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FACES AND PLACES

By

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(AUTHOR OF "EAST BY WEST: A RECORD OF A JOURNEY ROUND THE WORLD")

WITH PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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To J.R. Robinson, Editor and Manager of the "Daily News", at whose suggestion some of these articles were written, they are in their collected form inscribed, with sincere regard, by an old friend and colleague.

London, *February* 1892.

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FACES AND PLACES

CHAPTER I.

"FRED" BURNABY

I made the acquaintance of Colonel Fred Burnaby in a balloon. In such strange quarters, at an altitude of over a thousand feet, commenced a friendship that for years was one of the pleasantest parts of my life, and remains one of its most cherished memories.

It was on the 14th of September, 1874. A few weeks earlier two French aeronauts, a Monsieur and Madame Duruof, making an ascent from Calais, had been carried out to sea, and dropping into the Channel, had passed through enough perils to make them a nine days' wonder. Arrangements had been completed for them to make a fresh ascent from the grounds of the Crystal Palace, and half London seemed to have gone down to Sydenham to see them off. I was young and eager then, and having but lately joined the staff of the *Daily News* as special correspondent, was burning for an opportunity to distinguish myself. So I went off to the Crystal Palace resolved to go up in the balloon.

"No," said Mr. Coxwell, when I asked him if there were a seat to spare in the car. "No; I am sorry to say that you are too late. I have had at least thirty applications for seats, and as the car will hold only six persons, and as practically there are but two seats for outsiders, you will see that it is impossible."

This was disappointing, the more so as I had brought with me a large military cloak and a pair of seal-skin gloves, under a general but well-defined impression that the thing to do up in a balloon was to keep yourself warm. Mr. Coxwell's account of the position of affairs so completely shut out the prospect of a passage in the car that I reluctantly resigned the charge of the military cloak and gloves, and strolled down to the enclosure where the process of inflating the balloon was going on. Here was congregated a vast crowd, which increased in density as four o'clock rang out, and the great mass of brown silk into which the gas was being assiduously pumped began to assume a pear-like shape, and sway to and fro in the light air of the autumn afternoon.

About this time the heroes of the hour, Monsieur and Madame Duruof walked into the enclosure, accompanied by Mr. Coxwell and Mr. Glaisher. A little work was being extensively sold in the Palace bearing on the title-page, over the name "M. Duruof," a murderous-looking face, the letter-press purporting to be a record of the life and adventures of the French aeronauts. Happily M. Duruof bore but the slightest resemblance to this portrait, being a young man of pleasing appearance, with a good, firm, frank-looking face.

By a quarter to five o'clock the monster balloon was almost fully charged, and was swaying to and fro in a wild, fitful manner, that could not have been beheld without trepidation by any of the thirty gentlemen who had so judiciously booked seats in advance. The wickerwork car now secured to the balloon was half filled with ballast and crowded with men, whilst others hung on to the ropes and to each other in the effort to steady it.

But they could not do much more than keep it from mounting into mid-air. Hither and thither it swung, parting in swift haste the curious throng that encompassed it, and dragging the men about as if they were ounce weights. The wind seemed to be rising and the faces of the experienced aeronauts grew graver and graver, answers to the constantly repeated question, "Where is it likely to come down?" becoming increasingly

vague. At last Mr. Glaisher, looking up at the sky and round at the neighbouring trees bending under the growing blast, put his veto upon Madame Duruof's forming one of the party of voyagers.

"We are not in France," he said. "The people will not insist upon a woman going up when there is any danger. The descent is sure to be rough, will possibly be perilous, so Madame Duruof had better stay where she is."

Madame Duruof was ready to go, but was at least equally willing to stay behind, and so it was settled that she should not leave the palace grounds by the balloon. I cast a lingering thought on the military cloak and the seal-skin gloves, in safe keeping in a remote part of the building. If Madame was not going there might be room for a substitute. But again Mr. Coxwell would not listen to the proposal. There were at least thirty prior applicants; some had even paid their money, and they must have the preference.

At five o'clock all was ready for the start. M. Wilfrid de Fonvielle, a French aeronaut and journalist, took off his hat, and in full gaze of a sympathising and deeply interested crowd deliberately attired himself in a Glengarry cap, a thick overcoat, and a muffler. M Duruof put on his overcoat, and Mr. Barker, Mr. Coxwell's assistant, seated on the ring above the car, began to take in light cargo in the shape of aneroids, barometers, bottles of brandy and water, and other useful articles. M. Duruof scrambled into the car, one of the men who had been weighing it down getting out to make room for him. Then M. de Fonvielle, amid murmurs of admiration from the crowd, nimbly boarded the little ship, and immediately began taking observations. There was a pause, and Mr. Coxwell, who stood by the car, prepared for the rush of the Thirty. But nobody volunteered. Names were called aloud; only the wind, sighing amongst the trees made answer.

"Il faut partir," said M. Duruof, somewhat impatiently. Then a middle-aged gentleman, who, I afterwards learned, had come all the way from Cambridge to make the journey, and who had only just arrived breathless on the ground, was half-lifted, half-tumbled in, amid agonised entreaties from Barker to "mind them bottles." The Thirty had unquestionably had a fair chance, and Mr. Coxwell made no objection as I passed him and got into the car, followed by one other gentleman, who brought the number up to the stipulated half-dozen. We were all ready to start, but it was thought desirable that Madame Duruof should show herself in the car. So she was lifted in, and the balloon allowed to mount some twenty feet, frantically held by ropes by the crowd below. It descended again, Madame Duruof got out, and in her place came tumbling in a splendid fellow, some six feet four high, broad-chested to boot, who instantly made supererogatory the presence of half a dozen of the bags of ballast that lay in the bottom of the car.

It was an anxious moment, with the excited multitude spread round far as the eye could reach, the car leaping under the swaying balloon, and the anxious, hurried men straining at the ropes. But I remember quite well sitting at the bottom of the car and wondering when the new-comer would finish getting in. I dare say he was nimble enough, but his full arrival seemed like the paying out of a ship's cable.

This was Fred Burnaby, only Captain then, unknown to fame, with Khiva unapproached, and the wilds of Asia Minor untrodden by his horse's hoofs. His presence on the grounds was accidental, and his undertaking of the journey characteristic. He had invited some friends to dine with him that night at his rooms, then in St. James's Street. Hearing of the proposed balloon ascent, he felt drawn to see the voyagers off, purposing to be home in time to dress for dinner. The defection of the Thirty appearing to leave an opening for an extra passenger, Burnaby could not resist the temptation. So with a hasty *Au revoir!* to his companion, the Turkish Minister, he pushed his way through the crowd and dropped into the car.

I always forgot to ask him how his guests fared. As it turned out, he had no chance of communicating with his servant before the dinner hour. The arrival of Burnaby exceeded by one the stipulated number of passengers, and Coxwell was anxious for us to start before any more got in. For a minute or two we still cling to the earth, the centre of an excited throng that shout, and tug at ropes, and run to and fro, and laugh, and cry, and scream "Good-bye" in a manner that makes our proposed journey seem dreadful in prospect. The circle of faces look

fixedly into ours; we hear the voices of the crowd, see the women laughing and crying by turns, and then, with a motion that is absolutely imperceptible, they all pass away, and we are in mid-air where the echo of a cheer alone breaks the solemn calm.

I had an idea that we should go up with a rush, and be instantly in the cold current of air in view of which the preparation of extra raiment, the nature of which has been already indicated, had been made. But here we were a thousand feet above the level of the Palace gardens, sailing calmly along in bright warm sunlight, and no more motion perceptible than if we were sitting on chairs in the gardens, and had been so sitting whilst the balloon mounted. It was a quarter past five when we left the earth, and in less than five minutes the Crystal Palace grounds, with its sea of upturned faces, had faded from our sight. Contrary to prognostication, there was only the slightest breeze, and this setting north-east, carried us towards the river in the direction of Greenwich. We seemed to skirt the eastern fringe of London, St. Paul's standing out in bold relief through the light wreath of mist that enveloped the city. The balloon slowly rose till the aneroid marked a height of fifteen hundred feet. Here it found a current which drove it slightly to the south, till it hovered for some moments directly over Greenwich Hospital, the training ship beneath looking like a cockle boat with walking sticks for masts and yards. Driving eastward for some moments, we slowly turned by Woolwich and crossed the river thereafter steadily pursuing a north-easterly direction.

Looking back from the Essex side of the river the sight presented to view was a magnificent one. London had vanished, even to the dome of St. Paul's, but we knew where the great city lay by the mist that shrouded it and shone white in the rays of the sun. Save for this patch of mist, that seemed to drift after us far away below the car, there was nothing to obscure the range of vision. I am afraid to say how many miles it was computed lay within the framework of the glowing panorama. But I know that we could follow the windings of the river that curled like a dragon among the green fields, its shining scales all aglow in the sunlight, and could see where it finally broadened out and trended northward. And there, as M. Duruof observed with a significant smile, was "the open sea."

There was no feeling of dizziness in looking down from the immense height at which we now floated--two thousand feet was the record as we cleared the river. By an unfortunate oversight we had no map of the country, and were, except in respect of such landmarks as Greenwich, unable with certainty to distinguish the places over which we passed.

"That," said Burnaby from his perch up in the netting over the car, where he had clambered as being the most dangerous place immediately accessible, "is one of the great drawbacks to the use of balloons in warfare. Unless a man has natural aptitude, and is specially trained for the work, his observations from a balloon are of no use, a bird's-eye view of a country giving impressions so different from the actual position of places."

This dictum was illustrated by the scene spread out beneath us. Seen from a balloon the streets of a rambling town resolve themselves into beautifully defined curves, straight lines, and various other highly respectable geometrical shapes.

We could not at any time make out forms of people. The white highways that ran like threads among the fields, and the tiny openings in the towns and villages which we guessed were streets, seemed to belong to a dead world, for nowhere was there trace of a living person. The strange stillness that brooded over the earth was made more uncanny still by cries that occasionally seemed to float in the air around us, behind, before, to the right, to the left, but never exactly beneath the car. We could hear people calling, and had a vague idea they were running after us and cheering; but we could distinguish no moving thing. Yes; once the gentleman from Cambridge exclaimed that there were some pheasants running across a field below; but upon close investigation they turned out to be a troop of horses capering about in wild dismay. A flock of sheep in another field, huddled close together, looked like a heap of limestone chippings. As for the fields stretched out in wide expanse, far as the eye could reach, they seemed to form a gigantic carpet, with patterns chiefly diamond shape, in colour shaded from bright emerald to russet brown.

At six o'clock the sun began to drop behind a broad belt of black cloud that had settled over London. The mist following us ever since we crossed the river had overtaken us, even passed us, and was strewed out over the earth, the sky above our heads being yet a beautiful pale blue. We were passing with increased rapidity over the rich level land that stretches from the river bank to Chelmsford, and there was time to look round at each other. Burnaby had come down from the netting and disposed his vast person amongst us and the bags of ballast. He was driven down by the smell of gas, which threatened to suffocate us all when we started. M. Wilfrid de Fonvielle, kneeling down by the side of the car, was perpetually "taking observations," and persistently asking for "the readings," which the gentleman from Cambridge occasionally protested his inability to supply, owing either to Burnaby having his foot upon the aneroid, or to the Captain so jamming him up against the side of the car that the accurate reading of a scientific instrument was not only inconvenient but impossible.

When we began to chat and exchange confidences, the fascination which balloon voyaging has for some people was testified to in a striking manner. The gentleman from Cambridge had a mildness of manner about him that made it difficult to conceive him engaged in any perilous enterprise. Yet he had been in half a dozen balloon ascents, and had posted up from his native town on hearing that a balloon was going up from the Crystal Palace. As for Burnaby, it was borne in upon me, even at this casual meeting, that it did not matter to him what enterprise he embarked upon, so that it were spiced with danger and promised adventure. He had some slight preference for ballooning, this being his sixteenth ascent, including the time when the balloon burst, and the occupants of the car came rattling down from a height of three thousand feet, and were saved only by the fortuitous draping of the half emptied balloon, which prevented all the gas from escaping.

At half-past six we were still passing over the Turkey carpet, apparently of the same interminable pattern. Some miles ahead the level stretch was broken by clumps of trees, which presently developed into woods of considerable extent. It was growing dusk, and no town or railway station was near. Burnaby, assured of being too late for his dinner party, wanted to prolong the journey. But the farther the balloon went the longer would be the distance over which it would have to be brought back and Mr. Coxwell's assistant was commendably careful of his employer's purse. On approaching Highwood the balloon passed over a dense wood, in which there was some idea of descending. But finally the open ground was preferred, and, the wood being left behind, a ploughed field was selected as the place to drop, and the gas was allowed to escape by wholesale. The balloon swooped downward at a somewhat alarming pace, and if Barker had had all his wits about him he would have thrown out half a bag of ballast and lightened the fall. But after giving instructions for all to stoop down in the bottom of the car and hold onto the ropes, he himself promptly illustrated the action, and down we went like a hawk towards the ground.

As it will appear even to those who have never been in a balloon, no advice could have been worse than that of stooping down in the bottom of the car, which was presently to come with a great shock to the earth, and would inevitably have seriously injured any who shared its contact. Fortunately Burnaby, who was as cool as if he were riding in his brougham, shouted out to all to lift their feet from contact with the bottom of the car, and to hang on to the ropes. This was done, and when the car struck the earth it merely shook us, and no one had even a bruise.

Before we began to descend at full speed the grappling iron had been pitched over, and, fortunately, got a firm hold in a ridge of the ploughed land. Thus, when the balloon, after striking the ground, leapt up again into the air and showed a disposition to wander off and tear itself to pieces against the hedges and trees, it was checked by the anchor rope and came down again with another bump on the ground. This time the shock was not serious, and after a few more flutterings it finally stood at ease.

The highest altitude reached by the balloon was three thousand feet, and this was registered about a couple of miles before we struck Highwood. For some distance before completing this descent we had been skimming along at about a thousand feet above the level of the fields, and the intention to drop being evident, a great crowd of rustics gallantly kept

pace with the balloon for the last half-mile. By the time we were fairly settled down, half a hundred men, women, and children had converged upon the field from all directions, and were swarming in through the hedge.

Actually the first in at the death was an old lady attired chiefly in a brilliant orange-coloured shawl, who came along over the ridges with a splendid stride. But she did not fully enjoy the privilege she had so gallantly earned. She was making straight for the balloon, when Burnaby mischievously warned her to look out, for it might "go off." Thereupon the old lady, without uttering a word in reply, turned round and, with strides slightly increased in length, made for the hedge, through which she disappeared, and the orange-coloured shawl was seen no more.

All the rustics appeared to be in a state more or less dazed. What with having been running some distance, and what with surprise at discovering seven gentlemen dropped out of the sky into the middle of a ploughed field, they could find relief only in standing at a safe distance with their mouths wide open. In vain Barker talked to them in good broad English, and begged them to come and hold the car whilst we got out. No one answered a word, and none stirred a step, except when the balloon gave a lurch, and then they got ready for a start towards the protecting hedges. At last Burnaby volunteered to drop out. This he did, deftly holding on to the car, and by degrees the intelligent bystanders approached and cautiously lent a hand. Finding that the balloon neither bit nor burned them, they swung on with hearty goodwill, and so we all got out, and Barker commenced the operation of packing up, in which task the natives, incited by the promise of a "good drink," lent hearty assistance.

We had not the remotest idea where we were, and night was fast closing in. Where was the nearest railway station? Perhaps if we had arrived in the neighbourhood in a brake or an omnibus, we might have succeeded in getting an answer to this question. As it was, we could get none. One intelligent party said, after profound cogitation, that it was "over theere," but as "over theere" presented nothing but a vista of fields--some ploughed and all divided by high hedges--this was scarcely satisfactory. In despair we asked where the high-road was, and this being indicated, but still vaguely and after a considerable amount of thought, Burnaby and I made for it, and presently succeeded in striking it.

The next thing was to get to a railway station, wherever it might be, and as the last train for town might leave early, the quicker we arrived the better. Looking down the road, Burnaby espied a tumble-down cart standing close into the hedge, and strode down to requisition it. The cart was full of hampers and boxes, and sitting upon the shaft was an elderly gentleman in corduroys intently gazing over the hedge at the rapidly collapsing balloon, which still fitfully swayed about like a drunken man awaking out of sleep.

"Will you drive us to the nearest railway station, old gentleman?" said Burnaby cheerily.

The old gentleman withdrew his gaze from the balloon and surveyed us, a feeble, indecisive smile playing about his wooden features; but he made no other answer.

"Will you drive us to the nearest railway station?" repeated Burnaby. "We'll pay you well."

Still no answer came from the old gentleman, who smiled more feebly than ever, now including me in his intelligent purview. After other and diverse attempts to draw him into conversation, including the pulling of the horse and cart into the middle of the road, and the making of a feint to start it off at full gallop, it became painfully clear that the old gentleman had, at sight of the balloon, gone clean out of such senses as he had ever possessed, and as there was a prospect of losing the train if we waited till he came round again, nothing remained but to help ourselves to the conveyance. So Burnaby got up and disposed of as much of himself as was possible in a hamper on the top of the cart. I sat on the shaft, and taking the reins out of the old gentleman's resistless hand, drove off down the road at quite a respectable pace.

After we had gone about a mile the old gentleman, who had been employing his unwonted leisure in staring at us all over, broke into a chuckle. We gently encouraged him by laughing in chorus, and after a brief space

he said,--

"I seed ye coming."

As I had a good deal to do to keep the pony up and going, Burnaby undertook to follow up this glimmering of returning sense on the part of the old gentleman, and with much patience and tact he succeeded in getting him so far round that we ascertained we were driving in the direction of "Blackmore." Further than this we could not get, any pressure in the direction of learning whether there was a railway station at the town or village, or whatever it might be, being followed by alarming symptoms of relapse on the part of the old gentleman. However, to get to Blackmore was something, and after half an hour's dexterous driving we arrived at the village, of which the inn standing back under the shade of three immemorial oak trees appeared to be a fair moiety.

We paid the old gentleman and parted company with him, though not without a saddening fear that the shock of the balloon coming down under his horse's nose, as it were, had permanently affected his brain. At Blackmore we found a well-horsed trap, and through woods and long country lanes drove to Ingatestone, and as fast as the train could travel got back to civilisation.

This was the beginning of a close and intimate friendship, that ended only with Burnaby's departure for the Soudan. He often talked to me of himself and of his still young life. Educated at Harrow, he thence proceeded to Germany, where, under private tuition, he acquired an unusually perfect acquaintance with the French, Italian, and German languages, and incidentally imbibed a taste for gymnastics. At sixteen he, the youngest of one hundred and fifty candidates, passed his examination for admission to the army, and at the mature age of seventeen found himself a cornet in the Royal Horse Guards. At this time his breast seems to have been fired by the noble ambition to become the strongest man in the world. How far he succeeded is told in well-authenticated traditions that linger round various spots in Windsor and London. He threw himself into the pursuit of muscle with all the ardour since shown in other directions, and the cup of his joy must have been full when a precise examination led to the demonstration of the fact that his arm measured round the biceps exactly seventeen inches. He could put 'Nathalie' (then starring it at the Alhambra) to shame with her puny 56-lb. weight in each hand, and could 'turn the arm' of her athletic father as if it had been nothing more than a hinge-rusted nut-cracker. His plaything at Aldershot was a dumb-bell weighing 170 lbs., which he lifted straight out with one hand, and there was a standing bet of £10 that no other man in the Camp could perform the same feat. At the rooms of the London Fencing Club there is to this day a dumb-bell weighing 120 lbs., with record of how Fred Burnaby was the only member who could lift it above his head.

There is a story told of early barrack days which he assured me was quite true. A horsedealer arrived at Windsor with a pair of beautiful little ponies he had been commanded to show the Queen. Before exhibiting them to her Majesty he took them to the Cavalry Barracks for display to the officers of the Guards. Some of these, by way of a pleasant surprise, led the ponies upstairs into Burnaby's room, where they were much admired. But when the time came to take leave an alarming difficulty presented itself. The ponies, though they had walked upstairs, could by no means be induced to walk down again. The officers were in a fix; the horsedealer was in despair; when young Burnaby settled the matter by taking up the ponies, one under each arm and, walking downstairs, deposited them in the barrack-yard. The Queen heard the story when she saw the ponies, and doubtless felt an increased sense of security at Windsor, having this astounding testimony to the prowess of her Household Troops.

Cornet Burnaby was as skilful as he was strong. He was one of the best amateur boxers of the day, as Tom Paddock, Nat Langham, and Bob Travers could testify of their well-earned personal experience. Moreover, he fenced as well as he boxed, and the turn of his wrist, which never failed to disarm a swordsman, was known in more than one of the capitals of Europe. Ten years before he started for Khiva, there was much talk at the Rag of the wonderful feat of the young Guardsman, who undertook for a small wager to hop a quarter of a mile, run a quarter of a mile, ride a quarter of a mile, row a quarter of a mile, and walk a quarter of

a mile in a quarter of an hour, and who covered the mile and a quarter of distance in ten minutes and twenty seconds.

Fred Burnaby had, whilst barely out of his teens, realised his boyish dream, and become the strongest man in the world. But he had also begun to pay the penalty of success in the coin of wasted tissues and failing health. When a man finds, after anxious and varied experiments, that a water-ice is the only form of nourishment his stomach will retain, he is driven to the conviction that there is something wrong, and that he had better see the doctor. The result of the young athlete's visit to the doctor was that he mournfully laid down the dumb-bells and the foil, eschewed gymnastics, and took to travel.

COL. FRED BURNABY.

An average man advised to travel for his health's sake would probably have gone to Switzerland or the South of France, according to the sort of climate held to be desirable. Burnaby went to Spain, that being at the time the most troubled country in Europe, not without promise of an outbreak of war. Here he added Spanish to his already respectable stock of languages, and found the benefit of the acquisition in his next journey, which was to South America, where he spent four months shooting unaccustomed game and recovering from the effects of his devotion to gymnastics. Returning to do duty with his regiment, he began to learn Russian and Arabic, going at them steadily and vigorously, as if they were long stretches of ploughed land to be ridden over. A second visit to Spain provided him with the rare gratification of being shut up in Barcelona during the siege, and sharing all the privations and dangers of the garrison. Whilst in Seville during a subsequent journey he received a telegram saying that his father was seriously ill. France was at the time in the throes of civil war, with the Communists holding Paris against the army of Versailles. To reach England any other way than viâ Paris involved a delay of many days, and Burnaby determined to dare all that was to be done by the Communists. So, carrying a Queen's Messenger's bag full of cigars in packets that looked more or less like Government despatches, he passed through Paris and safely reached Calais.

A year later he set forth intending to journey to Khiva, but on reaching Naples was striken with fever, spent four months of his leave in bed, and was obliged to postpone the trip. In 1874 he once more went to Spain, this time acting as the special correspondent of the Times with the Carlists, and his letters form not the least interesting chapter in the long story of the miserable war. In the early spring of 1875 he made a dash at Central Africa, hoping to find "Chinese Gordon" and his expedition. He met that gallant officer on the Sobat river, a stream which not ten Englishmen have seen, and having stayed in the camp for a few days, set out homeward, riding on a camel through the Berber desert

to Korosko, a distance of five hundred miles. After an absence of exactly four months he turned up for duty at the Cavalry Barracks, Windsor, with as much nonchalance as if he had been for a trip to the United States in a Cunard steamer.

It was whilst on this flight through Central Africa that the notion of the journey to Khiva came back with irresistible force. It had been done by MacGahan, but that plucky journalist had judiciously started in the spring. Burnaby resolved to accomplish the enterprise in winter; and accordingly, on November 30th, 1875, he started by way of St. Petersburg, treating himself, as a foretaste of the joys that awaited him on the steppes, to the long lonely ride through Russia in midwinter. At Sizeran he left civilisation and railways behind him, and rode on a sleigh to Orenburg, a distance of four hundred and eighty miles. At Orenburg he engaged a Tartar servant, and another stretch of eight hundred miles on a sleigh brought him to Fort No. 1, the outpost of the Russian army facing the desert of Central Asia. After this even the luxury of sleigh-riding was perforce foregone, and Burnaby set out on horseback, with one servant, one guide, and a thermometer that registered between 70° and 80° below freezing point, to find Khiva across five hundred miles of pathless, trackless, silent snow.

Two Cossacks riding along this route with despatches had just before been frozen to death. The Russians, inured to the climate, had never been able to take Khiva in the winter months. They had tried once, and had lost six hundred camels and two-thirds of their men before they saw the enemy. But Fred Burnaby gaily went forth, clothed-on with sheepskins. After several days' hard riding and some nights' sleep on the snow, he arrived in Khiva, chatted with the Khan, fraternised with the Russian officers, kept his eyes wide open, and finally was invited to return by a telegram from the Commander-in-Chief, who had been brought to understand how this strange visitor from the Cavalry Barracks at Windsor had fluttered the military authorities at St. Petersburg.

This adventure might have sufficed an ordinary man for a lifetime. But in the very next year, whilst his *Ride to Khiva* remained the most popular book in the libraries, he paid a second visit to the Turcomans, seeking them now, not on the bleak steppes round Khiva, but in the more fertile, though by Europeans untrodden, plains of Asia Minor. He had one other cherished project of which he often spoke to me. It was to visit Timbuctoo. But whilst brooding over this new journey he fell in love, married, settled down to domestic life in Cromwell Gardens, and took to politics. It was characteristic of him that, looking about for a seat to fight, he fixed upon John Bright's at Birmingham, that being at the time the Gibraltar of political fortresses.

The last time I saw Fred Burnaby was in September 1884. He was standing on his doorstep at Somerby Hall, Leicestershire, speeding his parting guests. By his side, holding on with all the might of a chubby hand to an extended forefinger, was his little son, a child some five years old, whose chief delight it was thus to hang on to his gigantic father and toddle about the grounds. We had been staying a week with Burnaby in his father's old home, and it had been settled, on the invitation of his old friend Henry Doetsch, that we should meet again later in the year, and set out for Spain to spend a month at Huelva. A few weeks later the trumpet sounded from the Soudan, and like an old war-horse that joyously scents the battle from afar, Burnaby gave up all his engagements, and fared forth for the Nile.

At first he was engaged in superintending the moving of the troops between Tanjour and Magrakeh. This was hard work admirably done. But Burnaby was always pining to get to the front. In a private letter dated Christmas Eve, 1884, he writes: "I do not expect the last boat will pass this cataract before the middle of next month, and then I hope to be sent for to the front. It is a responsible post Lord Wolseley has given me here, with forty miles of the most difficult part of the river, and I am very grateful to him for letting me have it. But I must say I shall be better pleased if he sends for me when the troops advance upon Khartoum."

The order came in due course, and Burnaby was riding on to the relief of Gordon when his journey was stopped at Abu-Klea. He was attached to the staff of General Stewart, whose little force of six-thousand-odd men was suddenly surrounded by a body of fanatical Arabs, nine thousand strong. The British troops formed square, inside which the mounted officers sat directing the desperate defence, that again and

again beat back the angry torrent. After some hours' fighting, a soldier in the excitement of the moment got outside the line of the square, and was engaged in a hand-to-hand conflict with a cluster of Arabs. Burnaby, seeing his peril, dashed out to the rescue--"with a smile on his face," as one who saw him tells me,--and was making irresistible way against the odds when an Arab thrust a spear in his throat, and he fell off his horse dead. He sleeps now, as he always yearned to rest, in a soldier's grave, dug for him by chance on the continent whose innermost recesses he had planned some day to explore.

The date of his death was January 17th, 1885. His grave is nameless, and its place in the lonely Desert no man knoweth.

> "Brave Burnaby down! Wheresoever 'tis spoken
> The news leaves the lips with a wistful regret
> We picture that square in the desert, shocked, broken,
> Yet packed with stout hearts, and impregnable yet
> And there fell, at last, in close mêlée, the fighter
> Who Death had so often affronted before;
> One deemed he'd no dart for his valorous slighter
> Who such a gay heart to the battle-front bore.
> But alas! for the spear thrust that ended a story
> Romantic as Roland's, as Lion-Heart's brief
> Yet crowded with incident, gilded with glory
> And crowned by a laurel that's verdant of leaf.
> A latter-day Paladin, prone to adventure,
> With little enough of the spirit that sways
> The man of the market, the shop, the indenture!
> Yet grief-drops will glitter on Burnaby's bays.
> Fast friend as keen fighter, the strife glow preferring,
> Yet cheery all round with his friends and his foes;
> Content through a life-story short, yet soul-stirring
> And happy, as doubtless he'd deem, in its close."

Thus *Punch*, as it often does, voiced the sentiments of the nation on learning the death of its hero.

CHAPTER II.

A NIGHT ON A MOUNTAIN

There are not many English abroad this morning on the top of the hill. In fact, unless they had passed the night here it would not be easy for them to present themselves, seeing that San Salvatore, though a very modest mound, standing as it does in the neighbourhood of the Alps, is high enough to lift its crest out of the curtain of mist that lies over the lower world. Lugano, its lake, and its many small towns--as like each other when seen from a distance as if they had been turned out of a mould--are understood to lie at some uncertain depth beneath the mist. In truth, unless they have wholly disappeared in the night, we know that they are there, for we walked up in the late afternoon with intent to sleep here.

The people of Lugano, more especially the hotel-keepers, were much exercised at this undertaking. Nobody in recent recollection had been known to spend the night on San Salvatore, and if the eccentricity were permitted and proved enjoyable, no one could say that it might not spread, leaving empty beds at Lugano. There was, accordingly, much stress laid on possible dangers and certain discomforts. Peradventure there was no bed; assuredly it would be hard and damp and dirty. There would be nothing to eat, nor even to drink; and in short, if ever there was madness characteristic of the English abroad, here was the mid March of its season.

But the undertaking was not nearly so mad as it looked. I had been up Salvatore on the previous day and surveyed the land. It is a place that still holds high rank in the Romish calendar of Church celebrations. Many years ago a chapel was built on its summit, and pilgrimages instituted. These take place at Ascension and Pentecost, when the hillside swarms with devout sons and daughters of Italy, and the music of high mass breaks the silence of the mountains. Even pilgrims must eat and drink and sleep, and shortly after the chapel was built there rose up at its feet, in a sheltered nook, a little house, a chapel-of-ease in the sense that here was sold wine of the country, cheese of the district, and *jambon* reputed to come across the seas from distant "Yorck." A spare bedroom was also established for the accommodation of the officiating priests, and it was on the temporary reversion of this apartment that I had counted in making those arrangements that Lugano held to be hopelessly heretical.

When, on my first visit to the top of San Salvatore, I reached

the pilgrimage chapel, I found an old gentleman standing at the door of the hostelry by which the pilgrim must needs pass on his way to the chapel--a probably undesigned but profitable arrangement, since it brings directly under his notice the possibility of purchasing "vins du pays, pain, fromage, saucissons, and jambon d'Yorck."

When I broached the subject of the night's entertainment the landlord was a little taken aback, and evidently inclined to dwell upon those inconveniences of which Lugano had made so much. But the more he thought of it, the more he liked the idea. As I subsequently learned, the hope of his youth, the sustenance of his manhood, and the dream of his old age was to see his little hut develop into a grand hotel, with a porter in the hall, an army of waiters bustling about, and himself in the receipt of custom. It was a very small beginning that two English people should propose to lodge with him for a night. Still, it was something, and everything must have a beginning. Monte Generoso, among the clouds on the other side of the lake, began in that way; and look at it now with its *chambres* at eight francs a day, its *table d'hôte* at five francs, and its *bougies* dispensed at their weight in silver!

"Si, signor"; he thought it might be done. He was sure--nay, he was positive.

