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PENCIL SKETCHES:

OR,

OUTLINES OF CHARACTER AND MANNERS.

BY MISS LESLIE.

INCLUDING "MRS. WASHINGTON POTTS," AND "MR. SMITH," WITH OTHER STORIES.

"So runs the world away."—Shakspeare.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

The work from which the following is a selection, has been long out of print; and many inquiries have been made concerning it. Since its first appearance, a new generation of young people has grown up; and they may, perhaps, find amusement and improvement in pictures of domestic life, that were recognised as such by their mothers.

The present volume will probably be succeeded by another, containing the remainder of the original Pencil Sketches, with additional stories.

Eliza Leslie.

United States Hotel,
Philadelphia, March 25th, 1852.

CONTENTS.

MRS. WASHINGTON POTTS.

"The course of *parties* never does run smooth."—SHAKSPEARE.

Bromley Cheston, an officer in the United States navy, had just returned from a three years' cruise in the Mediterranean. His ship came into New York; and after he had spent a week with a sister that was married in Boston, he could not resist his inclination to pay a visit to his maternal aunt, who had resided since her widowhood at one of the small towns on the banks of the Delaware.

The husband of Mrs. Marsden had not lived long enough to make his fortune, and it was his last injunction that she should retire with her daughter to the country, or at least to a country town. He feared that if she remained in Philadelphia she would have too many temptations to exercise her taste for unnecessary expense: and that, in consequence, the very moderate income, which was all he was able to leave her, would soon be found insufficient to supply her with comforts.

We will not venture to say that duty to his aunt Marsden was the young lieutenant's only incentive to this visit: as she had a beautiful daughter about eighteen, for whom, since her earliest childhood, Bromley Cheston had felt something a little more vivid than the usual degree of regard that boys think sufficient for their cousins. His family had formerly lived in Philadelphia, and till he went into the navy Bromley and Albina were in habits of daily intercourse. Afterwards, on returning from sea, he always, as soon as he set his foot on American ground, began to devise means of seeing his pretty cousin, however short the time and however great the distance. And it was in meditation on Albina's beauty and sprightliness that he had often "while sailing on the midnight deep," beguiled the long hours of the watch, and thus rendered more tolerable that dreariest part of a seaman's duty.

On arriving at the village, Lieutenant Cheston immediately established his quarters at the hotel, fearing that to become an inmate of his aunt's house might cause her some inconvenience. Though he had performed the whole journey in a steamboat, he could not refrain from changing his waistcoat, brushing his coat sleeves, brushing his hat, brushing his hair, and altering the tie of his cravat. Though he had "never told his love," it cannot be said that concealment had "preyed on his damask cheek;" the only change in that damask having been effected by the sun and wind of the ocean.

Mrs. Marsden lived in a small modest-looking white house, with a green door and green venetian shutters. In early summer the porch was canopied and perfumed with honeysuckle, and the windows with roses. In front was a flower-garden, redolent of sweetness and beauty; behind was a well-stored *potager*, and a flourishing little orchard. The windows were amply shaded by the light and graceful foliage of some beautiful locust trees.

"What a lovely spot!" exclaimed Cheston—and innocence—modesty—candour—contentment—peace—simple pleasures—intellectual enjoyments—and various other delightful ideas chased each other rapidly through his mind.

When he knocked at the door, it was opened by a black girl named Drusa, who had been brought up in the family, and whose delight on seeing him was so great that she could scarcely find it in her heart to tell him that "the ladies were both out, or at least partly out." Cheston, however, more than suspected that they were wholly at home, for he saw his aunt peeping over the bannisters, and had a glimpse of his cousin flitting into the back parlour; and besides, the whole

domicile was evidently in some great commotion, strongly resembling that horror of all men, a house-cleaning. The carpets had been removed, and the hall was filled with the parlour-chairs: half of them being turned bottom upwards on the others, with looking-glasses and pictures leaning against them; and he knew that, on such occasions, the ladies of a family in middle life are never among the missing.

"Go and give Lieutenant Cheston's compliments to your ladies," said he, "and let them know that he is waiting to see them."

Mrs. Marsden now ran down stairs in a wrapper and morning cap, and gave her nephew a very cordial reception. "Our house is just now in such confusion," said she, "that I have no place to invite you to sit down in, except the back porch."—And there they accordingly took their seats.

"Do not suppose," continued Mrs. Marsden, "that we are cleaning house: but we are going to have a party to-night, and therefore you are most fortunate in your arrival, for I think I can promise you a very pleasant evening. We have sent invitations to all the most genteel families within seven miles, and I can assure you there was a great deal of trouble in getting the notes conveyed. We have also asked a number of strangers from the city, who happen to be boarding in the village; we called on them for that purpose. If all that are invited were to come, we should have a complete squeeze; but unluckily we have received an unusual number of regrets, and some have as yet returned no answers at all. However, we are sure of Mrs. Washington Potts."

"I see," said Cheston, "you are having your parlours papered."—"Yes," replied Mrs. Marsden, "we could not possibly have a party with that old-fashioned paper on the walls, and we sent to the city a week ago for a man to come and bring with him some of the newest patterns, but he never made his appearance till last night after we had entirely given him up, and after we had had the rooms put in complete order in other respects. But he says, as the parlours are very small, he can easily put on the new paper before evening, so we thought it better to take up the carpets, and take down the curtains, and undo all that we did yesterday, rather than the walls should look old-fashioned. I *did* intend having them painted, which would of course be much better, only that there was no time to get *that* done before the party; so we must defer the painting now for three or four years, till this new paper has grown old."

"But where is Albina?" asked Cheston.

"The truth is," answered Mrs. Marsden, "she is very busy making cakes; as in this place we can buy none that are fit for a party. Luckily Albina is very clever at all such things, having been a pupil of Mrs. Goodfellow. But there is certainly a great deal of trouble in getting up a party in the country."

Just then the black girl, Drusa, made her appearance, and said to Mrs. Marsden, "I've been for that there bean you call wanilla, and Mr. Brown says he never heard of such a thing."

"A man that keeps so large a store has no right to be so ignorant," remarked Mrs. Marsden. "Then, Drusa, we must flavour the ice-cream with lemon."

"There a'n't no more lemons to be had," said the girl, "and we've just barely enough for the lemonade."

"Then some of the lemons must be taken for the ice-cream," replied Mrs. Marsden, "and we must make out the lemonade with cream of tartar."

"I forgot to tell you," said Drusa, "that Mrs. Jones says she can't spare no more cream, upon no account."

"How vexatious!" exclaimed Mrs. Marsden. "I wish we had two cows of our own—one is not sufficient when we are about giving a party. Drusa, we must make out the ice-cream by thickening some milk with eggs."

"Eggs are scace," replied the girl, "Miss Albinar uses up so many for the cakes."

"She must spare some eggs from the cakes," said Mrs. Marsden, "and make out the cakes by adding a little pearl-ash. Go directly and tell her so."

Cheston, though by no means *au fait* to the mysteries of confectionary, could not help smiling at all this making out—"Really," said his aunt, "these things are very annoying. And as this party is given to Mrs. Washington Potts, it is extremely desirable that nothing should fail. There is no such thing now as having company, unless we can receive and entertain them in a certain style."

"I perfectly remember," said Cheston, "the last party at which I was present in your house. I was then a midshipman, and it was just before I sailed on my first cruise in the Pacific. I spent a delightful evening."

"Yes, I recollect that night," replied Mrs. Marsden. "In those days it was not necessary for us to support a certain style, and parties were then very simple things, except among people of the first rank. It was thought sufficient to have two or three baskets of substantial cakes at tea, some almonds, raisins, apples, and oranges, handed round afterwards, with wine and cordial, and then a large-sized pound-cake at the last. The company assembled at seven o'clock, and generally walked; for the ladies' dresses were only plain white muslin. We invited but as many as could be accommodated with seats. The young people played at forfeits, and sung English and Scotch songs, and at the close of the evening danced to the piano. How Mrs. Washington Potts would be

shocked if she was to find herself at one of those obsolete parties!"

"The calf-jelly won't be clear," said the black girl, again making her appearance. "Aunt Katy has strained it five times over through the flannen-bag."

"Go then and tell her to strain it five-and-twenty times," said Mrs. Marsden angrily—"It must and shall be clear. Nothing is more vulgar than clouded jelly; Mrs. Washington Potts will not touch it unless it is transparent as amber."

"What, Nong tong paw again!" said Cheston. "Now do tell me who is Mrs. Washington Potts?"

"Is it possible you have not heard of her?" exclaimed Mrs. Marsden.

"Indeed I have not," replied Cheston. "You forget that for several years I have been cruising on classic ground, and I can assure you that the name of Mrs. Washington Potts has not yet reached the shores of the Mediterranean."

"She is wife to a gentleman that has made a fortune in New Orleans," pursued Mrs. Marsden. "They came last winter to live in Philadelphia, having first visited London and Paris. During the warm weather they took lodgings in this village, and we have become quite intimate. So we have concluded to give them a party, previous to their return to Philadelphia, which is to take place immediately. She is a charming woman, though she certainly makes strange mistakes in talking. You have no idea how sociable she is, at least since she returned our call; which, to be sure, was not till the end of a week; and Albina and I had sat up in full dress to receive her for no less than five days: that is, from twelve o'clock till three. At last she came, and it would have surprised you to see how affably she behaved to us."

"Not at all," said Cheston, "I should not have expected that she would have treated you rudely."

"She really," continued Mrs. Marsden, "grew quite intimate before her visit was over, and took our hands at parting. And as she went out through the garden, she stopped to admire Albina's moss-roses: so we could do no less than give her all that were blown. From that day she has always sent to us when she wants flowers."

"No doubt of it," said Cheston.

"You cannot imagine," pursued Mrs. Marsden, "on what a familiar footing we are. She has a high opinion of Albina's taste, and often gets her to make up caps and do other little things for her. When any of her children are sick, she never sends anywhere else for currant jelly or preserves. Albina makes gingerbread for them every Saturday. During the holidays she frequently sent her three boys to spend the day with us. There is the very place in the railing where Randolph broke out a stick to whip Jefferson with, because Jefferson had thrown in his face a hot baked apple which the mischievous little rogue had stolen out of Katy's oven."

In the mean time Albina had taken off the brown holland bib apron which she had worn all day in the kitchen, and telling the cook to watch carefully the plum-cake that was baking, she hastened to her room by a back staircase, and proceeded to take the pins out of her hair; for where is the young lady that on any emergency whatever, would appear before a young gentleman with her hair pinned up? Though, just now, the opening out of her curls was a considerable inconvenience to Albina, as she had bestowed much time and pains on putting them up for the evening.

Finally she came down in "prime array;" and Cheston, who had left her a school-girl, found her now grown to womanhood, and more beautiful than ever. Still he could not forbear reproving her for treating him so much as a stranger, and not coming to him at once in her morning-dress.

"Mrs. Washington Potts," said Albina, "is of opinion that a young lady should never be seen in dishabille by a gentleman."

Cheston now found it very difficult to hear the name of Mrs. Potts with patience.—"Albina," thought he, "is bewitched as well as her mother."

He spoke of his cruise in the Mediterranean; and Albina told him that she had seen a beautiful view of the bay of Naples in a souvenir belonging to Mrs. Washington Potts.

"I have brought with me some sketches of Mediterranean scenery," pursued Cheston. "You know I draw a little. I promise myself great pleasure in showing and explaining them to you."

"Oh! do send them this afternoon," exclaimed Albina. "They will be the very things for the centre-table. I dare say the Montagues will recognise some of the places they have seen in Italy, for they have travelled all over the south of Europe."

"And who are the Montagues?" inquired Cheston.

"They are a very elegant English family," answered Mrs. Marsden, "cousins in some way to several noblemen."

"Perhaps so," said Cheston.

"Albina met with them at the lodgings of Mrs. Washington Potts," pursued Mrs. Marsden, "where they have been staying a week for the benefit of country air; and so she enclosed her card, and sent them invitations to her party. They have as yet returned no answer; but that is no proof they will not come, for perhaps it may be the newest fashion in England not to answer notes."

"You know the English are a very peculiar people," remarked Albina.

"And what other lions have you provided?" said Cheston.

"Oh! no others except a poet," replied Albina. "Have you never heard of Bewley Garvin Gandy?"

"Never!" answered Cheston. "Is that all one man?"

"Nonsense," replied Albina; "you know that poets generally have three names. B. G, G. was formerly Mr. Gandy's signature when he wrote only for the newspapers, but now since he has come out in the magazines, and annuals, and published his great poem of the World of Sorrow, he gives his name at full length. He has tried law, physic, and divinity, and has resigned all for the Muses. He is a great favourite of Mrs. Washington Potts."

"And now, Albina," said Cheston, "as I know you can have but little leisure to-day, I will only detain you while you indulge me with 'Auld lang syne'—I see the piano has been moved out into the porch."

"Yes," said Mrs. Marsden, "on account of the parlour papering."

"Oh! Bromley Cheston," exclaimed Albina, "do not ask me to play any of those antediluvian Scotch songs. Mrs. Washington Potts cannot tolerate anything but Italian."

Cheston, who had no taste for Italian, immediately took his hat, and apologizing for the length of his stay, was going away with the thought that Albina had much deteriorated in growing up.

"We shall see you this evening without the ceremony of a further invitation?" said Albina.

"Of course," replied Cheston.

"I quite long to introduce you to Mrs. Washington Potts," said Mrs. Marsden.

"What simpletons these women are!" thought Cheston, as he hastily turned to depart.

"The big plum-cake's burnt to a coal," said Drusa, putting her head out of the kitchen door.

Both the ladies were off in an instant to the scene of disaster. And Cheston returned to his hotel, thinking of Mrs. Potts (whom he had made up his mind to dislike), of the old adage that "evil communication corrupts good manners," and of the almost irresistible contagion of folly and vanity. "I am disappointed in Albina," said he; "in future I will regard her only as my mother's niece, and more than a cousin she shall never be to me."

Albina having assisted Mrs. Marsden in lamenting over the burnt cake, took off her silk frock, again pinned up her hair, and joined assiduously in preparing another plum-cake to replace the first one. A fatality seemed to attend nearly all the confections, as is often the case when particular importance is attached to their success. The jelly obstinately refused to clarify, and the blanc-mange was equally unwilling to congeal. The maccaroons having run in baking, had neither shape nor feature, the kisses declined rising, and the sponge-cake contradicted its name. Some of the things succeeded, but most were complete failures: probably because (as old Katy insisted) "there was a spell upon them." In a city these disasters could easily have been remedied (even at the eleventh hour) by sending to a confectioner's shop, but in the country there is no alternative. Some of these mischances might perhaps have been attributed to the volunteered assistance of a mantua-maker that had been sent for from the city to make new dresses for the occasion, and who on this busy day, being "one of the best creatures in the world," had declared her willingness to turn her hand to anything.

It was late in the afternoon before the papering was over, and then great indeed was the bustle in clearing away the litter, cleaning the floors, putting down the carpets, and replacing the furniture. In the midst of the confusion, and while the ladies were earnestly engaged in fixing the ornaments, Drusa came in to say that Dixon, the waiter that had been hired for the evening, had just arrived, and falling to work immediately he had poured all the blanc-mange down the sink, mistaking it for bonnyclabber.[1] This intelligence was almost too much to bear, and Mrs. Marsden could scarcely speak for vexation.

"Drusa," said Albina, "you are a raven that has done nothing all day but croak of disaster. Away, and show your face no more, let what will happen."

Drusa departed, but in a few minutes she again put in her head at the parlour door and said, "Ma'am, may I jist speak one time more?"

"What now?" exclaimed Mrs. Marsden.

"Oh! there's nothing else spiled or flung down the sink, jist now," said Drusa, "but something's at hand a heap worse than all. Missus's old Aunt Quimby has jist landed from the boat, and is coming up the road with baggage enough to last all summer."

"Aunt Quimby!" exclaimed Albina; "this indeed caps the climax!"

"Was there ever anything more provoking!" said Mrs. Marsden. "When I lived in town she annoyed me sufficiently by coming every week to spend a day with me, and now she does not spend days but *weeks*. I would go to Alabama to get rid of her."

"And then," said Albina, "she would come and spend *months* with us. However, to do her justice,

she is a very respectable woman."

"All bores are respectable people," replied Mrs. Marsden; "if they were otherwise, it would not be in their power to bore us, for we could cut them and cast them off at once. How very unlucky! What will Mrs. Washington Potts think of her—and the Montagues too, if they *should* come? Still we must not affront her, as you know she is rich."

"What can her riches signify to us?" said Albina; "she has a married daughter."

"True," replied Mrs. Marsden, "but you know riches should always command a certain degree of respect, and there are such things as legacies."

"After all, according to the common saying, 'tis an ill wind that blows no good;' the parlours having been freshly papered, we can easily persuade Aunt Quimby that they are too damp for her to sit in, and so we can make her stay up stairs all the evening."

At this moment the old lady's voice was heard at the door, discharging the porter who had brought her baggage on his wheelbarrow; and the next minute she was in the front parlour. Mrs. Marsden and Albina were properly astonished, and, properly delighted at seeing her; but each, after a pause of recollection, suddenly seized the old lady by the arms and conveyed her into the entry, exclaiming, "Oh! Aunt Quimby! Aunt Quimby! this is no place for you."

"What's the meaning of all this?" cried Mrs. Quimby; "why won't you let me stay in the parlour?"

"You'll get your death," answered Mrs. Marsden, "you'll get the rheumatism. Both parlours have been newly papered to-day, and the walls are quite wet."

"That's a bad thing," said Mrs. Quimby, "a very bad thing. I wish you had put off your papering till next spring. Who'd have thought of your doing it this day of all days?"

"Oh! Aunt Quimby," said Albina, "why did you not let us know that you were coming?"

"Why, I wanted to give you an agreeable surprise," replied the old lady. "But tell me why the rooms are so decked out, with flowers hanging about the looking-glasses and lamps, and why the candles are dressed with cut paper, or something that looks like it?"

"We are going to have a party to-night," said Albina.

"A party! I'm glad of it. Then I'm come just in the nick of time."

"I thought you had long since given up parties," said Mrs. Marsden, turning pale.

"No, indeed—why should I—I always go when I am asked—to be sure I can't make much figure at parties now, being in my seventy-fifth year. But Mrs. Howks and Mrs. Himes, and several others of my old friends, always invite me to their daughters' parties, along with Mary; and I like to sit there and look about me, and see people's new ways. Mary had a party herself last winter, and it went off very well, only that both the children came out that night with the measles; and one of the lamps leaked, and the oil ran all over the side-board and streamed down on the carpet; and, it being the first time we ever had ice-cream in the house, Peter, the stupid black boy, not only brought saucers to eat it in, but cups and saucers both."

The old lady was now hurried up stairs, and she showed much dissatisfaction on being told that as the damp parlours would certainly give her her death, there was no alternative but for her to remain all the evening in the chamber allotted to her. This chamber (the best furnished in the house) was also to be 'the ladies' room,' and Albina somewhat consoled Mrs. Quimby by telling her that as the ladies would come up there to take off their hoods and arrange their hair, she would have an opportunity of seeing them all before they went down stairs. And Mrs. Marsden promised to give orders that a portion of all the refreshments should be carried up to her, and that Miss Matson, the mantua-maker, should sit with her a great part of the evening.

It was now time for Albina and her mother to commence dressing, but Mrs. Marsden went down stairs again with 'more last words' to the servants, and Albina to make some change in the arrangement of the centre-table.

She was in a loose gown, her curls were pinned up, and to keep them close and safe, she had tied over her head an old gauze handkerchief. While bending over the centre-table, and marking with rose-leaves some of the most beautiful of Mrs. Hemans' poems, and opening two or three souvenirs at their finest plates, a knock was suddenly heard at the door, which proved to be the baker with the second plum-cake, it having been consigned to *his* oven. Albina desired him to bring it to her, and putting it on the silver waiter, she determined to divide it herself into slices, being afraid to trust that business to any one else, lest it should be awkwardly cut, or broken to pieces; it being quite warm.

The baker went out, leaving the front door open, and Albina, intent on her task of cutting the cake, did not look up till she heard the sound of footsteps in the parlour; and then what was her dismay on perceiving Mr. and Mrs. Montague and their daughter.

Albina's first impulse was to run away, but she saw that it was now too late; and, pale with confusion and vexation, she tried to summon sufficient self-command to enable her to pass off this *contre-tems* with something like address.

It was not yet dusk, the sun being scarcely down, and of all the persons invited to the party, it

was natural to suppose that the English family would have come the latest.

Mr. Montague was a long-bodied short-legged man, with round gray eyes, that looked as if they had been put on the outside of his face, the sockets having no apparent concavity: a sort of eye that is rarely seen in an American. He had a long nose and a large heavy mouth with projecting under-teeth, and altogether an unusual quantity of face; which face was bordered round with whiskers, that began at his eyes and met under his chin, and resembled in texture the coarse wiry fur of a black bear. He kept his hat under his arm, and his whole dress seemed as if modelled from one of the caricature prints of a London dandy.

Mrs. Montague (evidently some years older than her husband) was a gigantic woman, with features that looked as if seen through a magnifying glass. She wore heavy piles of yellowish curls, and a crimson velvet tocque. Her daughter was a tall hard-faced girl of seventeen, meant for a child by her parents, but not meaning herself as such. She was dressed in a white muslin frock and trowsers, and had a mass of black hair curling on her neck and shoulders.

They all fixed their large eyes directly upon Albina, and it was no wonder that she quailed beneath their glance, or rather their stare, particularly when Mrs. Montague surveyed her through her eye-glass. Mr. Montague spoke first. "Your note did not specify the hour—Miss—Miss Martin," said he, "and as you Americans are early people, we thought we were complying with the simplicity of republican manners by coming before dark. We suppose that in general you adhere to the primitive maxim of 'early to bed and early to rise.' I forget the remainder of the rhyme, but *you* know it undoubtedly."

Albina at that moment wished for the presence of Bromley Cheston. She saw from the significant looks that passed between the Montagues, that the unseasonable earliness of this visit did not arise from their ignorance of the customs of American society, but from premeditated impertinence. And she regretted still more having invited them, when Mr. Montague with impudent familiarity walked up to the cake (which she had nicely cut into slices without altering its form) and took one of them out.—"Miss Martin," said he, "your cake looks so inviting that I cannot refrain from helping myself to a piece. Mrs. Montague, give me leave to present one to you. Miss Montague, will you try a slice?"

They sat down on the sofa, each with a piece of cake, and Albina saw that they could scarcely refrain from laughing openly, not only at her dishabille, but at her disconcerted countenance.

Just at this moment, Drusa appeared at the door, and called out, "Miss Albinar, the presarved squinches are all working. Missus found 'em so when she opened the jar." Albina could bear no more, but hastily darting out of the room, she ran up stairs almost crying with vexation.

Old Mrs. Quimby was loud in her invectives against Mr. Montague for spoiling the symmetry of the cake, and helping himself and his family so unceremoniously. "You may rely upon it," said she, "a man that will do such a thing in a strange house is no gentleman."

"On the contrary," observed Mrs. Marsden, "I have no doubt that in England these free and easy proceedings are high ton. Albina, have not you read some such things in Vivian Grey?"

"I do not believe," said Mrs. Quimby, "that if this Englishman was in his own country, he would dare to go and take other people's cake without leave or license. But he thinks any sort of behaviour good enough for the Yankees, as they call us."

"I care not for the cake," said Albina, "although the pieces must now be put into baskets; I only think of the Montagues walking in without knocking, and catching me in complete dishabille: after I had kept poor Bromley Cheston waiting half an hour this morning rather than he should see me in my pink gingham gown and with my hair in pins."

"As sure as sixpence," remarked Mrs. Quimby, "this last shame has come upon you as a punishment for your pride to your own cousin."

Mrs. Marsden having gone into the adjoining room to dress, Albina remained in this, and placed herself before the glass for the same purpose. "Heigho!" said she, "how pale and jaded I look! What a fatiguing day I have had! I have been on my feet since five o'clock this morning, and I feel now more fit to go to bed than to add to my weariness by the task of dressing, and then playing the agreeable for four or five hours. I begin to think that parties (at least such parties as are now in vogue) should only be given by persons who have large houses, large purses, conveniences of every description, and servants enough to do all that is necessary."

"Albina is talking quite sensibly," said Aunt Quimby to Mrs. Marsden, who came in to see if her daughter required her assistance in dressing.

"Pho!" said Mrs. Marsden, "think of the eclat of giving a party to Mrs. Washington Potts, and of having the Montagues among the guests! We shall find the advantage of it when we visit the city again."

"Albina," said Aunt Quimby, "now we are about dressing, just quit for a few moments and help me on with my long stays and my new black silk gown, and let me have the glass awhile; I am going to wear my lace cap with the white satin riband. This dark calico gown and plain muslin cap won't do at all to sit here in, before all the ladies that are coming up."

"Oh! no matter," replied Albina, who was unwilling to relinquish the glass or to occupy any of her

time by assisting her aunt in dressing (which was always a troublesome and tedious business with the old lady); and her mother had now gone down to be ready for the reception of the company, and to pay her compliments to the Montagues. "Oh! no matter," said Albina, "your present dress looks perfectly well; and the ladies will be too much engaged with themselves and their own dresses, to remark anything else. No one will observe whether your gown is calico or silk, and whether your cap is muslin or lace. Elderly ladies are always privileged to wear what is most convenient to them."

Albina put on the new dress that the mantua-maker had made for her. When she tried it on the preceding evening Miss Matson declared that "it fitted like wax." She now found that it was scarcely possible to get it on at all, and that one side of the forebody was larger than the other. Miss Matson was called up, and by dint of the pulling, stretching, and smoothing well known to mantua-makers, and still more by means of her pertinacious assurances that the dress had no fault whatever, Albina was obliged to acknowledge that she *could* wear it, and the redundancy of the large side was pinned down and pinned over. In sticking in her comb she broke it in half, and it was long before she could arrange her hair to her satisfaction without it. Before she had completed her toilette, several of the ladies arrived and came into the room; and Albina was obliged to snatch up her paraphernalia, and make her escape into the next apartment.

At last she was dressed—she went down stairs. The company arrived fast, and the party began.

Bromley Cheston had come early to assist in doing the honours, and as he led Albina to a seat, he saw that, in spite of her smiles, she looked weary and out of spirits; and he pitied her. "After all," thought he, "there is much that is interesting about Albina Marsden."

The party was *very* select, consisting of the élite of the village and its neighbourhood; but still, as is often the case, those whose presence was most desirable had sent excuses, and those who were not wanted had taken care to come. And Miss Boreham (a young lady who, having nothing else to recommend her, had been invited solely on account of the usual elegance of her attire, and whose dress was expected to add prodigiously to the effect of the rooms), came most unaccountably in an old faded frock of last year's fashion, with her hair quite plain, and tucked behind her ears with two side-combs. Could she have had a suspicion of the reason for which she was generally invited, and have therefore perversely determined on a reaction?

The Montagues sat together in a corner, putting up their eye-glasses at every one that entered the room, and criticising the company in loud whispers to each other; poor Mrs. Marsden endeavouring to catch opportunities of paying her court to them.

About nine o'clock, appeared an immense cap of blond lace, gauze riband, and flowers; and under the cap was Mrs. Washington Potts, a little, thin, trifling-looking woman with a whitish freckled face, small sharp features, and flaxen hair. She leaned on the arm of Mr. Washington Potts, who was nothing in company or anywhere else; and she led by the hand a little boy in a suit of scarlet, braided and frogged with blue: a pale rat-looking child, whose name she pronounced Laughy-yet, meaning La Fayette; and who being the youngest scion of the house of Potts, always went to parties with his mother, because he would not stay at home.

Bromley Cheston, on being introduced to Mrs. Washington Potts, was surprised at the insignificance of her figure and face. He had imagined her tall in stature, large in feature, loud in voice, and in short the very counterpart to Mrs. Montague. He found her, however, as he had supposed, replete with vanity, pride, ignorance, and folly: to which she added a sickening affectation of sweetness and amiability, and a flimsy pretension to extraordinary powers of conversation, founded on a confused assemblage of incorrect and superficial ideas, which she mistook for a general knowledge of everything in the world.

Mrs. Potts was delighted with the handsome face and figure, and the very genteel appearance of the young lieutenant, and she bestowed upon him a large portion of her talk.

"I hear, sir," said she, "you have been in the Mediterranean Sea. A sweet pretty place, is it not?"

"Its shores," replied Cheston, "are certainly very beautiful."

"Yes, I should admire its chalky cliffs vastly," resumed Mrs. Potts; "they are quite poetical, you know. Pray, sir, which do you prefer, Byron or Bonaparte? I dote upon Byron; and considering what sweet verses he wrote, 'tis a pity he was a corsair, and a vampyre pirate, and all such horrid things. As for Bonaparte, I never could endure him after I found that he had cut off poor old King George's head. Now, when we talk of great men, my husband is altogether for Washington. I laugh, and tell Mr. Potts it's because he and Washington are namesakes. How do you like La Fayette?"—(pronouncing the name à la canaille).

"The man, or the name?" inquired Cheston.

"Oh! both to be sure. You see we have called our youngest blossom after him. Come here, La Fayette, stand forward, my dear; hold up your head, and make a bow to the gentleman."

"I won't," screamed La Fayette. "I'll never make a bow when you tell me."

"Something of the spirit of his ancestors," said Mrs. Potts, affectedly smiling to Cheston, and patting the urchin on the head.

"His ancestors!" thought Cheston. "Who could they possibly have been?"

"Perhaps the dear fellow may be a little, a very little spoiled," pursued Mrs. Potts. "But to make a comparison in the marine line (quite in your way, you know), it is as natural for a mother's heart to turn to her youngest darling, as it is for the needle to point out the longitude. Now we talk of longitude, have you read Cooper's last novel, by the author of the Spy? It's a sweet book—Cooper is one of my pets. I saw him in dear, delightful Paris. Are you musical, Mr. Cheston?—But of course you are. Our whole aristocracy is musical now. How do you like Paganini? You must have heard him in Europe. It's a very expensive thing to hear Paganini.—Poor man! he is quite ghastly with his own playing. Well, as you have been in the Mediterranean, which do you prefer, the Greeks or the Poles?"

"The Poles, decidedly," answered Cheston, "from what I have heard of *them*, and seen of the Greeks."

"Well, for my part," resumed Mrs. Potts, "I confess I like the Greeks, as I have always been rather classical. They are so Grecian. Think of their beautiful statues and paintings by Rubens and Reynolds. Are you fond of paintings? At my house in the city, I can show you some very fine ones."

"By what artists?" asked Cheston.

"Oh! by my daughter Harriet. She did them at drawing-school with theorems. They are beautiful flower-pieces, all framed and hung up; they are almost worthy of Sir Benjamin West."[2]

In this manner Mrs. Potts ran on till the entrance of tea, and Cheston took that opportunity of escaping from her; while she imagined him deeply imbued with admiration of her fluency, vivacity, and variety of information. But in reality, he was thinking of the strange depravity of taste that is sometimes found even in intelligent minds; for in no other way could he account for Albina's predilection for Mrs. Washington Potts. "And yet," thought he, "is a young and inexperienced girl more blameable for her blindness in friendship (or what she imagines to be friendship), than an acute, sensible, talented man for his blindness in love? The master-spirits of the earth have almost proverbially married women of weak intellect, and almost as proverbially the children of such marriages resemble the mother rather than the father. A just punishment for choosing so absurdly. Albina, I must know you better."

The party went on, much as parties generally do where there are four or five guests that are supposed to rank all the others. The patricians evidently despised the plebeians, and the plebeians were offended at being despised; for in no American assemblage is any real inferiority of rank ever felt or acknowledged. There was a general dullness, and a general restraint. Little was done, and little was said. La Fayette wandered about in everybody's way; having been kept wide awake all the evening by two cups of strong coffee, which his mother allowed him to take because he would have them.

There was always a group round the centre-table, listlessly turning over the souvenirs, albums, &c., and picking at the flowers; and La Fayette ate plum-cake over Cheston's beautiful drawings.

Albina played an Italian song extremely well, but the Montagues exchanged glances at her music; and Mrs. Potts, to follow suit, hid her face behind her fan and simpered; though in truth she did not in reality know Italian from French, or a semibreve from a semiquaver. All this was a great annoyance to Cheston. At Albina's request, he led Miss Montague to the piano. She ran her fingers over the instrument as if to try it; gave a shudder, and declared it most shockingly out of tune, and then rose in horror from the music stool. This much surprised Mrs. Marsden, as a musician had been brought from the city only the day before for the express purpose of tuning this very instrument.

"No," whispered Miss Montague, as she resumed her seat beside her mother, "I will not condescend to play before people who are incapable of understanding my style."

At this juncture (to the great consternation of Mrs. Marsden and her daughter) who should make her appearance but Aunt Quimby in the calico gown which Albina now regretted having persuaded her to keep on. The old lady was wrapped in a small shawl and two large ones, and her head was secured from cold by a black silk handkerchief tied over her cap and under her chin. She smiled and nodded all round to the company, and said—"How do you do, good people; I hope you are all enjoying yourselves. I thought I *must* come down and have a peep at you. For after I had seen all the ladies take off their hoods, and had my tea, I found it pretty dull work sitting up stairs with the mantua-maker, who had no more manners than to fall asleep while I was talking."

Mrs. Marsden, much discomfited, led Aunt Quimby to a chair between two matrons who were among "the unavoidably invited," and whose pretensions to refinement were not very palpable. But the old lady had no idea of remaining stationary all the evening between Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Jackson. She wisely thought "she could see more of the party," if she frequently changed her place, and being of what is called a sociable disposition, she never hesitated to talk to any one that was near her, however high or however low.

"Dear mother," said Albina in an under-voice, "what can be the reason that every one, in tasting the ice-cream, immediately sets it aside as if it was not fit to eat? I am sure there is everything in it that ought to be."

"And something more than ought to be," replied Mrs. Marsden, after trying a spoonful—"the salt

that was laid round the freezer has got into the cream (I suppose by Dixon's carelessness), and it is *not* fit to eat."

"And now," said Albina, starting, "I will show you a far worse mortification than the failure of the ice-cream. Only look—there sits Aunt Quimby between Mr. Montague and Mrs. Washington Potts."

"How in the world did she get there?" exclaimed Mrs. Marsden. "I dare say she walked up, and asked them to make room for her between them. There is nothing now to be done but to pass her off as well as we can, and to make the best of her. I will manage to get as near as possible, that I may hear what she is talking about, and take an opportunity of persuading her away."

As Mrs. Marsden approached within hearing distance, Mr. Montague was leaning across Aunt Quimby, and giving Mrs. Potts an account of something that had been said or done during a splendid entertainment at Devonshire House.—"Just at that moment," said he, "I was lounging into the room with Lady Augusta Fitzhenry on my arm (unquestionably the finest woman in England), and Mrs. Montague was a few steps in advance, leaning on my friend the Marquis of Elvington."

"Pray, sir," said Mrs. Quimby, "as you are from England, do you know anything of Betsey Dempsey's husband?"

"I have not the honour of being acquainted with that person," replied Mr. Montague, after a withering stare.

"Well, that's strange," pursued Aunt Quimby, "considering that he has been living in London at least eighteen years—or perhaps it is only seventeen. And yet I think it must be near eighteen, if not quite. Maybe seventeen and a half. Well it's best to be on the safe side, so I'll say seventeen. Betsey Dempsey's mother was an old school-mate of mine. Her father kept the Black Horse tavern. She was the only acquaintance I ever had that married an Englishman. He was a grocer, and in very good business; but he never liked America, and was always finding fault with it, and so he went home, and was to send for Betsey. But he never sent for her at all; and for a very good reason; which was that he had another wife in England, as most of them have—no disparagement to you, sir."

Mrs. Marsden now came up, and informed Mrs. Potts in a whisper, that the good old lady beside her, was a distant relation or rather connexion of *Mr.* Marsden's, and that, though a little primitive in appearance and manner, she had considerable property in bank-stock. To Mrs. Marsden's proposal that she should exchange her seat for a very pleasant one in the other room next to her old friend, Mrs. Willis, Aunt Quimby replied nothing but "Thank you, I'm doing very well here."

Mrs. and Miss Montague, apparently heeding no one else, had talked nearly the whole evening to each other, but loudly enough to be heard by all around them. The young lady, though dressed as a child, talked like a woman, and she and her mother were now engaged in an argument whether the flirtation of the Duke of Risingham with Lady Georgiana Melbury would end seriously or not.

"To my certain knowledge," said Miss Montague, "his Grace has never yet declared himself to Lady Georgiana, or to any one else."

"I'll lay you two to one," said Mrs. Montague, "that he is married to her before we return to England."

"No," replied the daughter, "like all others of his sex he delights in keeping the ladies in suspense."

"What you say, miss, is very true," said Aunt Quimby, leaning in her turn across Mr. Montague, "and, considering how young you are, you talk very sensibly. Men certainly have a way of keeping women in suspense, and an unwillingness to answer questions, even when we ask them. There's my son-in-law, Billy Fairfowl, that I live with. He married my daughter Mary, eleven years ago the 23d of last April. He's as good a man as ever breathed, and an excellent provider too. He always goes to market himself; and sometimes I can't help blaming him a little for his extravagance. But his greatest fault is his being so unsatisfactory. As far back as last March, as I was sitting at my knitting in the little front parlour with the door open (for it was quite warm weather for the time of the year), Billy Fairfowl came home, carrying in his hand a good sized shad; and I called out to him to ask what he gave for it, for it was the very beginning of the shad season; but he made not a word of answer; he just passed on, and left the shad in the kitchen, and then went to his store. At dinner we had the fish, and a very nice one it was; and I asked him again how much he gave for it, but he still avoided answering, and began to talk of something else; so I thought I'd let it rest awhile. A week or two after, I again asked him; so then he actually said he had forgotten all about it. And to this day I don't know the price of that shad."

The Montagues looked at each other—almost laughed aloud, and drew back their chairs as far from Aunt Quimby as possible. So also did Mrs. Potts. Mrs. Marsden came up in an agony of vexation, and reminded her aunt in a low voice of the risk of renewing her rheumatism by staying so long between the damp, newly-papered walls. The old lady answered aloud—"Oh! you need not fear, I am well wrapped up on purpose. And indeed, considering that the parlours were only papered to-day, I think the walls have dried wonderfully (putting her hand on the paper)—I am sure nobody could find out the damp if they were not told."

"What!" exclaimed the Montagues; "only papered to-day—(starting up and testifying all that prudent fear of taking cold, so characteristic of the English). How barbarous to inveigle us into such a place!"

"I thought I felt strangely chilly all the evening," said Mrs. Potts, whose fan had scarcely been at rest five minutes.

The Montagues proposed going away immediately, and Mrs. Potts declared she was *most* apprehensive for poor little La Fayette. Mrs. Marsden, who could not endure the idea of their departing till all the refreshments had been handed round (the best being yet to come), took great pains to persuade them that there was no real cause of alarm, as she had had large fires all the afternoon. They held a whispered consultation, in which they agreed to stay for the oysters and chicken salad, and Mrs. Marsden went out to send them their shawls, with one for La Fayette.

By this time the secret of the newly-papered walls had spread round both rooms; the conversation now turned entirely on colds and rheumatisms; there was much shivering and considerable coughing, and the demand for shawls increased. However, nobody actually went home in consequence.

"Papa," said Miss Montague, "let us all take French leave as soon as the oysters and chicken salad have gone round."

Albina now came up to Aunt Quimby (gladly perceiving that the old lady looked tired), and proposed that she should return to her chamber, assuring her that the waiters should be punctually sent up to her—"I do not feel quite ready to go yet," replied Mrs. Quimby. "I am very well here. But you need not mind *me*. Go back to your company, and talk a little to those three poor girls in the yellow frocks that nobody has spoken to yet, except Bromley Cheston. When I am ready to go I shall take French leave, as these English people call it."

But Aunt Quimby's idea of French leave was very different from the usual acceptation of the term; for having always heard that the French were a very polite people, she concluded that their manner of taking leave must be particularly respectful and ceremonious. Therefore, having paid her parting compliments to Mrs. Potts and the Montagues, she walked all round the room, curtsying to every body and shaking hands, and telling them she had come to take French leave. To put an end to this ridiculous scene, Bromley Cheston (who had been on assiduous duty all the evening) now came forward, and, taking the old lady's arm in his, offered to escort her up stairs. Aunt Quimby was much flattered by this unexpected civility from the finest-looking young man in the room, and she smilingly departed with him, complimenting him on his politeness, and assuring him that he was a real gentleman; trying also to make out the degree of relationship that existed between them.

"So much for Buckingham!" said Cheston, as he ran down stairs after depositing the old lady at the door of her room. "Fools of all ranks and of all ages are to me equally intolerable. I never can marry into such a family."

The party went on.

"In the name of heaven, Mrs. Potts," said Mrs. Montague, "what induces you to patronize these people?"

"Why they are the only tolerable persons in the neighbourhood," answered Mrs. Potts, "and very kind and obliging in their way. I really think Albina a very sweet girl, very sweet indeed: and Mrs. Marsden is rather amiable too, quite amiable. And they are so grateful for any little notice I take of them, that it is really quite affecting. Poor things! how much trouble they have given themselves in getting up this party. They look as if they had had a hard day's work; and I have no doubt they will be obliged, in consequence, to pinch them for months to come; for I can assure you their means are very small—very small indeed. As to this intolerable old aunt, I never saw her before; and as there is something rather genteel about Mrs. Marsden and her daughter—rather so at least about Albina—I did not suppose they had any such relations belonging to them. I think, in future I must confine myself entirely to the aristocracy."

"We deliberated to the last moment," said Mrs. Montague, "whether we should come. But as Mr. Montague is going to write his tour when we return to England, he thinks it expedient to make some sacrifices, for the sake of seeing the varieties of American society."

"Oh! these people are not in society!" exclaimed Mrs. Potts eagerly. "I can assure you these Marsdens have not the slightest pretensions to society. Oh! no—I beg you not to suppose that Mrs. Marsden and her daughter are at all in society!"

This conversation was overheard by Bromley Cheston, and it gave him more pain than he was willing to acknowledge, even to himself.

At length all the refreshments had gone their rounds, and the Montagues had taken real French leave; but Mrs. Washington Potts preferred a conspicuous departure, and therefore made her adieux with a view of producing great effect. This was the signal for the company to break up, and Mrs. Marsden gladly smiled them out; while Albina could have said with Gray's Prophetess—

> "Now my weary lips I close,
> Leave me, leave me to repose."

But, according to Mrs. Marsden, the worst of all was the poet, the professedly eccentric Bewley Garvin Gandy, author of the World of Sorrow, Elegy on a Broken Heart, Lines on a Suppressed Sigh, Sonnet to a Hidden Tear, Stanzas to Faded Hopes, &c. &c., and who was just now engaged in a tale called "The Bewildered," and an Ode to the Waning Moon, which set him to wandering about the country, and "kept him out o'nights." The poet, not being a man of this world, did not make his appearance at the party till the moment of the bustle occasioned by the exit of Mrs. Washington Potts. He then darted suddenly into the room, and looked wild.

We will not insinuate that he bore any resemblance to Sandy Clark. He certainly wore no chapeau, and his coat was not in the least à la militaire, for it was a dusky brown frock. His collar was open, in the fashion attributed to Byron, and much affected by scribblers who are incapable of imitating the noble bard in anything but his follies. His hair looked as if he had just been tearing it, and his eyes seemed "in a fine frenzy rolling." He was on his return from one of his moonlight rambles on the banks of the river, and his pantaloons and coat-skirt showed evident marks of having been deep among the cat-tails and splatter-docks that grew in the mud on its margin.

Being a man that took no note of time, he wandered into Mrs. Marsden's house between eleven and twelve o'clock, and remained an hour after the company had gone; reclining at full length on a sofa, and discussing Barry Cornwall and Percy Bysshe Shelley, L. E. L. and Mrs. Cornwall Baron Wilson. After which he gradually became classical, and poured into the sleepy ears of Mrs. Marsden and Albina a parallel between Tibullus and Propertius, a dissertation on Alcæus, and another on Menander.

Bromley Cheston, who had been escorting home two sets of young ladies that lived "far as the poles asunder," passed Mrs. Marsden's house on returning to his hotel, and seeing the lights still gleaming, he went in to see what was the matter, and kindly relieved his aunt and cousin by reminding the poet of the lateness of the hour, and "fairly carrying him off."

Aunt Quimby had long since been asleep. But before Mrs. Marsden and Albina could forget themselves in "tired nature's sweet restorer," they lay awake for an hour, discussing the fatigues and vexations of the day, and the mortifications of the evening. "After all," said Albina, "this party has cost us five times as much as it is worth, both in trouble and expense, and I really cannot tell what pleasure we have derived from it."

"No one expects pleasure at their own party," replied Mrs. Marsden. "But you may depend on it, this little compliment to Mrs. Washington Potts will prove highly advantageous to us hereafter. And then it is *something* to be the only family in the neighbourhood that could presume to do such a thing."

Next morning, Bromley Cheston received a letter which required his immediate presence in New York on business of importance. When he went to take leave of his aunt and cousin, he found them busily engaged in clearing away and putting in order; a task which is nearly equal to that of making the preparations for a party. They looked pale and spiritless, and Mrs. Washington Potts had just sent her three boys to spend the day with them.

When Cheston took Albina's hand at parting, he felt it tremble, and her eyes looked as if they were filling with tears. "After all," thought he, "she is a charming girl, and has both sense and sensibility."

"I am very nervous to-day," said Albina, "the party has been too much for me; and I have in prospect for to-morrow the pain of taking leave of Mrs. Washington Potts, who returns with all her family to Philadelphia."

"Strange infatuation!" thought Cheston, as he dropped Albina's hand, and made his parting bow. "I must see more of this girl, before I can resolve to trust my happiness to her keeping; I cannot share her heart with Mrs. Washington Potts. When I return from New York, I will talk to her seriously about that ridiculous woman, and I will also remonstrate with her mother on the folly of straining every nerve in the pursuit of what she calls a certain style."

In the afternoon, Mrs. Potts did Albina the honour to send for her to assist in the preparations for to-morrow's removal to town; and in the evening, the three boys were all taken home sick, in consequence of having laid violent hands on the fragments of the feast: which fragments they had continued during the day to devour almost without intermission. Also Randolph had thrown Jefferson down stairs, and raised two green bumps on his forehead, and Jefferson had pinched La Fayette's fingers in the door till the blood came; not to mention various minor squabbles and hurts.

At parting, Mrs. Potts went so far as to kiss Albina, and made her promise to let her know immediately, whenever she or her mother came to the city.

In about two weeks, Aunt Quimby finished her visitation: and the day after her departure, Mrs. Marsden and Albina went to town to make their purchases for the season, and also with a view towards a party, which they knew Mrs. Potts had in contemplation. This time they did not, as usual, stay with their relations, but they took lodgings at a fashionable boarding-house, where they could receive their "great woman," *comme il faut*.

On the morning after their arrival, Mrs. Marsden and her daughter, in their most costly dresses, went to visit Mrs. Potts, that she might be apprised of their arrival; and they found her in a

spacious house, expensively and ostentatiously furnished.

After they had waited till even *their* patience was nearly exhausted, Mrs. Potts came down stairs to them, but there was evidently a great abatement in her affability. She seemed uneasy, looked frequently towards the door, got up several times and went to the window, and appeared fidgety when the bell rung. At last there came in two very flaunting ladies, whom Mrs. Potts received as if she considered them people of consequence. They were not introduced to the Marsdens, who, after the entrance of these new visitors, sat awhile in the pitiable situation of ciphers, and then took their leave. "Strange," said Mrs. Marsden, "that she did not say a word of her party."

Three days after their visit, Mrs. Washington Potts left cards for Mrs. and Miss Marsden, without inquiring if they were at home. And they heard from report that her party was fixed for the week after next, and that it was expected to be very splendid, as it was to introduce her daughter, who had just quitted boarding-school. The Marsdens had seen this young lady, who had spent the August holidays with her parents. She was as silly as her mother, and as dull as her father, in the eyes of all who were not blindly determined to think her otherwise, or who did not consider it particularly expedient to uphold every one of the name of Potts.

At length they heard that the invitations were going out for Mrs. Potts's party, and that though very large, it was not to be general; which meant that only one or two of the members were to be selected from each family with whom Mrs. Potts thought proper to acknowledge an acquaintance. From this moment Mrs. Marsden, who at the best of times had never really been treated with much respect by Mrs. Potts, gave up all hope of an invitation for herself; but she counted certainly on one for Albina, and every ring at the door was expected to bring it. There were many rings, but no invitation; and poor Albina and her mother took turns in watching at the window.

At last Bogle[3] was seen to come up the steps with a handful of notes; and Albina, regardless of all rule, ran to the front-door herself. They were cards for a party, but not Mrs. Potts's, and were intended for two other ladies that lodged in the house.

Every time that Albina went out and came home, she inquired anxiously of all the servants if no note had been left for her. Still there was none. And her mother still insisted that the note *must* have come, but had been mislaid afterwards, or that Bogle had lost it in the street.

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday passed over, and still no invitation. Mrs. Marsden talked much of the carelessness of servants, and had no doubt of the habitual negligence of Messrs. Bogle, Shepherd, and other "fashionable party-men." Albina was almost sick with "hope deferred." At last, when she came home on Monday morning from Second street, her mother met her at the door with a delighted face, and showed her the long-desired note, which had just been brought by Mrs. Potts's own man. The party was to take place in two days: and so great was now Albina's happiness, that she scarcely felt the fatigue of searching the shops for articles of attire that were very elegant, and yet not *too* expensive; and shopping with a limited purse is certainly no trifling exercise both of mind and body; so also is the task of going round among fashionable mantua-makers, in the hope of coaxing one of them to undertake a dress at a short notice.

Next morning, Mrs. Potts sent for Albina immediately after breakfast, and told her that as she knew her to be very clever at all sorts of things, she wanted her to stay that day and assist in the preparations for the next. Mrs. Potts, like many other people who live in showy houses and dress extravagantly, was very economical in servants. She gave such low wages, that none would come to her who could get places anywhere else, and she kept them on such limited allowance that none would stay with her who were worth having.

Fools are seldom consistent in their expenditure. They generally (to use a homely expression) strain at gnats and swallow camels.

About noon, Albina having occasion to consult Mrs. Potts concerning something that was to be done, found her in the front parlour with Mrs. and Miss Montague. After Albina had left the room, Mrs. Montague said to Mrs. Potts—"Is not that the girl who lives with her mother at the place on the river, I forget what you call it—I mean the niece of the aunt?"

"That is Albina Marsden," replied Mrs. Potts.

"Yes," pursued Mrs. Montague, "the people that made so great an exertion to give you a sort of party, and honoured Mr. and Miss Montague and myself with invitations."

"She's not to be here to-morrow night, I hope!" exclaimed Miss Montague.

"Really," replied Mrs. Potts, "I could do no less than ask her. The poor thing did her very best to be civil to us all last summer."

"Oh!" said Mrs. Montague, "in the country one is willing sometimes to take up with such company as we should be very sorry to acknowledge in town. You assured me that your party to-morrow night would be extremely *recherché*. And as it is so early in the season you know that it is necessary to be more particular now than at the close of the campaign, when every one is tired of parties, and unwilling to get new evening dresses lest they should be out of fashion before they are wanted again. Excuse me, I speak only from what I have heard of American customs."

"I am always particular about my parties," said Mrs. Potts.

"A word in your ear," continued Mrs. Montague. "Is it not impolitic, or rather are you not afraid

to bring forward so beautiful a girl as this Miss Martin on the very night of your own daughter's *debut*?"

Mrs. Potts looked alarmed for a moment, and then recovering herself said—"I have no fear of Miss Harriet Angelina Potts being thrown in the shade by a little country girl like this. Albina Marsden is pretty enough, to be sure—at least, rather pretty—but then there is a certain style—a certain air which she of course—in short, a certain style—"

"As to what you call a certain style," said Mrs. Montague, "I do not know exactly what you mean. If it signifies the air and manner of a lady, this Miss Martin has as much of it as any other American girl. To me they are all nearly alike. I cannot distinguish those minute shades of difference that you all make such a point of. In my unpractised eyes the daughters of your mechanics and shopkeepers look as well and behave as well as the daughters of your lawyers and doctors, for I find your nobility is chiefly made up of these two professions, with the addition of a few merchants; and you call every one a merchant that does not sell his commodities by the single yard or the single quart."

"Mamma," whispered Miss Montague, "if that girl is to be here, I don't wish to come. I can't endure her."

"Take my advice," continued Mrs. Montague to Mrs. Potts, "and put off this Miss Martin. If she was not so strikingly handsome, she might pass unnoticed in the crowd. But her beauty will attract general observation, and you will be obliged to tell exactly who she is, where you picked her up, and to give or to hear an account of her family and all her connexions; and from the specimen we have had in the old aunt, I doubt if they will bear a very minute scrutiny. So if she *is* invited, endeavour to uninvite her."

"I am sure I would willingly do that," replied Mrs. Potts, "but I can really think of no excuse."

"Oh! send her a note to-morrow," answered Mrs. Montague, carelessly, and rising to depart, "anything or nothing, so that you only signify to her that she is not to come."

All day Mrs. Potts was revolving in her mind the most feasible means of preventing Albina from appearing at her party; and her conscience smote her when she saw the unsuspecting girl so indefatigable in assisting with the preparations. Before Albina went home, Mrs. Potts had come to the conclusion to follow Mrs. Montague's advice, but she shrunk from the task of telling her so in person. She determined to send her next morning a concise note, politely requesting her not to come; and she intended afterwards to call on her and apologize, on the plea of her party being by no means general, but still so large that every inch of room was an object of importance; also that the selection consisted entirely of persons well known to each other and accustomed to meet in company, and that there was every reason to fear that her gentle and modest friend Albina would have been unable to enjoy herself among so many strangers, &c., &c. Those excuses, she knew, were very flimsy, but she trusted to Albina's good nature, and she thought she could smooth off all by inviting both her and her mother to a sociable tea.

