turned and looked at him. It was Mowbray; and he was looking at the lady who had just entered.

This lady was Philippa.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XXVI.

ERNEST AND PHILIPPA.

The young girl had never looked more beautiful. She was clad in a simple white satin, her dazzling arms were bare, but she wore not a single bracelet; her hair was carried back from her temples, and powdered until it resembled a midnight strewed with star-dust—but not a single jewel glittered above her imperial brow, or on her neck. She looked like an uncrowned queen, and took her place as one not needing ornaments.

Poor Mowbray, as we have seen, trembled slightly as she entered. With all his strength he could not restrain this exhibition of emotion.

When he had visited her so often at Shadynook she had invariably worn a number of jewels, and seemed to have taken an idle delight in decorating her person with all the splendor which unlimited wealth places at the command of those who possess it. Now she came like a simple village maiden—like a May-day queen; queen not in virtue of her jewels or her wealth, but for her beauty and simplicity and kindness.

If he had loved her before, poor Mowbray now more than loved her.

All his resolutions melted before her approach, as the iceberg thaws and dissolves beneath the rays of a tropic sky. He had floated into the old latitudes of love and warmth again, and his cold heart once more began to beat—his hardness to pass away; leaving the old, true, faithful love.

She came on carelessly through the crowd, dispensing smiles and gay laughter. Surrounded by a host of admirers, she talked with all of them at once—scattered here a jest, there a smile; asked here a question, replied gaily there to one addressed to her; and as she moved, the crowd of gallant gentlemen moved with her, as the stars hover around and follow in the wake of the bright harvest moon.

Philippa was "easily foist." She had that rare joyousness which is contagious, making all who come within its influence merry like itself; and with her wildest laughter and her most careless jests, a maiden simpleness and grace was mingled which made the "judicious" who had "grieved" before as much her admirers as the ruffled and powdered fine gentlemen who bowed and smiled and whispered to her as she moved.

Poor Mowbray! He saw what he had lost, and groaned.

This was the woman whom he loved—would have given worlds to have love him again. This was the bold true nature he had felt such admiration for—and now he saw how maidenly she was, and only saw it fully when she was lost to him.

Could she have ever uttered those cruel words which still echoed in his heart?—and was this kind and happy face, this open, frank, and lovely girl, the woman who had struck his heart so rudely?

Could he not love her still, and go to her and say, "I wronged you, pardon me, I love you more than ever"?

No; all that was over, and he might love her madly, with insane energy, and break his heart with the thought of her beauty and simplicity and truth; but never would he again approach a woman who despised him—looked upon him as an adventurer and fortune-hunter.

Still Philippa came on slowly, bowing, smiling, and jesting—she ever approached nearer.

Mowbray felt a shudder run through his body, and turned to leave the spot.

As he did so, he heard a voice which made his ears tingle, his heart sink, his cheek flush, utter in the most quiet manner, and without any exhibition of coldness or satire or affectation, the words:

"Good evening, Mr. Mowbray. Will you not speak to me?"

Mowbray became calm suddenly, by one of those efforts of resolution which characterized him.

"Good evening, madam," he said, approaching the young girl unconsciously; "I trust you are well."

And wondering at himself, he stood beside her.

"I believe I am very well," she said, smiling; "will you give me your arm?"

Mowbray presented his arm, bowing calmly; and with a smile which embraced the whole mortified group of gentlemen, the young girl turned away with him.

"I have not had the pleasure of seeing you—have I?—lately," she said; "where have you been, if I may ask a very impertinent question?"

"At Williamsburg, madam."

"And never at Shadynook?"

"I was informed that you had gone home."

"Yes, so I did. But then if you had much—friendship for me, I think you might have followed me."

Mowbray was so much moved by the fascinating glance which accompanied these words, that he could only murmur:

"Follow you, madam?"

"Yes; I believe when gentlemen have friends—particular friends among the ladies, and those friends leave them, they go to seek them."

"I am unfortunately a poor law student, madam—I have little time for visits."

Philippa smiled.

"I am afraid that is an evasion, sir," she said.

"How, madam?"

"The true reason I fear is, that the rule I have spoken of does not apply to you and myself."

"The rule——?"

"That we follow our particular friends—or rather that the gentlemen do. I fear you do not regard me in that light."

Mowbray could only say:

"Why should I not, madam?"

Philippa paused for a moment; and then said, smiling:

"Shall I tell you?"

"Yes."

"I fancy then that something which I said in our last interview offended you."

This was a home thrust, and Mowbray could not reply.

"Answer," she said; "did you not come away from that interview thinking me very rude, very unladylike, very affected and unlovely? did you not cordially determine never to think of me again—and have you not kept that resolution?"

"No, madam," said Mowbray, replying by evasion to the last clause of the sentence.

Philippa pouted.

"Mr. Mowbray," she said, "you are very cold. I believe I have left at least a dozen gallant wits to give you my whole attention, and you reply to me in monosyllables."

Mowbray felt his heart wounded by these words, which were uttered with as much feeling as annoyance, and replied:

"I should not have accepted your proposal, madam; it was selfish. I am not in very excellent spirits this evening, and fear that I shall not be able to entertain you. Pardon my dulness."

"No, I will not. You can be just as agreeable as you choose, and you will not."

Mowbray found himself smiling at these words, and said:

"Perhaps, then, if you will ask me some more questions, madam, I may reply in something more than monosyllables."

"Well then, sir, are you going to the May-day party at Shadynook?"

"I do not know—yes, I suppose, however. I have promised."

"Then Miss Lucy will wish to have you."

"Yes—well, I shall go."

"I am very glad!" said Philippa.

Mowbray could not explain the happiness he felt: all his coldness and doubt seemed to be passing away in presence of this young girl, who gave him such winning smiles, and so obstinately refused to observe his constraint. He had spoken truly to Hoffland; he was in love, and he had no longer any command over himself. He banished the thought that she was playing with his feelings, as soon as it occurred, and gave himself up to the intoxicating happiness which he experienced in her presence.

"You will also come to the party, will you not?" he said, smiling.