As the picture of the hotel of the future glowed in his mind he became enthusiastic, and proposed that we should view the apartments. The bedroom we found sufficiently roomy, with both fireplace and one of the two windows bricked up to avoid draughts. The mattress of the bed, it is true, was stuffed with chopped straw, and was not free from suspicion of harbouring rats. But there was a gorgeous counterpane, whose many colours would have excited the envy of Joseph's brethren had their pilgrimage chanced to lead them in this direction. The floor was of cement, and great patches of damp displayed themselves on the walls. Over the bed hung a peaceful picture of a chubby boy clasping a crook to his breast, and exchanging glances of maudlin sentimentality with a sheep that skipped at his side. The damp had eaten up one of the legs of mutton, and the sheep went on three legs. But nothing could exceed the more than human tenderness with which it regarded the chubby boy with the crook.

We soon settled about the bed, and there remained only the question of food. On this point also our host displayed even an increase of airy confidence. What would signor? There were sausage, ham of York, and eggs, the latter capable of presentation in divers shapes.

This, it must be admitted, engendered a feeling of discouragement. We had two days earlier tasted the sausage of the country when served up in a first-class hotel as garnish to a dish of spinach. It is apparently made of pieces of gristle, and when liberated from the leather case that enshrines it, crumbles like a piece of old wall. Sausage was clearly out of the question, and the ham of York does not thrive out of its own country, acquiring a foreign flavour of salted sawdust. Eggs are very well in their way, but man cannot live on eggs alone.

Our host was a man full of resources. Why should we not bring the materials for dinner from Lugano? He would undertake to cook them, whatever they might be. This was a happy thought that clenched the bargain. We undertook to arrive on the following day, bringing our sheaves with us, in the shape of a supply of veal cutlets.

The ostensible object of spending a night on San Salvatore is to see the sun set and rise. The mountain is not high, just touching three thousand feet, an easy ascent of two hours. But it is a place glorious in the early morning and solemn in the quiet evening. Below lies the lake of Lugano, its full length visible. Straight before you, looking east, is the long arm that stretches to Porlezza, with its gentle curves where the mountains stand and cool their feet in the blue water. To the west, beyond a cluster of small and nameless lakes that lie on the plain, we see the other arm of the lake, with Ponte Tresa nestling upon it, and still farther west the

sun gleams on the waters of Lago Maggiore. Above Porlezza is Monte Legnone, and far away on the left glint the snow peaks of the Bernina. High in the north, above the red tiles and white walls of the town of Lugano are the two peaks of Monte Camoghe, flanked by something that seems a dark cloud in the blue sky, but which our host says is the ridge of St. Gothard. The sun sets behind the Alps of the Valais among which towers the Matterhorn and gleam the everlasting snows of Monte Rosa.

These form the framework of a picture which contains all the softness and richness of the beauty of a land where the grape and the fig grow, and where in these October days roses are in full bloom, and heliotropes sweeten every breath of air. Yesterday had opened splendidly, the morning sun rising over the fair scene and bringing out every point. But as we toiled up the hill this afternoon, carrying the cutlets, the sun had capriciously disappeared. The mountains were hid in clouds, and the lake, having no blue sky to reflect, had turned green with chagrin. There was little hope of visible sunset; but there was a prospect of sunrise, and certainty of a snug dinner in circumstances to which the novelty of the surroundings would lend a strange charm.

It was rather disappointing on arriving to find that our acquaintance of yesterday had disappeared. I have reason to believe the excitement of our proposed visit had been too much for him, and that he had found it desirable to retire to rest in the more prosaic habitation of the family down in the town. He had selected as substitute the most stalwart and capable of his sons, a man of the mature age of thirty-five. This person had the family attribute of readiness of resource and perfect confidence. The enthusiasm which had been too dangerously excited in the breast of his aged parent had been communicated to him. He was ready to go anywhere and cook anything, and having as a preliminary arranged a napkin under his arm, went bustling about the table disturbing imaginary flies and flicking off supposititious crumbs, as he had seen the waiter do in the restaurant at the hotel down in the town.

"Signor had brought the cutlets? Si, and beautiful they were! How would signor like to have them done? Thus, or thus, or thus?" in a variety of ways which, whilst their recital far exceeded my limited knowledge of the language, filled me with fullest confidence in Giacommetti.

That was his name, he told me in one of his bursts of confidence; and a very pretty name it is, though for brevity's sake it may be convenient hereafter to particularise him by the initial letter.

As I was scarcely in a position to decide among the various appetising ways of cooking suggested by G., I said I would leave it to him.

But, then, the signor could not make a dinner of cutlets. What else would he be so good as to like? Sausage, ham of York, and eggs--eggs *à la coque* or presented as omelettes. No? Then signor would commence with soup? Finally *potage au riz* was selected out of the embarrassment of riches poured at our feet by the enthusiastic G.

There being yet an hour to dinner, we ascended the few steps that led to the summit of the hill on which the chapel is perched, a marvel to all new-comers by the highway of the Lake. The door was open, and we walked in. There was no light burning on the altar, nor any water in the stone basin by the door. But there was all the apparatus of worship--the gaudy toyshop above the grand altar, the tiny side chapels, with their pictures of the dying Saviour, and the confessional box, now thick with dust, and echoless of sob of penitent or counsel of confessor. It was evidently a poorly endowed chapel, the tinsel adornments being of the cheapest and the candles of the thinnest. But in some past generation a good Catholic had bestowed upon it an altarcloth of richest silk, daintily embroidered. The colours had faded out of the flowers, and the golden hue of the cloth had been grievously dimmed. Still it remained the one rich genuine piece of workmanship in a chapel disfigured by an overbearing hankering after paper flowers and tinsel.

Early the next morning, whilst reposing under the magnificent

counterpane on the bed of chopped straw, I was awakened by hearing the chapel bell ring for mass. I thought it must be the ghost of some disembodied priest, who had come up through the darkness of the night and the scarcely more luminous mist of the morning to say a mass for his own disturbed soul. But, as I presently learned, they were human hands that pulled the bell-rope, and a living priest said mass all by himself in this lonely chapel whilst dawn was breaking over a sleeping world.

I saw him some hours later sitting on the kitchen dresser, in the sanctum where G. worked the mysteries of his art. He was resting his elbows on his knees as he leaned forward, and had in his mouth a large pipe, from which he vigorously puffed. I found him a very cheerful old gentleman, by no means unduly oppressed with the solemnity of this early mass in the lonely chapel. He lived down at Barbeng, at the back of the hill, and had come up this morning purely as a matter of business, and in partial fulfilment of a contract entered into with one of his parishioners, whose husband had been lost at sea whilst yet they were only twelve months married. The widow had scraped together sufficient money to have a due number of masses said on San Salvatore for the repose of the soul of her young husband. So once a week, whilst the contract ran, the old priest made his way up through the morning mist, tolled the bell, said the mass, and thereafter comforted himself with a voluminous pipe seated on the dresser in G.'s kitchen.

This is a digression, and I confess I have rather lingered over it, as it kept the soup waiting.

The preparation was brought in in a neat white bowl gracefully carried aloft by G., who still insisted upon going about with a napkin under his arm. Everything was in order except the soup. I like to think that the failure may have been entirely due to myself. G. had proposed quite a dozen soups, and I had ignorantly chosen the only one he could not make. The liquid was brown and greasy, smelling horribly of a something which in recognition of G.'s good intention I will call butter. The rice, which formed a principal component part, presented itself in conglomerate masses, as if G., before placing it in the tureen, had squeezed portions of it in his hand.

Perhaps he had, for he was not in the humour to spare himself trouble in his effort to make the banquet a success.

We helped ourselves plentifully to the contents of the tureen, which was much easier to do than to settle the disposition of the soup. G. was in an ecstasy of delight at things having gone on so well thus far. He positively pervaded the place, nervously changing the napkin from arm to arm, and frantically flicking off imaginary crumbs. At length it happily occurred to him that it would be well to go and see after the cutlets. Whereupon we emptied the soup back into the tureen, and when G. returned were discovered wiping our lips with the air of people who had already dined.

After all, there were the cutlets, and G. had not indulged in exaggerated approval of their excellence when in a state of nature. They were those dainty cuts into which veal naturally seems to resolve itself in butcher's shops on the Continent. We observed with concern that they looked a little burned in places when they came to the table, and the same attraction of variety was maintained in the disposition of salt. There were large districts in the area of the cutlet absolutely free from savouring. But then you came upon a small portion where the salt lay in drifts, and thus the average was preserved. We were very hungry and ate the cutlets, which, with an allowance of bread, made up the dinner. There were some potatoes, fried with great skill, amid much of the compound we had agreed to call butter. But, as I explained to G. in reply to a deprecatory gesture when he took away the floating mass untouched, I have not for more than three years been able to eat a potato. One of my relations was, about that date, choked by a piece of potato, and since then I have never touched them, especially when fried in a great deal of butter.

We had some cheese, for which Earl Granville's family motto would serve as literal description. You might bend it, but could not break it. I never was partial to bent cheese, but we made a fair

appearance with this part of the feast, owing to the arrival of G.'s dog, a miserable-looking cur, attracted to the banquet-hall by unwonted savours. He seemed to like the cheese; and G., when he came in with the coffee, was more than ever pleased with our appreciation of the good things provided for us.

"Rosbif and chiss--ha!" he said, breaking forth into English, and smiling knowingly upon us.

He felt he had probed the profoundest depths of the Englishman's gastronomical weakness.

With the appearance of the coffee the real pleasure of the evening commenced. Along nearly the whole of one side of the banquet-hall ran a fireplace, a recess of the proportions of a spare bedroom in an ordinary English house. There were no "dogs" or other contrivance for minimising the spontaneity of a fire. There are granite quarries near, and these had contributed an enormous block which formed a hearth raised about six inches above the level of the floor. On this an armful of brushwood was placed; and the match applied, it began to burn with cheerful crackling laughter and pleasant flame, filling the room with a fragrant perfume. For all other light a feeble oil lamp twinkled high up on the wall, and a candle burned on the table where we had so luxuriantly dined.

The fitful light shone on the oil paintings which partly hid the damp on the walls. There was a picture (not a bad one) of St. Sebastian pierced with arrows, and in his death-agony turning heavenward a beautiful face. There was the portrait of another monk holding on to a ladder, each rung of which was labelled with a cardinal virtue. There was a crucifixion or two, and what elsewhere might well pass for a family portrait--an elderly lady, with a cap of the period, nursing a spaniel. The damp had spared the spaniel whilst it made grave ravages upon the lady, eating a portion of her cheek and the whole of her left ear.

G. having the dinner off his mind, and having, as was gathered from a fearsome clattering in the back premises, washed up the dishes, wandered about the shadows in the background and showed a disposition for conversation. It was now he unfolded that dream of the hotel some day to be built up here, with the porter in the hall, the waiters buzzing round, the old man, his father, in the receipt of custom, and he (G.) exercising his great natural talents in supervising the making of soup, the frying of potatoes, and the selection of elastic cheeses. He showed, with pardonable pride, a visitors' book in which was written "Leopold, Prince of Great Britain and Ireland." His Royal Highness came here one rainy day in 1876, riding on a mule, and escorted by a bedraggled suite.

Did they partake of any refreshments?

No; the father, G. frankly admits, lost his head in the excitement of the moment--a confession which confirms the impression that, on a much less auspicious occasion, it has been thought desirable that a younger and stronger man should assume the direction of affairs. To proffer Royalty *potage au riz* on such brief notice was of course out of the question. But the fatuous old gentleman had permitted a Prince of Great Britain and Ireland to descend the mountain without having tasted any other of the comestibles which were doubtless on hand at the time, and portions of which most probably remain to this day.

About eight o'clock there were indications from the shadowy portions of the banqueting chamber that G. was getting sleepy, and that the hour had arrived when it was usual for residents to retire for the night. Even on the top of a mountain one cannot go to bed at eight o'clock, and we affected to disregard these signals. Beginning gently, the yawns increased in intensity till they became phenomenal. At nine o'clock G. pointedly compared the hour of the day as between his watch and mine.

It was hard to leave a bright wood fire and go to bed at nine o'clock; but G. was irresistible. He literally yawned us out of the room, up the staircase, and into the bed-chamber. There was a key hanging by the outside of the door the size of a small club, and weighing several pounds. On the inside the keyhole, contrary to

habitude, was in the centre of the door. From this point of approach it was, however, useful rather for ventilation than for any other purpose, since the key would not enter. Looking about for some means of securing the door against possible intrusions on the part of G. with a new soup, I discovered the trunk of a young tree standing against the wall. The next discovery was recesses in the wall on either side of the door, which suggested the evident purpose of the colossal bar. With this across the door one might sleep in peace, and I did till eight o'clock in the morning.

G. had been instructed to call us at sunrise if the morning were fair. As it happened, our ill luck of the evening was repeated in the morning. A thick mist obscured all around us, though as we passed down to civilisation and Lugano the sun, growing stronger, lifted wreaths of white mist, and showed valley, and lake, and town bathed in glorious light.

CHAPTER III.

THE PRINCE OF WALES

We in this country have grown accustomed to the existence of the Prince of Wales, and his personality, real and fabulous, is not unfamiliar on the other side of the Atlantic. But if we come to think of it, it is a very strange phenomenon. The only way to realise its immensity is to conceive its creation today, supposing that heretofore through the history of England there had been no such institution. A child is born in accidental circumstances and with chance connections that might just as reasonably have fallen to the lot of some other entity. He grows from childhood through youth into manhood, and all the stages, with increasing devotion and deference, he is made the object of reverential solicitude. All his wants are provided for, even anticipated. He is the first person to be considered wherever he goes. Men who have won renown in Parliament, in the camp, in literature, doff their hats at his coming, and high-born ladies curtsey.

It is all very strange; but so is the rising of the sun and the sequence of the moon. We grow accustomed to everything and take the Prince of Wales like the solar system as a matter of course.

Reflection on the singularity of his position leads to sincere admiration of the manner in which the Prince fills it. Take it for all in all, there is no post in English public life so difficult to fill, not only without reproach, but with success. Day and night the Prince lives under the bull's-eye light of the lantern of a prying public. He is more talked about, written about, and pulled about than any Englishman, except, perhaps, Mr. Gladstone. But Mr. Gladstone stands on level ground with his countrymen. If he is attacked or misrepresented, he can hit back again. The position of the Prince of Wales imposes upon him the impassivity of the target used in ordinary rifle practice. Whatever is said or written about him, he can make no reply, and the happy result which in the main follows upon this necessary attitude suggests that it might with advantage be more widely adopted.

Probably in the dead, unhappy night when the rain was on the roof and the Tranby Croft scandal was on everybody's tongue, the Prince of Wales had some bad quarters of an hour. But whatever he felt or suffered, he made no sign. To see him sitting in the chair on the bench in court whilst that famous trial was proceeding, no one, not having prior knowledge of the fact, would have guessed that he had the slightest personal interest in the affair. There was danger of his even over-doing the attitude of indifference. But he escaped it, and was exactly as smiling, debonair and courtly as if he were in his box at the theatre watching the development of some quite other dramatic performance. He has all the courage of his race, and his long training has steeled his nerves.

It would be so easy for the Prince of Wales to make mistakes that would alienate from him the affection which is now his in unstinted measure. There are plenty of precedents, and a fatal fulness of exemplars. Take, for example, his relations with political life. It would not be possible for him now, as a Prince of Wales did at the beginning of the century, to form a Parliamentary party, and control votes in the House of Commons by cabals hatched at

Marlborough House. But he might, if he were so disposed, in less occult ways meddle in politics. As a matter of fact, noteworthy and of highest honour to the Prince, the outside public have not the slightest idea to which side of politics his mind is biassed. They know all about his private life, what he eats, and how much; how he dresses, whom he talks to, what he does from the comparatively early hour at which he rises to the decidedly late one at which he goes to bed. But in all the gossip daily poured forth about him there is never a hint as to whether he prefers the politics of Tory or Liberal, the company of Lord Salisbury or Mr. Gladstone.

In a country where every man in whatever station of life is a keen politician, this is a great thing to say for one in the position of the Prince of Wales.

This absolute impartiality of attitude does not arise from indifference to politics or to the current of political warfare. The Prince is a Peer of Parliament, sits as Duke of Cornwall, and under that name figures in the division lists on the rare occasions when he votes. When any important debate is taking place in the House, he is sure to be found in his corner seat on the front Cross Bench, an attentive listener. Nor does he confine his attention to proceedings in the House of Lords. In the Commons there is no more familiar figure than his seated in the Peers' Gallery over the clock, with folded hands irreproachably gloved, resting on the rail before him as he leans forward and watches with keen interest the sometimes tumultuous scene.

Thus he sat one afternoon in the spring of the session of 1875. He had come down to hear a speech with which his friend, Mr. Chaplin, was known to be primed. The House was crowded in every part, a number of Peers forming the Prince's suite in the gallery, while the lofty figure of Count Munster, German Ambassador, towered at his right hand, divided by the partition between the Peers' Gallery and that set apart for distinguished strangers. It was a great occasion for Mr. Chaplin, who sat below the gangway visibly pluming himself and almost audibly purring in anticipation of coming triumph. But a few days earlier the eminent orator had the misfortune to incur the resentment of Mr. Joseph Gillis Biggar. All unknown to him, Joseph Gillis was now lying in wait, and just as the Speaker was about to call on the orator of the evening, the Member for Cavan rose and observed,--

"Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe there are strangers in the house."

The House of Commons, tied and bound by its own archaic regulations, had no appeal against the whim of the indomitable Joey B. He had spied strangers in due form, and out they must go. So they filed forth, the Prince of Wales at the head of them, the proud English Peers following, and by another exit the Envoy of the most potent sovereign of the Continent, representative of a nation still flushed with the overthrow of France--all publicly and peremptorily expelled at the raising of the finger of an uneducated, obscure Irishman, who, when not concerned with the affairs of the Imperial Parliament, was curing bacon at Belfast and selling it at enhanced prices to the Saxon in the Liverpool market.

The Prince of Wales bore this unparalleled indignity with the good humour which is one of his richest endowments. He possesses in rare degree the faculty of being amused and interested. The British workman, who insists on his day's labour being limited by eight hours, would go into armed revolt if he were called upon to toil through so long a day as the Prince habitually faces. Some of its engagements are terribly boring, but the Prince smiles his way through what would kill an ordinary man. His manner is charmingly unaffected, and through all the varying duties and circumstances of the day he manages to say and do the right thing. It is not a heroic life, but it is in its way a useful one, and must be exceedingly hard to live.

Watching the Prince of Wales moving through an assemblage, whether it be as he enters a public meeting or as he strolls about the greensward at Marlborough House on the occasion of a garden party, the observer may get some faint idea of the strain ever upon him. You can see his eyes glancing rapidly along the line of the crowd in search of some one whom he can make happy for the day by a smile or a

nod of recognition. If there were one there who might expect the honour, and who was passed over, the Prince knows full well how sore would be the heart-burning.

There is nothing prettier at the garden party than to see him walking through the crowd of brave men and fair women with the Queen on his arm. Her Majesty used in days gone by to be habile enough at the performance of this imperative duty laid upon Royalty of singling out persons for recognition. Now, when he is in her company, the Prince of Wales does it for her. Escorting her, bare-headed, through the throng; he glances swiftly to right or left, and when he sees some one whom he thinks the Queen should smile upon he whispers the name. The Queen thereupon does her share in contributing to the sum of human happiness.

It is, as I began by saying, all very strange if we look calmly at it. But, in the present order of things, it has to be done. It is the Prince of Wales's daily work, and it is impossible to conceive it accomplished with fuller appearance of real pleasure on the part of the active agent.

CHAPTER IV.

A HISTORIC CROWD.

"I very much regret that so much of your valuable time has been absorbed," said the Lord Chief Justice, speaking to the Tichborne Jury, as the massive form of the Claimant vanished through the side door, never more to enter the Court of Queen's Bench; "but it will be a consolation to you to think that your names will be associated in history with the most remarkable trial that has ever occurred in the annals of England."

There was another jury outside Sir Alexander Cockburn's immediate observation that always struck me, and I saw a good deal of it, as not the least notable feature in the great trial that at one time engrossed the attention of the English-speaking race. That was the crowd that gathered outside the Courts of Justice, then still an adjunct of Westminster Hall.

As there never was before a trial like that of the Claimant, so there never was a crowd like this. It had followed him through all the vicissitudes of his appeal to the jury of his countrymen, and of his countrymen's subsequently handing him over to another jury upon a fresh appeal. It began to flood the broad spaces at the bottom of Parliament Street in far-off days when the case of Tichborne *v.* Lushington was opened in the Sessions House, and it continued without weariness or falling-off all through the progress of the civil suit, beginning again with freshened zeal with the commencement of the criminal trial.

Like the Severn, Palace Yard filled twice a day whilst the blue brougham had its daily mission to perform, the crowd assembling in the morning to welcome the coming Claimant, and foregathering in the evening to speed him on his departure westward. It ranged in numbers from 5000 down to 1000. Put the average at 3000, multiply it by 291, the aggregate number of days which the Claimant was before the Courts in his varied character of plaintiff and defendant, and we have 873,000 as the total of the assemblage.

As a rule, the congregation of Monday was the largest of the week. Why this should be, students of the manners of this notable crowd were not agreed. Some held that the circumstance was to be accounted for by the fact that two days had elapsed during which the Claimant was not on view, and that on Monday the crowd came back, like a giant refreshed, to the feast, which, by regular repetition, had partially palled on Friday's appetite. Others found the desired explanation in the habit which partly obtains among the labouring classes of taking Monday as a second day of rest in the week, and of devoting a portion of it to the duty of going down to Westminster Hall to cheer "Sir Roger."

Probably both causes united to bring together the greater crowd of Monday afternoons. It must not be supposed that the mob was composed wholly or principally of what are called the working classes. When an hon. member rose in the House of Commons, and complained of the

inconvenience occasioned to legislators by the "Tichborne crowd," another member observed that, relative numbers considered, the House of Commons contributed as much to swell the throng as any other section of the people. During the last months of the trial, if any class predominated it was that which came from the provinces. The Claimant was undoubtedly one of the sights of London and before his greater attraction the traditional Monument which elsewhere--

> "Lifts its tall head and like a bully lies,"

sank into absolute insignificance. Not to have seen the Claimant, argued the London of the period unknown. Fashionably dressed ladies and exquisitely attired gentlemen battled for front places upon the pavement with sturdy agriculturists who had brought their wives and daughters to see "Sir Roger," and who had not the slightest intention of going back till they had accomplished their desire.

It came to pass that there were some two hundred faces in the crowd familiar to the police as daily attendants at the four o'clock festival in Palace Yard. Day after day, they came to feast their eyes on the portly figure of "Sir Roger," and, having gazed their fill, went away, to return again on the morrow. There was one aged gentleman whose grey gaiters, long-tailed coat, and massive umbrella were as familiar in Palace Yard as are the features on the clock-face in the tower. He came up from somewhere in the country in the days when Kenealy commenced his first speech, and, being a hale old man, he survived long enough to be in the neighbourhood when the learned gentleman had finished his second. At the outset, he was wont to fight gallantly for a place of vantage in the ranks near the arch-way of the Hall. Then, before the advances of younger and stouter newcomers, he faded away into the background. Towards the end, he wandered about outside the railings in Bridge Street, and, as the clock struck four, got the umbrella as near as its natural obstructiveness would permit to the carriage-gate whence the Claimant's brougham was presently to issue.

At first the police authorities dealt with the assembly in the ordinary manner, a more or less sufficient force being told off for the duty of keeping the thoroughfare clear. It soon became manifest that the Tichborne crowd, like everything else in connection with the trial, required especial treatment, and accordingly a carefully elaborated scheme was prepared. Superintendent Denning had under his command, for the preservation of peace and order in Palace Yard and the adjacent thoroughfares, not less than sixty men. One or two were stationed in the justice-chamber itself, and must by the time the verdict had been delivered have got pretty well up in the details of the case. Others guarded the entrance-door; others lined the passage into the yard, others were disposed about the yard itself; whilst, after three o'clock, two strong companies stood in reserve in the sheds that flank the entrance to the Hall. At half past three the crowd began to assemble, building itself up upon the little nucleus that had been hanging about all day. The favourite standpoint, especially in the cold, uncertain winter weather that marked the conclusion of the trial, was inside Westminster Hall, where the people were massed on the far side of a temporary barricade which the Tichborne case called into being, the railing of which was worn black by the touch of the hands of the faithful.

Outside, in the yard, the crowd momentarily thickened till it formed a dense lane, opening out from the front of the Hall, and turning to the left down to the south carriage-gate. The railings in Bridge Street and St. Margaret's Street were banked with people, and ranks were formed on the pavement in front of the grass-plot. At a quarter to four the policemen under the shed received the word of command, and marched out into St. Margaret's Street, some filing off to take charge of the gates, whilst the rest were drawn up on the pavement opposite and at the corner of Bridge Street, with the mission of preventing rushes after the Claimant's carriage as it drove through. A few minutes later the distinguished vehicle itself--a plain, dark-blue brougham, drawn by a finely bred bay mare--drove into the yard, and, taking up its position a little on one side of the entrance to the Hall, became the object of curious and respectful consideration. As the great clock boomed four strokes, the doors of the Court opened, and the privileged few who had been present at the day's proceedings issued forth.

The excitement increased as the Court emptied, culminating when, after a brief lull, the Claimant himself appeared, and waddled down the living lane that marked the route to his carriage. There was much cheering and a great amount of pocket-handkerchief waving, which "Sir Roger" acknowledged by raising his hat and smiling that "smile of peculiar sweetness and grace" which Dr. Kenealy brought under the notice of the three judges and a special jury. As the Claimant walked through the doorway, closely followed by the Inspector, the policemen on guard suddenly closed the doors, and the public within Westminster Hall found themselves netted and hopelessly frustrated in what was evidently their intention of rushing out and sharing the outside crowd's privilege of staring at the Claimant, as he actually stepped into his carriage.

The outside throng in Palace Yard, meanwhile, made the most of their special privilege, crowding round "Sir Roger" and cheering in a manner that made the bay mare plunge and rear. With the least possible delay, the Claimant is got into the brougham, the door is banged to, and the bay mare is driven swiftly through the Yard, the crowd closing in behind. But when they reach the gates, and essay to pass and flood the streets beyond, where the gigantic umbrella of the aged gentleman looms uplifted over the shoulders of the line of police like the section of a windmill sail, the iron gates are swung to, and this, the second and larger portion of the crowd, is likewise safely trapped, and can gaze upon the retreating brougham only through iron bars that, in this instance at least, "do make a cage." There are not many people outside, for it is hard to catch even a passing glimpse of the occupant of the carriage as it drives swiftly westward to Pimlico, finally pulling up in a broad street of a severely respectable appearance, not to be marred even by the near contiguity of Millbank convict prison.

Here also is a crowd, though only a small one, and select to wit, being composed chiefly of well-dressed ladies, forming part of a band of pilgrims who daily walked up and down the street, waiting and watching the outgoing and incoming of "Sir Roger." They are rewarded by the polite upraising of "Sir Roger's" hat, and a further diffusion of the sweet and gracious smile; and having seen the door shut upon the portly form, and having watched the brougham drive off, they, too, go their way, and the drama is over for the day.

But the crowd in and about Palace Yard have not accomplished their mission when they have seen the blue brougham fade in the distance. There is the "Doctor" to come yet, and all the cheering has to be repeated, even with added volume of sound. When the Claimant has got clear away, and the crowd have had a moment or two of breathing-time, the "Doctor" walks forth from the counsels' entrance, and is received with a burst of cheering and clapping of hands, which, "just like Sir Roger", he acknowledges by raising his hat, but, unlike him, permits no trace of a smile to illumine his face. Without looking right or left, the "Doctor" walks northward, raising his hat as he passes the caged and cheering crowd in Palace Yard. With the same grave countenance, not moved in the slightest degree by the comical effect of the big men in the crowd at his heels waving their hats over his head, the "Doctor" crosses Bridge Street, and walks into Parliament Street, as far as the Treasury, where a cab is waiting. Into this he gets with much deliberation, and, with a final waving of his hat, and always with the same imperturbable countenance, is driven off, and Parliament Street, subsiding from the turmoil in which the running, laughing, shouting mob have temporarily thrown it, finds time to wonder whether it would not have been more convenient for all concerned if the "Doctor's" cab had picked him up at the door of Westminster Hall.

Slowly approached the end of this marvellous, and to a succeeding generation almost incredible, and altogether inexplicable, phenomenon. It came about noon, on Saturday, the final day of February, 1874.

A few minutes before ten o'clock on that morning the familiar bay mare and the well-known blue brougham--where are they now?--appeared in sight, with a contingent of volunteer running footmen, who cheered "Sir Roger" with unabated enthusiasm. As the carriage passed through into the yard, a cordon of police promptly drew up behind it across the gateway, and stopped the crowd that would have entered

with it. But inside there was, within reasonable limits, no restraint upon the movements of the Claimant's admirers, who lustily cheered, and wildly waved their hats, drowning in the greater sound the hisses that came from a portion of the assemblage. The Claimant looked many shades graver than in the days when Kenealy's speech was in progress. Nevertheless, he smiled acknowledgment of the reception, and repeatedly raised his hat. When he had passed in, the throng in Palace Yard rapidly vanished, not more than a couple of hundred remaining in a state of vague expectation. Westminster Hall itself continued to be moderately full, a compact section of the crowd that had secured places of vantage between the barricade and the temporary telegraph station evidently being prepared to see it out at whatever hour the end might come.

For the next hour there was scarcely any movement in the Hall, save that occasioned by persons who lounged in, looked round, and either ranged themselves in the ranks behind the policemen, or strolled out again, holding to the generally prevalent belief that if they returned at two o'clock they would still have sufficient hours to wait. In the Yard a thin line extended from the side of the Hall gateway backwards to the railings in St. Margaret's Street, with another line drawn up across the far edge of the broad carriage-way before the entrance. There was no ostentatious show of police, but they had a way of silently filing out from under the sheds or out of the Commons' gateway in proportion as the crowd thickened, which conveyed the impression that there was a force somewhere about that would prove sufficient to meet any emergency. As a matter of fact, Mr. Superintendent Denning had under his command three hundred men, who had marched down to Westminster Hall at six o'clock in the morning, and were chiefly disposed in reserve, ready for action as circumstances might dictate.

At half-past eleven, there being not more than three or four hundred people in Palace Yard, a number of Press messengers, rushing helter-skelter out of the court and into waiting cabs, indicated the arrival of some critical juncture within the jealously guarded portals. Presently it was whispered that the Lord Chief Justice had finished his summing up, and that Mr. Justice Mellor was addressing the jury. A buzz of conversation rose and fell in the Hall, and the ranks drew closer up, waiting in silence the consummation that could not now be far distant.

The news spread with surprising swiftness, not only in Palace Yard, but throughout Bridge Street and St. Margaret's Street, and the railings looking thence into the yard became gradually banked with rows of earnest faces. Little groups formed on the pavement about the corners of Parliament Street. Faces appeared at the windows of the houses overlooking the Yard, and the whole locality assumed an aspect of grave and anxious expectation. A few minutes after the clock in the tower had slowly boomed forth twelve strokes it was known in the Bail Court, where a dozen rapid hands were writing out words the echo of which had scarcely died away in the inner court, that the Judges had finished their task, and that the Jury had retired to consider their verdict. It was known also in the lobbies, where a throng of gowned and wigged barristers were assembled, hanging on as the fringe of the densely packed audience that sat behind the Claimant, and overflowed by the opened doorway. Thence it reached the crowd outside, and after the first movement and hum of conversation had subsided, a dead silence fell upon Westminster Hall, and all eyes were fixed upon the door by which, at any moment, messengers might issue with the word or words up to the utterance of which by the Foreman of the Jury the great trial slowly dragged its length.