Next morning, Mrs. Potts, who was on no occasion very ready with her pen, considering that she professed to be *au fait* to everything, employed near an hour in manufacturing the following note to Albina.

"Mrs. Washington Potts' compliments to Miss Marsden, and she regrets being under the necessity of dispensing with Miss M.'s company, to join the social circle at her mansion-house this evening. Mrs. W. P. will explain hereafter, hoping Mrs. and Miss M. are both well. Mr. W. P. requests his respects to both ladies, as well as Miss Potts, and their favourite little La Fayette desires his best love."

This billet arrived while Albina had gone to her mantua-maker, to have her new dress fitted on for the last time. Her mother opened the note and read it; a liberty which no parent should take with the correspondence of a grown-up daughter. Mrs. Marsden was shocked at its contents, and at a loss to guess the motive of so strange an interdiction. At first her only emotion was resentment against Mrs. Potts. Then she thought of the disappointment and mortification of poor Albina, whom she pictured to herself passing a forlorn evening at home, perhaps crying in her own room. Next, she recollected the elegant new dress in which Albina would have looked so beautifully, and which would now be useless.

"Oh!" soliloquized Mrs. Marsden, "what a pity this unaccountable note was not dropped and lost in the street. But then, of course some one would have found and read it, and that would have been worse than all. How could Mrs. Potts be guilty of such abominable rudeness, as to desire poor Albina not to come, after she had been invited? But great people think they may do anything. I wish the note had fallen into the fire before it came to my hands; then Albina would have known nothing of it; she would have gone to the party, looking more charmingly than ever she did in her life; and she would be seen there, and admired, and make new acquaintances, and Mrs. Potts could do no otherwise than behave to her politely in her own house. Nobody would know of this vile billet (which perhaps after all is only a joke), and Mrs. Potts would suppose, that of course Albina had not received it; besides, I have no doubt that Mrs. Potts will send for her to-morrow, and make a satisfactory explanation. But then, to-night; if Albina could but get there to-night. What harm can possible arrive from my not showing her the note till to-morrow? Why should the dear girl be deprived of all the pleasure she anticipated this evening? And even if she expected no enjoyment whatever, still how great will be the advantage of having her seen at Mrs. Washington Potts's select party; it will at once get her on in the world. Of course Mrs. Potts will

conclude that the note had miscarried, and will treat her as if it had never been sent. I am really most strongly tempted to suppress it, and let Albina go."

The more Mrs. Marsden thought of this project, the less objectionable it appeared to her. When she saw Albina come home, delighted with her new dress, which fitted her exactly, and when she heard her impatiently wishing that evening was come, this weak and ill-judging mother could not resolve (as she afterwards said) to dash all her pleasant anticipations to the ground, and demolish her castles in the air. "My daughter shall be happy to-night," thought she, "whatever may be the event of to-morrow." She hastily concealed the note, and kept her resolution of not mentioning it to Albina.

Evening came, and Albina's beautiful hair was arranged and decorated by a fashionable French barber. She was dressed, and she looked charmingly.

Albina knew that Mrs. Potts had sent an invitation to the United States Hotel for Lieutenant Cheston, who was daily expected, but had not yet returned from New York, and she regretted much that she could not go to the party under his escort. She knew no one else of the company, and she had no alternative but to send for a carriage, and proceeded thither by herself, after her mother had despatched repeated messages to the hotel to know if Mr. Cheston had yet arrived, for he was certainly expected back that evening.

As Albina drove to the house, she felt all the terrors of diffidence coming upon her, and already repented that she had ventured on this enterprise alone. On arriving, she did not go into the ladies' room, but gave her hood and cloak at once to a servant, and tremulously requested another attendant to inform Mr. Potts that a lady wished to see him. Mr. Potts accordingly came out into the hall, and looked surprised at finding Albina there, for he had heard his wife and daughter talking of the note of interdiction. But concluding, as he often did, that it was in vain for him to try to comprehend the proceedings of women, he thought it best to say nothing.

On Albina requesting him to accompany her on her entrance, he gave her his arm in silence, and with a very perplexed face escorted her into the principal room. As he led her up to his wife, his countenance gradually changed from perplexity to something like fright. Albina paid her compliments to Mrs. Potts, who received her with evident amazement, and without replying. Mrs. Montague, who sat next to the lady of the mansion, opened still wider her immense eyes, and then, "to make assurance doubly sure," applied her opera-glass. Miss Montague first stared and then laughed.

Albina, much disconcerted, turned to look for a seat, Mr. Potts having withdrawn his arm. As she retired to the only vacant chair, she heard a half whisper running along the line of ladies, and though she could not distinguish the words so as to make any connected sense of them, she felt that they alluded to her.

"Can I believe my eyes?" said Mrs. Potts.

"The assurance of American girls is astonishing," said Mrs. Montague.

"She was forbidden to come," said Miss Montague to a young lady beside her. "Mrs. Potts herself forbade her to come."

"She was actually prohibited," resumed Mrs. Montague, leaning over to Mrs. Jones.

"I sent her myself a note of prohibition," said Mrs. Potts, leaning over to Mrs. Smith. "I had serious objections to having her here."

"I never saw such downright impudence," pursued Mrs. Montague. "This I suppose is one of the consequences of the liberty, and freedom and independence that you Americans are always talking about. I must tell Mr. Montague, for really this is too good to lose."

And beckoning her husband to come to her—"My dear," said she, "put down in your memorandum-book, that when American married ladies invite young ladies to parties, they on second thoughts forbid them to come, and that the said American young ladies boldly persist in coming in spite of the forbiddance."

And she then related to him the whole affair, at full length, and with numerous embellishments, looking all the time at poor Albina.

The story was soon circulated round the room in whispers and murmurs, and no one had candour or kindness to suggest the possibility of Miss Marsden's having never received the note.

Albina soon perceived herself to be an object of remark and animadversion, and she was sadly at a loss to divine the cause. The two ladies that were nearest to her, rose up and left their seats, while two others edged their chairs farther off. She knew no one, she was introduced to no one, but she saw that every one was looking at her as she sat by herself, alone, conspicuous, and abashed. Tea was waiting for a lady that came always last, and the whole company seemed to have leisure to gaze on poor Albina, and to whisper about her.

Her situation now became intolerable. She felt that there was nothing left for her but to go home. Unluckily she had ordered the carriage at eleven o'clock. At last she resolved on making a great effort, and on plea of a violent headache (a plea which by this time was literally true) to ask Mrs. Potts if she would allow a servant to bring a coach for her.

After several attempts, she rose for this purpose; but she saw at the same moment that all eyes were turned upon her. She tremblingly, and with downcast looks, advanced till she got into the middle of the room, and then all her courage deserted her at once, when she heard some one say, "I wonder what she is going to do next."

She stopped suddenly, and stood motionless, and she saw Miss Potts giggle, and heard her say to a school-girl near her, "I suppose she is going to speak a speech." She turned very pale, and felt as if she could gladly sink into the floor, when suddenly some one took her hand, and the voice of Bromley Cheston said to her, "Albina—Miss Marsden—I will conduct you wherever you wish to go"—and then, lowering his tone, he asked her, "Why this agitation—what has happened to distress you?"

Cheston had just arrived from New York, having been detained on the way by an accident that happened to one of the boats, and finding that Mrs. Marsden was in town, and had that day sent several messages for him, he repaired immediately to her lodgings. He had intended declining the invitation of Mrs. Potts, but when he found that Albina had gone thither, he hastily changed his dress and went to the party. When he entered, what was his amazement to see her standing alone in the centre of the room, and the company whispering and gazing at her.

Albina, on hearing the voice of a friend, the voice of Bromley Cheston, was completely overcome, and she covered her face and burst into tears. "Albina," said Cheston, "I will not now ask an explanation; I see that, whatever may have happened, you had best go home."

"Oh! most gladly, most thankfully," she exclaimed, in a voice almost inarticulate with sobs.

Cheston drew her arm within his, and bowing to Mrs. Potts, he led Albina out of the apartment, and conducted her to the staircase, whence she went to the ladies' room to compose herself a little, and prepare for her departure.

Cheston then sent one servant for a carriage, and another to tell Mr. Potts that he desired to speak with him in the hall. Potts came out with a pale, frightened face, and said—"Indeed, sir—indeed, I had nothing to do with it; ask the women. It was all them entirely. It was the women that laughed at Miss Albina, and whispered about her."

"For what?" demanded the lieutenant. "I insist on knowing for what cause."

"Why, sir," replied Potts, "she came here to my wife's party, after Mrs. Potts had sent a note desiring her to stay away; which was certainly an odd thing for a young lady to do."

"There is some mistake," exclaimed Cheston; "I'll stake my life that she never saw the note. And now, for what reason did Mrs. Potts write such a note? How did she dare—"

"Oh!" replied Potts, stammering and hesitating, "women will have their notions; men are not half so particular about their company. Somehow, after Mrs. Potts had invited Miss Albina, she thought, on farther consideration, that poor Miss Albina was not quite genteel enough for her party. You know all the women now make a great point of being genteel. But, indeed, sir (observing the storm that was gathering on Cheston's brow), indeed, sir—*I* was not in the least to blame. It was altogether the fault of my wife."

The indignation of the lieutenant was so highly excited, that nothing could have checked it but the recollection that Potts was in his own house. At this moment, Albina came down stairs, and Cheston took her hand and said to her: "Albina, did you receive a note from Mrs. Potts interdicting your presence at the party?"—"Oh! no, indeed!" exclaimed Albina, amazed at the question. "Surely she did not send me such a note."—"Yes she did, though," said Potts, quickly. —"Is it, then, necessary for me to say," said Albina, indignantly, "that, under those circumstances, nothing could have induced me to enter this house, now or ever! I saw or heard nothing of this note. And is this the reason that I have been treated so rudely—so cruelly—"

Upon this, Mr. Potts made his escape, and Cheston, having put Albina into the carriage, desired the coachman to wait a few moments. He then returned to the drawing-room and approached Mrs. Potts, who was standing with half the company collected round her, and explaining with great volubility the whole history of Albina Marsden. On the appearance of Cheston, she stopped short, and all her auditors looked foolish.

The young officer advanced into the centre of the circle, and, first addressing Mrs. Potts, he said to her—"In justice to Miss Marsden, I have returned, madam, to inform you that your note of interdiction, with which you have so kindly made all the company acquainted, was till this moment unknown to that young lady. But, even had she come wilfully, and in the full knowledge of your prohibition, no circumstances whatever could justify the rudeness with which I find she has been treated. I have now only to say that, if any gentleman presumes, either here or hereafter, to cast a reflection on the conduct of Miss Albina Marsden, in this or in any other instance, he must answer to me for the consequences. And if I find that any lady has invidiously misrepresented this occurrence, I shall insist on an atonement from her husband, her brother, or her admirer."

He then bowed and departed, and the company looked still more foolish.

"This lesson," thought Cheston, "will have the salutary effect of curing Albina of her predominant follies. She is a lovely girl, after all, and when withdrawn from the influence of her mother, will make a charming woman and an excellent wife."

Before the carriage stopped at the residence of Mrs. Marsden, Cheston had made Albina an offer of his heart and hand, and the offer was not refused.

Mrs. Marsden was scarcely surprised at the earliness of Albina's return from the party, for she had a secret misgiving that all was not right, that the suppression of the note would not eventuate well, and she bitterly regretted having done it. When her daughter related to her the story of the evening, Mrs. Marsden was overwhelmed with compunction; and, though Cheston was present, she could not refrain from acknowledging at once her culpability, for it certainly deserved no softer name. Cheston and Albina were shocked at this disclosure; but, in compassion to Mrs. Marsden, they forbore to add to her distress by a single comment. Cheston shortly after took his leave, saying to Albina as he departed, "I hope you are done for ever with Mrs. Washington Potts."

Next morning, Cheston seriously but kindly expostulated with Albina and her mother on the folly and absurdity of sacrificing their comfort, their time, their money, and, indeed, their self-respect, to the paltry distinction of being capriciously noticed by a few vain, silly, heartless people, inferior to themselves in everything but in wealth and in a slight tincture of soi-disant fashion; and who, after all, only took them on or threw them off as it suited their own convenience.

"What you say is very true, Bromley," replied Mrs. Marsden. "I begin to view these things in their proper light, and as Albina remarks, we ought to profit by this last lesson. To tell the exact truth, I have heard since I came to town that Mrs. Washington Potts is, after all, by no means in the first circle, and it is whispered that she and her husband are both of very low origin."

"No matter for her circle or her origin," said Cheston, "in our country the only acknowledged distinction should be that which is denoted by superiority of mind and manners."

Next day Lieutenant Cheston escorted Mrs. Marsden and Albina back to their own home—and a week afterwards he was sent unexpectedly on a cruise in the West Indies.

He returned in the spring, and found Mrs. Marsden more rational than he had ever known her, and Albina highly improved by a judicious course of reading which he had marked out for her, and still more by her intimacy with a truly genteel, highly talented, and very amiable family from the eastward, who had recently bought a house in the village, and in whose society she often wondered at the infatuation which had led her to fancy such a woman as Mrs. Washington Potts, with whom, of course, she never had any farther communication.

A recent and very large bequest to Bromley Cheston from a distant relation, made it no longer necessary that the young lieutenant should wait for promotion before he married Albina; and accordingly their union took place immediately on his return.

Before the Montagues left Philadelphia to prosecute their journey to the south, there arrived an acquaintance of theirs from England, who injudiciously "told the secrets of his prison-house," and made known in whispers "not loud but deep," that Mr. Dudley Montague, of Normancourt Park, Hants, (alias Mr. John Wilkins, of Lamb's Conduit Street, Clerkenwell), had long been well-known in London as a reporter for a newspaper; that he had recently married a widow, the ci-devant governess of a Somers Town Boarding-school, who had drawn her ideas of fashionable life from the columns of the Morning Post, and who famished her pupils so much to her own profit that she had been able to retire on a sort of fortune. With the assistance of this fund, she and her daughter (the young lady was in reality the offspring of her mother's first marriage) had accompanied Mr. Wilkins across the Atlantic: all three assuming the lordly name of Montague, as one well calculated to strike the republicans with proper awe. The truth was, that for a suitable consideration proffered by a tory publisher, the *soi-disant* Mr. Montague had undertaken to add another octavo to the numerous volumes of gross misrepresentation and real ignorance that profess to contain an impartial account of the United States of America.

MR. SMITH.

Those of my readers who recollect the story of Mrs. Washington Potts, may not be sorry to learn that in less than two years after the marriage of Bromley Cheston and Albina, Mrs. Marsden was united to a southern planter of great wealth and respectability, with whom she had become acquainted during a summer excursion to Newport. Mrs. Selbourne (that being her new name) was now, as her letters denoted, completely in her element, presiding over a large establishment, mistress of twelve house-servants, and almost continually engaged in doing the honours of a spacious mansion to a round of company, or in complying with similar invitations from the leading people of a populous neighbourhood, or in reciprocating visits with the most fashionable inhabitants of the nearest city. Her only regret was that Mrs. Washington Potts could not "be there to see." But then as a set-off, Mrs. Selbourne rejoiced in the happy reflection, that a distance of several hundred miles placed a great gulf between herself and Aunt Quimby, from whose Vandal incursions she now felt a delightful sense of security. She was not, however, like most of her compatriots, a warm advocate for the universal diffusion of railroads; neither did she assent very cordially to the common remarks about this great invention, annihilating both time and space, and bringing "the north and the south, and the east and the west" into the same neighbourhood.

Bromley Cheston, having succeeded to a handsome inheritance by the demise of an opulent relative, in addition to his house in Philadelphia, purchased as a summer residence that of his mother-in-law on the banks of the Delaware, greatly enlarging and improving it, and adding to its little domain some meadow and woodland; also a beautiful piece of ground which he converted into a green lawn sloping down towards the river, and bounded on one side by a shady road that led to a convenient landing-place.

The happiness of Albina and her husband (who in the regular course of promotion became Captain Cheston) was much increased by the society of Bromley's sister Myrtilla, a beautiful, sprightly, and intelligent girl, whom they invited to live with them after the death of her maternal grandmother, an eastern lady, with whom she had resided since the loss of her parents, and who had left her a little fortune of thirty thousand dollars.

Their winters were passed in Philadelphia, where Albina found herself quite at home in a circle far superior to that of Mrs. Washington Potts, who was one of the first to visit Mrs. Cheston on her marriage. This visit was of course received with civility, but returned by merely leaving a card at the door. No notice whatever was taken of Mrs. Potts's second call; neither was she ever invited to the house.

When Cheston was not at sea, little was wanting to complete the perfect felicity of the family. It is true they were not entirely exempt from the occasional annoyances and petty vexations, inseparable from even the happiest state of human life; but these were only transient shadows, that, on passing away, generally served as topics of amusement, and caused them to wonder how trifles, diverting in the recollection, could have really so troubled them at the time of occurrence. Such, for instance, were the frequent visitations of Mrs. Quimby, who told them (after they had enlarged their villa, and bought a carriage and a tilbury), "Really, good people, now that things are all so genteel, and pleasant, and full-handed, I think I shall be apt to favour you with my company the greatest part of every summer. There's no danger of Billy Fairfowl and Mary being jealous. They always let me go and come just as I please; and if I was to stay away ten years, I do not believe they'd be the least affronted."

As the old lady had intimated, her visits, instead of being "few and far between," were many and close together. It is said you may get used to anything, and therefore the Chestons *did not* sell off their property and fly the country on account of Aunt Quimby. Luckily she never brought with her any of the Fairfowl family, her son-in-law having sufficient tact to avoid on principle all visiting intercourse with people who were beyond his sphere: for, though certain of being kindly treated by the Chestons themselves, he apprehended that he and his would probably be looked down upon by persons whom they might chance to meet there. Mrs. Quimby, for her part, was totally obtuse to all sense of these distinctions.

One Monday evening, on his return from town, Captain Cheston brought his wife and sister invitations to a projected picnic party, among the managers of which were two of his intimate friends. The company was to consist chiefly of ladies and gentlemen from the city. Their design was to assemble on the following Thursday, at some pleasant retreat on the banks of the Delaware, and to recreate themselves with an unceremonious *fête champêtre*. "I invited them," continued the captain, "to make use of my grounds for the purpose. We can find an excellent place for them in the woods by the river side. Delham and Lonsgrave will be here to-morrow, to reconnoitre the capabilities of the place."

The ladies were delighted with the prospect of the picnic party; more especially on finding that most of the company were known to them.

"It will be charming," said Albina, "to have them near us, and to be able to supply them with many conveniences from our own house. You may be assured, dear Bromley, that I shall liberally do my part towards contributing to the picnickery. You know that our culinary preparations never go wrong now that I have more experience, good servants, and above all plenty to do with."

"How fortunate," said Myrtilla Cheston, "that Mrs. Quimby left us this morning. This last visit has been so long that I think she will scarcely favour us with another in less than two or three weeks. I hope she will not hear that the picnic is to be on our place."

"There is no danger," replied Cheston; "Aunt Quimby cannot possibly know any of the persons concerned in it. And besides, I met her to-day in the street, and she told me that she was going to set out on Wednesday for Baltimore, to visit Billy Fairfowl's sister, Mrs. Bagnell: 'Also,' said she, 'it will take me from this time to that to pack my things, as I never before went so far from home, and I dare say, I shall stay in Baltimore all the rest of the fall; I don't believe when the Bagnells once have me with them, they'll let me come away much this side of winter.'"

"I sincerely hope they will not!" exclaimed Albina; "I am so glad that Nancy Fairfowl has married a Baltimorean. I trust they will make their house so pleasant to Aunt Quimby, that she will transfer her favour from us to them. You know she often tells us that Nancy and herself are as like as two peas, both in looks and ways; and from her account, Johnny Bagnell must be a third pea, exactly resembling both of them."

"And yet," observed Cheston, "people whose minds are of the same calibre, do not always assimilate as well as might be supposed. When *too* nearly alike, and too close to each other, they frequently rub together so as to grate exceedingly."

We will pass over the intervening days by saying, that the preparations for the picnic party were

duly and successfully made: the arrangement of the ground being undertaken by Captain Cheston, and Lieutenants Delham and Lonsgrave, and completed with the taste, neatness, and judicious arrangement, which always distinguishes such things when done by officers, whether of army or navy.

The appointed Thursday arrived. It was a lovely day, early in September: the air being of that delightful and exhilarating temperature, that converts the mere sense of existence into pleasure. The heats of summer were over, and the sky had assumed its mildest tint of blue. All was calm and cool, and lovely, and the country seemed sleeping in luxurious repose. The grass, refreshed by the August rains, looked green as that of the "emerald isle;" and the forest trees had not yet begun to wear the brilliant colours of autumn, excepting here and there a maple whose foliage was already crimsoned. The orchards were loaded with fruit, glowing in ripeness; and the buckwheat fields, white with blossoms, perfumed the air with their honeyed fragrance. The rich flowers of the season were in full bloom. Birds of beautiful plumage still lingered in the woods, and were warbling their farewell notes previous to their return to a more southern latitude. The morning sunbeams danced and glittered on the blue waters of the broad and brimming Delaware, as the mirrored surface reflected its green and fertile banks with their flowery meadows, embowering groves, and modestly elegant villas.

The ground allotted to the party was an open space in the woodlands, which ran along an elevated ridge, looking directly down on the noble river that from its far-off source in the Catskill mountains, first dividing Pennsylvania from New York and then from New Jersey, carries its tributary stream the distance of three hundred miles, till it widens into the dim and lonely bay whose last waves are blended with the dark-rolling Atlantic. Old trees of irregular and fantastic forms, leaning far over the water, grew on the extreme edge of this bank; and from its steep and crumbling side protruded their wildly twisted roots, fringed with long fibres that had been washed bare by the tide which daily overflowed the broad strip of gray sand, that margined the river. Part of an old fence, that had been broken down and carried away by the incursions of a spring freshet, still remained, at intervals, along the verge of the bank; and his ladies had prevailed on Captain Cheston not to repair it, as in its ruinous state it looked far more picturesque than if new and in good order. In clearing this part of the forest many of the largest and finest trees had been left standing, and beneath their shade seats were now dispersed for the company. In another part of the opening, a long table had been set under a sort of marquée, constructed of colours brought from the Navy Yard, and gracefully suspended to the wide-spreading branches of some noble oaks: the stars and stripes of the most brilliant flag in the world, blending in picturesque elegance with the green and clustering foliage. At a little distance, under a group of trees, whose original forms were hidden beneath impervious masses of the forest grape-vine, was placed a side-table for the reception of the provisions, as they were unpacked from the baskets; and a clear shady brook which wandered near, rippling over a bed of pebbles on its way down to the river, afforded an unlimited supply of "water clear as diamond spark," and made an excellent refrigerator for the wine bottles.

Most of the company were to go up in the early boat: purposing to return in the evening by the railroad. Others, who preferred making their own time, were to come in carriages. As soon as the bell of the steamboat gave notice of her approach, Captain Cheston, with his wife and sister, accompanied by Lieutenants Delham and Lonsgrave, went down to the landing-place to receive the first division of the picnic party, which was chiefly of young people, all with smiling countenances, and looking as if they anticipated a very pleasant little fête. The Chestons were prepared to say with Seged of Ethiopia, "This day shall be a day of happiness"—but as the last of the gay procession stepped from the landing-board, Aunt Quimby brought up the rear.

"Oh! Bromley," said Mrs. Cheston, in a low voice, to her husband, "there is our most *mal-à-propos* of aunts—I thought she was a hundred miles off. This is really too bad—what shall we do with her? On this day, too, of all days—"

"We can do nothing, but endeavour, as usual, to make the best of her," replied the captain; "but where did she pick up that common-looking man, whom she seems to be hauling along with her?"

Mrs. Quimby now came up, and after the first greeting, Albina and Myrtilla endeavoured to withdraw from her the attention of the rest of the company, whom they conducted for the present to the house; but she seized upon the captain, to whom she introduced her companion by the appellation of Mr. Smith. The stranger looked embarrassed, and seemed as if he could scarcely presume to take the offered hand of Captain Cheston, and muttered something about trespassing on hospitality, but Aunt Quimby interrupted him with—"Oh! nonsense, now, Mr. Smith—where's the use of being so shame-faced, and making apologies for what can't be helped? I dare say my nephew and niece wonder quite as much at seeing *me* here, supposing that I'm safe and sound at Nancy Bagnell's, in Baltimore. But are you sure my baggage is all on the barrow? Just step back, and see if the big blue bandbox is safe, and the little yellow one; I should not wonder if the porter tosses them off, or crushes in the lids. All men seem to have a spite at bandboxes."

Mr. Smith meekly obeyed: and Aunt Quimby, taking the arm of Cheston, walked with him towards the house.

"Tell me who this gentleman is," said Captain Cheston. "He cannot belong to any of the Smiths of 'Market, Arch, Race, and Vine, Chestnut, Walnut, Spruce, and Pine.'"

"No," replied Mrs. Quimby, "nor to the Smiths of the cross-streets neither—nor to those up in the Northern Liberties, nor them down in Southwark. If you mean that he is not a Philadelphia man,

you've hit the nail on the head—but that's no reason there shouldn't be Smiths enough all over the world. However, the short and the long of it is this—I was to have started for Baltimore yesterday morning, bright and early, with Mr. and Mrs. Neverwait—but the shoemaker had not sent home my over-shoes, and the dyer had not finished my gray Canton crape shawl, that he was doing a cinnamon brown, and the milliner disappointed me in new-lining my bonnet; so I could not possibly go, you know, and the Neverwaits went without me. Well, the things *were* brought home last night, which was like coming a day after the fair. But as I was all packed up, I was bent upon going, somehow or other, this morning. So I made Billy Fairfowl take me down to the wharf, bag and baggage, to see if he could find anybody he knew to take charge of me to Baltimore. And there, as good luck would have it, we met with Mr. Smith, who has been several times in Billy's store, and bought domestics of him, and got acquainted with him; so that Billy, finding this poor Mr. Smith was a stranger, and a man that took no airs, and that did not set up for great things, got very sociable with him, and even invited him to tea. Now, when we met him on the wharf, Mr. Smith was quite a windfall for us, and he agreed to escort me to Baltimore, as of course he must, when he was asked. So, then, Billy being in a hurry to go to market for breakfast (before all the pick of the butter was gone), just bade me good-bye, and left me on the wharf, seeing what good hands I was in. Now, poor Mr. Smith being a stranger, and, of course, not so well used to steamboats as our own people, took me into the wrong one; for the New York and Baltimore boats were laying side by side, and seemed both mixed together, so that it was hard telling which was which, the crowd hiding everything from us. And after we got on board, I was so busy talking, and he a listening, and looking at the people, that we never found out our mistake till we were half-way up the river, instead of being half-way down it. And then I heard the ladies all round talking of a nic or a pic (or both I believe they called it), that they said was to be held on Captain Cheston's grounds. So, then, I pricked up my ears, and found that it was even so; and I told them that Captain Cheston was a near relation of mine, for his wife was own daughter to Mrs. Marsden that was, whose first husband was my sister Nelly's own son; and all about your marrying Albina, and what a handsome place you have, and how Mr. Smith and I had got into the wrong boat, and were getting carried off, being taken up the river instead of down."

"And what did the company say to all this?" inquired Cheston.

"Why, I don't exactly remember, but they must have said something; for I know those that were nearest stopped their own talk when I began. And, after awhile, I went across to the other side of the boat, where Mr. Smith was leaning over the railing, and looking at the foam flying from the wheels, (as if it was something new), and I pulled his sleeve, and told him we were quite in luck to-day, for we should be at a party without intending it. And he made a sort of humming and hawing about intruding himself (as he called it) without an invitation. But I told him to leave all that to me—I'd engage to pass him through. And he talked something of betaking himself to the nearest hotel after we landed, and waiting for the next boat down the river. However, I would not listen to that; and I made him understand that any how there could be no Baltimore to-day, as it was quite too late to get there now by any contrivance at all; and that we could go down with the other company this evening by the railroad, and take a fresh start to-morrow morning. Still he seemed to hold back; and I told him that as to our going to the party, all things had turned up as if it *was* to be, and I should think it a sin to fling such good luck aside, when it was just ready to drop into our mouths, and that he might never have another chance of being in such genteel company as long as he lived. This last hint seemed to do the business, for he gave a sort of a pleased smile, and made no more objection. And then I put him in mind that the people that owned the ground were my own niece and nephew, who were always crazy to see me, and have me with them; and I could answer for it they'd be just as glad to see any of my acquaintance—and as to the eatables, I was sure *his* being there would not make a cent's worth of difference, for I was certain there'd be plenty, and oceans of plenty, and I told him only to go and look at the baskets of victuals that were going up in the boat; besides all that, I knew the Chestons would provide well, for they were never backward with anything."

She now stopped to take breath, and Cheston inquired if her son-in-law knew nothing more of Mr. Smith than from merely seeing him in his store.

"Oh! yes; did not I tell you we had him to tea? You need not mention it to anybody—but (if the truth must be told) Mr. Smith is an Englishman. The poor man can't help that, you know: and I'm sure I should never have guessed it, for he neither looks English nor talks English. He is not a bit like that impudent Mr. Montague, who took slices out of Albina's big plum-cake hours before the company came, at that great party she gave for Mrs. Washington Potts."

"Pshaw!" said Cheston.

"Yes, you may well pshaw at it. But after all, for my own part, I must say I enjoyed myself very much that evening. I had a great deal of pleasant talk. I was sorry, afterwards, that I did not stay down stairs to the last, to see if all the company took French leave like me. If they did, it must have been quite a pretty sight to see them go. By the bye (now I talk of French leave) did you hear that the Washington Pottses have broke all to pieces and gone off to France to live upon the money that he made over to his wife to keep it from his creditors?"

"But, Mr. Smith—" resumed Cheston.

"Why, Bromley, what makes you so fidgety? Billy Fairfowl (though I say it that shouldn't say it) is not the man to ask people to tea unless he is sure they are pretty decent sort of folks. So he went first to the British Consul, and inquired about Mr. Smith, and described his look and dress just as he would a runaway 'prentice. And the Consul knew exactly who he meant, and told him he would

answer for Mr. Smith's being a man of good character, and perfectly honest and respectable. And that, you know, is quite as much as need be said of anybody. So, then, we had him to tea, quite in a plain way; but he seemed very easily satisfied, and though there were huckleberries, and cucumbers, and dough-nuts, he did not eat a thing but bread and butter, and not much of that, and took no sugar in his tea, and only drank two cups. And Billy talked to him the whole evening about our factories, and our coal and iron: and he listened quite attentively, and seemed to understand very well, though he did not say much; and he kept awake all the time, which was very clever of him, and more than Billy is used to. He seems like a good-hearted man, for he saved little Jane from pulling the tea-waiter down upon her head, as she was coming out from under the table; and he ran and picked up Johnny, when he fell over the rockers of the big chair, and wiped the blood off his nose with his own clean handkerchief. I dare say he's a good soul; but he is very humble-minded, and seems so afraid of saying wrong that he hardly says anything. Here he comes, trudging along beside the porter; and I see he has got all the baggage safe, even the brown paper parcel and the calico bag. That's his own trunk, under all the rest."

Mr. Smith now came up, and inquired of Captain Cheston for the nearest inn, that he might remain there till a boat passed down for Philadelphia. "Why, Mr. Smith," interrupted Aunt Quimby, "where's the sense of being so backward? We ought to be thankful for our good luck in getting here on the very day of the picnic, even though we *did* come by mistake. And now you *are* here, it's all nonsense for you to run away, and go and mope by yourself at a country tavern. I suppose you are afraid you're not welcome; but I'll answer for you as well as myself."

Civility to the stranger required that Captain Cheston should second Mrs. Quimby; and he did so in terms so polite that Mr. Smith was induced, with much diffidence, to remain.

"Poor man!" said Aunt Quimby, in a low voice, to the captain, "between ourselves, it's plain enough that he is not much used to being among great people, and he's afraid of feeling like a fish out of water. He must have a very poor opinion of himself, for even at Billy Fairfowl's he did not seem quite at home; though we all tried to encourage him, and I told him myself, as soon as we sat down to the tea-table, to make just as free as if he was in his own house."

Arrived at the mansion of the Chestons, Mrs. Quimby at first objected to changing her dress, which was a very rusty black silk, with a bonnet to match; declaring that she was sure nothing was expected of people who were on their travels, and that she saw no use in taking the trouble to unpack her baggage. She was, however, overruled by the representations of Albina, who offered to both unpack and re-pack for her. Accordingly she equipped herself in what she called her second-best suit. The gown was a thick rustling silk, of a very reddish brown, with a new inside kerchief of blue-tinted book muslin that had never been washed. Over her shoulders she pinned her Canton-crape shawl, whose brown tinge was entirely at variance with the shade of her gown. On her head was a stiff hard cap, trimmed with satin ribbon, of a still different brown colour, the ends of the bows sticking out horizontally, and scolloped into numerous points. She would not wear her best bonnet, lest it should be injured; and fortunately her worst was so small that she found, if she put it on, it would crush her second-best cap. She carried in one hand a stiff-starched handkerchief of imitation-cambric, which she considered too good to unfold; and with the other she held over her head a faded green parasol.

Thus equipped, the old lady set out with Captain and Mrs. Cheston for the scene of the picnic; the rest of the party being a little in advance of them. They saw Mr. Smith strolling about the lawn, and Mrs. Quimby called to him to come and give his arm to her niece, saying, "There, Albina, take him under your wing, and try to make him sociable, while I walk on with your husband. Bromley, how well you look in your navy-regimentals. I declare I'm more and more in luck. It is not everybody that can have an officer always ready and willing to 'squire them"—And the old lady (like many young ladies) unconsciously put on a different face and a different walk, while escorted by a gentleman in uniform.

"Bromley," continued Aunt Quimby, "I heard some of the picnic ladies in the boat saying that those which are to ride up are to bring a lion with them. This made me open my eyes, and put me all in quiver; so I could not help speaking out, and saying—I should make a real right down objection to his being let loose among the company, even if he was ever so tame. Then they laughed, and one of them said that a lion meant a great man; and asked me if I had never heard the term before. I answered that may be I had, but it must have slipped my memory; and that I thought it a great shame to speak of Christian people as if they were wild beasts."

"And who is this great man?" inquired Cheston.

"Oh! he's a foreigner from beyond sea, and he is coming with some of the ladies in their own carriage—Baron Somebody"—

"Baron Von Klingenberg," said Cheston, "I have heard of him."

"That's the very name. It seems he is just come from Germany, and has taken rooms at one of the tip-top hotels, where he has a table all to himself. I wonder how any man can bear to eat his victuals sitting up all alone, with not a soul to speak a word with. I think I should die if I had no body to talk to. Well—they said that this Baron is a person of very high *tone*, which I suppose means that he has a very loud voice—and from what I could gather, it's fashionable for the young ladies to fall in love with him, and they think it an honour to get a bow from him in Chesnut street, and they take him all about with them. And they say he has in his own country a castle that stands on banks of rind, which seems a strange foundation. Dear me—now we've got to the

picnic place—how gay and pretty everything looks, and what heaps of victuals there must be in all those baskets, and oceans of drinkables in all those bottles and demijohns. Mercy on me—I pity the dish-washers—when will they get through all the dirty plates! And I declare! how beautiful the flags look! fixed up over the table just like bed-curtains—I am glad you have plenty of chairs here, besides the benches.—And only see!—if here a'n't cakes and lemonade coming round."

The old lady took her seat under one of the large trees, and entered unhesitatingly into whatever conversation was within her hearing; frequently calling away the Chestons to ask them questions or address to them remarks. The company generally divided into groups; some sat, some walked, some talked; and some, retreating farther into the woods, amused themselves and each other with singing, or playing forfeits. There was, as is usual in Philadelphia assemblages, a very large proportion of handsome young ladies; and all were dressed in that consistent, tasteful, and decorous manner which distinguishes the fair damsels of the city of Penn.

In a short time Mrs. Quimby missed her protegée, and looking round for him she exclaimed—"Oh! if there is not Mr. Smith a sitting on a rail, just back of me, all the time. Do come down off the fence, Mr. Smith. You'll find a much pleasanter seat on this low stump behind me, than to stay perched up there. Myrtilla Cheston, my dear, come here—I want to speak to you."

Miss Cheston had the amiability to approach promptly and cheerfully: though called away from an animated conversation with two officers of the navy, two of the army, and three young lawyers, who had all formed a semicircle round four of the most attractive belles: herself being the cynosure.

"Myrtilla," said Aunt Quimby, in rather a low voice, "do take some account of this poor forlorn man that's sitting behind me. He's so very backward, and thinks himself such a mere nobody, that I dare say he feels bad enough at being here without an invitation, and all among strangers too—though I've told him over and over that he need not have the least fear of being welcome. There now—there's a good girl—go and spirit him up a little. You know you are at home here on your brother's own ground."

"I scarcely know how to talk to an Englishman," replied Myrtilla, in a very low voice.

"Why, can't you ask him, if he ever in his life saw so wide a river, and if he ever in his life saw such big trees, and if he don't think our sun a great deal brighter than his, and if he ever smelt buckwheat before?"

Myrtilla turned towards Mr. Smith (and perceiving from his ill-suppressed smile that he had heard Mrs. Quimby's instructions) like Olivia in the play, she humoured the jest by literally following them, making a curtsy to the gentleman, and saying, "Mr. Smith, did you ever in your life see so wide a river? did you ever in your life see such big trees? don't you think our sun a great deal brighter than yours? and did you ever smell buckwheat before?"

"I have not had that happiness," replied Mr. Smith with a simpering laugh, as he rose from the old stump, and, forgetting that it was not a chair, tried to hand it to Myrtilla. She bowed in acknowledgment, placed herself on the seat—and for awhile endeavoured to entertain Mr. Smith, as he stood leaning (not picturesquely) against a portion of the broken fence.

In the mean time Mrs. Quimby continued to call on the attention of those around her. To some the old lady was a source of amusement, to others of disgust and annoyance. By this time they all understood who she was, and how she happened to be there. Fixing her eyes on a very dignified and fashionable looking young lady, whom she had heard addressed as Miss Lybrand, and (who with several others) was sitting nearly opposite, "Pray, Miss," said Aunt Quimby, "was your grandfather's name Moses?"

"It was," replied the young lady.

"Oh! then you must be a granddaughter of old Moses Lybrand, who kept a livery stable up in Race street; and his son Aaron always used to drive the best carriage, after the old man was past doing it himself. Is your father's name Aaron?"

"No, madam," said Miss Lybrand—looking very red—"My father's name is Richard."

"Richard—he must have been one of the second wife's children. Oh! I remember seeing him about when he was a little boy. He had a curly head, and on week days generally wore a gray jacket and corduroy trowsers; but he had a nice bottle-green suit for Sunday. Yes, yes—they went to our church, and sat up in the gallery. And he was your father, was he? Then Aaron must have been your own uncle. He was a very careful driver for a young man. He learnt of his father. I remember just after we were first married, Mr. Quimby hiring Moses Lybrand's best carriage to take me and my bridesmaids and groomsmen on a trip to Germantown. It was a yellow coachee with red curtains, and held us all very well with close packing. In those days people like us took their wedding rides to Germantown and Frankford and Darby, and ordered a dinner at a tavern with custards and whips, and came home in the evening. And the high-flyers, when *they* got married, went as far as Chester or Dunks's Ferry. They did not then start off from the church door and scour the roads all the way to Niagara just because they were brides and grooms; as if that was any reason for flying their homes directly. But pray what has become of your uncle Aaron?"

"I do not know," said the young lady, looking much displeased; "I never heard of him."

"But did not you tell me your grandfather's name was Moses?"

"There may have been other Moses Lybrands."

"Was not he a short pockmarked man, that walked a little lame, with something of a cast in his right eye: or, I won't be positive, may be it was in the left?"

"I am very sure papa's father was no such looking person," replied Miss Lybrand, "but I never saw him—he died before I was born—"

"Poor old man," resumed Mrs. Quimby, "if I remember right, Moses became childish many years before his death."

Miss Lybrand then rose hastily, and proposed to her immediate companions a walk farther into the woods; and Myrtilla, leaving the vicinity of Mr. Smith, came forward and joined them: her friends making a private signal to her not to invite the aforesaid gentleman to accompany them.

Aunt Quimby saw them depart, and looking round said—"Why, Mr. Smith—have the girls given you the slip? But to be sure, they meant you to follow them!"

Mr. Smith signified that he had not courage to do so without an invitation, and that he feared he had already been tiring Miss Cheston.

"Pho, pho," said Mrs. Quimby, "you are quite too humble. Pluck up a little spirit, and run after the girls."

"I believe," replied he, "I cannot take such a liberty."

"Then I'll call Captain Cheston to introduce you to some more gentlemen. Here—Bromley—"

"No—no," said Mr. Smith, stopping her apprehensively; "I would rather not intrude any farther upon his kindness."

"I declare you are the shame-facedest man I ever saw in my life. Well, then, you can walk about, and look at the trees and bushes. There's a fine large buttonwood, and there's a sassafras; or you can go to the edge of the bank and look at the river and watch how the tide goes down and leaves the splatter-docks standing in the mud. See how thick they are at low water—I wonder if you couldn't count them. And may be you'll see a wood-shallop pass along, or may be a coal-barge. And who knows but a sturgeon may jump out of the water, and turn head over heels and back again—it's quite a handsome sight!"

Good Mr. Smith did as he was bidden, and walked about and looked at things, and probably counted the splatter-docks, and perhaps saw a fish jump.

"It's all bashfulness—nothing in the world but bashfulness," pursued Mrs. Quimby; "that's the only reason Mr. Smith don't talk."

"For my part," said a very elegant looking girl, "I am perfectly willing to impute the taciturnity of Mr. Smith (and that of all other silent people) to modesty. But yet I must say, that as far as I have had opportunities of observing, most men above the age of twenty have sufficient courage to talk, if they know what to say. When the head is well furnished with ideas, the tongue cannot habitually refrain from giving them utterance."

"That's a very good observation," said Mrs. Quimby, "and suits *me* exactly. But as to Mr. Smith, I do believe it's all bashfulness with him. Between ourselves (though the British consul warrants him respectable) I doubt whether he was ever in such genteel society before; and may be he thinks it his duty to listen and not to talk, poor man. But then he ought to know, that in our country he need not be afraid of nobody: and that here all people are equal, and one is as good as another."

"Not exactly," said the young lady, "we have in America, as in Europe, numerous gradations of mind, manners, and character. Politically we are equal, as far as regards the rights of citizens and the protection of the laws; and also we have no privileged orders. But individually it is difficult for the refined and the vulgar, the learned and the ignorant, the virtuous and the vicious to associate familiarly and indiscriminately, even in a republic."

The old lady looked mystified for a few moments, and then proceeded—"As you say, people's different. We can't be hail fellow well met, with Tom, Dick, and Harry—but for my part I think myself as good as anybody!"

No one contradicted this opinion, and just then a gentleman came up and said to the young lady—"Miss Atwood, allow me to present you with a sprig of the last wild roses of the season. I found a few still lingering on a bush in a shady lane just above."

"'I bid their blossoms in my bonnet wave,'"

said Miss Atwood—inserting them amid one of the riband bows.

"Atwood—Atwood," said Aunt Quimby, "I know the name very well. Is not your father Charles Atwood, who used to keep a large wholesale store in Front street?"

"I have the happiness of being that gentleman's daughter," replied the young lady.

"And you live up Chestnut now, don't you—among the fashionables?"

"My father's house *is* up Chestnut street."

"Your mother was a Ross, wasn't she?"

"Her maiden name *was* Ross."

"I thought so," proceeded Mrs. Quimby; "I remember your father very well. He was the son of Tommy Atwood, who kept an ironmonger's shop down Second street by the New Market. Your grandfather was a very obliging man, rather fat. I have often been in his store, when we lived down that way. I remember once of buying a waffle-iron of him, and when I tried it and found it did not make a pretty pattern on the waffles, I took it back to him to change it: but having no other pattern, he returned me the money as soon as I asked him. And another time, he had the kitchen tongs mended for me without charging a cent, when I put him in mind that I had bought them there; which was certainly very genteel of him. And no wonder he made a fortune; as all people do that are obliging to their customers, and properly thankful to them. Your grandfather had a brother, Jemmy Atwood, who kept a china shop up Third street. He was your great-uncle, and he married Sally Dickison, whose father, old Adam Dickison, was in the shoemaking line, and died rich. I have heard Mr. Quimby tell all about them. He knew all the family quite well, and he once had a sort of notion of Sally Dickison himself, before he got acquainted with me. Old Adam Dickison was a very good man, but he and his wife were rather too fond of family names. He called one of his daughters Sarah, after his mother, and another Sarah, after his wife; for he said 'there couldn't be too many Sally Dickisons.' But they found afterwards they could not get along without tacking Ann to one of the Sarahs, and Jane to the other. Then they had a little girl whom they called Debby, after some aunt Deborah. But little Debby died, and next they had a boy; yet rather than the name should be lost, they christened him Debbius. I wish I could remember whether Debbius was called after the little Debby or the big one. Sometimes I think it was one and sometimes t'other—I dare say Miss Atwood, you can tell, as you belong to the family?"

"I am glad that I can set this question at rest," replied Miss Atwood, smiling heroically; "I have heard the circumstance mentioned when my father has spoken of his great-uncle Jemmy, the chinaman, and of the shoemaker's family into which uncle Jemmy married, and in which were the two Sallys. Debbius was called equally after his sister and his aunt."

Then turning to the very handsome and *distingué*-looking young gentleman who had brought her the flowers, and who had seemed much amused at the foregoing dialogue, Miss Atwood took his hand, and said to Aunt Quimby: "Let me present to you a grandson of that very Debbius, Mr. Edward Symmington, my sort of cousin; and son of Mr. Symmington, the lawyer, who chanced to marry Debbius's daughter."

Young Symmington laughed, and, after telling Miss Atwood that she did everything with a good grace, he proposed that they should join some of their friends who were amusing themselves further up in the woods. Miss Atwood took his arm, and, bowing to Mrs. Quimby, they departed.

"That's a very pleasant young lady," said she; "I am glad I've got acquainted with her. She's very much like her grandfather, the ironmonger; her nose is the very image of old Benny's."

Fearing that *their* turn might come next, all the young people now dispersed from the vicinity of Aunt Quimby, who, accosting a housewifely lady that had volunteered to superintend the arrangements of the table, proposed going with her to see the baskets unpacked.

The remainder of the morning passed pleasantly away; and about noon, Myrtilla Cheston and her companions, returning from their ramble, gave notice that the carriages from town were approaching. Shortly after, there appeared at the entrance of the wood, several vehicles filled with ladies and gentlemen, who had preferred this mode of conveyance to coming up in the early boat. Most of the company went to meet them, being curious to see exactly who alighted.

When the last carriage drew up, there was a buzz all round: "There is the Baron! there is the Baron Von Klingenberg; as usual, with Mrs. Blake Bentley and her daughters!"

After the new arrivals had been conducted by the Chestons to the house, and adjusted their dresses, they were shown into what was considered the drawing-room part of the woods, and accommodated with seats. But it was very evident that Mrs. Blake Bentley's party were desirous of keeping chiefly to themselves, talking very loudly to each other, and seemingly resolved to attract the attention of every one round.

"Bromley," said Mrs. Quimby, having called Captain Cheston to her, "is that a baron?"

"That is the Baron Von Klingenberg."

"Well, between ourselves, he's about as ugly a man as ever I laid my eyes on. At least, he looks so at that distance; a clumsy fellow, with high shoulders and a round back, and his face all over hair, and as bandy as he can be, besides; and he's not a bit young, neither."

"Barons never seem to me young," said Miss Turretville, a young lady of the romantic school, "but Counts always do."

"I declare even Mr. Smith is better looking," pursued Aunt Quimby, fixing her eyes on the baron; "don't you think so, Miss?"

"I think nothing about him," replied the fair Turretville.

"Mr. Smith," said Myrtilla, "perhaps is not actually ugly, and, if properly dressed, might look tolerably; but he is too meek and too weak. I wasted much time in trying to entertain him, as I sat under the tree; but he only looked down and simpered, and scarcely ventured a word in reply. One thing is certain, I shall take no further account of him."

"Now, Myrtilla, it's a shame, to set your face against the poor man in this way. I dare say he is very good."

"That is always said of stupid people."

"No doubt it would brighten him wonderfully, if you were to dance with him when the ball begins."

"Dance!" said Myrtilla, "dance with *him*. Do you suppose he knows either a step or a figure? No, no! I shall take care never to exhibit myself as Mr. Smith's partner, and I beg of you, Aunt Quimby, on no account to hint such a thing to him. Besides, I am already engaged three sets deep," and she ran away, on seeing that Mr. Smith was approaching.

"Well, Mr. Smith," said the old lady, "have you been looking at the shows of the place? And now the greatest show of all has arrived—the Baron of Clinkanbeg. Have you seen him?"

"I believe I have," replied Mr. Smith.

"You wander about like a lost sheep, Mr. Smith," said Aunt Quimby, protectingly, "and look as if you had not a word to throw at a dog; so sit down and talk to *me*. There's a dead log for you. And now you shan't stir another step till dinner-time." Mr. Smith seated himself on the dead log, and Mrs. Quimby proceeded: "I wish, though, we could find places a little nearer to the baron and his ladies, and hear them talk. Till to-day, I never heard a nobleman speak in my life, having had no chance. But, after all, I dare say they have voices much like other people. Did you ever happen to hear any of them talk, when you lived in England?"

"Once or twice, I believe," said Mr. Smith.

"Of course—excuse me, Mr. Smith—but, of course, they didn't speak to *you*?"

"If I recollect rightly, they chanced to have occasion to do so."

"On business, I suppose. Do noblemen go to shops themselves and buy their own things? Mr. Smith, just please to tell me what line you are in."

Mr. Smith looked very red, and cast down his eyes. "I am in the tin line," said he, after a pause.

"The tin line! Well, never mind; though, to be sure, I did not expect you were a tinner. Perhaps you do a little also in the japan way?"

"No," replied Mr. Smith, magnanimously, "I deal in nothing but tin, plain tin!"

"Well, if you think of opening a shop in Philadelphia, I am pretty sure Billy Fairfowl will give you his custom; and I'll try to get Mrs. Pattypan and Mrs. Kettleworth to buy all their tins of you."

Mr. Smith bowed his head in thankfulness.

"One thing I'm sure of," continued Aunt Quimby, "you'll never be the least above your business. And, I dare say, after you get used to our American ways, and a little more acquainted with our people, you'll be able to take courage and hold up your head, and look about quite pert."

Poor Mr. Smith covered his face with his hands and shook his head, as if repelling the possibility of his ever looking pert.

The Baron Von Klingenberg and his party were all on chairs, and formed an impervious group. Mrs. Blake Bentley sat on one side of him, her eldest daughter on the other, the second and third Miss Bentleys directly in front, and the fourth, a young lady of eighteen, who affected infantine simplicity and passed for a child, seated herself innocently on the grass at the baron's feet. Mrs. Bentley was what some call a fine-looking woman, being rather on a large scale, with fierce black eyes, a somewhat acquiline nose, a set of very white teeth (from the last new dentist), very red cheeks, and a profusion of dark ringlets. Her dress, and that of her daughters, was always of the most costly description, their whole costume being made and arranged in an ultra fashionable manner. Around the Bentley party was a circle of listeners, and admirers, and enviers; and behind that circle was another and another. Into the outworks of the last, Aunt Quimby pushed her way, leading, or rather pulling, the helpless Mr. Smith along with her.

The Baron Von Klingenberg (to do him justice) spoke our language with great facility, his foreign accent being so slight that many thought they could not perceive it at all. Looking over the heads of the ladies immediately around him, he levelled his opera-glass at all who were within his view, occasionally inquiring about them of Mrs. Blake Bentley, who also could not see without her glass. She told him the names of those whom she considered the most fashionable, adding, confidentially, a disparaging remark upon each. Of a large proportion of the company, she affected, however, to know nothing, replying to the baron's questions with: "Oh! I really cannot tell you. They are people whom one does not know—very respectable, no doubt; but not the sort of persons one meets in society. You must be aware that on these occasions the company is

always more or less mixed, for which reason I generally bring my own party along with me."

"This assemblage," said the baron, "somewhat reminds me of the annual *fêtes* I give to my serfs in the park that surrounds my castle, at the cataract of the Rhine."

Miss Turretville had just come up, leaning on the arm of Myrtilla Cheston. "Let us try to get nearer to the baron," said she; "he is talking about castles. Oh! I am so glad that I have been introduced to him. I met him the other evening at Mrs. De Mingle's select party, and he took my fan out of my hand and fanned himself with it. There is certainly an elegant ease about European gentlemen that our Americans can never acquire."

"Where is the ease and elegance of Mr. Smith?" thought Myrtilla, as she looked over at that forlorn individual shrinking behind Aunt Quimby.

"As I was saying," pursued the baron, lolling back in his chair and applying to his nose Mrs. Bentley's magnificent essence-bottle, "when I give these *fêtes* to my serfs, I regale them with Westphalia hams from my own hunting-grounds, and with hock from my own vineyards."

"Dear me! ham and hock!" ejaculated Mrs. Quimby.

"Baron," said Miss Turretville, "I suppose you have visited the Hartz mountains?"

"My castle stands on one of them."

"Charming! Then you have seen the Brocken?"

"It is directly in front of my ramparts."

"How delightful! Do you never imagine that on a stormy night you hear the witches riding through the air, to hold their revels on the Brocken? Are there still brigands in the Black Forest?"

"Troops of them. The Black Forest is just back of my own woods. The robbers were once so audacious as to attack my castle, and we had a bloody fight. But we at length succeeded in taking all that were left alive."

"What a pity! Was their captain anything like Charles de Moor?"

"Just such a man."

"Baron," observed Myrtilla, a little mischievously, "the situation of your castle must be *unique*; in the midst of the Hartz mountains, at the falls of the Rhine, with the Brocken in front, and the Black Forest behind."

"You doat on the place, don't you?" asked Miss Turretville. "Do you live there always?"