"Oh, yes!" said Philippa; "they could not very well get on without me. In the first place, Bel and myself are to get every thing ready; I mean at Shadynook. As to the invitations, and all the externals, they are intrusted to that handsome gentleman yonder, who is devouring Bel with his eyes! Can't you see him?" added Philippa, with a merry laugh; "poor fellow he is deeply in love——"

"And that you think very ridiculous?"

"Indeed, no. I can imagine no greater compliment, and no larger happiness, than to be sincerely loved by a true and honest gentleman."

Mowbray looked at her sadly, but with a smile.

"There are very many honest gentlemen," he said.

"Yes, but they do not love everybody," said Philippa; "and that for a very good reason."

"What?"

The young girl laughed.

"Because they love themselves so much," she said. "Gallant Adonises! they think themselves handsome, nay, more lovely than all the maidens in the world!"

Mowbray caught the infectious mirth of the young girl, and smiled. Poor Mowbray! where were all his mighty resolutions—his fair promises—his determination to remain an iceberg in presence of this haughty young girl? He was falling more deeply in love with her every moment.

"You are very severe upon the fine gentlemen," he said; "I think your picture is the exception."

"No, no! the rule! the rule!" she went on laughing. "Just look at them yonder. See how they smile and simper, and press their hands to their hearts, and daintily arrange their drop curls! I would as soon be loved by a lay-figure!"

And Philippa burst into a fit of merry laughter.

"Look!" she said; "see that ridiculous young gentleman near the door, with the velvet breast-knot—think of a velvet breast-knot! See how he daintily helps himself to snuff from a box with a picture of Madame Pompadour, or some celebrated lady, upon the lid; and see his jewelled hand, his simpering face, his languid air, his affected drawl as he murmurs, 'Ah—yes—madam—very—warm—but a charming—spectacle.' On my word! I would always provide myself with a bottle of *sal volatile* when such gentlemen came to see me!"

Mowbray found himself growing positively happy. Not only were his spirits raised by the young girl's merry and good-humored conversation, but every word which she uttered made his heart thrill more and more. All her discourse, all her satire upon the butterflies of the ball-room, had originated in the discussion of what character was proper for a lover. She scouted the idea of the love of one of these idlers attracting for a moment the regard of an intelligent woman: then was it not a just conclusion, that she looked for character, and dignity, and activity? She pointed to his own opposite, in grotesque colors, and laughed at her picture: then did she not find something to like in himself? Could she ever love him?

And Mowbray's cheek flushed—his strong frame was agitated.

"The amusing part of all this is," said Philippa, laughing, "that these gentlemen think their charms irresistible. Now, there is my cousin Charles—you know him, I believe."

"Charles——?"

"Charles Hoffland."

"Charles, your cousin!" cried Mowbray; "it is impossible!"

"Why, what is impossible in the fact? Possible? Of course it is possible!"

And Philippa laughed again more merrily than before.

"Your cousin!" repeated Mowbray; "why, Charles is one of my best friends."

"That is very proper, sir; then, you have two friends in the family."

And Philippa gave her cavalier an enchanting smile.

"Charles is a very excellent young man," she laughed; "and I am sure loves me deeply, but then any one can see he loves himself extravagantly."

"Is it possible! But excuse me," said Mowbray, seeing that his astonishment annoyed his companion; "he was to be here to-night."

"Has he arrived?" said Philippa, looking round with her daring smile.

"I do not see him."

"Tell me when he comes," she said, shaking with laughter; "he's a sad fellow, and I must lecture him."

Mowbray looked at her.

"Strange that I did not see that you were related," he said.

"Very strange."

"He resembles you strongly."

"Yes."

"But has light hair."

"Has he?"

"And is smaller, I verily believe."

"No, I believe our height is just the same. Has he attended to his studies?"

Mowbray smiled and shook his head.

"Not in a way to injure his health, I fear."

"Lazy fellow! I will never marry him."

"He is then a suitor of yours, madam? I was not aware of the fact—and request you to pardon my criticism."

"There you are assuming your grand air again," said Philippa, laughing; "please leave it at home when you come to see me. Ah! you smile again—that pleases me. What did you ask? 'Was Charles my suitor—did he love me?' Yes, I am convinced that he loves me devotedly, as deeply as a man can love any thing—as much, that is to say, as he loves himself!"

And the young girl burst into another fit of laughter, and positively shook with merriment.

"Did you become well acquainted with him?" she asked, after a pause; "Charles is not stiff—too free and easy, I fear, and I am sure you—liked him."

"Indeed, I did," said Mowbray; "he was a great consolation to me, and I always thought there was something strangely familiar in his face. Singular that I never observed how closely he resembled you."

"That was because you did not think of me very frequently."

Mowbray colored.

"I thought of you too often, I fear," he said in a low tone.

"And never came to see me—that is a probable tale," she said, coloring also, and glancing with a mixture of mirth and timidity at him.

Their eyes met;—those eloquent pleaders said much in that second.

"I have suffered much," he said; "my heart is not very strong—I was deceived—I could not——"

And Mowbray would have said something still more significant of his feelings, but for his companion's presence of mind. She observed, with womanly tact, that a number of eyes were fixed upon them, and adroitly diverted the conversation from the dangerous direction it was taking.

"I do not see Charles," she said, laughing and blushing; "did you not say he promised to be here?"

"Yes," murmured Mowbray.

"He's a great idler, but I love him very much," she said, laughing. "Tell me, Mr. Mowbray, as a friend—you know him well—could I find a better husband?"

Mowbray colored.

"He has a noble heart," he said; "do I understand that——"

"I love him! Yes, I cannot deny it truly; and why should I not make him happy?—for he loves me sincerely."

Mowbray felt his heart sink. Then that new-born hope was doomed to disappointment—that fancy was all folly! His miseries would be only deeper for the brief taste of happiness. He could not reply; he only muttered some inarticulate words, which Philippa did not seem to hear.

"I will decide finally on the day of the party at Shadynook," she said, smiling; "and now let us leave the subject. But do not forget to tell me when Charles enters," she added, laughing.

Poor Mowbray! he felt his heart oppressed with a new and more bitter emotion. The company thought him happy in exclusive possession of the lovely girl's society—his side was pierced with a cruel, rankling thorn. (Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE LAST CHANCE OF JACQUES.