Half an hour later the door burst open, and messengers came leaping in breathless haste down the steps and across the Hall, shouting as they ran,--

"Guilty! Guilty on all counts!" The words were taken up by the crowd, and passed from mouth to mouth in voices scarcely above a whisper. It was a flock of junior barristers, issuing from the court, radiant and laughing, who brought the next news.

"Fourteen years! Fourteen years!" they called out.

This time the crowd in Westminster Hall took up the cry in louder

tones, and there was some attempt at cheering, but it did not prevail. The less dense crowd in the Yard received the intelligence without any demonstration and after a brief pause made off with one consent for the judges' entrance in St. Margaret's Street, where, peradventure, they might see the prisoner taken away, or at least would catch a glimpse of the judges and counsel.

From this hour up to nearly four o'clock the crowd, in numbers far exceeding those present at the first intimation of the verdict and sentence, hung about St. Margaret's Street and Palace Yard waiting for the coming forth of the prisoner, who had long ago been safely lodged in Newgate. They did not know that as soon as the convict was given in charge of the tipstaff of the court he was led away by Inspector Denning, along a carefully planned and circuitous route that entirely baffled the curiosity of the waiting crowd. Through the Court of Exchequer the prisoner and his guards went, by the members' private staircase, across the lobby, along the corridor, through the smoking-room into the Commons Courtyard, where a plain police omnibus was in waiting with an escort of eleven men. In this the prisoner took his seat, and was driven through the Victoria Tower gate *en route* for Newgate. He accompanied his custodians as quietly as if they were conducting him to his brougham, and only once broke the silence of the journey to Newgate.

"It's very hot," he said, as he panted along the passages of the House of Commons, "and I am so fat."

CHAPTER V.

WITH PEGGOTTY AND HAM.

A careful survey of the map of Kent will disclose Lydd lying within four miles of the coast, in the most southerly portion of the promontory tipped by Dungeness. Lydd has now its own branch line from Ashford, but when I first knew it the nearest point by rail on one hand was Folkestone, and on the other Appledore. Between these several points lies a devious road, sometimes picking its way through the marshes, and occasionally breaking in upon a sinking village, which it would probably be delightful to dwell in if it did not lie so low, was not so damp, and did not furnish the inhabitants with an opportunity for obtaining remarkably close acquaintance with the symptoms of the ague. Few of the marsh towns are more picturesque than Lydd, owing to the sturdy independence shown by the architects of the houses, and to the persistent and successful efforts made to avoid anything like a straight line in the formation of the streets. The houses cluster "anyhow" round the old church, and seem to have dropped accidentally down in all sorts of odd nooks and corners. They face all ways, and stand at angles, several going the length of turning their backs upon the streets and placidly opening out from their front door into the nearest field.

In the main street, through which her Majesty's cart passes, and along which all the posting is done, a serious attempt has made at the production of something like an ordinary street. But even here the approach to regularity is a failure, owing to some of the houses along the line putting forth a porch, or blooming into a row of utterly unnecessary pillars before the parlour windows. In short, Lydd, being entirely out of the tracks of the world, cares little for what other towns may do, and has just built its houses where and how it pleased. Between Dungeness and Lydd there is an expanse of shingle which makes the transit an arduous undertaking, and one not to be accomplished easily without the aid of "backstays" (pronounced "backster"), a simple contrivance somewhat upon the principle of snowshoes. When the proneness to slip off the unaccustomed foot has been overcome, backstays are not so awkward as they look. A couple of flat pieces of inch-thick wood, four inches wide by six long, with a loop of leather defectively fastened for the insertion of the foot went to make up the pair of "backsters" by whose assistance I succeeded in traversing two miles of rough, loose shingle that separates the southern and eastern edge of Lydd marsh from the sea.

The lighthouse stands on the farthest point, jutting into the sea, and has at the right of it West Bay, and on the left East Bay. A signboard on the top of a pole stuck in the shingle, almost within hail of the lighthouse, announces the proximity of "The Pilot." "The Pilot" is a small shanty run up on the shingle, and possessed of

accommodation about equal in extent to that afforded by the residence of the Peggottys. Reminiscences of the well-known abode on the beach at Yarmouth are further favoured, as we draw nearer, by the appearance of the son of the house, who comes lounging out in a pilot-cloth suit, with a telescope under his arm, and a smile of welcome upon his bright, honest face. This must be Ham, who we find occupies the responsible position of signalman at this station, and frequently has the current of his life stirred by the appearance of strange sail upon the horizon. Peggotty, his father, is the proprietor of "The Pilot," which hostelry drives a more or less extensive trade in malt liquor with the eight men constituting the garrison of a neighbouring fort, supplemented by such stray customers as wind and tide may bring in.

I made the acquaintance of the Peggotty family and was made free of the cabin many years ago, in the dark winter time when the *Northfleet* went down off Dungeness, and over three hundred passengers were lost. All the coast was then alive with expectancy of some moment finding the sea crowded with the bodies of the drowned. The nine days during which, according to all experience at Dungeness, the sea might hold its dead were past, and at any moment the resurrection might commence. But it never came, and other theories had to be broached to explain the unprecedented circumstance. The most generally acceptable, because the most absolutely irrefragable, was that the dead men and women had been carried away by an under-current out into the Atlantic, and for ever lost amid its wilds.

My old friend Peggotty tells me, in a quiet, matter-of-fact manner, a story much more weird than this. He says that after we watchers had left the scene, the divers got fairly to work and attained a fair run of the ship. They found she lay broadside on to a bank of sand, by the edge of which she had sunk till it overtopped her decks. By the action of the tide the sand had drifted over the ship, and had even at that early date commenced to bury her. The bodies of the passengers were there by the hundred, all huddled together on the lee-side.

"The divers could not see them," Peggotty adds, "for what with the mud and sand the water is pretty thick down there. But they could feel them well enough--an arm sticking out there, and a knee sticking out here, and sometimes half a body clear of the silt, owing to lying one over another. They could have got them all up easy enough, and would, too, if they had been paid for it. They were told that they were to have a pound apiece for all they brought up. They sent up one, but there was no money for it, and no one particularly glad to see it, and so they left them all there, snug enough as far as burying goes. The diving turned out a poor affair altogether. The cargo wasn't much good for bringing up, bein' chiefly railway iron, spades, and such like. There were one or two sales at Dover of odd stores they brought up, but it didn't fetch in much altogether, and they soon gave up the job as a bad un."

The years have brought little change to this strange out-of-the-way corner of the world, an additional wreck or two being scarcely a noteworthy incident. The section of an old boat in which, with fortuitous bits of building tacked on at odd times as necessity has arisen, the Peggottys live is as brightly tarred as ever, and still stoutly braves the gales in which many a fine ship has foundered just outside the front door. One peculiarity of the otherwise desirable residence is that, with the wind blowing either from the eastward, westward, or southward, Mrs. Peggotty will never allow the front door to be opened. As these quarters of the wind comprehend a considerable stretch of possible weather, the consequence is that the visitor approaching the house in the usual manner is on eight days out of ten disturbed by the apparition of Peggotty at the little look-out window, violently, and to the stranger, mysteriously, beckoning him away to the northward, apparently in the direction of the lighthouse.

This means, however, only that he is to go round by the back, and the *détour* is not to be regretted, as it leads by Peggotty's garden, which in its way is a marvel, a monument of indomitable struggle with adverse circumstances. It is not a large plot of ground, and perhaps looks unduly small by reason of being packed in by a high paling, made of the staves of wrecked barrels and designed to keep

the sand and grit from blowing across it. But it is large enough to produce a serviceable crop of potatoes, which, with peas and beans galore occupy the centre beds, Peggotty indulging a weakness for wallflowers and big red tulips on the narrow fringe of soil running under the shadow of the palings. The peculiarity about the garden is that every handful of soil that lies upon it has been carried on Peggotty's back across the four-mile waste of shingle that separates the sea-coast from Lydd. That is, perhaps, as severe a test as could be applied to a man's predilection for a garden. There are many people who like to have a bit of garden at the back of their house. But how many would gratify their taste at the expense of bringing the soil on their own backs, plodding on "backstays" over four miles of loose shingle?

One important change has happened in this little household since I last sat by its hearthstone. Ham is married, and is, in some incomprehensible manner, understood to reside both at Lydd with Mrs. Ham and at the cabin with his mother. As for Mrs. Peggotty, she is as lively and as "managing" as ever--perhaps a trifle smaller in appearance, and with her smooth clean face more than ever suggestive of the idea of a pebble smoothed and shaped by the action of the tide.

I find on chatting with Peggotty that the old gentleman's mind is in somewhat of a chaotic state with respect to the wrecks that abound in the bay. He has been here for forty-eight years, and the fact is, in that time, he has seen so many wrecks that the timbers are, as it were, floating in an indistinguishable mass through his mind, and when he tries to recall events connected with them, the jib-boom of "the *Rhoda* brig" gets mixed up with the rigging of "the *Spendthrift*," and "the *Branch*, a coal-loaded brig," that came to grief thirty years ago, gets inextricably mixed up with the "Rooshian wessel." But, looking with far-away gaze towards the Ness Lighthouse, and sweeping slowly round as far east as New Romney, Peggotty can tot off a number of wrecks, now to be seen at low water, which with others, the names whereof he "can't just remember," bring the total past a score.

The first he sees on this side of the lighthouse is the *Mary*, a bit of black hull that has been lying there for more than twenty years. She was "bound somewheres in France," and running round the Ness, looking for shelter in the bay, stuck fast in the sand, "and broke up in less than no time." She was loaded with linseed and millstones, which I suspect, from a slight tinge of sadness in Peggotty's voice as he mentioned the circumstance, is not for people living on the coast the best cargo which ships that *will* go down in the bay might be loaded with. Indeed, I may remark that though Peggotty, struggling with the recollections of nearly fifty years, frequently fails to remember the name of the ship whose wreck shows up through the sand, the nature of her cargo comes back to him with singular freshness.

Near the *Mary* is another French ship, which had been brought to anchor there in order that the captain might run ashore and visit the ship's agent at Lydd. Whilst he was ashore a gale of wind came on "easterdly"; ship drifted down on Ness Point, and knocked right up on the shore, the crew scrambling out on to dry land as she went to pieces. Another bit of wreck over there is all that is left of the *Westbourne*, of Chichester, coal-laden. She was running for Ness Point at night, and, getting too far in, struck where she lay, and all the crew save one were drowned. Nearer is the *Branch*, also a coal-loaded brig, a circumstance which suggests to Peggotty the parenthetical remark that "at times there is a good deal of coal about the shingle." A little more to the east is "the Rooshian wessel *Nicholas I.*," in which Peggotty has a special interest so strong that he forgets to mention what her cargo was. It is forty-six years since *Nicholas I.* came to grief; and no other help being near, the whole of the crew were saved through the instrumentality of Peggotty's dog. It was broad daylight, with a sea running no boat could live in. The "Rooshian" was rapidly breaking up, and the crew were shrieking in an unknown tongue, the little group on shore well knowing that the unfamiliar sound was a cry for help. Peggotty's Newfoundland dog was there, barking with mad delight at the huge waves that came tumbling on the shore, when it occurred to Peggotty that perhaps the dog could swim out to the drowning men. So he signalled him off, and in the dog went, gallantly buffeting the waves till it reached the ship.

The Russian sailors tied a piece of rope to a stick, put the stick in the dog's mouth, and he, leaping overboard, carried it safely to shore, and a line of communication being thus formed, every soul on board was saved.

"They've got it in the school-books for the little children to read," Peggotty says, permitting himself to indulge in the slightest possible chuckle. I could not ascertain what particular school-book was meant, because last winter, when another Russian ship came ashore here and was totally wrecked, Peggotty presented the captain with his only copy of the work as a souvenir of the compulsory visit. But when we returned to the cabin, Mrs. Peggotty brought down a faded, yellow, much-worn copy of the *Kent Herald*, in which an account of the incident appears among other items of the local news of the day.

Further eastward are the remains of a West Indiaman, loaded with mahogany and turtles, the latter disappearing in a manner still a marvel at Dungeness, whilst of the former a good deal of salvage money was made. It is not far from this wreck that the Russian last-mentioned came to grief. She met her fate in a peculiarly sad manner. The *Alliance*, a tar-loaded vessel, drifting inwards before a strong east wind, began to burn pitch barrels as a signal for assistance. The Russian, thinking she was on fire, ran down to her assistance, and took the ground close by. Both ships were totally wrecked, and the crews saved with no other property save the clothes they stood in.

Still glancing from Dungeness eastward, we see at every hundred yards a black mass of timber, sometimes showing the full length of a ship, oftener only a few jagged ribs marking where the carcase lies deeply embedded. Each has its name and its history, and is a memento of some terrible disaster in which strong ships have been broken up as if they were built of cardboard, and through which men and women have not always successfully struggled for life.

"We don't have so much loss of life in this bay as in the west bay round the point," said Ham. "Here, you see, when there's been a rumpus, the water quiets soon after, and the shipwrecked folk can take to their boats; on the other side the water is rougher, and there's less chance for them. There was one wreck here not long since, though, when all hands were lost. It was a Danish ship that came running down one stormy night, and run ashore there before she could make the light. We saw her flash her flare-up lights, and made ready to help her, but before we could get up she went to pieces, and what is most singular, never since has a body been seen from the wreck. Ah, sir, it's a bad spot. Often between Saturday and Monday you'll see three fine ships all stranded together on this beach. When there's a big wreck like the *Northfleet* over there, everybody talks about it, and all the world knows full particulars. But there's many and many a shipwreck here the newspapers never notice, and hundreds of ships get on, and with luck get off, without a word being said anywhere."

"There's mother signallin' the heggs and bakin is done," said Peggotty, looking back at the cabin, where a white apron waved out of one of the port-holes that served for window.

So we turned and left this haunted spot, where, with the ebbing tide, twenty-three wrecks, one after the other, thrust forth a rugged rib or a jagged spar to remind the passer-by of a tragedy.

CHAPTER VI.

TO THOSE ABOUT TO BECOME JOURNALISTS.

AN OPEN LETTER.

My dear young friends,__
I suppose no one not prominently engaged in journalism knows how widely spread is the human conviction that, failing all else, any one can "write for the papers," making a lucrative living on easy terms, amid agreeable circumstances. I have often wondered how Dickens, familiar as he was with this frailty, did not make use of it in the closing epoch of Micawber's life before he quitted England. Knowing what he did, as letters coming to light at this

day testify, it would seem to be the most natural thing in the world that finally, nothing else having turned up, it should occur to Dickens that Mr. Micawber would join the Press--probably as editor, certainly on the editorial staff, possibly as dramatic critic, a position which involves a free run of the theatres and a more than nodding acquaintance with the dramatic stars of the day.

Perhaps Dickens avoided this episode because it was too literally near the truth in the life of the person who, all unconsciously, stood as the lay figure of David Copperfield's incomparable friend. It is, I believe, not generally known that Charles Dickens's father did in his last desolate days become a member of the Press. When Dickens was made editor of the Daily News, he thoughtfully provided for his father by installing him leader of the Parliamentary Corps of that journal. The old gentleman, of course, knew nothing of journalism, was not even capable of shorthand. Providentially he was not required to take notes, but generally to overlook things, a post which exactly suited Mr. Micawber. So he was inducted, and filled the office even for a short time after his son had impetuously vacated the editorial chair. Only the other day there died an original member of the *Daily News* Parliamentary Corps, who told me he quite well remembered his first respected leader, his grandly vague conception of his duties, and his almost ducal manner of not performing them.

Of the many letters that come to me with the assurance that I have in my possession blank appointments on the editorial and reportorial staff of all contemporary journals paying good salaries, the saddest are those written by more than middle-aged men with families. Some have for years been earning a precarious living as reporters or sub-editors on obscure papers, and now find themselves adrift; others are men who, having vainly knocked at all other gates, are flushed by the happy thought that at least they can write acceptably for the newspapers; others, again, already engaged in daily work, are anxious to burn the midnight oil, and so add something to a scanty income. These last are chiefly clergymen and schoolmasters--educated men with a love of letters and the idea that, since it is easy and pleasant to read, it must be easy to write, and that in the immensity of newspapers and periodical literature there would be not only room, but eager welcome for them.

This class of correspondents is curiously alike in one feature. There is an almost sprightliness in their conviction that what they can write in these circumstances would exactly suit any paper, daily or weekly, morning or evening. All they have to do is to give up their odd savings of time to the work; all you--their hapless correspondent--have to do is to fill up one of those blank appointments with which your desk is clogged, and send it to them by first post.

There is no other profession in the world thus viewed by outsiders. No one supposes he can make boots, cut clothes, or paint the outside of a house without having served some sort of apprenticeship, not to mention the possession of special aptitude. Any one can, right off--, become a journalist. Such as these, and all those about to become journalists, I would advise to study a book published several years ago. It is the *Life of James MacDonell*, a name which, before this book was published, was an idle sound to the outer world, though to contemporary workers in the inner circle of the Press Macdonell was known as one of the ablest and most brilliant of modern journalists. In these short and simple annals, the aspirant who imagines the successful journalist's life is all beer and skittles will discover what patient study, what self-denial, what strenuous effort, and, more essential than all, what rare natural gifts are needed to achieve the position into which Macdonell toiled.

It is this last consideration that makes me doubt whether there is any utility in offering practical hints "To Those about to become Journalists." If a boy or youth has in him the journalistic faculty, it will come out, whatever unpromising or adverse circumstances he may be born to. If he has it not, he had very much better take to joinering or carpentering, to clerking, or to the dispensation of goods over the retail counter. Journalism is an honourable and, for those specially adapted, a lucrative profession. But it is a poor business for the man who has mistaken his way into it. The

very fact that it has such strong allurement for human nature makes harder the struggle for life with those engaged in its pursuit. I gather from facts brought under my personal notice that at the present time there are, proportionately with its numbers, more unemployed in the business of journalism than in any other, not exceeding that of the dockers. When a vacancy occurs on any staff, the rush to fill it is tremendous. Where no vacancy exists the knocking at the doors is incessant. All the gates are thronged with suitors, and the accommodation is exceedingly limited.

The first thing the youth who turns his face earnestly towards journalism should convince himself of is, that the sole guiding principle controlling admission to the Press or advance in its ranks is merit. This, as your communications, my dear young friends, have convinced me, is a statement in direct contravention of general belief. You are convinced that it is all done by patronage, and that if only some one in authority will interest himself in you, you straightway enter upon a glorious career. There is, however, no royal road to advancement on the Press. Proprietors and editors simply could not afford it. Living as newspapers do in the fierce light focussed from a million eyes, fighting daily with keen competition, the instinct of self-preservation compels their directors to engage the highest talent where it is discoverable, and, failing that, the most sedulously nurtured skill. For this they will pay almost anything; and they ask nothing more, neither blood-relationship, social distinction, nor even academic training. In journalism, more than in any other profession, not excepting the Bar, a man gets on by his own effort, and only by that. Of course, proprietors, and even editors, may, if the commercial prosperity of their journal permit the self-indulgence, find salaried situations for brothers, sons, or nephews or may oblige old friends in the same direction. Charles Dickens, as we have seen, made his father manager of the Parliamentary Corps of the *Daily News*. But that did not make him a journalist, nor did he, after his son's severance of his connection with the paper, long retain the post.

This line of reflection is, I am afraid, not encouraging to you, my dear young friends; but it leads up to one fact in which I trust you will be justified in finding ground for hope. Amongst the crowd struggling to obtain a footing within the pale of journalism, the reiterated rebuffs they meet with naturally lead to the conviction that it is a sort of close borough, those already in possession jealously resenting the efforts of outsiders to breach its sacred portals. Nothing could be further removed from the fact. A nugget of gold is not more pleasing to the sight of the anxious miner than is the discovery by the editor or manager of a newspaper of a new light in the world of journalism. This I put in the forefront of friendly words of advice to those about to enter journalism. Get rid of the fatal idea that some one will open the door for you and land you safely inside. You must force the door yourself with incessant knocking if need be, prepared for searching inquiry as to your right to enter, but certain of a hearty welcome and fraternal assistance when you have proved your right.

As an ounce of example is worth a ton of precept, I may perhaps mention that in a journalistic career now extending over just twenty-five years, I never but once received anything in the way of patronage, and that was extended at the very outset only after a severe test of the grounds upon which recommendation could be made. My parents, in their wisdom, destined me for a commercial career. If I had followed the bent given me when I left school, I should now have been a very indifferent clerk in the hide and valonia business. But like you, my dear young friends, I felt that my true vocation was journalism, and I determined to be a journalist.

I will tell you exactly how I did it. Like you, I meant to be an editor some day, but also, I trust, like you, I felt that it would be convenient, if not necessary to start by being a reporter. So I began to study shorthand, teaching myself by Pitman's system. When, after infinite pains, I had mastered this mystery, I began to look out for an opening on the Press. I had no friends in journalism, not the remotest acquaintance. I made the tour of the newspaper offices in the town where I lived, was more or less courteously received, and uniformly assured that there was no opening. One exception was made by a dear friend whose name is to-day known and honoured

throughout Great Britain, who was then the young assistant-editor of a local daily paper. He gave me some trial work to do, and was so far satisfied that he promised me the first vacancy on the junior staff of reporters.

That was excellent, but I did not sit down waiting till fortune dropped the promised plum into my mouth. I got at all the newspapers within reach, searched for advertisements for reporters, answered them day after day, week after week, even month after month, without response. At last a cautious inquiry came. The reply was deemed satisfactory, and I got my chance.

This, dear young friends, is the short and simple annal of my start in journalism, and you will see that the pathway is equally open to you.

CHAPTER VII.

A CINQUE PORT.

Skulls piled roof high in the vault beneath the church tower supply the only show thing Hythe possesses. There is some doubt as to their precise nationality, but of their existence there can be none, as any visitor to the town may see for himself on payment of sixpence (parties of three or more eighteenpence). It is known how within a time to which memory distinctly goes the skulls were found down upon the beach, whole piles of them, thick as shingle on this coast. The explanation of their tenancy of British ground is popularly referred to the time, now nearly nine hundred years gone by, when Earl Godwin, being exiled, made a raid on this conveniently accessible part of England, and after a hard fight captured all the vessels lying in the haven. Others find in the peculiar formation of the crania proof positive that the skulls originally came from Denmark.

But Saxon or Dane, or whatever they be, it is certain the skulls were picked up on the beach, and after an interval were, with some dim notion of decency, carried up to the church, where they lay neglected in a vault. The church also going to decay, the determination was taken to rebuild it, and being sorely pressed for funds a happy thought occurred to a practical vicar. He had the skulls piled up wall-like in an accessible chamber, caused the passages to be swept and garnished, and then put on the impost mentioned above, the receipts helping to liquidate the debt on the building fund. Thus, by a strange irony of fate, after eight centuries, all that is left of these heathens brings in sixpences to build up a Christian church.

A good deal has happened in Hythe since the skulls first began to bleach on the inhospitable shore. When Earl Godwin suddenly appeared with his helm hard up for Hythe, the little town on the hill faced one of the best havens on the coast. It was, as every one knows, one of the Cinque Ports, and at the time of the Conqueror undertook to furnish, as its quota of armament, five ships, one hundred and five men, and five boys. Even in the time of Elizabeth there was a fair harbour here. But long ago the sea changed all that. It occupied itself in its leisure moments by bringing up illimitable shingle, with which it filled up all water ways, and cut Hythe off from communication with the sea as completely as if it were Canterbury.

It is not without a feeling of humiliation that a burgess of the once proud port of Hythe can watch the process of the occasional importation of household coal. Where Earl Godwin swooped down over twenty fathoms of water the little collier now painfully picks her way at high water. On shore stand the mariners of Hythe (in number four), manning the capstan. When the collier gets within a certain distance a hawser is thrown out, the capstan turns more or less merrily round, and the collier is beached, so that at low water she will stand high and dry.

Thus ignominiously is coal landed at one of the Cinque Ports.

Of course this change in the water approaches has altogether revolutionised the character of the place. Hythe is a port without imports or exports, a harbour in which nothing takes refuge but shingle. It has not even fishing boats, for lack of place to moor

them in. It is on the greatest water highway of the world, and yet has no part in its traffic. Standing on the beach you may see day after day a never-ending fleet of ships sailing up or down as the wind blows east or west. But, like the Levite in the parable, they all pass by on the other side. Hythe has nothing to do but to stand on the beach with its hands in its pockets and lazily watch them.

Thus cut off from the world by sea, and by land leading nowhere in particular except to Romney Marshes, Hythe has preserved in an unusual degree the flavour of our earlier English world. There have indeed been times when endeavour was made to profit by this isolation. As one of the Cinque Ports Hythe has since Parliaments first sat had the privilege of returning representatives. In the time of James II. it seems to have occurred to the Mayor (an ancestor of one of the members for West Kent in a recent Parliament), that since a member had to be returned to Parliament much trouble would be saved, and no one in London would be any the wiser, if he quietly, in his capacity as returning officer, returned himself. But some envious Radical setting on the opposite benches, was too sharp for him, and we find the sequel of the story set forth in the Journals of the House of Commons under date 1685, where it is written--

"Information given that the Mayor of Hythe had returned himself: Resolved by the House of Commons that Mr. Julius Deedes, the Mayor, is not duly elected. New writ ordered in his stead."

Hythe is a little better known now, but not much. And yet for many reasons its acquaintance is worth forming. The town itself, lying snugly at the foot of the hill crowned by the old church, is full of those bits of colour and quaintnesses of wall and gable-end which good people cross the Channel to see. In the High-street there is a building the like of which probably does not anywhere exist. It is now a fish-shop, not too well stocked, where a few dried herrings hang on a string under massive eaves that have seen the birth and death of centuries. From the centre of the roof there rises a sort of watch-tower, whence, before the houses on the more modern side of the street were built, when the sea swept over what is now meadow-land, keen eyes could scan the bay on the look out for inconvenient visitors connected with the coastguard. When the sea prevented Hythe honestly earning its living in deep-keeled boats, it perforce took to smuggling, a business in which this old watch-tower played a prominent part.

This is a special though neglected bit of house architecture in Hythe. But everywhere, save in the quarters by the railway station or the Parade, where new residences are beginning to spring up, the eye is charmed by old brown houses roofed with red tiles, often standing tree-shaded in a bountiful flower garden, and always preserving their own lines of frontage and their own angle of gable, with delightful indifference to the geometric scale of their neighbour.

The South-Eastern Railway Company have laid their iron hand on Hythe, and its old-world stillness is already on Bank Holidays and other bleak periods of the passing year broken by the babble of the excursionist. In its characteristically quiet way Hythe has long been known as what is called a watering-place. When I first knew it, it had a Parade, on which were built eight or ten houses, whither in the season came quiet families, with children and nurses. For a few weeks they gave to the sea frontage quite a lively appearance, which the mariners (when they were not manning the capstan) contemplated with complacency, and said to each other that Hythe was "looking up." For the convenience of these visitors some enterprising person embarked on the purchase of three bathing machines, and there are traditions of times when these were all in use at the same hour--so great was the influx of visitors.

Also there is a "bathing establishment" built a long way after the model of the Pavilion at Brighton. The peculiarity of this bathing establishment is or was when I first knew the charming place that regularly at the end of September the pump gets out of order, and the new year is far advanced before the solitary plumber of the place gets it put right. He begins to walk dreamily round the place at Easter. At Whitsuntide he brings down an iron vessel containing unmelted solder, and early in July the pump is mended.

This mending of the pump is one of the epochs of Hythe, a sure harbinger of the approaching season. In July "The Families" begin to come down, and the same people come every year, for visitors to Hythe share in the privilege of the inhabitants, inasmuch as they never--or hardly ever--die. Of late years, since the indefatigable Town Clerk has succeeded in waking up the inhabitants to the possibilities of the great future that lies before their town, not only has a new system of drainage and water been introduced, but a register has been kept of the death-rate. From a return, published by the Medical Officer of Health, it appears that the death-rate of Hythe was 9.3 per 1000. Of sixty-three people who died in a year out of a population of some four thousand, twenty-three were upwards of sixty years of age, many of them over eighty. Perhaps the best proof of the healthfulness of Hythe is to be found in a stroll through the churchyard, whence it would appear that only very young children or very old people are carried up the hill.

The difficulty about Hythe up to recent times has been the comparative absence of accommodation for visitors. Its fame has been slowly growing as The Families have spread it within their own circles. But it was no use for strangers to go to Hythe, since they could not be taken in. This is slowly changing. Eligible building sites are offered, villas have been run up along the Sandgate Road, and an hotel has been built by the margin of the sea. When news reached the tower of the church that down on the beach there had risen a handsome hotel, fitted with all the luxuries of modern life, it is no wonder that the skulls turned on each other and--as Longfellow in the "Skeleton in Armour" puts it--

> "Then from those cavernous eyes
> Pale flashes seem to rise,
> As when the northern skies
> Gleam In December."

WHITETHORN, HYTHE, KENT

This is surely the beginning of the end. Having been endowed with a railway which brings passengers down from London in a little over two hours, Hythe is now dowered with an hotel in which they may dine and sleep. The existence of the hotel being necessarily admitted, prejudice must not prevent the further admission that it is exceedingly well done. Architecturally it is a curiosity, seeing that though it presents a stately and substantial front neither stone nor brick enters into its composition. It is made entirely of shingle mixed with mortar, the whole forming a concrete substance as durable as granite. The first pebble of the new hotel was laid quite a respectable number of years ago, the ceremony furnishing an almost dangerous flux of excitement to the mariners at the capstan. It has grown up slowly, as becomes an undertaking connected with Hythe. But it is finished now, handsome without, comfortable within, with views from the front stretching seawards from Dungeness to Folkestone, and at the back across green pastures, glimpses are caught through the trees of the red-tiled town.

Now that suitable accommodation is provided for stray visitors, Hythe, with its clean beach, its parade that will presently join hands with Sandgate, its excellent bathing, and its bracing air,

may look to take high rank among watering places suburban to London. But there are greater charms even than these in the immediate neighbourhood. With some knowledge of English watering places, I solemnly declare that none is set in a country of such beauty as is spread behind Hythe. Unlike the neighbourhood of most watering places, the country immediately at the back of the town is hilly and well wooded. Long shady roads lead past blooming gardens or through rich farms, till they end in some sleepy village or hamlet, the world forgetting, by the world forgot. In late July the country is perfect in its loveliness. The fields and woods are not so flowery as in May, though by way of compensation the gardens are rich in roses. Still there are sufficient wild flowers to gladden the eye wherever it turns. From the hedgerows big white convolvulus stare with wonder-wide eyes, the honeysuckle is out, the wild geranium blooms in the long grass, the blackberry bushes are in full flower, and the poppies blaze forth in great clusters at every turn of the road. The corn is only just beginning to turn a faint yellow, but the haymakers are at work, and every breath of the joyous wind carries the sweet scent of hay.

CHAPTER VIII.

OYSTERS AND ARCACHON.

If the name had not been appropriated elsewhere, Arcachon might well be called the Salt Lake City. It lies on the south shore of a basin sixty-eight miles in circumference, into which, through a narrow opening, the Bay of Biscay rolls its illimitable waters. Little more than thirty years ago the town was represented by half a dozen huts inhabited by fishermen. It was a terribly lonely place, with the smooth lake in front of it, the Atlantic thundering on the dunes beyond, and in the rear the melancholy desert of sand known as the Landes.