"No; only in the hunting season. I am equally at home in all the capitals of the continent. I might, perhaps, be chiefly at my native place, Vienna, only my friend, the emperor, is never happy but when I am with him; and his devotion to me is rather overwhelming. The truth is, one gets surfeited with courts, and kings, and princes; so I thought it would be quite refreshing to take a trip to America, having great curiosity to see what sort of a place it is. I recollect, at the last court ball, the emperor was teazing me to waltz with his cousin, the Archduchess of Hesse Hoblingen, who, he feared, would be offended if I neglected her. But her serene highness dances as if she had a cannon-ball chained to each foot, and so I got off by flatly telling my friend the emperor that if women chose to go to balls in velvet and ermine, and with coronets on their heads, they might get princes or some such people to dance with them; as for my part, it was rather excruciating to whirl about with persons in heavy royal robes!"

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Miss Turretville, "did you venture to talk so to an emperor? Of course before next day you were loaded with chains and immured in a dungeon; from which I suppose you escaped by a subterranean passage."

"Not at all; my old crony the emperor knows his man; so he only laughed and slapped me on the shoulder, and I took his arm, and we sauntered off together to the other end of the grand saloon. I think I was in my hussar uniform; I recollect that evening I broke my quizzing glass, and had to borrow the Princess of Saxe Blinkenberg's."

"Was it very elegant—set round with diamonds?" asked Miss Matilda Bentley, putting up to her face a hand on which glittered a valuable brilliant.

"Quite likely it was, but I never look at diamonds; one gets so tired of them. I have not worn any of mine these seven years; I often joke with my friend Prince Esterhazy about his diamond coat, that he *will* persist in wearing on great occasions. Its glitter really incommodes my eyes when he happens to be near me, as he generally is. Whenever he moves you may track him by the gems that drop from it, and you may hear him far off by their continual tinkling as they fall."

"Only listen to that, Mr. Smith," said Aunt Quimby aside to her protegée, "I do not believe there is such a man in the world as that Hester Hazy with his diamond coat, that he's telling all this rigmarole about. It sounds like one of Mother Bunch's tales."

"I rather think there is such a man," said Mr. Smith.

"Nonsense, Mr. Smith, why you're a greater goose than I supposed!"

Mr. Smith assented by a meek bow.

Dinner was now announced. The gentlemen conducted the ladies, and Aunt Quimby led Mr. Smith; but she could not prevail on him to take a seat beside her, near the head of the table, and directly opposite to the Baron and his party. He humbly insisted on finding a place for himself very low down, and seemed glad to get into the neighbourhood of Captain Cheston, who presided at the foot.

The Blake Bentley party all levelled their glasses at Aunt Quimby; but the old lady stood fire amazingly well, being busily engaged in preparing her silk gown against the chance of injury from any possible accident, tucking a napkin into her belt, pinning a pocket handkerchief across the body of her dress, turning up her cuffs, and tying back the strings of her cap to save the ribbon from grease-spots.

The dinner was profuse, excellent, and handsomely arranged: and for a while most of the company were too earnestly occupied in satisfying their appetites to engage much in conversation. Aunt Quimby sent a waiter to Captain Cheston to desire him to take care of poor Mr. Smith: which message the waiter thought it unnecessary to deliver.

Mrs. Blake Bentley and her daughter Matilda sat one on each side of the Baron, and showed rather more assiduity in helping him than is customary from ladies to gentlemen. Also their solicitude in anticipating his wants was a work of super-erogation, for the Baron could evidently take excellent care of himself, and was unremitting in his applications to every one round him for everything within their reach, and loud and incessant in his calls to the waiters for clean plates and clean glasses.

When the dessert was set on, and the flow of soul was succeeding to the feast which, whether of reason or not, had been duly honoured, Mrs. Quimby found leisure to look round, and resume her colloquy.

"I believe, madam, your name is Bentley," said she to the lofty looking personage directly opposite.

"I am Mrs. Blake Bentley," was the reply, with an imperious stare that was intended to frown down all further attempts at conversation. But Aunt Quimby did not comprehend repulsion, and had never been silenced in her life—so she proceeded—

"I remember your husband very well. He was a son of old Benny Bentley up Second street, that used to keep the sign of the Adam and Eve, but afterwards changed it to the Liberty Tree. His wife was a Blake—that was the way your husband came by his name. Her father was an upholsterer, and she worked at the trade before she was married. She made two bolsters and three pillows for me at different times; though I'm not quite sure it was not two pillows and three bolsters. He had a brother, Billy Blake, that was a painter: so he must have been your husband's uncle."

"Excuse me," said Mrs. Blake Bentley, "I don't understand what you are talking about. But I'm very sure there were never any artist people in the family."

"Oh! Billy Blake was a painter and glazier both," resumed Mrs. Quimby; "I remember him as well as if he was my own brother. We always sent for him to mend our broken windows. I can see him now—coming with his glass box and his putty. Poor fellow, he was employed to put a new coat of paint on Christ Church steeple, which we thought would be a good job for him: but the scaffold gave way and he fell down and broke his leg. We lived right opposite, and saw him tumble. It's a mercy he wasn't killed right out. He was carried home on a hand-barrow. I remember the afternoon as well as if it were yesterday. We had a pot-pie for dinner that day; and I happened to have on a new calico gown, a green ground with a yellow sprig in it. I have some of the pieces now in patch-work."

Mrs. Blake Bentley gave Mrs. Quimby a look of unqualified disdain, and then turning to the baron, whispered him to say something that might stop the mouth of that abominable old woman. And by way of beginning she observed aloud, "Baron, what very fine plums these are!"

"Yes," said the baron, helping himself to them profusely, "and apropos to plums—one day when I happened to be dining with the king of Prussia, there were some very fine peaches at table (we were sitting, you know, trifling, over the dessert), and the king said to me, 'Klingenberg, my dear fellow, let's try which of us can first break that large looking-glass by shooting a peach-stone at it.'"

"Dear me! what a king!" interrupted Mrs. Quimby, "and now I look at you again, sir (there, just now, with your head turned to the light), there's something in your face that puts me in mind of Jacob Stimbel, our Dutch young man that used to live with us and help to do the work. Mr. Quimby bought him at the wharf out of a redemptioner ship. He was to serve us three years: but before his time was up be ran away (as they often do) and went to Lancaster, and set up his old trade of a carpenter, and married a bricklayer's daughter, and got rich and built houses, and had three or four sons—I think I heard that one of them turned out a pretty bad fellow. I can see Jake Stimbel now, carrying the market-basket after me, or scrubbing the pavement. Whenever I look at you I think of him; may be he was some relation of yours, as you both came from Germany?"

"A relation of mine, madam!" said the Baron.

"There now—there's Jake Stimbel to the life. He had just that way of stretching up his eyes and drawing down his mouth when he did not know what to say, which was usually the case after he stayed on errands."

The baron contracted his brows, and bit in his lips.

"Fix your face as you will," continued Mrs. Quimby, "you are as like him as you can look. I am sure I ought to remember Jacob Stimbel, for I had all the trouble of teaching him to do his work, besides learning him to talk American; and as soon as he had learnt, he cleared himself off, as I told you, and ran away from us."

The baron now turned to Matilda Bentley, and endeavoured to engage her attention by an earnest conversation in an under tone; and Mrs. Bentley looked daggers at Aunt Quimby, who said in a low voice to a lady that sat next to her, "What a pity Mrs. Bentley has such a violent way with her eyes. She'd be a handsome woman if it was not for that."

Then resuming her former tone, the impenetrable old lady continued, "Some of these Dutch people that came over German redemptioners, and were sold out of ships, have made great fortunes." And then turning to a lady who sat on the other side, she proceeded to enumerate various wealthy and respectable German families whose grandfathers and grandmothers had been sold out of ships. Bromley Cheston, perceiving that several of the company were wincing under this infliction, proposed a song from one of the young officers whom he knew to be an accomplished vocalist. This song was succeeded by several others, and during the singing the Blake Bentley party gradually slipped away from the table.

After dinner the company withdrew and dispersed themselves among the trees, while the servants, &c., were dining. Mrs. Cheston vainly did her utmost to prevail on Aunt Quimby to go to the house and take a *siesta*. "What for?" said Mrs. Quimby, "why should I go to sleep when I ain't a bit sleepy. I never was wider awake in my life. No, no—these parties don't come every day; and I'll make the most of this now I have had the good luck to be at it. But, bless me! now I think of it, I have not laid eyes on Mr. Smith these two hours—I hope he is not lost. When did he leave the table? Who saw him go? He's not used to being in the woods, poor man!"

The sound of the tambourine now denoted the approach of the musicians, and the company adjourned to the dancing ground, which was a wide opening in the woods shaded all round with fine trees, under which benches had been placed. For the orchestra a little wooden gallery had been erected about eight feet from the ground, running round the trunk and amid the spreading boughs of an immense hickory.

The dancers had just taken their places for the first set, when they were startled by the shrieks of a woman, which seemed to ascend from the river-beach below. The gentlemen and many of the ladies ran to the edge of the bank to ascertain the cause, and Aunt Quimby, looking down among the first, exclaimed, "Oh! mercy! if there isn't Mr. Smith a collaring the baron, and Miss Matilda a screaming for dear life!"

"The baron collaring Mr. Smith, you mean," said Myrtilla, approaching the bank.

"No, no—I mean as I say. Why who'd think it was in Mr. Smith to do such a thing! Oh! see, only look how he shakes him. And now he gives him a kick, only think of doing all that to a baron! but I dare say he deserves it. He looks more like Jake Stimbel than ever."

Captain Cheston sprung down the bank (most of the other gentlemen running after him), and immediately reaching the scene of action rescued the foreigner, who seemed too frightened to oppose any effectual resistance to his assailant.

"Mr. Smith," said Captain Cheston, "what is the meaning of this outrage,—and in the presence of a lady, too!"

"The lady must excuse me," replied Mr. Smith, "for it is in her behalf I have thus forgotten myself so far as to chastise on the spot a contemptible villain. Let us convey Miss Bentley up the bank, for she seems greatly agitated, and I will then explain to the gentlemen the extraordinary scene they have just witnessed."

"Only hear Mr. Smith, how he's talking out!" exclaimed Aunt Quimby. "And there's the baron-fellow putting up his coat collar and sneaking off round the corner of the bank. I'm so glad he's turned out a scamp!"

Having reached the top of the bank, Matilda Bentley, who had nearly fainted, was laid on a bench and consigned to the care of her mother and sisters. A flood of tears came to her relief, and while she was indulging in them, Mrs. Bentley joined the group who were assembled round Mr. Smith and listening to his narrative.

Mr. Smith explained that he knew this *soi-disant* Baron Von Klingenberg to be an impostor and a swindler. That he had, some years since, under another name, made his appearance in Paris, as an American gentleman of German origin, and large fortune; but soon gambled away all his money. That he afterwards, under different appellations, visited the principal cities of the continent, but always left behind the reputation of a swindler. That he had seen him last in London, in the capacity of valet to the real Baron Von Klingenberg, who, intending a visit to the United States, had hired him as being a native of America, and familiar with the country and its customs. But an unforeseen circumstance having induced that gentleman to relinquish this

transatlantic voyage, his American valet robbed him of a large sum of money and some valuable jewels, stole also the letters of introduction which had been obtained by the real Baron, and with them had evidently been enabled to pass himself for his master. To this explanation, Mr. Smith added that while wandering among the trees on the edge of the bank, he had seen the impostor on the beach below, endeavouring to persuade Miss Bentley to an elopement with him; proposing that they should repair immediately to a place in the neighbourhood, where the railroad cars stopped on their way to New York, and from thence proceed to that city, adding,—"You know there is no overtaking a railroad car, so all pursuit of us will be in vain; besides, when once married all will be safe, as you are of age and mistress of your own fortune." "Finding," continued Mr. Smith, "that he was likely to succeed in persuading Miss Bentley to accompany him, I could no longer restrain my indignation, which prompted me to rush down the bank and adopt summary measures in rescuing the young lady from the hands of so infamous a scoundrel, whom nothing but my unwillingness to disturb the company prevented me from exposing as soon as I saw him."

"Don't believe him," screamed Mrs. Blake Bentley; "Mr. Smith indeed! Who is to take *his* word? Who knows what Mr. Smith is?"

"I do," said a voice from the crowd; and there stepped forward a gentlemen, who had arrived in a chaise with a friend about half an hour before. "I had the pleasure of knowing him intimately in England, when I was minister to the court of St. James's."

"May be you bought your tins at his shop," said Aunt Quimby.

The ex-ambassador in a low voice exchanged a few words with Mr. Smith; and then taking his hand, presented him as the Earl of Huntingford, adding, "The only tin he deals in is that produced by his extensive mines in Cornwall."

The whole company were amazed into a silence of some moments: after which there was a general buzz of favourable remark; Captain Cheston shook hands with him, and all the gentlemen pressed forward to be more particularly introduced to Lord Huntingford.

"Dear me!" said Aunt Quimby; "to think that I should have been so sociable with a lord—and a real one too—and to think how he drank tea at Billy Fairfowl's in the back parlour, and ate bread and butter just like any other man—and how he saved Jane, and picked up Johnny—I suppose I must not speak to you now, Mr. Smith, for I don't know how to begin calling you my lord. And you don't seem like the same man, now that you can look and talk like other people: and (excuse my saying so) even your dress looks genteeler."

"Call me still Mr. Smith, if you choose," replied Lord Huntingford; and, turning to Captain Cheston, he continued—"Under that name I have had opportunities of obtaining much knowledge of your *unique* and interesting country:—knowledge that will be useful to me all the remainder of my life, and that I could not so well have acquired in my real character."

He then explained, that being tired of travelling in Europe, and having an earnest desire to see America thoroughly, and more particularly to become acquainted with the state of society among the middle classes (always the truest samples of national character), he had, on taking his passage in one of the Liverpool packets, given his name as Smith, and put on the appearance of a man in very common life, resolving to preserve his incognito as long as he could. His object being to observe and to listen, and fearing that if he talked much he might inadvertently betray himself, he endeavoured to acquire a habit of taciturnity. As is frequently the case, he rather overdid his assumed character: and was much amused at perceiving himself rated somewhat below mediocrity, and regarded as poor Mr. Smith.

"But where is that Baron fellow?" said Mrs. Quimby; "I dare say he has sneaked off and taken the railroad himself, while we were all busy about Lord Smith."

"He has—he has!" sobbed Miss Bentley; who in spite of her grief and mortification, had joined the group that surrounded the English nobleman; "and he has run away with my beautiful diamond ring."

"Did he steal it from your finger?" asked Aunt Quimby, eagerly; "because if he did, you can send a constable after him."

"I shall do no such thing," replied Matilda, tartly; then turning to her mother she added, "It was when we first went to walk by the river side. He took my hand and kissed it, and proposed exchanging rings—and so I let him have it—and he said he did not happen to have any ring of his own about him, but he would give me a magnificent one that had been presented to him by some emperor or king."

"Now I think of it," exclaimed Mrs. Bentley, "he never gave me back my gold essence-bottle with the emerald stopper."

"Now I remember," said Miss Turretville, "he did not return me the beautiful fan he took out of my hand the other evening at Mrs. De Mingle's. And I doubt also if he restored her diamond opera glass to the Princess of Saxe Blinkinberg."

"The Princess of Saxe Fiddlestick!" exclaimed Aunt Quimby; "do you suppose he ever really had anything to do with such people? Between ourselves, I thought it was all fudge the whole time he was trying to make us believe he was hand and glove with women that had crowns on their

heads, and men with diamond coats, and kings that shot peach stones. The more he talked, the more he looked like Jacob Stimbel—I'm not apt to forget people, so it would be strange if I did not remember our Jake; and I never saw a greater likeness."

"Well, for my part," said Miss Turretville, candidly, "I really *did* think he had serfs, and a castle with ramparts, and I did believe in the banditti, and the captain just like Charles De Moor. And I grieved, as I often do, that here, in America, we had no such things."

"Pity we should!" remarked Aunt Quimby.

To be brief: the Bentleys, after what had passed, thought it best to order their carriage and return to the city: and on their ride home there was much recrimination between the lady and her eldest daughter; Matilda declaring, that she would never have thought of encouraging the addresses of such an ugly fellow as the baron, had not her mother first put it into her head. And as to the projected elopement, she felt very certain of being forgiven for that as soon as she came out a baroness.

After the departure of the Bentleys, and when the excitement, caused by the events immediately preceding it, had somewhat subsided, it was proposed that the dancing should be resumed, and Lord Huntingford opened the ball with Mrs. Cheston, and proved that he could dance, and talk, and look extremely well. As soon as she was disengaged, he solicited Myrtilla's hand for the nest set, and she smilingly assented to his request. Before they began, Aunt Quimby took an opportunity of saying to her: "Well, Myrtilla; after all you are going to exhibit yourself, as you call it, with Mr. Smith."

"Oh! Aunt Quimby, you must not remember anything that was said about him while he was incog —"

"Yes, and now he's out of cog it's thought quite an honour to get a word or a look from him. Well —well—whether as poor simple Mr. Smith, or a great lord that owns whole tin mines, he'll always find *me* exactly the same; now I've got over the first flurry of his being found out."

"I have no doubt of that, Aunt Quimby," replied Myrtilla, giving her hand to Lord Huntingford, who just then came up to lead her to the dance.

The afternoon passed rapidly away, with infinite enjoyment to the whole company; all of whom seemed to feel relieved by the absence of the Blake Bentley party. Aunt Quimby was very assiduous in volunteering to introduce ladies to Lord Smith, as she called him, and chaperoned him more than ever.

The Chestons, perfectly aware that if Mrs. Quimby returned to Philadelphia, and proceeded to Baltimore under the escort of Mr. Smith, she would publish all along the road that he was a lord, and perhaps convert into annoyance the amusement he seemed to find in her entire want of tact, persuaded her to defer the Baltimore journey and pass a few days with them; promising to provide her with an escort there, in the person of an old gentleman of their neighbourhood, who was going to the south early next week; and whom they knew to be one of the mildest men in the world, and never incommoded by anything.

When the fête was over, Lord Huntingford returned to the city with his friend, the ex-minister. At parting, he warmly expressed his delight at having had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with Captain Cheston and his ladies; and Aunt Quimby exclaimed, "It's all owing to me—if it had not been for me you might never have known them; I always had the character of bringing good luck to people: so it's no wonder I'm so welcome everywhere."

On Captain Cheston's next visit to Philadelphia, he gathered that the fictitious Baron Von Klingenberg was really the reprobate son of Jacob Stimbel of Lancaster, and had been recognised as such by a gentleman from that place. That he had many years before gone to seek his fortune in Europe, with the wreck of some property left him by his father; where (as Lord Huntingford had stated) he had last been seen in London in the capacity of a valet to a German nobleman; and that now he had departed for the west, with the design, as was supposed, of gambling his way to New Orleans. Nothing could exceed the delight of Aunt Quimby on finding her impression of him so well corroborated.

The old lady went to Baltimore, and found herself so happy with her dear crony Mrs. Bagnell, that she concluded to take up her permanent residence with her on the same terms on which she lived at her son-in-law Billy Fairfowl's, whose large family of children had, to say the truth, latterly caused her some inconvenience by their number and their noise; particularly as one of the girls was growing up so like her grandmother, as to out-talk her. Aunt Quimby's removal from Philadelphia to Baltimore was, of course, a sensible relief to the Chestons.

Lord Huntingford (relinquishing the name and character of Mr. Smith) devoted two years to making the tour of the United States, including a visit to Canada; justly believing that he could not in less time accomplish his object of becoming *well* acquainted with the country and the people. On his return through the Atlantic cities, he met with Captain Cheston at Norfolk, where he had just brought in his ship from a cruise in the Pacific. Both gentlemen were glad to renew their acquaintance; and they travelled together to Philadelphia, where they found Mrs. Cheston and Myrtilla waiting to meet the captain.

Lord Huntingford became a constant visitor at the house of the Chestons. He found Myrtilla improved in beauty, and as he thought in everything else, and he felt that in all his travels

through Europe and America, he had met with no woman so well calculated to insure his happiness in married life. The sister of Captain Cheston was too good a republican to marry a foreigner and a nobleman, merely on account of his rank and title: but Lord Huntingford, as a man of sense, feeling, and unblemished morality, was one of the best specimens of his class, and after an intimate acquaintance of two months, she consented to become his countess. They were married a few days before their departure for England, where Captain and Mrs. Cheston promised to make them a visit the ensuing spring.

Emily Atwood and Mr. Symmington were bridesmaid and groomsman, and were themselves united the following month. Miss Turretville made a very advantageous match, and has settled down into a rational woman and a first-rate housewife. The Miss Bentleys are all single yet; but their mother is married to an Italian singer, who is dissipating her property as fast as he can, and treating her ill all the time.

While in Philadelphia, Lord Huntingford did not forget to visit occasionally his early acquaintance, Mr. William Fairfowl (who always received him as if he was still Mr. Smith), and on leaving the city he presented an elegant little souvenir to Mrs. Fairfowl, and one to each of her daughters.

At Lord Huntingford's desire, Mrs. Quimby was invited from Baltimore to be present at his wedding (though the company was small and select), and she did honour to the occasion by wearing an entirely new gown and cap, telling the cost of them to every person in the room, but declaring she did not grudge it in the least; and assuming to herself the entire credit of the match, which she averred never would have taken place if she had not happened to come up the river, instead of going down.

The events connected with the picnic day, had certainly one singular effect on Aunt Quimby, who from that time protested that she always thought of a nobleman whenever she heard the name of Smith.

Could all our readers give in their experience of the numerous Smiths they must have known and heard of, would not many be found who, though bearing that trite appellation, were noblemen of nature's own making?

UNCLE PHILIP.

"Out spake that ancient mariner."—Coleridge.

We will not be particular in designating the exact site of the flourishing village of Corinth; neither would we advise any of our readers to take the trouble of seeking it on the map. It is sufficient to tell them that they may consider it located on one of the banks of the Hudson, somewhere above the city of New York, and somewhere below that of Albany; and that, more than twenty years ago, the Clavering family occupied one of the best houses at its southern extremity.

Mrs. Clavering was the widow of a storekeeper, who had always, by courtesy, been called a merchant, according to a prevailing custom in the provincial towns of America. Her husband had left her in affluent circumstances, and to each of her five children he had bequeathed a sufficient portion to furnish, when they came of age, an outfit for the girls and a beginning for the boys. Added to this, they had considerable expectations from an uncle of their mother's, a retired sea-captain, and a confirmed old bachelor, who had long been in the practice of paying the family an annual visit on returning from his India voyages. He had become so much attached to the children, that when he quitted the sea (which was soon after the death of Mr. Clavering) he had, at the request of his niece, removed to Corinth, and taken up his residence in her family.

Though so far from his beloved element, the ocean, Captain Kentledge managed to pass his time very contentedly, taking occasional trips down the river to New York (particularly when a new ship was to be launched), and performing, every summer, an excursion to the eastward: keeping closely along the coast, and visiting in turn every maritime town and village from Newport to Portland; never omitting to diverge off to Nantucket, which was his native place, and from whence, when a boy, he had taken his first voyage in a whale ship.

Uncle Philip (for so Captain Kentledge was familiarly called by Mrs. Clavering and her children) was a square-built man, with a broad weather-beaten face, and features the reverse of classical. His head was entirely bald, with the exception of two rough side-locks, and a long thin gray tress of hair, gathered into a queue, and secured with black ribbon. Uncle Philip was very tenacious of his queue.

Like most seamen when on shore, he was singularly neat in his dress. He wore, all the year round, a huge blue coat, immense blue trowsers, and a white waistcoat of ample dimensions, the whole suit being decorated with gold buttons; for, as he observed, he had, in the course of his life, worn enough of brass buttons to be heartily tired of them: gilt ones he hated, because they were shams; and gold he could very well afford, and therefore it was his pleasure to have them. His cravat was a large black silk handkerchief, tied in front, with a spreading bow and long ends. His shirt frill was particularly conspicuous and amazingly broad, and it was fastened with a large oval-shaped brooch, containing under its glass a handsome hair-coloured device of Hope leaning

on an anchor. He never wore boots, but always white stockings and well-blacked long-quartered shoes. His hat had both a wide crown and a wide brim. Every part of his dress was good in quality and large in quantity, denoting that he was above economizing in the material.

Though "every inch a sailor," it must not be supposed that Captain Kentledge was in the constant habit of interlarding his conversation with sea-terms; a practice which, if it ever actually prevailed to the extent that has been represented in fictitious delineations of "the sons of the wild and warring wave," has long since been discontinued in real life, by all nautical men who have any pretensions to the title of gentlemen. A sea-captain, whose only phraseology was that of the forecastle, and who could talk of nothing without reference to the technical terms of his profession, would now be considered as obsolete a character "as the Lieutenant Bowlings and Commodore Trunnions of the last century."

Next to the children of his niece, the object most beloved by Uncle Philip was an enormous Newfoundland dog, the companion of his last voyages, and his constant attendant on land and on water, in doors and out of doors. In the faces of Neptune and his master there was an obvious resemblance, which a physiognomist would have deduced from the similarity of their characters; and it was remarked by one of the wags of the village that the two animals walked exactly alike, and held out their paws to strangers precisely in the same manner.

Mrs. Clavering, as is generally the case with mothers of the present day, when they consider themselves very genteel, intended one of her sons for the profession of physic, and the other for that of law. But in the mean time, Uncle Philip had so deeply imbued Sam, the eldest, with a predilection for the sea, that the boy's sole ambition was to unite himself to that hardy race, "whose march is o'er the mountain-waves, whose home is on the deep." And Dick, whom his mother designed for a lawyer, intended himself for a carpenter: his genius pointing decidedly to hand-work rather than to head-work. It was Uncle Philip's opinion that boys should never be controlled in the choice of a profession. Yet he found it difficult to convince Mrs. Clavering that there was little chance of one of her sons filling a professor's chair at a medical college, or of the other arriving at the rank of chief justice; but that as the laws of nature and the decrees of fate were not to be reversed, Dick would very probably build the ships that Sam would navigate.

About three months before the period at which our story commences, Uncle Philip had set out on his usual summer excursion, and had taken with him not only Neptune, but Sam also, leaving Dick very much engaged in making a new kitchen-table with a drawer at each end. After the travellers had gone as far as the State of Maine, and were supposed to be on their return, Mrs. Clavering was surprised to receive a letter from Uncle Philip, dated "Off Cape Cod, lat. 42, lon. 60, wind N.N.E." The following were the words of this epistle:—

"Dear Niece Kitty Clavering: I take this opportunity of informing you, by a fishing-boat that is just going into the harbour, that being on Long Wharf, Boston, yesterday at 7 A. M., and finding there the schooner Winthrop about to sail for Cuba, and the schooner being commanded by a son of my old ship-mate, Ben Binnacle, and thinking it quite time that Sam should begin to see the world (as he was fifteen the first of last April), and that so good an opportunity should not be lost, I concluded to let him have a taste of the sea by giving him a run down to the West Indies. Sam was naturally very glad, and so was Neptune; and Sam being under my care, I, of course, felt in duty bound to go along with him. The schooner Winthrop is as fine a sea-boat as ever swam, and young Ben Binnacle is as clever a fellow as his father. We are very well off for hands, the crew being young Ben's brother and three of his cousins (all from Marblehead, and all part owners), besides Sam and myself, and Neptune, and black Bob, the cabin-boy. So you have nothing to fear. And even if we should have a long passage, there is no danger of our starving, for most of the cargo is pork and onions, and the rest is turkeys, potatoes, flour, butter, and cheese.

"You may calculate on finding Sam greatly improved by the voyage. Going to sea will cure him of all his awkward tricks, as you call them, and give him an opportunity of showing what he really is. He went out of Boston harbour perched on the end of the foresail boom, and was at the mainmast head before we had cleared the light-house. To-morrow I shall teach him to take an observation. Young Ben Binnacle has an excellent quadrant that was his father's. We shall be back in a few weeks, and bring you pine-apples and parrots. Shall write from Havana, if I have time.

"Till then, yours,
"Philip Kentledge.

"P. S. Neptune is very happy at finding himself at sea again. Give our love to Dick and the girls.

"N. B. We took care to have our trunk brought on board before we got under way. Though we have a stiff breeze, Sam is not yet sea-sick, having set his face against it.

"2d P. S. Don't take advantage of my absence to put the girls in corsets, as you did when I was away last summer.

"2d N. B. Remember to send old Tom Tarpaulin his weekly allowance of tobacco all the time I am gone. You know I promised, when I first found him at Corinth, to keep him in tobacco as long as he lived; and if you forget to furnish it punctually, the poor fellow

will be obliged to take his own money to buy it with."

This elopement, as Mrs. Clavering called it, caused at first great consternation in the family, but she soon consoled herself with the idea that 'twas well it was no worse, for if Uncle Philip had found a vessel going to China, commanded by an old ship-mate, or a ship-mate's son, he would scarcely have hesitated to have acted as he had done in this instance. The two younger girls grieved that in all probability Sam had gone without gingerbread, which, they had heard, was a preventive to sea-sickness; but Fanny, the elder, remarked that it was more probable he had his pockets full, as, from Uncle Philip's account, he continued perfectly well. "Whatever Uncle Philip may say," observed Fanny, very judiciously, "Sam must, of course, have known that gingerbread is a more certain remedy for sea-sickness than merely setting one's face against it." Dick's chief regret was, that not knowing beforehand of their trip to the West Indies, he had lost the opportunity of sending by them for some mahogany.

In about four weeks, the Clavering family was set at ease by a letter from Sam himself, dated Havana. It detailed at full length the delights of the voyage, and the various qualifications of black Bob, the cabin-boy, and it was finished by two postscripts from Uncle Philip; one celebrating the rapid progress of Sam in nautical knowledge, and another stating that they should return in the schooner Winthrop.

They did return—Uncle Philip bringing with him, among other West India productions, a barrel of pine-apples for Mrs. Clavering, and three parrots, one for each of his young nieces; to all of whom he observed the strictest impartiality in distributing his favours. Also, a large box for Dick, filled with numerous specimens of tropical woods.

It was evening when they arrived at Corinth, and they walked up directly from the steamboat wharf to Mrs. Clavering's house; leaving their baggage to follow in a cart. Intending to give the family a pleasant surprise, they stole cautiously in at the gate, and walked on the grass to avoid making a noise with their shoes on the gravel. As usual at this hour, a light shone through the Venetian shutters of the parlour-windows. But our voyagers listened in vain for the well-known sounds of noisy mirth excited by the enjoyment of various little games and plays in which it was usual for the children to pass the interval between tea and bed-time; a laudable custom, instituted by Uncle Philip soon after he became one of the family.

"I hope all may be right," whispered the old captain, as he ascended the steps of the front porch, "I don't hear the least sound."

They sat down the three parrot-cages, which they had carried themselves from the wharf, and then went up to the windows and reconnoitered through the shutters. They saw the whole family seated round the table, busily employed with books and writing materials, and all perfectly silent. Uncle Philip now hastily threw open the front door, and, followed by Sam, made his appearance in the parlour, exclaiming—

"Why, what is all this? Not hearing any noise as we came along, we concluded there must be sickness, or death in the house."

"We are not dead yet," said Dick, starting up, "though we are learning French."

In an instant the books were abandoned, the table nearly overset in getting from behind it, and the whole group hung round the voyagers, delighted at their return, and overwhelming them with questions and caresses. In a moment there came prancing into the room the dog Neptune, who had remained behind to guard the baggage-cart, which had now arrived at the front gate. The faithful animal was literally received with open arms by all the children, and when he had nearly demolished little Anne by the roughness of his gambols, she only exclaimed—"Oh! never mind—never mind. I am so glad to have Neptune back again, that I don't care, if he *does* tear my new pink frock all to tatters."

Mrs. Clavering made a faint attempt at reproaching Uncle Philip for thus stealing a march and carrying off her son, but the old captain turned it all into a subject of merriment, and pointed out to her Sam's ruddy looks and improved height; and his good fortune in having a brown skin, which, on being exposed to the air and sun of the ocean, only deepened its manly tint, instead of being disfigured by freckles. On Mrs. Clavering remarking that her poor boy had learnt the true balancing gait of a sailor, the uncle and nephew exchanged glances of congratulation; and Sam, in the course of the evening, took frequent occasions to get up and walk across the room, by way of displaying this new accomplishment.

As Mrs. Clavering understood that her uncle and son had not yet had their supper, she quitted the room "on hospitable thoughts intent," while the children were listening with breathless interest to a minute detail of the voyage; Sam leaning over the back of his uncle's great chair, into which Fanny had squeezed herself beside the old gentleman, who held Jane on one knee and Anne on the other; and Dick making a seat of the dog Neptune, who lay at his master's feet.

"Who are those people talking in the porch?" asked little Anne, interrupting her uncle to listen to the strange sounds that issued from without.

"Oh! they are the parrots," said Sam, laughing, "I wonder they should have been forgotten so long."

"Parrots!" exclaimed all the children at once, and in a moment every one of the young people were out in the porch, and the cages were carried into the parlour. The parrots were duly

admired, and made to go through all their phrases, of which (being very smart parrots) they had learnt an infinite variety, and Uncle Philip told the girls to draw lots for the first choice of these new pets. Dick supplying for that purpose little sticks of unequal lengths. After this the box of tropical woods was opened, and Dick's happiness became too great for utterance.

Supper was now brought in, and placed by Mrs. Clavering's order on a little table in the corner, it not being worth while, as she said, to remove the books and writing apparatus from the centre-table, as the lessons must be shortly resumed.

"What lessons are these," said Uncle Philip, "on which you seem so intent? Before I went away there was no lesson-learning of evenings. Have Mr. Fulmer and Miss Hickman adopted a new plan? I think, children, I have heard you say that your lessons were very short, and that you always learned them in school, which was one reason, why I approved of Mr. Fulmer for the boys, and Miss Hickman for the girls. I never could bear the idea of poor children being forced to spend their play-time in learning lessons. The school hours are long enough in all conscience."

"Oh—we don't go to Miss Hickman now," exclaimed the girls:—"And I don't go any longer to Mr. Fulmer," cried Dick, with something like a sigh.

"And where do you go, then?" inquired Uncle Philip.

"We go to Monsieur and Madame Franchimeau's French Study," replied Dick. "He teaches the boys, and she the girls—and our lessons are so long that it takes us the whole evening to learn them, and write our exercises. We are kept in school from eight in the morning till three in the afternoon. And then at four we go back again, and stay till dusk, trying to read and talk French with Monsieur and Madame Ravigote, the father and mother of Madame Franchimeau."

"What's all this?" said Uncle Philip, laying down his knife and fork.

Mrs. Clavering, after silencing Dick with a significant look, proceeded to explain—

"Why, uncle," said she, "you must know that immediately after you left us, there came to Corinth a very elegant French family, and their purpose was to establish an Institute, or Study, as they now call it, in which, according to the last new system of education, everything is to be learnt in French. Mrs. Apesley, Mrs. Nedging, Mrs. Pinxton, Mrs. Slimbridge and myself, with others of the leading ladies of Corinth, had long wished for such an opportunity of having our children properly instructed, and we all determined to avail ourselves of it. We called immediately on the French ladies, who are very superior women, and we resolved at once to bring them into fashion by showing them every possible attention. We understood, also, that before Monsieur Franchimeau and his family came to Corinth, they had been on the other side of the river, and had visited Tusculum with a view of locating themselves in that village. But these polished and talented strangers were not in the least appreciated by the Tusculans, who are certainly a coarse and vulgar people; and therefore it became the duty of us Corinthians to prove to them our superiority in gentility and refinement."

"I thought as much," said Uncle Philip; "I knew it would come out this way. So the Corinthians are learning French out of spite to the Tusculans. And I suppose, when these Monsieurs and Madames have done making fools of the people of this village, they will move higher up the river, and monkeyfy all before them between this and Albany. For, of course, the Hyde Parkers will learn French to spite the New Paltzers, and the Hudsonians to spite the Athenians, and the Kinderhookers to spite the—"

"Now, uncle, do hush," said Mrs. Clavering, interrupting him; "how can you make a jest of a thing from which we expect to derive so much benefit?"

"I am not jesting at all," replied Uncle Philip; "I fear it is a thing too serious to laugh at. But why do you say *we*? I hope, Kitty Clavering, *you* are not making a fool of yourself, and turning school-girl again?"

"I certainly do take lessons in French," replied Mrs. Clavering. "Mrs. Apesley, Mrs. Nedging, Mrs. Pinxton, Mrs. Slimbridge and myself, have formed a class for that purpose."

"Mrs. Apesley has eleven children," said Uncle Philip.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Clavering, "but the youngest is more than two years old. And Mrs. Nedging has only three."

"True," observed the uncle; "one of them is an idiot boy that can neither hear, speak, nor use any of his limbs; the others are a couple of twin babies, that were only two months old when I went away."

"But they are remarkably good babies," answered Mrs. Clavering, "and can bear very well to have their mother out of their sight."

"And Mrs. Pinxton," said Uncle Philip, "has, ever since the death of her husband, presided over a large hotel, which, if properly attended to, ought to furnish her with employment for eighteen hours out of the twenty-four."

"Oh! but she has an excellent barkeeper," replied Mrs. Clavering, "and she has lately got a cook from New York, to whom she gives thirty dollars a month, and she has promoted her head-chambermaid to the rank of housekeeper. Mrs. Pinxton herself is no longer to be seen going

through the house as she formerly did. You would not suppose that there was any mistress belonging to the establishment."

"So much the worse," said Uncle Philip, "both for the mistress and the establishment. Well, and let me ask, if Mrs. Slimbridge's husband has recovered his health during my absence?"

"Oh! no, he is worse than ever," replied Mrs. Clavering.

"And still," resumed Uncle Philip, "with an invalid husband, who requires her constant care and attention, Mrs. Slimbridge can find it in her heart to neglect him, and waste her time in taking lessons that she may learn to read French (though I am told their books are all about nothing), and to talk French, though I cannot for my life see who she is to talk to."

"There is no telling what advantage she may not derive from it in future life," remarked Mrs. Clavering.

"I can tell her one thing," said Uncle Philip, "when poor Slimbridge dies, her French will never help her to a second husband. No man ever married a woman because she had learnt French."

"Indeed, uncle," replied Mrs. Clavering, "your prejudices against everything foreign are so strong, that it is in vain for me to oppose them. To-night, at least, I shall not say another word on the subject."

"Well, well, Kitty," said Uncle Philip, shaking her kindly by the hand, "we'll talk no more about it to-night, and perhaps, as you say, I ought to have more patience with foreigners, seeing that, as no man can choose his own birth-place, it is not to be expected that everybody can be born in America. And those that are not, are certainly objects of pity rather than of blame."

"Very right, uncle," exclaimed Sam; "I am sure I pity all that are not Americans of the United States, particularly since I have been among the West Indian Spaniards."

"Now, Kitty Clavering," said Uncle Philip, triumphantly, "you perceive the advantages of seeing the world: who says that Sam has not profited by his voyage?"

The family separated for the night; and next morning Sam laughed at Dick for repeating his French verbs in his sleep. "No wonder," replied Dick, "if you knew how many verbs I have to learn every day, and how much difficulty I have in getting them by heart, when I am all the time thinking of other things, you would not be surprised at my dreaming of them; as people are apt to do of whatever is their greatest affliction."

At breakfast, the conversation of the preceding evening was renewed, by Mrs. Clavering observing with much complacency,

"Monsieur Franchimeau will be very happy to find that I have a new scholar for him."

"Indeed!" said Uncle Philip; "and who else have you been pressing into the service?"

"My son Sam, certainly," replied Mrs. Clavering. "I promised him to Mr. Franchimeau, and he of course has been expecting to have him immediately on his return from the West Indies. Undoubtedly, Sam must be allowed the same advantages as his brother and sisters. Not to give him an equal opportunity of learning French would be unjust in the extreme."

"Dear mother," replied Sam, "I am quite willing to put up with that much injustice."

"Right, my boy," exclaimed Uncle Philip; "and when you have learnt everything else, it will then be quite time enough to begin French."

"You misunderstand entirely," said Mrs. Clavering. "The children *are* learning everything else. But Mr. Franchimeau goes upon the new system, and teaches the whole in French and out of French books. His pupils, and those of Madame Franchimeau, learn history, geography, astronomy, botany, chemistry, mathematics, logic, criticism, composition, geology, mineralogy, conchology, and phrenology."

"Mercy on their poor heads," exclaimed Uncle Philip, interrupting her: "They'll every one grow up idiots. All the sense they have will be crushed out of them, by this unnatural business of overloading their minds with five times as much as they can bear. And the whole of this is to be learned in a foreign tongue too. Well, what next? Are they also taught Latin and Greek in French? And now I speak of those two languages—that have caused so many aching heads and aching hearts to poor boys that never had the least occasion to turn them to any account—suppose that all the lectures at the Medical Colleges were delivered in Latin or Greek. How much, do you think, would the students profit by them? Pretty doctors we should have, if they learnt their business in that way. No, no; the branches you have mentioned are all hard enough in themselves, particularly that last ology about the bumps on people's heads. To get a thorough knowledge of any one of these arts or sciences, or whatever you call them, is work enough for a man's lifetime; and now the whole of them together are to be forced upon the weak understandings of poor innocent children, and in a foreign language, to boot. Shame on you—shame on you, Kitty Clavering!"

"Uncle Philip," said Mrs. Clavering, smiling at his vehemence, for on such occasions she had always found it more prudent to smile than to frown, "you may say what you will now, but I foresee that you will finally become a convert to my views of this subject. I intend to make French the general language of the family, and in a short time you will soon catch it yourself. Why,

though I cannot say much for his proficiency in his lessons, even Ric*har*[4] has picked up without intending it, a number of French phrases, that he pronounces quite well when I make him go over them with me."

"Ric*har*!" cried Uncle Philip, "and pray who is he? Who is Richar?"

"That's me, uncle," said Dick.

"So you have Frenchified Dick's name, have you!" said the old gentleman, "but I'm determined you shall not Frenchify Sam's."

"No," observed Sam, "I'll not be Frenchified."

"And pray, young ladies," resumed the uncle, "Fanny, Jenny, and Anny, have you too been put into French?"

"Yes, uncle," replied Jane, "we are now Fanchette, Jeanette, and Annette."

"So much the worse," said Uncle Philip. "Listen to me, when I tell you, that all this Frenchifying will come to no good; and I foresee that you may be sorry for it when it is too late. Of what use will it be to any of you? I have often heard that all French books worth reading are immediately done into English. And I never met with a French person worth knowing that had not learned to talk English."

"Now, uncle," said Mrs. Clavering, "you are going quite too far. If our knowledge of French should not come into use while in our own country, who knows but some time or other we may all go to France."

"I for one," replied Uncle Philip, "*I* know that you will not; at least, you shall never go to France with my consent. No American woman goes to France, without coming home the worse for it in some way or other. There were the two Miss Facebys, who came up here last spring, fresh from a six months' foolery in Paris. I can see them now, ambling along in their short petticoats, with their hands clasped on their belt buckles, their mouths half open like idiots, and their eyes turned upwards like dying calves."

Here Uncle Philip set the whole family to laughing, by starting from his chair and imitating the walk and manner of the Miss Facebys.

"There," said he, resuming his seat, "I know that's exactly like them. Then did not they pretend to have nearly forgotten their own language, affecting to speak English imperfectly. And what was the end of them? One ran away with a dancing-master's mate, and the other got privately married to a fiddler."

"But you must allow," said Mrs. Clavering, "that the Miss Facebys improved greatly in manner by their visit to France."

"I know not what you call *manner*" replied Uncle Philip, "but I'm sure in *manners* they did not. Manner and manners, I find, are very different things. And I was told by a gentleman, who had lived many years in France, that the Miss Facebys looked and behaved like French chambermaids, but not like French ladies. For my part, I am no judge of French women; but this I know, that American girls had better be like themselves, and not copy any foreign women whatever. And let them take care not to unfit themselves for American husbands. If they do, they'll lose more than they'll gain."

"Well, Uncle Philip," said Mrs. Clavering, "I see it will take time to make a convert of you."

"Don't depend on that," replied the old gentleman. "I, that for sixty years have stood out against all foreigners, particularly the French, am not likely to be taken in by them now."

"We shall see," resumed Mrs. Clavering. "But are you really serious in prohibiting Sam from becoming a pupil of Mr. Franchimeau?"

"Serious, to be sure I am," replied Uncle Philip. "Of what use can it be to him, if he follows the sea, as of course he will?"

"Of great use," answered Mrs. Clavering, "if he should be in the French trade."

"I look forward to his being in the India trade," said Uncle Philip, proudly.

"But suppose, uncle," said Fanny, "he should happen to have French sailors on board his ship?"

"French sailors! French!" exclaimed Uncle Philip; "for what purpose should he ship a Frenchman as a sailor? Why, I was once all over a French frigate that came into New York, and she was a pretty thing enough to look at outside. But when you got on board and went between decks, I never saw so dirty a ship. However, I won't go too far—I won't say that all French frigates are like this one, or all French sailors like those. Besides, this was many years ago, and, perhaps, they've improved since."

"No doubt of it," said Mrs. Clavering.

"Well," pursued Uncle Philip, "I only tell you what I saw."

"But, not knowing their language, you must have misunderstood a great deal that you saw,"

observed Mrs. Clavering.

"The first-lieutenant spoke English," said Uncle Philip, "and he showed me the ship; and, to do him justice, he was a very clever fellow, for all he was a Frenchman. There must certainly be *some* good ones among them. Yes, yes—I have not a word to say against that first-lieutenant. But I wish you had seen the men that we found between decks. Some were tinkling on a sort of guitars, and some were tooting on a kind of flutes, and some were scraping on wretched fiddles. Some had little paint-boxes, and were drawing watch-papers, with loves and doves on them; some were sipping lemonade, and some were eating sugar-candy; and one (whom I suspected to have been originally a barber), was combing and curling a lapdog. It was really sickening to see sailors making such fools of themselves. By the bye, I did not see a tolerable dog about the ship. There was no fine Newfoundlander like my gallant Neptune (come here, old fellow), but there were half a dozen short-legged, long-bodied, red-eyed, tangle-haired wretches, meant for poodles, but not even half so good. And some of the men were petting huge cats, and some were feeding little birds in cages."

"Well," said Mrs. Clavering, "I see no harm in all this—only an evidence that the general refinement of the French nation pervades all ranks of society. Is it not better to eat sugar-candy than to chew tobacco, and to sip lemonade than to drink grog?"

"And then," continued Uncle Philip, "to hear the names by which the fellows were calling each other, for their tongues were all going the whole time as fast as they could chatter. There were Lindor and Isidore, and Adolphe and Emile. I don't believe there was a Jack or a Tom in the whole ship. I was so diverted with their names, that I made the first-lieutenant repeat them to me, and I wrote them down in my pocket-book. A very gentlemanly man was that first-lieutenant. But as to the sailors—why, there was one fellow sprawling on a gun (I suppose I should say reclining), and talking to himself about his amiable Pauline, which, I suppose, is the French for Poll. When we went into the gun-room, there was the gunner sitting on a chest, and reading some love-verses of his own writing, addressed to his belle Celestine, which, doubtless, is the French for Sall. Think of a sailor pretending to have a belle for his sweetheart! The first-lieutenant told me that the gunner was the best poet in the ship. I must say, I think very well of that first-lieutenant. There were half a dozen boys crowding round the gunner (or forming a group, as, I suppose, you would call it), and looking up to his face with admiration; and one great fool was kneeling behind him, and holding over his head a wreath of some sort of green leaves, waiting to crown him when he had done reading his verses."

"Well," observed Mrs. Clavering, "I have no doubt the whole scene had a very pretty effect."

"Pshaw," said Uncle Philip. "When I came on deck again, there was the boatswain's mate, who was also the ship's dancing-master (for a Frenchman can turn his hand to anything, provided it's foolery), and he was giving a lesson to two dozen dirty fellows with bare feet and red woollen caps, and taking them by their huge tarry hands, and bidding them *chassez* here, and *balancez* there, and *promenade* here, and *pirouette* there. I was too angry to laugh, when I saw sailors making such baboons of themselves."

"Now," remarked Mrs. Clavering, "it is an established fact, that without some knowledge of dancing, no one can move well, or have a graceful air and carriage. Why, then, should not sailors be allowed an opportunity of cultivating the graces as well as other people? Why should they be debarred from everything that savours of refinement?"

"I am glad," said Uncle Philip, laughing, "that it never fell to my lot to go to sea with a crew of refined sailors. I think, I should have tried hard to whack their refinement out of them. Why the French first-lieutenant (who was certainly a very clever fellow), told me that, during the cruise, five or six seamen had nearly died of their sensibility, as he called it; having jumped overboard, because they could not bear the separation from their sweethearts."

"Poor fellows," said Fanny, "and were they drowned?"

"I asked that," replied Uncle Philip, "hoping that they were; but, unluckily for the service, they were all provided with sworn friends, who jumped heroically into the sea, and fished the lubbers out. And, no doubt, the whole scene had a very pretty effect."

"How can you make a jest of such things?" said Mrs. Clavering, reproachfully.

"Why, I am only repeating your own words," answered the old gentleman. "But, to speak seriously, this shows that French ships ought always to be furnished with Newfoundland dogs to send in after the lovers, and spare their friends the trouble of getting a wet jacket for them:—Come here, old Nep. Up, my fine fellow, up," patting the dog's head, while the enormous animal rested his fore-paws on his master's shoulders.

Mrs. Clavering now reminded the children that it was considerably past their hour for going to school, but with one accord they petitioned for a holiday, as it was the first day of Uncle Philip's and Sam's return.

"You know the penalty," said Mrs. Clavering; "you know that if you stay away from school, you will be put down to the bottom of the class."

The children all declared their willingness to submit to this punishment rather than go to school that day.

"Now, Kitty Clavering," said Uncle Philip, "you see plainly that their hearts are not in the French: and that it is all forced work with them. So I shall be regularly displeased, if you send the children to school to-day. They shall go with me to the cabin, and we will all spend the morning there."

The cabin was a small wooden edifice planned by Uncle Philip, and erected by his own hands with the assistance of Sam and Dick. It stood on the verge of the river, where the bank took the form of a little cape or headland, which Uncle Philip called Point Lookout. On an eminence immediately above, was the house of Mrs. Clavering, from the front garden of which a green slope, planted with fruit-trees, descended gradually to the water's edge.

The building (into which you went down by a flight of wooden steps inserted in the face of the hill), was as much as possible like the cabin of a ship. The ceiling was low, with a skylight near the centre, and the floor was not exactly level, there being a very visible slant to one side. At the back of this cabin was an imitation of transoms, above which was a row of small windows of four panes each, and when these windows were open, they were fastened up by brass hooks to the beams that supported the roof. In the middle of the room was a flag-staff, which went up through the centre of a table, and perforated the ceiling like the mizen-mast of a ship, and rose to a great height above the roof. From the top of this staff an American ensign, on Sundays and holidays, displayed its stars and stripes to the breeze. There was a range of lockers all round the room, containing in their recesses an infinite variety of marine curiosities that Uncle Philip had collected during his voyages, and also some very amusing specimens of Chinese patience and ingenuity. The walls were hung with charts, and ornamented with four coloured drawings that Captain Kentledge showed as the likenesses of four favourite ships, all of which he, had at different times commanded. These drawings were made by a young man that had sailed with him as mate; and to unpractised eyes all the four ships looked exactly alike; but Uncle Philip always took care to explain that the Columbia was sharpest at the bows, and the American roundest at the stern; that the United States had the tallest masts, and the Union the longest yards.

An important appendage to the furniture of this singular room was a hanging-shelf, containing Captain Kentledge's library; and the books were the six octavo volumes of Cook's Voyages, and also the voyages of Scoresby, Ross and Parry, the Arabian Nights, Dibdin's Songs, Robinson Crusoe, and Cooper's Pilot, Red Rover, and Water Witch.

This cabin was the stronghold of Uncle Philip, and the place where, with Sam and Neptune, he spent all his happiest hours. For here he could smoke his segars in peace, and chew his tobacco without being obliged to watch an opportunity of slipping it privately into his mouth. But as Mrs. Clavering had particularly desired that he would not initiate Sam into the use of "the Indian weed," he had promised to refrain from instructing him in this branch of a sailor's education; and being "an honourable man," Uncle Philip had faithfully kept his word.

Dick (acknowledging that during his uncle's absence he had used the cabin as a workshop, and that it was now ankle-deep in chips and shavings), ran on before with a broom to sweep the litter into a corner. The whole group proceeded thither from the breakfast table, Uncle Philip wishing he had three hands that he might give one to each of the little girls; but as that was not the case, they drew lots to decide which should be contented to hold by the skirt of his coat, and the lot fell upon Fanny; the old gentleman leading Jane and Anne, while Sam and Neptune brought up the rear.

Arrived at the cabin, Uncle Philip placed himself in his arm-chair; the girls sat round him sewing for their dolls; Sam took his slate and drew upon it all the different parts of the schooner Winthrop, of which (from his brother's description) Dick commenced making a minature model in wood; and Neptune mounted one of the transoms and looked out of the window.

Things were going on very pleasantly, and Uncle Philip was in the midst of narrating the particulars of a violent storm they had encountered in the gulf of Florida, when Dick, casting his eyes towards the glass door, exclaimed, "the French are coming, the French are coming!"

Uncle Philip testified much dissatisfaction at the intrusion of these unwelcome visitors, and Dick again fell to work with the broom. In a few minutes Mrs. Clavering entered the cabin, bringing with her Monsieur and Madame Franchimeau, and the *vieux* papa, and *vieille* mama,[5] Monsieur and Madame Ravigote.

Mr. Franchimeau was a clumsy, ill-made man, fierce-eyed, black-whiskered, and looking as if he might sit for the picture of "Abællino the Great Bandit." Madame Franchimeau was a large woman, with large features, and a figure that was very bad in dishabille, and very good in full dress. Her father and mother were remnants of the *ancien régime*, but the costume of the *vieux* papa was not at all in the style of Blissett's Frenchman. His clothes were like those of other people, and instead of a powdered toupee and pigeon-wing side-curls, with a black silk bag behind, he wore a reddish scratch-wig that almost came down to his eyebrows. Why do very old men, when they wear wigs, generally prefer red ones? Madame Ravigote was a little withered, witch-like woman, with a skin resembling brown leather, which was set off by four scanty flaxen ringlets.