While Mowbray and Philippa were holding their singular colloquy in one portion of the laughing and animated crowd, our friend Sir Asinus, with that perseverance which characterized his great intellect, was endeavoring to make an impression on the heart of the maiden of his love. But it was all in vain.

In vain did Sir Asinus dance minuets without number, execute bows beyond example—the little maiden obstinately persisted in bestowing her smiles on her companion, Bathurst.

That young gentleman finally bore her off triumphantly on his arm.

Sir Asinus stood still for a moment, then sent these remarkable words after the little damsel:

"You have crushed a faithful heart—you have spurned a deep affection, beautiful and fascinating maiden. Inured to female charms, and weary of philosophy, I found in thee the ideal of my spirit—truth and simplicity: the fates forbid, and henceforth I am nought! Never again look up, O maiden, to my window, when the morning sun shines on it, as you pass to school—expect to see me in those fair domains no more! Henceforth I am a wanderer, and am homeless. In my bark, named in past days the Rebecca, I will seek some foreign clime, and nevermore return to these shores. I'll buy me a fiddle in Italy, and hobnob with gondoliers, singing the songs of Tasso on Venetian waters. Never again expect to see my face at the window as you go on merrily—I leave my native shore to-morrow, and am gone!"

With which words—words which terrified the little damsel profoundly—Sir Asinus folded his arms, and in this position, with a sad scowl upon his face, passed forth into the night.

As he reached the door of the Raleigh, he perceived Mrs. Wimple and one or two elderly ladies getting into a chariot; and behind them Jacques leading Belle-bouche triumphantly toward his small two-seated vehicle.

Jacques was radiant, and this the reader may possibly understand, if he will recollect the scheme of this gentleman—to address Belle-bouche where no fate could interrupt him.

As Sir Asinus passed on, frowning, Jacques cast upon that gentleman a look which expressed triumphant happiness.

"You won't interrupt me on my way back, will you?" he said, smiling; "eh, my dear Sir Asinus?"

Sir Asinus ground his teeth.

Belle-bouche was safely stowed into the vehicle—Jacques gathered up the reins, was about to get in—when, disastrous fate! the voice of Mrs. Wimple was heard, declaring that the night had grown too cool for her beloved niece to ride in the open air.

Sir Asinus lingered and listened with sombre pleasure.

In vain did Jacques remonstrate, and Belle-bouche declare the night delightful: Aunt Wimple, strong in her fears of night air, was inexorable.

So Belle-bouche with a little pout got down, and Jacques cursing his evil stars, assisted her into the chariot.

Would he not come in, and spend the night at Shadynook?—they could make room for him by squeezing, said Aunt Wimple.

No, no, he could not inconvenience them—he would not be able to stay at Shadynook—he hoped they would have a pleasant journey; and as the chariot rolled off, the melancholy Jacques gazed after it with an expression of profound misery.

He felt a hand upon his shoulder; he turned and saw Sir Asinus. But Sir Asinus was not deriding him—he was groaning.

"Let us commit suicide," said the knight, in gloomy tones.

Jacques started.

"Suicide!"

"The night is favorable, and my hopes are dead, like yours," said Sir Asinus, gloomily.

"That is enough to kill at one time," said the melancholy Jacques; "mine are not—animation is only suspended. On the whole, my dear friend, I am opposed to your proposition. Good night!"

And Jacques, with a melancholy smile, departed.

Sir Asinus, with a gesture of despair, rushed forth into the night. Whether that gentleman had been reading romances or not, we cannot say; but as he disappeared, he bore a strong resemblance to a desperate lover bent on mischief.

Within, the reel had now begun—that noble divertisement, before which all other dances disappear, vanquished, overwhelmed, driven from the field, and weeping their departed glories. For the reel is a high mystery—it is superior to all—it cannot be danced beyond the borders of Virginia—as the Seville orange of commerce loses its flavor, and is nothing. The reel ends all the festivities of the old Virginian gatherings, and crowns with its supreme merriment the pyramid of mirth. When it is danced properly,—to proper music, by the proper persons, and with proper ardor,—all the elements break loose. Mirth and music and bright eyes respectively shower, thunder and lighten. In the old days, it snowed too—for the powder fell in alabaster dust and foamy clouds, and crammed the air with fragrance.

As for the reel which they danced at the Raleigh tavern, in the Apollo room, upon the occasion we allude to, who shall speak of it with adequate justice? Jacques lost it—tulip-like, the king of grace—Belle-bouche was with him; and a thousand eyes were on the maze,—the maze which flashed, and buzzed, and rustled, ever merrier—and glittered with its diamonds and far brighter eyes—and ever grew more tangled and more simple, one and many, complicate and single, while the music roared above in flashing cadences and grand ambrosial grace.

And merrier feet were never seen. The little maidens seemed to pour their hearts out in the enchanting divertisement, and the whole apartment, with its dazzling lights and flowers, was full of laughter, mirth, and holiday from end to end. When the final roar of the violins dropped into silence, and so crumbled into nothing, all was ended. Cavaliers offered their arms—ladies put on their hoods—chariots drove up and received their burdens; and in another hour, the joyous festival was but a recollection. After the reel—nothingness.

The Apollo room was still again—waiting for other men than youthful gallants, other words than flattering compliments.

And Mowbray went home with a wounded heart, which all the smiles of Philippa could not heal—for Hoffland was his rival. Denis went home with a happy heart, for Lucy had smiled on him. Sir Asinus was miserable—boy Bathurst was happy. The ball at the Raleigh was a true microcosm, where John smiled and James sighed, and all played on, and went away miserable or the reverse.

And so it ended.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SIR ASINUS INTENDS FOR EUROPE.

The morning of the May-day festival dawned bright and joyous;—nature seemed to be smiling, and the "rosy-bosomed hours" began their flight toward the west, with that brilliant splendor which they always deck themselves in, in the merry month of May.

Jacques rose early, and was at his mirror betimes. He had selected a suit of extraordinary richness, made with express reference to the rainbow; and when he drew on his coat, and took a last survey of himself in the mirror, he smiled—no longer sighed—and thought of Belle-bouche with the triumphant feeling of a general who has driven the enemy at last into a corner.