The Landes is peopled by a strange race, of whom the traveller speeding along the railway to-day may catch occasional glimpses. Early in the century the department was literally a sandy plain, about as productive as Sahara, and in the summer time nearly as hot. But folks must live, and they exist on the Landes, picking up a scanty living, and occasionally dying for lack of water. One initial difficulty in the way of getting along in the Landes is the sheer impossibility of walking. When the early settler left his hut to pay a morning call or walk about his daily duties, he sank ankle deep in sand.

But the human mind invariably rises superior to difficulties of this character.

What the "backstay" is to the inhabitant of the district around Lydd, the stilts are to the lonely dwellers in the Landes. The peasants of the department are not exactly born on stilts, but a child learns to walk on them about the age that his British brother is beginning to toddle on foot.

Stilts have the elementary recommendation of overcoming the difficulty of moving about in the Landes. In addition, they raise a man to a commanding altitude, and enable him to go about his daily business at a pace forbidden to ordinary pedestrians. The stilts are, in truth, a modern realisation of the gift of the seven-league boots. They are so much a part of the daily life of the people that, except when he stoops his head to enter his hut, the peasant of the Landes would as soon think of taking off his legs by way of resting himself as of removing his stilts. The shepherds, out all day tending their sheep, might, if they pleased, stretch themselves at full length on the grey sand, making a pillow of the low bushes. But they prefer to stand; and you may see them, reclining against a third pole stuck in the ground at the rear, contentedly knitting stockings, keeping the while one eye upon the flock of sheep anxiously nibbling at the meagre grass.

Next to the shepherds, the most remarkable live stock in the Landes are the sheep. Such a melancholy careworn flock! poor relations of the plump Southdown that grazes on fat Sussex wolds. Long-legged, scraggy-necked, anxious-eyed, the sheep of the Landes bear eloquent testimony to the penury of the place and the difficulty of making both ends meet--which in their case implies the burrowing of the nose in tufts of sand-girt grass. To abide among such sheep through the long

day should be enough to make any man melancholy. But the peasant of the Landes, who is used to his stilts, also grows accustomed to his sheep, and they all live together more or less happily ever afterwards.

The Landes is quite a prosperous province to-day compared with what it was in the time of Louis XVI. During the First Empire there was what we would call a Minister of Woods and Forests named Bremontier. He looked over the Landes and found it to be nothing more than a waste of shifting sand. Rescued from the sea by a mere freak of nature, it might, for all practical purposes, have been much more usefully employed if covered a few fathoms deep with salt water. To M. Bremontier came the happy idea of planting the waste land with fir trees. Nothing else would grow, the fir tree might. And it did. To-day the vast extent of the Landes is almost entirely covered with dark forests in perpetual verdure.

These have transformed the district, adding not only to the improvement of its sanitary condition, but creating a new source of wealth. Out of the boundless vistas of fir trees there ever flows a constant stream of resin, which brings in large revenues. Passing through the forest by the railway line from La Mothe to Arcachon, one sees every tree marked with a deep cut. It looks as if the woodman had been about, picking out trees ready for the axe, and had come to the conclusion that they might be cut down *en bloc*. But these marks are indications of the process of milking the forests. It is a very simple affair, to which mankind contributes a mere trifle. In order to get at the resin a piece of bark is cut off from each tree. Out of the wound the resin flows, falling into a hole dug in the ground at the roots. When this is full it is emptied into cans and carried off to the big reservoir: when one wound in the tree is healed another is cut above it, and so the tree is finally drained.

Besides this revenue from resin immense sums are obtained from the sale of timber; and thus the Landes, which a hundred years ago seemed to be an inconvenient freak of nature afflicting complaining France, has been turned into a money-yielding department.

The firs which fringe the seacoast by the long strip of land that lies between the mouth of the Gironde and the town of Bayonne have much to do with the prosperity of Arcachon. The salt lake, with its little cluster of fishermen's cottages, lies within a couple of hours' journey by rail from Bordeaux, a toiling, prosperous place, which, seated on the broad Garonne, longed for the sea. Some one discovered that there was excellent bathing at Arcachon, the bed of the salt lake sloping gently upwards in smooth and level sands. Then the doctors took note of the beneficial effects of the fir trees which environed the place. The aromatic scent they distilled was declared to be good for weak chests, and, almost by magic, Arcachon began to grow.

By swift degrees the little cluster of fishermen's cottages spread till it became a town--of one street truly, but the street is a mile and a half long, skirting the seashore and backed by the fir forests. Bordeaux took Arcachon by storm. A railway was made, and all through the summer months the population poured into the long street, filling it beyond all moderate notions of capacity. The rush came so soon, and Arcachon was built in such a hurry, that the houses have a casual appearance, recalling the towns one comes upon in the Far West of America, which yesterday were villages, and to-day have a town-hall, a bank, many grog-shops, a church or two, and four or five daily newspapers.

A vast number of the dwellings are of the proportion of pill-boxes. Some are literally composed of two closets, one called a bedroom and the other a sitting-room; or, oftener still, both used as bedrooms. Others are built in terraces a storey high and a few feet wide, with the name of the proprietor painted over the liliputian trap-door that serves for entrance hall. The idea is that you live at ease and in comfort at Bordeaux, and just run down to Arcachon for a bath. There are no bathing machines or tents; but all along the shore, in supplement of the liliputian houses that serve a double debt to pay--being residences at night and bathing-machines by day,--stand rows of sentry-boxes, whence the bather emerges arrayed in more or less bewitching attire. The water is very shallow, and enterprising persons of either sex spend hours of the summer day in paddling about in their bathing costumes.

It is a pretty, lively scene. For background the long straggling town; in the foreground the motley groups of bathers, the far-reaching smooth

surface of the lake; and, beyond, the broad Atlantic, thundering impotently upon the barricade of sandhills that makes possible the peace of Arcachon.

Like all watering-places, Arcachon lives two lives. In summer-time it springs into active bustle, with house-room at a premium, and the shops and streets filled with a gay crowd. It affects to have a winter season, and is, indeed, ostentatiously divided into two localities, one called the winter-town and the other the summer-town. The former is situated on the higher ground at the back of the town, and consists of villa residences built on plots reclaimed from the fir forest.

This is well enough in the winter-time, many English people flocking thither attracted by the shelter and scent of the fir trees; but Arcachon itself--the long unlovely street--is in the winter months steeped in the depths of desolation. The shops are deserted, the pill-boxes have their lids put on, and everywhere forlorn signs hang forth announcing that here is a *maison* or an *appartement à louer*.

All through the winter months, shut up between sea and sand, Arcachon is A Town to Let.

Deprived in the winter months of the flock of holiday makers, Arcachon makes money in quite another way. Just as suddenly as it bloomed forth a fashionable watering-place, it has grown into an oyster park of world-wide renown. Last year the Arcachon oyster beds produced not less than three hundred million oysters, the cultivators taking in round figures a million francs. The oysters are distributed through various markets, but the greatest customer is London, whither there come every year fifty millions of the dainty bivalve.

"And what do they call your oysters in London?" I asked M. Faure, the energetic gentleman who has established this new trade between the Gironde and the Thames.

"They call them 'Natives'," he said, with a sly twinkle.

The Arcachon oyster, if properly packed, can live eight days out of the water, a period more than sufficient to allow for its transit by the weekly steamers that trade between Bordeaux and London. A vast quantity go to Marenne in the Charente lnferieure, where they fatten more successfully than in the salt lake, and acquire that green colour which makes them so much esteemed and so costly in the restaurants at Paris.

Oysters have, probably since the time of the Deluge, congregated in the Basin d'Arcachon; but it is only within the last thirty years the industry has been developed and placed on a footing that made possible the growth of today. Up to the year 1860 oysters were left to their own sweet will in the matter of creating a bed. When they settled upon a place it was diligently cultivated, but the lead was absolutely left to the oyster. Dr. Lalanne, in the intervals of a large medical practice at La Teste, a little place on the margin of the Basin, observed that oysters were often found attached to a piece of a wreck floating in the middle of the water far remote from the beds.

This led him to study more closely the reproductive habits of the oyster. He discovered that the eggs after incubation remained suspended in the water for a space of from three to five days. Thus, for some time after the *frai* season, practically the whole of the water in the Basin d'Arcachon was thick with oysters' eggs. Dr. Lalanne conceived the idea of providing this vast wealth with other means of establishing itself than were offered by a casual piece of wreck. What was wanted was something to which the eggs, floating in the water, could attach themselves, and remain till they were developed beyond the state of *ova*. After various experiments Dr. Lalanne adapted to the purpose the hollow roof tile in use everywhere in the South of France.

These are laid in blocks, each containing one hundred and twelve tiles, enclosed in a wooden framework. In June, when the oysters lay their eggs, these blocks of tiles are dropped into the water by the oyster beds. The eggs floating about, find the crusty surface of the tiles a convenient resting-place, and attach themselves by millions. Six months later the tiles, being examined, are found to be covered by oysters grown to the size of a silver sixpence. The tiles are taken up and the little oysters scraped off, a process facilitated by the fact that the tiles have in the first instance been coated with a solution of lime,

which rubs off, carrying the tender oyster with it.

The infant oysters are next placed in iron network cases, through which the water freely passes, whilst the young things are protected from crabs and other natural enemies. At the end of a year or eighteen months, they have so far grown as to be trusted out on their own account. They are accordingly strewn on the broad oyster beds, to fatten for another year or eighteen months, when they are ready for the waiting *gourmet*. Your oyster is fit to eat at eighteen months of age; but there is more of it when it is three years old.

We sailed out from Arcachon across the lake to the oyster park. Here the water is so shallow that the men who tend the beds walk about them in waterproof boots coming up to their knees. This part of the bay is dotted with boats with white canopies. Seen at anchor from Arcachon they look like boats laid up for the winter season; but every one is tenanted night and day. They are the homes of the guardians of the oyster beds, who keep watch and ward through the long winter.

Even more disastrous than possible visits from a male poacher are the incursions of a large flat sea-fish, known at Arcachon as the *thére*, with us the ray. This gentleman has a colossal appetite for oysters. Scorning to deal with them by the dozen, he devours them by the thousand, asking neither for the succulent lemon nor the grosser addition of Chili vinegar. His action with the oyster is exceedingly summary. He breaks the shell with a vigorous blow of his tail, and gobbles up the contents. As it is stated by reputable authorities that the *thére* can dispose of 100,000 oysters in a day, it is clear that the tapping must be pretty persistent.

This selfish brute, regardless of the fact that we pay a minimum three shillings a dozen for oysters in London, is happily circumvented by an exceedingly simple device. Rowing about the oyster beds at Arcachon one notices that they are fringed with small twigs of fir trees. The natural supposition is that these are to mark the boundary of the various oyster beds; but it is in truth designed to keep out the *thére*. This blundering fish, bearing down on the oyster bed in search of luncheon, comes upon the palisade of loosely planted twigs. Nothing in the world would be easier than for him to steer between the openings, of which there are abundance. But though he has stomach enough for a hundred thousand oysters, he has not brains enough to understand that by a little manoeuvring he might get at his meal. Repelled by the open network of twigs, he swims forlornly round and round the beds, so near and yet so far, with what anguish of heart only the lover of oysters can fathom.

The oyster beds at Arcachon belong to the State, and are leased to private persons, the leading company, which has created the British trade, having its headquarters at La Teste. The wholesale price of oysters at Arcachon is from a sovereign to forty shillings a thousand, according to size. In the long street they sell retail at from twopence to eightpence a dozen, thus realising what seems to-day the hopeless dream of the British oyster-eater.

CHAPTER IX.

CHRISTMAS EVE AT WATTS'S.

Wandering out of the High Street, Rochester, on the afternoon before Christmas Day, by a narrow passage to the left I came upon the old Cathedral. The doors were open, and as they were the only doors in Rochester open to me, except, perhaps, those of the tramp house at the Union, I entered, and sat down as near as befitted my condition. The afternoon service was going on, and even to tired limbs and an empty stomach it was restful and soothing to hear the sweet voices of the surpliced choristers, and the grand deep tones of the organ, echoing through the fretted roof, and rolling round the long pillared aisles. There were not ten people there besides myself, the clergy and the choir forming the bulk of the assembly. As soon as the service had been gone through, the clergy and the choir filed out, and the lay people one by one departed.

I should have liked to sit where I was all night. It was at least warm and sheltered, and I have slept on worse beds than may be made of half a dozen Cathedral chairs. But presently the verger came round, and perceiving at a glance that I was not a person likely to possess a

superfluous sixpence, asked me if I was going to sit there all night. I said I was if he didn't mind; but he did, and there was nothing for it but to clear out.

"Haven't you got nowhere to go to?" asked the man, as I moved slowly off.

"Nowhere in particular," I answered.

"That's a bad look-out for Christmas-eve. Why don't you go over to Watts's?"

"What's Watts's?"

"It's a house in High Street, where you'll get a good supper, a bed, and a fourpenny-bit in the morning if you can show you'em an honest man, and not a regular tramp. There's old Watts's muniment down by the side of the choir. A reglar brick he was, who not only wrote beautiful hymns, but gave away his money for the relief of the pore."

My heart warmed to the good old Doctor whose hymns I had learnt in my youth, little thinking that the day would come when I should be thankful to him for more substantial nourishment. I had intended to go in the ordinary way to get a night's lodging in the casual ward; but Watts's was evidently a better game, and getting from the verger minute directions how to proceed in order to gain admittance to Watts's, I left the Cathedral.

The verger was not a bad-hearted fellow, I am sure, though he did speak roughly to me at first. He seemed struck with the fact that a man not too well clad, who had nowhere particular to sleep on the eve of Christmas Day, could scarcely be expected to be "merry." All the time he was talking about Watts's he was fumbling in his waistcoat pocket, and I know he was feeling if he had there a threepenny-bit. But if he had, it didn't come immediately handy, and before he got hold of it the thought of the sufficient provision which awaited me at Watts's afforded vicarious satisfaction to his charitable feelings, and he was content with bidding me a kindly good-night, as he pointed my road down the lane to the police-office, where, it seemed, Dr. Watts's guests had to put in a preliminary appearance.

Crossing High Street, passing through a sort of courtyard, and down some steps, I reached a snug-looking house, which I had some difficulty in believing was a police-office. But it was, and the first thing I saw was seven men lounging about the yard. They didn't seem like regular tramps, but they had a look as if they had walked far, and each man carried a little bundle and a stick. The verger had told me that only six men per night were admitted to Watts's, and there were seven already.

"Are you for Watts's?" one of them, a little, sharp-looking fellow, with short light hair pasted down over his forehead, asked me, seeing me hesitate.

"Yes."

"Well, it ain't no go to-night. There's seven here, and fust come, fust served."

"Don't believe him, young 'un," said an elderly man, "it's all one what time you come, so as it's afore half-past five you'll take your chance with the rest of us."

It was not yet five, so I loafed about with the rest of them, being scowled upon by all except the elderly man till the arrival of two other travellers removed to them the weight of the odium I had lightly borne. At a quarter to six a police-sergeant appeared at the door of the office and said:

"Now then."

This was generally interpreted as a signal to advance, and we stood forward in an irregular line. The sergeant looked around us sternly till his eye lighted upon the elderly man.

"So you're trying it on again, are you?"

"I've not been here for two months, if I may never sleep in a bed

again," whimpered the elderly man.

"You was here last Monday week that I know of, and may be since. Off you go!" and the elderly gentleman went off with an alacrity that rather reduced the wonderment I had felt at his disinterested intervention to prevent my losing a chance, suggesting, as it did, that he felt the probability of gaining admission was exceedingly remote.

I was the next upon whom the eye of the police-sergeant loweringly fell.

"What do you want?"

"A night's lodging at Watts's."

"Watts's is for decent workmen on the tramp. You ain't a labourer. Show me your hands." I held out my hands, and the police-sergeant examined the palms critically.

"What are you?"

"A paper stainer."

"Where have you been to?"

"I came from Canterbury last."

"Where do you work?"

"In London when I can find work."

"Where are you going now?"

"To London."

"How much money have you got?"

"Three-halfpence."

"Humph!"

I don't know whether a murder had recently been committed in Kent, and whether I in some degree answered to the description of the supposed murderer. If it were so, the unfortunate circumstance will explain why the sergeant should have run me through and through with his eyes whilst propounding these queries, and why he should have made them in such a gruff voice. However, he seemed to have finally arrived at the conclusion that I was not the person wanted for the murder, and after a brief pause he said, "Go inside."

I went inside, into one of the snuggest little police-offices I have seen in the course of some tramping, and took the liberty of warming myself by the cosy fire, whilst the remaining applicants for admission to Watts's were being put through a sort of minor catechism such as that I had survived. Presently the sergeant came in with the selected five of my yard companions, and, taking us one by one, entered in a book, under the date "24th December," our several names, ages, birthplaces and occupations, also the names of the last place we had come from, and the next whither we were going. Then, taking up a scrap of blue paper with some printed words on it, and filling in figures, a date, and a signature, he bade us follow him.

Out of the snug police-office--which put utterly in the shade the comforts of the cathedral regarded as a sleeping place--across the courtyard, which somebody said faced the Sessions House, down High Street to the left till we stopped before an old-fashioned white house with a projecting lamp lit above the doorway, shining full on an inscription graven in stone. I read it then and copied it when I left the house next morning. It ran thus:--

RICHARD WATTS, Esqr.
by his will dated 22 Aug., 1579,
founded this charity
for six poor travellers,
who not being Rogues, or Proctors,
may receive gratis, for one Night,
Lodging, Entertainment,
and four pence each.

In testimony of his Munificence,
in honour of his Memory,
and inducement to his Example,
Nathl. Hood, Esq., the present Mayor,
has caused this stone,
gratefully to be renewed,
and inscribed,
A.D. 1771.

It was not Dr. Watts, then, as the verger had given me to understand. I was sorry, for it had seemed like going to the house of an old friend, and I had meant after supper to recite "How doth the little Busy Bee" for the edification of my fellow-guests, and to tell them what I had learnt long ago of the good writer's life and labours.

"Here we are again, Mrs. Kercham," said our conductor, stepping into the low hall of the white house.

"Yes, here you are again," replied an old lady, dressed in black, and wearing a widow's cap. "Have you got 'em all to-night?"

"Yes, six--all tidy men. Can you write, Mr. Paper Stainer?"

I could write, and did, setting forth, in a book which lay on a table in a room labelled "Office," my name, age, occupation, and the town whence I had last come. Three of the other guests followed my example. Two could not write; and the sergeant, paying me a compliment on my beautiful clerkly handwriting, asked me to fill in the particulars for them. This ceremony over, we were shown into our bedrooms, and told to give ourselves "a good wash." My room was on the ground-floor, out in the yard: and I hope I may never be shown into a worse. It was not large, being about eight feet square, nor was it very high. The walls were whitewashed, and the floor clean. A single small window, deep set in the thick stone-built walls, looked out on to the yard, and by it stood the solitary piece of furniture, a somewhat rickety Windsor chair. I except the bed, which was supposed to stand in a corner, but actually covered nearly the whole of the floor. The bedstead was of iron, and, I should imagine, was one of the earliest constructions of the sort ever sold in this country.

"I put on three blankets, being Christmas-time, though the weather is not according; so you can take one off if you like."

"Thank you, ma'am; I'll leave it till I go to bed, if you please." Much reason had I subsequently to be thankful for my caution.

After having washed, I came out, and was told to go into a room, facing my bedroom, on the other side of the yard. Here I found three of my fellow-guests sitting by a fire, and in a few minutes the other two arrived, all looking very clean and (speaking for myself particularly) feeling ravenously hungry. The chamber, which had "Travellers' Room" painted over the doorway, was about twelve or thirteen feet long and eight wide, and, like our bedrooms, was not remarkable for variety of furniture. A plain deal table stood at one end, and then there were two benches, and that's all. Over the mantelpiece a large card hung with the following inscription:--

"Persons accepting this charity are each supplied with a supper, consisting of half a pound of meat, one pound of bread, and half a pint of porter at seven o'clock in the evening, and fourpence on leaving the house in the morning. The additional comfort of a good fire is given during the winter months, from October 18th till March 10th, for the purpose of drying their clothes and supplying hot water for their use. They go to bed at eight o'clock."

This was satisfactory, except inasmuch as it appeared that supper was not to be forthcoming till seven o'clock, and it was now only twenty minutes past six. This forty minutes promised to be harder to bear than the hunger of the long day; but the pain was averted by the appearance at half-past six of a pleasant-looking young woman, carrying a plate of cold roast beef in each hand. These she put down on the table, supplementing them in course of time with four similar plates, six small loaves, and as many mugs of porter.

It does not become guests to dictate arrangements, but if the worshipful trustees of Watts's knew how tantalising it is to a hungry man to see

cold roast beef brought in in a slow and deliberate manner, they would buy a large tray for the use of the pleasant young person, and let the feast burst at once upon the vision of the guests.

Sharp on the stroke of seven we drew the benches up to the table, and Mrs. Kercham, standing at one end and leaning over, said grace. Impatiently hungry as I was, I could not help noticing the precise terms in which the good matron implored a blessing. I suppose she had had her tea in the parlour. At any rate, she was not going to favour us with her company, and so, bending over our plates of cold beef, she lifted up her voice and said with emphasis,--

"For what *you* are about to receive out of His bountiful goodness may the Lord make you truly thankful."

I write the personal pronoun with a capital letter, not being quite certain from Mrs. Kercham's rapid enunciation whether the bountiful goodness was Mr. Watts's or the Lord's.

Six emphatic "Amens!" followed, and before the sound had died away six able-bodied men had fallen-to upon the beef and the bread in a manner that would have done kind Master Watts's heart good had he beheld them.

I think I had done first, for I remember when I looked round the table my fellow-guests were still eating and washing their suppers down with economical draughts from the half-pint mugs of porter. They--I think I may say we--did credit to the selection of the police sergeant, and, so far as appearances went, fulfilled one of the requirements of Master Watts, there being nothing of the rogue in our faces, if I except a slight hint in the physiognomy of the little man with the fair hair plastered down over his forehead, and perhaps I am prejudiced against him.

It was a little after seven when the plates were all polished, the mugs drained, and nothing but a few crumbs left to tell where a loaf had stood. The pleasant young person coming in to clear the table, we drew up round the fire, and for the first time in our more than two hours' companionship began to exchange remarks.

They were of the briefest and most commonplace character, and attempts made to get up a general conversation signally failed. "What do you do?" "Where do you come from?" "Things hard down there?" were staple questions, with an occasional "Did you hear tell of Joe Mackin on the road?" or "Was Bill O'Brien there at the time?" From the replies to these inquiries I learnt that my companions were respectively a fitter, a painter, a waiter, and two indefinitely self-described as "labourers." They had walked since morning from Faversham, from Sittingbourne, from Gravesend, and from Greenwich, and, sitting close around the fire, soon began to testify to their weariness by nodding, and even snoring.

"Well, lads, I'm off, goodnight," said the painter, yawning and stretching himself out of the room.

One by one the remaining four quickly followed, and before what I had on entering regarded as the absurdly early hour of eight o'clock had struck, five of Watts's guests had gone to bed, and the sixth was sitting looking drowsily in the fire, and thinking what a jolly Christmas he was having.

I was awakened by a familiar voice inquiring whether I was "going to sit up all night," and opening my eyes beheld the matron standing by me with a shovelful of coal in one hand and a small jug in the other. Her voice was sharp, but her look was kind, and I was not a bit surprised when she threw the coal on the fire, and, putting down the jug, which evidently contained porter, said she would bring a glass in a minute.

"I'm not going to bed myself for a bit, and if you like to sit by the fire and smoke a pipe and drink a glass whilst I mend a stocking or two, you'll be company."

So we sat together by Master Watts's fire, and whilst I drank his porter and smoked my own tobacco, the matron mended her stockings, and told me a good deal about the trials she had gone through in a life that would never again see its sixtieth year. Forty years she had spent under the roof of Watts's, and knew all about the old man's

will, and how he ordered that after the re-marriage or the death of his wife, his principal dwelling-house, called Satis, on Boley Hill, with the house adjoining, the closes, orchards, and appurtenances, his plate and his furniture, should be sold, and the proceeds be placed out at usury by the Mayor and citizens of Rochester for the perpetual support of an alms-house then erected and standing near the Market Cross; and how he further ordained that there should be added thereto six rooms, "with a chimney in each," and with convenient places for six good mattresses or flock beds, and other good and sufficient furniture for the lodgment of poor wayfarers for a single night.

Had she many people come to see the quaint old place beside those whom the police-sergeant brought every night?

Not many. The visitors' book had been twenty years in the house, and it was not nearly full of names.

I took up the book, and carelessly turning back the leaves came upon the signature "Charles Dickens," with "Mark Lemon" written underneath.

I know Dickens pretty well--his books, I mean, of course--and said, with a gratified start, "Ha! has Dickens been here?"

"Yes, he has," said the matron, in her sharpest tones, "and a pretty pack of lies he told about it. Stop a bit."

I stopped accordingly whilst the old lady flew out of the room, and flying back again with a well-worn pamphlet in her hand, shoved it at me, saying, "Read that." I opened it, and found it to be the Christmas number of *Household Words* for 1854. It was entitled "The Seven Poor Travellers," and the opening chapter, in Mr Dickens's well-known style, described by name, and in detail, the very house in which I had taken my supper.

It was a charming narrative, I, poor waif and stray, felt a strong personal regard for the great novelist as I read the cheery story in which he sets forth how, calling at the house on the afternoon before Christmas-day, he obtained permission to give a Christmas feast to the six Poor Travellers; how he ordered the materials for the feast to be sent in from his own inn; how, when the feast was set upon the table, "finer beef, a finer turkey, a greater prodigality of sauce and gravy," he never saw; and how "it made my heart rejoice to see the wonderful justice my travellers did to everything set before them." All this and much more, including "a jug of wassail" and the "hot plum-pudding and mince pies," which "a wall-eyed young man connected with the fly department at the hotel was, at a given signal, to dash into the kitchen, seize, and speed with to Dr. Watts's Charity," was painted with a warmth and colour that made my mouth water, even after the plate of cold beef, the small loaf, and the unaccustomed allowance of porter.

"How like Dickens!" I exclaimed, with wet eyes, as I finished the recital; "and he even waited in Rochester all night to give his poor Travellers 'hot coffee and piles of bread and butter in the morning!'"

"Get along with you! he didn't do nothing of the sort."

"What! didn't he come here, as he says, and give the poor Travellers a Christmas treat?"

Not a bit of it; as the matron, with indignation that seemed to have lost nothing by lapse of years, forthwith demonstrated. There had been no supper, no wassail, no hot coffee in the morning, and, in truth, no meeting between Charles Dickens and the Travellers, at Christmas or at any other time.

Indeed, the visitors' book testified that the visit had been paid on May 11th, 1854, and not at Christmastide at all.

It was time to go to bed after that, and I left the matron to cool down from the boiling-point to which she had been suddenly lifted at sight of the ghost of 1854. My little room looked cheerless enough in the candlelight, but I had brought sleep with me as a companion, and knew that I should soon be as happy as if my bed were of down, and the roof-tree that of Buckingham Palace.

And so in sooth I would have been but for the chimney. Why did the

otherwise unexceptional Master Watts insist upon the chimney? Such a chimney it was, too, yawning across the full length of one side of the room, and open straight up to the cold sky. There was--what I forgot to mention in the inventory--a sort of tall clothes-horse standing before the enormous aperture, and after trying various devices to keep the wind out, I at last bethought me of the supernumerary blanket, and, throwing it over the clothes-horse, I leaned it against the chimney board. This served admirably as long as it kept its feet, and when it blew down, as it did occasionally during the night, it only meant putting up and refixing it, and the exercise prevented heavy sleeping.

At seven in the morning we were called up, and after another "good wash," went our ways, each with fourpence sterling in his hand, the parting gift of hospitable Master Watts.

"Good-bye, paper-stainer," said the matron, as, after looking up and down High Street, I strode off towards the bridge, Londonwards. "Come and see us again if you are passing this way."

"Thank you,--I will," I said.

CHAPTER X.

NIGHT AND DAY ON THE CARS IN CANADA.

"Porter!"

The voice broke the stillness of a long night, and suddenly woke me out of a deep sleep. There was a moment's pause, and then the voice, which sounded singularly near to my bed-curtains, spoke again.

"Porter!"

"Yes, sah!"

"You have given me the wrong boots."

From the foot of my bed, as it seemed, there came another voice which said, with querulous emphasis, "These are not my boots."

Then followed explanations, apologies, and interchange of boots; and before the parleying had come to an end I was sufficiently awake to remember that on the previous night I had gone to bed in a Pullman car at Montreal, and had been speeding all night towards Halifax. It had been mild autumnal weather in Montreal, and the snow, which a week ago had fallen to the depth of two or three inches, had melted and been trodden out of sight save for the sprinkling which remained on the crest of Mount Royal. Here, as a glance through the window disclosed, we were again in the land of snow. It was not deep, for winter had not yet set in, and the sleighs, joyfully brought out at the first fall, had been relegated to summer quarters. But there was quite enough about to give the country a cheerful wintry aspect, the morning sun shining merrily over the white fields and the leafless trees, bare save for the foliage with which the snowflakes had endowed them. It may have been an equally fine morning in Montreal, but it is certain it seemed twice as bright and fresh here, and we began to realise something of those exhilarating properties of the Canadian air of which we had fondly read.

On this long journey eastward travellers do not enter the city of Quebec. They pass by on the other side of the river, and thus gain the advantage of seeing Quebec as a picture should be seen, from a convenient distance. Moreover, like many celebrated paintings, Quebec will not stand inspection at the length of the nose. But even taken in detail, walking through its narrow and steep streets, there is much to delight the eye. It has quaint old houses, and shops with pea green shutters, over which flaunt crazy, large-lettered signs that it could have entered into the heart of none but a Frenchman to devise. Save for the absence of the blouse and the sabot you might, picking your way through the mud in a street in the lower part of the city, imagine yourself in some quarters of Dieppe or Calais, or any other of the busier towns in the north of France. The peaked roofs, the unexpected balconies, the ill-regulated gables, and the general individuality of the houses are pleasing to the eye wearied with the prim monotony of English street architecture.

Quebec, to be seen at its best, should be gazed at from the harbour, or

from the other side of the river. This morning it is glorious, with its streets in the snow, its many spires in the sunlight, and the blue haze of the hills in the distance. We make our first stoppage at Point Levi, the station for Quebec, and here are twenty minutes for breakfast. The whereabouts of breakfast is indicated by a youth, who from the steps of an "hotel" at the station gate stolidly rings a bell. The passengers enter, and are shown into a room, in the centre of which is a large stove. The atmosphere is simply horrible. The double windows are up for the still dallying winter, and, as the drops of dirty moisture which stand on the panes testify, they are hermetically closed. The kitchen leads out of the room by what is apparently the only open door in the house, every other being jealously closed lest peradventure a whiff of fresh air should get in. It is impossible to eat, and one is glad to pay for the untasted food and get out into the open air before the power of respiration is permanently injured.

It was said this is the only place where there would be any chance of breakfast, nothing to eat till Trois Pistoles is reached, late in the afternoon. Happily this information turned out ill-founded. At L'Islet, a little station reached at eleven o'clock a stoppage was made at an unpretentious but clean and fresh restaurant, where the people speak French and know how to make soup.