Soon after breakfast, Mrs. Clavering had sent a message to "the French Study," implying the arrival of Captain Kentledge, and the consequent holiday of the children; and the Gauls had concluded it expedient to dismiss their school at twelve o'clock, and hasten to pay their compliments to the rich old uncle, of whom they had heard much since their residence at Corinth.

When they were presented to Captain Kentledge, he was not at all prepossessed in favor of their appearance, and would have been much inclined to receive them coldly; but as he was now called upon to appear in the character of their host, he remembered the courtesy due to them as his guests, and he managed to do the honors of his cabin in a very commendable manner, considering that he said to himself, "for my own sake, I cannot be otherwise than civil to them; but I despise them, notwithstanding."

There was much chattering that amounted to nothing; and much admiration of the cabin, by which, instead of pleasing Uncle Philip, they only incurred his farther contempt, by admiring always in the wrong place, and evincing an ignorance of ships that he thought unpardonable in people that had crossed the Atlantic. On Sam being introduced to them, there were many overstrained compliments on his beauty, and what they called his *air distingué*. Monsieur Franchimeau thought that *le jeune Sammi*[6] greatly resembled Mr. Irvine Voshintone, whom he had seen in Paris; but Monsieur Ravigote thought him more like the portrait of Sir Valter Scotch. Madame Franchimeau likened him to the head of the Apollo Belvidere, and Madame Ravigote to the Duke of Berry. But all agreed that he had a general resemblance to La Fayette, with a slight touch of Dr. Franklin. However these various similitudes might be intended as compliments, they afforded no gratification to Uncle Philip, whose secret opinion was, that if Sam looked like anybody, it was undoubtedly Paul Jones. And during this examination, Sam was not a little disconcerted at being seized by the shoulders and twirled round, and taken sometimes by the forehead and sometimes by the chin, that his face might be brought into the best light for discovering all its affinities.

There was then an attempt at general conversation, the chief part of which was borne by the ladies, or rather by Madame Franchimeau, who thought in her duty to atone for the dogged taciturnity of her husband. Monsieur Franchimeau, unlike the generality of his countrymen, neither smiled, bowed, nor complimented. Having a great contempt for the manners of the *vieille cour*[7] and particularly for those of his father-in-law; he piqued himself on his *brusquerie*,[8] and his almost total disregard of *les bienséances*,[9] and set up *un esprit fort*:[10] but he took care to talk as little as possible, lest his claims to that character should be suspected.

Uncle Philip, though he scorned to acknowledge it, was not in reality destitute of all comprehension of the French language, having picked up some little acquaintance with it from having, in the course of his wanderings, been at places where nothing else was spoken; and though determined on being displeased, he was amused, in spite of himself, at some of the tirades of Madame Franchimeau. Understanding that Monsieur Philippe (as much to his annoyance she called him) had just returned from the West Indies, she began to talk of Cape François, and the insurrection of the blacks, in which, she said, she had lost her first husband, Monsieur Mascaron. "By this terrible blow," said she, "I was *parfaitement abimé*,[11] and I refused all consolation till it was my felicity to inspire Monsieur Franchimeau with sentiments the most profound. But my heart will for ever preserve a tender recollection of my well-beloved Alphonse. Ah! my Alphonse—his manners were adorable. However, my regards are great for *mon ami*[12] Monsieur Franchimeau. It is true, he is *un pen brusque—c'est son caractère*.[13] But his heart is of a goodness that is really inconceivable. He performs the most charming actions, and with a generosity that is heroic. *Ah! mon ami*—you hear me speak of you—but permit me the sad consolation of shedding yet a few tears for my respectable Alphonse."

Madame Franchimeau then entered into an animated detail of the death of her first husband, who was killed before her eyes by the negroes; and she dwelt upon every horrid particular, till she had worked herself into a passion of tears. Just then, Fanny Clavering (who had for that purpose been sent up to the house by her mother) arrived with a servant carrying a waiter of pine-apples, sugar and Madeira.

Madame Franchimeau stopped in the midst of her tears, and exclaimed—"*Ah! des ananas—mon ami (to her husband)—maman—papa—voyez—voyez—des ananas*.[14] Ah! my poorest Alphonse, great was his love for these—what you call them—apple de pine. He was just paring his apple de pine, when the detestable negroes rushed in and overset the table. *Ah! quel scène—une véritable tragédie!*[15] *Pardonnez*, Madame Colavering, I prefer a slice from the largest part of the fruit.—Ah! my amiable Alphonse—his blood flew all over my robe, which was of spotted Japan muslin. I wore that day a long sash of a broad ribbon of the colour of Aurore, fringed at both of its ends. When I was running away, he grasped it so hard that it came untied, and I left it in his hand.—May I beg the favour of some more sugar?—*Mon ami*, you always prefer the pine-apple bathed in Champagne."

"Yes," replied Franchimeau, "it does me no good, unless each slice is soaked in some wine of fine quality." But Mrs. Clavering acknowledging that she had no Champagne in the house, Franchimeau gruffly replied, that "he supposed Madeira might do."

Madame then continued her story and her pine-apple. "*Ah! mon bien-aimé Alphonse*,"[16] said she, "he had fourteen wounds—I will take another slice, if you please, Madame Colavering. There—there—a little more sugar. *Bien obligé*[17]—a little more still. *Maman, vous ne mangez pas de bon appetit. Ah! je comprens—vous voulez de la crème avec votre anana.*[18]—Madame Colavering, will you do mamma the favour to have some cream brought for her? and I shall not refuse some for myself. Ah! *mon Alphonse*—the object of my first grand passion! He exhibited in dying some contortions that were hideous—*absolument effroyable*[19]—they are always present

before my eyes—Madame Colavering, I would prefer those two under slices; they are the best penetrated with the sugar, and also well steeped in the *jus*."[20]

The cream was procured, and the two Madames did it ample justice. Presently the youngest of the French ladies opened her eyes very wide, and exclaimed to her father, "*Mon cher papa, vous n' avez pas déjà fini?*"[21] "My good friend, Madame Colavering, you know, of course, that my papa cannot eat much fruit, unless it is accompanied by some *biscuit*—for instance, the cake you call sponge."

"I was not aware of that," replied Mrs. Clavering.

"*Est-il possible?*"[22] exclaimed the whole French family, looking at each other.

Mrs. Clavering then recollecting that there was some sponge-cake in the house, sent one of the children for it, and when it was brought, their French visiters all ate heartily of it; and she heard the *vieille maman*[23] saying to the *vieux papa*,[24] "*Eh, mon ami, ce petit collation vient fort à-propos, comme notre déjeûner était seulement un mauvais salade.*"[25]

The collation over, Mrs. Clavering, by way of giving her guests an opportunity of saying something that would please Uncle Philip, patted old Neptune on the head, and asked them if they had ever seen a finer dog?

"I will show you a finer," replied Madame Franchimeau; "see, I have brought with me my interesting *Bijou*"—and she called in an ugly little pug that had been scrambling about the cabin door ever since their arrival, and whose only qualification was that of painfully sitting up on his hind legs, and shaking his fore-paws in the fashion that is called begging. His mistress, with much importunity, prevailed on him to perform this elegant feat, and she then rewarded him with a saucer-full of cream, sugar, and sponge-cake. He was waspish and snappish, and snarled at Jane Clavering when she attempted to play with him; upon which Neptune, with one blow of his huge forefoot, brought the pug to the ground, and then stood motionless, looking up in Uncle Philip's face, with his paw on the neck of the sprawling animal, who kicked and yelped most piteously. This interference of the old Newfoundlander gave great offence to the French family, who all exclaimed, "*Quelle horreur! Quelle abomination! En effet c'est trop!*"[26]

Uncle Philip could not help laughing; but Sam called off Neptune from Bijou, and set the fallen pug on his legs again, for which compassionate act he was complimented by the French ladies on his *bonté de cœur*,[27] and honoured at parting, with the title of *le doux Sammi*.[28]

"I'll never return this visit," said Uncle Philip, after the French guests had taken their leave.

"Oh! but you *must*," replied Mrs. Clavering; "it was intended expressly for you—you *must* return it, in common civility."

"But," persisted Uncle Philip, "I wish them to understand that I don't intend to treat them with common civility. A pack of selfish, ridiculous, impudent fools. No, no. I am not so prejudiced as to believe that all French people are as bad as these—many of them, no doubt, if we could only find where they are, may be quite as clever as the first lieutenant of that frigate; but, to their shame be it spoken, the best of them seldom visit America, and our country is overrun with ignorant, vulgar impostors, who, unable to get their bread at home, come here full of lies and pretensions, and to them and their quackery must our children be intrusted, in the hope of acquiring a smattering of French jabber, and at the risk of losing everything else."

"Don't you think Uncle Philip always talks best when he's in a passion?" observed Dick to Sam.

After Mrs. Clavering had returned to the house, Dick informed his uncle that, a few days before, she had made a dinner for the whole French family; and Captain Kentledge congratulated himself and Sam on their not arriving sooner from their voyage. Dick had privately told his brother that the behaviour of the guests, on this occasion, had not given much satisfaction. Mrs. Clavering, it seems, had hired, to dress the dinner, a mulatto woman that professed great knowledge of French cookery, having lived at one of the best hotels in New York. But Monsieur Franchimeau had sneered at all the French dishes as soon as he tasted them, and pretended not to know their names, or for what they were intended; Monsieur Ravigote had shrugged and sighed, and the ladies had declined touching them at all, dining entirely on what (as Dick expressed it) they called roast beef de mutton and natural potatoes.[29]

It was not only his regard for the children that made Mrs. Clavering's French mania a source of great annoyance to Uncle Philip, but he soon found that much of the domestic comfort of the family was destroyed by this unaccountable freak, as he considered it. Mrs. Clavering was not young enough to be a very apt scholar, and so much of her time was occupied by learning her very long lessons, and writing her very long exercises, that her household duties were neglected in consequence. As in a provincial town it is difficult to obtain servants who can go on well without considerable attention from the mistress, the house was not kept in as nice order as formerly; the meals were at irregular hours, and no longer well prepared; the children's comfort was forgotten, their pleasures were not thought of, and the little girls grieved that no sweetmeats were to be made that season; their mother telling them that she had now no time to attend to such things. The children's story-books were taken from them, because they were now to read nothing but Telemaque; they were stopped short in the midst of their talk, and told to *parlez*

Français.[30] Even the parrots heard so much of it that, in a short time, they prated nothing but French.

Uncle Philip had put his positive veto on Sam's going to French school, and he insisted that little Anne had become pale and thin since she had been a pupil of the Franchimeaus. Mrs. Clavering, to pacify him, consented to withdraw the child from school; but only on condition that she was every day to receive a lesson at home, from old Mr. Ravigote.

Anne Clavering was but five years old. As yet, no taste for French "had dawned upon her soul," and very little for English; her mind being constantly occupied with her doll, and other playthings. Monsieur Ravigote, with all the excitability of his nation, was, in the main, a very good-natured man, and was really anxious for the improvement of his pupil. But all was in vain. Little Anne never knew her lessons, and had as yet acquired no other French phrase than "*Oui, Monsieur*."[31]

Every morning, Mr. Ravigote came with a face dressed in smiles, and earnest hope that his pupil was going that day to give him what he called "one grand satisfaction;" but the result was always the same.

One morning, as Uncle Philip sat reading the newspaper, and holding little Anne on his knee while she dressed her doll, Mr. Ravigote came in, bowing and smiling as usual, and after saluting Captain Kentledge, he said to the little child: "Well, my dear little friend, *ma gentille Annette*,[32] I see by the look of your countenance that I shall have one grand satisfaction with you this day. Application is painted on your visage, and docility also. Is there not, *ma chère*?"[33]

"*Oui, Monsieur*," replied the little Anne.

"*J'en suis ravi*.[34] Now, *ma chère, commençons—commençons tout de suite*."[35]

Little Anne slowly descended from her uncle's knee, carefully put away her doll and folded up her doll's clothes, and then made a tedious search for her book.

"*Eh! bien, commençons*," said Mr. Ravigote, "you move without any rapidity."

"*Oui, Monsieur*," responded little Anne, who, after she had taken her seat in a low chair beside Mr. Ravigote, was a long time getting into a comfortable position, and at last settled herself to her satisfaction by crossing her feet, leaning back as far as she could go, and hooking one finger in her coral necklace, that she might pull at it all the time.

"*Eh! bien, ma chère*; we will first have the lessons without the book," said Mr. Ravigote, commencing with the vocabulary. "Tell me the names of all the months of the year—for instance, January."

"*Janvier*," answered the pupil, promptly.

"Ah! very well, very well, indeed, *ma chère*—for once, you know the first word of your lesson. Ah! to-day I have, indeed, great hope of you. Come, now, February?"

"*Fevrier*," said little Anne.

"Excellent! excellent! you know the second word too—and now, then, March?"

"Marsh."

"Ah! no, no—but I am old; perhaps I did not rightly hear. Repeat, *ma chère enfant*,[36] repeat."

"Marsh," cried little Anne in a very loud voice.

"Ah! you are wrong; but I will pardon you—you have said two words right. *Mars, ma chère, Mars* is the French for March the month. Come now, April."

"Aprile."

"Aprile! there is no such word as Aprile—*Avril*. And now tell me, what is May?"

"*Mai*."

"Excellent! excellent! capital! *magnifique!* you said that word *parfaitement bien*.[37] Now let us proceed—June."

"Juney."

"Ah! no, no—*Juin, ma chère, Juin*—but I will excuse you. Now, tell me July."

Little Anne could make no answer.

"Ah! I fear—I begin to fear you. Are you not growing bad?"

"*Oui, Monsieur*," said little Anne.

"Come then; I will tell you this once—*Juillet* is the French for July. Now, tell me what is August?"

"Augoost!"

"Augoost! Augoost! there is no such a word. Why, you are very bad, indeed—*Août, Août, Août*."

The manner in which Mr. Ravigote vociferated this rather uncouth word, roused Uncle Philip from his newspaper and his rocking-chair, and mistaking it for a howl of pain, he started up and exclaimed, "Hallo!" Mr. Ravigote turned round in amazement, and Uncle Philip continued, "Hey, what's the matter? Has anything hurt you? I thought I heard a howl."

"Dear uncle," said little Anne, "Mr. Ravigote is not howling; he is only saying August in French."

Uncle Philip bit his lip and resumed his paper. Mr. Ravigote proceeded, "September?" and his pupil repeated in a breath, as if she was afraid to stop an instant lest she should forget—

"Septembre, Octobre, Novembre, Décembre."

"Ah! very well; very well, indeed," exclaimed Mr. Ravigote; "you have said these four words *comme il faut*;[38] but it must be confessed they are not much difficult."

He then proceeded with the remainder of her vocabulary lesson; but in vain—not another word did she say that had the least affinity to the right one. "Ah!" said he, "*je suis au desespoir*;[39] I much expected of you this day, but you have overtumbled all my hopes. *Je suis abimé*."[40]

"*Oui, Monsieur*, said little Anne.

"You are one *mauvais sujet*,"[41] pursued the teacher, beginning to lose his patience; "punishment is all that you merit. *Mais allons, essayons encore*."[42]

Just at that moment the string of little Anne's beads (at which she had been pulling during the whole lesson) broke suddenly in two, and the beads began to shower down, a few into her lap, but most of them on the floor.

"*Oh! quel dommage!*"[43] exclaimed Mr. Ravigote; "*Mais n'importe, laissez-les*,[44] and continue your lesson."

But poor Mr. Ravigote found it impossible to make the little girl pay the slightest attention to him while her beads were scattered on the floor; and his only alternative was to stoop down and help her to pick them up. Uncle Philip raised his eyes from the paper, and said, "Never mind the beads, my dear; finish the lesson, and I will buy you a new coral necklace to-morrow, and a much prettier one than that."

Little Anne instantly rose from the floor, and whisking into her chair, prepared to resume her lesson with alacrity.

"*Eh! bien*," said the teacher, "now we will start off again, and read the inside of a book. Come, here is the fable of the fox and the grapes. These are the fables that we read during the *ancien régime*; there are none so good now."

Mr. Ravigote then proceeded to read with her, translating as he went on, and making her repeat after him—"A fox of Normandy, (some say of Gascony,) &c., &c. Now, my dear, you must try this day and make a copy of the nasal sounds as you hear them from me. It is in these sounds that you are always the very worst. The nasal sounds are the soul and the life of French speaking."

The teacher bent over the book, and little Anne followed his pronunciation more closely than she had ever done before: he exclaiming at every sentence, "Very well—very well, indeed, my dear. To-day you have the nasal sounds, *comme une ange*."[45]

But on turning round to pat her head, he perceived that *gentille Annette* was holding her nose between her thumb and finger, and that it was in this way only she had managed to give him satisfaction with the nasal sounds. He started back aghast, exclaiming—

"*Ah! quelle friponnerie! la petite coquine! Voici un grand acte de fourberie et de méchanceté!*"[46] So young and so depraved—ah! I fear, I much fear, she will grow up a rogue-a cheat—perhaps a thief. *Je suis glacé d'horreur! Je tremble! Je frissonne!*"[47]

"I'll tell you what," said Uncle Philip, laying down his newspaper, "you need neither tremble nor frisson, nor get yourself into any horror about it. The child's only a girl of five years old, and I've no notion that the little tricks, that all children are apt to play at times, are proofs of natural wickedness, or signs that they will grow up bad men and women. But to cut the matter short, the girl is too little to learn French. She is not old enough either to understand it, or to remember it, and you see it's impossible for her to give her mind to it. So from this time, I say, she shall learn no more French till she is grown up, and desires it herself. (*Little Anne gave a skip half way to the ceiling.*) You shall be paid for her quarter all the same, and I'll pay you myself on the spot. So you need never come again."

Mr. Ravigote was now from head to foot all one smile; and bowing with his hands on his heart, he, at Uncle Philip's desire, mentioned the sum due for a quarter's attempt at instruction. Uncle Philip immediately took the money out of his pocket-book, saying, "There,—there is a dollar over; but you may keep it yourself: I want no change. I suppose my niece, Kitty Clavering, will not be pleased at my sending you off; but she will have to get over it, for I'll see that child tormented no longer."

Mr. Ravigote thought in his own mind, that the torment had been much greater to him than to the child; but he was so full of gratitude, that he magnanimously offered to take the blame on himself, and represent to Mrs. Clavering that it was his own proposal to give up Mademoiselle Annette, as her organ of French was not yet developed.

"No, no," said Uncle Philip, "I am always fair and above-board. I want nobody to shift the blame from my shoulders to their own. Whatever I do, I'll stand by manfully. I only hope that you'll never again attempt to teach French to babies."

Mr. Ravigote took leave with many thanks, and on turning to bid his adieu to the little girl, he found that she had already vanished from the parlour, and was riding about the green on the back of old Neptune.

When Uncle Philip told Mrs. Clavering of his dismissal of Mr. Ravigote, she was so deeply vexed, that she thought it most prudent to say nothing, lest she should be induced to say too much.

A few days after this event, Madame Franchimeau sent an invitation, written in French, for Mrs. Clavering, and "Monsieur Philippe" to pass the evening at her house, and partake of a *petit souper*,[48] bringing with them *le doux Sammi*, and *la belle Fanchette*.[49] This supper was to celebrate the birthday of her niece, Mademoiselle Robertine, who had just arrived from New York, and was to spend a few weeks at Corinth.

Uncle Philip had never yet been prevailed on to enter the French house, as he called it; and on this occasion he stoutly declared off, saying that he had no desire to see any more of their foolery, and that he hated the thoughts of a French supper. "My friend, Tom Logbook," said he, "who commands the packet Louis Quatorze, and understands French, told me of a supper to which he was invited the first time he was at Havre, and of the dishes he was expected to eat, and I shall take care never to put myself in the way of such ridiculous trash. Why, he told me there was wooden-leg soup, and bagpipes of mutton, and rabbits in spectacles, and pullets in silk stockings, and potatoes in shirts.[50] Answer me now, are such things fit for Christians to eat?"

For a long time Mrs. Clavering tried in vain to prevail on Uncle Philip to accept of the invitation. At last Dick suggested a new persuasive. "Mother," said he, "I have no doubt Uncle Philip would go to the French supper, if you will let us all have a holiday from school for a week."

"That's a good thought, Dick," exclaimed the old gentleman. "Yes, I think I would. Well, on these terms I will go, and eat trash. I suppose I shall live through it. But remember now, this is the first and last and only time I will ever enter a French house."

After tea, the party set out for Monsieur Franchimeau's, and were ushered into the front parlour, which was fitted up in a manner that exhibited a strange *mélange* of slovenliness and pretension. There was neither carpet nor matting, and the floor was by no means in the nicest order; but there were three very large looking-glasses, the plates being all more or less cracked, and the frames sadly tarnished. The chairs were of two different sorts, and of very ungenteel appearance; but there was a kind of Grecian sofa, or lounge, with a gilt frame much defaced, and a red damask cover much soiled; and, in the centre of the room, stood a *fauteuil*[51] covered with blue moreen, the hair poking out in tufts through the slits. The windows were decorated with showy curtains of coarse pink muslin and marvellously coarse white muslin; the drapery suspended from two gilt arrows, one of which had lost its point, and the other had parted with its feather. The hearth was filled with rubbish, such as old pens, curl-papers, and bits of rag; but the mantel-piece was adorned with vases of artificial flowers under glass bells, and two elegant chocolate cups of French china.

The walls were hung with a dozen bad lithographic prints, tastefully suspended by bows of gauze ribbon. Among these specimens of the worst style of the modern French school, was a Cupid and Psyche, with a background that was the most prominent part of the picture, every leaf of every tree on the distant mountains being distinctly defined and smoothly finished. The clouds seemed unwilling to stay behind the hills, but had come so boldly forward and looked so like masses of stone, that there was much apparent danger of their falling on the heads of the lovers and crushing them to atoms. Psyche was an immensely tall, narrow woman, of a certain age, and remarkably strong features; and Cupid was a slender young man, of nineteen or twenty, about seven feet high, with long tresses descending to his waist.

Another print represented a huge muscular woman, with large coarse features distorted into the stare and grin of a maniac, an enormous lyre in her hand, a cloud of hair flying in one direction, and a volume of drapery exhibiting its streaky folds in another; while she is running to the edge of a precipice, as if pursued by a mad bull, and plunging forward with one foot in the air, and her arms extended above her head. This was Sappho on the rock of Leucate. These two prints Mr. Franchimeau (who professed connoisseurship, and always talked when pictures were the subject —that is, French pictures) pointed out to his visiters as magnificent emanations of the Fine Arts. "The coarse arts, rather," murmured Uncle Philip.

The guests were received with much suavity by the French ladies and the *vieux* papa; and Capt. Kentledge was introduced by Madame Franchimeau to three little black-haired girls, with surprisingly yellow faces, who were designated by the mother as "*mon aimable Lulu, ma mignonne Mimi, and ma petite ange Gogo*."[52] Uncle Philip wondered what were the real names of these children.

After this, Madame Franchimeau left the room for a moment, and returned, leading in a very pretty young girl, whom she introduced as her *très chère niece, Mademoiselle Robertine*,[53] orphan daughter of a brother of her respectable Alphonse.

Robertine had a neat French figure, a handsome French face, and a profusion of hair arranged precisely in the newest style of the wax figures that decorate the windows of the most fashionable *coiffeurs*.[54] She was dressed in a thin white muslin, with a short black silk apron, embroidered at the corners with flowers in colours. Mr. Franchimeau resigned to her his chair beside Uncle Philip, to whom (while her aunt and the Ravigotes were chattering and shrugging to Mrs. Clavering) she addressed herself with considerable fluency and in good English. People who have known but little of the world, and of the best tone of society, are apt, on being introduced to new acquaintances, to talk to them at once of their profession, or in reference to it; and Robertine questioned Uncle Philip about his ships and his voyages, and took occasion to tell him that she had always admired the character of a sailor, and still more that of a captain; that she thought the brown tinge given by the sea air a great improvement to a fine manly countenance; that fair-complexioned people were her utter aversion, and that a gentleman was never in his best looks till he had attained the age of forty, or, indeed, of forty-five.

"Then I am long past the age of good looks," said Uncle Philip, "for I was sixty-two the sixth of last June."

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Robertine. "I had no idea that Captain Kentledge could have been more than forty-three or forty-four at the utmost. But gentlemen who have good health and amiable dispositions, never seem to grow old. I have known some who were absolutely charming even at seventy."

"Pshaw!" said Uncle Philip, half aside.

Robertine, who had been tutored by her aunt Franchimeau, ran on with a tirade of compliments and innuendos, so glaring as to defeat their own purpose. Sam, who sat opposite, and was a shrewd lad, saw in a moment her design, and could not forbear at times casting significant looks towards his uncle. The old captain perfectly comprehended the meaning of those looks, and perceived that Mademoiselle Robertine was spreading her net for him. Determining not to be caught, he received all her smiles with a contracted brow; replied only in monosyllables; and, as she proceeded, shut his teeth firmly together, closed his lips tightly, pressed his clenched hands against the sides of his chair, and sat bolt upright; resolved on answering her no more.

About nine o'clock, the door of the back parlour was thrown open by the little mulatto girl, and Madame Franchimeau was seen seated at the head of the supper-table. Mr. Franchimeau led in Mrs. Clavering; Mr. Ravigote took Fanny; Madame Ravigote gave her hand to Sam, and Robertine, of course, fell to the lot of Uncle Philip, who touched with a very ill grace the fingers that she smilingly extended to him.

In the centre of the supper-table was a salad decorated with roses, and surrounded by four candles. The chief dish contained *blanquettes* of veal; and the other viands were a *fricandeau* of calves' ears; a *purée* of pigs' tails; a *ragout* of sheep's feet, and another of chickens' pinions interspersed with claws; there was a dish of turnips with mustard, another of cabbage with cheese, a bread omelet, a plate of poached eggs, a plate of sugar-plums, and a dish of hashed fish, which Madame Franchimeau called a *farce*.

As soon as they were seated, Robertine took a rose from the salad, and with a look of considerable sentiment, presented it to Uncle Philip, who received it with a silent frown, and took an opportunity of dropping it on the floor, when Sam slyly set his foot on it and crushed it flat. The young lady then mixed a glass of *eau sucré*[55] for the old gentleman, saying very sweet things all the time; but the beverage was as little to his taste as the Hebe that prepared it.

The French children were all at table, and the youngest girl looking somewhat unwell, and leaving her food on her plate, caused Mrs. Clavering to make a remark on her want of appetite.

"*N'importe*,"[56] said Madame Franchimeau; "she is not affamished; she did eat very hearty at her tea; she had shesnoot for her tea."

"Chestnuts!" exclaimed Mrs. Clavering.

"Oh, yes; we have them at times. *N'importe*, my little Gogo; cease your supper, you will have the better appetite for your breakfast. You shall have an apple for your breakfast—a large, big apple. Monsieur Philippe, permit me to help you to some of this fish; you will find it a most excellent *farce*:[57] I have preserved it from corruption by a process of vinegar and salt, and some charcoal. Madame Colavering, I will show you that mode of restoring fish when it begins to putrefy: a great chemist taught it to my assassined Alphonse."

Uncle Philip pushed away his plate with unequivocal signs of disgust, and moved back his chair, determined not to taste another mouthful while he stayed in the house. Suspicious of everything, he even declined Robertine's solicitations to take a glass of *liqueur* which she poured out for him, and which she assured him was genuine *parfait amour*.[58] During supper, she had talked to him, in a low voice, of the great superiority of the American nation when compared with the French; and regretted the frivolity and *inconsequence* of the French character; but assured him that when French ladies had the honour of marrying American gentlemen, they always lost that

inconsequence, and acquired much depth and force.

After supper, Mr. Franchimeau, who, notwithstanding his taciturnity and *brusquerie*, was what Uncle Philip called a Jack of all trades, sat down to an old out-of-tune piano, that stood in one of the recesses of the back parlour, and played an insipid air of "Paul at the Tomb of Virginia," singing with a hoarse stentorian voice half-a-dozen namby-pamby stanzas, lengthening out or contracting some of the words, and mispronouncing others to suit the measure and the rhyme. This song, however, seemed to produce great effect on the French part of his audience, who sighed, started, and exclaimed—"*Ah! quels sont touchans, ces sentimens sublimes!*"[59]

"*Ma chère amie*," continued Madame Franchimeau, pressing the hand of Mrs. Clavering, "*permettez que je pleure un peu le triste destin de l'innocence et de la vertu—infortuné Paul—malheureuse Virginie*;"[60] and she really seemed to shed tears.

Uncle Philip could no longer restrain himself, but he started from his chair and paced the room in evident discomposure at the folly and affectation that surrounded him; his contempt for all men that played on pianos being much heightened by the absurd appearance of the huge black-whiskered, shock-headed Monsieur Franchimeau, with his long frock-coat hanging down all over the music-stool. Robertine declined playing, alleging that she had none of her own music with her; and she privately told Uncle Philip that she had lost all relish for French songs, and that she was very desirous of learning some of the national airs of America—for instance, the Tars of Columbia. But still Uncle Philip's heart was iron-bound, and he deigned no other reply than, "I don't believe they'll suit you."

A dance was then proposed by Madame Ravigote, and Robertine, "nothing daunted," challenged Uncle Philip to lead off with her; but, completely out of patience, he turned on his heel, and walked away without vouchsafing an answer. Robertine then applied to Sam, but with no better success, for as yet he had not learned that accomplishment, and she was finally obliged to dance with old Mr. Ravigote, while Madame Franchimeau took out her mother; Fanny danced with the lovely Lulu, and Mimi and Gogo with each other; Mr. Franchimeau playing cotillions for them.

Uncle Philip thought in his own mind that the dancing was the best part of the evening's entertainment, and old Madame Ravigote was certainly the best of the dancers; though none of the family were deficient in a talent which seems indigenous to the whole French nation.

The cotillions were succeeded by cream of tartar lemonade, and a plate of sugar-plums enfolded in French mottoes, from which Robertine selected the most amatory, and presented them to Uncle Philip, who regularly made a point of giving them all back to her in silence, determined not to retain a single one, lest she might suppose he acknowledged the application.

The old gentleman was very tired of the visit, and glad enough when Mrs. Clavering proposed departing. And all the way home his infatuated niece talked to him in raptures of the elegance of French people, and the vast difference between them and the Americans.

"There is, indeed, a difference," said Uncle Philip, too much fatigued to argue the point that night.

Next morning, after they had adjourned to the cabin, Sam addressed the old gentleman with, "Well, Uncle Philip, I wish you joy of the conquest you made last evening of the pretty French girl, Miss Robertine."

"A conquest of *her*," replied Uncle Philip, indignantly; "the report of my dollars has made the conquest. I am not yet old enough to be taken in by such barefaced manœuvring. No, no; I am not yet in my dotage; and I heartily despise a young girl that is willing to sell herself to a man old enough to be her father."

"I am glad you do," observed Sam; "I have often heard my mother say that such matches never fail to turn out badly, and to make both husband and wife miserable. We all think she talks very sensibly on this subject."

"No doubt," said Uncle Philip.

"I really wonder," pursued Sam, "that a Frenchwoman should venture to make love to *you*."

"Love!" exclaimed Uncle Philip; "I tell you, there's no love in the case. I am not such a fool as to believe that a pretty young girl could fall in love with an old fellow like *me*. No, no; all she wants is, that I should die as soon as possible and leave her a rich widow: but she will find her mistake; she shall see that all her sweet looks and sweet speeches will have no effect on me but to make me hate her. She might as well attempt to soften marble by dropping honey on it."

"You'll be not only marble, but granite, also, won't you, Uncle Philip?" said Sam.

"That I will, my boy," said the old gentleman; "and now let's talk of something else."

After this, no persuasion could induce Uncle Philip to repeat his visit to the Franchimeaus; and when any of that family came to Mrs. Clavering's he always left the room in a few minutes, particularly if they were accompanied by Robertine. In short, he now almost lived in his cabin, laying strict injunctions on Mrs. Clavering not to bring thither any of the French.

One morning, while he was busy there with Sam, Dick, and Neptune, the boys, happening to look out, saw Robertine listlessly rambling on the bank of the river, and entirely alone. There was

every appearance of a shower coming up. "I suppose," said Dick, "Miss Robertine intends going to our house; and if she does not make haste, she will be caught in the rain. There, now, she is looking up at the clouds. See, see—she is coming this way as fast as she can."

"Confound her impudence!" said Uncle Philip; "is she going to ferret me out of my cabin? Sam, shut that door."

"Shall I place the great chest against it?" said Sam.

"Pho—no," replied the old gentleman. "With all her assurance, she'll scarcely venture to break in by force. I would not for a thousand dollars that she should get a footing here."

Presently a knock was heard at the door.

"There she is," said Dick.

"Let us take no notice," said Sam.

"After all," said Uncle Philip, "she's a woman; and a woman must not be exposed to the rain, when a man can give her a shelter. We must let her in; nothing else can be done with her."

Upon this, Sam opened the door; and Robertine, with many apologies for her intrusion, expressed her fear of being caught in the rain, and begged permission to wait there till the shower was over.

"I was quite lost in a reverie," said she, "as I wandered on the shore of the river. Retired walks are now best suited to my feelings. When the heart has received a deep impression, nothing is more delicious than to sigh in secret."

"Fudge!" muttered Uncle Philip between his teeth.

"Uncle Philip says fudge," whispered Dick to Sam.

"I'm glad of it," whispered Sam to Dick.

Uncle Philip handed Robertine a chair, and she received this common-place civility with as much evident delight as if he had proffered her "the plain gold ring."

"Sam," said the old gentleman, "run to the house as fast as you can, and bring an umbrella, and then see Miss Robertine home."

"That I will, uncle," said Sam, with alacrity.

Robertine then began to admire the drawings on the wall, and said—"Apparently, these are all ships that Captain Kentledge has taken in battle?"

"No," replied Uncle Philip, "I never took any ship in battle; I always belonged to the merchant service."

Robertine was now at fault; but soon recovering herself, she continued—"No doubt if you *had* been in battle, you *would* have taken ships; for victory always crowns the brave, and my opinion is, that all Americans are brave of course; particularly if they are gentlemen of the sea."

"And have plenty of cash," Uncle Philip could not avoid saying.

Robertine coloured to the eyes; and Uncle Philip checked himself, seeing that he had been too severe upon her. "I must not forget that she is a woman," thought he; "while she stays, I will try to be civil to her."

But Robertine was too thoroughly resolved on carrying her point to be easily daunted; and, in half a minute, she said with a smile—"I see that Captain Kentledge will always have his jest. Wit is one of the attributes of his profession."

Her admiration of the ships not having produced much effect, Robertine next betook herself to admiring the dog Neptune, who was lying at his master's feet, and she gracefully knelt beside him and patted his head, saying—"What a magnificent animal! The most splendid dog I ever saw! What a grand and imposing figure! How sensible and expressive is his face!"

Dick found it difficult to suppress an involuntary giggle, for it struck him that Robertine must have heard the remark which was very current through the village, of Neptune's face having a great resemblance to Uncle Philip's own.

Where is the man that, being "the fortunate possessor of a Newfoundland dog," can hear his praises without emotion? Uncle Philip's ice began to thaw. All the blandishments that Robertine had lavished on himself, caused no other effect than disgust; but the moment she appeared to like his dog, his granite heart began to soften, and he felt a disposition to like *her* in return. He cast a glance towards Robertine as she caressed old Neptune, and he thought her so pretty that the glance was succeeded by a gaze. He put out his hand to raise her from her kneeling attitude, and actually placed a chair for her beside his own. Robertine thought herself in Paradise, for she saw that her last arrow had struck the mark. Uncle Philip's stubborn tongue was now completely loosened, and he entered into an eloquent detail of the numerous excellencies of the noble animal, and related a story of his life having been saved by Neptune during a shipwreck.

To all this did Robertine "most seriously incline." She listened with breathless interest, was

startled, terrified, anxious, delighted, and always in the right place; and when the story was finished, she pronounced Newfoundland dogs the best of all created animals, and Neptune the best of all Newfoundland dogs.

Just then Sam arrived with the umbrella.

"Sam," said Uncle Philip, "you may give *me* the umbrella; I will see Miss Robertine home myself. But I think she had better wait till the rain is over."

This last proposal Robertine thought it most prudent to decline, fearing that if she stayed till the rain ceased, Uncle Philip might no longer think it necessary to escort her home. Accordingly the old gentleman gave her his arm, and walked off with her under the umbrella. As soon as they were gone, Sam and Dick laughed out, and compared notes.

In the afternoon, after spending a considerable time at his toilet, Uncle Philip, without saying anything to the family, told one of the servants that he should not drink tea at home, and sallied off in the direction of Franchimeau's. He did not return till ten o'clock, and then went straight to bed without entering the sitting-room. The truth was, that when he conveyed Robertine home in the morning, he could not resist her invitation into the house; and he sat there long enough for Madame Ravigote (who, in frightful *dishabille*, was darning stockings in the parlour) to see that things wore a promising aspect. The old lady went to the school-room door, and called out Madame Franchimeau to inform her of the favourable change in the state of affairs: and it was decided that *le vieux Philippe*[61] (as they called him behind the scenes, for none of them, except Robertine, could say Kentledge), should be invited to tea, that the young lady might have an immediate opportunity of following up the success of the morning.

Next morning, about eleven o'clock, Uncle Philip disappeared again, and was seen no more till dinner-time. When he came in, he took his seat at the table without saying a word, and there was something unusually queer in his look, and embarrassed in all his motions; and the children thought that he did not seem at all like himself. Little Anne, who sat always at his right hand, leaned back in her chair and looked behind him, and then suddenly exclaimed—"Why, Uncle Philip has had his queue cut off!"

There was a general movement of surprise. Uncle Philip reddened, hesitated, and at last said, in a confused manner, "that he had for a long time thought his queue rather troublesome, and that he had recently been told that it made him look ten years older than he really was; and, therefore, he had stopped at the barber's, on his way home, and got rid of it."

Mrs. Clavering had never admired the queue; but she thought the loss of it, just at this juncture, looked particularly ominous.

In the afternoon she received a visit from her friend, Mrs. Slimbridge, who was scarcely seated when she commenced with—"Well, Mrs. Clavering, I understand you are shortly to have a new aunt, and I have come to congratulate you on the joyful occasion."

"A new aunt?" said Mrs. Clavering; "I am really at a loss to understand your meaning!" looking, however, as if she understood it perfectly.

"Why, certainly," replied Mrs. Slimbridge, "it can be no news to *you* that Captain Kentledge is going to be married to Madame Franchimeau's niece, Mademoiselle Robertine. He was seen, yesterday morning, walking with her under the same umbrella!"

"Well, and what of that?" interrupted Mrs. Clavering, fretfully; "does a gentleman never hold an umbrella over a lady's head unless he intends to marry her?"

"Oh, as yet they do," replied Mrs. Slimbridge, "but I know not how much longer even that piece of civility will be continued—gentlemen are now so much afraid of committing themselves. But seriously, his seeing her home in the rain is not the most important part of the story. He drank tea at Franchimeau's last evening, and paid a long visit at the house this morning; and Emilie, their mulatto girl, told Mrs. Pinxton's Mary, and my Phillis had it direct from *her*, that she overheard Miss Robertine, persuading Captain Kentledge to have his queue cut off. The good gentleman, it seems, held out for a long time, but at last consented to lose it. However, I do not vouch for the truth of that part of the statement. Old seafaring men are so partial to their hair, and it is a point on which they are so obstinate, that I scarcely think Miss Robertine would have ventured so far."

"Some young girls have boldness enough for anything," said Mrs. Clavering, with a toss of her head, and knowing in her own mind that the queue was really off.

"Well," continued Mrs. Slimbridge, "the story is all over town that it is quite a settled thing; and, as I said, I have hastened to congratulate you."

"Congratulate me! For what?" said Mrs. Clavering; with much asperity.

"Why," returned Mrs. Slimbridge, "you know these French people are your bosom friends, and of course you must rejoice in the prospect of a nearer connexion with them. To be sure, it would be rather more gratifying if Miss Robertine was in a somewhat higher walk of life. You know it is whispered, that she is only a mantua-maker's girl, and that the dear friend whom Madame Franchimeau talks about, as having adopted her beloved Robertine (though she takes care never to mention the name of that dear friend), is in reality no other than the celebrated Madame

Gigot, in whose dressmaking establishment Mademoiselle is hired to work."

"Horrible!" was Mrs. Clavering's involuntary exclamation; but recovering herself, she continued —"But I can assure you, Mrs. Slimbridge, that I am perfectly convinced there is not a word of truth in the whole story. Captain Kentledge has certainly his peculiarities, but he is a man of too much sense to marry a young wife; and besides, his regard for my children is so great, that I am convinced it is his firm intention to live single for their sakes, that he may leave them the whole of his property. He thinks too much of the family to allow his money to go out of it."

"All that may be," answered Mrs. Slimbridge; "but when an old man falls in love with a young girl, his regard for his own relations generally melts away like snow before the fire. I think you had better speak to Captain Kentledge on the subject. I advise you, as a friend, to do so, unless you conclude that opposition may only render him the more determined. Certainly one would not like to lose so much money out of the family, without making a little struggle to retain it. However, I must now take my leave. As a friend, I advise you to speak to Captain Kentledge."

"I can assure you," replied Mrs. Clavering, as she accompanied her guest to the door, "this silly report gives me not the slightest uneasiness, as it is too absurd to merit one serious thought. I shall dismiss it from my mind with silent contempt. To mention it to Captain Kentledge would be really too ridiculous."

As soon as she had got rid of her visitor, Mrs. Clavering hastily threw on her calash, and repaired at a brisk pace to Uncle Philip's cabin. She found him at his desk, busily employed in writing out for Robertine the words of "America, Commerce, and Freedom." She made a pretext for sending away Sam, and told Uncle Philip that she wished some private conversation with him. The old gentleman coloured, laid down his pen, and began to sit very uneasy on his chair, guessing what was to come.

Mrs. Clavering then, without further hesitation, acquainted him with all she had heard, and asked him if it could possibly be true that he had any intention of marrying Robertine.

"I don't know but I shall," said Uncle Philip.

"You really shock me!" exclaimed Mrs. Clavering.

"What is there so shocking," replied the old gentleman, "in my liking a pretty girl—ay, and in making her my wife, too, if I think proper? But that's as it may be—I have not yet made her the offer."

Mrs. Clavering breathed again. "Really, Uncle Philip," said she, "I thought you had more sense, and knew more of the world. Can you not see at once that all she wants is your money? It is impossible she could have any other inducement."

"I thank you for your compliment," said Uncle Philip, pulling up his shirt collar and taking a glance at the looking-glass.

"Is the man an absolute fool?" thought Mrs. Clavering: "what can have got into him?" Then raising her voice, she exclaimed—"Is this, then, the end of all your aversion to the French?"

"Then you should not have put the French in my way," said Uncle Philip: "it is all your own fault; and if I *should* play the fool, you have nobody to thank but yourself. Why did you make me go to that supper?"

"Why, indeed!" replied Mrs. Clavering, with a sigh: "but knowing how much you dislike foreigners and all their ways, such an idea as your falling in love with a French girl never for a moment entered my mind. But I can tell you one thing that will effectually put all thoughts of Miss Robertine out of your head."

"What is that?" said Uncle Philip, starting and changing colour.

"When I tell you that she is a mantua-maker," pursued Mrs. Clavering, "and in the employ of Madame Gigot of New York, you, of course, can never again think of her as a wife."

"And why not?" said Uncle Philip, recovering himself—"why should not a mantua-maker be thought of as a wife? If that's all you have to say against her, it only makes me like her the better. I honour the girl for engaging in a business that procures her a decent living, and prevents her from being burdensome to her friends. Don't you know that a man can always raise his wife to his own level? It is only a woman that sinks by marrying beneath her; as I used to tell you when you fell in love with the players, the first winter you spent in New York."

"I deny the players—I deny them altogether," said Mrs. Clavering, with much warmth: "all I admired was their spangled jackets and their caps and feathers, and I had some curiosity to see how they looked off the stage, and therefore was always glad when I met any of them in the street."

"Well, well," replied Uncle Philip, "let the players pass; I was only joking."

"And even if it were true," resumed Mrs. Clavering, "that I had particularly admired one or two of the most distinguished performers, I was then but a mere child, and there is a great difference between playing the fool at sixteen and at sixty."

"I don't see the folly," said Uncle Philip, "of marrying a pretty young girl, who is so devotedly

attached to me that she cannot possibly help showing it continually."

"Robertine attached to *you*!" retorted Mrs. Clavering. "And can you really believe such an absurdity?"

"I thank you again for the compliment," replied Uncle Philip: "but I know that such things *have been*, strange as they may appear to you. I believe I have all my life undervalued myself; and this young lady has opened my eyes."

"Blinded them, rather," said Mrs. Clavering. "But for your own sake, let me advise you to give up this girl. No marriage, where there is so great a disparity of years, ever did or could, or ever will or can, turn out well—and so you will find to your sorrow."

"I rather think I shall try the experiment," said Uncle Philip. "If I am convinced that Miss Robertine has really a sincere regard for me, I shall certainly make her Mrs. Kentledge—so I must tell you candidly that you need not say another word to me on the subject."

He resumed his writing, and Mrs. Clavering, after pausing a few moments, saw the inutility of urging anything further, and walked slowly and sadly back to the house. The children's quarters at school had nearly expired, and she delighted them all with the information that, finding they had not made as much progress in French as she had expected, and having reason to believe that the plan of learning everything through the medium of that language was not a good one, she had determined that after this week they should quit Monsieur and Madame Franchimeau, and return to Mr. Fulmer and Miss Hickman. She ceased visiting the French family, who, conscious that they would now be unwelcome guests, did not approach Mrs. Clavering's house. But Uncle Philip regularly spent every evening with Robertine; and Mrs. Clavering did not presume openly to oppose what she now perceived to be his fixed intention; but she indulged herself in frequent innuendoes against everything French, which the old gentleman was ashamed to controvert, knowing how very recently he had been in the practice of annoying his niece by the vehement expression of his own prejudices against that singular people; and he could not help acknowledging to himself that though he liked Robertine, all the rest of her family were still fools. That the Franchimeaus and Ravigotes were ridiculous, vulgar pretenders, Mrs. Clavering was no longer slow in discovering; but she was so unjust as to consider them fair specimens of their nation, and to turn the tables so completely as to aver that nothing French was endurable. She even silenced the parrots whenever they said, "*Parlons toujours François*."[62]

One morning Uncle Philip was surprised in his cabin by the sudden appearance of a very tall, very slender young Frenchman, dressed in the extreme of dandyism; his long, thin face was of deadly whiteness, but his cheeks were tinted with rouge; he had large black eyes, and eyebrows arched up to a point; his immense whiskers were reddish, and met under his chin; but his hair was black, and arranged with great skill and care according to the latest fashion, and filling the apartment with the perfume of attar of roses.

Immediately on entering, he strode up to Uncle Philip, and extending a hand whose fingers were decorated with half a dozen showy rings, presented to him a highly-scented rose-coloured card, which announced him as "Monsieur Achille Simagrée de Lantiponne, of Paris."

"Well, sir," said Uncle Philip, "and I am Captain Philip Kentledge, once of Salem, Massachusetts, and now of Corinth, New York."

"*Oui, je le sais*,"[63] replied the Frenchman, in a loud shrill voice, and with a frown that was meant to be terrific. "*Oui, perfide—traitre—presque scélérat—tremblez! Je vous connois—tremblez, tremblez, je vous dit! Moi, c'est moi qui vous parle!*"[64]

"What's all this for?" said Uncle Philip, looking amazed.

"*Imbecil*," muttered Monsieur de Lantiponne; "*il ne comprend pas le Français*.[65] *Eh, bien*; I will, then, address you (*roturier comme vous êtes*[66]) in perfect English, and very cool. How did you dare to have the temerity to rob from me the young miss, my *fiancée*, very soon my bride. Next month I should have conducted her up to the front of the altar. I had just taken four apartments in the Broadway—two for the exercise of my profession of artist in hair, and merchant of perfumes and all good smells; and two up the staircase, where Mademoiselle Robertine would pursue her dresses and her bonnets. United together, we should have made a large fortune. My father was a part of the noblesse of France, but we lost all our nobleness by the revolution. 'Virtue, though unfortunate, is always respectable;' that sentiment was inscribed above the door of my mamma's shop in the Palais Royal."

"Well," said Uncle Philip, "and what next?"

"What next, *coquin*?"[67] continued the Frenchman, grinding his teeth. "Listen and die. Yesterday, I received from her this letter, enfolding a ring of my hair which once I had plaited for her. Now, I will overwhelm you with shame and repentance by reading to you this fatal letter, translating it into perfect English. *Ah! comme il est difficile d'étouffer mes emotions! N'importe, il faut un grand effort.*"[68]

"Take a chair," said Uncle Philip, who was curious to know how all this would end; "when people are in great trouble, they had better be seated."

"*Ecoutez*,"[69] said Lantiponne; "hear this lettre." He then commenced the epistle, first reading audibly a sentence in French, and then construing it into English:—

CORINTH,——.

MY EVER DEAR FRIEND:

Destiny has decreed the separation of two hearts that should have been disunited by death alone, and has brought me acquainted with an old man who, since the moment of our introduction, has never ceased to persecute me with the language of love. In vain did I fly from him—for ever did he present himself before me with the most audacious perseverance. My aunt (and what affectionate niece can possibly disobey the commands of her father's sister-in-law?) has ordered me to accept him; and I must now, like a mournful dove, be sacrificed on the altar of Plutus. His name is Captain Kentledge, but we generally call him Old Philip—sometimes the Triton, and sometimes Sinbad, for he is a sailor, and very rich. He is a stranger both to elegance and sentiment; of an exterior perfectly revolting; and his manners are distinguished by a species of brutality. It is impossible for me to regard him without horror. But duty is the first consideration of a niece, and, though the detestable Philip knows that my heart is devoted to my amiable Achille, he takes a savage pleasure in urging me to name the day of our marriage. Compassionate me, my ever dear Lantiponne. I know it will be long before the wounds of our faithful hearts are cicatrized.

I return you the little ring (so simple and so touching) that you made me of your hair. But I will keep for ever the gold essence-bottle and the silver toothpick, as emblems of your tenderness. I shall often bathe them with my tears.

Adieu, my dear friend—my long-beloved Lantiponne. As Philip Kentledge is very bald, I shall, when we are married, compel him to wear a wig, and I will take care that he buys it of you. Likewise, we shall get all our perfumery at your shop.

The inconsolable
ROBERTINE.

There are moments when my affliction is so great, that I think seriously of charcoal. If you find it impossible to survive the loss of your Robertine, that is the mode of death which you will undoubtedly select, as being most generally approved in Paris. For my own part, reason has triumphed, and I think it more heroic to live and to suffer.

Uncle Philip listened to this letter with all the indignation it was calculated to excite. But Sam and Dick were so diverted that they could not refrain from laughing all the time; and towards the conclusion, the old gentleman caught the contagion, and laughed also.

"*Ah! scélérat—monstre—ogre!*"[70] exclaimed Lantiponne—"do you make your amusement of my sorrows? Render me, on this spot, the satisfaction due to a gentleman. It is for that I am come. Behold—here I offer you two pistoles—make your selection. Choose one this moment, or you die."

"Sam," said Uncle Philip, "hand me that stick."

"Which one, uncle?" exclaimed Sam—"the hickory or the maple?"

"The hickory," replied Uncle Philip.

And as soon as he got it into his hand, he advanced towards the Frenchman, who drew back, but still extended the pistols, saying—"I will shoot off both—instantly I will present fire!"

"Present fire if you dare," said Uncle Philip, brandishing his stick.

Monsieur Simagrée de Lantiponne lowered his pistols and walked backward towards the door, which was suddenly thrown open from without, so as nearly to push him down, and Robertine entered, followed by Madame Franchimeau. At the sight of Lantiponne, both ladies exclaimed —"*Ah! perfide! traitre!*" and a scene of violent recrimination took place in French—Madame Franchimeau declaring that she had never influenced her niece to give up her first lover for "Monsieur Philippe," but that the whole plan had originated with Robertine herself. Lantiponne, in deprecating the inconstancy of his mistress, complained bitterly of the useless expense he had incurred in hiring four rooms, when two would have sufficed, had he known in time that she intended to jilt him. Robertine reproached him with his dishonourable conduct in betraying her confidence and showing her letter to the very person who, above all others, ought not to have seen it; and she deeply regretted having been from home with her aunt and uncle when Lantiponne came to their house immediately on his arrival at Corinth, and before he had sought an interview with Captain Kentledge. He had seen only the old Ravigotes, who were so impolitic as to give him a direction to Uncle Philip's cabin, as soon as he inquired where his rival was to be found.

The altercation was so loud and so violent, that Uncle Philip finally demanded silence in the startling and authoritative tone to which he had accustomed himself when issuing his orders on ship-board; putting his hands before his mouth and hallooing through them as substitutes for a speaking trumpet. He was not so ungallant as to say that in reality the lady had made the first advances, but he addressed his audience in the following words:—

"I tell you what, my friends, here's a great noise to little purpose, and much shrugging, and stamping, and flourishing of hands, that might as well be let alone. As for me, take notice, that I am quite out of the question, and after this day I'll have nothing more to do with any of you. I'm thankful to this young fellow for having opened my eyes; though I can't approve of his showing me his sweetheart's letter. He has saved me from the greatest act of folly an old man can commit, that of marrying a young girl. I shall take care not to make a jackass of myself another time."

Sam and Dick exchanged looks of congratulation.