He issued forth and mounted his gay charger, which, with original and brilliant taste, he had decked with ribbons for the joyous festival; and as he got into the saddle and gathered up the reins, a little crowd of diminutive negro boys, with sadly dilapidated garments, cringed before him, and threw up their caps and split the air with "hoora's" in his honor.

Jacques pranced forth from the *Raleigh* stable yard in state, and took his way along Gloucester street, the admiration of every beholder. He was going to glory and conquest—probably: he was on his way to happiness

—perhaps. He felt a sentiment of benevolent regard for all the human family, and even, in passing, cast his thoughts on Sir Asinus.

That gentleman's window was open, and something strange seemed to be going on within.

And as Jacques drew nearer, he observed a placard dangling from the window. This placard bore in huge letters the mournful words:

"THE WITHIN INTENDS FOR EUROPE ON THE MORROW."

Jacques felt his conscience smite him—he could not let his friend depart without bidding him adieu. He dismounted, tied his horse, and laughing to himself, ascended to the chamber of the knight.

A sad sight awaited him.

Seated upon a travelling trunk, with a visage which had become elongated to a really distressing degree, Sir Asinus was sighing, and casting a last lingering look behind.

His apartment was in great disorder—presenting indeed that negligent appearance which rooms are accustomed to present, when their occupants are about to depart. The books were all stowed away in boxes—the pictures taken down—the bed unmade—the sofa littered with papers, and the violin, and flute—the general air of the desolate room, that of a man who has parted with his last hope and wishes to exist no longer.

But the appearance of Sir Asinus was worse than that of his apartment.

"Good morning, my dear Jacques," said the knight, sighing; "you visit me at a sad moment."

Jacques smiled.

"I am just on the wing."

"As I see."

"From my placard, eh?"

"Yes."

"Well, have you any commands?"

"For Europe?"

"Precisely."

"Well—no," said Jacques, with indecorous levity; "except that you will present my respects to Pitt and Barré."

"Scoffer!"

"Hey! who scoffed?"

"You!"

"I did not."

"You laugh, unworthy friend that you are," said Sir Asinus; "you deride me."

"Not at all."

"You rejoice at my departure."

"No."

"At any rate, you are not sorry," said Sir Asinus, sighing; "and I return the compliment. I myself am not sorry to part with the unworthy men who have misunderstood me, and persecuted me. A martyr to political ideas—to love for my country—I go to foreign lands to seek a home."

And having uttered this melancholy sentence, the woful knight twirled his thumbs, and sighed piteously.

As for Jacques, he smiled.

"When do you leave?" he said.

Sir Asinus pointed to the placard.

"On the morrow?"

"Yes."

"Well, there is time yet to attend the May-festival at Shadynook. Come along."

"No, no," said Sir Asinus, sighing; "no, I thank you. I have had all my noble aspirations chilled—my grand ideas destroyed; my heart is no longer fit for merriment. I depart."

And rising, Sir Asinus seated himself upon the table disconsolately.

Jacques looked at him and smiled.

"Do you know, my dear Asinus," he said, "that you present at this moment the grandest and most heroic picture? When a great man suffers, the world should weep."

"Instead of which, you laugh."

"I? I am not laughing."

"You are smiling."

"That is because, for the first time in my life, I am nearly happy."

"Happy? Would that I were! Happy? It is a word which I seldom have use for," said Sir Asinus, dangling his legs and sighing piteously.

"Why not endeavor to use it?"

"I cannot."

"Come and laugh with us at Shadynook."

"I no longer laugh."

"You weep?"

"No: my grief is too deep for tears—it is dried up—I mean the tears."

"Poor fellow!"

"There you are pitying my afflictions—spare me!"

"I do pity you. To see the noble and joyous Sir Asinus grow melancholy—to see those legs, which erst glided through the minuet and reel, now dangling wearily—to see that handsome visage so drawn down; is there no occasion for pity?"

And Jacques sighed.

"Well, well," said Sir Asinus, "I am glad you came, spite of your unworthy banter, you unfeeling fellow. I wish to send some messages to my friends."

"What are they?"

"First, to Belle-bouche—love and remembrance."

"That is beautiful; and I never knew these words yet fail to touch the heart."

"To all the boys, the fond regards of him who goes from them—a martyr to the attempt to uphold their rights."

"That is affecting too."

"To the little dame who passed with you some days ago—Miss Martha Wayles by name—but no; nothing to her."

And Sir Asinus groaned.

"Nothing?" said Jacques.

"No; the memory of my love for her shall never grieve her; let us say no more, Jacques, my friend. I have finished."

"And what do you leave to me?" said Jacques.

"My affection."

"I would prefer that violin."

"No, no, my friend; it will comfort me on my voyage. Now farewell!"

"Shall I see you no more?"

"No more."

"Why?"

"Do I not depart to-day?"

"True, true," said Jacques; "and if you really must go, farewell. Write to me."

"Let us embrace."

"Willingly."

And Sir Asinus caught his friend in his arms and sniffled.

Jacques, with his head over his friend's shoulder, chuckled.

"Now farewell," said Sir Asinus; "perhaps some day I may return—farewell."

And covering his eyes, he turned away.

Jacques took out his pocket-handkerchief—pressed his friend's hand for the last time, and departed.

He mounted his horse, gathered up the reins, and set forward again toward Shadynook, leaving the disconsolate Sir Asinus to finish his preparations for departure in his beautiful sail-boat the *Rebecca*.

Poor Sir Asinus! He had not the courage to call it the *Martha*: disappointed in love and politics, he no longer clung to either, and thought the best name after all would be the MARTYR.(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE MAY FESTIVAL.

If not as splendid as the great ball at the Raleigh, the festival at Shadynook was declared by all to be far more pleasant.

At an early hour in the forenoon bevies of lovely girls and graceful cavaliers began to arrive, and the various parties scattered themselves over the lawn, the garden, through the grove and the forest, with true sylvan freedom and unrestraint.

Shadynook, thanks to the active exertions of Belle-bouche and Philippa, was one bower of roses and other flowers. All the windows were festooned with them—the tables were great pyramids of wreaths; and out upon the lawn the blossoms from the trees showered down upon the animated throng, and made the children laugh—for many little girls were there—and snowing on the cavaliers, made them like heralds of the spring; and lying on the earth, a rosy velvet carpet, almost made the old poetic fiction true, and gave the damsels of the laughing crowd an opportunity to walk "ankle-deep in flowers."