A few years ago a journey by rail between Montreal and Halifax, without break save what is necessary for replenishing the engine stores, would have been impossible. The Grand Trunk, spanning the breadth of the more favoured provinces of Ontario and Quebec, leaves New Brunswick and Nova Scotia without other means of intercommunication than is afforded by its many rivers and its questionable roads. For many years Canadian statesmen, and all others interested in the practical confederation of the various provinces that make up the Dominion, felt that the primary and surest bond of union would be a railway. The military authorities were even more urgent as to the necessity of connecting Quebec and Halifax, and at one time a military road was seriously talked about. Long ago a railway was projected, and in 1846-8 a survey was carried out with that object. From that date up to 1869, when the road was actually commenced, the matter was fitfully discussed, and it was only in 1876 that the railway was opened.

It is only a single line, and as a commercial undertaking is not likely to pay at that, passing as it does through long miles of territory where "still stands the forest primeval." It was made by the Dominion Government in pursuance of a high national policy, and it adequately and admirably meets the ends for which it was devised. The total length from Rivière du Loup to Halifax is 561 miles. There is a spur running down to St. John, in the Bay of Fundy, eighty-nine miles long, another branch fifty-two miles long to Pictou, a great coal district opposite the southern end of Prince Edward Island; while a third span of eleven miles, branching off at Monckton and finishing at Point du Char, meets the steamers for Prince Edward Island, making a total length of 713 miles. The rails are steel, and the road is, mile for mile, as well made as any in England. The carriages are on the American principle--the long waggons capable of seating fifty or sixty persons, with an open passage down the centre, through which the conductor and ticket collector periodically walk. The carriages are heated to distraction by means of a huge stove at either end. It is possible to open the windows, but that is to be easily accomplished only after an apprenticeship too long for the stay of the average traveller. After a painful hour one gets accustomed to the atmosphere of the place, as it is happily possible to grow accustomed to any atmosphere. But the effect of these fierce stoves and obstinate windows must be permanently deleterious.

The Pullman car has fortunately come to make railway travelling in America endurable. Apart from other considerations, the inevitable stove is better managed. You are thoroughly warmed,---occasionally, it is true, parboiled. But there is at least freedom from the sulphurous atmosphere which pervades the ordinary car, with its two infernal machines, one at either end. In addition, the Pullman cars have more luxurious fittings, and are hung on smoother springs. It is at night their value becomes higher, and travellers are inclined to lie awake and wonder how their fathers and elder brothers managed to travel in the pre-Pullman era.

Life is too short to limit travel on this continent to the daytime. Travelling eight hours a day by rail, which we in England think a pretty

good allowance, it would take just five days to go from Montreal to Halifax. Thanks to the Pullman car and its adequate sleeping accommodation, a business man may leave Montreal at ten o'clock at night, say on Monday, and be in Halifax in time to transact business shortly after noon on Wednesday. Thus he loses only a day, for he must sleep somewhere, and he might find many a worse bed than is made up for him on a Pullman. The arrangements for ventilation leave nothing to be desired save a little less apprehension on the part of Canadians of the supposed malign influence of fresh air. If you can get the ventilators kept open you may sleep with impunity. But, as far as a desire for preserving the goodwill of my immediate neighbours controls me, I would, being in Canada, as soon pick a pocket as open a window. One night, before the beds were made up I secretly approached the coloured gentleman in charge of the carriage and heavily bribed him to open the ventilators. This he faithfully did, as I saw, but when I awoke this morning, half stifled in the heavy atmosphere, I found every ventilator closed.

After leaving Quebec, and for a far-reaching run, the railway skirts the river St. Lawrence, of which we get glimpses near and far as we pass. The time is not far distant when this mighty river will be frozen to the distance of fully a mile out, and men may skate where Atlantic steamers sail. At present the river is free, but the frost comes like a thief in the night, and the wary shipmasters have already gone into winter quarters. The railway people are also preparing for the too familiar terrors of the Canadian winter. As we steamed out of Quebec we saw the snow-ploughs conveniently shunted, ready for use at a moment's notice. The snowsheds are a permanent institution on the Intercolonial Railway. The train passes through them sometimes for the length of half a mile. They are simply wooden erections like a box, built in parts of the line where the snow is likely to drift. Passing swiftly through them just now you catch glimmers of light through the crevices. Presently, when the snow comes, these will be effectually closed up. Snow will lie a hundred feet thick on either side, to the full height of the shed, and the train, as watched from the line, will seem to vanish in an illimitable snow mound.

This is as yet in the future. At present the landscape has all the beauty that snow can give without the monotony of the unrelieved waste of white. Mounds of brown earth, tufts of grass, bits of road, roofs of houses, and belts of pine showing above the sprinkling of snow, give colour to the landscape. One divines already why Canadians, in building their houses, paint a door, or a side of a chimney, or a gable-end, red or chocolate, whilst all the rest is white. This looks strange in the summer, or in the bleak interregnum when neither the sun nor the north-east wind can be said absolutely to reign. But in the winter, when far as the eye can roam it is wearied with sight of the everlasting snow, a patch of red or of warm brown on the scarcely less white houses is a surprising relief.

The country in the neighbourhood of Rivière du Loup, where the Grand Trunk finishes and the Intercolonial begins, is filled with comfortable homesteads. The line runs through a valley between two ranges of hills. All about the slopes on the river side stand snug little houses, each within its own grounds, each having a peaked roof, which strives more or less effectually to rival the steepness of its neighbour. The houses straggle for miles down the line, as if they had started out from Quebec with the intention of founding a town for themselves, and had stopped on the way, beguiled by the beauty of the situation. Sometimes a little group stand together, when be sure you shall find a church, curiously small but exceedingly ornate in its architecture. The spires are coated with a glazed tile, which catches whatever sunlight there may be about, and glistens strangely in the landscape.

The first day following the first night of our journey closed in a manner befitting its rare beauty. The sun went down amid a glow of grandeur that illuminated all the world to the west, transfigured the blue mountains veined with snow, and spread a soft roseate blush over the white lowlands. We went to bed in New Brunswick still in the hilly country named by the colonists Northumberland. We awoke to find ourselves in the narrow neck of land which connects Nova Scotia with the continent. It was like going to bed in Sweden in December, and waking in Ireland in September. The snow was melted, the sun was hidden behind the one thin cloud that spread from horizon to horizon, and the sharp, brisk air of yesterday was exchanged for a cold, wet atmosphere, that

distilled itself in dank drops on the window-panes. The aspect of the country was also changed. The ground was sodden, the grass brown with perpetual wet. In one field we saw the hapless haycocks floating in water. Thus it was through Nova Scotia into Halifax--water everywhere on the ground, and threatening rain in the air.

CHAPTER XI

EASTER ON LES AVANTS.

We nearly lost our Naturalist between Paris and Lausanne. It was felt at the time, more especially by the latest additions to the party, that this would have been a great calamity. Habits, long acquired, of stopping by the roadside and minutely examining weeds or bits of stone, are not to be eradicated in a night's journey by rail. Accordingly, wherever the train stopped the Naturalist was, at the last moment, discovered to be absent, and search parties were organised with a promptness that, before we reached Dijon, had become quite creditable. But the success achieved begat a condition of confidence that nearly proved fatal. In travelling on a French line there is only one thing more remarkable than the leisurely way in which an express train gets under way after having stopped at a station, and that is the excitement that pervades the neighbourhood ten minutes before the train starts. Men in uniform go about shrieking *"En voiture, messieurs, en voiture!"* in a manner that suggests to the English traveller that the train is actually in motion, and that his passage is all but lost.

It was this habitude that led to our excitement at Melun. We had, after superhuman efforts, got the Naturalist into the carriage, and had breathlessly fallen back in the seat, expecting the train to move forthwith. Ten minutes later it slowly steamed out of the station, accompanied by the sound of the tootling horn and enveloped in thick clouds of poisonous smoke. This sort of thing happening at one or two other stations, we were induced to give our Naturalist an extra five minutes to gather some fresh specimen of a rare grass growing between the rails or some curious insect embedded in the bookstall. It was at Sens that, growing bolder with success, we nearly did lose him, dragging him in at the last moment, amid a scene of excitement that could be equalled elsewhere only on the supposition that the station was on fire and that five kegs of gunpowder were in the booking-office.

Shortly after leaving Dijon a conviction began to spread that perhaps if the fates had proved adverse, and we had lost him somewhere under circumstances that would have permitted him to come on by a morning train, we might have borne up against the calamity. Amongst a miscellaneous and imposing collection of scientific instruments, he was the pleased possessor of an aneroid. This I am sure is an excellent and even indispensable instrument at certain crises. But when you have been so lucky as to get to sleep in a railway carriage on a long night journey, to be awakened every quarter of an hour to be informed "how high you are now" grows wearisome before morning.

It was the Chancery Barrister who was partly responsible for this. He found it impossible to sleep, and our Naturalist, fastening upon him, kept him carefully posted up in particulars of the increasing altitude. This was the kind of thing that broke in upon our slumbers all through the night:--

Our Naturalist: "1200 feet above the level of the sea."

The Chancery Barrister (in provokingly sleepy tone): "Ah!"

Then we turn over, and fall asleep again. A quarter of an hour later:

Our Naturalist: "1500 feet now."

Chancery Barrister: "Really!"

Another fitful slumber, broken by a strong presentiment that the demoniacal aneroid is being again produced.

Our Naturalist (exultantly, as if he had privately arranged the incline, and was justly boastful of his success): "2100 feet."

Chancery Barrister (evidently feeling that something extra is expected of him): "No, *really* now!"

This kind of thing through what should be the silent watches of the night is to be deprecated, as tending to bring science into disrepute.

There was a good deal of excitement about the baggage. We were a personally conducted party to the extent that the Hon. Member who had suggested the trip, had undertaken the general direction, or had had the office thrust upon him. Feeling his responsibility, he had, immediately on arriving at Calais, changed some English money. This was found very convenient. Nobody had any francs except the Member, so we freely borrowed from him to meet trifling exigencies.

With the object of arriving at the best possible means of dealing with the vexed question of luggage, a variety of expedients had been tried. The Chancery Barrister, having read many moving narratives of raids made upon registered luggage in the secrecy of the luggage van, had adopted a course which displayed a profound knowledge of human nature. He had argued with himself (as if he were a judge in chambers) that what proved an irresistible temptation to foreign guards and other railway officials was the appearance of boxes and portmanteaux iron-clasped, leather-strapped, and double-locked. The inference naturally was that they contained much that was valuable. Now, he had pointed out to himself, if you take a directly opposite course, and, as it were, invite the gentleman in charge of your luggage to open your portmanteau, he will think you have nothing in it worth his attention, and will pass on to others more jealously guarded. You can't very well leave your box open, as the things might tumble out. So, as a happy compromise, he had duly locked and strapped his portmanteau, and then tied the key to the handle.

As he observes, with the shrewd perception that will inevitably lead him to the Woolsack, "You are really helpless, and can do nothing to prevent these gentlemen from helping themselves. If you leave the key there, there is a fair chance of their treating your property as the Levite treated the Good Samaritan. If not, your box will be decently opened instead of having the lock broken or the hinges wrenched off."

That was a good idea, and proved triumphantly successful; for, on arrival at Montreux, the Chancery Barrister's portmanteau turned up all right, the key innocently reposing on the handle, and, as subsequent investigation showed, the contents untouched.

Our Manufacturer had a still better way, though, as was urged, he comes from Yorkshire, and we of the southern part of the island have no chance in competition with the race. He lost his luggage somewhere between Dover and Paris, and has ever since been free from all care on the subject.

Perhaps it was the influence of these varied incidents that led to a scene of some excitement on our arrival at Montreux station. There, what was left of our luggage was disgorged, and of fourteen packages registered, only nine were visible to the naked eye. It was then the Patriarch came to the front and displayed some of those qualities which subsequently found a fuller field amid the solitude of the Alps.

We call him the Patriarch because he is a grandfather. In other respects he is the youngest of the party, the first on the highest peak, the first down in the afternoon with his ready order for "tea for ten," of which, if the party is late in arriving and he finds time hang heavy on his hands, he will genially drink five cups himself. With the care of half a dozen colossal commercial undertakings upon his mind, he is as merry as a boy and as playful as a kitten. But when once aroused his anger is terrible.

His thunder and lightning played around the station-master at Montreux on the discovery of the absence of five packages. The Patriarch has a wholesome faith in the all-sufficiency of the English language. The station-master's sole lingual accomplishment was French. This concatenation of circumstances might with ordinary persons have led to some diminution of the force of adjuration. But probably the station-master lost little of the meaning the Patriarch desired to convey. This tended in the direction of showing the utter incapacity of the Swiss or French nature to manage a railway, and the discreditable incompetency of the officials of whatever grade. The station-master was properly abashed before the torrent of indignant speech. But he had his turn presently. Calmer inspection disclosed the fact that all the fourteen packets were delivered. It was delightful to see how the

station-master, immediately assuming the offensive, followed the Patriarch about with gesticulation indicative of the presence of the baggage, and with taunting speech designed to make the Patriarch withdraw his remarks--whatever they might have been. On this point the station-master was not clear, but he had a shrewd suspicion that they were not complimentary. The Patriarch, however, now retired upon his dignity.

It was, as he said, no use arguing with fellows like this.

Les Avants sit high up among the mountains at the back of Montreux. It seems madness to go there at a time when fires are still cheerful and when the leaves have not yet put forth their greenness. But, as was made apparent in due time, Les Avants, at no time inconveniently cold, would be, but for the winds that blow over the snow-clad hills surprisingly hot. To build an hotel here seems a perilously bold undertaking. It is not on the way to anywhere, and people going from the outer world must march up the hill, and, when they are tired of it, must needs, like the Duke of York in his famous military expedition, march down again. None but a Swiss would build an hotel here, and few but English would frequent it. Yet the shrewdness of the proprietor has been amply justified, and Les Avants is becoming in increasing degree a favourite pilgrimage.

The hotel was built nearly twenty years ago. Previously the little valley it dominates had been planted with one or two chalets which for more than half a century have looked out upon the deathless snows of the Dent du Midi. There is one which has rudely carved over the lintel of its door the date 1816. Noting which, the Chancery Barrister, with characteristic accuracy, observed that "five centuries look down upon us."

Our landlord is an enterprising man. His business in life is to keep an hotel, and the height of his ambition is to keep it well. Only a fortnight ago he returned from a grand tour of the winter watering-places, from the Bay of Biscay to the Bay of Genoa. The ordinary attractions of the show places from Biarritz to Bordighera had no lure for him. What he studied were the hotels and their various modes of management. He told us, with a flush of pride on his sun-tanned cheek, that he travelled as an ordinary tourist. There was no hint of his condition or the object of his journey, no appeal to confraternity with a view to getting bed and breakfast at trade prices, or some reduction on the *table d'hôte* charges. He travelled as a sort of Haroun al Raschid among innkeepers, haughtily paying his bills, and possibly feeing the waiters. He is a very good sort of a fellow, attentive and obliging, and it is odd how we all agree in the hope that he was from time to time over-charged.

It is a fair prospect looked out upon from the bedroom window on our arrival. Almost at our feet, it seems, is the Lake of Geneva, though we remember the wearisome climb up the hill, and know it must be miles away. On the other side are the snow-clad hills that reach down to Savoy on the east, and are crowned by the heights of the Dent du Midi on the west. On the left, flanking our own place of abode, rise up the grim heights of the Roches de Naye, and, still farther back, the Dent du Jaman--a terrible tooth this, which draws attention from all the country round, and excites the wildest ambition of the tourist. The man or woman resting within a circuit of ten miles of Montreux, who has not touched the topmost heights of the Dent du Jaman, goes home a crushed person. A very small proportion do it, but every one talks of doing it---which, unless the weather be favourable, is perhaps the wiser thing to do. It fills a large place in the conversation as well as in the landscape, and it will be a bad thing for the Lake of Geneva if this tooth should ever be drawn.

Lovely as was the scene in the fresh morning air, with the glistening snow, the dark pines on the lower hills, the blue lake, and the greyish upland, they did but serve to frame the picture of the Patriarch as he sat upon the bench in the front of the hotel. A short jacket of blue serge, knickerbockers of the same material, displaying the proportions of a notable pair of legs, the whole crowned by a chimney-pot hat, went to make up a remarkable figure. The Patriarch had in his hand a blue net for catching butterflies. The Naturalist had excited his imagination by stories of the presence of the "Camberwell Beauty," a rare and beautiful species of butterfly, of which he was determined to take home a specimen. In later days he

was fair to see with his hat thrown back on his brow, his net in his hand: and his stout legs twinkling in their haste to come up with a butterfly.

The Alps have witnessed many strange sights since first they uplifted their heads to heaven. But it is calculated that the Patriarch was the first who brought under their notice the chimney-pot hat of the civilised Englishman.

This haste to be up on the first morning was a faithful precursor of the indomitable vitality of the Patriarch. He was always first up and first off, and, amongst many charming peculiarities, was his indifference as to which way the road lay. We generally had a guide with us, and nothing was more common in toiling up a mountain side than to discover the guide half a mile to the left and the Patriarch half a mile to the right, something after the fashion of the letter Y, we being at the stem. We saw a good deal more of the country than we otherwise should have done, owing to the constant necessity of going after the Patriarch and bringing him back. Sometimes he got away by himself, at others he deluded some hapless member of the company into following him. One young man, just called to the bar, had a promising career almost cut short on the second day. In the innocence of his heart he had followed the Patriarch, who led him through an apparently impassable pine forest on to the crest of a remote hill, whence he crawled down an hour late for luncheon, the Patriarch having arrived ten minutes before him, and having already had his knife into every receptacle for food that was spread out, from the loaf of bread to the box of sardines, from the preserved peaches to the cup without a handle that held the butter.

Walking up the hill behind the hotel on the way to the Jaman, the Member had a happy idea. "Why," he asked, "should not the Parliamentary Session be movable, like a reading party? Say the Bankruptcy Bill is referred to a grand committee. What is to prevent them coming right off here and settling down for a fortnight or three weeks, or in fact whatever time might be necessary thoroughly to discuss the measure?"

They might do worse, we agreed, as we walked on, carefully selecting the shady side of the road, and thinking of dear friends shivering in England. The blue haze under which we know the lake lies; the Alps all around, their green sides laced with snow and their heads covered with it; the fleckless blue sky; the brown rocks, and over all and through all the murmuring music of the invisible stream, as it trickles on its way down the gorge, would be better accompaniments to a good grind at a difficult Bill than any to be found within the precincts of Westminster.

"You remember what Virgil says?" the Chancery Barrister strikes in.

Divers things of diverse character we have discovered invariably remind the Chancery Barrister of Virgil or Horace, occasionally perchance of an English poet. This is very pleasant, and none the less so because the reminiscences come slowly, gathering strength as they advance, like the Chancery Barrister's laugh, which begins like the pattering of rain on leaves, and ends in the roar of a thunderstorm. The Chancery Barrister takes his jokes gently to begin with: he sees them afar off, and, closing one eye, begins to smile. The smile broadens to a grin, the grin becomes a cachinnation, then, as he hugs the fun, the cachinnation deepens to a roar of laughter, and the thing is complete.

It is thus with his quotations, though these are not always completed--at least, not in accordance with recognised authorities. As one of the ladies says, with that kindliness peculiar to the sex, "The Chancery Barrister is most original when he is making a quotation."

"What's that Wolsey says about the pomps and vanities of this world?"
"'Vain pomps and vanities of this world,'" the Chancery Barrister begins, and we know we are in for a quotation. "No, not pomps and vanities. 'Vain pomps and glories of this world' (that's it)--"

> "'Vain pomp and glory of this world, I hate ye.
> I feel my heart new opened. O how wretched
> Is the poor man that hangs on princes' favours!
> There is betwixt the smile we would aspire to,
> That sweet aspect of princes and their ruin,
> More pangs and fears than wars or women have.'"

It's odd how one thing leads to another. By the time the Chancery Barrister has got his quotation right, the Patriarch is half a mile

ahead in the wrong direction, and we all have to go and look for him.

The Col de Jaman is the salvation of many tourists. Not being regular Alpine climbers, they start over the Dent and get as far as the Col, rest awhile just under the great mountain molar, and come down. We had a splendid day for our expedition. It had been freezing hard in the night, and when we reached the snow region we found the pines frosted. On the Col a beneficent commune has built some chalets furnished with plentiful supply of firewood. Out of the sun it was bitterly cold, and we were glad to light a fire, which crackled and roared up the broad chimney and made a pretty accompaniment to the Chancery Barrister's song about the Jolly Young Waterman. He sang it all in one key, and that the wrong one. But it was a well-meant effort, and we all joined in the chorus.

There's some talk to-day of a startling episode at an hotel up the Rhone Valley. A Russian gentleman was sitting sipping his tea, when there approached him a lady, who addressed him in three languages. His replies not being satisfactory she shot him. This is cited by the Chancery Barrister as showing the advantage of an early acquaintance with foreign languages, and the desirableness of a pure accent.

It is quite agreed that if our Naturalist had been in the Russian's place he would have been shot after the first question. This morning, on ringing for his bath, he was answered by a chambermaid with a "Pas encore." Why "not just yet" our Naturalist did not know. He was not unusually early. But he had done his duty. He had tried to get up and have his bath; it was not ready, so he might go back to bed with a quiet conscience. Presently came another knock, and our Naturalist, carefully robing himself, opened the door, and discovered the chambermaid standing there with a plate, a knife, and a breakfast roll.

"What the dev----I mean *qu'c'est qu'c'est*?" he asked.

"*Monsieur a demandé le petit pain*," the girl replied, astonished at his astonishment.

With great presence of mind he accepted the situation, took in the bread, and did without his bath. The Member says that, coming upon him suddenly amid the silence of the snow, he heard him practising the slightly different sounds of *pain* and *bain*.

Nothing but snow between the Col and the Dent du Jaman, but snow at its very best, hard and dry. Just before we reach the top we come upon a huge drift frozen hard and slippery. We might have gone round, but we decided to try and climb. The Patriarch of course was first, and achieved the task triumphantly. Others followed, and then came the Chancery Barrister. Another step, and he would have safely landed. But unhappily a quotation occurred to him.

"This is jolly," he said, turning half round, with the proud consciousness that he was at the crest and that with another stride all would be well; "what's that Horace says about enjoying what you have?"

> "'Me pascant olivae,
> Me cichorea, levesque malvae,
> Frui paratis, et valido mihi,
> Latoe, dones, et, precor, integra
> Cum----'"

Here the most terrible contortion appeared on the generally pleasant countenance of the Chancery Barrister. He clutched desperately at the ice; but his suspicion was too true. He had begun to move downwards ("When he got to *cum* he came," the Member, who makes bad jokes, says), and with increasing impetus he slid down the bank. His face during the terrible moments when he was not quite certain where he would stop, or indeed whether he would ever stop, passed through a series of contortions highly interesting to those on the bank above.

"*Me pascant olivae*!" cried the Member. "Olives are evidently no use as a support in a case like yours, and diachylon would be more use to you now than soft mallows."

The Chancery Barrister, who had happily reached the bottom, walked round by a more accessible path, and nothing further either from Horace or Virgil occurred to him for more than an hour.

Perhaps the difference in the weather had something to do with it, but

we found the Dent du Jaman not nearly so difficult to climb as the Roches de Naye. After the scamper across the snow and the climb over this little ice-collar down which the Chancery Barrister had slipped, there is no more snow. We climb up by steps worn by the feet of many adventurers. The top is a level cone with an area not much greater than that of a moderate-sized dining-room. There was not a breath of wind, and the sun beat down with a warmth made all the more delicious by the recollection of the frozen region through which we had passed. The Dent is only a trifle above six thousand feet high, but the prospect as seen from it stretches far. Below is the Canton de Vaud, a portion of the Jura chain of mountains, the far-reaching Alps of the Savoy, a bit of the lake gleaming like an emerald under the white tops of the mountains, a cloud on the southern horizon that the guide tells us are the mountains of the Valais, and, still to the south just touched by the sun, glitter the snow summits of the Great St. Bernard.

Coming down, we bivouac in the *châlet*, lighting up the fire again. Here, twelve hundred feet lower down, it is bitterly cold, in spite of, perhaps because of, the fire. The *châlet* is built with commendable deference to the necessity for ventilation. The wind, smelling fire, comes rushing over the snow, and we are glad to put on coat and caps. The conversation turns to legal topics, and certain eminent personages are discussed with great severity. Of one it is roundly asserted that he is mad.

"I am quite sure of it," said the Chancery Barrister, who has recovered his spirits with his footing, "and I'll tell you why. He seconded me for the Reform Club, and----"

We all agree that this is quite enough; but the Chancery Barrister insists on proceeding with his narrative, of which it seems this was merely the introduction.

We found our Naturalist of very little use. We had expected he would mount with us whatever heights we sought, and had pleasing views of his explaining the flora as we went along. But he always had some excuse that kept him on lower levels. One morning he declared he had passed a sleepless night owing to the efforts of two Scotch lads who occupied the room next to him. They had some taste for carpentering, and were addicted to getting up in the dead of the night and doing odd jobs about the room. At half-past five a.m. they left their couch and began playing Cain and Abel. Only the Naturalist protested there is no authority in Scripture for the fearful row Abel made when Cain got him down on his back.

At other times our Naturalist had heard of a "Camberwell Beauty" in the neighbourhood, and must needs go and catch it, which, by the way, he never did. On the whole, we conclude our Naturalist is an impostor.

We reserved the Roches de Naye till the last day. It was rather a stupendous undertaking, the landlord assuring us that four guides were necessary. One led a horse that no one would ride, one carried the indispensable luncheon-basket, and two fared forth at early morn to cut steps in the snow. The sun was shining when we started on this desperate enterprise, and it was hot enough as we toiled along the lower heights. But when we reached the snow level, the sun had gone in, having just shone long enough to make the snow wet. Then a cold bleak wind set in, and we began to think that, after all, there was more in the Naturalist than met the eye. Whilst we were toiling along, sometimes temporarily despairing, and generally up to our waists in snow, he was enjoying the comforts of the hotel, or strolling about in languid search of fabulous butterflies.

Picking our way round a hill in which had been cut in the snow a ledge about two feet wide, we came in face of the slope we were to climb. Up at the top, looking like black ants, were the guides cutting a zigzag path in the snow. The Member observed that if any one were to offer him a sovereign and his board on condition of his climbing up this slope, he would prefer to remain in indigent circumstances. As we were getting nothing for the labour, were indeed paying for the privilege of undertaking it, we stuck at it, and after a steady climb reached the top, when the wind was worse than ever. It was past luncheon time, and every one was ferociously hungry; but it was agreed that if we camped here and lunched, we should never get to the top. So on we went, through the sloppy snow, pursued by the keen blast that cut through all possible clothing.

It was a hard pull and not much to see for it, since clouds had rolled up from the west and hid the promised panorama. The wind was terrible, and there was no shelter. But we could hold out no longer, and the luncheon being laid upon the sloppy grass, the Patriarch, with his accustomed impartiality, went round with his knife.

By this time we had induced him to take the sardines last, which he obligingly did.

We ran most of the way back to the side of the hill where the snow had been cut. The exercise made us a little warmer; and the genial influence of the cold fowl, the hard-boiled eggs, the sardines and the thin red wine beginning to work, we were able to enjoy the spectacle of the Patriarch leading the first party down the perilous incline. We had ropes, but didn't think it worth while to be tied. The party was divided into two sections, half a dozen holding on to a rope. It must have been a beautiful sight from many a near mountain height to watch the Patriarch's chimney-pot hat slowly move downwards on the zigzag path.

"What's that Virgil says about ranging mountain tops?" said the Chancery Barrister:

> "Me Parnassi deserta per ardua dulcis
> Raptat amor: juvat ire jugis, qua nulla priorum
> Castaliam molli divertitur orbita clivo."

He had got in the centre of the second party, and with two before him, three behind, and a firm grip on the rope, he thought it safe to quote poetry.

We had eight days at Les Avants, of which this devoted to the ascent of the Roches was the only one the sun did not shine upon. Whether on mountain or in valley, what time the sun was shining it was delightfully warm. The narcissi were not yet out, but the fields were thick with their buds. How the place would look when their glory had burst forth on all the green Alps we could only imagine. But already everywhere bloomed the abundant marigolds, the hepaticae, the violets, the oxlips, the gentians, the primroses, and the forget-me-nots.

CHAPTER XII.

THE BATTLE OF MERTHYR.

"Well, sir, it is, as you say, a long time ago, but it was one of those things, look you, that a man meets with only once in his lifetime; and that being so, I might call it all to mind if I began slowly, and went on so as to keep my pipe alight to the end."

The speaker was a little, white-haired miner, who had been employed for fifty years by the Crawshays, of Cyfarthfa. We were sitting in the sanctum of his kitchen, the beautifully sanded floor of which smote me with remorse, for I had walked up from Merthyr, and was painfully conscious of two muddy footprints in the doorway.

Mrs. Morgan Griffiths, engaged upon the task of repairing Mr. Morgan Griffiths's hose, was seated in the middle of the room opposite the fireplace, having against the wall on either side of her a mahogany chest of drawers in resplendent state of polish. Mr. Morgan Griffiths sat beside the fireplace, with his pipe in one hand, the other resting affectionately upon another mahogany chest of drawers, also resplendently polished, standing in a recess at his left. The other side of the fireplace was occupied by the visitor, who, if he had turned his head a little to the right, might have seen his face reflected in the resplendent polish of a third mahogany chest of drawers, which somewhat inconveniently projected from the recess on the side of the fireplace.

Apparently, every well-to-do Welsh collier marks his status in society by the possession of a mahogany chest of drawers--if mounted in brass so much the better--which it is the pride and privilege of his wife to keep in a state of resplendent polish. Mr. Morgan Griffiths having had a long run of prosperity, and being of a frugal mind, had launched out largely in the purchase of mahogany chests of drawers, and his kitchen may be said to bristle with them. Each had its history, and it was to the patient listening to the repetition thereof, and to the expenditure of much appreciative criticism upon the varied styles of architecture displayed in their construction, that I completely won Mr. Morgan

Griffiths's confidence, and overcame the cautious fencing with which he met my first inquiries touching his recollection of the memorable Merthyr Riots of 1831.

Perfect confidence reigned between us now, and I discovered that, though it is exceedingly hard to get a Welsh miner to talk freely to "a Saxon," when he opens his heart, and can look back for a period of fifty years, he is a very interesting companion.

"Yes, it's a long time ago," Mr. Morgan Griffiths repeated, in short, clipping intonation of the English language I will not attempt to reproduce, "but I've often talked it over with Mrs. Morgan Griffiths, and I can see it all now. Times was sore bad, and there was a deal of poverty about. Bread was dear, and iron was cheap--at least so Mr. Crawshay said when we went up to ask him if he couldn't give us miners a trifle over the twelve or thirteen shillings a week we was earning. Everybody I knowed was in debt, and had been in debt for some time, and was getting further in every week. The shopkeepers up at Merthyr were getting uneasy about their money, and besides saying plump out to some of us that we couldn't have any more bread, or that, without money down on the nail, they served out all round summonses to what was called the Court of Requests. That was all very well, but as we couldn't get enough to eat from day to day upon our wages, it was pretty certain we couldn't go and pay up arrears. But the summonses came all the same, and it was a black look-out, I can tell you.

"One day, in the middle of the summer of this year 1831, there was a great meeting out on Waun-hill of all the miners of the country. I can't rightly tell you the day of the month, but it was about three reeks after we rescued Thomas Llewellin, who had been sent to gaol on account of the row at Mr. Stephens's. We talked over our grievances together, and we made up our minds that we couldn't stand them any longer, though we meant no more mischief than our little Morgan who wasn't born then, me and Mrs. Morgan Griffiths not being married at the time, nor indeed set eyes on each other. After the row opposite the Bush Inn, I went back to my work till such time as the petition we had agreed to send to the King was written out by Owen Evans, and had come round to be signed by us all. But there was others not so peaceably minded, and a lot of them, meeting outside Merthyr, marched over the hill to Aberdare, where they went to Mr. Fothergill's and treated him pretty roughly. They ate up all the victuals in the house, and finished up all the beer, and then took a turn round the town collecting all the bread and cheese they could lay their hands on.