"Now," continued Uncle Philip, "if, after all this, the young barber-man is still willing to take the girl, I know not what better either of them can do than to get married off-hand. I shall not feel quite satisfied till I have seen the ceremony myself, so let it take place immediately. I happen to have a hundred dollar bill in my pocket-book, so I'll give it to them for a wedding present. Come, I'm waiting for an answer."

Madame Franchimeau and the young couple all hesitated.

"Uncle," whispered Sam, "they have just been quarrelling violently—how can you expect them to get over it so soon, and be married directly?"

"Pho!" replied Uncle Philip, "an't they French?"

There was a pause of some moments. At last Robertine put on her best smile, and said in French to Lantiponne—"My estimable friend, pardon the errors of a young and simple heart, which has never for a moment ceased to love you."

"What candour!" exclaimed Lantiponne—"what adorable frankness! Charming Robertine!"—kissing her hand—"more dear to me than ever."

The aunt, though much displeased at Robertine for missing Uncle Philip, thought it best that the affair should go off with as good a grace as possible, and she exclaimed, while she wiped tears of vexation from her eyes—"How sweet to witness this reunion!"

"Boys," said Uncle Philip, "which of you will run for Squire Van Tackemfast? To prevent all future risks, we'll have the marriage here on the spot, and Miss Robertine shall return to New York to-day as Madame"—he had to consult the young Frenchman's card—"as Madame Achille Simagrée de Lantiponne."

Both boys instantly set off for the magistrate, but as Sam ran fastest, Dick gave up the chase, and turned to the house, where he startled his mother by exclaiming—"Make haste—make haste down to the cabin—there's to be marrying there directly."

"Shocking!" cried Mrs. Clavering, throwing away her sewing. "Is Uncle Philip really going to play the madman? Can there be no way of saving him?"

"He *is* saved," replied Dick; "he has just been saved by a French barber, Miss Robertine's old sweetheart; and so Uncle Philip is going to have them married out of the way, as soon as possible. I suppose he is determined that Miss Robertine shall not have the least chance of making another dead set at him. Sam is gone for Squire Van Tackemfast."

"But the cabin is no place for a wedding," said Mrs. Clavering.

"Why," replied Dick, "Uncle Philip seems determined not to quit the cabin till all danger is over. Dear mother, make haste, or Miss Robertine may yet win him back again."

Mrs. Clavering hastily changed her cap, and ordered a servant to follow with cake and wine; and on their way to the cabin Dick gave her an account of all that had passed. In a few minutes Sam arrived, accompanied by Squire Van Tackemfast, with whom Captain Kentledge exchanged a few explanatory words. There was no time for any further preparation. Uncle Philip instantly put the hand of Robertine into that of her lover. The young couple stood up before the magistrate, who merely uttered a few words, but which were sufficient in law to unite them for ever—"In the name of the commonwealth, I pronounce you man and wife." This was the whole of the ceremony; the magistrate writing a certificate, which was duly signed by all present.

"Now," said Uncle Philip, looking at his watch and addressing Lantiponne, "the steamboat will soon be along, and if you are going down to the city to-day, you will have little enough time to make your preparations."

The bride and groom curtsied and bowed gracefully, and departed with Madame Franchimeau, whose last words were—"What a surprise for Monsieur Franchimeau, and also for papa and mamma and my little darlings!"

When they were all fairly off, Mrs. Clavering felt as if relieved from the weight of a mountain; and she could not quit the cabin till she had had a long discussion with Uncle Philip on the recent events.

In about an hour, the steamboat passed along, going close in shore to get all the advantage of the tide; and Robertine, who stood on the deck leaning on her husband's arm, smiled and waved her handkerchief to Uncle Philip.

To conclude—it was not long before the old gentleman prevailed on Mrs. Clavering and her family to remove with him to a house of his own at Salem, a plan which had been in agitation for

the last year; and in due time the boys commenced their apprenticeships, Sam to the captain of an Indiaman, and Dick to a shipbuilder. Both succeeded well; and have since become eminent in their respective professions.

Uncle Philip looks not much older than when he first allowed himself to be smitten with Miss Robertine; but he has never since fallen into a similar snare. He has made his will, and divided his whole property between Mrs. Clavering and her children, with the exception of some legacies to old sailors.

The Simagrée de Lantiponnes have a large establishment in Broadway.

The Franchimeaus and their system soon got out of favour at Corinth, and they have ever since been going the rounds of new villages.

THE ALBUM.

"Tis not in mortals to command success."—Addison.

"Ungallant!—unmilitary!" exclaimed the beautiful Orinda Melbourne, to her yet unprofessed lover, Lieutenant Sunderland, as in the decline of a summer afternoon they sat near an open window in the northwest parlour of Mr. Cozzens's house at West Point, where as yet there was no hotel. "And do you steadily persist in refusing to write in my album? Really, you deserve to be dismissed the service for unofficer-like conduct."

"I have forsworn albums," replied Sunderland, "and for at least a dozen reasons. In the first place, the gods have not made me poetical."

"Ah!" interrupted Miss Melbourne, "you remind me of the well-known story of the mayor of a French provincial town, who informed the king that the worthy burgesses had fifteen reasons for not doing themselves the honour of firing a salute on his majesty's arrival: the first reason being that they had no cannon."

"A case in point," remarked Sunderland.

"Well," resumed Orinda, "I do not expect you to surpass the glories of Byron and Moore."

"Nothing is more contemptible than *mediocre* poetry," observed Sunderland; "the magazines and souvenirs have surfeited the world with it."

"I do not require you to be even *mediocre*," persisted the young lady. "Give me something ludicrously bad, and I shall prize it almost as highly as if it were seriously good. I need not remind you of the hackneyed remarks, that extremes meet, and that there is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous. Look at this Ode to West Point, written in my album by a very obliging cadet, a room-mate of my brother's. It is a perfect gem. How I admire these lines—

> 'The steamboat up the river shoots,
> While Willis on his bugle toots.'"

"Wo to the man," said Sunderland, "who subjects his poetical reputation to the ordeal of a lady's album, where all, whether gifted or ungifted, are expected to do their best."

"You are mistaken," replied Orinda; "that expectation has long since gone by. We have found, by experience, that either from negligence or perverseness, gentlemen are very apt to write their worst in our albums."

"I do not wonder at it," said Sunderland. "However, I must retrieve my character as a knight of chivalry. Appoint me any other task, and I will pledge myself to perform your bidding. Let your request 'take any shape but that, and my firm nerves shall never tremble.'"

"But why this inveterate horror of albums?" asked Orinda. "Have you had any experience in them?"

"I have, to my sorrow," replied Sunderland. "With me, I am convinced, 'the course of albums never will run smooth.' For instance, I once, by means of an album, lost the lady of my love (I presume not to say the love of my lady.)"

Orinda looked up and looked down, and "a change came o'er the spirit of her face:" which change was not unnoticed by her yet undeclared admirer, whose acquaintance with Miss Melbourne commenced on a former visit she had made to West Point, to see her brother, who was one of the cadets of the Military Academy.

Orinda Melbourne was now in her twenty-first year, at her own disposal (having lost both her parents), and mistress of considerable property, a great part of which had been left to her by an aunt. She resided in the city of New York, with Mr. and Mrs. Ledbury, two old and intimate friends of her family, and they had accompanied her to West Point. She was universally considered a very charming girl, and by none more so than by Lieutenant Sunderland. But hearing that Miss Melbourne had declined the addresses of several very unexceptionable gentlemen, our hero was trying to delay an explicit avowal of his sentiments, till he should

discover some reason to hope that the disclosure would be favourably received.

Like most other men, on similar occasions, he gave a favourable interpretation to the emotion involuntarily evinced by the young lady, on hearing him allude to his former flame.

There was a pause of a few moments, till Orinda rallied, and said with affected carelessness, "You may as well tell me the whole story, as we seem to have nothing better to talk of."

"Well, then," proceeded Sunderland, "during one of my visits to the city, I met with a very pretty young lady from Brooklyn. Her name is of course unmentionable; but I soon found myself, for the first time in my life, a little in love—"

"I suspect it was not merely a little," remarked Orinda, with a penetrating glance; "it is said, that in love the first fit is always the strongest."

"No, no!" exclaimed Sunderland; "I deny the truth of that opinion. It is a popular fallacy—I know it is," fixing his eyes on Orinda.

At that minute, the young officer would have given a year's pay to be certain whether the glow that heightened Miss Melbourne's complexion, was a *bona fide* blush, or only the reflection of the declining sunbeams, as they streamed from under a dark cloud that was hovering over the western hills. However, after a few moments' consideration, he again interpreted favourably.

"Proceed, Mr. Sunderland," said Orinda in rather a tremulous voice; "tell me all the particulars."

"Of the album I will," replied he. "Well, then—this young lady was one of the belles of Brooklyn, and certainly very handsome."

"Of what colour were her eyes and hair?" inquired Orinda.

"Light—both very light."

Orinda, who was a brunette, caught herself on the point of saying, that she had rarely seen much expression in the countenance of a blonde; but she checked the remark, and Sunderland proceeded.

"The lady in question had a splendidly bound album, which she produced and talked about on all occasions, and seemed to regard with so much pride and admiration, that if a lover could possibly have been jealous of a book, I was, at times, very near becoming so. It was half filled with amatory verses by juvenile rhymesters, and with tasteless insipid drawings in water colours, by boarding-school misses: which drawings my Dulcinea persisted in calling paintings. She also persisted in urging me to write 'a piece of poetry' in her album, and I persevered in declaring my utter inability: as my few attempts at versification had hitherto proved entire failures. At last, I reluctantly consented, recollecting to have heard of sudden fits of inspiration, and of miraculous gifts of poetical genius, with which even milkmaids and cobblers have been unexpectedly visited. So taking the album with me, I retired to the solitude of my apartment at the City Hall, concluding with Macbeth that when a thing is to be well done, 'tis well to do it quickly. Here I manfully made my preparations 'to saddle Pegasus and ride up Parnassus'—but in vain. With me the winged steed of Apollo was as obstinate as a Spanish mule on the Sierra Morena. Not an inch would he stir. There was not even the slightest flutter in his pinions; and the mountain of the Muses looked to me as inaccessible as—as what shall I say—"

"I will help you to a simile," replied Orinda; "as inaccessible as the sublime and stupendous precipice to which you West Pointers have given the elegant and appropriate title of Butter Hill."

"Exactly," responded Sunderland. "Parnassus looked like Butter Hill. Well, then—to be brief (as every man says when he suspects himself to be tedious), I sat up till one o'clock, vainly endeavouring to manufacture something that might stand for poetry. But I had no rhymes for my ideas, and no ideas for my rhymes. I found it impossible to make both go together. I at last determined to write my verses in prose till I had arranged the sense, and afterwards to put them into measure and rhyme. I tried every sort of measure from six feet to ten, and I essayed consecutive rhymes and alternate rhymes, but all was in vain. I found that I must either sacrifice the sense to the sound, or the sound to the sense. At length, I thought of the Bouts Rimées of the French. So I wrote down, near the right hand edge of my paper, a whole column of familiar rhymes, such as mine, thine, tears, fears, light, bright, &c. And now I congratulated myself on having accomplished one-half of my task, supposing that I should find it comparatively easy to do the filling up. But all was to no purpose. I could effect nothing that I thought even tolerable, and I was too proud to write badly and be laughed at. However, I must acknowledge that, could I have been certain that my 'piece of poetry' would be seen only by the fair damsel herself, I might easily have screwed my courage to the sticking place; for greatly as I was smitten with the beauty of my little nymph, I had a secret misgiving that she had never sacrificed to Minerva."

Our hero paused a moment to admire the radiance of the smile that now lighted up the countenance of Orinda.

"In short," continued he, "I sat up till 'night's candles were burnt out,' both literally and metaphorically, and I then retired in despair to my pillow, from whence I did not rise till ten o'clock in the morning.

"That evening I carried back the album to my fair one; but she still refused to let me off, and insisted that I should take it with me to West Point, to which place I was to return next day. I did

so, hoping to catch some inspiration from the mountain air, and the mountain scenery. I ought to have recollected that few of the poets on record, either lived among mountains, or wrote while visiting them. The sons of song are too often fated to set up their household gods, and strike their lyres, in dark narrow streets and dismal alleys.

"As soon as the steamboat had cleared the city, I took out my pocket-book and pencil, and prepared for the onset. I now regarded the ever-beautiful scenery of the magnificent Hudson with a new interest. I thought the Palisades would do something for me; but my imagination remained as sterile and as impenetrable as their eternal rocks. The broad expanse of the Tappan Sea lay like a resplendent mirror around me, but it reflected no image that I could transfer to my tablets. We came into the Highlands, but the old Dundeberg rumbled nothing in my fancy's ears, Anthony's Nose looked coldly down upon me, and the Sugar Loaf suggested no idea of sweetness. We proceeded along, but Buttermilk Falls reminded me not of the fountain of Helicon, and Bull Hill and Breakneck Hill seemed too rugged ever to be smoothed into verse.

"That afternoon I went up to Fort Putnam, for the hundred and twentieth time in my life. I walked round the dismantled ramparts; I looked into their damp and gloomy cells. I thought (as is the duty of every one that visits these martial ruins) on the 'pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war.' But they inspired nothing that I could turn to account in my lady's album; nothing that could serve to introduce the compliment always expected in the last stanza. And, in truth, this compliment was the chief stumbling-block after all. 'But for these vile compliments, I might myself have been an album-poet.'"

"Is it then so difficult to compliment a lady?" inquired Orinda.

"Not in plain prose," replied Sunderland, "and when the lady is a little *à l'imbecile*, nothing in the world is more easy. But even in prose, to compliment a sensible woman as she deserves, and without danger of offending her modesty, requires both tact and talent."

"Which I suppose is the reason," said Orinda, "that sensible women obtain so few compliments from your sex, and fools so many."

"True," replied Sunderland. "But such compliments as we wish to offer to elegant and intellectual females, are as orient pearls compared to French beads."

Orinda cast down her beautiful eyes under the expressive glance of her admirer. She felt that she was now receiving a pearl.

"But to proceed," continued Sunderland. "I came down from the fort no better poet than I went up, and I had recourse again to the solitude of my own room. Grown desperate, and determined to get the album off my mind and have it over, an idea struck me which I almost blush to mention. Promise not to look at me, and I will amaze you with my candour."

Orinda pretended to hold her fan before her eyes.

"Are you sure you are not peeping between the stems of the feathers?" said Sunderland. "Well, then, now for my confession; but listen to it 'more in sorrow than in anger,' and remember that the album alone was the cause of my desperation and my dishonour. Some Mephistopheles whispered in my ear to look among the older poets for something but little known, and transfer it as mine to a page in the fatal book. I would not, of course, venture on Scott or Moore or Byron; for though I doubted whether my lady-love was better versed in *them* than in the bards of Queen Anne's reign, yet I thought that perhaps some of the readers of her album might be acquainted with the last and best of the minstrels. But on looking over a volume of Pope, I found his 'Song by a Person of Quality.'"

"I recollect it," said Orinda; "it is a satire on the amateur love-verses of that period,—such as were generally produced by fashionable inamoratoes. In these stanzas the author has purposely avoided every approach to sense or connexion, but has assembled together a medley of smooth and euphonous sounds. And could you risk such verses with your Dulcinea?"

"Yes," replied Sunderland; "with *her* I knew that I was perfectly safe, and that she would pronounce them sweet and delightful. And in short, that they would exactly suit the calibre of her understanding."

"Yet still," said Orinda, "with such an opinion of her mental qualifications, you professed to love this young lady—or rather you really loved her—no doubt you did."

"No, no," replied Sunderland, eagerly; "it was only a passing whim—only a boyish fancy—such as a man may feel a dozen times before he is five-and-twenty, and before he is seriously in love. I should have told you that at this period I had not yet arrived at years of discretion."

"I should have guessed it without your telling," said Orinda, mischievously.

The young officer smiled, and proceeded.

"I now saw my way clear. So I made a new pen, placed Pope on my desk, and sitting down to the album with a lightened spirit, I began with the first stanza of his poem:

'Fluttering spread thy purple pinions,
Gentle Cupid, o'er my heart—
I a slave in thy dominions,

Nature must give way to art.'

And I then added the second and sixth verses, substituting the name of my fair one for that of Aurelia."

"What would I not give to know that name!" thought Orinda. "But, in those verses," she remarked to Sunderland, "if I recollect aright, there is no direct compliment to the lady's beauty."

"But there is a very great one by implication," answered the lieutenant. "For instance, the line —'Hear me pay my dying vows.'—What more could I profess than to die for love of her! And a lady that is died for, must of course be superlatively charming. In short, I finished the verses, and I must say they were very handsomely transcribed. Now, do not laugh. Is it not more excusable to take some pride in writing a good hand, than to boast of scribbling a bad one? I have known persons who seemed absolutely to plume themselves on the illegibility of their scrawls; because, unfortunately, so many men of genius have indulged in a most shameful style of chirography.

"Well, I viewed my performance with much satisfaction, and then proceeded to look attentively through the album (I had as yet but glanced over it), to see if any one excelled me in calligraphy. What was my horror, when I found among a multitude of Lines to Zephyrs and Dew-drops, and Stanzas to Rose-buds and Violets, the identical verses that I had just copied from Pope! Some other poor fellow, equally hard pressed, had been beforehand with me, and committed the very same theft; which, in his case, appeared to me enormous. I pronounced it 'flat burglary,' and could have consigned him to the penitentiary 'for the whole term of his natural life.' To be compelled to commit a robbery is bad enough, but to be anticipated in the very same robbery, and to find that you have burdened your conscience, and jeoparded your self-respect for nothing, is worse still."

"There was one way," observed Orinda, "in which you could have extricated yourself from the dilemma. You might have cut out the leaf, and written something else on another."

"That was the very thing I finally determined on doing," replied Sunderland. "So after a pause of deep distress, I took my penknife, and did cut out the leaf: resolving that for my next 'writing-piece,' I would go as far back as the poets of Elizabeth's time. While pleasing myself with the idea that all was now safe, I perceived, in moving the book, that another leaf was working its way out; and I found, to my great consternation, that I had cut too deeply, and that I had loosened a page on which was faintly drawn in a lady's hand a faint Cupid shooting at a faint heart, encircled with a wreath of faint flowers. I recollected that my 'fair one with locks of gold,' had pointed out to me this performance as 'the sweetest thing in her album.'"

"By-the-bye," remarked Orinda, "when you found so much difficulty in composing verses, why did you not substitute a drawing?"

"Oh!" replied the lieutenant, "though I am at no loss in military drawing, and can finish my bastions, and counterscarps, and ravelins, with all due neatness, yet my miscellaneous sketches are very much in the style of scene-painting, and totally unfit to be classed with the smooth, delicate, half-tinted prettinesses that are peculiar to ladies' albums."

"Now," said Orinda, "I am going to see how you will bear a compliment. I know that your drawings are bold and spirited, and such as the artists consider very excellent for an amateur, and therefore I will excuse you from writing verses in my album, on condition that you make me a sketch, in your own way, of my favourite view of Fort Putnam—I mean that fine scene of the west side which bursts suddenly upon you when going thither by the back road that leads through the woods. How sublime is the effect, when you stand at the foot of the dark gray precipice, feathered as it is with masses of beautiful foliage, and when you look up to its lofty summit, where the living rock seems to blend itself with the dilapidated ramparts of the mountain fortress!"

"To attempt such a sketch for Miss Melbourne," replied Sunderland, with much animation, "I shall consider both a pleasure and an honour. But Loves and Doves, and Roses and Posies, are entirely out of my line, or rather out of the line of my pencil. Now, where was I? I believe I was telling of my confusion when I found that I had inadvertently cut out the young lady's pet Cupid."

"But did it not strike you," said Orinda, "that the easiest course, after all, was to go to your demoiselle, and make a candid confession of the whole? which she would undoubtedly have regarded in no other light than as a subject of amusement, and have been too much diverted to feel any displeasure."

"Ah! you must not judge of every one by yourself," replied Sunderland. "I thought for a moment of doing what you now suggest, but after a little consideration, I more than suspected that my candour would be thrown away upon the perverse little damsel that owned the album, and that any attempt to take a ludicrous view of the business would mortally offend her. All young ladies are not like Miss Orinda Melbourne"—(bowing as he spoke).

Orinda turned her head towards the window, and fixed her eyes intently on the top of the Crow's Nest. This time the suffusion on her cheeks was not in the least doubtful.

"Well, then," continued Sunderland, "that I might remedy the disaster as far as possible, I procured some fine paste, and was proceeding to cement the leaf to its predecessor, when, in my agitation, a drop of the paste fell on the Cupid's face. In trying to absorb it with the corner of a clean handkerchief, I 'spread the ruin widely round,' and smeared off his wings, which

unfortunately grew out of the back of his neck: a very pardonable mistake, as the fair artist had probably never seen a live Cupid. I was now nearly frantic, and I enacted sundry ravings 'too tedious to mention.' The first use I made of my returning senses was to employ a distinguished artist (then on a visit to West Point) to execute on another leaf, another Cupid, with bow and arrow, heart and roses, &c. He made a beautiful little thing, a design of his own, which alone was worth a thousand album drawings of the usual sort. I was now quite reconciled to the disaster, which had given me an opportunity of presenting the young lady with a precious specimen of taste and genius. As soon as it was finished, I obtained leave of absence for a few days, went down to the city, and, album in hand, repaired to my Brooklyn beauty. I knew that, with her, there would be no use in telling the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; and I acknowledge, with shame, that I suppressed the fact of my copying Pope's verses. I merely said that, not being quite satisfied with my poetry, I had cut out the leaf; and I then went on to relate the remainder exactly as it happened. As I proceeded, I observed her brows beginning to contract, and her lips beginning to pout. 'Well, sir,' said she, with her eyes flashing (for I now found that even blue eyes could flash), 'I think you have been taking great liberties with my album: cutting and clipping it, and smearing it with paste, and spoiling my best Cupid, and then getting a man to put another picture into it, without asking my leave.'

"Much disconcerted, I made many apologies, all of which she received with a very ill grace. I ventured to point out to her the superiority of the drawing that had been made by the artist.

"'I see no beauty in it,' she exclaimed; 'the shading is not half so much blended as Miss Cottonwool's, and it does not look half so soft.'"

"I have observed," said Orinda, "that persons who in reality know but little of the art, always dwell greatly on what they call softness."

"I endeavoured to reconcile her to the drawing," continued Sunderland; "but she persisted in saying that it was nothing to compare to Miss Cottonwool's, which she alleged was of one delicate tint throughout, while this was very light in some places and very dark in others, and that she could actually see distinctly where most of the touches were put on, 'when in paintings that are really handsome,' said she, 'all the shading is blended together, and looks soft.'

"To conclude, she would not forgive me; and, in sober truth, I must acknowledge that the petulance and silliness she evinced on this occasion, took away much of my desire to be restored to favour. Next day, I met her walking on the Battery, in high flirtation with an old West Indian planter, who espoused her in the course of a fortnight, and carried her to Antigua."

Orinda now gave an involuntary and almost audible sigh; feeling a sensation of relief on hearing that her rival by anticipation was married and gone, and entirely *hors de combat*.

Mr. and Mrs. Ledbury, who had been taking a long walk, now came in; and shortly after, the bell rang for tea. And when Orinda took the offered arm of Sunderland (as he conducted her to the table), she felt a presentiment that, before many days, the important question would be asked and answered.

The evening on which our story commences, was that of the 3d of July, 1825, and tea was scarcely over at the Mess House when an orderly sergeant came round with a notice for the officers to assemble in uniform at the dock, to receive General La Fayette, who was expected in half an hour.

The guest of the nation had visited the Military Academy soon after his arrival in America. He had there been introduced to Cadet Huger, the son of that gallant Carolinian who, in conjunction with the generous and enterprising Bollman, had so nearly succeeded in the hazardous attempt of delivering him from the dungeons of Olmutz.

La Fayette was now on his return from his memorable tour throughout the United States. Major Worth,[71] who was in command at West Point during the temporary absence of Colonel Thayer, happened to be at Newburgh when the steamboat arrived there, in which La Fayette was proceeding down the river from Albany to New York; and he invited the General to stop at West Point, and remain till the next boat. The invitation was promptly accepted, and Major Worth instantly despatched a messenger with the intelligence; wishing to give the residents of the post an opportunity of making such preparations for the reception of their distinguished visiter as the shortness of the time would allow.

The officers hastily put on their full dress uniform, and repaired to the wharf, or dock, as it was called. The band (at that time the finest in America) was already there. The ladies assembled on the high bank that overlooks the river, and from thence witnessed the arrival of La Fayette.

On the heights above the landing-place, and near the spot where the hotel has been since erected, appeared an officer, and a detachment of soldiers, waiting, with a lighted match, to commence the salute; for which purpose several pieces of artillery had been conveyed thither.

The twilight of a summer evening was accelerated by a vast and heavy cloud, portentous of a thunderstorm. It had overspread the west, and loured upon the river, on whose yet unruffled waters the giant shadows of the mountains were casting a still deeper gloom. Beyond Polipel's Island was seen the coming steamboat, looking like an immense star upon a level with the horizon. There was a solemn silence all around, which was soon broken by the sound of the paddles, that were heard when the boat was as far off as Washington's Valley: and, in a few

minutes, her dense shower of sparks and her wreath of red smoke were vividly defined upon the darkening sky.

The boat was soon at the wharf; and, at the moment that La Fayette stepped on shore, the officers took off their hats, the band struck up Hail Columbia, and, amid the twilight gloom and the darkness of the impending thundercloud, it was chiefly by the flashes of the guns from the heights that the scene was distinctly visible. The lightning of heaven quivered also on the water; and the mountain echoes repeated the low rolling of the distant thunder in unison with the loud roar of the cannon.

The general, accompanied by his son, and by his secretary, Levasseur, walked slowly up the hill, leaning on the arm of Major Worth, preceded by the band playing La Fayette's March, and followed by the officers and professors of the Institution. When they had ascended to the plain, they found the houses lighted up, and the camp of the cadets illuminated also. They proceeded to the Mess House, and as soon as they had entered, the musicians ranged themselves under the elms in front, and commenced Yankee Doodle; the quickstep to which La Fayette, at the head of his American division, had marched to the attack at the siege of Yorktown.

While the General was partaking of some refreshment, the officers and professors returned for the ladies, all of whom were desirous of an introduction to him. Many children were also brought and presented to the far-famed European, who had so importantly assisted in obtaining for them and for their fathers, the glorious immunities of independence.

The star has now set which shone so auspiciously for our country at that disastrous period of our revolutionary struggle—

> "When hope was sinking in dismay,
> And gloom obscured Columbia's day."

Mouldering into dust is that honoured hand which was clasped with such deep emotion by the assembled sons and daughters of the nation in whose cause it had first unsheathed the sword of liberty. And soon will that noble and generous heart, so replete with truth and benevolence, be reduced to "a clod of the valley." Yet, may we not hope that from the world of eternity, of which his immortal spirit is now an inhabitant, he looks down with equal interest on the land of his nativity, and on the land of his adoption: that country so bound to him by ties of everlasting gratitude; that country where all were his friends, as he was the friend of all.

Tears suffused the beautiful eyes of Orinda Melbourne, when, introduced by her lover, she took the offered hand of La Fayette, and her voice trembled as she replied to the compliment of the patriot of both hemispheres. Sunderland remarked to the son of the illustrious veteran, that it gave him much pleasure to see that the General's long and fatiguing journey had by no means impaired his healthful appearance, but that, on the contrary, he now looked better than he had done on his first arrival in America. "Ah!" replied Colonel La Fayette, "how could my father suffer from fatigue, when every day was a day of happiness!"

After Orinda had resigned her place to another lady, she said to Sunderland, who stood at the back of her chair—"What would I not give for La Fayette's autograph in my album!"

"Still harping on the album," said Sunderland, smiling.

"Excuse me this once," replied Orinda. "I begin to think as you do with respect to albums, but if nothing else can be alleged in their favour, they may, at least, be safe and convenient depositories for mementoes of those whose names are their history. All I presume to wish or to hope from La Fayette, is simply his signature. But I have not courage myself to ask such a favour. Will you convey my request to him?"

"Willingly," answered Sunderland. "But he will grant that request still more readily if it comes from your own lips. Let us wait awhile, and I will see that you have an opportunity."

In a short time, nearly all the company had departed, except those that were inmates of the house. The gentlemen having taken home the ladies, returned for the purpose of remaining with La Fayette till the boat came along in which he was to proceed to the city.

Orinda took her album; her admirer conducted her to the General, and with much confusion she proffered her request; Sunderland brought him a standish, and he wrote the name "La Fayette" in the centre of a blank page, which our heroine presented to him: it having on each side other blank leaves that Orinda determined should never be filled up. Highly gratified at becoming the possessor of so valued a signature, she could scarcely refrain, in her enthusiasm, from pressing the leaf to her lips, when she soon after retired with Mrs. Ledbury.

The officers remained with General La Fayette till the arrival of the boat, which came not till near twelve o'clock. They then accompanied him to the wharf, and took their final leave. The thunderstorm had gone round without discharging its fury on West Point, and everything had turned out propitiously for the General's visit; which was perhaps the more pleasant for having been so little expected.

The following day was the Fourth of July, and the next was the one fixed on by Mr. and Mrs. Ledbury for returning to New York. That morning, at the breakfast-table, the number of guests was increased by the presence of a Mr. Jenkins, who had come from the city in the same boat with Miss Melbourne and her friends, and after passing a few days at West Point, had gone up

the river to visit some relations at Poughkeepsie, from whence he had just returned. Mr. Jenkins was a shallow, conceited, over-dressed young man, and, moreover, extremely ugly, though of this misfortune he was not in the least aware. He was of a family whose wealth had not made them genteel. He professed great politeness to the ladies, that is, if they had beauty and money; yet he always declared that he would marry nothing under a hundred thousand dollars. But he was good-natured; and that, and his utter insignificance, got him along tolerably well, for no one ever thought it worth while to be offended at his folly and self-sufficiency.

After breakfast, Mrs. Ledbury asked Orinda if she had prevailed on Mr. Sunderland to write an article in her album, adding—"I heard you urging him to that effect the other day, as I passed the front parlour."

"I found him inexorable, as to writing," replied Orinda.

"Well, really," said Mr. Jenkins, "I don't know how a gentleman can reconcile himself to refuse anything a lady asks. And he an officer too! For my part, I always hold it my bounden duty to oblige the ladies, and never on any account to treat them with *hauteur*, as the French call it. To be sure, I am not a marrying man—that is, I do not marry under a hundred thousand—but still, that is no reason why I should not be always polite and agreeable. *Apropos*, as the French say—*apropos*, Miss Melbourne, you know *I* offered the other day to write something for you in your album, and I will do it with all the pleasure in life. I am very partial to albums, and quite *au-fait* to them, to use a French term."

"We return to the city this afternoon," said Orinda. "You will scarcely have time to add anything to the treasures of *my* album."

"Oh! it won't take me long," replied Jenkins; "short and sweet is *my* motto. There will be quite time enough. You see I have already finished my breakfast. I am not the least of a *gourmand*, to borrow a word from the French."

Orinda had really some curiosity to see a specimen of Jenkins's poetry: supposing that, like the poor cadet's, it might be amusingly bad. Therefore, having sent for her album, she put it hastily into Jenkins's hand: for at that moment Lieutenant Sunderland, who had, as usual, breakfasted at the mess-table with his brother officers, came in to invite her to walk with him to Gee's Point. Orinda assented, and immediately put on her bonnet, saying to her lover as she left the house—

"You know this is one of my favourite walks—I like that fine mass of bare granite running far out into the river, and the beautiful view from its extreme point. And then the road, by which we descend to it, is so charmingly picturesque, with its deep ravine on one side, filled with trees and flowering shrubs, and the dark and lofty cliff that towers up on the other, where the thick vine wanders in festoons, and the branches of the wild rose throw their long streamers down the rock, whose utmost heights are crowned with still-lingering remnants of the grass-grown ruins of Fort Clinton."

But we question if, on this eventful morning, the beauties of Gee's Point were duly appreciated by our heroine, for long before they had reached it, her lover had made an explicit avowal of his feelings and his hopes, and had obtained from her the promise of her hand: which promise was faithfully fulfilled on that day two months.

In the afternoon, Lieutenant Sunderland accompanied Miss Melbourne and her friends on their return to the city. Previous to her departure, Orinda did not forgot to remind Mr. Jenkins of her album, now doubly valuable to her as containing the name of La Fayette, written by his own hand.

Jenkins begged a thousand pardons, alleging that the arrival of a friend from New York, had prevented him from writing in it, as he had intended. "And of course," said he, "I could not put off my friend, as he is one of the *élite* of the city, to describe him in French. However, there is time enough yet. Short and sweet, you know"—

"The boat is in sight," said Sunderland.

"Oh! no matter," answered Jenkins. "I can do it in a minute, and I will send it down to the boat after you. Miss Melbourne shall have it before she quits the wharf. I would on no consideration be guilty of disappointing a lady."

And taking with him the album, he went directly to his room.

"You had best go down to the dock," said the cadet, young Melbourne, who had come to see his sister off. "There is no time to be lost. I will take care that the album reaches you in safety, should you be obliged to go without it."

They proceeded towards the river, but they had scarcely got as far as Mrs. Thomson's, when a waiter came running after them with the book, saying—"Mr. Jenkins's compliments to Miss Melbourne, and all is right."

"Really," said Sunderland, "that silly fellow must have a machine for making verses, to have turned out anything like poetry in so short a time."

They were scarcely seated on the deck of the steamboat, when Orinda opened her album to look for the inspirations of Jenkins's Muse. She found no verses. But on the very page consecrated by the hand of La Fayette, and immediately under the autograph of the hero, was written, in an

awkward school-boy character, the name of Jeremiah Jenkins.

THE SET OF CHINA.

"How thrive the beauties of the graphic art?"—PETER PINDAR.

"Mr. Gummage," said Mrs. Atmore, as she entered a certain drawing-school, at that time the most fashionable in Philadelphia, "I have brought you a new pupil, my daughter, Miss Marianne Atmore. Have you a vacancy?"

"Why, I can't say that I have," replied Mr. Gummage; "I never have vacancies."

"I am very sorry to hear it," said Mrs. Atmore; and Miss Marianne, a tall, handsome girl of fifteen, looked disappointed.

"But perhaps I *could* strain a point, and find a place for her," resumed Mr. Gummage, who knew very well that he never had the smallest idea of limiting the number of his pupils, and that if twenty more were to apply, he would take them every one, however full his school might be.

"Do, pray, Mr. Gummage," said Mrs. Atmore; "do try and make an exertion to admit my daughter; I shall regard it as a particular favour."

"Well, I believe she may come," replied Gummage: "I suppose I can take her. Has she any turn for drawing?"

"I don't know," answered Mrs. Atmore; "she has never tried."

"So much the better," said Gummage; "I like girls that have never tried; they are much more manageable than those that have been scratching and daubing at home all their lives."

Mr. Gummage was no gentleman, either in appearance or manner. But he passed for a genius among those who knew nothing of that ill-understood race. He had a hooked nose that turned to the right, and a crooked mouth that turned to the left—his face being very much out of drawing, —and he had two round eyes that in colour and expression resembled two hazel-nuts. His lips were "pea-green and blue," from the habit of putting the brushes into his mouth when they were overcharged with colour. He took snuff illimitably, and generally carried half a dozen handkerchiefs, some of which, however, were to wrap his dinner in, as he conveyed it from market in his capacious pockets; others, as he said, were "to wipe the girl's saucers."

His usual costume was an old dusty brown coat, corduroy pantaloons, and a waistcoat that had once been red, boots that had once been black, and a low crowned rusty hat—which was never off his head, even in the presence of the ladies—and a bandanna cravat. The vulgarity of his habits, and the rudeness of his deportment, all passed off under the title of eccentricity. At the period when he flourished—it was long before the time of Sully—the *beau ideal* of an artist, at least among the multitude, was an ugly, ill-mannered, dirty fellow, that painted an inch thick in divers gaudy colours, equally irreconcileable to nature and art. And the chief attractions of a drawing master—for Mr. Gummage was nothing more—lay in doing almost everything himself, and producing for his pupils, in their first quarter, pictures (so called) that were pronounced "fit to frame."

"Well, madam," said Mr. Gummage, "what do you wish your daughter to learn? figures, flowers, or landscapes?"

"Oh! all three," replied Mrs. Atmore. "We have been furnishing our new house, and I told Mr. Atmore that he need not get any pictures for the front parlour, as I would much prefer having them all painted by Marianne. She has been four quarters with Miss Julia,[72] and has worked Friendship and Innocence, which cost, altogether, upwards of a hundred dollars. Do you know the piece, Mr. Gummage? There is a tomb with a weeping willow, and two ladies with long hair, one dressed in pink, the other in blue, holding a wreath between them over the top of the urn. The ladies are Friendship. Then on the right hand of the piece is a cottage, and an oak, and a little girl dressed in yellow, sitting on a green bank, and putting a wreath round the neck of a lamb. Nothing can be more natural than the lamb's wool. It is done entirely in French knots. The child and the lamb are Innocence."

"Ay, ay," said Gummage, "I know the piece well enough—I've drawn them by dozens."

"Well," continued Mrs. Atmore, "this satin piece hangs over the front parlour mantel. It is much prettier and better done than the one Miss Longstitch worked, of Charlotte at the tomb of Werter, though she *did* sew silver spangles all over Charlotte's lilac gown, and used chenille, at a fi'-penny-bit a needleful, for all the banks and the large tree. Now, as the mantel-piece is provided for, I wish a landscape for each of the recesses, and a figure-piece to hang on each side of the large looking-glass, with flower-pieces under them, all by Marianne. Can she do all these in one quarter?"

"No, that she can't," replied Gummage; "it will take her two quarters' hard work, and may be three, to get through the whole of them."

"Well, I won't stand about a quarter more or less," said Mrs. Atmore; "but what I wish Marianne to do most particularly, and, indeed, the chief reason why I send her to drawing-school just now, is a pattern for a set of china that we are going to have made in Canton. I was told the other day by a New York lady (who was quite tired of the queer, unmeaning things which are generally put on India ware), that she had sent a pattern for a tea-set, drawn by her daughter, and that every article came out with the identical device beautifully done on the china, all in the proper colours. She said it was talked of all over New York, and that people who had never been at the house before, came to look at and admire it. No doubt it was a great feather in her daughter's cap."

"Possibly, madam," said Gummage.

"And now," resumed Mrs. Atmore, "since I heard this, I have thought of nothing else than having the same thing done in my family; only I shall send for a dinner set, and a very long one, too. Mr. Atmore tells me that the Voltaire, one of Stephen Girard's ships, sails for Canton early next month, and he is well acquainted with the captain, who will attend to the order for the china. I suppose in the course of a fortnight Marianne will have learnt drawing enough to enable her to do the pattern?"

"Oh! yes, madam—quite enough," replied Gummage, suppressing a laugh.

"Very well," said Mrs. Atmore. "And now, Mr. Gummage, let me look at some of your models."

"Figures, flowers, or landscapes?" asked the artist.

"Oh! some of each," replied the lady.

Mr. Gummage had so many pupils—both boys and girls—and so many classes, and gave lessons besides, at so many boarding-schools, that he had no leisure time for receiving applications, and as he kept his domicile incog. he saw all his visitors at his school-room. Foreseeing a long examination of the prints, he took from a hanging shelf several of his numerous portfolios, and having placed them on a table before Mrs. Atmore and her daughter, he proceeded to go round and direct his present class of young ladies, who were all sitting at the drawing-desks in their bonnets and shawls, because the apartment afforded no accommodation for these habiliments if laid aside. Each young lady was leaning over a straining-frame, on which was pasted a sheet of drawing-paper, and each seemed engaged in attempting to copy one of the coloured engravings that were fastened by a slip of cleft cane to the cord of twine that ran along the wall. The benches were dusty, the floor dirty and slopped with spilt water; and the windows, for want of washing, looked more like horn than glass. The school-room and teacher were all in keeping. Yet for many years Mr. Gummage was so much in fashion that no other drawing-masters had the least chance of success. Those who recollect the original, will not think his portrait overcharged.

We left Mr. Gummage going round his class for the purpose of giving a glance, and saying a few words to each.

"Miss Jones, lay down the lid of your paint-box. No rulers shall be used in my school, as I have often told you."

"But, Mr. Gummage, only look at the walls of my castle; they are all leaning to one side; both the turrets stand crooked, and the doors and windows slant every way."

"No matter, it's my rule that nobody shall use a rule. Miss Miller, have you rubbed the blue and bistre I told you?"

"Yes, sir; I've been at it all the afternoon; here it is."

"Why, that's not half enough."

"Mr. Gummage, I've rubbed, and rubbed, till my arm aches to the shoulder, and my face is all in a glow."

"Then take off your bonnet, and cool yourself. I tell you there's not half enough. Why, my boys rub blue and bistre till their faces run of a stream. I make them take off their coats to it."

"Mr. Gummage," said one young lady, "you promised to put in my sky to-day."

"Mr. Gummage," said another, "I've been waiting for my distances these two weeks. How can I go any farther till you have done them for me?"

"Finish the fore-ground to-day. It is time enough for the distances: I'll put them in on Friday."

"Mr. Gummage," said another, "my river has been expecting you since last Wednesday."

"Why, you have not put in the boat yet. Do the boat to-day, and the fisherman on the shore. But look at your bridge! Every arch is of a different size—some big, and some little."

"Well, Mr. Gummage, it is your own fault—you should let me use compasses. I have a pair in my box—do, pray, let me use them."

"No, I won't. My plan is that you shall all draw entirely by the eye."

"That is the reason we make everything so crooked."

"I see nothing more crooked than yourselves," replied the polite drawing-master.

"Mr. Gummage," said another young lady, raising her eyes from a novel that she had brought with her, "I have done nothing at my piece for at least a fortnight. I have been all the time waiting for you to put in my large tree."

"Hush this moment with your babbling, every soul of you," said the teacher, in an under tone: "don't you see there are strangers here? What an unreasonable pack of fools you are! Can I do everybody's piece at once? Learn to have patience, one and all of you, and wait till your turn comes."

Some of the girls tossed their heads and pouted, and some laughed, and some quitted their desks and amused themselves by looking out at the windows. But the instructor turned his back on them, and walked off towards the table at which Mrs. Atmore and her daughter were seated with the portfolios, both making incessant exclamations of "How beautiful!—how elegant!—how sweet!"

"Oh! here are Romeo and Juliet in the tomb scene!" cried Marianne. "Look, mamma, is it not lovely?—the very play in which we saw Cooper and Mrs. Merry. Oh! do let me paint Romeo and Juliet for the dinner set! But stop—here's the Shepherdess of the Alps! how magnificent! I think I would rather do that for the china. And here's Mary Queen of Scots; I remember her ever since I read history. And here are Telemachus and Minerva, just as I translated about them in my Telemaque exercises. Oh! let me do them for the dinner set—sha'n't I. Mr. Gummage?"

"I don't see any figure-pieces in which the colours are bright enough," remarked Mrs. Atmore.

"As to that," observed Gummage—who knew that the burthen of the drawing would eventually fall on him, and who never liked to do figures—"I don't believe that any of these figure pieces would look well if reduced so small as to go on china plates."

"Well,—here are some very fine landscapes," pursued Mrs. Atmore; "Here's the Cascade of Tivoli—and here's a view in Jamaica—and here's Glastonbury Abbey."

"Oh! I dote on abbeys," cried Marianne, "for the sake of Amanda Fitzalan."

"Your papa will not approve of your doing this," observed Mrs. Atmore: "you know, he says that abbeys are nothing but old tumble-down churches."

"If I may not do an abbey, let me do a castle," said Marianne; "there's Conway Castle by moonlight—how natural the moon looks!"

"As to castles," replied Mrs. Atmore, "you know your papa says they are no better than old jails. He hates both abbeys and castles."

"Well, here is a noble country seat," said Marianne—"'Chiswick House.'"

"Your papa has no patience with country seats," rejoined Mrs. Atmore. "He says that when people have made their money, they had better stay in town to enjoy it; where they can be convenient to the market, and the stores, and the post-office, and the coffee-house. He likes a good comfortable three story brick mansion, in a central part of the city, with marble steps, iron railings, and green venetian shutters."

"To cut the matter short," said Mr. Gummage, "the best thing for the china is a flower piece—a basket, or a wreath—or something of that sort. You can have a good cipher in the centre, and the colours may be as bright as you please. India ware is generally painted with one colour only; but the Chinese are submissive animals, and will do just as they are bid. It may cost something more to have a variety of colours; but I suppose you will not mind that."

"Oh! no—no," exclaimed Mrs. Atmore, "I shall not care for the price; I have set my mind on having this china the wonder of all Philadelphia."

Our readers will understand, that at this period nearly all the porcelain used in America was of Chinese manufacture; very little of that elegant article having been, as yet, imported from France.

A wreath was selected from the portfolio that contained the engravings and drawings of flowers. It was decided that Marianne should first execute it the full size of the model (which was as large as nature), that she might immediately have a piece to frame; and that she was afterwards to make a smaller copy of it, as a border for all the articles of the china set; the middle to be ornamented with the letter A, in gold, surrounded by the rays of a golden star. Sprigs and tendrils of the flowers were to branch down from the border, so as nearly to reach the gilding in the middle. The large wreath that was intended to frame, was to bear in its centre the initials of Marianne Atmore, being the letters M. A., painted in shell gold.

"And so," said Mr. Gummage, "having a piece to frame, and a pattern for your china, you'll kill two birds with one stone."

On the following Monday, the young lady came to take her first lesson, followed by a mulatto boy, carrying a little black morocco trunk, that contained a four row box of Reeves' colours, with an assortment of camel's hair pencils, half a dozen white saucers, a water cup, a lead pencil, and a piece of India rubber. Mr. Gummage immediately supplied her with two bristle brushes, and sundry little shallow earthern cups, each containing a modicum of some sort of body colour, masticot, flake white, &c., prepared by himself, and charged at a quarter-dollar apiece, and

which he told her she would want when she came to do landscapes and figures.

Mr. Gummage's style was, to put in the sky, water, and distances with opaque paints, and the most prominent objects with transparent colours. This was probably the reason that his foregrounds seemed always to be sunk in his backgrounds. The model was scarcely considered as a guide, for he continually told his pupils that they must try to excel it; and he helped them to do so by making all his skies deep red fire at the bottom, and dark blue smoke at the top; and exactly reversing the colours on the water, by putting red at the top, and blue at the bottom. The distant mountains were lilac and white, and the near rocks buff colour shaded with purple. The castles and abbeys were usually gamboge. The trees were dabbed and dotted in with a large bristle brush, so that the foliage looked like a green fog. The foam of the cascades resembled a concourse of wigs, scuffling together and knocking the powder out of each other, the spray being always fizzed on with one of the aforesaid bristle brushes. All the dark shadows in every part of the picture were done with a mixture of Prussian blue and bistre, and of these two colours there was consequently a vast consumption in Mr. Gummage's school. At the period of our story, many of the best houses in Philadelphia were decorated with these landscapes. But for the honour of my townspeople, I must say that the taste for such productions is now entirely obsolete. We may look forward to the time, which we trust is not far distant, when the elements of drawing will be taught in every school, and considered as indispensable to education as a knowledge of writing. It has long been our belief that *any* child may, with proper instruction, be made to draw, as easily as any child may be made to write. We are rejoiced to find that so distinguished an artist as Rembrandt Peale has avowed the same opinion, in giving to the world his invaluable little work on Graphics: in which he has clearly demonstrated the affinity between drawing and writing, and admirably exemplified the leading principles of both.

Marianne's first attempt at the great wreath was awkward enough. After she had spent five or six afternoons at the outline, and made it triangular rather than circular, and found it impossible to get in the sweet pea, and the convolvulus, and lost and bewildered herself among the multitude of leaves that formed the cup of the rose, Mr. Gummage snatched the pencil from her hand, rubbed out the whole, and then drew it himself. It must be confessed that his forte lay in flowers, and he was extremely clever at them; "but," as he expressed it, "his scholars chiefly ran upon landscapes."

After he had sketched the wreath, he directed Marianne to rub the colours for her flowers, while he put in Miss Smithson's rocks.

When Marianne had covered all her saucers with colours, and wasted ten times as much as was necessary, she was eager to commence painting, as she called it; and in trying to wash the rose with lake, she daubed it on of crimson thickness. When Mr. Gummage saw it, he gave her a severe reprimand for meddling with her own piece. It was with great difficulty that the superabundant colour was removed; and he charged her to let the flowers alone till he was ready to wash them for her. He worked a little at the piece every day, forbidding Marianne to touch it: and she remained idle while he was putting in skies, mountains, &c., for the other young ladies.

At length the wreath was finished—Mr. Gummage having only sketched it, and washed it, and given it the last touches. It was put into a splendid frame, and shown as Miss Marianne Atmore's first attempt at painting; and everybody exclaimed, "What an excellent teacher Mr. Gummage must be! How fast he brings on his pupils!"

In the mean time, she undertook at home to make the small copy that was to go to China. But she was now "at a dead lock," and found it utterly impossible to advance a step without Mr. Gummage. It was then thought best that she should do it at school—meaning that Mr. Gummage should do it for her, while she looked out of the window.

The whole was at last satisfactorily accomplished, even to the gilt star with the A in the centre. It was taken home and compared with the larger wreath, and found still prettier, and shown as Marianne's, to the envy of all mothers whose daughters could not furnish models for china. It was finally given in charge to the captain of the Voltaire, with injunctions to order a dinner-set exactly according to the pattern—and to prevent the possibility of a mistake, a written direction accompanied it.

The ship sailed—and Marianne continued three quarters at Mr. Gummage's school, where she nominally effected another flower piece, and also perpetrated Kemble in Rolla, Edwin and Angelina, the Falls of the Rhine, and the Falls of Niagara; all of which were duly framed, and hung in their appointed places.

During the year that followed the departure of the ship Voltaire, great impatience for her return was manifested by the ladies of the Atmore family—anxious to see how the china would look, and frequently hoping that the colours would be bright enough, and none of the flowers omitted—that the gilding would be rich, and everything inserted in its proper place, exactly according to the pattern. Mrs. Atmore's only regret was, that she had not sent for a tea-set also; not that she was in want of one, but then it would be so much better to have a dinner-set and a tea-set precisely alike, and Marianne's beautiful wreath on all.

"Why, my dear," said Mr. Atmore, "how often have I heard you say that you would never have another *tea*-set from Canton, because the Chinese persist in making the principal articles of such old-fashioned, awkward shapes. For my part, I always disliked the tall coffee pots, with their straight spouts, looking like light-houses with bowsprits to them; and the short, clumsy tea-pots,

with their twisted handles, and lids that always fall off."

"To be sure," said Mrs. Atmore, "I have been looking forward to the time, when we can get a French tea-set upon tolerable terms. But in the mean while, I should be very glad to have cups and saucers with Marianne's beautiful wreath, and of course, when we use this china on the table we shall always bring forward our silver pots."

Spring returned, and there was much watching of the vanes, and great joy when they pointed easterly, and the ship-news now became the most interesting column of the papers. A vessel that had sailed from New York for Canton, on the same day the Voltaire departed for Philadelphia, had already got in; therefore the Voltaire might be hourly expected. At length she was reported below; and at this period the river Delaware suffered much, in comparison with the river Hudson, owing to the tediousness of its navigation from the capes to the city.

At last the Voltaire cast anchor at the foot of Market street, and our ladies could scarcely refrain from walking down to the wharf to see the ship that held the box, that held the china. But invitations were immediately sent out for a long projected dinner-party, which Mrs. Atmore had persuaded her husband to defer till they could exhibit the beautiful new porcelain.

The box was landed, and conveyed to the house. The whole family were present at the opening, which was performed in the dining-room by Mr. Atmore himself,—all the servants peeping in at the door. As soon as a part of the lid was split off, and a handful of straw removed, a pile of plates appeared, all separately wrapped in India paper. Each of the family snatched up a plate and hastily tore off the covering. There were the flowers glowing in beautiful colours, and the gold star and the gold A, admirably executed. But under the gold star, on every plate, dish, and tureen, were the words, "THIS IN THE MIDDLE!"—being the direction which the literal and exact Chinese had minutely copied from a crooked line that Mr. Atmore had hastily scrawled on the pattern with a very bad pen, and of course without the slightest thought of its being inserted *verbatim* beneath the central ornament.

Mr. Atmore laughed—Mrs. Atmore cried—the servants giggled aloud—and Marianne cried first, and laughed afterwards.

The only good that resulted was, that it gave occasion to Mr. Atmore to relate the story to his guests whenever he had a dinner-party.

LAURA LOVEL.

"The world is still deceived with ornament."—SHAKSPEARE.

Laura Lovel was the eldest surviving daughter of a clergyman settled in a retired and beautiful village at the western extremity of the state of Massachusetts. Between Laura and her two youngest sisters, three other children had died. Being so much their senior, it was in her power to assist her father materially in the instruction of Ella and Rosa; as after his family had become small, Mr. Lovel thought it best that the two little girls should receive all their education at home, and never were children that conferred more credit on their teachers. Mrs. Lovel was a plain, good woman, of excellent practical sense, a notable seamstress, and a first-rate housewife. Few families were more perfectly happy, notwithstanding that the limited income of Mr. Lovel (though sufficient for comfort) left them little or nothing for superfluities.

They had a very neat house standing in the centre of a flourishing garden, in which utility had been the first consideration, though blended as far as possible with beauty. The stone fence looked like a hedge of nasturtians. The pillars supporting the rustic piazza that surrounded the house, were the rough trunks of small trees, with a sufficient portion of the chief branches remaining, to afford resting-places for the luxuriant masses of scarlet beans that ran over them; furnishing, when the blossoms were off, and the green pods full grown, an excellent vegetable-dish for the table. The house was shaded with fruit-trees exclusively; and the garden shrubs were all raspberry, currant, and gooseberry, and the flowers were chiefly those that had medicinal properties, or could be turned to culinary purposes—with the exception of some that were cultivated purposely for the bees. A meadow which pastured two cows and a horse, completed the little domain.