The harpsichord was constantly in use; and those old Scottish songs, which echo now like some lost memory to our grandfathers and grandmothers—we are writing of those personages—glided on the air from coral lips, and made the spring more bright; and many gallant hearts were there enslaved, and sighed whenever they heard sung again those joyous or sad ditties of the Scottish muse.

Books lay about with lovely poems in them—written by the fine old Sucklings and Tom Stanleys—breathing high chivalric homage to the fair; and volumes of engravings, full of castles or bright pictures of Arcadian scenes—brought thither by the melancholy Jacques as true-love offerings—or sunset views where evening died away a purple margin on the blue Italian skies.

And here and there, on mantelpieces and side-tables, were grotesque ornaments in china; and odd figures cut in glass of far Bohemia; and painted screens and embroidery. And through the crowd ran yelping more than one small lap-dog, trodden on by children, who cried out with merriment thereat.

Belle-bouche had rightly judged that many children should be invited; for if bouquets are bright and pleasant, so are merry childish faces; and so dozens of young maidens, scarcely in their teens, and full of wild delight, ran here and there, playing with each other, and seeking Belle-bouche—kind, loving Belle-bouche—every now and then, to say that something was *so* pretty, and she was so good! Whereat Belle-bouche would smile, and play with their curls, and they would run and play again.

There was this observable fact about the young lady who has appeared so frequently in our little narrative, illustrating its dull pages with her languishing and joyful smiles, showering upon it the tender grace of her fair countenance and innocent eyes—there was this to be observed, we say, that Belle-bouche loved and was beloved by children. She always had them round her when she went where they were, smiling and looking up to her with innocent faces—from the little infantile prattlers just from the nursery, to those who, passing into their bright teens, began to study how they might best fulfil their duty in society—enslave the gallants. All loved Belle-bouche, and on this occasion she had scarcely a moment's rest.

Her own companions loved her too, devotedly, and if any one had asked the crowd assembled, what was the brightest picture, the fairest ornament of the whole festival, they would have with one voice declared—the little hostess. Philippa, with her queenly brow and ready laughter, did not receive one-half the devoted

attention which was lavished on her companion; and indeed Belle-bouche was the toast of the whole assembly.

The finest cavaliers gathered around her and paid her their addresses—all smiled on her, and paid homage to her. Her joy was full.

But see the finest gentleman of all approach—the no longer melancholy, the joyful and superb knight of the ribbon-decorated horse!

Jacques approached with the air of a captive prince—submissive, yet proud. He smiled.

"Beautiful queen of May," he said, trailing his plumed hat upon the floor, "behold your slave. Never did shepherd in the vales of Arcady pay truer homage to his Daphne's charms than I do to those of our hostess!"

This was considered a pretty speech, and Belle-bouche was about to reply with a smile, when little Martha Wayles, who was present in a pink-gauze dress and lace, cried:

"Oh, my goodness! just look there!"

"What is it?" asked the company.

"There, through the window," said little Martha, blushing at the attention she excited.

"What?"

"That horse with ribbons!"

The company gazed through the window, and began to laugh. There indeed was the horse of Jacques, splendid in all the colors of the rainbow, pawing and tossing his head as the groom led him away.

"A little romance of mine," said Jacques, smiling; "I trust 'tis not considered in bad taste—I had a crook——"

"A crook?"

"Yes, wreathed with flowers, as was the custom, I believe, in Arcadia; but I feared it would attract attention in the town, and I left it," said Jacques, with lamblike innocence.

This sally was greeted with tumultuous applause.

"A crook!" cried the damsels.

"An excellent idea!"

"So sylvan!"

"And so appropriate!"

"We may have as many as we fancy, I believe," said Jacques, smiling; "I have prepared a number as an introduction to the festival: they are in the garden, ladies, already wreathed with flowers!"

The company rose in a mass to go and get them, and soon they were in the garden; then scattered over the lawn; then every where, laughing, making merry, and behaving like a crowd of children released from school. The damsels acted shepherdesses to perfection, and closely resembled the pictures we are accustomed to see upon the fans which ladies use even to the present day. Their little airs of sylvan simplicity were very pretty; and the gallant gentlemen were not backward in their part. They bowed and simpered until they resembled so many supple-jacks, pulled by the finger of a child.

"Look," said Jacques to Belle-bouche, and sighing slightly as he gazed upon the fresh beauty of her face; "see those lovers yonder——"

"Lovers?" said Belle-bouche, smiling.

"I am not mistaken, I think," said Jacques; "yes, yes, my queen, they are lovers. Do you not think that something like that which I spoke of formerly will come to pass?"

Belle-bouche, with a delicious little rose-color brightening her cheek, replied, patting her satin-sandalled foot upon the flowery sward:

"Which you spoke of—pray, what did you speak of?"

"Of my wish to be a shepherd——"

"Ah—a shepherd," said Belle-bouche, removing a cherry blossom from her hair, and smiling.

"Yes, my lovely queen," said Jacques, with great readiness; "I wished to be a shepherd and have a crook ——"

"Oh, sir!"

"And that my Arcadian love should also have one and draw me—so that passing through the fields——"

"Oh, yes——"

"I might kiss her hand——"

"Yes, yes——"

"And passing through the forests wrap her in my cloak——"

Belle-bouche laughed.

"And crossing the streams on narrow moss-clad logs, support her with my arm—as the dearest and most blessed treasure upon earth!" cried Jacques, seizing the hand of Belle-bouche, which hung down, and enraptured that she did not withdraw it.

Belle-bouche understood perfectly that Jacques referred to their meeting on that day when she had been reading in the forest, and had fled from him across the stream. Her roseate blush betrayed her.

"If only that bright dream of love could be a reality for me!" he whispered; "if one I love so——"

"Oh, Miss Bel! the girls sent for you—the pyramid is ready!" cried the merry voice of little Martha.

And running toward Belle-bouche, the girl told her that they really must have her in the garden "before the procession commenced."

Poor Jacques drew back groaning.

"There's another chance gone!" he sighed; "what luck I have! I'm always interrupted, and the fates are leagued against me."

Belle-bouche left him with a blush and a smile, and disappeared.