"A lad sent by Mr. Fothergill came running over the mountain with a letter to the magistrates, telling them what was happening in Aberdare, and pressing them to send off for the soldiers. It was said the magistrates did this pretty quick, but we had no railways or telegraphs then, and, ride as quick as you might, the soldiers could not get here before morning. The men from Aberdare were back here the same night, and marched straight for the Court of Requests, where they made poor Coffin, the clerk, give up every scrap of book or paper he had about the Court's business, and they made a bonfire of them in the middle of the street. Then they came over here, and swore we should all turn out and join them.

"I remember it well. I was just coming up from the pit to go to my tea, when they came bursting over the tips, shouting and waving their sticks, and wearing in their hats little bits of burnt paper from the bonfire opposite Coffin's house. They were most of them drunk, but they were very friendly with us, and only wanted us to leave off work and go along with them. I was a young fellow then, up to any lark, and didn't make much fuss about it. So off we went to Dowlais, freed the men there, and we all had a good drink together.

"Next day the soldiers came in earnest: Scotchmen with petticoats on, and nasty-looking guns on their shoulders. I stood in a passage whilst they marched down High Street from Cyfarthfa way, and didn't like the look of things at all. But close upon their heels came all our fellows, with bludgeons in their hands, and one of them, a man from Dowlais, had tied a red pocket-handkerchief on a stick and waved it over his head like a flag. The soldiers tramped steadily along till they got just above the Castle Inn, and there they halted, our men

pressing on till they filled the open place below the Castle, as well as crowding the street behind the soldiers, who looked to me, as I hung on by the hands and legs to a lamp-post, just like a patch of red in the centre of a great mass of black. The soldiers had some bread and cheese and beer served out to them, but they were a long time getting it; for as soon as any one came out of the Castle with a loaf of bread and a piece of cheese some of our men snatched it out of their hands and eat it, jeering at the soldiers and offering them bits.

"The soldiers never said a word or budged an inch till the Sheriff looked out of the window and asked the little fellow who was their commander-in-chief to draw them up on the pavement close before the hotel. The little fellow said something to them; and they turned round their guns so as the butt ends were presented, and marched straight forward, as if our fellows were not on the pavement as thick as ants. There was a little stoppage owing to the men not being able to clear off because of the crowd on the right and left. But the thick ends of the guns went steadily on with the bare-legged silent soldiers after them, and in a few strides the pavement was clear, and the soldiers were eating their bread and cheese with their faces to the crowd, and a tight right-handed grip on their muskets.

"The Sheriff got on a chair in the doorway of the Castle, with the soldiers well placed between him and us, and made a rigmaroling speech about law and order, and the King; but he said nothing about giving us more wages. Our master, Mr. Crawshay, was in the hotel too, and so was Mr. Guest, of Dowlais. Evan Jones, a man who had come over from Aberdare, got up on the shoulders of his mates and made a rattling speech all about our poor wages.

"'Law and order's all very well," he said, "but can you live on twelve shillings a week, Mr. Sheriff, and bring up a lot of little sheriffs?'

"Then we all shouted, and old Crawshay coming up to the doorway, I got down from the lamp-post, not wishing to let him see me there, though I was only standing on my rights. But Mr. William had a voice which, something like an old file at work, could go through any crowd, and I heard him in his quiet, stern way, just as if he was talking to his men on a pay-day, say it was no use them crowding there with sticks and stones to talk to him about wages.

"'Go home, all of you' he said; 'go to bed; and when you are sober and in your senses, send us a deputation from each mine, and we'll see what can be done. But you won't be sensible for a fortnight after this mad acting; so let us say on this day fortnight you come with your deputation. Now go home, and don't make fools of yourselves any more.'

"We always listened to what Mr. Crawshay said, though he might be a little hard sometimes, and this made us waver. But just then Lewis-yr-Helwyr, shouting out in Welsh, 'We ask for more wages and they give us soldiers,' leaped at the throat of the Scotchman nearest to him, and snatching the musket out of his hand, stuck the bayonet into him.

"In the twinkling of an eye the great black mass jumped upon the little red patch I told you of, and a fearful struggle began. The attack was so sudden, and the soldiers were at the moment so earnest with their bread and cheese, that nearly all the front rank men lost their muskets and pressed backward on their comrades behind. These levelled their pieces over the front rank's shoulders and fired straight into the thick of us. The little officer had hardly given the word to fire when he was knocked down by a blow on the head, and a bayonet stuck into him, Our men pressed stoutly forward and, tumbling over the dead, fell upon the soldiers, who could move neither arm nor leg. The rear rank were, as fast as they could bustle, filing into the hotel, but not before they had managed to pass over their heads the little officer, who looked very sick, with the blood streaming down his face.

"At last the soldiers all got inside the doorway of the hotel, where they stood fast like a wedge, two kneeling down shoulder to shoulder with their bayonets fixed, three others firing over their heads, and others behind handing up loaded guns as fast as they fired. There was a lane speedily made amongst us in front of the doorway; but we had won the fight for all that, and cheered like mad when the soldiers turned tail.

"In a few minutes we shouted on the other side of our mouths. Without

any notice the windows of every room in the hotel suddenly flew up, and out came from each the muzzles of a pair of muskets which flashed death down upon us at the rate of two men a minute; for as soon as the first couple of soldiers fired they retired and reloaded whilst two others took their places and blazed away. A rush was made to the back of the hotel, and we had got into the passage, when the bearded faces of the Scotchmen showed through the smoke with which the house was filled, and the leaders of our lot were shoved back at the point of the bayonet. At the same time the windows at the back of the house flew up as they had done in the front, and the muzzles of the muskets peeped out as they had done before.

"This was getting rather hot for me. Men dead or dying were lying about everywhere around the Castle Inn. If I had been asked that night how many were killed, I think I should have said two hundred; but when the accounts came to be made up, it was found that not more than sixty or seventy were shot dead, though many more were wounded. I was neither hurt nor dead as yet, and I thought I had better go home if I wanted to keep so. I was below the Castle Inn at the time, and not caring to pass the windows with those deadly barrels peeping out I turned down High Street, and walked through the town. It was raining in torrents, and I never saw Merthyr look so wretched. Every shop was closed, and barricades placed across some of the windows of the private houses; and as I walked along, trying to look as if I hadn't been up at the Castle, I saw white faces peeping over window blinds.

"Merthyr was trembling in its shoes that day, I can tell you; and it came out afterwards that every tradesman in the place had got together all the bread, cheese, meat, pies, and beer he could put his hands on, ready to throw out to the mob if they came knocking at his door.

"It was late at night when I got home, having gone a long way round, and I saw nothing more of our fellows; but I heard that the wounded soldiers had been taken up to Penydarren House, which was fortified by their comrades, and held all night against our men. Somehow the word got passed round that we were to meet the next morning in a quiet place on the Brecon road, and when I got there I found our gallant fellows in great force. I, having neither sword nor gun, was told off with a lot of others to get up on the heights that bank the turnpike road near Coedycymmer, and roll down big stones, so that the fresh troops expected up from Brecon could not pass. This we did with a will; and when, in the afternoon, a lot of cavalry came up, we made it so hot for them, what with the stones rolled down from above and the musketry that came rattling up from our men who had guns, that they cleared off pretty smartly.

"This cheered us greatly, and another lot of ours, who had been posted on the Swansea road to intercept troops coming up in that direction, soon after joined us, with news of a great victory, by which they had routed the soldiers and taken their swords and muskets. We thought Merthyr was ours, though I'm not sure that we quite knew what we were going to do with it. When somebody shouted, 'Let's go to Merthyr!' we all shouted with him, and ran along the road, intending to take Penydarren House by storm. On the way we met Evan Price and some others, who had been to see Mr. Guest, and had been promised fine things for the men if they would give up their arms and go peaceably to work. Some jumped at this offer and sneaked off; but I had got a sabre now, and was in for death or glory. There was a good many in the same boat, and on we went towards Penydarren House, enough of us to eat it up, if the walls had been built of boiled potatoes instead of bricks.

"When we got in sight of the house, we found they were ready for us, and had got a lot of those soldiers drawn up in battle array. There was a deal of disputing amongst our leaders how the attack was to commence, and whilst they were chattering the men were dropping off in twos and threes, and in about an hour we were all gone, so nothing more was done that night.

"We lay quietly in our own homes on Sunday, and on Monday had a great meeting on Waun-hill again, colliers coming up by thousands to join up from all parts around. Early in the forenoon we began to move down towards Merthyr, everybody in high spirits, shouting, waving caps, and brandishing swords. I saw one man get an awful backhanded cut on the cheek from an Aberdare collier, who was waving his sword about like a madman. Nobody knew exactly where we were going, or what we were going to do; but when we got as far as Dowlais we were saved the trouble of

deciding, for there was Mr. Guest, with a great army of soldiers drawn up across the road. Mr. Guest was as cool as myself, and rode forward to meet us as if we were the best friends in the world. He made a good speech, begging us to think of our wives and families, and go quietly home whilst we had the chance. Nothing came of that, however, and he pulled out a paper, and read an Act of Parliament, after which he turned to the commander-in chief of the soldiers, and said he had done all a magistrate could do, and the soldiers must do the rest.

"'Get ready,' shouts out the commander-in-chief; and the soldiers brought their muskets down with a flash like lightning, and a clash that made me feel uncomfortable, remembering what I had seen on the Friday.

"'Present!'

"There was ten murderous barrels looking straight at us. Another word, and we should have their contents amongst our clothes. It was an awful moment. I saw one black-bearded fellow had covered me as if I were a round target, and I said to myself as well as I could speak for my lips were like parched peas, 'Morgan Griffiths, twelve shillings a week and an allowance of coal is better than this'; and I'm not ashamed to own that I turned round and made my way through the crush of our men, which was getting less inconveniently pressing at the end nearest to the levelled barrels.

"There was, to tell the truth, a good deal of movement towards the rear amongst our men, and when Mr. Guest saw this he rode up again, and, standing right between the guns and the front rank of our men, said something which I could not rightly hear, and then our men began running off faster than ever, so that in about half an hour the soldiers had the road to themselves.

"That was not the last of the riots, but it is all I can tell you about them, for I had had quite enough of the business. There is something about the look of a row of muskets pointed at you, with ball inside the barrels and a steady finger on the triggers, which you don't care to see too often.

"Anyhow, I went home, and there heard tell of more fighting all that week on the Brecon road, of Merthyr in a state of panic, and at last of Dick Penderyn and Lewis the Huntsman being taken, and the whole of our men scattered about the country, and hunted as if they were rats.

"It was a bad business, sir--a very bad business, and I know no more than them as was shot down in the front of the Castle Hotel how it came about or what we meant to do. We were like a barrel of gunpowder that had been broken up and scattered about the road. A spark came, and poof!--we went off with a bang, and couldn't stop ourselves. Yes, this is a bad business, too, this strike of to-day, and there's a good many thousand men going about idle and hungry who were busy and full a month ago. I don't feel the bitterness of it myself so much, because I have a little store in the house. I had been saving it to buy another chest of drawers to stand there, opposite the door, but it's going out now in bread and meat, and I don't know whether I shall live to save up enough after the trouble's over, for I'm getting old now, look you."

CHAPTER XIII.

MOSQUITOES AND MONACO.

Up to the end of October, in ordinary seasons, the mosquitoes hold their own against all comers along the full length of the Riviera. For some unexplained reasons they clear out earlier from Genoa, though the atmosphere may be as unbearably close as at other points of the coast which mosquitoes have in most melancholy manner marked as their own. Perhaps it is the noise of the city that scares them. The people live in the street as much as possible, and therein conduct their converse in highly-pitched notes. I have a strong suspicion that, like the habitation jointly rented by Messrs. Box and Cox, Genoa is tenanted by two distinct populations. One fills the place by day and throughout the evening up to about ten o'clock; after this hour it disappears, and there is a brief interval of rare repose. About 2 a.m. the Cox of this joint tenancy appears on the scene, and by four there is a full tide of bustle that murders sleep as effectually as was ever done by Macbeth. I do not wonder that the mosquitoes (who, I have the best reason to know, are insects of the finest discrimination and the most exacting

good taste) quit Genoa at the earliest possible moment.

The most delightful spot in or near the city is, to my mind, Campo Santo, the place where rich Genoese go when they die. The burial-ground is a large plot of ill-kept land, where weeds grow, and mean little crosses rear their heads. Round this run colonnades adorned with statuary, generally life-size, and frequently of striking merit. Originally, it is presumable that the sculptor's art was invoked in order to perpetuate the memory of the dead. There are in some of the recesses, either in the form of medallions or busts, life-like representations of those who have gone before. But the fashion of the day is improving upon this. In the newest sculptures there is exceedingly little of the dead, and as much as possible of the living.

About half-way down the colonnade, entering from the right, there is a memorable group. A woman of middle age, portly presence and expansive dress, is discovered in the centre on her knees, with hands clasped. The figure is life-size and every detail of adornment, from the heavy bracelet on her wrist to the fine lace of her collar, is wrought from the imperishable marble. On her face is an expression of profound grief, tempered by the consciousness that her large earrings have been done justice to. Standing at a respectful distance behind her is a youth with bared head drooped, and a tear delicately chiselled in the eye nearest to the spectator. He carries his hat in his hand, displays much shirt-cuff; and the bell-shaped cut of the trouser lying over his dainty boot makes his foot look preciously small.

These figures, both life-size, stand in an arched recess, and show to the best advantage. Just above the arch the more observant visitor will catch sight of a small medallion, modestly displaying, about half life-size, the face of an ordinary-looking man, who may have been a prosperous linendraper or a cheesefactor with whom the markets had gone well. This is presumably the deceased, and it is difficult to imagine anything more soothing to the feelings of his widow and son than to come here in the quiet evenings or peaceful mornings and contemplate their own life-sized figures so becomingly bereaved.

Mosquitoes do not meddle with woe so sacred as this; but at San Remo, for example, which has no Campo Santo, they are having what is known in the American language as a high old time. Along the Riviera the shutters of the hotels are taken down in the first week of October. Then arrives the proprietor with the advance guard of servants, and the third cook; the *chef* and his first lieutenant will not come till a month later. In the meantime the third cook can prepare the meals for the establishment and for any chance visitor whom evil fate may have led untimeously into these parts. Then begins the scrubbing down and the dusting, the bringing out of stored carpets, and the muffling of echoing corridors in brown matting. The season does not commence till November, coincidental with the departure of the mosquitoes. But there is enough to occupy the interval, and there are not wanting casual travellers whose bills suffice to cover current expenses. On these wayfarers the faithful mosquito preys with the desperate determination born of the conviction that time is getting a little short with him, and that his pleasant evenings are numbered.

There are several ways of dealing with the mosquito, all more or less unsatisfactory. The commonest is to make careful examination before blowing out the candle, with intent to see that none of the enemy lingers within the curtains of the bed. This is good, as far as it goes. But, having spent half an hour with candle in hand inside the curtains, to the imminent danger of setting the premises on fire, and having convinced yourself that there is not a mosquito in the inclosure, and so blown out the candle and prepared to sleep, it requires a mind of singular equanimity forthwith to hear without emotion the too familiar whiz. At Bordighera the mosquitoes, disdaining strategic movements, openly flutter round the lamps on the dinner-table, and ladies sit at meat with blue gauze veils obscuring their charms. Half measures were evidently of no use in these circumstances, and I tried a whole one. Having shut the windows of the bedroom, I smoked several cigars, tobacco fumes being understood to have a dreamy influence on the mosquito. At Bordighera they had none. I next made a fire of a box of matches, and burnt on the embers a quantity of insect powder. This filled the chamber with an intolerable stench, which, whatever may be the case elsewhere, is much enjoyed by the Bordighera mosquito. These operations serve a useful purpose in occupying the mind and helping

the night to pass away. But as direct deterrents they cannot conscientiously be recommended.

There is one place along the Riviera where the mosquito is defied. Monaco has special attractions of its own which triumphantly withstand all countervailing influences. Other places along the coast are deserted from the end of June to the beginning of November. But Monaco, or rather the suburb of it situated on Monte Carlo, remains in full receipt of custom. In late October the place is enchanting. The wind, blowing across the sea from Africa, making the atmosphere heavy and sultry, has changed, coming now from the east and anon from the west. The heavy clouds that cast shadows of purple and reddish-brown on the sea have descended in a thunderstorm, lasting continuously for eight hours. Sky and sea vie in the production of larger expanse of undimmed blue. The well-ordered garden by the Casino is sweet with the breath of roses and heliotrope. The lawns have the fresh green look that we islanders associate with earliest summer. The palm-trees are at their best, and along the road leading down to the bathing place one walks under the shadow of oleanders in full and fragrant blossom. The warmth of the summer day is tempered by a delicious breeze, which falls at night, lest peradventure visitors should be incommoded by undue measure of cold.

If there is an easily accessible Paradise on earth, it seems to be fixed at Monaco. Yet all these things are as nothing in the eyes of the people who have created and now maintain the place. It seems at first sight a marvel that the Administration should go to the expense of providing the costly appointments which crown its natural advantages. But the Administration know very well what they are about. When man or woman has been drawn into the feverish vortex that sweeps around the gaming tables, the fair scene outside the walls is not of the slightest consequence. It would be all the same to them if the gaming tables, instead of being set in a handsome apartment in a palace surrounded by one of the most beautiful scenes in Europe, were made of deal and spread in a hovel. But gamesters are, literally, soon played out at Monaco, and it is necessary to attract fresh moths to the gaudily glittering candle. Moreover, the tenure of the place is held by slender threads. What is thought of Monaco and its doings by those who have the fullest opportunity of studying them is shown by the fact that the Administration are pledged to refuse admission to the tables to any subject of the Prince of Monaco, or to any French subject of Nice or the department of the Maritime Alps. The proclamation of this fact cynically stares in the face all who enter the Casino. The local authorities will not have any of their own neighbours ruined. Let foreigners, or even Frenchmen of other departments, care for themselves.

In face of this sentiment the Administration find it politic to propitiate the local authorities and the people, who, if they were aroused to a feeling of honest indignation at what daily passes beneath their notice, might sweep the pestilence out of their midst. Accordingly, whilst keeping the gaming rooms closed against natives resident in the department, the Administration throw open all the other pleasures of Monte Carlo, inviting the people of Monaco to stroll in their beautiful gardens, to listen to the concerts played twice a day by a superb band, and to make unfettered use of what is perhaps the best reading-room on the Continent. Monaco gets a good deal of pleasure out of Monte Carlo, which moreover brings much good money into the place. The Casino will surely at no distant day share the fate of the German gambling places. But, as surely, the initiative of this most desirable consummation will not come from Monaco.

In the meanwhile, Monte Carlo, like the mosquitoes, is having a high good time. Night and day the tables are crowded, beginning briskly at eleven in the morning and closing wearily on the stroke of midnight. There are a good many English about, but they do not contribute largely to the funds of the amiable and enterprising Administration. English girls, favoured by an indulgent father or a good-natured brother, put down their five-franc pieces, and, having lost them, go away smiling. Sometimes the father or the brother may be discovered seated at the tables later in the day, looking a little flushed, and poorer by some sovereigns. But Great Britain and Ireland chiefly contribute spectators to the melancholy and monotonous scene.

As usual, women are among the most reckless players. Looking in at two o'clock one afternoon I saw at one of the tables a well-dressed lady of

about thirty, with a purseful of gold before her and a bundle of notes under her elbow. She was playing furiously, disdaining the mild excitement of the five-franc piece, always staking gold. She was losing, and boldly played on with an apparent composure belied by her flushed cheeks and flashing eyes. I saw her again at ten o'clock in the evening. She was playing at another table, having probably tried to retrieve her luck at each in succession. The bank notes were gone, and she had put away her purse, for it was easy to hold in her prettily-gloved hand her remaining store of gold. It was only eight hours since I had last seen her, but in the meantime she had aged by at least ten years. She sat looking fixedly on the table, from time to time moistening her dry lips with scarcely less dry tongue. Her face wore a look of infinite sadness, which might have been best relieved by a burst of tears. But her eyes were as dry as her lips, and she stared stonily, staking her napoleons till the last was gone. This accomplished, she rose with evident intent to leave the room, but catching sight of a friend at another table she borrowed a handful of napoleons, and finding another table played on as recklessly as before. In ten minutes she had lost all but a single gold piece. Leaving the table again, she held this up between her finger and thumb, and showed it to her friend with a hysterical little laugh.

It was her last coin, and she evidently devised it for some such matter-of-fact purpose as paying her hotel bill. If she had turned her back on the table and walked straight out, she might have kept her purpose; but the ball was still rolling, and there remained a chance. She threw down the napoleon, and the croupier raked it in amid a heap of coin that might be better or even worse spared.

This is one of the little dramas that take place every hour in this gilded hall, and I describe it in detail only because I chanced to be present at the first scene and the last. Sometimes the dramas become tragedies, and the Administration, who do all things handsomely, pay the funeral expenses, and beg as a slight acknowledgment of their considerate generosity that as little noise as possible may follow the echo of the pistol-shot.

CHAPTER XIV.

A WRECK IN THE NORTH SEA.

One December afternoon in the year 1875, just as night was closing in, the steam-tug *Liverpool*, which had left Harwich at six o'clock in the morning, was seen steaming into the harbour with flag half-mast high. It was quite dark when she reached the quay, but there was light enough for the crowd collected to see rows of figures laid in the stern of the little steamer, the faces covered with blankets. These figures, as it presently was made known, were twelve dead bodies, the flotsam of the wreck of the *Deutschland*. When the tug arrived at the wreck she found her much as she had been left when the survivors had been brought off the previous day. The two masts and the funnel were all standing, the sails bellied out with the wind that blustered across the sandbank. The wind was so high and the sea so rough that Captain Corrington could not bring his tug alongside; but a boat was launched, under the charge of the chief mate and Captain Brickerstein, of the *Deutschland*. The chief officer and the engineer, with some sailors from the tug, rowed out and made fast to the wreck. It was low water, and the deck was dry. There were no bodies lying about the deck or near the ship; but on going below, in the saloon cabin there were found floating about eight women, a man, and two children. These were taken on board the boat, and further search in the fore-cabin led to the discovery of the dead body of a man, making twelve in all. One of the bodies was that of a lady who, when the wreck was first boarded, had been seen lying in her berth. She had since been washed out, and had she floated out by the companion-way or through the skylight might have drifted out to sea with others. Like all the bodies found, she was fully dressed. Indeed, as fuller information showed, there was an interval between the striking of the ship and her becoming water-logged sufficiently long to enable all to prepare for what might follow.

According to the captain's narrative, the ill-fated vessel steamed out of Bremenhaven on Sunday morning with a strong east wind blowing and snow falling thickly. This continued throughout Sunday. All Sunday night the lead was thrown every half-hour, the last record showing seventeen fathoms of water. At four o'clock on Monday morning a light was seen, which the captain believed to be that of the *North Hinderfire* ship, a

supposition which tallied with the reckoning. The vessel was forging slowly ahead, when, at half-past five, a slight shock was felt. This was immediately succeeded by others, and the captain knew he had run on a bank. The order was passed to back the engines. This was immediately done, but before any way could be made the screw broke and the ship lay at the mercy of wind and waves. She was bumping heavily, and it was thought if sail were set she might be carried over the bank. This was tried, but without effect. The captain then ordered rockets to be sent up and a gun fired.

In the meantime the boats were ordered to be swung out, but the sea was running so high that it was felt it would be madness to launch them. Two boats were, however, lowered without orders, one being immediately swamped, and six people who had got into her swept into the sea. Life-preservers were served out to each passenger. The women were ordered to keep below in the saloon, and the men marshalled on deck to take turns at the pumps. At night, when the tide rose, the women were brought up out of the cabin; some placed in the wheel-house, some on the bridge, and some on the rigging, where they remained till they were taken off by the tug that first came to the rescue of the hopeless folk. The whole of the mail was saved, the purser bringing it into the cabin, whence it was fished out and taken on board the tug.

The passengers were all in bed when the ship struck, and were roused first by the bumping of the hull, and next by the cry that rang fore and aft for every man and woman to put on life-belts, of which there was a plentiful store in hand. The women jumped up and swarmed in the companion-way of the saloon, making for the deck, where they were met by the stewardess, who stood in the way, and half forced, half persuaded them to go back, telling them there was no danger. After the screw had broken, the engines also failed, and the sails proved useless.

The male passengers then cheerfully formed themselves into gangs and worked at the pumps, but, as one said, they "were pumping at the North Sea," and as it was obviously impossible to make a clearance of that, the task was abandoned, and officers, crew, and passengers relapsed into a state of passive expectancy of succour from without. That this could not long be coming happily seemed certain. The rockets which had been sent up had been answered from the shore. The lightship which had helped to mislead the captain was plainly visible, and at least two ships sailed by so near that till they began hopelessly to fade away, one to the northward and the other to the southward, the passengers were sure those on board had seen the wreck, and were coming to their assistance.

Perhaps it was this certainty of the nearness of succour that kept off either the shrieking or the stupor of despair. However that be, it is one of the most notable features about this fearful scene that, with a few exceptions, after the first shock everybody was throughout the first day wonderfully cool, patient, and self-possessed. There was no regular meal on Monday, but there was plenty to eat and drink, and the opportunity seems to have been generally, though moderately, improved. The women kept below all day, and, while the fires were going, were served with hot soup, meat, bread, and wine, and seemed to have been inclined to make the best of a bad job.

Towards night the horror of the situation increased in a measure far beyond that marked by the darkness. All day long the sea had been washing over the ship, but by taking refuge in the berths and on the tables and benches in the saloon it had been possible to keep comparatively dry. As night fell the tide rose, and at midnight the water came rushing over the deck in huge volumes, filling the saloon, and making the cabins floating coffins. The women were ordered up and instructed to take to the rigging, but many of them, cowed by the wildness of the sea that now swept the deck fore and aft, and shuddering before the fury of the pitiless, sleet-laden gale, refused to leave the saloon.

Then happened horrible scenes which the pen refuses to portray in their fulness. One woman, driven mad with fear and despair, deliberately hung herself from the roof of the saloon. A man, taking out his penknife, dug it into his wrist and worked it about as long as he had strength, dying where he fell. Another, incoherently calling on the wife and child he had left in Germany, rushed about with a bottle in his hand frantically shouting for paper and pencil. Somebody gave him both, and, scribbling a note, he corked it down in a bottle and threw it overboard, following it himself a moment later as a great wave came and swept him out of sight.

There were five nuns on board who, by their terror-stricken conduct, seem to have added greatly to the weirdness of the scene. They were deaf to all entreaties to leave the saloon, and when, almost by main force, the stewardess (whose conduct throughout was plucky) managed to get them on to the companion-ladder, they sank down on the steps and stubbornly refused to go another step. They seemed to have returned to the saloon again shortly, for somewhere in the dead of the night, when the greater part of the crew and passengers were in the rigging, one was seen with her body half through the skylight, crying aloud in a voice heard above the storm, "Oh, my God, make it quick! make it quick!" At daylight, when the tide had ebbed, leaving the deck clear, some one from the rigging went down, and, looking into the cabin, saw the nuns floating about face upwards, all dead.

There seems to have been a wonderful amount of unselfishness displayed, everybody cheering and trying to help every other body. One of the passengers--a cheery Teuton, named Adolph Herrmann--took a young American lady under his special charge. He helped her up the rigging and held her on there all through the night, and says she was as brave and as self-possessed as if they had been comfortably on shore. Some time during the night an unknown friend passed down to him a bottle of whisky. The cork was in the bottle, and as he was holding on to the rigging with one hand and had the other round the lady, there was some difficulty in getting at the contents of the bottle. This he finally solved by knocking the neck off, and then found himself in the dilemma of not being able to get the bottle to the lady's mouth.

"You are pouring it down my neck," was her quiet response to his first essay. In the end he succeeded in aiming the whisky in the right direction, and after taking some himself, passed it on, feeling much refreshed.

Just before a terrible accident occurred, which threatened death to one or both. The purser, who had fixed himself in the rigging some yards above them, getting numbed, loosed his hold, and falling headlong struck against the lady and bounded off into the sea. But Herrmann kept his hold, and the shock was scarcely noticed. On such a night all the obligations were not, as Herrmann gratefully acknowledges, on the one side; for when one of his feet got numbed, his companion, following his direction, stamped on it till circulation was restored.

From their perilous post, with waves occasionally dashing up and blinding them with spray, they saw some terrible scenes below. A man tied to the mast nearer the deck had his head cut off by the waves, as Herrmann says, though probably a rope or a loose spar was the agent. Not far off, a little boy had his leg broken in the same manner. They could hear and see one of the nuns shrieking through the skylight, and when she was silenced the cry was taken up by a woman wailing from the wheelhouse,--

"My child is drowned, my little one, Adam!"

At daylight a sailor, running nimbly down the rigging, reached the poop, and, bending over, attempted to seize some of the half-drowned people who were floating about. Once he caught a little child by the clothes; but before he could secure it a wave carried it out of his grasp, and its shrieks were hushed in the roar of the waters. At nine o'clock, on the second morning of the wreck the tide had so far ebbed that the deck was clear, and, coming down from the rigging, the battered and shivering survivors began to think of getting breakfast. A provident sailor had, whilst it was possible, taken up aloft a couple of loaves of black bread, a ham, and some cheese. These were now brought out and fairly distributed.

An hour and a half later all peril was over, and the gallant survivors were steaming for Harwich in the tug-boat *Liverpool*.

CHAPTER XV.

A PEEP AT AN OLD HOUSE OF COMMONS FROM THE LADIES' GALLERY.

"No," Mrs. Chiltern-Hundreds said when I asked, Was she in these days

a constant visitor at the House of Commons? "Chiltern, you know, has accepted a place of profit under the Crown, and is no longer eligible to sit as a member. It is such trouble to get in, and when you are there the chances are that nothing is going on, so I have given it up. I remember very well the first time I was there. I wrote all about it to an old schoolfellow. If you are interested in the subject, I will show you a copy of what I then jotted down."

I was much interested, and when I saw the letter was glad I had expressed my interest. The copy placed at my disposal was undated, but internal evidence showed that Mrs. Chiltern-Hundreds had paid her visit in the session of 1874, when Mr. Disraeli had for the first time in his history been returned to power as well as to office, and Mr. Gladstone, crushed by an overwhelming defeat, had written his famous letter to "My dear Granville," announcing his retirement from political life. Looking down through the grille, the visitor in the gallery saw many bearers of well-known names who have travelled far since that date, some beyond the grave. Here are Madame's notes written in her own angular handwriting:--

"Be in the great hall at four o'clock."

Those were Chiltern's words to me as he hurried off after luncheon, and here we were in the great hall, but there was no Chiltern, which was vexatious. True, it was half-past four, and he is such a stickler for what he calls punctuality, and has no sympathy with those delays which are inseparable from going out in a new bonnet. One of the strings----but there, what does it matter? Here we were standing in the great hall, where we had been told to come, and no one to meet us. There was a crowd of persons standing before the entrance to a corridor to the left of the hall. Two policemen were continually begging them to stand back and not block up the entrance, so that the members who were passing in and out (I dare say on the look-out for their wives, so that they should not be kept here a moment) might not be inconvenienced. It is really wonderful how careful the police about Westminster are of the sacred persons of members. If I cross the road at the bottom of Parliament Street by myself I may be run over by a hansom cab or even an omnibus, without the slightest compunction on the part of the police on duty there. But if Chiltern happens to be with me the whole of the traffic going east and west is stopped, and a policeman with outstretched hands stands waiting till we have gained the other side of the road.