About the time that Laura Lovel had finished her seventeenth year, there came to the village of Rosebrook an old friend of her father's, whom he had long since lost sight of. They had received their early education at the same school, they had met again at college, and had some years after performed together a voyage to India; Mr. Brantley as supercargo, Mr. Lovel as a missionary. Mr. Brantley had been very successful in business, and was now a merchant of wealth and respectability, with a handsome establishment in Boston. Mr. Lovel had settled down as pastor of the principal church in his native village.

The object of Mr. Brantley's present visit to Rosebrook, was to inquire personally into the state of some property he still retained there. Mr. Lovel would not allow his old friend to remain at the tavern, but insisted that *his* house should be his abiding place; and they had much pleasure in comparing their reminiscences of former times. As their chief conversation was on topics common to both, Mr. Lovel did not perceive that, except upon mercantile subjects, Mr. Brantley

had acquired few new ideas since they had last met, and that his reading was confined exclusively to the newspapers. But he saw that in quiet good-nature, and easiness of disposition, his old friend was still the same as in early life.

Mr. Brantley was so pleased with every member of the Lovel family, and liked his visit so much, that he was induced to prolong it two days beyond his first intention; and he expressed an earnest desire to take Laura home with him, to pass a few weeks with his wife and daughter. This proposal, however, was declined, with sincere acknowledgments for its kindness; Mr. Lovel's delicacy making him unwilling to send his daughter, as a guest, to a lady who as yet was ignorant of her existence, and Laura sharing in her father's scruples.

Mr. Brantley took his leave: and three months afterwards he paid a second visit to Rosebrook, for the purpose of selling his property in that neighbourhood. He brought with him a short but very polite letter from his wife to Mr. and Mrs. Lovel, renewing the invitation for Laura, and pressing it in a manner that could scarcely be withstood. Mr. Lovel began to waver; Mrs. Lovel thought it was time that Laura should see a little of the world, and Laura's speaking looks told how much pleasure she anticipated from the excursion. The two little girls, though their eyes filled at the idea of being separated from their beloved sister, most magnanimously joined in entreating permission for her to go, as they saw that she wished it. Finally, Mr. Lovel consented; and Laura seemed to tread on air while making her preparations for the journey.

That evening, at the hour of family worship, her father laid his hand on Laura's head, and uttered a fervent prayer for the preservation of her health and happiness during her absence from the paternal roof. Mrs. Lovel and all her daughters were deeply affected, and Mr. Brantley looked very much inclined to participate in their emotion.

Early next morning Mr. Brantley's chaise was at the door, and Laura took leave of the family with almost as many tears and kisses as if she had been going to cross the Atlantic. Little Ella, who was about eight years old, presented her, at parting, with a very ingenious needle-book of her own making, and Rosa, who was just seven, gave her as a keepsake an equally clever pincushion. She promised to bring them new books, and other little presents from Boston, a place in which they supposed everything that the world produced, could be obtained without difficulty.

Finally, the last farewell was uttered, the last kiss was given, and Laura Lovel took her seat in the chaise beside Mr. Brantley, who drove off at a rapid pace; and in a few moments a turn in the road hid from her view the house of her father, and the affectionate group that still lingered at its gate, to catch the latest glimpse of the vehicle that was bearing away from them the daughter and the sister.

As they proceeded on their journey, Laura's spirits gradually revived, and she soon became interested or delighted with everything she beheld; for she had a quick perception, with a mind of much intelligence and depth of observation.

The second day of their journey had nearly closed, before the spires of the Boston churches, and the majestic dome of the State House, met the intense gaze of our heroine. Thousands of lights soon twinkled over the city of the three hills, and the long vistas of lamps that illuminated the bridges, seemed to the unpractised eyes of Laura Lovel to realize the glories of the Arabian Nights. "Oh!" she involuntarily exclaimed, "if my dear little sisters could only be with me now!"

As they entered by the western avenue, and as Mr. Brantley's residence was situated in the eastern part of the city, Laura had an opportunity of seeing as she passed a vast number of lofty, spacious, and noble-looking dwelling-houses, in the erection of which the patrician families of Boston have perhaps surpassed all the other aristocracies of the Union; for, sternly republican as are our laws and institutions, it cannot be denied that in private life every section of our commonwealth has its aristocracy.

At length they stopped at Mr. Brantley's door, and Laura had a very polite reception from the lady of the mansion, an indolent, good-natured, insipid woman, the chief business of whose life was dress and company. Mr. Brantley had purchased a large and handsome house in the western part of the town, to which the family were to remove in the course of the autumn, and it was Mrs. Brantley's intention, when they were settled in their new and elegant establishment, to get into a higher circle, and to have weekly *soirées*. To make her parties the more attractive, she was desirous of engaging some very pretty young lady (a stranger with a new face) to pass the winter with her. She had but one child, a pert, forward girl, about fourteen, thin, pale, and seeming "as if she suffered a great deal in order to look pretty." She sat, stood, and moved, as if in constant pain from the tightness of her corsets, the smallness of her sleeve-holes, and the narrowness of her shoes. Her hair, having been kept long during the whole period of her childhood, was exhausted with incessant tying, brushing, and curling, and she was already obliged to make artificial additions to it. It was at this time a mountain of bows, plaits, and puffs; and her costume was in every respect that of a woman of twenty. She was extremely anxious to "come out," as it is called, but her father insisted on her staying in, till she had finished her education; and her mother had been told that it was very impolitic to allow young ladies to "appear in society" at too early an age, as they were always supposed to be older than they really were, and therefore would be the sooner considered *passé*.

After tea, Mrs. Brantley reclined herself idly in one of the rocking-chairs, Mr. Brantley retired to the back parlour to read undisturbed the evening papers, and Augusta took up some bead-work, while Laura looked over the Souvenirs with which the centre-table was strewed.

"How happy you must be, Miss Brantley," said Laura, "to have it in your power to read so many new books!"

"As to reading," replied Augusta, "I never have any time to spare for that purpose; what with my music, and my dancing, and my lessons in French conversation, and my worsted-work, and my bead-work; then I have every day to go out shopping, for I always *will* choose everything for myself. Mamma has not the least idea of my taste; at least, she never remembers it. And then there is always some business with the mantua-makers and milliners. And I have so many morning visits to pay with mamma—and in the afternoon I am generally so tired that I can do nothing but put on a wrapper, and throw myself on the bed, and sleep till it is time to dress for evening."

"Oh!" thought Laura Lovel, "how differently do we pass our time at Rosebrook!—Is not this a beautiful engraving?" she continued, holding one of the open Souvenirs towards Augusta.

"Yes—pretty enough," replied Augusta, scarcely turning her head to look at it.—"Mamma, do not you think I had better have my green pelerine cut in points rather than in scollops?"

"I think," replied Mrs. Brantley, "that scollops are the prettiest."

"Really, mamma," said Augusta, petulantly, "it is very peculiar in you to say so, when you ought to know that scollops have had their day, and that points have come round again."

"Very well, then, my love," replied Mrs. Brantley, indolently, "consult your own taste."

"That I always do," said Augusta, half aside to Laura, who, addressing herself to Mrs. Brantley, made some inquiry about the last new novel.

"I cannot say that I have read it," answered Mrs. Brantley; "at least, I don't know that I have. Augusta, my love, do you recollect if you have heard me say anything about the last new book—the—a—the—what is it you call it, Miss Lovel?"

"La! mamma," said Augusta, "I should as soon expect you to write a book as to read one."

There was a pause for a minute or two. Augusta then leaning back towards her mother, exclaimed, "Upon second thoughts, I think I will have the green pelerine scolloped, and the blue one pointed. But the points shall be squared at the ends—on that I am determined."

Laura now took up a volume of the juvenile annual, entitled the Pearl, and said to Augusta, "You have most probably a complete set of the Pearl."

"After all, mamma," pursued Augusta, "butterfly bows are much prettier than shell-bows. What were you saying just now, Miss Lovel, about my having a set of pearls?—you may well ask;"—looking spitefully towards the back-parlour, in which her father was sitting. "Papa holds out that he will not give me a set till I am eighteen; and as to gold chains, and corals, and cornelians, I am sick of them, and I won't wear them at all; so you see me without any ornaments whatever, which you must think very peculiar."

Laura had tact enough to perceive that any further attempt at a conversation on books would be unavailing; and she made some inquiry about the annual exhibition of pictures at the Athenæum.

"I believe it is a very good one," replied Mrs. Brantley. "We stopped there one day on our way to dine with some friends out of town. But as the carriage was waiting, and the horses were impatient, we only stayed a few minutes, just long enough to walk round."

"Oh! yes, mamma," cried Augusta; "and don't you recollect we saw Miss Darford there in a new dress of lavender-coloured grenadine, though grenadines have been over these hundred years. And there was pretty Mrs. Lenham, as the gentlemen call her, in a puce-coloured italianet, though italianets have been out for ages. And don't you remember Miss Grover's canary-coloured reps bonnet, that looked as if it had been made in the ark. The idea of any one wearing reps! a thing that has not been seen since the flood! Only think of reps!"

Laura Lovel wondered what *reps* could possibly be. "Now I talk of bonnets," pursued Augusta; "pray, mamma, did you tell Miss Pipingcord that I would have my Tuscan Leghorn trimmed with the lilac and green riband, instead of the blue and yellow?"

"Indeed," replied Mrs. Brantley, "I found your cousin Mary so extremely ill this afternoon when I went to see her, and my sister so very uneasy on her account, that I absolutely forgot to call at the milliner's, as I had promised you."

"Was there ever anything so vexatious!" exclaimed Augusta, throwing down her bead-work. "Really, mamma, there is no trusting you at all. You never remember to do anything you are desired." And flying to the bell, she rang it with violence.

"I could think of nothing but poor Mary's danger," said Mrs. Brantley, "and the twenty-five leeches that I saw on her forehead."

"Dreadful!" ejaculated Augusta. "But you might have supposed that the leeches would do her good, as, of course, they will. Here, William," addressing the servant-man that had just entered, "run as if you were running for your life to Miss Pipingcord, the milliner, and tell her upon no account whatever to trim Miss Brantley's Tuscan Leghorn with the blue and yellow riband that was decided on yesterday. Tell her I have changed my mind, and resolved upon the lilac and

green. Fly as if you had not another moment to live, or Miss Pipingcord will have already trimmed the bonnet with the blue and yellow."

"And then," said Mrs. Brantley, "go to Mrs. Ashmore's, and inquire how Miss Mary is this evening."

"Why, mamma," exclaimed Augusta, "aunt Ashmore lives so far from Miss Pipingcord's, that it will be ten or eleven o'clock before William gets back, and I shall be all that time on thorns to know if she has not already disfigured my bonnet with the vile blue and yellow."

"Yesterday," said Mrs. Brantley, "you admired that very riband extremely."

"So I did," replied Augusta, "but I have been thinking about it since, and, as I tell you, I have changed my mind. And now that I have set my heart upon the lilac and green, I absolutely detest the blue and yellow."

"But I am really very anxious to know how Mary is to-night," said Mrs. Brantley.

"Oh!" replied Augusta, "I dare say the leeches have relieved her. And if they have not, no doubt Dr. Warren will order twenty-five more—or something else that will answer the purpose. She is in very good hands—I am certain that in the morning we shall hear she is considerably better. At all events, I *will not* wear the hateful blue and yellow riband.—William, what are you standing for?"

The man turned to leave the room, but Mrs. Brantley called him back. "William," said she, "tell one of the women to go to Mrs. Ashmore's and inquire how Miss Mary is."

"Eliza and Matilda are both out," said William, "and Louisa is crying with the toothache, and steaming her face over hot yerbs. I guess she won't be willing to walk so far in the night-air, just out of the steam."

"William," exclaimed Augusta, stamping with her foot, "don't stand here talking, but go at once; there's not a moment to lose. Tell Miss Pipingcord if she *has* put on that horrid riband, she must take it off again, and charge it in the bill, if she pretends she can't afford to lose it, as I dare say she will; and tell her to be sure and send the bonnet home early in the morning—I am dying to see it."

To all this, Laura Lovel had sat listening in amazement, and could scarcely conceive the possibility of the mind of so young a girl being totally absorbed in things that concerned nothing but external appearance. She had yet to learn that a passion for dress, when thoroughly excited in the female bosom, and carried to excess, has a direct tendency to cloud the understanding, injure the temper, and harden the heart.

Till the return of William, Augusta seemed indeed to be on thorns. At last he came, and brought with him the bonnet, trimmed with the blue and yellow. Augusta snatched it out of the bandbox, and stood speechless with passion, and William thus delivered his message from the milliner:—

"Miss Pippincod sends word that she had riband'd the bonnet afore I come for it—she says she has used up all her laylock green for another lady's bonnet, as chose it this very afternoon; and she guesses you won't stand no chance of finding no more of it, if you sarch Boston through; and she says she shew you all her ribands yesterday, and you chose the yellow blue yourself, and she han't got no more ribands as you'd be likely to like. Them's her very words."

"How I hate milliners!" exclaimed Augusta; and ringing for the maid that always assisted her in undressing, she flounced out of the room and went to bed.

"Miss Lovel," said Mrs. Brantley, smiling, "you must excuse dear Augusta. She is extremely sensitive about everything, and that is the reason she is apt to give way to these little fits of irritation."

Laura retired to her room, grieving to think how unamiable a young girl might be made, by the indulgence of an inordinate passion for dress.

Augusta's cousin Mary did not die.

The following day was to have been devoted to shopping, and to making some additions to the simple wardrobe of Laura Lovel, for which purpose her father had given her as much money as he could possibly spare. But it rained till late in the afternoon, and Mrs. Brantley's coach was out of order, and the Brantleys (like many other families that kept carriages of their own) could not conceive the possibility of *hiring* a similar vehicle upon any exigency whatever.

It is true that the present case was in reality no exigency at all; but Mrs. Brantley and her daughter seemed to consider it as such, from the one watching the clouds all day as she sat at the window, in her rocking-chair, and the other wandering about like a troubled spirit, fretting all the time, and complaining of the weather. Laura got through the hours very well, between reading Souvenirs (almost the only books in the house) and writing a long letter to inform her family of her safe arrival, and to describe her journey. Towards evening, a coach was heard to stop at the door, and there was a violent ringing, followed by a loud sharp voice in the entry, inquiring for Mrs. Brantley, who started from her rocking-chair, as Augusta exclaimed, "Miss Frampton!—I know 'tis Miss Frampton!" The young lady rushed into the hall, while her mother advanced a few steps, and Mr. Brantley threw down his paper, and hastened into the front-parlour with a look that expressed anything but satisfaction.

There was no time for comment or preparation. The sound was heard of baggage depositing, and in a few moments Augusta returned to the parlour, hanging lovingly on the arm of a lady in a very handsome travelling dress, who flew to Mrs. Brantley and kissed her familiarly, and then shook hands with her husband, and was introduced by him to our heroine.

Miss Frampton was a fashionable-looking woman, of no particular age. Her figure was good, but her features were the contrary, and the expression of her eye was strikingly bad. She had no relations, but she talked incessantly of her *friends*—for so she called every person whom she knew by sight, provided always that they were *presentable* people. She had some property, on the income of which she lived, exercising close economy in everything but dress. Sometimes she boarded out, and sometimes she billeted herself on one or other of these said friends, having no scruples of delicacy to deter her from eagerly availing herself of the slightest hint that might be construed into the semblance of an invitation. In short, she was assiduous in trying to get acquainted with everybody from whom anything was to be gained, flattering them to their faces, though she abused them behind their backs. Still, strange to tell, she had succeeded in forcing her way into the outworks of what is called society. She dressed well, professed to know everybody, and to go everywhere, was *au fait* of all the gossip of the day, and could always furnish ample food for the too prevailing appetite for scandal. Therefore, though every one disliked Miss Frampton, still every one tolerated her; and though a notorious calumniator, she excited so much fear, that it was generally thought safer to keep up some slight intercourse with her, than to affront her by throwing her off entirely.

Philadelphia was her usual place of residence; but she had met the Brantley family at the Saratoga Springs, had managed to accompany them to New York on their way home, had boarded at Bunker's during the week they stayed at that house, had assisted them in their shopping expeditions, and professed a violent regard for Augusta, who professed the same for her. Mrs. Brantley's slight intimation "that she should be glad to see her if ever she came to Boston," Miss Frampton had now taken advantage of, on pretext of benefiting by change of air. Conscious of her faded looks, but still hoping to pass for a young woman, she pretended always to be in precarious health, though of this there was seldom any proof positive.

On being introduced to Laura Lovel, as to a young lady on a visit to the family, Miss Frampton, who at once considered her an interloper, surveyed our heroine from head to foot, with something like a sneer, and exchanged significant glances with Augusta.

As soon as Miss Frampton had taken her seat, "My dear Mrs. Brantley," said she, "how delighted I am to see you! And my sweet Augusta, too! Why she has grown a perfect sylph!"

After hearing this, Augusta could not keep her seat five minutes together, but was gliding and flitting about all the remainder of the evening, and hovering round Miss Frampton's chair.

Miss Frampton continued, "Yes, my dear Mrs. Brantley, my health has, as usual, been extremely delicate. My friends have been seriously alarmed for me, and all my physicians have been quite miserable on my account. Dr. Dengue has been seen driving through the streets like a madman, in his haste to get to me. Poor man!—you must have heard the report of his suffering Mrs. Smith's baby to die with the croup, from neglecting to visit it, which, if true, was certainly in very bad taste. However, Dr. Dengue is one of my oldest friends, and a most charming man."

"But, as I was saying, my health still continued delicate, and excitement was unanimously recommended by the medical gentlemen—excitement and ice-cream. And as soon as this was known in society, it is incredible how many parties were made for me, and how many excursions were planned on my account. I had carriages at my door day and night. My friends were absolutely dragging me from each other's arms. Finally they all suggested entire change of air, and total change of scene. So I consented to tear myself awhile from my beloved Philadelphia, and pay you my promised visit in Boston."

"We are much obliged to you," said Mrs. Brantley. "And really," pursued Miss Frampton, "I had so many engagements on my hands, that I had fixed five different days for starting, and disappointed five different escorts. My receiving-room was like a levee every morning at visiting hours, with young gentlemen of fashion, coming to press their services, as is always the case when it is reported in Philadelphia that Miss Frampton has a disposition to travel. A whole procession of my friends accompanied me to the steamboat, and I believe I had more than a dozen elegant smelling-bottles presented to me—as it is universally known how much I always suffer during a journey, being deadly sick on the water, and in a constant state of nervous agitation while riding."

"And who did you come with at last?" asked Mrs. Brantley.

"Oh! with my friends the Twamberleys, of your city," replied Miss Frampton. "The whole family had been at Washington, and as soon as I heard they were in Philadelphia on their return home, I sent to inquire—that is, or rather, I mean, *they* sent to inquire as soon as they came to town, and heard that I intended visiting Boston—they sent to inquire if I would make them happy by joining their party."

"Well," observed Mr. Brantley, "I cannot imagine how you got along with all the Twamberleys. Mr. Twamberley, besides being a clumsy, fat man, upwards of seventy years old, and lame with the gout, and nearly quite deaf, and having cataracts coming on both eyes, is always obliged to travel with his silly young wife, and the eight children of her first husband, and I should think he had enough to do in taking care of himself and them. I wonder you did not prefer availing

yourself of the politeness of some of the single gentlemen you mentioned."

"Oh!" replied Miss Frampton, "any of them would have been too happy, as they politely expressed it, to have had the pleasure of waiting on me to Boston. Indeed, I knew not how to make a selection, being unwilling to offend any of them by a preference. And then again, it is always in better taste for young ladies to travel, and, indeed, to go everywhere, under the wing of a married woman. I dote upon chaperones; and by coming with this family, I had Mrs. Twamberley to matronize me. I have just parted with them all at their own door, where they were set down."

Mr. Brantley smiled when he thought of Mrs. Twamberley (who had been married to her first husband at fifteen, and was still a blooming girlish looking woman) matronizing the faded Miss Frampton, so evidently by many years her senior.

Laura Lovel, though new to the world, had sufficient good sense and penetration to perceive almost immediately, that Miss Frampton was a woman of much vanity and pretension, and that she was in the habit of talking with great exaggeration; and in a short time she more than suspected that many of her assertions were arrant falsehoods—a fact that was well known to all those numerous persons that Miss Frampton called her *friends*.

Tea was now brought in, and Miss Frampton took occasion to relate in what manner she had discovered that the famous silver urn of that charming family, the Sam Kettlethorps, was, in reality, only plated—that her particular favourites, the Joe Sowerbys, showed such bad taste at their great terrapin supper, as to have green hock-glasses for the champagne; and that those delightful people, the Bob Skutterbys, the first time they attempted the new style of heaters at a venison dinner, had them filled with spirits of turpentine, instead of spirits of wine.

Next morning, Miss Frampton did not appear at the breakfast-table, but had her first meal carried into her room, and Augusta breakfasted with her. Between them Laura Lovel was discussed at full length, and their conclusion was, that she had not a single good feature—that her complexion was nothing, her figure nothing, and her dress worse than nothing.

"I don't suppose," said Augusta, "that her father has given her much money to bring to town with her."

"To be sure he has not," replied Miss Frampton, "if he is only a poor country clergyman. I think it was in very bad taste for him to let her come at all."

"Well," said Augusta, "we must take her a shopping this morning, and try to get her fitted out, so as to make a decent appearance at Nahant, as we are going thither in a few days."

"Then I have come just in the right time," said Miss Frampton. "Nahant is the very place I wish to visit—my sweet friend Mrs. Dick Pewsey has given me such an account of it. She says there is considerable style there. She passed a week at Nahant when she came to Boston last summer."

"Oh! I remember her," cried Augusta. "She was a mountain of blonde lace."

"Yes," observed Miss Frampton, "and not an inch of that blonde has yet been paid for, or ever will be; I know it from good authority."

They went shopping, and Augusta took them to the most fashionable store in Washington street, where Laura was surprised and confused at the sight of the various beautiful articles shown to them. Even their names perplexed her. She knew very well what gros de Naples was (or gro de nap, as it is commonly called), but she was at a loss to distinguish gros de Berlin, gros de Suisse, gros des Indes, and all the other gros. Augusta, however, was au fait of the whole, and talked and flitted, and glided; producing, as she supposed, great effect among the young salesmen at the counters. Miss Frampton examined everything with a scrutinizing eye, undervalued them all, and took frequent occasions to say that they were far inferior to similar articles in Philadelphia.

At length, a very light-coloured figured silk, with a very new name, was selected for Laura. The price appeared to her extremely high, and when she heard the number of yards that were considered necessary, she faintly asked "if less would not do." Miss Frampton sneered, and Augusta laughed out, saying, "Don't you see that the silk is very narrow, and that it has a wrong side and a right side, and that the flowers have a top and a bottom? So as it cannot be turned every way, a larger quantity will be required."

"Had I not better choose a plain silk," said Laura, "one that is wider, and that *can* be turned any way?"

"Oh! plain silks are so common," replied Augusta; "though, for a change, they are well enough. I have four. But this will be best for Nahant. We always dress to go there; and, of course, we expect all of our party to do the same."

"But really this silk is so expensive," whispered Laura.

"Let the dress be cut off," said Miss Frampton, in a peremptory tone. "I am tired of so much hesitation. Tis in very bad taste."

The dress *was* cut off, and Laura, on calculating the amount, found that it would make a sad inroad on her little modicum. Being told that she must have also a new printed muslin, one was chosen for her with a beautiful sky blue for the predominant colour, and Laura found that this also was a very costly dress. She was next informed that she could not be presentable without a

French pelerine of embroidered muslin.

Pelerines in great variety were then produced, and Laura found, to her dismay, that the prices were from ten to twenty-five dollars. She declined taking one, and Miss Frampton and Augusta exchanged looks which said, as plainly as looks could speak, "I suppose she has not money enough."

Laura coloured—hesitated—at last false pride got the better of her scruples. The salesman commended the beauty of the pelerines; particularly of one tied up in the front, and ornamented on the shoulders, with bows of blue riband—and our heroine yielded, and took it at fifteen dollars; those at ten dollars being voted by Miss Frampton "absolutely mean."

After this, Laura was induced to supply herself with silk stockings and white kid gloves, "of a new style," and was also persuaded to give five dollars for a small scarf, also of a new style. And when all these purchases were made, she found that three quarters of a dollar were all that remained in her purse. Augusta also bought several new articles; but Miss Frampton got nothing. However, she insisted afterwards on going into every fancy store in Washington street—not to buy, but "to see what they had": and gave much trouble in causing the salesmen needlessly to display their goods to her, and some offence by making invidious comparisons between their merchandise and that of Philadelphia. By the time all this shopping was over, the clock of the Old South had struck two, and it was found expedient to postpone till next day the intended visit to the milliner and mantua-maker, Miss Frampton and Augusta declaring that, of afternoons, they were never fit for anything but to throw themselves on the bed and go to sleep. Laura Lovel, fatigued both in body and mind, and feeling much dissatisfied with herself, was glad of a respite from the pursuit of finery, though it was only till next morning; and she was almost "at her wit's end" to know in what way she was to pay for having her dress made—much less for the fashionable new bonnet which her companions insisted on her getting—Augusta giving more than hints, that if she went with the family to Nahant, they should expect her "to look like other people;" and Miss Frampton signifying in loud whispers, that "those who were unable to make an appearance, had always better stay at home."

In the evening there were some visitors, none of whom were very entertaining or agreeable, though all the ladies were excessively dressed. Laura was reminded of the homely proverb, "Birds of a feather flock together." The chief entertainment was listening to Augusta's music, who considered herself to play and sing with wonderful execution. But to the unpractised ears and eyes of our heroine, it seemed nothing more than an alternate succession of high shrieks and low murmurs, accompanied by various contortions of the face, sundry bowings and wavings of the body, great elevation of the shoulders and squaring of the elbows, and incessant quivering of the fingers, and throwing back of the hands. Miss Frampton talked all the while in a low voice to a lady that sat next to her, and turned round at intervals to assure Augusta that her singing was divine, and that she reminded her of Madame Feron.

Augusta had just finished a very great song, and was turning over her music-books in search of another, when a slight ring was heard at the street door, and as William opened it, a weak, hesitating voice inquired for Miss Laura Lovel, adding, "I hope to be excused. I know I ought not to make so free; but I heard this afternoon that Miss Laura, eldest daughter of the Reverend Edward Lovel of Rosebrook, Massachusetts, is now in this house, and I have walked five miles into town, for the purpose of seeing the young lady. However, I ought not to consider the walk as anything, and it was improper in me to speak of it at all. The young lady is an old friend of mine, if I may be so bold as to say so."

"There's company in the parlour," said William, in a tone not over respectful; "very particular company."

"I won't meddle with any of the company," proceeded the voice. "I am very careful never to make myself disagreeable. But I just wish (if I am not taking too great a liberty) to see Miss Laura Lovel."

"Shall I call her out," said William.

"I would not for the world give her the trouble," replied the stranger. "It is certainly my place to go to the young lady, and not hers to come to me. I always try to be polite. I hope you don't find me unpleasant."

"Miss Lovel," said Miss Frampton, sneeringly, "this must certainly be *your* beau."

The parlour-door being open, the whole of the preceding dialogue had been heard by the company, and Miss Frampton, from the place in which she sat, had a view of the stranger, as he stood in the entry.

William, then, with an unsuppressed grin, ushered into the room a little, thin, weak-looking man, who had a whitish face, and dead light hair, cut straight across his forehead. His dress was scrupulously neat, but very unfashionable. He wore a full suit of yellowish brown cloth, with all the gloss on. His legs were covered with smooth cotton stockings, and he had little silver knee-buckles. His shirt collar and cravat were stiff and blue, the latter being tied in front with very long ends, and in his hand he held a blue bandanna handkerchief, carefully folded up. His whole deportment was stiff and awkward.

On entering the room, he bowed very low with a peculiar jerk of the head, and his whole

appearance and manner denoted the very acme of humility. The company regarded him with amazement, and Miss Frampton began to whisper, keeping her eye fixed on him all the time. Laura started from her chair, hastened to him, and holding out her hand, addressed him by the name of Pyam Dodge. He took the proffered hand, after a moment of hesitation, and said, "I hope I am properly sensible of your kindness, Miss Laura Lovel, in allowing me to take your hand, now that you are grown. Many a time have I led you to my school, when I boarded at your respected father's, who I trust is well. But now I would not, on any account, be too familiar."

(Laura pointed to a chair.)

"But which is the mistress of the house? I know perfectly well that it is proper for me to pay my respects to her, before I take the liberty of sitting down under her roof. If I may presume to say that I understand anything thoroughly, it is certainly good manners. In my school, manners were always perfectly well taught—my own manners, I learned chiefly from my revered uncle, Deacon Ironskirt, formerly of Wicketiquock, but now of Popsquash."

Laura then introduced Pyam Dodge to the lady of the house, who received him civilly, and then to Mr. Brantley, who, perceiving that the poor schoolmaster was what is called a character, found his curiosity excited to know what he would do next.

This ceremony over, Pyam Dodge bowed round to each of the company separately. Laura saw at once that he was an object of ridicule; and his entire want of tact, and his pitiable simplicity, had never before struck her so forcibly. She was glad when, at last, he took a seat beside her, and, in a low voice, she endeavoured to engage him in a conversation that should prevent him from talking to any one else. She found that he was master of a district school about five miles from Boston, and that he was perfectly contented—for more than that he had never aspired to be.

But vain were the efforts of our heroine to keep Pyam Dodge to herself, and to prevent him from manifesting his peculiarities to the rest of the company. Perceiving that Augusta had turned round on her music-stool to listen and to look at him, the schoolmaster rose on his feet, and bowing first to the young lady, and then to her mother, he said: "Madam, I am afraid that I have disturbed the child while striking on her pyano-forty. I would on no account cause any interruption—for that might be making myself disagreeable. On the contrary, it would give me satisfaction for the child to continue her exercise, and I shall esteem it a privilege to hear how she plays her music. I have taught singing myself."

Augusta then, by desire of her mother, commenced a new bravura, which ran somehow thus:—

Oh! drop a tear, a tender tear—oh! drop a tear, a tender, tender tear. Oh! drop, oh! drop, oh! dro-o-op a te-en-der te-e-ear—a tender tear—a tear for me—a tear for me; a tender tear for me.

When I, when I, when I-I-I am wand'ring, wand'ring, wand'ring, wand'ring far, far from thee—fa-a-ar, far, far, far from thee—from thee.

For sadness in—for sadness in, my heart, my heart shall reign—shall re-e-e-ign—my hee-e-art—for sa-a-adness in my heart shall reign—shall reign.

Until—until—unti-i-il we fondly, fondly meet again, we fondly meet, we fo-o-ondly me-e-et—until we fondly, fondly, fondly meet—meet, meet, meet again—we meet again.

This song (in which the silliness of the words was increased tenfold by the incessant repetition of them), after various alternations of high and low, fast and slow, finished in thunder, Augusta striking the concluding notes with an energy that made the piano tremble.

When the bravura was over, Pyam Dodge, who had stood listening in amazement, looked at Mrs. Brantley, and said: "Madam, your child must doubtless sing that song very well when she gets the right tune."

"The right tune!" interrupted Augusta, indignantly.

"The right tune!" echoed Mrs. Brantley and Miss Frampton.

"Yes," said Pyam Dodge, solemnly—"and the right words also. For what I have just heard is, of course, neither the regular tune nor the proper words, as they seem to go every how—therefore I conclude that all this wandering and confusion was caused by the presence of strangers: myself, in all probability, being the greatest stranger, if I may be so bold as to say so. This is doubtless the reason why she mixed up the words at random, and repeated the same so often, and why her actions at the pyano-forty are so strange. I trust that at other times she plays and sings so as to give the proper sense."

Augusta violently shut down the lid of the piano, and gave her father a look that implied: "Won't you turn him out of the house?" But Mr. Brantley was much diverted, and laughed audibly.

Pyam Dodge surveyed himself from head to foot, ascertained that his knee-buckles were fast, and his cravat not untied, and, finding all his clothes in complete order, he said, looking round to the company: "I hope there is nothing ridiculous about me. It is my endeavour to appear as well as possible; but the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong."

"Upon my word," said Miss Frampton, leaning across the centre-table to Mrs. Brantley, "your *protegée* seems to have a strange taste in her acquaintances. However, that is always the case with people who have never been in society, as my friend Mrs. Tom Spradlington justly remarks."

A waiter with refreshments was now brought in, and handed round to the company. When it came to Pyam Dodge, he rose on his feet, and thanked the man for handing it to him; then, taking the smallest possible quantity of each of the different articles, he put all on the same plate, and, unfolding his blue bandanna, he spread it carefully and smoothly over his knees, and commenced eating with the smallest possible mouthfuls, praising everything as he tasted it. The wine being offered to him, he respectfully declined it, signifying that he belonged to the Temperance Society. But he afterwards took a glass of lemonade, on being assured that it was not punch, and again rising on his feet, he drank the health of each of the company separately, and not knowing their names, he designated them as the lady in the blue gown, the lady in the white gown, the gentleman in the black coat, &c.

This ceremony over, Pyam Dodge took out an old-fashioned silver watch, of a shape almost globular, and looking at the hour, he made many apologies for going away so soon, having five miles to walk, and requested that his departure might not break up the company. He then bowed all round again—told Laura he would thank her for her hand, which, on her giving him, he shook high and awkwardly, walked backwards to the door and ran against it, trusted he had made himself agreeable, and at last departed.

The front-door had scarcely closed after him, when a general laugh took place, which even Laura could scarcely refrain from joining in.

"Upon my word, Miss Lovel," said Augusta, "this friend of yours is the most peculiar person I ever beheld."

"I never saw a man in worse taste," remarked Miss Frampton.

In a moment another ring was heard at the door, and on its being opened, Pyam Dodge again made his appearance in the parlour, to beg pardon of the lady of the house, for not having returned thanks for his entertainment, and also to the *young* lady for her music, which, he said, "was doubtless well meant." He then repeated his bows and withdrew.

"What an intolerable fool!" exclaimed Augusta.

"Indeed," replied Laura Lovel, "he is, after all, not deficient in understanding, though his total want of tact, and his entire ignorance of the customs of the world, give an absurdity to his manner, which I confess it is difficult to witness without a smile. I have heard my father say that Pyam Dodge is one of the best classical scholars he ever knew, and he is certainly a man of good feelings, and of irreproachable character."

"I never knew a bore that was not," remarked Miss Frampton.

There was again a ring at the door, and again Pyam Dodge was ushered in. His business now was to inform Miss Laura Lovel, that if she did not see him every day during her residence in Boston, she must not impute the infrequency of his visits to any disrespect on his part, but rather to his close confinement to the duties of his school—besides which, his leisure time was much occupied in studying Arabic; but he hoped to make his arrangements, so as to be able to come to town and spend at least three evenings with her every week.

At this intimation there were such evident tokens of disapproval, on the part of the Brantley family and Miss Frampton, and of embarrassment on that of Laura, that poor Pyam Dodge, obtuse as he was to the things of this world, saw that the announcement of his visits was not perfectly well received. He looked amazed at this discovery, but bowed lower than ever, hoped he was not disgusting, and again retreated.

Once more was heard at the door the faint ring that announced the schoolmaster. "Assuredly," observed a gentleman present, "this must be the original Return Strong."

This time, however, poor Pyam Dodge did not venture into the parlour, but was heard meekly to inquire of the servant, if he had not dropped his handkerchief in the hall. The handkerchief was picked up, and he finally departed, humbly hoping "that the gentleman attending the door, had not found him troublesome." The moment he was gone, the gentleman that attended the door was heard audibly to put down the dead-latch.

Next day Augusta Brantley gave a standing order to the servants, that whenever Miss Lovel's schoolmaster came, he was to be told that the whole family were out of town.

In the morning, Laura was conveyed by Augusta and Miss Frampton to the mantua-maker's, and Miss Boxpleat demurred a long time about undertaking the two dresses, and longer still about finishing them that week, in consequence of the vast quantity of work she had now on hand. Finally she consented, assuring Laura Lovel that she only did so to oblige Miss Brantley.

Laura then asked what would be her charge for making the dresses. Miss Boxpleat reddened, and vouchsafed no reply; Miss Frampton laughed out, and Augusta twitched Laura's sleeve, who wondered what *faux pas* she had committed, till she learned in a whisper, that it was an affront to the dressmaker to attempt to bargain with her beforehand, and our heroine, much disconcerted, passively allowed herself to be fitted for the dresses.

Laura had a very pretty bonnet of the finest and whitest split straw, modestly trimmed with white lutestring riband; but her companions told her that there was no existing without a dress-hat, and she was accordingly carried to Miss Pipingcord's. Here they found that all the handsomest

articles of this description were already engaged, but they made her bespeak one of a very expensive silk, trimmed with flowers and gauze riband, and when she objected to the front, as exposing her whole face to the summer sun, she was told that of course she must have a blonde gauze veil. "We will stop at Whitaker's," said Augusta, "and see his assortment, and you can make the purchase at once." Laura knew that she could not, and steadily persisted in her refusal, saying that she must depend on her parasol for screening her face.

Several other superfluities were pressed upon our poor heroine, as they proceeded along Washington street; Augusta really thinking it indispensable that Laura should be fashionably and expensively dressed, and Miss Frampton feeling a malignant pleasure in observing how much these importunities confused and distressed her.

Laura sat down to dinner with an aching head, and no appetite, and afterwards retired to her room, and endeavoured to allay her uneasiness with a book.

"So," said Miss Frampton to Mrs. Brantley, "this is the girl that dear Augusta tells me you think of inviting to pass the winter with you."

"Why, is she not very pretty?" replied Mrs. Brantley.

"Not in my eye," answered Miss Frampton. "Wait but two years, till my sweet Augusta is old enough and tall enough to come out, and you will have no occasion to invite beauties, for the purpose of drawing company to your house—for, of course, I cannot but understand the motive; and pray, how can the father of this girl enable her to make a proper appearance? When she has got through the two new dresses that we had so much difficulty in persuading her to venture upon, is she to return to her black marcelline?—You certainly do not intend to wrong your own child by going to the expense of dressing out this parson's daughter yourself. And, after all, these green young girls do not draw company half so well as ladies a few years older—decided women of ton, who are familiar with the whole routine of society, and have the veritable *air distingué*. One of that description would do more for your soirées, next winter, than twenty of these village beauties."

Next day our heroine's new bonnet came home, accompanied by a bill of twelve dollars. She had supposed that the price would not exceed seven or eight. She had not the money, and her embarrassment was increased by Miss Frampton's examining the bill, and reminding her that there was a receipt to it. Laura's confusion was so palpable, that Mrs. Brantley felt some compassion for her, and said to the milliner's girl, "The young lady will call at Miss Pipingcord's, and pay for her hat." And the girl departed, first asking to have the bill returned to her, as it was receipted.

When our heroine and her companions were out next morning, they passed by the milliner's, and Laura instinctively turned away her head. "You can now call at Miss Pipingcord's and pay her bill," said Miss Frampton. "It is here that she lives—don't you see her name on the door?"

"I have not the money about me," said Laura, in a faltering voice—"I have left my purse at home." This was her first attempt at a subterfuge, and conscience-struck, she could not say another word during the walk.

On the last day of the week, her dresses were sent home, with a bill of eleven dollars for making the two, not including what are called the trimmings, all of which were charged at about four times their real cost. Laura was more confounded than ever. Neither Mrs. Brantley nor Augusta happened to be present, but Miss Frampton was, and understood it all. "Can't you tell the girl you will call and settle Miss Boxpleat's bill?" said she. "Don't look so confused"—adding in a somewhat lower voice, "she will suspect you have no money to pay with—really, your behaviour is in very bad taste."

Laura's lip quivered, and her cheek grew pale. Miss Frampton could scarcely help laughing, to see her so new to the world, and at last deigned to relieve her by telling Miss Boxpleat's girl that Miss Lovel would call and settle the bill.

The girl was scarcely out of the room, when poor Laura, unable to restrain herself another moment, hid her face against one of the cushions of the ottoman, and burst into tears. The flinty heart of Miss Frampton underwent a momentary softening. She looked awhile in silence at Laura, and then said to her, "Why, you seem to take this very much to heart."

"No wonder," replied Laura, sobbing—"I have expended all my money; all that my father gave me at my departure from home. At least I have only the merest trifle left; and how am I to pay either the milliner's bill, or the mantua-maker's?"

Miss Frampton deliberated for a few moments, walked to the window, and stood there awhile—then approached the still weeping Laura, and said to her, "What would you say if a friend was to come forward to relieve you from this embarrassment?"

"I have no friend," replied Laura, in a half-choked voice—"at least none here. Oh! how I wish that I had never left home!"

Miss Frampton paused again, and finally offered Laura the loan of twenty-five dollars, till she could get money from her father. "I know not," said Laura, "how I can ask my father so soon for any more money. I am convinced that he gave me all he could possibly spare. I have done very wrong in allowing myself to incur expenses which I am unable to meet. I can never forgive

myself. Oh! how miserable I am!" And she again covered her face and cried bitterly.

Miss Frampton hesitated—but she had heard Mr. Brantley speak of Mr. Lovel as a man of the strictest integrity, and she was certain that he would strain every nerve, and redouble the economy of his family expenditure, rather than allow his daughter to remain long under pecuniary obligations to a stranger. She felt that she ran no risk in taking from her pocket-book notes to the amount of twenty-five dollars, and putting them into the hands of Laura, who had thought at one time of applying to Mr. Brantley for the loan of a sufficient sum to help her out of her present difficulties, but was deterred by a feeling of invincible repugnance to taxing any farther the kindness of her host, conceiving herself already under sufficient obligations to him as his guest, and a partaker of his hospitality. However, had she known more of the world and had a greater insight into the varieties of the human character, she would have infinitely preferred throwing herself on the generosity of Mr. Brantley, to becoming the debtor of Miss Frampton. As it was, she gratefully accepted the proffered kindness of that lady, feeling it a respite. Drying her tears, she immediately equipped herself for walking, hastened both to the milliner and the mantua-maker, and paying their bills, she returned home with a lightened heart.

Laura Lovel had already begun to find her visit to the Brantley family less agreeable than she had anticipated. They had nothing in common with herself; their conversation was neither edifying nor entertaining. They had few books, except the Annuals; and though she passed the Circulating Libraries with longing eyes, she did not consider that she was sufficiently in funds to avail herself of their contents. No opportunities were offered her of seeing any of the shows of the city, and of those that casually fell in her way, she found her companions generally more ignorant than herself. They did not conceive that a stranger could be amused or interested with things that, having always been within their own reach, had failed to awaken in *them* the slightest curiosity. Mr. Brantley was infinitely the best of the family; but he was immersed in business all day, and in the newspapers all the evening. Mrs. Brantley was nothing, and Augusta's petulance and heartlessness, and Miss Frampton's impertinence (which somewhat increased after she lent the money to Laura), were equally annoying. The visitors of the family were nearly of the same stamp as its members.

Laura, however, had looked forward with much anticipated pleasure to the long-talked-of visit to the sea-shore; and in the mean time her chief enjoyment was derived from the afternoon rides that were occasionally taken in Mr. Brantley's carriage, and which gave our heroine an opportunity of seeing something of the beautiful environs of Boston.

Miss Frampton's fits of kindness were always very transient, and Laura's deep mortification at having been necessitated to accept a favour from such a woman, was rendered still more poignant by unavoidably overhearing (as she was dressing at her toilet-table that stood between two open windows) the following dialogue; the speakers being two of Mrs. Brantley's servant girls that were ironing in the kitchen porch, and who in talking to each other of the young ladies, always dropped the title of Miss:

"Matilda," said one of them, "don't you hear Laura's bell? Didn't she tell you arter dinner, that she would ring for you arter a while, to come up stairs and hook the back of her dress."

"Yes," replied Matilda—"I hear it as plain as you do, Eliza; but I guess I shan't go till it suits me. I'm quite beat out with running up stairs from morning to night to wait on that there Philadelphy woman, as she takes such high airs. Who but she indeed! Any how, I'm not a going to hurry. I shall just act as if I did not hear no bell at all—for as to this here Laura, I guess she an't much. Augusta told me this morning, when she got me to fix her hair, that Miss Frampton told her that Laura axed and begged her, amost on her bare knees, to lend her some money to pay for her frocks and bunnet."

"Why, how could she act so!" exclaimed Eliza.

"Because," resumed Matilda, "her people sent her here without a copper in her pocket. So I guess they're a pretty shabby set, after all."

"I was judging as much," said Eliza, "by her not taking no airs, and always acting so polite to everybody."

"Well now," observed Matilda, "Mr. Scourbrass, the gentleman as lives with old Madam Montgomery, at the big house, in Bowdin Square, and helps to do her work, always stands out that very great people of the rale sort, act much better, and an't so apt to take airs as them what are upstarts."

"Doctors differ," sagely remarked Eliza. "However, as you say, I don't believe this here Laura *is* much; and I'm thinking how she'll get along at Nahant. Miss Lathersoap, the lady as washes her clothes, told me, among other things, that Laura's pocket-handkerchers are all quite plain—not a worked or a laced one among them. Now our Augusta would scorn to carry a plain handkercher, and so would her mother."

"I've taken notice of Laura's handkerchers myself," said Matilda, "and I don't see why we young ladies as lives out, and does people's work to oblige them, should be expected to run at the beck and call of any strangers they may choose to take into the house; let alone when they're not no great things."

Laura retreated from the open windows, that she might hear no more of a conversation so painful

to her. She would at once have written to her father, told him all, and begged him, if he possibly could, to send her money enough to repay Miss Frampton, but she had found, by a letter received the day before, that he had gone on some business to the interior of Maine, and would not be home in less than a fortnight.

Next day was the one finally appointed for their removal to Nahant, and our heroine felt her spirits revive at the idea of beholding, for the first time in her life, "the sea, the sea, the open sea." They went in Mr. Brantley's carriage, and Laura understood that she *might* ride in her black silk dress and her straw bonnet.

They crossed at the Winnisimmet Ferry, rode through Chelsea, and soon arrived at the flourishing town of Lynn, where every man was making shoes, and every woman binding them. The last sunbeams were glowing in the west, when they came to the beautiful Long Beach that connects the rocks of Lynn with those of Nahant, the sand being so firm and smooth that the shadow of every object is reflected in it downwards. The tide was so high that they drove along the verge of the surf, the horses' feet splashing through the water, and trampling on the shells and sea-weed left by the retiring waves. Cattle, as they went home, were cooling themselves by wading breast high in the breakers; and the little sand-birds were sporting on the crests of the billows, sometimes flying low, and dipping into the water the white edges of their wings, and sometimes seeming, with their slender feet, to walk on the surface of the foam. Beyond the everlasting breakers rolled the unbounded ocean, the haze of evening coming fast upon it, and the full moon rising broad and red through the misty veil of the eastern horizon.

Laura Lovel felt as if she could have viewed this scene for ever, and at times she could not refrain from audibly expressing her delight. The other ladies were deeply engaged in listening to Miss Frampton's account of a ball and supper given by her intimate friend, that lovely woman, Mrs. Ben Derrydown, the evening before Mr. Ben Derrydown's last failure, and which ball and supper exceeded in splendour anything she had ever witnessed, except the wedding-party of her sweet love, Mrs. Nick Rearsby, whose furniture was seized by the sheriff a few months after; and the birth-night concert at the coming out of her darling pet, Kate Bolderhurst, who ran away next morning with her music-master.

Our party now arrived at the Nahant Hotel, which was full of visitors, with some of whom the Brantleys were acquainted. After tea, when the company adjourned to the lower drawing-rooms, the extraordinary beauty of Laura Lovel drew the majority of the gentlemen to that side of the apartment on which the Brantley family were seated. Many introductions took place, and Mrs. Brantley felt in paradise at seeing that *her* party had attracted the greatest number of beaux. Miss Frampton generally made a point of answering everything that was addressed to Laura; and Augusta glided, and flitted, and chattered much impertinent nonsense to the gentlemen on the outskirts of the group, that were waiting for an opportunity of saying something to Miss Lovel.

Our heroine was much confused at finding herself an object of such general attention, and was also overwhelmed by the officious volubility of Miss Frampton, though none of it was addressed to *her*. Mrs. Maitland, a lady as unlike Mrs. Brantley as possible, was seated on the other side of Laura Lovel, and was at once prepossessed in her favour, not only from the beauty of her features, but from the intelligence of her countenance. Desirous of being better acquainted, and seeing that Laura's present position was anything but pleasant to her, Mrs. Maitland proposed that they should take a turn in the veranda that runs round the second story of the hotel. To this suggestion Laura gladly assented—for she felt at once that Mrs. Maitland was just the sort of woman she would like to know. There was a refinement and dignity in her appearance and manner that showed her to be "every inch a lady;" but that dignity was tempered with a frankness and courtesy that put every one around her immediately at their ease. Though now in the autumn of life, her figure was still good—her features still handsome, but they derived their chief charm from the sensible and benevolent expression of her fine open countenance. Her attire was admirably suited to her face and person; but she was not over-dressed, and she was evidently one of those fortunate women who, without bestowing much time and attention upon it, are *au fait* of all that constitutes a correct and tasteful costume.

Mrs. Maitland took Laura's arm within hers, and telling Mrs. Brantley that she was going to carry off Miss Lovel for half an hour, she made a sign to a fine-looking young man on the other side of the room, and introduced him as her son, Mr. Aubrey Maitland. He conducted the two ladies up stairs to the veranda, and in a few minutes our heroine felt as if she had been acquainted with the Maitlands for years. No longer kept down and oppressed by the night-mare influence of fools, her spirit expanded, and breathed once more. She expressed, without hesitation, her delight at the scene that presented itself before her—for she felt that she was understood.

The moon, now "high in heaven," threw a solemn light on the trembling expanse of the ocean, and glittered on the spray that foamed and murmured for ever round the rocks that environed the little peninsula, their deep recesses slumbering in shade, while their crags and points came out in silver brightness. Around lay the numerous islands that are scattered over Boston harbour, and far apart glowed the fires of two light-houses, like immense stars beaming on the verge of the horizon; one of them, a revolving light, alternately shining out and disappearing. As a contrast to the still repose that reigned around, was the billiard-room (resembling a little Grecian temple), on a promontory that overlooked the sea—the lamps that shone through its windows, mingling with the moon-beams, and the rolling sound of the billiard-balls uniting with the murmur of the eternal waters.

Mrs. Maitland listened with corresponding interest to the animated and original comments of her

new friend, whose young and enthusiastic imagination had never been more vividly excited; and she drew her out, till Laura suddenly stopped, blushing with the fear that she had been saying too much. Before they returned to the drawing-room, Aubrey was decidedly and deeply in love.

When Laura retired to her apartment, she left the window open, that she might from her pillow look out upon the moonlight sea, and be fanned by the cool night breeze that gently rippled its waters; and when she was at last lulled to repose by the monotonous dashing of the surf against the rocks beneath her casement, she had a dream of the peninsula of Nahant—not as it now is, covered with new and tasteful buildings, and a favourite resort of the fashion and opulence of Boston, but as it must have looked two centuries ago, when the seals made their homes among its caverned rocks, and when the only human habitations were the rude huts of the Indian fishers, and the only boats their canoes of bark and skins.

When she awoke from her dream, she saw the morning-star sparkling high in the east, and casting on the dark surface of the sea a line of light which seemed to mimic that of the moon, long since gone down beyond the opposite horizon. Laura rose at the earliest glimpse of dawn to watch the approaches of the coming day. A hazy vapour had spread itself over the water, and through its gauzy veil she first beheld the red rim of the rising sun, seeming to emerge from its ocean bed. As the sun ascended, the mist slowly rolled away, and "the light of morning smiled upon the wave," and tinted the white sails of a little fleet of outward-bound fishing-boats.

At the breakfast table the majority of the company consisted of ladies only: most of the gentlemen (including Aubrey Maitland) having gone in the early steamboat to attend to their business in the city. After breakfast, Laura proposed a walk, and Augusta and Miss Frampton, not knowing what else to do with themselves, consented to accompany her. A certain Miss Blunsdon (who, being an heiress, and of a patrician family, conceived herself privileged to do as she pleased, and therefore made it her pleasure to be a hoyden and a slattern), volunteered to pioneer them, boasting of her intimate knowledge of every nook and corner of the neighbourhood. Our heroine, by particular desire of Augusta and Miss Frampton, had arrayed herself that morning in her new French muslin, with what they called its proper accompaniments.

Miss Blunsdon conducted the party to that singular cleft in the rocks, known by the name of the Swallow's Cave, in consequence of its having been formerly the resort of those birds, whose nests covered its walls. Miss Frampton stopped as soon as they came in sight of it, declaring that it was in bad taste for ladies to scramble about such rugged places, and Augusta agreeing that a fancy for wet, slippery rocks was certainly very peculiar. So the two friends sat down on the most level spot they could find, while Miss Blunsdon insisted on Laura's following her to the utmost extent of the cave, and our heroine's desire to explore this wild and picturesque recess made her forgetful of the probable consequences to her dress.

Miss Blunsdon and Laura descended into the cleft, which, as they proceeded, became so narrow as almost to close above their heads; its lofty and irregular walls seeming to lose themselves in the blue sky. The passage at the bottom was in some places scarcely wide enough to allow them to squeeze through it. The tide was low, yet still the stepping-stones, loosely imbedded in the sand and sea-weed, were nearly covered with water. But Laura followed her guide to the utmost extent of the passage, till they looked out again upon the sea.

When they rejoined their companions—"Oh! look at your new French muslin," exclaimed Augusta to Laura. "It is draggled half way up to your knees, and the salt water has already taken the colour out of it—and your pelerine is split down the back—and your shoes are half off your feet, and your stockings are all over wet sand. How very peculiar you look!"