Ten minutes afterwards the company had reassembled on the lawn, and seemed to be anxiously expecting something.

This something suddenly made its appearance, and advanced into the open space with merriment and laughter.

It was a party of young girls who, clad in all the colors of the rainbow, bore in their midst a pyramid of silver dishes wreathed with flowers, and overflowing with strawberries and early fruits. It was a revival of the old May-day ceremonies in London, when the milkmaids wreathed their buckets with flowers, and passed from door to door, singing and asking presents. Jacques had arranged it all—the philosophic and antiquarian Jacques; and with equal taste he had selected the beautiful verses of Marlow or Shakspeare, for the chorus of maidens.

The maidens approached the company, therefore, merrily singing, in their childlike voices, the song:

"Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That valleys, groves, or hills, or fields,
Or woods and steepy mountains yields;

"Where we will sit upon the rocks
And see the shepherds feed our flocks,
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

"And I will make thee beds of roses,
And then a thousand fragrant posies;
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle,
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle;

"A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Slippers lined choicely for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

"A belt of straw and ivy buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my love."

As the song ended, little Martha came forth from the throng, and holding in her hand a small crook, went round with a very laughing face asking charity from the applauding company.

"Only a penny, sir!" she said, motioning back a pistole which Mr. Jack Denis held out gaily.

And then—the collection ended—the young girls of the masquerade hurried back to rid themselves of their pyramid.

Mr. Jack Denis and Miss Lucy Mowbray, who had just arrived with her brother, bent their steps toward the grove, through which ran a purling stream; and thither they were followed after a little by Miss Martha Wayles and her admirer, Bathurst. We cannot follow them and listen to their conversation—that would be indecorous. But we may be permitted to say that two young ladies—one very young—on that morning plighted their troth to two young gentlemen—one very young. And if they blushed somewhat upon returning, it was an honest blush, which the present chronicler for one will not laugh at.

In the garden all by this time was joyous and wild merriment. The young ladies were running here and there; servants were preparing in a flowery retreat a long table full of fruits and every delicacy; and merriest of all, Miss Philippa was scattering on every side her joyous and contagious laughter.

Suddenly this laughter of the young lady ceased, and she colored slightly.

She saw Mowbray looking at her with a glance of so much love, that she could not support his gaze.

In a moment he was at her side. "Will you not walk with me?" she said, without waiting for him to address her; and in a moment her arm was in his own, and they were strolling away. They went toward a noble old oak, in the branches of which was fixed a platform, and this platform was approached by a movable sort of ladder. The leaves around the platform were so dense that it was impossible to see any one who might be sitting within.

As Mowbray and Philippa approached, the ladder was seen suddenly to move, a little exclamation was heard, and the next moment the movable steps rose erect, balanced themselves for an instant, and fell to the ground, cutting off all connection between the platform and the ground.

At the same moment a triumphant voice muttered:

"Now let me see them interrupt me!"

Mowbray and Philippa did not hear it; they passed on, silent and embarrassed.

Philippa, it was evident, had something to say, and scarcely knew how to begin; she hesitated, laughed, blushed, and patted the ground petulantly with her little foot. At last she said, with a smile and a blush:

"I asked you to offer me your arm for an especial purpose. Can you guess what that purpose was?"

Mowbray smiled, and replied:

"I am afraid not."

"I wished to tell you a tale."

"A tale?"

"A history, if you please; and as you are a thinker, and an impartial one, to ask your opinion."

"I am sure you do me a great deal of honor," said Mowbray, smiling with happiness; "I listen."

Philippa cast down her eyes, patted the ground more violently than before with her silken-sandalled foot, and biting her lip, was silent.

Mowbray looked at her, and saw the blush upon her cheek. She raised her head—their eyes met; and the blush deepened.

"Do not look at me," she said, turning away her head and bursting into a constrained laugh; "I never could bear to have any one look at me."

"It is a very severe request, but I will obey you," he said, smiling; "now for your history."

"It will surprise you, I suppose," she said, with her daring laugh again; "but listen. Do not interrupt me. Well, sir, once upon a time—you see I begin in true tale fashion—once upon a time, there was a young girl who had the misfortune to be very rich. She had been left an orphan at an early age, and never knew the love and tenderness of parents. Well, sir, as was very natural, this young woman, with all her wealth, experienced one want—but that was a great one—the necessity of having some one to love her. I will be brief, sir—let me go on uninterruptedly. One day this young woman saw pass before her a man whose eyes and words proved that he had some affection for her—enough that it was afterwards shown that she was not mistaken. At the time, however, she doubted his affection. Her unhappy wealth had made her suspicious, and she experienced a sort of horror of giving her heart to some one who loved her wealth and not herself. Let me go on, sir! I must not be interrupted! Well, she doubted this gentleman; and one day said to him what she afterwards bitterly regretted. She determined to charge him with mercenary intentions, and watch his looks and listen to his words, and test him. He listened, replied coldly, and departed, leaving her nearly heart-broken, for his nature was not one which any woman could despise."

Mowbray looked at her strangely. She went on.

"She watched for him day after day—he did not come. She was angry, and yet troubled; she doubted, and yet tried to justify herself. But even when he left her, she had conceived a mad scheme—it was to go and become his companion, and so test him. This she did, assuming the dress of a man: was it not very indelicate,

sir, and could she have been a lady? I see you start—but do not interrupt me. Let me go on. The young woman assumed, as I said, an impenetrable disguise—ingratiated herself with him, and found out all his secrets. The precious secret which she had thus braved conventionality to discover, was her own. He loved her—yes! he loved her!" said the young girl, with a tremor of the voice and a beating heart; "she could not be mistaken! In moments of unreserve, of confidence, he told her all, as one friend tells another, and she knew that she was loved. Then she threw off her disguise—finding him noble and sincere—and came to him and told him all. She saw that he was incredulous—could not realize such indelicacies in the woman he loved; and to make her humiliation complete, she proved to him, by producing a trifle he had given her, in her disguise—like this, sir."

And Philippa with a trembling hand drew forth the fringed gloves which she had procured from Mowbray at the Indian Camp. They fell from her outstretched hand—it shook.

Mowbray was pale, and his eyes were full of wonder.