We were gazing up with the crowd at somebody who was lighting the big chandelier by swinging down from somewhere in the roof a sort of censer, when Chiltern came out of the corridor and positively began to scold us for being late. I thought that at the time very mean, as I was just going to scold him; but he knows the advantage of getting the first word. He says, Why were we half an hour late? and how could he meet us there at four if at that time we had not left home? But that's nonsense. Chiltern has naturally a great flow of words, which he has cultivated by close attendance upon his Parliamentary duties. But he is mistaken if he thinks I am a Resolution and am to be moved by being "spoken to."

We walked through a gallery into a hall something like that in which Chiltern had kept us waiting, only much smaller. This was full of men chattering away in a manner of which an equal number of women would have been ashamed. There was one nice pleasant-looking gentleman carefully wrapped up in an overcoat with a fur collar and cuffs. That was Earl Granville, Chiltern said. I was glad to see his lordship looking so well and taking such care of himself. There was another peer there, a little man with a beaked nose, the only thing about him that reminded you of the Duke of Wellington. He had no overcoat, being evidently too young to need or care for such encumbrance. He wore a short surtout and a smart blue necktie, and frisked about the hall in quite a lively way. Chiltern said that he was Lord Hampton, with whom my great-grandfather went to Eton. He was at that time plain "John Russell" (not Lord John of course), and has for the last forty-five years been known as Sir John Pakington. But then Chiltern has a way of saying funny things, and I am not sure that he was in earnest in telling us that this active young man was really the veteran of Droitwich.

From this hall, through a long carpeted passage, catching glimpses on the way of snug writing rooms, cosy libraries, and other devices

for lightening senatorial labours, we arrived at a door over which was painted the legend "To the Ladies' Gallery." This opened on to a flight of steps at the top of which was another long corridor, and we found ourselves at last at the door of the Ladies' Gallery, where we were received by a smiling and obliging attendant.

I expected to find a fine open gallery something like the orchestra at the Albert Hall, or at least like the dress circle at Drury Lane. Picture my disappointment when out of the bright light of the corridor we stepped into a sort of cage, with no light save what came through the trellis-work in front. I thought this was one of Chiltern's stupid practical jokes, and being a little cross through his having kept us waiting for such an unconscionable long time, was saying something to him when the smiling and obliging attendant said, "Hush-sh-sh!" and pointed to a placard on which was printed, like a spelling lesson, the impertinent injunction "Silence is requested."

There was no doubt about it. This was the Ladies' Gallery of the British House of Commons, and a pretty place it is to which to invite ladies. I never was good at geometry and that sort of thing, and cannot say how many feet or how many furlongs the gallery is in length, but I counted fourteen chairs placed pretty close together, and covered with a hideous green damask. There are three rows of chairs, the two back rows being raised above the first the height of one step. As far as seeing into the House is concerned, one might as well sit down on the flight of steps in Westminster Hall as sit on a chair in the back row in the Ladies' Gallery. On the second row it is tolerable enough, or at least you get a good view of the little old gentleman with the sword by his side sitting in a chair at the far end of the House. I thought at first this was the Speaker, and wondered why gentlemen on the cross benches should turn their backs to him. But Chiltern said it was Lord Charles Russell, Sergeant-at-Arms, a much more important personage than the Speaker, who takes the Mace home with him every night, and is responsible for its due appearance on the table when the Speaker takes the chair.

In the front row you can see well enough--what there is to be seen, for I confess that my notion of the majesty of the House of Commons is mightily modified since I beheld it with my own eyes. In the first place you are quite shut out of sight in the Ladies' Gallery, and I might have saved myself all the trouble of dressing, which made me a little late and gave Chiltern an opportunity of saying disagreeable things which he subsequently spread over a fortnight. I might have been wearing a coal-scuttle bonnet or a mushroom hat for all it mattered in a prison like this. There was sufficient light for me to see with satisfaction that other people had given themselves at least an equal amount of trouble. Two had arrived in charming evening dress, with the loveliest flowers in their hair. I dare say they were going out to dinner, and at least I hope so, for it is a disgraceful thing that women should be entrapped into spending their precious time dressing for a few hours' stay in a swept and garnished coal-hole like this.

The smiling and obliging attendant offered me the consolation of knowing that the Gallery is quite a charming place compared with what it used to be. Thirty or forty years ago, whilst the business of Parliament was carried on in a temporary building, accommodation for ladies was provided in a narrow box stationed above the Strangers' Gallery, whence they peered into the House through pigeon holes something like what you see in the framework of a peep-show. The present Gallery formed part of the design of the new Houses, but when it was opened it was a vastly different place. It was much darker, had no ante-rooms worth speaking of, and the leading idea of a sheep-pen was preserved to the extent of dividing it into three boxes, each accommodating seven ladies. About twelve years ago one of the dividing walls was knocked down, and the Ladies' Gallery thrown into a single chamber, with a special pen to which admission is obtained only by order from the Speaker. Still much remained to be done to make it even such a place as it now is, and that work was done by that much--and, as Chiltern will always have it, *unjustly*--abused man, Mr. Ayrton. It was he who threw open the back of the Gallery, giving us some light and air, and it is to him that we ladies are indebted for the dressing-room and the tea-room.

This being shut up is one reason why I was disappointed with the House of Commons. Another is with respect to the size of the chamber itself. It is wonderful to think how *big* men can talk in a room like this. It is scarcely larger than a good-sized drawing-room. I must say for

Chiltern that we got seats in the front row, and what there was to be seen we saw. Right opposite to us was a gallery with rows of men sitting six deep. It was "a big night," and there was not a seat to spare in this, which I suppose was the Strangers' Gallery. Everybody there had his hat off, and there was an official sitting on a raised chair in the middle of the top row, something like I saw the warders sitting amongst prisoners at Millbank one Sunday morning when Chiltern took me to see the Claimant repeating the responses to the Litany. The House itself is of oblong shape, with rows of benches on either side, cushioned in green leather and raised a little above each other. There are four of these rows on either side, with a broad passage between covered with neat matting.

Chiltern says the floor is an open framework of iron, and that beneath is a labyrinth of chambers into which fresh air is pumped and forced in a gentle stream into the House, the vitiated atmosphere escaping by the roof. But then the same authority, when I asked him what the narrow band of red colour that ran along the matting about a pace in front of the benches on either side meant, gravely told me that if any member when addressing the House stepped out beyond that line, Lord Charles Russell would instantly draw his sword, shout his battle-cry, "Who goes Home!" and rushing upon the offender bear him off into custody.

So you see it is difficult to know what to believe, and it is a pity people will not always say what they mean in plain English.

Midway down each row of benches is a narrow passage that turned out to be "the gangway," of which you read and hear so much. I had always associated "the gangway" with a plank along which you walked to somewhere--perhaps on to the Treasury Bench. But it is only a small passage like a narrow aisle in a church. There is a good deal of significance about this gangway, for anybody who sits below it is supposed to be of an independent turn of mind, and not to be capable of purchase by Ministers present or prospective. Thus all the Irish members sit below the gangway, and so do Mr. Macdonald and Mr. Charles Lewis. It is an odd thing, Chiltern observes, that, notwithstanding this peculiarity, Ministries are invariably recruited from below the gangway. Sir Henry James sat there for many Sessions before he was made Solicitor-General, and there was no more prominent figure in recent years than that of the gentleman who used to be known as "Mr. Vernon Harcourt."

On the conservative side this peculiarity is less marked than on the Liberal, though it was below the gangway on the Conservative side that on a memorable night more than a quarter of a century ago a certain dandified young man, with well-oiled locks and theatrically folded arms, stood, and, glaring upon a mocking House, told them that the time would come when they *should* hear him. As a rule, the Conservatives make Ministers of men who have borne the heat and burden of the day on the back Ministerial benches. With the Liberals the pathway of promotion, Chiltern says, opens from below the gangway. Mr. Lowe came from there, so did Mr Goschen, Mr. Stansfeld, Mr. Childers, Mr. Foster, and even Mr. Gladstone himself. The worst thing a Liberal member who wants to become a Cabinet Minister or a Judge can do is to sit on the back Ministerial benches, vote as he is bidden, and hold his tongue when he is told. He should go and sit below the gangway, near Mr Goldsmid or Mr. Trevelyan, and in a candid, ingenuous, and truly patriotic manner make himself on every possible occasion as disagreeable to the leaders of his party as he can.

I do not attempt to disguise the expectation I cherish of being some day wife of the First Lord of the Admiralty, or at least of the President of the Board of Trade; for there are few men who can, upon occasion, make themselves more disagreeable than Chiltern, who through these awkward bars I see sitting below the gangway on the left-hand side, and calling out "Hear, hear!" to Sir Stafford Northcote, who is saying something unpleasant about somebody on the front Opposition benches.

The front seat by the table on the right-hand side is the Treasury bench, and the smiling and obliging attendant tells me the names of the occupants there and in other parts of the House. The gentleman at the end of the seat with the black patch over his eye is Lord Barrington, who, oddly enough, sits for the borough of Eye, and fills the useful office of Vice-Chamberlain. Next to him is Sir H. Selwin-Ibbetson, Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department, and whom I have heard genially described as "one of the prosiest speakers in the

House." Next to him, with a paper in his hand and a smirk of supreme self-satisfaction on his face, is Mr. Cross, the Home Secretary.

He sits beside a figure you would notice wherever you saw it. The legs are crossed, the arms folded, and the head bent down, showing from here one of the most remarkable styles of doing the human hair that ever I beheld. The hair is combed forward from the crown of the head and from partings on either side, and brought on to the forehead, where it is apparently pasted together in a looped curl.

This is Mr. Disraeli, as I know without being told, though I see him now for the first time. He is wonderfully old-looking, with sunken cheeks and furrowed lines about the mouth and eyes. But his lofty brow does not seem to have a wrinkle on it, and his hands, when he draws them from under his arms and folds them before him, twiddling his thumbs the while, are as smooth and white as Coningsby's. He is marvellously motionless, sitting almost in the same position these two hours. But he is as watchful as he is quiet. I can see his eyes taking in all that goes on on the bench at the other side of the table, where right hon. gentlemen, full of restless energy, are constantly talking to each other, or passing notes across each other, or even pulling each other's coat-tails and loudly whispering promptings as in turn they rise and address the House.

I observe that Mr. Disraeli does not wear his hat in the House, and Chiltern, to whom I mention this when he comes up again, tells me that he and some half-dozen others never do. Since Mr Gladstone has retired from the cares of office he is sometimes, but very rarely, able to endure the weight of his hat on his head while sitting in the House; but, formerly, he never wore it in the presence of the Speaker. The rule is to wear your hat in the House, and a very odd effect it has to see men sitting about in a well-lighted and warm chamber with their hats on their heads.

Chiltern tells me this peculiarity of wearing hats was very nearly the means of depriving Great Britain and Ireland of the presence in Parliament of Mr. John Martin. That distinguished politician, it appears, had never, before County Meath sent him to Parliament, worn a hat of the hideous shape which fashion entails upon our suffering male kindred. It is well known that when he was returned he declared that he would never sit at Westminster, the reason assigned for this eccentricity being that he recognised no Parliament in which the member for County Meath might sit other than one meeting of the classic ground of College Green. But Chiltern says that was only a poetical flight, the truth lying at the bottom of the hat.

"Never," Mr. Martin is reported to have said to a Deputation of his constituents, "will I stoop to wear a top hat. I never had one on my head, and the Saxon shall never make me put it there."

He was as good as his word when he first came to town, and was wont to appear in a low-crowned beaver hat of uncertain architecture. But after he had for some weeks assisted the process of Legislature under the shadow of this hat, the Speaker privately and in considerate terms conveyed to him a hint that, in the matter of hats at least, it was desirable to have uniformity in the House of Commons.

Mr. Martin, who, in spite of his melodramatic speeches and his strong personal resemblance to Danny Man in the "Colleen Nawn," is, Chiltern says, really one of the gentlest and most docile of men, straightway abandoned the nondescript hat and sacrificed his inclinations and principles to the extent of buying what he calls "a top hat." But he has not taken kindly to it, and never will. It is always getting in his way, under his feet or between his knees, and he is apparently driven to observe the precaution of constantly holding it in his hands when it is not safely disposed on his head. It is always thus held before him, a hand firmly grasping the rim on either side, when he is making those terrible speeches we read, in which he proves that John Mitchel is an unoffending martyr, and that the English, to serve their private ends, introduced the famine in Ireland.

Mr. Cowen, the member for Newcastle, shares Mr Martin's prejudices about hats, and up to the present time has not abandoned them. As we passed through the lobby on our way to the Gallery, Chiltern pointed him out to me. He was distinguished in the throng by wearing a round hat of soft

felt, and he has never been seen at Westminster in any other. But at least he does not put it on his head in the House; and it is much better to sit upon than the tall hats on the top of which excited orators not unfrequently find themselves when, hotly concluding their perorations and unconscious of having left their hats just behind them, they throw themselves back on the bench from which they had erewhile risen to "say a few words."

The gentleman on the left of the Premier is said to be Sir Stafford Northcote, but there is so little of his face to be seen through the abundance of whisker and moustache that I do not think any one has a right to speak positively on the matter. The smooth-faced man next to him is Mr. Gathorne Hardy. The tall, youthful-looking man on his left is Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, who, I suppose by instructions of the Cabinet, generally sits, as he does to-night, next to Mr. Ward Hunt. The Chief Secretary for Ireland is slim; not to put too fine a point on it, Mr. Ward Hunt is not, and the two manage to seat themselves with some approach to comfort. The First Lord of the Admiralty further eases the pressure on his colleagues by throwing his left arm over the back of the bench, where it hangs like a limb of some monumental tree.

The carefully devised scheme for the disposition of Mr. Ward Hunt on the Treasury bench is completed by assigning the place on the other side of him to Sir Charles Adderley. The President of the Board of Trade, Chiltern says, is understood to have long passed the mental stage at which old John Willet had arrived when he was discovered sitting in his chair in the dismantled bar of the Maypole after the rioters had visited his hostelry. He is apparently unconscious of discomfort when crushed up or partially sat upon by his elephantine colleague, which is a fortunate circumstance.

The stolid man with the straight back directly facing Mr Disraeli on the front bench opposite is the Marquis of Hartington. The gentleman with uncombed hair and squarely cut garments on the left of the Leader of the Opposition is Mr Forster. The big man further to the left, who sits with folded arms and wears a smile expressive of his satisfaction with all mankind, particularly with Sir William Harcourt, is the ex-Solicitor-General. The duck of a man with black hair, nicely oiled and sweetly waved, is Sir Henry James. Where have I seen him before? His face and figure and attitude seem strangely familiar to me. I have been shopping this morning, but I do not think I could have seen behind any milliner's or linendraper's counter a person like the hon. and learned gentleman the member for Taunton.

Beyond this doughty knight, and last at this end of the bench, is a little man in spectacles, and with a preternatural look of wisdom on his face. He is the Right Hon. Lyon Playfair, and is said to have, next to Mr. Fawcett, the most remarkably retentive memory of any man in the House. Chiltern says he always writes his lectures before he delivers them to the House, sending the manuscript to the *Times*, and so accurate is his recitation that the editor has only to sprinkle the lecture with "Hear, hears!" and "Cheers" to make the thing complete.

On the right-hand side of the Marquis of Hartington is Mr. Goschen. In fact, at the moment I happen to have reached him in my survey he is on his feet, asking a question of his "right hon. friend opposite." What a curious attitude the man stands in! Apparently the backs of his legs are glued to the bench from which he has risen, a device which enables him, as he speaks, to lean forward like a human Tower of Pisa. He is putting the simplest question in the world to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but if he were a junior clerk asking his employer for the hand of his eldest daughter he could not look more sheepish. His hat is held in his left hand behind his back possibly with a view to assist in balancing him, and to avoid too much strain on the adhesive powers that keep the back of his legs firmly attached to the bench. With his right hand he is, when not pulling up his collar, feeling himself nervously round the waist, as if to make sure that he is there.

Next to him are Mr. Dodson and Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, and, with these planted between him and actual or aspirant leaders of the Liberal party, sits Mr. Lowe. I cannot see much of his face from here, for he wears his hat and at the moment hangs his head. A little later on I both saw and heard him speak and a splendid speech he made, going right to the heart of the matter, laying it bare. His success as a debater is a marvellous triumph of mind over material influences. It would be hard to conceive a man having fewer of the outward graces of oratory than Mr Lowe. His

utterance is hesitating, sometimes even to stuttering, he speaks hurriedly, and without emphasis; his manner is nervous and restless, and he is so short-sighted that the literary quotations with which his speeches abound are marred by painful efforts to read his notes. Yet how he rouses the House, moving it to cheers and laughter, and to the rapid interchange of volleys of "Hear, hear" from opposite sides of the House, which Chiltern says is the most exhilarating sound that can reach the ear of a speaker in the House of Commons. Mr. Lowe sits down with the same abruptness that marked his rising, and rather gets into his hat than puts it on, pushing his head so far into its depths that there is nothing of him left on view save what extends below the line of his white eyebrows.

To the right of Mr. Lowe I see a figure which, foreshortened from my point of view, is chiefly distinguishable by a hat and pair of boots. Without absolute Quaker fashion about the cut of the hat or garments, there is a breadth about the former and a looseness about the latter suggestive of Quaker associations. Perhaps if my idea were mercilessly analysed it would appear that it has its growth in the knowledge that I am looking down on Mr. Bright, and that I know Mr. Bright is of Quaker parentage. But I am jotting down my impressions as I receive them. Mr. Bright does not address the House to-night, but he has made one or two short speeches this Session, and Chiltern, who has heard them, speaks quite sorrowfully of the evidence they give of failing physical power. The orator who once used to hold the House of Commons under his command with as much ease as Apollo held in hand the fiery coursers of the chariot of the sun, now stands before it on rare occasions with a manner more nervous than that in which some new members make their maiden speech. The bell-like tones of his voice are heard no more; he hesitates in choosing words, is not sure of the sequence of his phrases, and resumes his seat with evident gratefulness for the renewed rest.

Chiltern adds that much of this nervousness is probably owing to a sensibility of the expectation which his rising arouses in the House, and a knowledge that he is not about to make the "great speech" looked for ever since he returned to his old place. But at best the matchless oratory of John Bright is already a tradition in the House of Commons, and it is but the ghost of the famous Tribune who now nightly haunts the scene of his former glories. Mr Gladstone was sitting next to Mr. Bright, in what the always smiling and obliging attendant tells me is a favourite attitude with him. His legs were stretched out, his hands loosely clasped before him, and his head thrown back, resting on the cushion at the back of the seat, so that the soft light from the illuminated roof shone full on his upturned face. It is a beautiful face, soft as a woman's, very pale and worn, with furrowed lines that tell of labour done and sorrow lived through.

Here again I am conscious of the possibility of my impressions being moulded by my knowledge of facts; but I fancy I see a great alteration since last I looked on Mr. Gladstone's face, now two years ago. It was far away from here, in a big wooden building in a North Wales town. He was on a platform surrounded by grotesque men in blue gowns and caps, which marked high rank in Celtic bardship. At that time he was the nominal leader of a great majority that would not follow him, and president of a Ministry that thwarted all his steps. His face looked much harder then, and his eye glanced restlessly round, taking in every movement of the crowd in the pavilion. He seemed to exist in a hectic flush of life, and was utterly incapable of taking rest. Now his face, though still thin, has filled up. The lines on his brow and under his eyes, though too deeply furrowed to be eradicable, have been smoothed down, and there is about his face a sense of peace and a pleasant look of rest.

Chiltern says that sometimes when Mr. Gladstone has been in the House this Session he has, during the progress of a debate, momentarily sprung into his old attitude of earnest, eager attention, and there have been critical moments when his interposition in debate has appeared imminent. But he has conquered the impulse, lain back again on the bench, and let the House go its own way. It is very odd, Chiltern says, to have him sitting there silent in the midst of so much talking. This was specially felt during the debate about those Irish Acts with which he had so much to do.

Chiltern tells me that whilst the debate on the Irish Bill was going on

there came from no one knows where, passed from hand to hand along the benches, a scrap of paper on which was written this verse from "In Memoriam":--

> "At our old pastimes in the hall
> We gambol'd making vain pretence
> Of gladness, With an awful sense
> Of one mute Shadow watching all."

Although the gangway has a distinct and important significance in marking off *nuances* of political parties, it appears that it does not follow as an inevitable sequence that because a man sits behind the Ministerial bench he is therefore a Taper or a Tadpole, or that because he takes up his quarters below the gangway he is a John Hampden. The distinction is more strongly marked on the Liberal side; but even there there are some honest men who usually obey the crack of the Whip. On the Conservative side the gangway has scarcely any significance, and though the Lewisian "Party," which consists solely of Charles, sits there, and from time to time reminds the world of its existence by loudly shouting in its ear, it may always be depended upon in a real party division to swell the Ministerial majority by one vote. The Scotch members, who sit chiefly on the Liberal side, spread themselves impartially over seats above and below the gangway. The Home Rule members, who also favour the Liberal side, sit together in a cluster below the gangway in defiant proximity to the Sergeant-at-Arms. They are rather noisy at times, and whenever Chiltern comes in late to dinner, or after going back stays till all hours in the morning, it is sure to be "those Irish fellows." But I think the House of Commons ought to be much obliged to Ireland for its contribution of members, and to resist to the last the principle of Home Rule. For it is not, as at present constituted, an assembly that can afford to lose any element that has about it a tinge of originality, a flash of humour, or an echo of eloquence.

That, of course, is Chiltern's remark. I only know, for my part, that the Ladies' Gallery is a murky den, in which you can hear very little, not see much, and are yourself not seen at all.

CHAPTER XVI.

SOME PREACHERS I HAVE KNOWN.

MR. MOODY.

I heard Mr. Moody preach twice when he paid his first visit to this country. Borrowing an idea from another profession, he had a series of rehearsals before he came to London. It was in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, and service opened at eight o'clock on a frosty morning in December. I had to stand during the whole of the service, one of a crowd wedged in the passages between the closely-packed benches. Every available seat had been occupied shortly after seven, when the doors were thrown open. The galleries were thronged, and even the balconies at the rear of the hall were full to overflowing. The audience were, I should say, pretty equally divided in the matter of sex, and were apparently of the class of small tradesmen, clerks, and well-to do mechanics; that was the general class of the morning congregation. But it must not therefore be understood that the upper class in Manchester stood aloof from the special services of the American gentlemen. At the afternoon meeting, elegantly attired ladies and gentlemen, wearing spotless kid gloves and coats of irreproachable cut, struggled for a place in the mighty throng that streamed into the hall.

Punctually at eight o'clock the meeting was opened by one of the local clergymen, who prayed for a blessing on the day and the work, declaring, amid subdued but triumphant cries from portions of the congregation, that "the Lord has risen indeed! Now is the stone rolled away from the sepulchre, and the Kingdom of God is at hand." Mr. Moody, who sat at a small desk in front of the platform, advanced and gave out the hymn, "Guide us, O Thou Great Jehovah," the singing of which Mr. Sankey, sitting before a small harmonium, led and accompanied, the vast congregation joining with great heartiness.

"Mr. Sankey will now sing a hymn by himself," said Mr. Moody; whereupon there was a movement in the hall, a rustling of dresses, and a general settling down to hear something special.

The movement was so prolonged that Mr. Moody again stood up, and begged that every one would be "perfectly still whilst Mr. Sankey sang." There

was another pause, Mr. Sankey waiting with marked punctiliousness till the last cougher had got over his difficulty. Presently the profound stillness was broken by the harmonium--"melodeon" is, I believe, the precise name of the instrument--softly sounding a bar of music. Then Mr. Sankey suddenly and loudly broke in with the first line of the hymn, "What are you going to do, brother?"

Mr Sankey has a fairly good voice, which he used in what is called "an effective" manner, singing certain lines of the hymn *pianissimo*, and giving the recurrent line, "What are you going to do, brother?" *forte*, with a long dwelling on the monosyllable "do." When he reached the last verse, he, after a short pause, began to play a tune well known at these meetings, into which the congregation struck with a mighty voice that served to bring into stronger prominence the artificial character of the preceding performance. The words had a martial, inspiriting sound, and as the verse rolled forth, filling the great hall with a mighty musical noise, one could see the eyes of strong men fill with tears.

> "Ho, my comrades! see the signal
> Waving in the sky;
> Reinforcements now appearing,
> Victory is nigh!
> 'Hold the fort, for I am coming,'
> Jesus signals still;
> Wave the answer back to Heaven,
> 'By Thy grace we Will.'"

The subject of Mr. Moody's address was "Daniel"--whom he once, referring to the prophet's position under King Darius, dubbed "the Bismarck of those times," and always called "Dan'l." One might converse for an hour with Mr. Moody without discovering from his accent that he comes from the United States. But it is unmistakable when he preaches, and especially in the colloquies supposed to have taken place between characters in the Bible and elsewhere.

He began his discourse without other preface than a half apology for selecting a subject which, it might be supposed, everybody knew everything about. But, for his part, he liked to take out and look upon the photographs of old friends when they were far away, and he hoped his hearers would not think it waste of time to take another look at the picture of Dan'l. One peculiarity about Dan'l was that there was nothing against his character to be found all through the Bible. Nowadays, when men write biographies, they throw what they call the veil of charity over the dark spots in a career. But when God writes a man's life he puts it all in. So it happened that there are found very few, even of the best men in the Bible, without their times of sin. But Dan'l came out spotless, and the preacher attributed his exceptionally bright life to the power of saying "No."

After this exordium, Mr. Moody proceeded to tell in his own words the story of the life of Daniel. Listening to him, it was not difficult to comprehend the secret of his power over the masses. Like Bunyan, he possesses the great gift of being able to realise things unseen, and to describe his vision in familiar language to those whom he addresses. His notion of "Babylon, that great city," would barely stand the test of historic research. But that there really was in far-off days a great city called Babylon, in which men bustled about, ate and drank, schemed and plotted, and were finally overruled by the visible hand of God, he made as clear to the listening congregation as if he were talking about Chicago.

He filled the lay figures with life, clothed them with garments, and then made them talk to each other in the English language as it is to-day accented in some of the American States.

On the previous night I had heard him deliver an address in one of the densely populated districts of Salford. Admission to the chapel in which the service was held was exclusively confined to women, and, notwithstanding it was Saturday night, there were at least a thousand sober-looking and respectably dressed women present. The subject of the discussion was Christ's conversation with Nicodemus--whose social position Mr. Moody incidentally made familiar to the congregation by observing, "if he had lived in these days, he would have been a doctor of divinity, Nicodemus, D. D, or perhaps LL D." His purpose was to make it clear that men are saved, not by any action of their own, but simply by faith. This he illustrated, among other ways, by introducing a domestic scene from the life of the children of Israel in the Wilderness at the time the brazen serpent was lifted up. The dramatis personae were

a Young Convert, a Sceptic, and the Sceptic's Mother. The convert, who has been bitten by the serpent, and, having followed Moses' injunction, is cured, "comes along" and finds the sceptic lying down "badly bitten." He entreats him to look upon the brazen serpent which Moses has lifted up. But the sceptic has no faith in the alleged cure, and refuses.

"Do you think," he says, "I'm going to be saved by looking at a brass serpent away off on a pole? No, no."

"Wall, I dunno," says the young convert, "but I was saved that way myself. Don't you think you'd better try it?"

The sceptic refuses, and his mother "comes along," and observes, --"Hadn't you better look at it, my boy?"

"Well, mother, the fact is, if I could understand the f'losophy of it I would look up right off; but I don't see how a brass serpent away off on a pole can cure me."

And so he dies in his unbelief.

It seemed odd to hear this conversation from the Wilderness recited, word for word, in the American vernacular, and with a local colouring that suggested that both the sceptic and the young convert wore tail-coats, and that the mother had "come along" in a stuff dress. But when the preacher turned aside, and in a few words spoke of sons who would not hear the counsel of Christian mothers and refused to "look up and live," the silent tears that coursed down many a face in the congregation showed that his homely picture had been clear as the brazen serpent in the Wilderness to the eyes of faith before which it was held up.

The story of Daniel is one peculiarly susceptible of Mr. Moody's usual method of treatment, and for three-quarters of an hour he kept the congregation at the morning meeting enthralled whilst he told how Daniel's simple faith triumphed over the machinations of the unbeliever. Mr. Moody's style is unlike that of most religious revivalists. He neither shouts nor gesticulates, and mentioned "hell" only once, and that in connection with the life the drunkard makes for himself. His manner is reflected by the congregation in respect of abstention from working themselves up into "a state." This makes all the more impressive the signs of genuine emotion which follow and accompany the preacher's utterance. When he was picturing the scene of Daniel translating the king's dream, rapidly reciting Daniel's account of the dream, and Nebuchadnezzar's quick and delighted ejaculation, "That's so!" "That's it!" as he recognised the incidents, I fancied it was not without difficulty some of the people, bending forward, listening with glistening eye and heightened colour, refrained from clapping their hands for glee that the faithful Daniel, the unyielding servant of God, had triumphed over tribulation, and had walked out of prison to take his place on the right hand of the king.

There was not much exhortation throughout the discourse, not the slightest reference to any disputed point of doctrine. It was nothing more than a re-telling of the story of Daniel. But whilst Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, Darius, and even the hundred and twenty princes, became for the congregation living and moving beings, all the ends of the narrative were, with probably unconscious, certainly unbetrayed, art, gathered together to lead up to the one lesson--that compromise, where truth and religion are concerned, is never worthy of those who profess to believe God's word.

"I am sick of the shams of the present day," said Mr. Moody, bringing his discourse to a sudden close. "I am tired of the way men parley with the world whilst they are holding out their hands to be lifted into heaven. If we're gwine to be good Christians and God's people let us be so out-and-out."

"BENDIGO."

Bendigo, the erewhile famous champion of England, I one evening found in the pulpit at the London Cabman's Mission Hall. After quitting the ring, Bendigo took to politics; that is to say, he, for a consideration, directed at Parliamentary elections the proceedings of the "lambs" in his native town of Nottingham. Now he had given up even that

worldliness, and had taken to preaching. His fame had brought together a large congregation. The Hall was crowded to overflowing, and the proceedings were, as one of the speakers described it, conducted "by shifts," the leaders, including Bendigo, going downstairs to address the crowd collected in the lower room after having spoken to the congregation in the regular meeting hall.

The service was opened with prayer by Mr. John Dupee, superintendent of the Mission, after which the congregation vigorously joined in the singing of a hymn. A second hymn followed upon the reading of a psalm; and Mr. Dupee proceeded to say a few words about "our dear and saved brother, Bendigo." With a frankness that in no wise disconcerted the veteran prizefighter, Mr. Dupee discussed and described the condition in which he had lived up to about two years ago. The speaker was, it appeared, a fellow-townsman of Bendigo's, and his recollection of him went back for nearly forty years, at which time his state was so bad that Mr. Dupee, then a lad, used to walk behind him through the streets of Nottingham praying that he might be forgiven. Now he was saved, and, quoting the handbill that had advertised the meeting, Mr. Dupee hailed him as "a miracle of mercy, the greatest miracle of the nineteenth century," which view the congregation approved by fervent cries of "Praise the Lord!" "Hallelujah!"

Whether Bendigo would stand steadfast in the new course he had begun to tread was a matter which--Mr. Dupee did not hide it--was freely discussed in the circles where the ex-champion was best known. But he had now gone straight for two years, and Mr. Dupee believed he would keep straight.