Laura was now extremely sorry to find her dress so much injured, and Miss Frampton comforted her by the assurance that it would never again be fit to be seen. They returned to the hotel, where they found Mrs. Maitland reading on one of the sofas in the upper hall. Laura was hastily running up stairs, but Augusta called out—"Mrs. Maitland, do look at Miss Lovel—did you ever see such a figure? She has demolished her new dress, scrambling through the Swallow's Cave with Miss Blunsdon." And she ran into the ladies' drawing-room to repeat the story at full length, while Laura retired to her room to try some means of remedying her disasters, and to regret that she had not been permitted to bring with her to Nahant some of her gingham morning dresses. The French muslin, however, was incurable; its blue, though very beautiful, being of that peculiar cast which always fades into a dull white when wet with water.

Miss Frampton remained a while in the hall: and taking her seat beside Mrs. Maitland, said to her in a low confidential voice—"Have you not observed, Mrs. Maitland, that when people, who are nobody, attempt dress, they always overdo it. Only think of a country clergyman's daughter coming to breakfast in so expensive a French muslin, and then going out in it to clamber about the rocks, and paddle among the wet sea-weed. Now you will see what a show she will make at dinner in a dress, the cost of which would keep her whole family in comfortable calico gowns for two years. I was with her when she did her shopping, and though, as a friend, I could not forbear entreating her to get things that were suitable to her circumstances and to her station in life, she turned a deaf ear to everything I said (which was certainly in very bad taste), and she would buy nothing but the most expensive and useless frippery. I suppose she expects to catch the beaux by it. But when they find out who she is, I rather think they will only nibble at the bait—Heavens! what a wife she will make! And then such a want of self-respect, and even of common integrity. Of course you will not mention it—for I would on no consideration that it should go any farther—but between ourselves. I was actually obliged to lend her money to pay her bills."

Mrs. Maitland, thoroughly disgusted with her companion, and disbelieving the whole of her gratuitous communication, rose from the sofa and departed without vouchsafing a reply.

At dinner, Laura Lovel appeared in her new silk, and really looked beautifully. Miss Frampton, observing that our heroine attracted the attention of several gentlemen who had just arrived from the city, took an opportunity, while she was receiving a plate of chowder from one of the waiters, to spill part of it on Laura's dress.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Lovel," said she; "when I took the soup I did not perceive that you and your new silk were beside me."

Laura began to wipe her dress with her pocket-handkerchief. "Now don't look so disconcerted," pursued Miss Frampton, in a loud whisper. "It is in very bad taste to appear annoyed when an accident happens to your dress. People in society always pass off such things, as of no consequence whatever. I have apologized for spilling the soup, and what more can I do?"

Poor Laura was not in *society*, and she knew that to *her* the accident *was* of consequence. However, she rallied, and tried to appear as if she thought no more of the mischance that had spoiled the handsomest and most expensive dress she had ever possessed. After dinner she tried to remove the immense grease-spot by every application within her reach, but had no success.

When she returned to the drawing-room, she was invited to join a party that was going to visit the Spouting Horn, as it is generally denominated. She had heard this remarkable place much talked of since her arrival at Nahant, and she certainly felt a great desire to see it. Mrs. Maitland had letters to write, and Mrs. Brantley and Miss Frampton were engaged in their siesta; but Augusta was eager for the walk, as she found that several gentlemen were going, among them Aubrey Maitland, who had just arrived in the afternoon boat. His eyes sparkled at the sight of our heroine, and offering her his arm, they proceeded with the rest of the party to the Spouting Horn. This is a deep cavity at the bottom of a steep ledge of rocks, and the waves, as they rush successively into it with the tide, are immediately thrown out again by the action of a current of air which comes through a small opening at the back of the recess, the spray falling round like that of a cascade or fountain. The tide and wind were both high, and Laura was told that the Spouting Horn would be seen to great advantage.

Aubrey Maitland conducted her carefully down the least rugged declivity of the rock, and gave her his hand to assist her in springing from point to point. They at length descended to the bottom of the crag. Laura was bending forward with eager curiosity, and looking steadfastly into the wave-worn cavern, much interested in the explosions of foaming water, which was sometimes greater and sometimes less. Suddenly a blast of wind twisted her light dress-bonnet completely round, and broke the sewing of one of the strings, and the bonnet was directly whirled before her into the cavity of the rock, and the next moment thrown back again amidst a shower of sea-froth. Laura cried out involuntarily, and Aubrey sprung forward, and snatched it out of the water.

"I fear," said he, "Miss Level, your bonnet is irreparably injured." "It is, indeed," replied Laura; and remembering Miss Frampton's lecture, she tried to say that the destruction of her bonnet was of no consequence, but unaccustomed to falsehood, the words died away on her lips.

The ladies now gathered round our heroine, who held in her hand the dripping wreck of the once elegant bonnet; and they gave it as their unanimous opinion, that nothing could possibly be done to restore it to any form that would make it wearable. Laura then tied her scarf over her head, and Aubrey Maitland thought she looked prettier than ever.

Late in the evening, Mr. Brantley arrived from town in his chaise, bringing from the post-office a letter for Laura Lovel, from her little sisters, or rather two letters written on the same sheet. They ran thus:—

"Rosebrook, August 9th, 18—.

"Dearest Sister:—We hope you are having a great deal of pleasure in Boston. How many novels you must be reading—I wish I was grown up as you are—I am eight years old, and I have never yet read a novel. We miss you all the time. There is still a chair placed for you at table, and Rosa and I take turns in sitting next to it. But we can no longer hear your pleasant talk with our dear father. You know Rosa and I always listened so attentively that we frequently forgot to eat our dinners. I see advertised a large new book of Fairy Tales. How much you will have to tell us when you come home. Since you were so kind as to promise to bring me a book, I think, upon second thought, I would rather have the Tales of the Castle than Miss Edgeworth's Moral Tales.

"Dear mother now has to make all the pies and puddings herself. We miss you every way. The Children's Friend must be a charming book—so must the Friend of Youth.

"Yesterday we had a pair of fowls killed for dinner. Of course they were not Rosa's chickens, nor mine—they were only Billy and Bobby. But still, Rosa and I cried very much, as they were fowls that we were acquainted with. Dear father reasoned with us about it for a long time; but still, though the fowls were made into a pie, we could eat nothing but the crust. I think I should like very much to read the Robins, and also Keeper's Travels in Search of his Master.

"I hope, dear Laura, you will be able to remember everything you have seen and heard in Boston, that you may have the more to tell us when you come home. I think, after all,

there is no book I would prefer to the Arabian Nights—no doubt the Tales of the Genii are also excellent. Dear Laura, how I long to see you again. Paul and Virginia must be very delightful.

"Yours affectionately,
"ELLA LOVEL."

"DEAR SISTER LAURA—I cried for a long time after you left us, but at last I wiped my eyes, and played with Ponto, and was happy. I have concluded not to want the canary-bird I asked you to get for me, as I think it best to be satisfied by hearing the birds sing on the trees, in the garden, and in the woods. Last night I heard a screech-owl—I would rather have a young fig-tree in a tub—or else, a great quantity of new flower-seeds. If you do not get either the fig-tree or the flower-seeds, I should like a blue cat, such as I have read of: you know those cats are not sky-blue, but only a bluish gray. If a blue cat is not to be had, I should be glad of a pair of white English rabbits; and yet, I think I would quite as willingly have a pair of doves. I never saw a real dove; but if doves are scarce, or cost too much, I shall be satisfied with a pair of fan-tailed pigeons, if they are quite white, and their tails fan very much. If you had a great deal of money to spare, I should like a kid or a fawn, but I know that is impossible; so I will not think of it. Perhaps, when I grow up, I may be a president's wife; if so, I will buy an elephant.

"Your affectionate sister,
"ROSA LOVEL."

"I send kisses to all the people in Boston that love you."

How gladly would Laura, had it been in her power, have made every purchase mentioned in the letters of the two innocent little girls! And her heart swelled and her eyes overflowed, when she thought how happy she might have made them at a small part of the expense she had been persuaded to lavish on the finery that had given her so little pleasure, and that was now nearly all spoiled.

Next day was Sunday; and they went to church and heard Mr. Taylor, the celebrated mariner clergyman, with whose deep pathos and simple good sense Laura was much interested, while she was at the same time amused with his originality and quaintness.

On returning to the hotel, they found that the morning boat had arrived, and on looking up at the veranda, the first object Laura saw there was Pyam Dodge, standing stiffly with his hands on the railing.

"Miss Lovel," said Augusta, "there's your friend, the schoolmaster."

"Mercy upon us," screamed Miss Frampton, "has that horrid fellow come after you? Really, Miss Lovel, it was in very bad taste to invite him to Nahant."

"I did not invite him," replied Laura, colouring; "I know not how he discovered that I was here."

"The only way, then," said Miss Frampton, "is to cut him dead, and then perhaps he'll clear off."

"Pho," said Augusta, "do you suppose he can understand cutting? why he won't know whether he's cut or not."

"May I ask who this person is?" said Aubrey Maitland, in a low voice, to Laura. "Is there any stain or any suspicion attached to him?"

"Oh! no, indeed," replied Laura, earnestly. And, in a few words, as they ascended the stairs, she gave him an outline of the schoolmaster and his character.

"Then do not cut him at all," said Aubrey. "Let me take the liberty of suggesting to you how to receive him." They had now come out into the veranda, and Maitland immediately led Laura up to Pyam Dodge, who bowed profoundly on being introduced to him, and then turned to our heroine, asked permission to shake hands with her, hoped his company would be found agreeable, and signified that he had been unable to learn where she was from Mr. Brantley's servants; but that the evening before, a gentleman of Boston had told him that Mr. Brantley and all the family were at Nahant. Therefore, he had come thither to-day purposely to see her, and to inform her that the summer vacation having commenced, he was going to pay a visit to his old friends at Rosebrook, and would be very thankful if she would honour him with a letter or message to her family.

All this was said with much bowing, and prosing, and apologizing. When it was finished, Maitland invited Pyam Dodge to take a turn round the veranda with Miss Lovel and himself, and the poor schoolmaster expressed the most profound gratitude. When they were going to dinner, Aubrey introduced him to Mrs. Maitland, placed him next to himself at table, and engaged him in a conversation on the Greek classics, in which Pyam Dodge, finding himself precisely in his element, forgot his humility, and being less embarrassed, was therefore less awkward and absurd than usual.

Laura Lovel had thought Aubrey Maitland the handsomest and most elegant young man she had

ever seen. She now thought him the most amiable.

In the afternoon, there was a mirage, in which the far-off rocks in the vicinity of Marblehead appeared almost in the immediate neighbourhood of Nahant, coming out in full relief, their forms and colours well-defined, and their height and breadth seemingly much increased. While all the company were assembled to look at this singular optical phenomenon (Aubrey Maitland being earnestly engaged in explaining it to our heroine), Miss Frampton whispered to Laura that she wished particularly to speak with her, and accordingly drew her away to another part of the veranda.

Laura turned pale, for she had a presentiment of what was coming. Miss Frampton then told her, that presuming she had heard from home, she concluded that it would, of course, be convenient to return the trifle she had lent her; adding, that she wished to give a small commission to a lady that was going to town the next morning.

Poor Laura knew not what to say. She changed colour, trembled with nervous agitation, and at last faltered out that, in consequence of knowing her father was from home, she had not yet written to him on the subject, but that she would do so immediately, and hoped Miss Frampton would not find it very inconvenient to wait a few days.

"Why, really, I don't know how I can," replied Miss Frampton; "I want a shawl exactly like Mrs. Horton's. She tells me they are only to be had at one store in Boston, and that when she got hers the other day, there were only two left. They are really quite a new style, strange as it is to see anything in Boston that is not quite old-fashioned in Philadelphia. The money I lent you is precisely the sum for this purpose. Of course, I am in no want of a shawl—thank Heaven, I have more than I know what to do with—but, as I told you, these are quite a new style—"

"Oh! how gladly would I pay you, if I could!" exclaimed Laura, covering her face with her hands. "What would I give at this moment for twenty-five dollars!"

"I hope I am not inconvenient," said the voice of Pyam Dodge, close at Laura's back; "but I have been looking for Miss Laura Lovel, that I may take my leave, and return to town in the next boat."

Miss Frampton tossed her head and walked away, to tell Mrs. Horton, confidentially, that Miss Lovel had borrowed twenty-five dollars of her to buy finery; but not to add that she had just been asking her for payment.

"If I may venture to use such freedom," pursued Pyam Dodge, "I think, Miss Laura Lovel, I overheard you just now grieving that you could not pay some money. Now, my good child (if you will forgive me for calling you so), why should you be at any loss for money, when I have just received my quarter's salary, and when I have more about me than I know what to do with? I heard you mention twenty-five dollars—here it is (taking some notes out of an enormous pocket-book), and if you want any more, as I hope you do—"

"Oh! no, indeed—no," interrupted Laura. "I cannot take it; I would not on any consideration."

"I know too well," continued Pyam Dodge, "I am not worthy to offer it, and I hope I am not making myself disagreeable. But if, Miss Laura Lovel, you would only have the goodness to accept it, you may be sure I will never ask you for it as long as I live. I would even take a book-oath not to do so."

Laura steadily refused the proffered kindness of the poor schoolmaster, and begged Pyam Dodge to mention the subject to her no more. She told him that all she now wished was to go home, and that she would write by him to her family, begging that her father would come for her (as he had promised at parting) and take her back to Rosebrook, as soon as he could. She quitted Pyam Dodge, who was evidently much mortified, and retired to write her letter, which she gave to him as soon as it was finished, finding him in the hall taking a ceremonious leave of the Maitlands. He departed, and Laura's spirits were gradually revived during the evening by the gratifying attentions and agreeable conversation of Mrs. Maitland and her son.

When our heroine retired for the night, she found on her table a letter in a singularly uncouth hand, if hand it could be called, where every word was differently written. It enclosed two ten dollar notes and a five, and was conceived in the following words:

"This is to inform Miss Laura, eldest daughter of the Reverend Edward Lovel, of Rosebrook, Massachusetts, that an unknown friend of hers, whose name it will be impossible for her to guess (and therefore to make the attempt will doubtless be entire loss of time, and time is always precious), having accidentally heard (though by what means is a profound secret) that she, at this present time, is in some little difficulty for want of a small sum of money, he, therefore, this unknown friend, offers to her acceptance the before-mentioned sum, hoping that she will find nothing disgusting in his using so great a liberty."

"Oh! poor Pyam Dodge!" exclaimed Laura, "why did you take the trouble to disguise and disfigure your excellent handwriting?" And she felt, after all, what a relief it was to transfer her debt from Miss Frampton to the good schoolmaster. Reluctant to have any further personal discussion on this painful subject, she enclosed the notes in a short billet to Miss Frampton, and sent it immediately to that lady's apartment. She then went to bed, comparatively happy, slept soundly, and dreamed of Aubrey Maitland.

About the end of the week, Laura Lovel was delighted to see her father arrive with Mr. Brantley.

As soon as they were alone, she threw herself into his arms, and with a flood of tears explained to him the particulars of all that passed since she left home, and deeply lamented that she had allowed herself to be drawn into expenses beyond her means of defraying, and which her father could ill afford to supply, to say nothing of the pain and mortification they had occasioned to herself.

"My beloved child," said Mr. Lovel, "I have been much to blame for intrusting you at an age so early and inexperienced, and with no knowledge of a town-life and its habits, to the guidance and example of a family of whom I knew nothing, except that they were reputable and opulent."

Mr. Lovel then gave his daughter the agreeable intelligence that the tract of land which was the object of his visit to Maine, and which had been left him in his youth by an old aunt, and was then considered of little or no account, had greatly increased in value by a new and flourishing town having sprung up in its immediate vicinity. This tract he had recently been able to sell for ten thousand dollars, and the interest of that sum would now make a most acceptable addition to his little income.

He also informed her that Pyam Dodge was then at the village of Rosebrook, where he was "visiting round," as he called it, and that the good schoolmaster had faithfully kept the secret of the twenty-five dollars which he had pressed upon Laura, and which Mr. Lovel had now heard, for the first time, from herself.

While this conversation was going on between the father and daughter, Mrs. Maitland and her son were engaged in discussing the beauty and the apparent merits of our heroine. "I should like extremely," said Mrs. Maitland, "to invite Miss Lovel to pass the winter with me. But, you know, we live much in the world, and I fear the limited state of her father's finances could not allow her to appear as she would wish. Yet, perhaps, I might manage to assist her in that respect, without wounding her delicacy. I think with regret of so fair a flower being 'born to blush unseen, and waste its sweetness on the desert air.'"

"There is one way," said Aubrey Maitland, smiling and colouring, "by which we might have Miss Lovel to spend next winter in Boston, without any danger of offending her delicacy, or subjecting her to embarrassment on account of her personal expenses—a way which would enable her to appear as she deserves, and to move in a sphere that she is so well calculated to adorn, though not as *Miss Lovel*."

"I cannot but understand you, Aubrey," replied Mrs. Maitland, who had always been not only the mother, but the sympathizing and confidential friend of her son—"yet be not too precipitate. Know more of this young lady, before you go so far that you cannot in honour recede."

"I know her sufficiently," said Aubrey, with animation. "She is to be understood at once, and though I flatter myself that I may have already excited some interest in her heart, yet I have no reason to suppose that she entertains for me such feelings as would induce her at this time to accept my offer. She is extremely anxious to get home; she may have left a lover there. But let me be once assured that her affections are disengaged, and that she is really inclined to bestow them on me, and a declaration shall immediately follow the discovery. A man who, after being convinced of the regard of the woman he loves, can trifle with her feelings, and hesitate about securing her hand, does not deserve to obtain her."

Laura had few preparations to make for her departure, which took place the next morning, Aubrey Maitland and Mr. Brantley accompanying her and her father to town, in the early boat. Mrs. Maitland took leave of her affectionately, Mrs. Brantley smilingly, Augusta coldly, and Miss Frampton not at all.

Mr. Lovel and his daughter passed that day in Boston, staying at a hotel. Laura showed her father the children's letter. All the books that Ella mentioned were purchased for her, and quite a little menagerie of animals was procured for Rosa.

They arrived safely at Rosebrook. And when Mr. Lovel was invoking a blessing on their evening repast, he referred to the return of his daughter, and to his happiness on seeing her once more in her accustomed seat at table, in a manner that drew tears into the eyes of every member of the family.

Pyam Dodge was there, only waiting for Laura's arrival, to set out next morning on a visit to his relations in Vermont. With his usual want of tact, and his usual kindness of heart, he made so many objections to receiving the money with which he had accommodated our heroine, that Mr. Lovel was obliged to slip it privately into his trunk before his departure.

In a few days, Aubrey Maitland came to Rosebrook and established himself at the principal inn, from whence he visited Laura the evening of his arrival. Next day he came both morning and evening. On the third day he paid her three visits, and after that it was not worth while to count them.

The marriage of Aubrey and Laura took place at the close of the autumn, and they immediately went into the possession of an elegant residence of their own, adjoining the mansion of the elder Mrs. Maitland. They are now living in as much happiness as can fall to the lot of human beings.

Before the Nahant season was over, Miss Frampton had quarrelled with or offended nearly every lady at the hotel, and Mr. Brantley privately insisted that his wife should not invite her to pass the winter with them. However, she protracted her stay as long as she possibly could, with any

appearance of decency, and then returned to Philadelphia, under the escort of one of Mr. Brantley's clerks. After she came home, her visit to Boston afforded her a new subject of conversation, in which the predominant features were general ridicule of the Yankees (as she called them), circumstantial slanders of the family to whose hospitality she had been indebted for more than three months, and particular abuse of "that little wretch Augusta."

JOHN W. ROBERTSON.

A TALE OF A CENT.

"Some there be that shadows kiss."—SHAKSPEARE.

Selina Mansel was only sixteen when she took charge of her father's house, and he delegated to her the arduous task of doing as she pleased: provided always that she duly attended to his chief injunction, never to allow herself to incur a debt, however trifling, and to purchase nothing that she could not pay for on the spot. To the observance of this rule, which he had laid down for himself in early life, Mr. Mansel attributed all his success in business, and his ability to retire at the age of fifty with a handsome competence.

Since the death of his wife, Mr. Mansel's sister had presided over his family, and had taken much interest in instructing Selina in what she justly termed the most useful part of a woman's education. Such was Miss Eleanor Mansel's devotion to her brother and his daughter, that she had hesitated for twelve years about returning an intelligible answer to the love-letters which she received quarterly from Mr. Waitstill Wonderly, a gentleman whose dwelling-place was in the far, far east. Every two years this paragon of patience came in person: his home being at a distance of several hundred miles, and his habits by no means so itinerant as those of the generality of his countrymen.

On his sixth avatar, Miss Mansel consented to reward with her hand the constancy of her inamorato; as Selina had, within the last twelvemonth, made up two pieces of linen for her father, prepared the annual quantity of pickles and preserves, and superintended two house-cleanings, all herself—thus giving proof positive that she was fully competent to succeed her aunt Eleanor as mistress of the establishment.

Selina Mansel was a very good and a very pretty girl. Though living in a large and flourishing provincial town, which we shall denominate Somerford, she had been brought up in comparative retirement, and had scarcely yet begun to go into company, as it is called. Her understanding was naturally excellent; but she was timid, sensitive, easily disconcerted, and likely to appear to considerable disadvantage in any situation that was the least embarrassing.

About two months after the departure of Mr. and Mrs. Wonderly, the whole borough of Somerford was thrown into commotion by the unexpected arrival of an old townsman, who had made his fortune in New Orleans. This person was called in his youth Jack Robinson. After twenty years of successful adventure, he now returned as John W. Robertson, Esq., and concluded to astonish for a while the natives of his own birth-place, and perhaps pass the summer among them. Therefore, he took two of the best apartments in the chief hotel; and having grown very tired of old bachelorship, and entertaining a great predilection for all the productions of his native town, he determined to select a wife from among the belles of Somerford.

Now Mr. Robertson was a man in whose face and figure the most amiable portrait-painter could have found nothing to commend. He was not what is called a fine-looking man, for though sufficiently tall, he was gaunt and ill-proportioned. He was not a handsome man, for every feature was ugly; and his complexion, as well as his hair, was all of one ash-colour; though his eyes were much lighter than his skin. He was fully aware of his deficiency in beauty; but it was some consolation to him that he had been a very pretty baby, as he frequently took occasion to mention. With all this, he was extremely ambitious of marrying a beautiful woman, and resolutely determined that she should "love him for himself alone." Though in the habit of talking ostentatiously of his wealth, yet he sometimes considered this wealth as a sort of thorn in his path to matrimony; for he could not avoid the intrusion of a very uncomfortable surmise, that were he still poor Jack Robinson, he would undoubtedly be "cut dead" by the same ladies who were now assiduously angling for a word or a look from John W. Robertson, Esq. It is true that, being habitually cautious, he proceeded warily, and dispensed his notice to the ladies with much economy, finding that, in the words of charity advertisements, "the smallest donations were thankfully received."

Having once read a novel, and it being one in which the heroine blushes all through the book, he concluded that confusion and suffusion were infallible signs of love, and that whenever the bloom on a lady's cheeks deepens at the sight of a gentleman, there can be no doubt of the sincerity and disinterestedness of her regard, and that she certainly loves him for himself alone. Adopting this theory, Mr. Robertson determined not to owe his success to any adventitious circumstances; and he accordingly disdained that attention to his toilet usually observed by gentlemen in the Cœlebs line. Therefore, as the season was summer, he walked about all the morning in a long loose gown of broad-striped gingham, buckskin shoes, and an enormous Leghorn hat, the brim turned up behind and down before. In the afternoon, his flying joseph was exchanged for a round jacket of

sea-grass: and in the evening he generally appeared in a seersucker coat. But he was invited everywhere.

The mothers flattered him, and the daughters smiled on him, yet still he saw no blushes. He looked in vain for the "sweet confusion, rosy terror," which he supposed to be always evinced by a young lady in the presence of the man of her heart. The young ladies that *he* met with, had all their wits about them; and if on seeing him they covered their faces, it was only to giggle behind their fans. Instead of shrinking modestly back at his approach, they followed him everywhere; and he has more than once been seen perambulating the main street of Somerford at the head of half a dozen young ladies, like a locomotive engine drawing a train of cars.

With the exception of two professed novel-readers who treated our hero with ill-concealed contempt, because they could find in him no resemblance to Lord St. Orville or to Thaddeus of Warsaw, Selina Mansel was almost the only lady in Somerford that took Mr. Robertson quietly. The truth was, she never thought of him at all: and it was this evident indifference, so strikingly contrasted with the unremitting solicitude of her companions, that first attracted his attention towards Selina, rather than her superiority in beauty or accomplishments; for Miss Madderlake had redder cheeks, Miss Tightscrew a smaller waist, Miss Deathscream sung louder, and Miss Twirlfoot danced higher.

Selina Mansel was the youngest of the Somerford belles, and had scarcely yet come out. It never entered her mind that a man of Mr. Robertson's age could think of marrying a girl of sixteen. How little she knew of old bachelors!

Having always heard herself termed "the child," by her father and her aunt, she still retained the habit of considering herself as such; and strange to tell, the idea of a lover had not yet found its way into her head or her heart. Accordingly, on meeting Mr. Robertson for the first time (it was at a small party), she thought she passed the evening pleasantly enough in sitting between two matrons, and hearing from them the praises of her aunt Wonderly's notability—accompanied by numerous suggestions of improvements in confectionery, and in the management of servants; these hints being kindly intended for her benefit as a young housekeeper.

Mr. Robertson, who proceeded cautiously in everything, after gazing at Selina across the room, satisfied himself that she was very handsome and very unaffected, and requested an introduction to her from the gentleman of the house, adding—"But not just now—any time in the course of the evening. You know, when ladies are in question, it is very impolitic in gentlemen to show too much eagerness."

The introduction eventually took place, and Mr. Robertson talked of the weather, then of the westerly winds, which he informed Selina were favourable to vessels going out to Europe, but dead ahead to those that were coming home. He then commenced a long story about the very profitable voyage of one of his ships, but told it in language unintelligible to any but a merchant.

Selina grew very tired, and having tried to listen quite as long as she thought due to civility, she renewed her conversation with one of the ladies that sat beside her, and Mr. Robertson, in some vexation, turned away and carried his dullness to the other end of the room, where pretty Miss Holdhimfast sat, the image of delighted attention, her eyes smiling with pleasure, and her lips parted in intense interest, while he talked to her of assorted cargoes, bills of lading, and customhouse bonds. At times, he looked round, over his shoulder, to see if Selina evinced any discomposure at his quitting her—but he perceived no signs of it.

Mr. Mansel having renewed his acquaintance with Mr. Robertson, our hero called next morning to pay a visit to the father of Selina, though his chief motive was the expectation of seeing the young lady, who since the preceding evening had occupied as much of his mind and thoughts as a thorough-going business man ever devotes to a woman.

Selina was in the parlour, and sat quietly at her sewing, not perceiving that, though Mr. Robertson talked to her father all the time about the Bank of the United States, he looked almost continually at her. On hearing the clock strike, she rose, put up her work, and repaired to her own room—recollecting that it was her day for writing to Mrs. Wonderly, and that the mail would close in two hours, which Selina had always found the shortest possible time for filling a large sheet of paper closely written—such being the missive that she despatched every week to her beloved aunt.

Mr. Robertson, after prolonging his visit to an unreasonable period, departed in no very good humour at Selina's not returning to the parlour: for though he saw through the designs of the other ladies, he was somewhat piqued that our young and handsome heroine should have no design at all.

In the afternoon Selina went out on a shopping expedition. Mr. Robertson happened to overtake her, and she looked so very pretty, and tripped along so lightly and gracefully, that he could not refrain from joining her, instead of making his bow and passing on, as had been his first intention.

In the course of conversation, Selina was informed by Mr. Robertson (who, though no longer in business, still made the price-current his daily study) that, by the last advices from New York, tallow was calm, and hides were drooping—that pots were lively, and that pearls were looking up; and that there was a better feeling towards mackerel.

He accompanied Selina to the principal fancy-store, and when the young lady had completed her purchases, and had been persuaded by Mr. Stretchlace to take several additional articles, she found, on examining her purse, that she had nearly exhausted its contents, and that even with putting all her small change together, she still wanted one cent. Mr. Stretchlace assured her that he considered a cent as of no consequence; but Selina, who had been brought up in the strictest ideas of integrity, replied that, as she had agreed to pay as much for the article as he had asked her, she could not allow him to lose a single farthing. Mr. Stretchlace smiled, and reminded her that she could easily stop in and give him the cent, at any time when she happened to be passing his store. Selina, recollecting her father's rule of never going in debt to a shopkeeper, even to the most trifling amount, proposed leaving a pair of gloves (her last purchase) till she came again. Mr. Robertson, to put an end to the difficulty, took a cent from his purse, and requested permission to lend it to Miss Mansel. Selina coloured, but after some hesitation accepted the loan, resolving to repay it immediately. Having this intention on her mind, she was rather glad when she found that Mr. Robertson intended walking home with her, as it would give her an opportunity of liquidating the debt—and he entertained her on the way with the history of a transaction in uplands, and another in sea-islands.

They arrived at Mr. Mansel's door, and her companion was taking his leave, when Selina, thinking only of the cent, asked him if he would not come in. Of course, she had no motive but to induce him to wait till she had procured the little coin in question. He found the invitation too flattering to be resisted, and smirkingly followed her into the front parlour. Selina was disappointed at not finding her father there. Desiring Mr. Robertson to excuse her for a moment, she went to her own room in quest of some change—but found nothing less than a five dollar note.

A young lady of more experience and more self-possession, would, at once, have thought of extricating herself from the dilemma by applying to one of the servants for the loan of a cent; but at this time no such idea entered Selina's head. Therefore, calling Ovid, her black man, she despatched him with the note to get changed, and then returned herself to the parlour.

Taking her seat near the centre-table, Selina endeavoured to engage her guest in conversation, lest he should go away without his money. But, too little accustomed to the world and its contingencies to feel at all at her ease on this occasion, not having courage to mention the cent, and afraid every moment that Mr. Robertson would rise to take his leave, she became more and more embarrassed, sat uneasily on her chair, kept her eyes on the floor, except when she stole glances at her visiter to see if he showed any symptoms of departure, and looked frequently towards the door, hoping the arrival of Ovid.

Unconscious of what she was doing, our heroine took a camellia japonica from a vase that stood on the table, and having smelled it a dozen times (though it is a flower that has no perfume) she began to pick it to pieces. Mr. Robertson stopped frequently in the midst of a long story about a speculation in sperm oil, his attention being continually engaged by the evident perturbation of the young lady. But when he saw her picking to pieces the camellia which she had pressed to her nose and to her lips, he was taken with a sudden access of gallantry, and stalking up to her, and awkwardly stretching out his hand at arm's length, he said, in a voice intended to be very sweet —"Miss Mansel, will you favour me with that flower?"

Selina, not thinking of what she did, hastily dropped the camellia into his out-spread palm, and ran to meet her servant Ovid, whom she saw at that moment coming into the house. She stopped him in the hall, and eagerly held out her hand, while Ovid slowly and carefully counted into it, one by one, ten half dollars, telling her that he had been nearly all over town with the note, as "change is always *scace* of an afternoon."

"How vexatious!" said Selina, in a low voice—"You have brought me no cents. It was particularly a cent that I wanted—a cent above all things. Did I not tell you so?—I am sure I thought I did."

Ovid persisted in declaring that she had merely desired him to get the note changed, and that he thought "nobody needn't wish for better change than all big silver,"—but feeling in his pocket, he said "he believed, if Miss Selina would let him, he could lend her a cent." However, after searching all his pockets, he found only a quarter of a dollar. "But," added he, "I can go in the kitchen and ax if the women hav'n't got no coppers. Ah! Miss Selina—your departed aunt always kept her pocket full."

Selina then desired him to go immediately and inquire for a cent among the women. She then returned to the parlour, and Mr. Robertson, having nothing more to say, rose to take his leave. During her absence from the room, he had torn off the back of a letter, folded in it the half-demolished camellia japonica, and deposited it in his waistcoat pocket.

Selina begged him to stay a few minutes longer, and she went into the kitchen to inquire in person about the cent.

"Apparently," thought Robertson, "she finds it hard to part with me. And certainly she *has* seemed confused and agitated, during the whole of my visit."

On making her inquiry among the denizens of the kitchen, Selina found that none of the women had any probable coppers, excepting Violet, the black cook, who was fat and lame, and who intended, as soon as she had done making some cakes for tea, to ascend to her attic, and search for one among her hoards.

"La! Miss Selina," said Violet, "what can put you in such a pheeze about a cent?"

"I have borrowed a cent of Mr. Robertson," replied Selina, "and I wish to return it immediately."

"Well, now, if ever!" exclaimed Violet; "why, if that's all, I count it the same as nothing, and samer. To be sure he is too much of a gentleman to take a cent from a lady. Why, what's a cent?"

"I hope," replied Selina, "that he is too much of a gentleman to *refuse* to take it."

"I lay you what you please," resumed Violet, "that if you go to offer him that cent, you'll 'front him out of the house. Why, when any of us borrows a copper of Ovid, we never thinks of paying him."

"True enough," said Ovid, half aside; "and that's the reason I most always take care never to have no coppers about me."

Selina now heard her father's voice in the parlour; and glad that he had come home, she hastened to obtain from him the much-desired coin. She found him earnestly engaged in discussing the Bank of the United States to Mr. Robertson, who was on the verge of departure. She went softly behind her father, and in a low voice asked him for a cent; but he was talking so busily that he did not hear her. She repeated the request. "Presently—presently," said Mr. Mansel, "another time will do as well." Mr. Robertson then made his parting bow to Selina, who, disconcerted at being baffled in all her attempts to get rid of her little debt, coloured excessively, and could not make an articulate reply to his "Good afternoon, Miss Mansel."

When her father returned from escorting his guest to the door, he recollected her request, and said—"What were you asking me, Selina? I think I heard you say something about money. But never interrupt me when I am talking of the bank."

Selina then made her explanation.

"You know," replied Mr. Mansel, "that I have always told you to avoid a debt as you would a sin; and I have also cautioned you never to allow yourself to be without all the varieties of small change."

He then gave her a handful of this convenient article, including half a dozen cents, saying, "There, now, do not forget to pay Mr. Robertson the first time you see him."

"Certainly, I will not forget it," replied Selina; "for, trifle as it is, I shall not feel at peace while it remains on my mind."

On the following afternoon Selina went out with her father to take a ride on horseback; and when they returned they found on the centre table the card of John W. Robertson. "Another *contre-tems*," cried Selina. "He has been here again, and I have not seen him to pay him the cent!"

"Send it to him by Ovid," said Mr. Mansel.

"*Send* such a trifle to a gentleman!" exclaimed Selina.

"Certainly," replied her father. "Even in the smallest trifles, it is best to be correct and punctual. You know I have always told you so."

Selina left the room for the purpose of despatching Ovid with the cent, but Ovid had gone out on some affairs of his own, and when she returned to the parlour she found two young ladies there, whose visit was not over till nearly dusk. By that time Ovid was engaged in setting the tea-table; a business from which nothing could ever withdraw him till all its details were slowly and minutely accomplished.

"It will be time enough after tea," said Selina, who, like most young housekeepers, was somewhat in awe of her servants. When tea was over both in parlour and kitchen (and by the members of the lower house that business was never accomplished without a long session), Ovid was despatched to the hotel with "Miss Mansel's compliments to Mr. Robertson, and the cent that she had borrowed of him." It was long before Ovid came back, and he then brought word that Mr. Robertson was out, but that he had left the cent with Mr. Muddler, the barkeeper.

"Of course," said Selina, "the barkeeper will give it to Mr. Robertson as soon as he returns."

"I have my doubts," replied Ovid.

"Why?" asked Selina; "why should you suppose otherwise?"

"Because," answered Ovid, "Mr. Muddler is a very doubty sort of man. That is, he's always to be doubted of. I lived at the hotel once, and I know all about him. He don't mind trifles, and he never remembers nothing. I guess Mr. Robertson won't be apt to get the cent: for afore I left the bar, I saw Muddler give it away in change to a man that came for a glass of punch. And I'm sure that Muddler won't never think no more about it. I could be as good as qualified that he won't."

"How very provoking!" cried Selina.

"You should have sealed it up in a piece of paper, and directed it to Mr. Robertson," said her father, raising his eyes from the newspaper in which he had been absorbed for the last hour. "Whatever is to be done at all, should always be done thoroughly."

"Yes, miss," said Ovid, "you know that's what your departed aunt always told you: partikaly when

you were stoning reasons for plum-cake."

Selina was now at a complete loss what course to pursue. The cent was in itself a trifle; but there had been so much difficulty about it, that it seemed to have swelled into an object of importance: and from this time her repugnance to speaking of it to Mr. Robertson, or to any one else, became almost insurmountable.

On the following morning, her father told her that he had met Mr. Robertson at the Post Office, and had been told by him that he should do himself the pleasure of making a morning call. "Therefore, Selina, I shall leave you to entertain him," said Mr. Mansel, "for I have made an appointment with Mr. Thinwall this morning, to go with him to look at a block of houses he is anxious to sell me."

Selina repaired to her room to get her sewing: and taking a cent from her purse, she laid it in her work-basket and went down stairs to be ready for the visit of Mr. Robertson. While waiting for him, she happened to look at the cent, and perceived that it was one of the very earliest coinage, the date being 1793. She had heard these cents described, but had never before seen one. The head of Liberty was characterized by the lawless freedom of her hair, the flakes of which were all flying wildly back from her forehead and cheek, and seemed to be blowing away in a strong north-wester; and she carried over her shoulder a staff surmounted with a cap. On the reverse, there was (instead of the olive wreath) a circular chain, whose links signified the union of the States. Our heroine was making a collection of curious coins, and she was so strongly tempted by the opportunity of adding this to the number, that she determined on keeping it for that purpose. She was just rising to go up stairs and get another as a substitute, when Mr. Robertson entered the parlour.

Selina was glad to see him, hoping that this visit would make a final settlement of the eternal cent. But she was also struck with the idea that it would be very awkward to ask him if the barkeeper had given him the one she had transmitted to him the evening before. She feared that the gentleman might reply in the affirmative, even if he had not really received it, and she felt a persuasion that it had entirely escaped the memory of Mr. Muddler. Not having sufficient self-possession to help her out of the difficulty, she hastily slipped the old cent back into her work-basket, and looked confused and foolish, and answered incoherently to Mr. Robertson's salutation. He saw her embarrassment, and augured favourably from it: but he cautiously determined not to allow himself to proceed too rapidly.

He commenced the conversation by informing her that sugars had declined a shade, but that coffee was active, and cotton firm; and he then prosed off into a long mercantile story, of which Selina heard and understood nothing: her ideas, when in presence of Mr. Robertson, being now unable to take any other form than that of a piece of copper.

Longing to go for another cent, and regretting that she had not brought down her purse, she sat uneasy and disconcerted: the delighted Robertson pausing in the midst of his tierces of rice, seroons of indigo, carboys of tar, and quintals of codfish, to look at the heightened colour of her cheek, and to give it the interpretation he most desired.

Selina had never thought him so tiresome. Just then came in Miss Peepabout and Miss Doublesight, who, having seen Mr. Robertson through the window, had a curiosity to ascertain what he was saying and doing at Mr. Mansel's. These two ladies were our hero's peculiar aversion, as they had both presumed to lay siege to him, notwithstanding that they were neither young nor handsome. Therefore, he rose immediately and took his leave: though Selina, in the hope of still finding an opportunity to discharge her debt, said to him, anxiously: "Do not go yet, Mr. Robertson." This request nearly elevated the lover to paradise, but not wishing to spoil her by too much compliance, he persevered in departing.

That evening Selina met him at a party given by Mrs. Vincent, one of the leading ladies of Somerford. Thinking of this possibility, and the idea of Mr. Robertson and a cent having now become synonymous, our heroine tied a bright new one in the corner of her pocket-handkerchief, determined to go fully prepared for an opportunity of presenting it to him. When, on arriving at Mrs. Vincent's house, she was shown to the ladies' room, Selina discovered that the cent had vanished, having slipped out from its fastening; and after an ineffectual search on the floor and on the staircase, she concluded that she must have dropped it in the street. The night was very fine, and Mrs. Vincent's residence was so near her father's, that Selina had walked thither, and Mr. Mansel (who had no relish for parties), after conducting her into the principal room, and paying his compliments to the hostess, had slipped off, and returned home to seek a quiet game of backgammon with his next-door neighbour, telling his daughter that he would come for her at eleven o'clock.

Our heroine was dressed with much taste, and looked unusually well. Mr. Robertson's inclination would have led him to attach himself to Selina for the whole evening; but convinced of the depth and sincerity of her regard (as he perceived that she now never saw him without blushing), he deemed it politic to hold back, and not allow himself to be considered too cheap a conquest. Therefore, after making his bow, and informing her that soap was heavy, but that raisins were animated, and that there was a good feeling towards Havana cigars, he withdrew to the opposite side of the room.

But though he divided his tediousness pretty equally among the other ladies, he could not prevent his eyes from wandering almost incessantly towards Selina, particularly when he

perceived a remarkably handsome young man, Henry Wynslade, engaged in a very lively conversation with her. Mr. Wynslade, who had recently returned from India, lodged, for the present, at the hotel in which Robertson had located himself; consequently, our hero had some acquaintance with him.

Mrs. Vincent having taken away Wynslade to introduce him to her niece, Mr. Robertson immediately strode across the room, and presented himself in front of Selina. To do him justice, he had entirely forgotten the cent: and he meant not the most distant allusion to it, when, at the end of a long narrative about a very close and fortunate bargain he had once made in rough turpentine, he introduced the well-known adages of "a penny saved is a penny got," and "take care of the pence and the pounds will take care of themselves."

"Pence and cents are nearly the same," thought the conscious Selina. She had on her plate some of the little printed rhymes that, being accompanied by bonbons, and enveloped in coloured paper, go under the denomination of secrets or mottoes. These delectable distichs were most probably the leisure effusions of the poet kept by Mr. and Mrs. Packwood, of razor-strop celebrity, and from their ludicrous silliness frequently cause much diversion among the younger part of the company.

In her confusion on hearing Mr. Robertson talk of pence, Selina began to distribute her mottoes among the ladies in her vicinity, and, without looking at it, she unthinkingly presented one to her admirer, as he stood stiff before her. A moment after he was led away by Mr. Vincent, to be introduced to a stranger: and in a short time the company adjourned to the supper-room.

The ladies were all seated, and the gentlemen were standing round, and Selina was not aware of her proximity to Mr. Robertson till she overheard him say to young Wynslade—"A most extraordinary circumstance has happened to me this evening."

"What is it?" cried Wynslade.

"I have received a declaration."

"A declaration! Of what?"

"I have indeed," pursued Robertson, "a declaration of love. To be sure, I have been somewhat prepared for it. When a lady blushes, and shows evident signs of confusion, whenever she meets a gentleman, there is good reason to believe that her heart is really touched. Is there not?"

"I suppose so," said Wynslade, smiling.

"You conclude then that the lady must love him for himself, and not for his property?" inquired Robertson.

"Ladies who are influenced only by mercenary considerations," replied Wynslade, "seldom feel much embarrassment in the presence of any gentleman."

"There is no forcing a blush—is there?" asked Robertson.

"I should think not," answered Wynslade, wondering to what all this would tend.

"To tell you a secret," resumed Robertson, "I have proof positive that I have made a serious impression on a very beautiful young lady. You need not smile, Mr. Wynslade, for I can show you something that was presented to me the other day by herself, after first pressing it repeatedly to her lips."

He then took out of his waistcoat pocket the paper that contained the remnant of the camellia japonica, adding, "I can assure you that this flower was given me by the prettiest girl in the room."

The eyes of Wynslade were involuntarily directed to Selina.

"You are right," resumed Robertson. "That is the very lady, Miss Selina Mansel."

"Can it be possible!" exclaimed Wynslade. "Is this the lady that blushes at you? Did *she* give you the flower?"

"Yes, she did," replied Robertson. "A true bill, I assure you. The flower was her gift, and she has just presented me with a piece of poetry that is still more pointed. And yet, between ourselves, I think it strange that so young a lady should not have had patience to wait for a declaration on my part. I wonder that she should be the first to break the ice. However, I suppose it is only a stronger evidence of her partiality."

"And what are you going to do?" asked Wynslade.

"Oh! I shall take her," answered Robertson. "At least I think I shall. To be sure, I have been so short a time in Somerford, that I have scarcely yet had an opportunity of ascertaining the state of the market. But, besides her being an only child, with a father that is likely to come down handsomely, she is very young and very pretty, and will in every respect suit me exactly. However, I shall proceed with due circumspection. It is bad policy to be too alert on these occasions. It will be most prudent to keep her in suspense awhile."

"Insufferable coxcomb!" thought Wynslade. However, he checked his contempt and indignation so far as to say with tolerable calmness—"Mr. Robertson, there must be certainly some mistake.

Before I went to India, I knew something of Miss Mansel and her family, and I reproach myself for not having sought to renew my acquaintance with them immediately on my return. She was a mere child when I last saw her before my departure. Still, I know from the manner in which she has been brought up, that it is utterly impossible she should have given you any real cause to suspect her of a partiality, which, after all, you seem incapable of appreciating."

"Suspect!" exclaimed Robertson, warmly; "suspect, indeed! Blushes and confusion you acknowledge to be certain signs. And then there is the flower—and then—"

"Where is the piece of poetry you talked of?" said Wynslade.

"Here," replied Robertson, showing him the motto—"here it is—read—and confess it to be proof positive."

Wynslade took the slip, and read on it—

> "To gain a look of your sweet face,
> I'd walk three times round the market-place."

"Ridiculous!" he exclaimed, as he returned the couplet to Robertson, the course of his ideas changing in a moment. The whole affair now appeared to him in so ludicrous a light that he erroneously imagined Selina to have been all the time diverting herself at Mr. Robertson's expense. He looked towards her with a smile of intelligence, and was surprised to find that she had set down her almost untasted ice-cream, and was changing colour, from red to pale, evidently overwhelmed with confusion.

"There," said Robertson, looking significantly from Selina to Wynslade, "I told you so—only see her cheeks. No doubt she has overheard all we have been saying."

Selina had, indeed, overheard the whole; for notwithstanding the talking of the ladies who were near her, her attention had been the whole time riveted to the conversation that was going on between Robertson and Wynslade. Her first impulse was to quit her seat, to go at once to Robertson, and to explain to him his mistake. But she felt the difficulty of making such an effort in a room full of company, and to the youthful simplicity of her mind that difficulty was enhanced by the want of a cent to put into his hand at the same time.

Still, she was so extremely discomfited, that every moment seemed to her an age till she could have an opportunity of undeceiving him. She sat pale and silent till Robertson stepped up and informed her that she seemed quite below par; and Wynslade, who followed him, observed that "Miss Mansel was probably incommoded by the heat of the room."

"Oh, yes!" she exclaimed, scarcely conscious of what she was saying; "it is, indeed, too warm—and here is such a crowd—and I am so fatigued—I wish it were eleven o'clock—I wish my father was here to take me home."

Both gentlemen at once volunteered their services; but Selina, struck with the idea that during their walk she should have a full opportunity of making her explanation to Mr. Robertson, immediately started up, and said she would avail herself of *his* offer. Robertson now cast a triumphant glance at Wynslade, who returned it with a look of disgust, and walked away, saying to himself, "What an incomprehensible being is woman!—I begin to despise the whole sex!"

Selina then took leave of her hostess, and in a few minutes found herself on her way home with Mr. Robertson.

"Mr. Robertson," said she, in a hurried voice, "I have something particular to say to you."

"Now it is coming," thought Robertson; "but I will take care not to meet her half way." Then speaking aloud—"It is a fine moonlight evening," said he: "that is probably what you are going to observe."

"You are under a serious mistake," continued Selina.

"I believe not," pursued Robertson, looking up. "The sky is quite clear, and the moon is at the full."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Selina.

"I am fond of moonlight," persisted Robertson; "and I am extremely flattered at your giving me an opportunity of enjoying it with you." Here he stopped short, fearing that he had said too much.

"My only motive," said Selina, "for accepting your offer of escorting me home, was that I might have an opportunity of explaining to you." Here she paused.

"Take your time, Miss Selina," said Robertson, trying to soften his voice. "I do not wish you to hurry yourself. I can wait very well for the explanation till to-morrow."

"No, you shall not," said Selina; "I must make it at once, for I shall be unable to sleep to-night till I have relieved my mind from it."

"Surely," thought Robertson to himself, "young ladies now-a-days are remarkably forward." "Well, then, Miss Mansel," speaking aloud, "proceed at once to the point. I am all attention."

Selina still hesitated—"Really," said she, "I know not how to express myself."

"No doubt of it," he replied; "young ladies, I suppose, are not accustomed to being very explicit on these occasions. However, I can understand—'A word to the wise,' you know: but the truth is, for my own part, I have not quite made up my mind. You are sensible that our acquaintance is of very recent date: a wife is not a bill to be accepted at sight You know the proverb—'Marry in haste and repent at leisure.' However, I think you may draw on me at sixty days. And now that I have acknowledged the receipt of your addresses"——

Selina interrupted him with vehemence—"Mr. Robertson, what are you talking about? You are certainly not in your senses. You are mistaken, I tell you—it is no such thing."

"Come, Miss Mansel," said Robertson, "do not fly from your offer: it is too late for what they call coquetry—actions speak louder than words. If I must be plain, why so much embarrassment whenever we meet? To say nothing of the flower you gave me—and that little verse, which speaks volumes"——

"Speaks nonsense!" cried Selina: "Is it possible you can be so absurd as to suppose"——Then bursting into tears of vexation, she exclaimed—"Oh that I had a cent!"

"A cent!" said Robertson, much surprised. "Is it possible you are crying for a cent?"

"Yes, I am," answered Selina; "just now, that is all I want on earth!"

"Well, then," said Robertson, taking one out of his pocket, "you shall cry for it no longer: here's one for you."

"This won't do—this won't do!" sobbed Selina.

"Why, I am sure it is a good cent," said Robertson, "just like any other."

"No," cried Selina, "your giving me another cent only makes things worse."

By this time they were in sight of Mr. Mansel's door, and Selina perceived something on the pavement glittering in the moonlight. "Ah!" she exclaimed, taking it up, "this must be the very cent I dropped on my way to Mrs. Vincent's. I know it by its being quite a new one. How glad I am to find it!"

"Well," said Robertson, "I have heard of ladies taking cents to church; but I never knew before that they had any occasion for them at tea-parties. And, by-the-bye (as I have often told my friend Pennychink the vestryman), that practice of handing a money-box round the church in service-time, is one of the meanest things I know, and I wonder how any man that is a gentleman can bring himself to do it."

"And now, Mr. Robertson," said Selina, hastily wiping her eyes, "have you forgotten that I borrowed a cent of you the other day at Mr. Stretchlace's store?"

"I *had* forgotten it," answered Robertson; "but I recollect it now."

"That cent was never returned to you," said Selina.

"It was not," replied Robertson, looking surprised.

"There it is," continued our heroine, as she gave it to him. "Now that I see it in your hand, I have courage to explain all. My father and my aunt have taught me to dread contracting even the smallest debt. Therefore, I could not feel at ease till I had repaid your cent. Several untoward circumstances have since prevented my giving it to you, though I can assure you, that whenever we met it was seldom absent from my mind. This was the real cause of the embarrassment or confusion you talk of. When I gave you the flower, and afterwards that foolish motto, I was thinking so much of the unlucky cent as to be scarcely conscious of what I was doing. Believe me when I repeat to you that this is the whole truth of what you have so strangely misinterpreted."

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Robertson: "and was there nothing in it but a paltry bit of copper, when I thought all the time that I had at last met with a young lady who loved me for myself, and not for my bank-stock, and my real estate, and my railroad shares!"

"For neither, I can assure you," said Selina, gayly; "but I shall be very glad to hear that yourself, and your bank-stock, and your real estate, and your railroad shares, have become the property of a lady of better taste than myself."

They had been for some time on the steps of Mr. Mansel's door, and before he rung the bell, Robertson said to Selina: "Well, however, you know I did not actually come to a proposal?"

"Not exactly," replied Selina, smiling.

"Therefore, you will not tell everybody that you refused me?"

"I will not, indeed," answered Selina. "And now, then, allow me to bid you adieu in the words of the song—'Good night—all's well!'"

She then tripped into the parlour, where she found her father just preparing to come for her; and having made him very merry with her account of the events of the evening, she went to bed with a light heart.

Mr. Robertson returned sullenly to his hotel, as much chagrined as a man of his obtuse feelings

could possibly be. And he was the more vexed at losing Selina, as he conceived that a woman who could give herself so much uneasiness on account of a cent, would consequently make a good wife. The more he thought of this, the better he liked her: and next morning, when Henry Wynslade inquired of him the progress of wooing, Robertson not having invention enough to gloss over the truth, told him the facts as they really were, and asked his companion's opinion of the possibility of yet obtaining Miss Mansel.

"Try again by all means," said Wynslade, who was curious to see how this business would end. "There is no knowing what may be the effect of a direct proposal—the ladies never like us the better for proceeding slowly and cautiously: so now for a point-blank shot."

"It shall be conveyed in a letter, then," replied Robertson; "I have always found it best, in matters of business, to put down everything in black and white."

"Do it at once, then," said Wynslade: "I have some thoughts of Miss Mansel myself, and perhaps I may cut you out."

"I doubt that," replied Robertson; "you are but commencing business, and *my* fortune is already made."

"I thought," observed Wynslade, "you would marry only on condition of being loved for yourself alone."

"I have given up that hope," answered Robertson, with a sort of sigh: "however, I was certainly a very pretty baby. I fear I must now be content to take a wife on the usual terms."

"Be quick, then, with your proposal," said Wynslade, "for I am impatient to make mine."