"Before leaving him, this audacious young girl was more than once convinced that the wild and unworthy freak she had undertaken to play, would lower her in his estimation; but she did not draw back. Her training had been bad; she enjoyed her liberty. Not until she had resumed the dress of her sex, did she awake to the consciousness of the great social transgression she had been guilty of. She then went to him and told him all, and stopped him when he tried to speak—do not speak, sir!—and bade him read the words she had written him, as she left him——"

Mowbray, with an unconscious movement, took from his pocket the letter left by Hoffland in the post-office, on the morning of the ball.

Philippa took it from his hand and opened it.

"Pardon, Ernest!"

These words were all it contained; and the young girl pointing to them, dropped the letter and burst into a flood of passionate tears. Her impulsive nature had fairly spent itself, and but for the circling arm of Mowbray she would have fallen.

In a moment her head was on his bosom—she was weeping passionately; and Mowbray forgot all, and only saw the woman whom he loved.

Need we say that he did not utter one word of comment on her narrative? Poor Mowbray! he was no statue, and the hand which she had promised him laughingly on that morning, now lay in his own; the proud and haughty girl was conquered by a power far stronger than her pride; and over them the merry blossoms showered, the orioles sang, and Nature laughed to see her perfect triumph.

When Philippa returned to the company she was very silent, and blushed deeply, holding to her face the handkerchief which Hoffland had picked up. But no one noticed her; all was in confusion.

Where was Belle-bouche? That was the question, and a hundred voices asked it. She had disappeared; and Jacques too was nowhere to be seen. The banquet was ready; where was the hostess?

It was in the middle of all this uproar that a voice was heard from the great oak, and looking up, the laughing throng perceived the radiant face of Jacques framed among the leaves, and looking on them.

"My friends," said Jacques, "the matter is very simple—be good enough to raise those steps."

And the cavalier pointed to the prostrate ladder.

With a burst of laughter, the steps were raised and placed against the oak. And then Jacques was observed to place his foot upon them, leading by the hand—Belle-bouche.

Belle-bouche was blushing much more deeply than Philippa; and Jacques was the picture of happiness. Is it too much to suppose that he had this time stolen a march on the inimical fates, and forced Belle-bouche to answer him? Is it extravagant to fancy that her reply was *not*, No?

And so they descended, and the company, laughing at the mishap, hastened toward the flower and fruit decorated table, and the banquet inaugurated itself joyously.

And in the midst of all, who should make his appearance but—the gallant Sir Asinus! Sir Asinus, no longer intending for Europe, but satisfied with Virginia; no *longer* woful, but in passable good spirits; no longer melancholy, but surveying those around him with affectionate regard.

And see him, in the midst of laughter and applause, mount on the end of a barrel which had held innumerable cakes, holding a paper in his hand, and calling for attention.

Listen!

"Whereas," reads Sir Asinus, "the undersigned has heretofore at different times expressed opinions of his Majesty, and of the Established Church, and of the noble aristocracy of England and Virginia, derogatory to the character of the said Majesty, and so forth;—also, whereas, he has unjustly slandered the noble and sublime College of William and Mary, so called from their gracious majesties, deceased;—and whereas, the said opinions have caused great personal inconvenience to the undersigned, and whereas he is tired of

martyrdom and exile: Therefore, be it hereby promulgated, that the undersigned doth here and now publicly declare himself ashamed of the said opinions, and doth abjure them: And doth declare his Majesty George III. the greatest of kings since Dionysius of Syracuse and Nero; and his great measure, the Stamp Act, the noblest legislation since the edict of Nantz. And further, the undersigned doth uphold the great Established Church, and revere its ministers, so justly celebrated for their piety and card-playing, their proficiency in theology, and their familiarity with that great religious epic of the Reformation, 'Reynard the Fox'—the study of which they pursue even on horseback. And lastly, the said undersigned doth honor the great college of Virginia, and revere the aristocracy, and respect entails, and spurn the common classes as becomes a gentleman and honest citizen; and in all other things doth conform himself to established rules, being convinced that whatever is, is right: and to the same hath set his hand, this twentieth day of May, in the year 1764."

Having finished which, Sir Asinus casts a melancholy glance upon little Martha, and adds:

"Now, my friends, let us proceed to enjoy the material comforts. Let us begin to eat, my friends."

And sitting down upon the barrel, the knight seizes a goblet and raises it aloft, and drinks to all the crowd.

And all the crowd do likewise, laughing merrily; and over them the blossoms shower with every odorous breeze; and with the breeze mingles a voice which whispers in a maiden's ear:

"Arcadia at last!"(Back to Table of Content.)

CHAPTER XXX.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Perhaps a few veritable extracts from the published correspondence of him whom, following a habit of his own, we have called Sir Asinus, may show the origin of some allusions in our chronicle. These short selections are arranged of course to suit the purpose of the narrative. Beginning with the "rats," we very appropriately end with a marriage—as in the case of that gentleman who was "led such a life" by the rats, that "he had to go to London to get himself a wife."

... "This very day, to others the day of greatest mirth and jollity, sees me overwhelmed with more and greater misfortunes than have befallen a descendant of Adam for these thousand years past, I am sure. I am now in a house surrounded with enemies who take counsel together against my soul, and when I lay me down to rest, they say among themselves, Come, let us destroy him. I am sure if there is such a thing as a devil in this world, he must have been here last night, and have had some hand in contriving what happened to me. Do you think the cursed rats (at his instigation, I suppose) did not eat up my pocket-book, which was in my pocket, within a foot of my head? And not contented with plenty for the present, they carried away my jemmy-worked silk garters, and half a dozen new minuets I had just got, to serve, I suppose, as provision for the winter. But of this I should not have accused the devil, (because you know rats will be rats, and hunger, without the addition of his instigations, might have urged them to do this,) if something worse, and from a different quarter, had not happened. You know it rained last night, or if you do not know it, I am sure I do. When I went to bed I laid my watch in the usual place, and going to take her up after I arose this morning, I found her in the same place, 'tis true, but, *quantum mutatus ab illo*! afloat in water, let in at a leak in the roof of the house, and as silent and still as the rats that had eat my pocket-book. Now you know if chance had had any thing to do in this matter, there were a thousand other spots where it might have chanced to leak as well as this one, which was perpendicularly over my watch. But I'll tell you, it's my opinion that the devil came and bored the hole over it on purpose. Well, as I was saying, my poor watch had lost her speech. I should not have cared much for this, but something worse attended it; the subtle particles of the water with which the case was filled, had by their penetration so overcome the cohesion of the particles of paper, of which my dear picture and watch-paper were composed, that in attempting to take them out to dry them, my cursed fingers gave them such a rent as I fear I never shall get over! *Multis fortunæ vulneribus percussus, huic uni me imparem sensi, et penitus succubui.* I would have cried bitterly, but I thought it beneath the dignity of a man, and a man too who had read των οντων, τα μεν εφ' ἡμιν τα δουκ εφ' ἡμιν. I do wish the devil had old Coke, for I am sure I never was so tired of an old dull scoundrel in my life. The old fellows say we must read to gain knowledge, and gain knowledge to make us happy and be admired. *Mere jargon!* Is there any such thing as happiness in this world? No. And as for admiration, I am sure the man who powders most, perfumes most, embroiders most, and talks most nonsense, is most admired."