Before introducing Bendigo to the meeting, Mr. Dupee said his own "brother Jim" would say a few words, his claim upon the attention of the congregation being enforced by the asseveration that he was "the next great miracle of the nineteenth century." From particulars which Mr. Dupee proceeded to give in relation to the early history of his brother, it would be difficult to decide whether he or Bendigo had the fuller claim to the title of the "wickedest man in Nottingham." A single anecdote told to the discredit of his early life must suffice in indication of its general character. He was, it appeared, always getting tipsy and arriving home at untimely hours.

"One night," said the preacher, "he came home very late, and was kicking up an awful row in the street just before he came in. I opened the window, and, looking out, said to him very gently, 'Now Jim, do come in without waking mother.' And what d'ye think he said? Why, he said nothing, but just up with a brick and heaved it at me. That was Jim in the old days," he continued, turning to his brother with an admiring glance. "He always was lively as a sinner, and he's just the same now he's on his way to join the saints."

"Jim" even at the outset fully justified this exordium by suddenly approaching the pulpit desk with his hands stretched out, singing the "Hallelujah band." In the course of an address delivered with much animation and filled with startling phrases, it became clear that "Jim" had been the immediate instrument of the conversion of Bendigo. He added considerably to the stock of information respecting the early life of that personage, and told in detail how better things began to dawn upon him.

At the outset of his new career Bendigo's enthusiasm was somewhat misdirected, as was manifested at an infidel meeting he attended in company with his sponsor.

"Who's them chaps on the platform?" said Bendigo to Jim.

"Infidels," said Jim.

"What's that?" queried Bendigo.

"Why, fellows as don't believe in God or the devil."

"Then come along, and we'll soon clear the platform," said Bendigo, beginning to strip.

Jim's address lasted for nearly half an hour, and when at last brought to a conclusion he went below to "begin again" with the crowd in the lower room.

Mr. Dupee again appeared at the desk and said they would sing a verse of a hymn, after which Bendigo would address them, and the plate would be handed round for a collection to cover the cost of the bills and of Bendigo's travelling expenses. The hymn was a well-known one, with, as given out by the preacher, an alteration in the second line thus:

> "Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
> Praise Him for brother Bendigo."

This sung with mighty volume of sound, Bendigo, who had all this time been quietly seated on the platform, advanced, and began to speak in a simple, unaffected, but wholly unintelligent manner. He was decently dressed in a frock-coat, with black velveteen waistcoat buttoned over his broad chest. He was still, despite his threescore years, straight as a pole; and had a fine healthy looking face, that belied the fearful stories told by his friends of his dissipation. Except a certain flattening of the bridge of the nose, a slight indentation on the forehead between the eyebrows, and the crooked finger on his left hand, he bore no traces of many pitched fights of which he is the hero, and might in such an assembly have been taken for a mild-mannered family coachman.

His address, though occasionally marked by the grotesque touches which characterised the remarks of the two preceding speakers, was not without touches of pathos.

"I've been a fighting character," he said, and this was a periphrastic way of referring to his old occupation in which he evidently took great pleasure; "but now I'm a Miracle. What could I do? I was the youngest-born of twenty-one children, and the first thing done with me was to put me in a workhouse. There I got among fellows who brought me out, and I became a fighting character. Thirty years ago I came up to London to fight Ben Caunt, and I licked him. I'm sixty-three now, and I didn't think I should ever come up to London to fight for King Jesus. But here I am, and I wish I could read out of the blessed Book for then I could talk to you better. But I never learnt to read, though I'm hoping by listening to the conversation around me to pick up a good deal of the Bible, and then I'll talk to you better. I'm only two years old at present, and know no more than a baby. It's two years ago since Jesus came to me and had a bout with me, and I can tell you He licked me in the first round. He got me down on my knees the first go, and there I found grace. I've got a good many cups and belts which I won when I was a fighting character. Them cups and belts will fade, but there's a crown being prepared for old Bendigo that'll never fade."

This and much more to the same purport the veteran said, and then Mr. Dupee interposed with more "few words," the plate was sent round, and the superintendent and Bendigo went downstairs to relieve "brother Jim," the echo of whose stentorian voice had occasionally been wafted in at the open door whilst Bendigo was relating his experiences.

"FIDDLER JOSS."

It was at another Mission Chapel in Little Wild Street, Drury Lane, that I "sat under" Fiddler Joss. His "dictionary name," as in the course of the evening I learned from one of his friends, is Mr. Joseph Poole. The small bills which invited all into whose hands they might fall to "come and hear Fiddler Joss" added the injunction "Come early to secure a seat." The doors were opened at half-past six, and those who obeyed the injunction found themselves in a somewhat depressing minority. At half-past six there were not more than a score of people present, and these looked few indeed within the walls of the spacious chapel. It is a surprise to find so well-built, commodious, it may almost be added handsome, a building in such a poor neighbourhood, and bearing so humble a designation. It provides comfortable sitting room for twelve hundred persons. There is a neat, substantial gallery running round the hall, and forming at one end a circular pulpit, evidently designed after the fashion of Mr. Spurgeon's at the Tabernacle--a building of which the Mission Chapel is in many respects a miniature.

The congregation began to drop in by degrees, and proved to be of a character altogether different from what might have been expected in such a place on such an occasion. Out of ten people perhaps one belonged to the class among which London missionaries are accustomed to labour. But while men and women of the "casual" order were almost entirely absent, and men of what is called in this connection "the working class"

were few and far between, there entered by hundreds people who looked as if they were the responsible owners of snug little businesses in the provision, stationery, or "general" line. An air of profound respectability, combined with the enjoyment of creature comforts, prevailed.

Whilst waiting for seven o'clock, the hour for the service to commence, a voluntary choir sang hymns, and the rapidly growing congregation joined in fitful snatches of harmony. Little hymn-books with green paper backs were liberally distributed, and there was no excuse for silence on the score of unfamiliarity with the hymns selected. At seven o'clock the preacher of the evening appeared on the rostrum, accompanied by two gentlemen accustomed, it appeared, to take a leading part in conducting the service in the chapel. One gave out a hymn, reading it verse by verse, and starting the tune with stentorian voice. This concluded, his colleague prayed, in a loud voice, and with energetic action. "We must have souls to-night," he said, smiting the rail of the pulpit; "we must have souls--not by ones and twos--and we must have them to-night in this place. There is a drunkard in this place. Give us his soul, O God! There is a thief in this place; I do not know where he sits, but God knows. We want to benefit God, and we must have souls to-night, not by twos and threes, but in hundreds."

After this there was another hymn, sung even with increased volume of sound. Energy was the predominant characteristic of the whole service, and it reached its height in the singing of hymns, when the congregation found the opportunity of joining their leaders in the devotional utterance. There were half a dozen women in the congregation who had solved the home difficulty about the baby by bringing it with them to chapel. The little ones, catching the enthusiasm of the place, joined audibly in all the acts of worship save in the singing. They crowed during the prayers, chattered during the reading of the lesson, and loudly wept at intervals throughout the sermon. But there was no room for their shrill voices in the mighty shout which threatened to rend the roof when hymns were sung.

Fiddler Joss, being impressively introduced by one of the gentlemen in the pulpit, began without preface to read rapidly from the fifth chapter of Romans, a task he accomplished with the assistance of a pair of double eyeglasses. He formally appropriated no text, and it would be difficult to furnish any connected account of his sermon. Evidently accustomed to address open-air audiences, he spoke at the topmost pitch of a powerful voice. Without desire to misapply rules of criticism, and in furtherance of an honest intention to describe impressions in as simple a form as may be, it must be added that the sermon was as far above the heads of a mission-chapel congregation as was the pitch of the preacher's voice. Its key-note was struck by an anecdote which Joss introduced at the outset of his discourse. There was, he said, a clergyman walking down Cheapside one day, when he heard a man calling out, "Buy a pie." The clergyman looked at the man, and recognised in him a member of his church.

"What, John," he said, "is this what you do in the weekdays?"

"Yes," said the man, "I earn an honest living by selling pies."

"Poor fellow," said the parson, "how I pity you."

"Bother your pity; buy a pie," retorted the man.

That, according to Fiddler Joss, is the way in which constituted authorities in church and chapel matters deal with the poor man in London and elsewhere. Mr. Methodist would not speak to Mr. Baptist, Mr. Wesleyan would have nothing to do with Mr. Congregationalist, Mr. High Church scoffed at Mr. Low Church, Mr. Low Church did not care what became of any of the rest, and among them all the poor man was utterly neglected.

"How we pity you," these people said to the poor man.

"Bother your pity," the poor man answered; "buy a pie."

Beyond this central argument, affirmation, or illustration, Fiddler Joss did not get far in the course of the thirty-five minutes during which he addressed the congregation. At this period he suddenly stopped, and asked for the sympathy of his friends, explaining that he was subject to

attacks of sickness, one of the legacies of the days of sin, when he was "five years drunk and never sober." After a pause he recommenced, and continued for some five minutes longer, when he abruptly wound up, apparently having got through only one half of his discourse.

It is only fair to regard the sermon as an incomplete one, and to believe that the message which "Fiddler Joss" had entered St. Giles's to speak to the poor and suffering lay in the second and undelivered portion.

DEAN STANLEY.

On St. Andrew's Day, 1875, I was present at two memorable services in Westminster Abbey. For many years during Dean Stanley's reign this particular day had been set apart for the holding of special services on behalf of foreign missions. What made this occasion memorable in the annals of the Church was the fact that the evening lecture was delivered by Dr. Moffat, a Nonconformist minister who, in the year after the Battle of Waterloo, began his career as a missionary to South Africa, and finally closed his foreign labours in the year when Sedan was fought. As being the first time a Nonconformist minister had officiated in Westminster Abbey, the event created wide interest, and lost none of its importance by the remarkable sermon preached in the afternoon by Dean Stanley.

The Dean took for his text two verses, one from the Old Testament, the other from the New. The first was from the 45th Psalm, and ran thus: "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." The second was the 16th verse of the 10th chapter of the Gospel of St. John: "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." Thus the verse runs in the ordinary translation, but the Dean preferred the word "flock" in place of fold, and used it throughout his discourse. Referring to an address recently delivered by Mr. W. E. Forster on "Our Colonies," the Dean observed that the right hon. gentleman had set himself the task of considering the question, "What were to be the future relations of the Mother Country to the Colonies?" The Dean proposed to follow the same course, with this difference: that the empire of which he had to speak was a spiritual empire, and the question he would consider was what ought to be the policy of the Church of England towards fellow-Christians separated from it on matters of form.

There were, he said, three courses open to the Church. There was the policy of abstention and isolation; there was the policy of extermination or absorption; and there was a middle course, avoiding abstention and not aiming at absorption, which consisted of holding friendly and constant intercourse with Christians of other Churches, earnestly and lovingly endeavouring to create as many points of contact as were compatible with holding fast the truth. The errors of all religions run into each other, just as their truths do. There was, no doubt, some exaggeration in the statement of the Roman Catholic authority who declared that "there is but one bad religion, and that is the religion of the man who professes what he does not believe." But there was no reason why, because the Church of England had done in times past and was still doing grand work, there should be no place for the Nonconformists. Church people rejoiced, and Nonconformists might rejoice, that the prayers of the Church of England were enshrined in a Liturgy radiant with the traditions of a glorious past. But that was no reason why there should be no room where good work was being done for men who preferred the chances of extemporaneous prayer--a custom of Apostolic origin, and perhaps (very daintily this was put) fittest for the exigencies of special occasions.

If some of the extremer Nonconformists, desirous of wrapping themselves in the mantle once worn by Churchmen, and possessed by a love for uniformity so exaggerated that they would tear down ancient institutions and reduce all Churches to the same level, there was no reason why Churchmen should return evil for evil and repay contumely with scorn. There was a nobler mission for Christians than that of seeking to exterminate each other, a higher object than that of endeavouring to sow the seeds of vulgar prejudice either against new discoveries or ancient institutions.

DR. MOFFAT.

Dean Stanley preached his sermon within the chancel, and it formed part of the customary afternoon service of the Church of England. Dr. Moffat delivered his lecture in the nave, its simple preface being the singing of the missionary hymn, "From Greenland's icy mountains."

The pioneer of missionary labour in South Africa was at this time close upon his eightieth year, but he seemed to have thriven upon hard work, and showed no signs of physical weakness. His full, rich voice, musical with a northern accent, which long residence in South Africa had not robbed of a note, filled every corner of the long aisle, and no section of the vast congregation was disappointed by reason of not hearing. Wearing a plain Geneva robe with the purple hood of his academic degree, he stood at the lectern, situated not many paces from the grave where his friend and son-in-law, Dr. Livingstone, lies.

Dean Stanley was one of many clergymen present, and occupied a seat just in front of the lectern.

Dr. Moffat began by protesting that he was very nervous, because, having been accustomed for fifty years or more to speak and teach and preach in a language altogether different from European, he had contracted a habit of thinking in that language, and sometimes found it momentarily difficult to find the exact expression of his thoughts in English.

"If I might," he said, with a touch of dry humour that frequently lighted up his discourse, "speak to you in the Betchuana tongue I could get along with ease. However, I will do what I can."

The lecture resolved itself into a quiet, homely, and exceedingly interesting chat, chiefly about the Betchuanas, with whom Dr. Moffat longest laboured. When he arrived in the country, early in the present century, he found the people sunk in the densest ignorance. Unlike most heathen tribes, they had no idea of a God, no notion of a hereafter. There was not an idol to be found in all their province, and one the lecturer's daughter showed to an intelligent leader of the people excited his liveliest astonishment. He was, indeed, so hopelessly removed from a state of civilisation that he ridiculed the notion of any one worshipping a thing made with his own hands.

Dr. Moffat seems to have been, on the whole, kindly received by the natives, though they could not make out what he wanted there. A special stumbling-block to them was, how it came to pass that when, as sometimes happened, he and Mrs Moffat were disrespectfully treated, they did not retaliate. This was satisfactorily explained to the popular mind by the assertion of a distinguished member of the community that the foreigners had run away from their country, and were content to bear any treatment rather than return to their own people, who would infallibly kill them.

The great difficulty met by Dr. and Mrs. Moffat on the threshold of their mission was their ignorance of the native language. There were no interpreters, and there was nothing for it but to grub along, patiently picking up words as they went. The Betchuanas were willing to teach them as far as they could, occasionally relieving the monotony of the lesson by a little joke at the pupils' expense. Once, Dr. Moffat told his hearers, a sentence was written down on a piece of paper, and he was instructed to take it to an aged lady, who was to give him something he was in need of. He found the old lady, who was scarcely handsome, and was decidedly wrinkled, and upon presenting the paper "she blushed very much." It turned out that the missionary had been the unconscious bearer of a message asking the old lady to kiss him, "which," Dr. Moffat added, with a seriousness that appeared to indicate a sense of the awkwardness of the position still present in his mind, "I did not want to do at all."

But he mastered the language at last, and then his moral mastery over the strange people amongst whom he had been thrown commenced. He found a
firm ally in the Queen, who, first attracted by the flavour of the pills and other delicacies he was accustomed to administer to her in his capacity of physician, became his constant and powerful friend. Under her auspices Christianity flourished, and in Betchuana at the present time, where once a printed book was regarded as the white man's charm, thousands now are able to read and treasure the Bible as formerly they treasured the marks which testified to the number of enemies they had slain in battle. Peace reigns where once blood ran, and over a vast tract of country civilisation is closely following in the footsteps of

the missionary.

Dr. Moffat concluded a simple address, followed with intense interest by the congregation, by an earnest plea for help for foreign missions. "If every child of God in Europe and America," he said, "would give something to this mission, the dark cloud which lies over this neglected and mysterious continent would soon be lighted, and before many years are passed we might behold the blessed sight of all Africa stretching forth her hands to God."

MR. SPURGEON.

In a lane leading from the station at Addlestone is a massive oak, which, if the gossips of the neighbourhood be trustworthy, has seen some notable sights. It is said that under its far-reaching branches "Wycliffe has preached and Queen Elizabeth dined."

Here one summer evening I first heard Mr. Spurgeon preach. The occasion was in connection with the building of a new Baptist Chapel, and when I arrived the foundation stone was being utilised as a receptacle for offerings, over which Mr. Spurgeon, sitting on the wall, and shaded from the sun by an umbrella reverently held over his head by a disciple, jovially presided.

After tea a pulpit was extemporised, upon the model of the one at the Tabernacle, by covering an empty provision box with red baize, and fastening before it a wooden railing, also with its decent covering of baize. A pair of steps, constructed with a considerable amount of trouble, were placed in position before the rostrum; but when, a few minutes after seven o'clock, the preacher appeared, he scorned their assistance, and scrambled on to the box from the level of the field, grasping the rail as soon as he was in a position to face the congregation, as if he recognised in it a familiar friend, whose presence made him feel at home under the novel circumstances that surrounded him. There might, when Mr. Spurgeon stood up, have been some doubt whether his voice could be heard throughout the vast throng gathered in front of the tree. But the first tones of the speaker's voice dispelled uncertainty, and the congregation settled quietly down, whilst Mr. Spurgeon, with uplifted hands, besought "the Spirit of God to be with them, even as in their accustomed places of worship." A hymn was sung, a portion of the 55th chapter of Isaiah read, another prayer offered up, and the preacher commenced his Sermon.

He took for his text a portion of the 36th verse of the 9th chapter of Matthew--"He was moved with compassion." At the outset he sketched, with rapid eloquence, the history of Jesus Christ. The first declaration that might have startled one not accustomed to the preacher's style of oratory was his expression of a preference for people who absolutely hated religion over those who simply regarded it with indifference. These former were people who showed they did think, and, like Saul of Tarsus, there was hope of their conversion.

"It is," he said, "a great time when the Lord goes into the devil's army, and, looking around him, sees some lieutenant, and says to him, 'Come along; you have served the black master long enough, I have need of you now.' It is astonishing how quietly he comes along, and what a valiant fight he fights on the side of his new master."

Mr. Spurgeon had a protest to make against the practice of refusing to help the poor except through the machinery of the Poor Law. Referring to Christ's having compassionated the hungry crowd and fed them, he said: "If Jesus Christ were alive now and presumed to feed a crowd of people, He would be had up by some society or other, and prosecuted for encouraging mendicancy. If He were alive in these days He would, I much fear, have occasion to say, 'I was hungry, and ye fed Me not; thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink; destitute, and you told Me to go on the parish.'"

He thought tracts were very good things in their way, but should not be relied upon solely as a means of bringing poor people to the Lord. "I believe a loaf of bread often contains the very essence of theology, and the Church of God ought to look to it that there are at her gates no, poor unfed, no sick untended." He was rather hard on "the clergy of all denominations," regretting to say that "as fish always stunk first at the head, so a Church when it goes wrong goes bad first among its ministers." He concluded by an eloquent appeal to his hearers to lose no

time in seeking salvation, calling "heaven and earth, and this old tree, under which the Gospel was preached five hundred years ago, to bear witness that I have preached to you the word of God, in which alone salvation is to be found."

The sermon occupied exactly an hour in the delivery, and was listened to throughout with profound attention. When it was over, Mr. Spurgeon held a sort of levée from the pulpit, the people pressing round to shake his hand, and it was nearly nine o'clock before the last of the congregation had passed away, leaving Wycliffe's Tree to its accustomed solitude.

The next time I heard Mr. Spurgeon preach was in his famous church. The Tabernacle will hold six thousand people when full, and on this night it was thronged from door to door, and from floor to ceiling, with a congregation gathered together to "watch" whilst the Old Year died and the New was born. At eleven o'clock when Mr. Spurgeon, gownless and guiltless of white neck-tie, or other clerical insignia, unceremoniously walked on to the platform which serves him for pulpit, there was not a foot of vacant space in the vast area looked down upon from the galleries, for even the aisles were thronged. The capacious galleries that rise tier over tier to the roof were crowded in like manner, and the preacher stood, faced and surrounded by a congregation, the sight of which might well move to the utterance of words that burn a man who had within him a fount of thoughts that breathe.

There was no other prelude to the service than the simply spoken invitation, "Let us pray," and the six thousand, declaring themselves "creatures of time," bent the knee with one accord to ask the "Lord of Eternity" to bless them in the coming year. After this a hymn was sung, Mr. Spurgeon reading out verse by verse, with occasional commentary, and not unfrequent directions to the congregation as to the manner of their singing.

"Dear friends, the devil sometimes makes you lag half a note behind the leader. Just try if you can't prevail over him to-night, and keep up in proper time."

There is no organ, nor even a tuning-fork, in use at the Tabernacle. But the difficulties, apparently insuperable under these circumstances, of leading so vast a congregation in the singing of unpractised tunes is almost overcome by the skilful generalship of the gentleman who steps forward to the rails beside the preacher's table, pitches the note, and leads the singing. The hymn brought to a conclusion, Mr. Spurgeon read and commented upon a passage of Scripture from the 25th of Matthew. Then another hymn. "Sing this verse very softly and solemnly," says the pastor; and the congregation in hushed tones, that seem to thrill all through the aisles and up through the crowded galleries, sing:

> "Who of us death's awful road
> In the coming year shall tread,
> With Thy rod and staff, O God,
> Comfort Thou his dying bed."

After another prayer from the pastor, and one from one of the deacons who accompanied him on the platform and sat behind in the crimson velvet arm-chairs, a third hymn was sung, and Mr. Spurgeon began his short address.

He took for text the 42nd verse of the 12th chapter of Exodus: "It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the Lord to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations." The night referred to in the text was that of the Passover--"a night of salvation, decision, emigration, and exultation," said the preacher, "and I pray God that this night, the last of a memorable year, may be the same for you, my friends. Oh for a grand emigration among you like that of the departure of the people of Israel--an emptying out of old Egypt, a robbing of Pharaoh of his slaves, and the devil of his dupes!"

It was understood that Mr. Spurgeon was labouring under severe indisposition, and probably this fact gave to his brief address a tone comparatively quiet and unimpassioned. Only once did he rise to the fervent height of oratory to which his congregation are accustomed, and that at the close, when, with uplifted hands and louder voice, he apostrophised the parting year: "Thou art almost gone, and if thou goest now the tidings to the throne of God will be that such and such a soul is yet unsaved. Oh, stay yet a while, Year, that thou mayest carry with

thee glad tidings that the soul is saved! Thy life is measured now by seconds, but all things are possible with God, and there is still time for the salvation of many souls."

At five minutes to twelve the preacher paused, and bade his hearers "get away to the Throne of Grace, and in silent prayer beseech the Almighty to bless you with a rich and special blessing in the new year He is sending you."

The congregation bent forward and a great silence was upon it, broken only by half-stifled coughing here and there, and once by the wailing of an infant in the gallery. The minutes passed slowly and solemnly as the Old Year's "face grew sharp and thin" under the ticking of the clock over the kneeling preacher and his deacons. The minutes dwindled down to seconds, and then--

> "Alack, our friend is gone!
> Close up his eyes, tie up his chin
> Step from the corpse, and let him in
> That standeth at the door."

"Now, as we have passed into the New Year," said Mr. Spurgeon, advancing to the rails as the last stroke of midnight died away, "I do not think we can do better than join in singing 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow.'"

No need now of instructions how to sing. The congregation were almost before the leader in raising the familiar strain, with which six thousand voices filled the spacious Tabernacle.

Then came the benediction, and a cheery "I wish you all a happy New Year, my friends," from Mr. Spurgeon.

A great shout of "The same to you!" arose in response from basement and galleries, and the congregation passed out into a morning so soft, and light, and mild, that it seemed as if the seasons were out of joint, and that the New Year had been born in the springtime.

IN THE RAGGED CHURCH.

The Ragged Church is one of the numerous by-paths through which the managers of the Field Lane Institution strive to approach and benefit the poor of London. It is situate in Little Saffron Hill, Farringdon Road, the service being held in a barn-like room, which on weekdays serves for school, and is capable of accommodating a thousand children. No money has been expended in architectural embellishment, and no question of a controversial character is likely to arise in connection with accessories in the shape of altar, surplice, or candles. The Ragged Church avoids these stumbling-blocks by the simple expedient of doing without candles, surplices, or altar. It does not even boast a pulpit, but draws the line so as to take in a harmonium, indispensable for leading the tunes. At one end of the room is a platform, on which the harmonium stands, and whereon the service is conducted.

It is the congregation rather than the preacher that I remember best in connection with the Ragged Church. Half-past eleven is the hour for the commencement of service, and was fixed upon chiefly to suit the convenience of a portion of the congregation, who, having slept overnight in the casual wards, are considerately detained in them till eleven o'clock, by which time society is supposed to be comfortably seated in its own churches, and is thus saved the shock of suddenly coming upon Rags and Tatters going to church or elsewhither--Rags and Tatters, it being well understood, not always showing themselves proof against the temptation of improving the occasion by begging. At a quarter to eleven there filed into the church threescore little girls, all dressed in wincey dresses, with brown, furry jackets and little brown hats, a monotony of colour that served to bring into fuller contrast the red and black wool scarf each wore tightly tied round her neck. They all looked bright, clean, and happy, and one noted a considerable proportion of pretty-faced and delicately-limbed children.

How they were born, or with what parentage, is in many cases a question to which the records of the institution supply no answer. They were simply "found" on a doorstep, or arrested when wandering about the street crying for the mother or the father who had cast them off. This class of school-girl is generally distinguished by the fineness of her Christian name, Blanche, and Lily, and Constance, being among the waifs and strays who have found a refuge with the kindly matron of the Field

Lane Institution. There are others whose history is written plainly enough in the records of the police-courts.

There is one, a prematurely aged little woman in her eleventh year, who, previous to being sent here, passed of her own free will night after night in the streets, living through the day on her wits, which are very sharp. Another, about the same age, when taken into custody on something more than suspicion of picking pockets, was found the possessor of no fewer than seven purses. A third, who is understood to be now in her ninth year, earned a handsome livelihood in the Haymarket by frequenting the public houses, and with dramatic gestures singing the more popular concert-hall songs. One of the most determined and head-strong young ladies of the establishment was not privileged to be present at the morning service, being, in fact, in bed, where she was detained with the hope that amid the silence and solitude of the empty chamber she might be brought to see in its true light the heinousness of the offence of wilfully depositing her boots in a pail of water.

Conviction for offences against the law is by no means a general characteristic of the girls. For the most part, destitution has been the simple ground on which they have obtained admission to the institution.

The girls being seated on the front benches to the right of the harmonium, the tramp of many feet was heard, and there entered by the opposite side of the church some sixty boys in corduroys, short jackets, and clean collars. They took up a position on the left of the harmonium, and, with one consent, gravely folded their arms. Their private history is, in its general features, much the same as that of the girls. All are sent hither by order of the police-court magistrate, but many have not committed any crime save the unpardonable one of being absolutely and hopelessly homeless. It is not difficult, stating the broad rule, to pick out from the boys those who have been convicted of crime. As compared with the rest they are generally brighter looking, and gifted with a stronger physique.

The distinction was strongly marked by the conjunction of two boys who sat together on the front form. One who had stolen nothing less than a coalscuttle, observed projecting from an ironmonger's shop in Drury Lane, was a sturdy, ruddy-cheeked little man, who folded his arms in a composed manner, and listened with an inquiring interest to the words poured forth over his head from the platform. The boy next to him, a pale-faced, inert lad, who stared straight before him with lack-lustre eyes, had the saddest of all boys' histories. He was born in a casual ward, his father died in a casual ward, and his mother nightly haunts the streets of London in pursuance of an elaborately devised plan, by which she is able so to time her visits to the various casual wards as never to be turned away from any on the ground that she had slept there too recently.

The foreground of the Ragged Church was bright enough, for whilst there is youth there is hope, and in the present case there is also the knowledge that these children are under guardianship at once kind and wise. Presently the back benches began to fill with a congregation such as no other church in London might show. Crushed-looking women in limp bonnets, scanty shawls, and much-patched dresses crept quietly in. With them, though not in their company, came men of all ages, and of a general level of ragged destitution--a gaunt, haggard, hungry, and hopeless congregation as ever went to church on a Sunday morning. Some had passed the night in the Refuge attached to the institution; many had come straight from the casual wards; others had spent the long hours since sundown in the streets; and one, a hale old man who diffused around him an air of respectability and comfort, was a lodger at Clerkenwell Workhouse. His snuff-coloured coat with two brass buttons at the back was the solitary whole garment visible in this section of the congregation.

It was his "Sunday out" and having had his breakfast at the workhouse, he had, by way of distraction, come to spend the morning and eat his lunch at the Field Lane Institution.

One man might be forgiven if he slept all through the sermon, for, as he explained, he had "passed a very bad night." He had settled himself to sleep on various doorsteps, with the fog for a blanket and the railings for pillow. But there appeared what in his experience was a quite uncommon activity on the part of the police, and he had been "moved on" from place to place till morning broke, and he had not slept a wink or

had half an hour's rest for the sole of his foot.

There were not many of the labouring class among the couple of hundred men who made up this miserable company. They were chiefly broken-down people, who, as tradesmen, clerks, or even professional men, had gradually sunk till they came to regard admission to the casual ward at night as the cherished hope that kept them up as they shuffled their way through the day. One man, who over a marvellous costume of rags carried the mark of respectability comprehended in a thin black silk necktie tied around a collarless neck, is the son of a late colonel of artillery, and has a brother at the present time a lieutenant in one of her Majesty's ships. After leading a reckless life, he turned his musical acquirements to account by joining the band of a marching regiment. Unfortunately, the death of his grandfather, two years ago, made him uncontrolled possessor of £500, and now he is dodging his way among the casual wards of London, holding on to respectability and his good connections by this poor black silk necktie.

Among the congregation was a bright-eyed, honest-looking lad bearing the familiar name of John Smith. Three months ago he was earning his living in a Yorkshire coal pit, when a strike among the men threw him out of work. There being no prospect of doing anything in Yorkshire, he set out for London, having, as he said, "heard it was a great place, where work was plenty." With three shillings in his pocket he started from Leeds, and walked to London, doing the journey in nine days. He had neither recommendation nor introduction other than his bright, honest, and intelligent face, and that seems to have served him only to the extent of getting an odd job that occupied him two days.

The service opened with singing, of which there was a plentiful repetition, the boys and girls in the foreground singing, the melancholy throng behind standing dumb. Hymn-books were supplied to them, and if they could read they might have found on the page from which the first hymn was taken a hymn so curiously infelicitous to the occasion that it is worth quoting a couple of verses. These are the two first:--

> Let us gather up the sunbeams
> Lying all around our path;
> Let us keep the wheat and roses,
> Casting out the thorns and chaff;
> Let us find our sweetest comfort
> In the blessings of to-day
> With a patient hand removing
> All the briars from the way.
>
> Strange we never prize the music
> Till the sweet-voiced bird has flown,
> Strange that we should slight the violets
> Till the lovely flowers are gone;
> Strange that summer skies and sunshine
> Never seem one half so fair
> As when winter's snowy pinions
> Shake the white down in the air.

After the opening hymns *Sankey's Sacred Song-Book*, in which this rhymed nonsense appears, was abandoned, and the congregation took to the admirable little selection of hymns compiled for the use of the institution, containing much less sentiment, and perhaps on the whole more suitable. After prayer and a short address, the boys and girls filed out as they had come in. Then the rest of the congregation rose, and as they passed out received a large piece of bread, supplemented by the distribution from a room on a lower storey of a cup of hot cocoa. Stretching all down the long flight of stone steps, they drank their cocoa and greedily munched the bread, and when it was done passed out into the sabbath noon, to slouch about the great city till the doors of the casual wards were open.

They had "gathered up all the sunbeams lying around their path" as far as the day had advanced, and there was no more for them till, at eight o'clock in the evening, the bread and tea should be set out before them under the workhouse roof.

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