... "This letter will be conveyed to you by the assistance of our friend Warner Lewis. Poor fellow! never did I see one more sincerely captivated in my life. He walked to the Indian Camp with her yesterday, by which means he had an opportunity of giving her two or three love-squeezes by the hand; and like a true Arcadian swain, has been so enraptured ever since that he is company for no one."

... "Last night, as merry as agreeable company and dancing with Belinda in the Apollo could make me, I never could have thought the succeeding sun would have seen me so wretched as I now am! Affairs at W. and

M. are in the greatest confusion. Walker, McClury, and Wat Jones are expelled *pro tempore*, or as Horrox softens it, rusticated for a month. Lewis Burwell, Warner Lewis, and one Thompson have fled to escape flagellation."

... "I wish I had followed your example and wrote in Latin, and that I had called my dear, *Campana in die*, instead of αδνιλεβ."—("The lady here alluded to is manifestly the Miss Rebecca Burwell mentioned in his first letter; but what suggested the quaint designation of her is not so obvious. In the first of them, Belinda, translated into dog Latin, which was there as elsewhere one of the *facetiæ* of young collegians, became *Campana in die*, that is, *bell in day*. In the second, the name is reversed, and becomes *Adnileb*, which for farther security is written in Greek characters, and the lady spoken of in the masculine gender."—*Note of Editor*.)

... "When you see Patsy Dandridge, tell her, 'God bless her.' I do not like the ups and downs of a country life: to-day you are frolicking with a fine girl, and to-morrow you are moping by yourself. Thank God! I shall shortly be where my happiness will be less interrupted. I shall salute all the girls below in your name, particularly S——y P——r. Dear Will, I have thought of the cleverest plan of life that can be imagined. You exchange your land for Edgehill, or I mine for Fairfields; you marry S——y P——r, I marry R——a B——l, join and get a pole chair and a pair of keen horses, practise the law in the same courts, and drive about to all the dances in the country together. How do you like it? Well, I am sorry you are at such a distance I cannot hear your answer; however, you must let me know it by the first opportunity, and all the other news in the world which you imagine will affect me."

... "With regard to the scheme which I proposed to you some time since, I am sorry to tell you it is totally frustrated by Miss R. B.'s marriage with Jacquelin Ambler, which the people here tell me they daily expect. Well, the Lord bless her! I say: but S——y P——r is still left for you. I have given her a description of the gentleman who, as I told her, intended to make her an offer of his hand, and asked whether or not he might expect it would be accepted. She would not determine till she saw him or his picture. Now, Will, as you are a piece of a limner, I desire that you will seat yourself immediately before your looking-glass and draw such a picture of yourself as you think proper; and if it should be defective, blame yourself. (Mind that I mentioned no name to her.) You say you are determined to be married as soon as possible, and advise me to do the same. No, thank ye; I will consider of it first. Many and great are the comforts of a single state, and neither of the reasons you urge can have any influence with an inhabitant, and a young inhabitant too, of Williamsburg. Who told you that I reported you was courting Miss Dandridge and Miss Dangerfield? It might be worth your while to ask whether they were in earnest or not. So far was I from it, that I frequently bantered Miss J——y T——o about you, and told her how feelingly you spoke of her. There is scarcely any thing now going on here. You have heard, I suppose, that J. Page is courting Fanny Burwell. W. Bland and Betsy Yates are to be married Thursday se'nnight. The Secretary's son is expected in shortly. Willis has left town entirely, so that your commands to him cannot be executed immediately; but those to the ladies I shall do myself the pleasure of delivering to-morrow night at the ball. Tom Randolph of Tuckahoe has a suit of Mecklenburg silk which he offered me for a suit of broadcloth."

... "I have not a syllable to write to you about. Would you that I should write nothing but truth? I tell you I know nothing that is true. Or would you rather that I should write you a pack of lies? Why, unless they were more ingenious than I am able to invent, they would furnish you with little amusement. What can I do then? Nothing, but ask you the news in your world. How have you done since I saw you? How did Nancy look at you when you danced with her at Southall's? Have you any glimmering of hope? How does R. B. do? Had I better stay here and do nothing, or go down and do less? or in other words, had I better stay here while I am here, or go down that I may have the pleasure of sailing up the river again in a full-rigged flat? You must know that as soon as the Rebecca (the name I intend to give the vessel above mentioned) is completely finished, I intend to hoist sail and away. I shall visit particularly, England, Holland, France, Spain, Italy, (where I would buy me a good fiddle,) and Egypt, and return through the British provinces to the northward, home. This, to be sure, would take us two or three years, and if we should not both be cured of love in that time, I think the devil would be in it.

T. JEFFERSON."

Many of these letters are written from "Devilsburg," which was the college name for the metropolitan city in the days of yore. The reader is referred to the first volume of Mr. Tucker's Life of Jefferson.

We shall make but one addition to our chronicle of those former personages and their boyish pranks, and that shall be a quotation:

"On the 1st of January, 1772, I was married to Martha Skelton, widow of Bathurst Skelton, and daughter of John Wayles, then twenty-three years old."

See his memoir of himself.(Back to Table of Content.)

FINIS.

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