Wynslade then departed, and Robertson placed himself at his desk, and in a short time despatched to our heroine the following epistle, taking care to keep a copy of it:

> "Miss Selina Mansel:—Your statement last night was duly attended to; but further consideration may give another turn to the business. The following terms are the best I think proper to offer:
>
> "One Town House—1 Country House—4 Servants—2 Horses—1 Carriage—1 Chaise—1 Set of Jewels—1 New Dress per Month—4 Bonnets per Ann.—1 Tea-party on your Birthday—Ditto on mine—1 Dinner-party on each anniversary of our Wedding-day, till further orders—2 Plays per Season—and half an Opera.
>
> "If you are not satisfied with the T. H. and the C. H. you may take 1 trip per summer to the Springs or the Sea-shore. If the Parties on the B.D.'s and the W. D. are not deemed sufficient, you may have sundry others.
>
> "On your part I only stipulate for a dish of rice always at dinner, black tea, 6 cigars per day, to be smoked by me without remark from you—newspapers, chess, and sundries. Your politics to be always the same as mine. No gentlemen under fifty to be received, except at parties. No musician to be allowed to enter the house; nor any young doctor.
>
> "If you conclude to close with these conditions, let me have advice of it as soon as convenient, that I may wait upon you without loss of time.
>
> "Your most obt. servt.
> "John W. Robertson.
>
> "N.B. It may be well to mention, that with respect to furniture, I cannot allow a piano, considering them as nuisances. Shall not object to any reasonable number of sofas and rocking-chairs.—Astral lamps at discretion.—Beg to call your attention to the allowance of gowns and bonnets.—Consider it remarkably liberal.—With respect to dress, sundries of course."

To this letter half an hour brought a concise answer, containing a civil but decided refusal, which Mr. Robertson, though quite crest-fallen, could not forbear showing to Wynslade, telling him that he now withdrew from the market. On the following morning our hero left Somerford on a tour to Canada.

Wynslade immediately laid siege to Selina Mansel, and being young, handsome, intelligent, and very much in love, he found little difficulty in obtaining her heart and hand.

After their marriage the young couple continued to live with Mr. Mansel, who since the affair of Robertson has taken especial care that Selina shall always be well supplied with cents, frequently procuring her from the bank five dollars' worth at a time.

John W. Robertson finally established himself in one of the large Atlantic cities; and in process of time his vanity recovered from the shock that had been given it by Miss Mansel. He has lately married a young widow, who being dependent with her five children on the bounty of her sister's husband, in whose house she lived with all her family, had address enough to persuade him that she loved him for himself alone.

THE LADIES' BALL.

"Then, thrilling to the harp's gay sound,
So sweetly rung each vaulted wall,
And echoed light the dancer's bound,
As mirth and music cheer'd the hall."—Scott.

The gentlemen who were considered as the *élite* of a certain city that shall be nameless, had been for some years in the practice of giving, about Christmas, a splendid ball to the ladies of the same circle. But at the period from which we date the commencement of our story, Christmas was fast approaching, and there had, as yet, been no intimation of the usual practical compliment.

Conjecture was busy among the ladies as to the cause of this extraordinary defection; but it was most generally attributed to the palpable fact that the attention of the gentlemen had been recently directed to a very different channel. In short, the beaux were now taking vast strides in the march of intellect, pioneered by certain newly popular lecturers in various departments of science. The pursuit of knowledge, both useful and useless, had become the order of the day. Profound were the researches into those mysteries of nature that in this world can never be elucidated: and long and elaborate were the dissertations on points that, when established, would not be worth a farthing.

The "beaux turned savans," had formed themselves into an association to which they had given a polysyllabic name of Greek etymology, and beyond the power of female tongue to pronounce, or of female hand to write; but a very young girl designated it as the Fee-faw-fum Society. They hired a spare room in one of the public buildings, and assembled there "in close divan" on stated nights when there were no evening lectures: several of the ologists holding forth to their classes of afternoons.

One seemingly indispensable instructor brought up the rear of the host of lecturers, and this was a professor of mnemonics: that is, a gentleman who gave lessons in memory, pledging himself to furnish the minds of his pupils with a regular set of springs, which as soon as touched would instantly unlock the treasures of knowledge that were laid up in "the storehouse of the brain:" the springs being acted upon by certain sheets of engraved and coloured hieroglyphics, some of which were numerical figures, others represented trees and houses, and cats and dogs, much in the style of what children call primer pictures. Some of our readers may, perhaps, recollect this professor, who made the circuit of the Union a few years since.

There seemed but two objections to this system, one being that the hieroglyphics and their key were harder to remember than the things they were to remind you of: the other, that they were frequently to be understood by contraries, like the Hetman in Count Benyowsky, whose characteristic phraseology is—"When I say the garret, I mean the cellar—when I tell you to go up, I mean you to come down."

The professor of mnemonics was very unpopular with the ladies, who asserted, that he had done the gentlemen more harm than good, by so puzzling their already overcharged heads, that he, in many instances, destroyed what little memory they had once possessed. This was particularly the case with regard to Mr. Slowman, who having, at length, proposed in form to Miss Tremor, and the lady, in her agitation, being unable at the moment to give him an intelligible answer, he had never remembered to press his suit any further.

One thing was certain, that since the gentlemen had been taking lessons in memory, they seemed totally to have forgotten the annual ball.

Yet, as the time drew near, there could be no doubt of its frequently entering their minds, from their steadily avoiding all reference to the subject. There was evidently a tacit understanding among them, that it was inexpedient to mention the ball. But the ice was at last broken by Gordon Fitzsimmons, as they were all standing round the fire, and adjusting their cloaks and surtouts, at the close of one of their society meetings.

"Is it not time," said he, "that we should begin to prepare for the Christmas ball?"

There was a silence—at last, one of the young gentlemen spoke, and replied—"that he had long since come to a conclusion that dancing was a very foolish thing, and that there was something extremely ridiculous in seeing a room-full of men and women jumping about to the sound of a fiddle. In short, he regarded it as an amusement derogatory to the dignity of human nature."

He was interrupted in the midst of his philippic by Fitzsimmons, who advised him to "consider it not so deeply." Now, Fitzsimmons was himself an excellent dancer, very popular as a partner, conscious of looking well in a ball-room, and therefore a warm advocate for "the poetry of motion."

Another of the young philosophers observed, "that he saw neither good nor harm in dancing, considered merely as an exercise: but that he was now busily engaged in writing a treatise on the Milky Way, the precise nature of which he had undoubtedly discovered, and therefore he had no leisure to attend to the ball or the ladies."

A second, who was originally from Norridgewock, in the state of Maine, protested that almost every moment of his time was now occupied in lithographing his drawings for the Flora Norridgewockiana, a work that would constitute an important accession to the science of botany, and which he was shortly going to publish.

A third declared frankly, that instead of subscribing to the ball, he should devote all his spare cash to a much more rational purpose, that of purchasing a set of geological specimens from the Himalaya Mountains. A fifth, with equal candour, announced a similar intention with regard to a box of beetles lately arrived from Van Diemen's Land.

A sixth was deeply and unremittingly employed in composing a history of the Muskogee Indians, in which work he would prove to demonstration that they were of Russian origin, as their name denotes: Muskogee being evidently a corruption of Muscovite; just as the Tuscaroras are undoubtedly of Italian descent, the founders of their tribe having, of course, come over from Tuscany.

And a seventh (who did things on a large scale) could not possibly give his attention to a ball or anything else, till he had finished a work which would convince the world that the whole Atlantic Ocean was once land, and that the whole American continent was once water.

To be brief, the number of young men who were in favour of the ball was so very limited, that it seemed impossible to get one up in a manner approaching to the style of former years. And the gentlemen, feeling a sort of consciousness that they were not exactly in their duty, became more remiss than ever in visiting the ladies.

It was now the week before Christmas: the ladies, being in hourly expectation of receiving their cards, had already begun to prepare; and flowers, feathers, ribands, and laces were in great activity. Still no invitations came. It was now conjectured that the ball was, for some extraordinary reason, to be deferred till New Year's. But what this reason was, the ladies (being all in a state of pique) had too much pride to inquire.

The gentlemen begun to feel a little ashamed; and Gordon Fitzsimmons had nearly prevailed on them to agree to a New Year's ball, when Apesley Sappington (who had recently returned from England in a coat by Stultz, and boots by Hoby) threw a damp on the whole business, by averring that, with the exception of Miss Lucinda Mandeville, who was certainly a splendid woman with a splendid fortune, there was not a lady in the whole circle worth favouring with a ball ticket. At least so they appeared to him, after seeing Lady Caroline Percy, and Lady Augusta Howard, and Lady Georgiana Beauclerck. Mr. Sappington did not explain that his only view of these fair blossoms of nobility had been circumscribed to such glimpses as he could catch of them while he stood in the street among a crowd assembled in front of Devonshire House, to gaze on the company through the windows, which in London are always open on gala nights. He assured his friends that all the ladies of the American aristocracy had a sort of *parvenue* air, and looked as if they had passed their lives east of Temple Bar; and that he knew not a single one of them that would be presentable at Almack's: always excepting Miss Lucinda Mandeville.

The gentlemen *savans* knew Apesley Sappington to be a coxcomb, and in their own minds did not believe him; but still they thought it scarcely worth while to allow their favourite pursuits to be interrupted for the sake of giving a ball to ladies that *might* be unpresentable at Almack's, and that *possibly* looked like *parvenues* from the east side of Temple Bar.

The belles, though much disappointed at the failure of the expected fête, proudly determined not to advert to the subject by the remotest hint in presence of the beaux; carefully avoiding even to mention the word cotillion when a gentleman was by. One young lady left off wishing that Taglioni would come to America, the name of that celebrated *artiste* being synonymous with dancing; and another checked herself when about to inquire of her sister if she had seen a missing ball of silk, because the word ball was not to be uttered before one of the male sex.

Things were in this uncomfortable state, when Miss Lucinda Mandeville, the belle *par excellence*, gave a turn to them which we shall relate, after presenting our readers with a sketch of the lady herself.

Miss Mandeville was very beautiful, very accomplished, and very rich, and had just completed her twenty-second year. Her parents being dead, she presided over an elegant mansion in the most fashionable part of the city, having invited an excellent old lady, a distant relation of the family, to reside with her. Mrs. Danforth, however, was but nominally the companion of Miss Mandeville, being so entirely absorbed in books that it was difficult to get her out of the library.

The hand of Miss Mandeville had been sought openly by one-half the gentlemen that boasted the honour of her acquaintance, and it had been hinted at by the other half, with the exception of Gordon Fitzsimmons, a young attorney of highly promising talents, whose ambition would have led him to look forward to the probability of arriving at the summit of his profession, but whose rise was, as yet, somewhat impeded by several very singular notions: such, for instance, as that a lawyer should never plead against his conscience, and never undertake what he knows to be the wrong side of a cause.

Another of his peculiarities was a strange idea that no gentleman should ever condescend to be under pecuniary obligations to his wife—ergo—that a man who has nothing himself, should never marry a woman that has anything. This last consideration had induced Mr. Fitzsimmons to undertake the Herculean task of steeling his heart, and setting his face against the attractions of

Miss Mandeville, with all her advantages of mind and person. Notwithstanding, therefore, that her conversation was always delightful to him, he rarely visited her, except when invited with other company.

Lucinda Mandeville, who, since the age of sixteen, had been surrounded by admirers, and accustomed to all the adulation that is generally lavished on a beauty and an heiress, was surprised at the apparent coldness of Gordon Fitzsimmons, than whom she had never met with a young man more congenial to her taste. His manifest indifference continually attracted her attention, and, after awhile, she began to suspect that it was no indifference at all, and that something else lurked beneath it. What that was, the sagacity of her sex soon enabled her to discover.

Fitzsimmons never urged Lucinda to play, never handed her to the piano, never placed her harp for her, never turned over the leaves of her music book; but she always perceived that though he affected to mingle with the groups that stood round as listeners, he uniformly took a position from whence he could see her to advantage all the time. When she happened to glance towards him, which, it must be confessed, she did much oftener than she intended (particularly when she came to the finest passage of her song), she never failed to find his eyes fixed on her face with a gaze of involuntary admiration, that, when they met, was instantly changed to an averted look of indifference.

Though he was scrupulous in dancing with her once only in the course of the evening, she could not but perceive that, during this set, his countenance, in spite of himself, lighted up with even more than its usual animation. And if she accidentally turned her head, she saw that his eyes were following her every motion: as well indeed they might, for she danced with the lightness of a sylph, and the elegance of a lady.

Notwithstanding his own acknowledged taste for everything connected with the fine arts, Fitzsimmons never asked to see Miss Mandeville's drawings. But she observed that after she had been showing them to others, and he supposed her attention to be elsewhere engaged, he failed not to take them up, and gaze on them as if he found it difficult to lay them down again.

In conversation, he never risked a compliment to Miss Mandeville, but often dissented with her opinion, and frequently rallied her.—Yet when she was talking to any one else, he always contrived to be within hearing; and frequently, when engaged himself in conversing with others, he involuntarily stopped short to listen to what Lucinda was saying.

Miss Mandeville had read much, and seen much, and had had much love made to her: but her heart had never, till now, been touched even slightly. That Fitzsimmons admired her, she could not possibly doubt: and that he loved her, she would have been equally certain, only that he continued all the time in excellent health and spirits; that, so far from sitting "like patience on a monument," he seldom sat anywhere; that when he smiled (which he did very often) it was evidently not at grief; and that the concealment he affected, was assuredly not feeding on his cheek, which, so far from turning "green and yellow," had lost nothing of its "natural ruby."

Neither was our heroine at all likely to die for love. Though there seemed no prospect of his coming to a proposal, and though she was sometimes assured by the youngest and prettiest of her female friends, that they knew from authentic sources that Mr. Fitzsimmons had magnanimously declared against marrying a woman of fortune; yet other ladies, who were neither young nor handsome, and had no hope of Mr. Fitzsimmons for themselves, were so kind as to convince Miss Mandeville that he admired her even at "the very top of admiration." And these generous and disinterested ladies were usually, after such agreeable communications, invited by Miss Mandeville to pass the evening with her.

Also—our heroine chanced one day to overhear a conversation between Dora, her own maid, and another mulatto girl; in which Dora averred to her companion that she had heard from no less authority than Squire Fitzsimmons's man Cato, "who always wore a blue coat, be the colour what it may, that the squire was dead in love with Miss Lucinda, as might be seen from many invisible *symptoms*, and that both Dora and Cato had a certain *foregiving* that it would turn out a match at last, for all that the lady had the money on her side, which, to be sure, was rather unnatural; and that the wedding might be looked for *momently*, any minute."

In the course of the next quarter of an hour, Miss Lucinda called Dora into her dressing-room, and presented her with a little Thibet shawl, which she had worn but once. Dora grinned understandingly: and from that time she contrived to be overheard so frequently in similar conversations, that much of the effect was diminished.

To resume the thread of our narrative—Lucinda being one morning on a visit to her friend Miss Delwin, the latter adverted to the failure of the annual dancing party.

"What would the beaux say," exclaimed Lucinda, struck with a sudden idea, "if the belles were to give a ball to *them*, by way of hinting our sense of their extraordinary remissness? Let us convince them that, according to the luminous and incontrovertible aphorism of the renowned Sam Patch, 'some things may be done as well as others.'"

"Excellent," replied Miss Delwin; "the thought is well worth pursuing. Let us try what we can make of it."

The two young ladies then proceeded to an animated discussion of the subject, and the more they

talked of it, the better they liked it. They very soon moulded the idea into regular form: and, as there was no time to be lost, they set out to call on several of their friends, and mention it to them.

The idea, novel as it seemed, was seized on with avidity by all to whom it was suggested, and a secret conclave was held on the following morning at Miss Mandeville's house, where the ladies debated with closed doors, while the plan was organized and the particulars arranged: our heroine proposing much that she thought would "point the moral and adorn the tale."

Next day, notes of invitation to a ball given by the ladies, were sent round to the gentlemen; all of whom were surprised, and many mortified, for they at once saw the motive, and understood the implied reproof. Some protested that they should never have courage to go, and talked of declining the invitation. But the majority decided on accepting it, justly concluding that it was best to carry the thing off with a good grace; and having, besides, much curiosity to see how the ladies would *conduct*, if we may be pardoned a Yankeeism.

Fitzsimmons declared that the delinquent beaux were rightly punished by this palpable hit of the belles. And he congratulated himself on having always voted in favour of the ball being given as formerly: secretly hoping that Miss Mandeville knew that *he* had not been one of the backsliders. We are tolerably sure that she *did* know it.

Eventually the invitations were all accepted, and the preparations went secretly but rapidly on, under the superintendence of Miss Mandeville and Miss Delwin. In the mean time, the gentlemen, knowing that they all looked conscious and foolish, avoided the ladies, and kept themselves as much out of their sight as possible; with the exception of Gordon Fitzsimmons, he being the only one that felt freedom to "wear his beaver up."

At length the eventful evening arrived. It had been specified in the notes that the ladies were to meet the gentlemen at the ball-room, which was a public one engaged for the occasion. Accordingly, the beaux found all the belles there before them: the givers of the *fête* having gone in their own conveyances, an hour in advance of the time appointed for their guests.

The six ladies that officiated as managers (and were all distinguished by a loop of blue riband drawn through their belts) met the gentlemen at the door as they entered the ball-room, and taking their hands, conducted them to their seats with much mock civility. The gentlemen, though greatly ashamed, tried in vain to look grave.

The room was illuminated with astral lamps, whose silver rays shone out from clusters of blue and purple flowers, and with crystal chandeliers, whose pendent drops sparkled amid festoons of roses. The walls were painted of a pale and beautiful cream colour. Curtains of the richest crimson, relieved by their masses of shadow the brilliant lightness of the other decorations: their deep silken fringes reflected in the mirrors, whose polished surfaces were partially hidden by folds of their graceful drapery. The orchestra represented a splendid oriental tent; and the musicians were habited in uniform Turkish dresses, their white turbans strikingly contrasting their black faces.

At the opposite end of the room was an excellent transparency, executed by an artist from a sketch by Miss Mandeville. It depicted a medley of scenery and figures, but so skilfully and tastefully arranged as to have a very fine effect when viewed as a whole. There was a Virginian lady assisting her cavalier to mount his horse—a Spanish damsel under the lattice of her lover, serenading him with a guitar—a Swiss *paysanne* supporting the steps of a chamois hunter as he timidly clambered up a rock—four Hindoo women carrying a Bramin in a palanquin—an English girl rowing a sailor in a boat—and many other anomalies of a similar description. Beneath the picture was a scroll fancifully ornamented, and containing the words "*Le monde renversé*."

That nothing might be wanting to the effect of the ball, the ladies had made a point of appearing this evening in dresses unusually splendid and *recherché*. The elegant form of Lucinda Mandeville was attired in a rich purple satin, bordered with gold embroidery, and trimmed round the neck with blond lace. Long full sleeves of the same material threw their transparent shade over her beautiful arms, and were confined at intervals with bands of pearls clasped with amethysts. A chain of pearls was arranged above the curls of her dark and glossy hair, crossing at the back of her head, and meeting in front, where it terminated in a splendid amethyst aigrette. Three short white feathers, tastefully disposed at intervals, completed the coiffure, which was peculiarly becoming to the noble and resplendent style of beauty that distinguished our heroine; though to a little slight woman with light hair and eyes, it would have been exactly the contrary.

"Did you ever see so princess-like a figure as Miss Mandeville?" said young Rainsford to Gordon Fitzsimmons, "or features more finely chiselled?"

"I have never seen a princess," replied Fitzsimmons, "but from what I have heard, few of them look in reality as a princess should. Neither, I think, does the word *chiselled* apply exactly to features, formed by a hand beside whose noble and beautiful creations the finest *chef d'œuvres* of sculpture are as nothing. I like not to hear of the human face being *well cut* or *finely chiselled*: though these expressions have long been sanctioned by the currency of fashion. Why borrow from art a term, or terms, that so imperfectly defines the beauty of nature? When we look at a living face, with features more lovely than the imagination of an artist has ever conceived, or at a complexion blooming with health, and eyes sparkling with intelligence, why should our delight and our admiration be disturbed, by admitting any idea connected with a block of marble and the

instruments that form it into shape?"

"But you must allow," said Rainsford, "that Miss Mandeville has a fine classic head."

"I acknowledge," said Fitzsimmons, "the graceful contour of the heads called classic. On this side of the Atlantic we have few opportunities of judging of antique sculpture, except from casts and engravings. But as to the faces of the nymphs and goddesses of Grecian art, I must venture to confess that they do not exactly comport with my ideas of female loveliness. Not to speak of their almost unvarying sameness (an evidence, I think, that they are not modelled from life, for nature never repeats herself), their chief characteristics are a cold regularity of outline, and an insipid straightness of nose and forehead, such as in a living countenance would be found detrimental to all expression. I know I am talking heresy: but I cannot divest myself of the persuasion, that a face with precisely the features that we are accustomed to admire in antique statuary, would, if clothed in flesh and blood, be scarcely considered beautiful."

"Perhaps so," said Rainsford; "but you surely consider Miss Mandeville beautiful?"

"The beauty of Lucinda Mandeville," replied Fitzsimmons, "is not that of a Grecian statue. It is the beauty of an elegant American lady, uniting all the best points of her countrywomen. Her figure is symmetry itself, and there is an ease, a grace, a dignity in her movements, which I have never seen surpassed. Her features are lovely in their form and charming in their expression, particularly her fine black eyes: and her complexion is unrivalled both in its bloom and its delicacy."

"What a pity that Lucinda does not hear all this!" remarked Miss Delwin, who happened to be near Fitzsimmons and his friend.

Fitzsimmons coloured, fearing that he had spoken with too much warmth: and, bowing to Miss Delwin, he took the arm of Rainsford, and went to another part of the room.

Miss Delwin, however, lost no time in finding Lucinda, and repeated the whole, verbatim, to her highly gratified friend, who tried to look indifferent, but blushed and smiled all the time she was listening: and who, from this moment, felt a sensible accession to her usual excellent spirits.

"Ladies," said Miss Delwin, "choose your partners for a cotillion."

For a few moments the ladies hesitated, and held back at the idea of so novel a beginning to the ball: and Fitzsimmons, much amused, made a sign to his friends not to advance. Miss Mandeville came forward with a smile on her lips, and a blush on her cheeks. The heart of Fitzsimmons beat quick; but she passed him, and curtsying to young Colesberry, who was just from college, and extremely diffident, she requested the honour of his hand, and led him, with as much composure as she could assume, to a cotillion that was forming in the centre of the room; he shrinking and apologizing all the while. And Miss Delwin engaged Fitzsimmons.

In a short time, all the ladies had provided themselves with partners. At first, from the singularity of their mutual situation, both beaux and belles felt themselves under considerable embarrassment, but gradually this awkwardness wore away, and an example being set by the master spirits of the assembly, there was much pleasantry on either side; all being determined to humour the jest, and sustain it throughout with as good a grace as possible.

When the cotillions were forming for the second set, nearly a dozen young ladies found themselves simultaneously approaching Gordon Fitzsimmons, each with the design of engaging him as a partner. And this *empressement* was not surprising, as he was decidedly the handsomest and most elegant man in the room.

"Well, ladies," said Fitzsimmons, as they almost surrounded him, "you must decide among yourselves which of you is to take me out. All I can do is to stand still and be passive. But I positively interdict any quarrelling about me."

"We have heard," said Miss Atherley, "of men dying of love, dying of grief, and dying from fear of death. We are now trying if it is not possible to make them die of vanity."

"True," replied Fitzsimmons, "we may say with Harry the Fifth at Agincourt—'He that outlives this day, and comes safe home,'"—"'Will stand a-tiptoe when this day is named,'"—added Miss Atherley, finishing the quotation.

Fitzsimmons did not reply; for his attention was at that moment engaged by seeing Miss Manderville leading out Apesley Sappington, and apparently much diverted with his absurdities.

"Ladies," said Miss Atherley, looking round to her companions, "let us try a fair chance of Mr. Fitzsimmons—suppose we draw lots for him."

"Do—by all means," exclaimed Fitzsimmons. "Set me up at a raffle."

"No," replied Miss Atherley, "we cannot conveniently raffle for you, as we have no dice at hand. Another way will do as well."

She then plucked from her bouquet some green rose-leaves, and half concealing them between her fingers, she offered the stems to each of her companions in turn, saying—"Whoever draws the largest rose-leaf may claim the honour of Mr. Fitzsimmons's hand for the next set."

The lots were drawn, and the largest rose-leaf remained with Miss Atherley (who was a young

lady of much beauty and vivacity), and whom her friends laughingly accused of foul play in contriving to hold it back, in which opinion Fitzsimmons assured them that he perfectly coincided. But Miss Atherley, however, led him triumphantly to the cotillion which, fortunately for his partner, did not happen to be the one in which Lucinda Mandeville was engaged.

At the conclusion of each set, the ladies conducted the gentlemen to their seats, assisted them to the refreshments that were handed round, and stood by and fanned them. Most of the gentlemen took all this very well, but others were much disconcerted: particularly a grave knight-errant-looking Spaniard, who (having but lately arrived, and understanding the language but imperfectly) conceived that it was the custom in America for ladies to give balls to gentlemen, and to wait on them during the evening. In this error he was mischievously allowed to continue: but so much was his gallantry shocked, that he could not forbear dropping on his knees to receive the attentions that were assiduously proffered to him: bowing gratefully on the fair hands that presented him with a glass of orgeat or a plate of ice-cream.—And he was so overcome with the honour, and so deeply penetrated with a sense of his own unworthiness, when Lucinda Mandeville invited him to dance with her, that she almost expected to see him perform kotou, and knock his head nine times against the floor.

Among others of the company was Colonel Kingswood, a very agreeable bachelor, long past the meridian of life, but not quite old enough to marry a young girl, his mind, as yet, showing no symptoms of dotage. His fortune was not sufficient to make him an object of speculation, and though courteous to all, his attentions were addressed exclusively to none. He was much liked by his young friends of both sexes, all of them feeling perfectly at ease in his society. Though he rarely danced, he was very fond of balls, and had participated in the vexation of Gordon Fitzsimmons when the beaux had declined giving their Christmas fête to the belles.

In an interval between the sets, Lucinda suggested to a group of her fair companions, the propriety of asking Colonel Kingswood to dance; a compliment that he had not as yet received during the evening. "You know," said she, "the Colonel sometimes dances, and now that the ladies have assumed the privilege of choosing their partners, courtesy requires that none of the gentlemen should be neglected."

But each declined asking Colonel Kingswood, on the plea that they had other partners in view.

"For my part," said Miss Ormond, frankly, "I am just going to ask Mr. Wyndham. This is, perhaps, the only chance I shall ever have of dancing with him, as I am quite certain he will never ask *me*."

"But, my dear Lucinda," said Miss Elgrove, "why not invite Colonel Kingswood yourself? There he is, talking to Mr. Fitzsimmons, near the central window. It is not magnanimous to propose to others what you are unwilling to do in *propriâ personâ*."

Lucinda had, in reality, but one objection to proposing herself as a partner to Colonel Kingswood, and that was, his being just then engaged in conversation with Gordon Fitzsimmons, whom she felt a sort of conscious reluctance to approach. However, she paused a moment, and then summoned courage to join the two gentlemen and proffer her request to the Colonel, even though Fitzsimmons was close at hand.

"My dear Miss Mandeville," said Colonel Kingswood, "I confess that I have not courage to avail myself of your very tempting proposal. As my fighting days are now over, I cannot stand the shot of the jealous eyes that will be directed at me from every part of the ball-room."

"I have seen you dance," remarked Lucinda, evading the application of his compliment.

"True," replied the Colonel, "but you might have observed that I never take out the *young* ladies—always being so considerate as to leave them to the young gentlemen. I carry my disinterestedness so far as invariably to select partners that are *ni jeune, ni jolie*: notwithstanding the remarks I frequently hear about well-matched pairs, &c."

"I am to understand, then," said Lucinda, "that you are mortifying me by a refusal."

"Come, now, be honest," returned Colonel Kingswood, "and change the word 'mortify' into *gratify*. But do not turn away. It is customary, you know, when a man is drawn for the militia and is unwilling to serve, to allow him to choose a substitute. Here then is mine. Advance, Mr. Fitzsimmons, and with such a partner I shall expect to see you 'rise from the ground like feather'd Mercury.'"

Fitzsimmons came forward with sparkling eyes and a heightened colour, and offered his hand to Lucinda, whose face was suffused even to the temples. There were a few moments of mutual confusion, and neither party uttered a word till they had reached the cotillion. The music commenced as soon as they had taken their places, and Lucinda being desired by her opposite lady to lead, there was no immediate conversation.

Our heroine called up all her pride, all her self-command, and all her native buoyancy of spirits; Fitzsimmons did the same, and they managed in the intervals of the dance to talk with so much vivacity, that each was convinced that their secret was still preserved from the other.

When the set was over, they returned to the place in which they had left Colonel Kingswood, who received them with a smile.

"Well, Miss Mandeville," said he, "what pretty things have you been saying to your partner?"

"Ask Mr. Fitzsimmons," replied Lucinda.

"Not a single compliment could I extract from her," said Fitzsimmons; "she had not even the grace to imply her gratitude for doing me the honour of dancing with me, or rather, for my doing her the honour. Ah! that is it—is it not? I forgot the present mode of expression. It is so difficult for one night only to get out of the old phraseology. But she certainly expressed no gratitude."

"I owed you none," replied Lucinda; "for, like Malvolio, you have had greatness thrust upon you. You know you are only Colonel Kingswood's substitute."

"Well," resumed Fitzsimmons, "have I not done my best to make 'the substitute shine brightly as the king?'"

"Recollect that the king is now by," said Colonel Kingswood. "But, Miss Mandeville, you must go through your part. Consider that to-night is the only opportunity the gentlemen may ever have of hearing how adroitly the ladies can flatter them."

"It is not in the bond," replied Lucinda.

"What is not?"

"That the ladies should flatter the gentlemen."

"Excuse me," said Colonel Kingswood; "the ladies having voluntarily taken the responsibility, the gentlemen must insist on their going regularly through the whole ball with all its accompaniments, including compliments, flattery, and flirtation, and a seasoning of genuine courtship, of which last article there is always more or less at every large party. And as it appears that Miss Mandeville has not faithfully done her part during the dance, she must make amends by doing it now."

"On the latter subject," said Fitzsimmons, "Miss Mandeville can need no prompting. Her own experience must have made her familiar with courtship in all its varieties."

"Of course,"—resumed the Colonel.—"So, Miss Mandeville, you can be at no loss in what manner to begin."

"And am I to stand here and be courted?" said Fitzsimmons.

"Now do not be frightened," observed the Colonel, "and do not look round as if you were meditating an escape. I will stand by and see how you acquit yourself in this new and delightful situation. Come, Miss Mandeville, begin."

"What sort of courtship will you have?" said Lucinda, who could not avoid laughing. "The sentimental, the prudential, or the downright?"

"The downright, by all means," cried the Colonel. "No, no," said Fitzsimmons; "let me hear the others first. The downright would be too overwhelming without a previous preparation."

Lucinda affected to hide her face with a feather that had fallen from her head during the dance, and which she still held in her hand, and she uttered hesitatingly and with downcast eyes—

"If I could hope to be pardoned for my temerity in thus presuming to address one whose manifest perfections so preponderate in the scale, when weighed against my own demerits—"

"Oh! stop, stop!" exclaimed Fitzsimmons; "this will never do!"

"Why, it is just the way a poor young fellow courted me last summer," replied Lucinda. "Come, let me go on. Conscious as I am that I might as well 'love a bright and particular star, and think to wed it—'"

"You will never succeed in that strain," said Fitzsimmons, laughing. "You must try another."

"Well, then," continued Lucinda, changing her tone, "here is the prudential mode. Mr. Gordon Fitzsimmons, thinking it probable (though I speak advisedly) that you may have no objection to change your condition, and believing (though perhaps I may be mistaken) that we are tolerably well suited to each other—I being my own mistress, and you being your own master—perceiving no great disparity of age, or incompatibility of temper—"

"I like not this mode either," interrupted Fitzsimmons; "it is worse than the other."

"Do you think so?" resumed Lucinda. "It is just the way a rich old fellow courted me last winter."

"Nothing is more likely," said Fitzsimmons. "But neither of these modes will succeed with me."

"Then," observed the Colonel, "there is nothing left but the plain downright."

"Mr. Fitzsimmons, will you marry me?" said Lucinda.

"With all my heart and soul," replied Fitzsimmons, taking her hand.

"Oh! you forget yourself," exclaimed Lucinda, struggling to withdraw it. "You are not half so good a comedian as I am. You should look down, and play with your guard-chain; and then look up, and tell me you are perfectly happy in your single state—that marriage is a lottery—that our acquaintance has been too slight for either of us to form a correct opinion of the other. In short, you should say *no*."

"By heavens!" exclaimed Fitzsimmons, kissing her beautiful hand; "I cannot say no—even in jest."

Lucinda's first sensation was involuntary delight. But in a moment she was startled by the conviction that she had unthinkingly gone too far. The native delicacy of woman thrilled every nerve in her frame, and her cheeks varied alternately from red to pale. Shocked at the length to which she had inadvertently carried a dialogue begun in *badinage*, and confused, mortified, and distressed at its result, she forcibly disengaged her hand from that of Fitzsimmons, and turning to a lady and gentleman that she saw passing, she said she would accompany them to the other end of the room. Arrived there, she seated herself in the midst of a group that were warmly engaged in discussing the comparative merits of Spanish dances and Polish dances: and she endeavoured to collect her scattered thoughts, and compose the flutter of her spirits. But it was in vain—the more she reflected on the little scene that had just taken place, the more she regretted it.

"What must Fitzsimmons think of me?" was her predominant idea. "His gallantry as a gentleman prompted his reply, but still how sadly I must have sunk in his opinion! That I should have allowed myself to be drawn into such a conversation! That I should have carried a foolish jest so far! But I will punish myself severely. I will expiate my folly by avoiding all farther intercourse with Gordon Fitzsimmons; and from this night we must become strangers to each other."

The change in Lucinda's countenance and manner was now so obvious that several of her friends asked her if she was ill. To these questions she answered in the negative: but her cheeks grew paler, and the tears sprang to her eyes.

Miss Delwin now approached, and said to her in a low voice—"My dear Lucinda, I perceive that you are suffering under some *contre-tems*; but such things, you know, are always incidental to balls, and all other assemblages where every one expects unqualified delight. We should be prepared for these contingencies, and when they do occur, the only alternative is to try to pass them over as well as we can, by making an effort to rally our spirits so as to get through the remainder of the evening with apparent composure, or else to plead indisposition and go home. Which course will you take?"

"Oh! how gladly would I retire!" exclaimed Lucinda, scarcely able to restrain her tears. "But were I to do so, there are persons who might put strange constructions—or rather the company might be induced to make invidious remarks—"

"By no means," interrupted Miss Delwin. "A lady may at any time be overcome with the heat and fatigue of a ball-room—nothing is more common."

"But," said Lucinda, "were I to leave the company—were I to appear as if unable to stay—were I to evince so much emotion—he would, indeed, suppose me in earnest."

"He!" cried Miss Delwin, looking surprised. "Of whom are you speaking, dear Lucinda? Who is it that would suppose you in earnest?"

"No matter," replied Lucinda, "I spoke inadvertently; I forgot myself; I knew not what I was saying."

"Dearest Lucinda," exclaimed Miss Delwin, "I am extremely sorry to find you so discomposed. What can have happened? At a more convenient time, may I hope that you will tell me?"

"Oh! no, no," replied Lucinda, "it is impossible. I cannot speak of it even to you. Ask me no further. I am distressed, humiliated, shocked at myself (and she covered her face with her hands). But I cannot talk about it, now or ever."

"Lucinda, my dear Lucinda," said Miss Delwin, "your agitation will be observed."

"Then I must endeavour to suppress it," replied Lucinda, starting up. "I *must* stay till this unfortunate ball is over; my going home would seem too pointed."

"Let me then intreat you, my dear girl," said Miss Delwin, "to exert yourself to appear as usual. Come, take my arm, and we will go and talk nonsense to Apesley Sappington."

Lucinda did make an effort to resume her usual vivacity. But it was evidently forced. She relapsed continually: and she resembled an actress that is one moment playing with her wonted spirit, and the next moment forgetting her part.

"So," said Colonel Kingswood to Fitzsimmons, after Lucinda had left them together, "I am to infer that you are are really in love with Miss Mandeville?"

"Ardently—passionately—and I long to tell her so in earnest," replied Fitzsimmons; and he took up the feather that Lucinda in her agitation had dropped from her hand.

"Of course, then, you will make your proposal to-morrow morning," said the colonel.

"No," replied Fitzsimmons, concealing the feather within the breast of his coat. "I cannot so wound her delicacy. I see that she is disconcerted at the little scene into which we inadvertently drew her, and alarmed at the idea that perhaps she allowed herself to go too far. I respect her feelings, and I will spare them. But to me she has long been the most charming woman in existence."

"What, then," inquired the colonel, "has retarded the disclosure of your secret, if secret it may be called?"

"Her superiority in point of fortune," replied Fitzsimmons. "You know the small amount of property left me by my father, and that in my profession I am as yet but a beginner; though I must own that my prospects of success are highly encouraging. To say nothing of my repugnance to reversing the usual order of the married state, and drawing the chief part of our expenditure from the money of my wife, how could I expect to convince her that my motives in seeking her hand were otherwise than mercenary?"

"Are they?" said Colonel Kingswood, with a half smile.

"No, on my soul they are not," replied Fitzsimmons, earnestly. "Were our situations reversed, I would, without a moment's hesitation, lay all that I possessed at her feet, and think myself the most honoured, the most fortunate of men if I could obtain a gem whose intrinsic value requires not the aid of a gold setting."

"Do you suppose, then," said Colonel Kingswood, "that a lovely and elegant woman like Miss Lucinda Mandeville can have so humble an opinion of herself as to suppose that she owes all her admirers to her wealth, and that there is nothing attractive about her but her bank-stock and her houses?"

"Since I first knew Miss Mandeville," replied Fitzsimmons, "I have secretly cherished the hope of being one day worthy of her acceptance. And this hope has incited me to be doubly assiduous in my profession, with the view of ultimately acquiring both wealth and distinction. And when I have made a name, as well as a fortune, I shall have no scruples in offering myself to her acceptance."

"And before all this is accomplished," observed the colonel, "some lucky fellow, with a ready-made fortune, and a ready-made name, or, more probably, some bold adventurer with neither, may fearlessly step in and carry off the prize."

"There is madness in the thought!" exclaimed Fitzsimmons, putting his hand to his forehead.

"Did it never strike you before?" inquired the colonel.

"It has, it has," cried Fitzsimmons; "a thousand times has it passed like a dark cloud over the sunshine of my hopes."

"Take my advice," said the colonel, "and address Miss Mandeville at once."

"Fool that I was!" exclaimed Fitzsimmons, "how could I be so utterly absurd—so devoid of all tact, as to reply to her unguarded *badinage* in a tone of reality! No wonder she looked so disconcerted, so shocked. At this moment, how she must hate me!"

"I am not so sure of that," observed the colonel; "but take my advice, and let the *etourderie* of this evening be repaired by the opening it affords you of disclosing your real feelings to the object of your love."

"I cannot," replied Fitzsimmons, "I cannot, after what has passed, run the risk of giving farther offence to her delicacy."

"Her delicacy," remarked the colonel, "may be more deeply offended by your delaying the disclosure. But we must separate for the present. If Miss Mandeville sees us talking together so earnestly, she may justly suppose herself the object of discussion."

The two gentlemen parted; and Fitzsimmons, feeling it impossible to speak to Lucinda again that evening, and having no inclination to talk to any one else, withdrew from the ball, and passed two hours in traversing his own room.

After the departure of her lover, Lucinda felt more at her ease; particularly as Colonel Kingswood was so considerate as to avoid approaching her. During the remainder of the evening, she exerted herself with such success as to recall a portion of her natural sprightliness, and of the habitual self-command that she had acquired from living in the world of fashion.

Supper was announced. The ladies, persisting in their assumed characters, conducted the gentlemen to the table, where the profusion and variety of the delicacies that composed the feast, could only be equalled by the taste and elegance with which they were decorated and arranged. The belles filled the plates of the beaux, and poured out the wine for them; and many pretty things were said about ambrosia and nectar.

At the conclusion of the banquet, the band in the orchestra, on a signal from some of the gentlemen, struck up the symphony to a favourite air that chiefly owes its popularity to the words with which Moore has introduced it into his melodies; and "To ladies' eyes a round, boys," was sung in concert by all the best male voices in the room. The song went off with much eclat, and made a pleasant conclusion to the evening.

After the belles had curtsied out the beaux, and retired to the cloak-room to equip themselves for their departure, they found the gentlemen all waiting to see them to their carriages, and assist in escorting them home: declaring that as the play was over, and the curtain dropped, they must be allowed to resume their real characters.

When Lucinda Mandeville arrived at her own house, and found herself alone in her dressing-

room, all the smothered emotions of the evening burst forth without restraint, and leaning her head on the arm of the sofa, she indulged in a long fit of tears before she proceeded to take off her ornaments. But when she went to her psyche for that purpose, she could not help feeling that hers was not a face and figure to be seen with indifference, and that in all probability the unguarded warmth with which Fitzsimmons had replied to her mock courtship, was only the genuine ebullition of a sincere and ardent passion.

It was long before she could compose herself to sleep, and her dreams were entirely of the ball and of Fitzsimmons. When she arose next morning, she determined to remain all day up stairs, and to see no visiters; rejoicing that the fatigue of the preceding evening would probably keep most of her friends at home.

About noon, Gordon Fitzsimmons, who had counted the moments till then, sent up his card with a pencilled request to see Miss Mandeville. Terrified, agitated, and feeling as if she never again could raise her eyes to his face, or open her lips in his presence, Lucinda's first thought was to reply that she was indisposed, but she checked herself from sending him such a message, first, because it was not exactly the truth, and secondly, lest he should suppose that the cause of her illness might have some reference to himself. She therefore desired the servant simply to tell Mr. Fitzsimmons that Miss Mandeville could receive no visiters that day.

But Fitzsimmons was not now to be put off. He had been shown into one of the parlours, and going to the writing-case on the centre-table, he took a sheet of paper, and addressed to her an epistle expressing in the most ardent terms his admiration and his love, and concluding with the hope that she would grant him an interview. There was not, of course, the slightest allusion to the events of the preceding evening. The letter was conceived with as much delicacy as warmth, and highly elevated the writer in the opinion of the reader. Still, she hesitated whether to see him or not. Her heart said yes—but her pride said no. And at length she most heroically determined to send him a written refusal, not only of the interview but of himself, that in case he should have dared to presume that the unfortunate scene at the ball could possibly have meant anything more than a jest, so preposterous an idea might be banished from his mind for ever.

In this spirit she commenced several replies to his letter, but found it impossible to indite them in such terms as to satisfy herself; and, after wasting half a dozen sheets of paper with unsuccessful beginnings, she committed them all to the fire. Finally, she concluded that she could explain herself more effectually in a personal interview, whatever embarrassment the sight of him might occasion her. But not being able at this time to summon courage to meet him face to face, she sent down a note of three lines, informing Mr. Fitzsimmons that she would see him in the evening at seven o'clock.

Several of Lucinda's friends called to talk about the ball, but she excused herself from seeing them, and passed the remainder of the day up stairs, in one long thought of Fitzsimmons, and in dwelling on the painful idea that the avowal of his sentiments had, in all probability, been elicited by her indiscretion of the preceding evening. "But," said she to herself, "I will steadily persist in declining his addresses; I will positively refuse him, for unless I do so, I never can recover my own self-respect. I will make this sacrifice to delicacy, and even then I shall never cease to regret my folly in having allowed myself to be carried so far in the thoughtless levity of the moment."

Being thus firmly resolved on dismissing her admirer, it is not to be supposed that Lucinda could attach the smallest consequence to looking well that evening, during what she considered their final interview. Therefore we must, of course, attribute to accident the length of time she spent in considering which she should wear of two new silk dresses; one being of the colour denominated *ashes of roses*—the other of the tint designated as *monkey's sighs*. Though ashes of roses seemed emblematic of an extinguished flame, yet monkey's sighs bore more direct reference to a rejected lover, which, perhaps, was the reason that she finally decided on it. There was likewise a considerable demur about a canezou and a pelerine, but eventually the latter carried the day. And it was long, also, before she could determine on the most becoming style of arranging her hair, wavering between plaits and braids. At last the braids had it.

Mr. Fitzsimmons was announced a quarter before seven, his watch being undoubtedly too fast. Lucinda came down in ill-concealed perturbation, repeating to herself, as she descended the stairs, "Yes—my rejection of him shall be positive—and my adherence to it firm and inexorable."

Whether it was so we will not presume to say, but this much is certain—that in a month from that time the delinquent gentlemen made the *amende honorable* by giving the ladies a most splendid ball, at which the *ci-devant* Miss Mandeville and Mr. Gordon Fitzsimmons made their first appearance in public as bride and bridegroom, to the great delight of Colonel Kingswood.

THE RED BOX,

OR,

SCENES AT THE GENERAL WAYNE.

A TALE.

——"Just of the same piece
Is every flatterer's spirit."—SHAKSPEARE.

In one of the most beautiful counties of Pennsylvania, and in the immediate vicinity of the Susquehanna, stood an old fashioned country tavern, known by the designation of the General Wayne. Of its landlord and his family, and of some little incidents that took place within its precincts about forty years ago, it is our purpose to relate a few particulars.

The proprietor of the house and of the fine farm that surrounded it, was by birth a New-Englander; and having served in Washington's army during the whole of the revolutionary war, he was still distinguished by the title of Colonel Brigham. When, on the return of peace, he resumed his original occupation of farming, he concluded to settle on the genial soil of Pennsylvania, and removed thither with his wife, their little daughter, and an adopted child named Oliver, a fine boy whom they boasted of loving equally with their own Fanny; that he was equally indulged admitted not of a doubt.

As Oliver advanced to manhood he took the chief charge of the farm, and Mrs. Brigham with great difficulty prevailed on her husband to set up an inn; partly to give himself more occupation, and partly because his boundless hospitality in entertaining gratuitously all strangers that came into the neighbourhood, had become rather too much of a tax.

Accordingly, a range of stalls for horses was erected at a short distance from the house, which was beautified with a new porch, running all along the front, and furnished with green benches. A village artist (who was not only a painter, but a glazier also) was employed to contrive a sign, which it was expected would surpass all that had ever been seen in the country; it being neither Buck nor Fox, neither Black Horse, Green Tree, Conestoga Wagon, or any of those every-day things.

The painter's ideas were committed to board in the shape of the landlord's old commander, General Anthony Wayne. This effigy was evidently designed for that of a human being, but the artist had begun the upper part on so large a scale, that there was little or no room for the body and limbs; the gallant general looking as if crushed down by the weight of his hat and head. He stood upon a narrow strip of verdigris green, with his two heels together, and his toes wonderfully turned out. The facings of his coat, and all his under-clothes, were of gold. He wielded in one hand an enormous sword—the other held out a pistol in the act of going off—and he leaned on a cannon from whence issued a flash of scarlet fire, and a cloud of sky-blue smoke.

It is true, that when the sign came home, the colonel made many objections to it, declaring that gold breeches had never been worn in the continental army, and that no man ever stood still leaning on a gun at the moment it was discharged—neither did he think it by any means a good likeness of General Wayne. But Mrs. Brigham reminded her husband that there was no use in telling all this to everybody, and that it might suit some people's ideas of General Wayne—adding, that she never saw a sign that *was* a good likeness, except Timothy Grimshaw's White Lion, which looked exactly like Timothy himself.

Oliver averred that the artist was certainly a liberal man, and had given them the full worth of their money, for beside the gilding, there was more paint on it than on any sign he had ever seen.

Their neighbour, Tempy Walters, was, however, of opinion that they had been greatly overcharged, for that a man had painted her brother's cellar-door (which was considerably larger than this sign) for half the money. "To be sure," added Tempy, "there was no gold on the cellar-door—but it must have taken twice the paint."

To be brief, the colonel dismissed the case by paying the artist rather more than he asked—telling him, also, that he should be glad to see him at his house whenever he chose to come, and that his visits should not cost him a cent.

There never, perhaps, was a less profitable tavern than the General Wayne. The people of the neighbourhood were amazingly sober, and Mrs. Brigham allowed no tipplers to lounge about the bar-room or porch. The charges were so moderate as scarcely to cover the actual cost of the good things which were so profusely lavished on the table, and the family could not relinquish the habit of treating their guests as visiters and friends. Colonel Brigham always found some reason why such and such articles were not worth considering at all, and why such and such people could not afford to pay as well as he could afford to give them food and shelter. On soldiers, of course, he bestowed gratuitous entertainment, and was never more delighted than when he saw them coming. Pedlers and tinmen always took it—and emigrants on their way to the back settlements were invariably told to keep their money to help pay for their land.

But though tavern-keeping did not realize the anticipations of Mrs. Brigham in operating as a check on the hospitality of her husband, still, as she said, it kept him about the house, and prevented him from heating and fatiguing himself in the fields, and from interfering with Oliver in the management of the farm—Oliver always doing best when left to himself. It must be understood that this youth, though virtually a dependant on the bounty of the Brighams, evinced as free and determined a spirit as if he had been literally "monarch of all he surveyed." He was active, industrious, frank to a fault, brave and generous; and would have fought at any moment in defence of any member of the family; or, indeed, for any member of any other family, if he

conceived them to have been injured.

Between Oliver and Fanny Brigham there was as yet no demonstration of any particular attachment. They had been brought up so much like brother and sister that they seemed not to know when to begin to fall in love. Fanny coquetted with the smart young men in the neighbourhood, and Oliver flirted with the pretty girls; not seeming to perceive that Fanny was the prettiest of all. The old people, however, had it very much at heart for a match to take place between the young people, as the best preventive to Oliver "going west" (a thing he sometimes talked of, in common with the generality of young farmers), and therefore they watched closely, and were always fancying that they detected symptoms of real *bona fide* love. If the young people quarrelled, it was better so than that they should feel nothing for each other but mutual indifference. If they appeared indifferent, it was supposed that Fanny was modestly veiling her genuine feelings, and that Oliver was disguising his to try the strength of hers. If they talked and laughed together, they were animated by each other's society. If they were silent, they had the matter under serious consideration. If Fanny received with complaisance the civilities of a rural beau, and if Oliver devoted his attention to a rural belle, it was only to excite each other's jealousy. On one thing, however, the old people were agreed—which was, that it was best not to hurry matters. In this they judged from their own experience; for Mrs. Brigham had lost her first lover (a man that had come to see her every Wednesday and Saturday for five years and a half) because her father prematurely asked him what his intentions were. And Colonel Brigham had been refused no less than nine times, in consequence of "popping the question" at his first interview—a way he had when he was young.

So equal, however, was their love for the two children (as they still continued to call them), so anxious were they to keep Oliver always with them, and so impossible did it seem to them to think of any other young man as a son-in-law, that they would have sacrificed much to bring about so desirable a conclusion. But we have been loitering too long on the brink of our story, and it is time we were fairly afloat.

One clear, mild autumnal evening, Colonel Brigham (who for himself never liked benches) was occupying a few chairs in his front porch, and reading several newspapers; looking occasionally towards a cider-press under a large tree, round which lay a mountain of apples that a horse and a black boy were engaged in grinding. The colonel was habited in striped homespun trousers, a dark brown waistcoat with silver buttons, and no coat—but he took great pride in always wearing a clean shirt of fine country-made linen. As relics of his former military capacity, he persisted in a three-cocked hat and a black stock. He had joined the army in the meridian of life, and he was now a large, stout, handsome old man, with a clear blue eye, and silver gray hair curling on each side of a broad high forehead. Suddenly a stage that passed the house twice a week, stopped before the door. The only passengers in it were an old gentleman who occupied the back seat, and four young ones that sat on the two others, all with their faces towards him.

"Can we be accommodated at this inn for a few days?" said the elder stranger, looking out at the side. Colonel Brigham replied in the affirmative, adding that just then there were no guests in the house. "So much the better," said the old gentleman; "I like the appearance of this part of the country, and may as well be here for a little while as any where else." And making a sign to the young ones, they all four scrambled out of the stage with such eagerness as nearly to fall over each other—and every one took a part in assisting him down the steps, two holding him by the hands, and two by the elbows. But as soon as his feet touched the ground, he shook them all off as if scattering them to the four winds. He was a small slender old man, but of a florid complexion, and showed no indication of infirm health, but the excessive care that he took of himself—being enveloped in a great coat, over it a fur tippet round his neck, and his hat was tied down with a silk handkerchief.

"Sir, you are welcome to the General Wayne," said Colonel Brigham, "though I cannot say much for the sign. That was not the way brave Anthony looked at Stony Point. May I ask the favour of your name?"

The stranger looked at first as if unaccustomed to this question, and unwilling to answer it. However, after a pause, he deigned to designate himself as Mr. Culpepper, and slightly mentioned the four young men as his nephews, the Mr. Lambleys. There was a family likeness throughout the brothers. They were all tall and slender—all had the same fawn-coloured hair, the same cheeks of a dull pink, the same smiling mouths habitually turned up at the corners, and faces that looked as if all expression had been subdued out of them, except that their greenish-gray eyes had the earnest intent look, that is generally found in those of dumb people.

Mr. Culpepper was conducted into a parlour, where (though the evening was far from cold) he expressed his satisfaction at finding a fire. He deposited on the broad mantel-piece a small red morocco box which he had carried under his arm, and while his nephews (who had all been to see the baggage deposited) were engaged in disrobing him of his extra habiliments, he addressed himself to Colonel Brigham, whom he seemed to regard with particular complaisance.

"Well, landlord," said he; "you are, perhaps, surprised at my stopping here?"

"Not at all," said the colonel.

"The truth is," pursued Mr. Culpepper, "I am travelling for my health, and therefore I am taking cross-roads, and stopping at out of the way places. For there is no health to be got by staying in cities, and putting up at crowded hotels, and accepting invitations to dinner-parties and tea-

parties, or in doing anything else that is called fashionable."

"Give me your hand, sir," said Colonel Brigham; "you are a man after my own heart!"

The four Mr. Lambleys stared at the landlord's temerity, and opened their eyes still wider when they saw it taken perfectly well, and that their uncle actually shook hands with the innkeeper. This emboldened them to murmur something in chorus about their all disliking fashion.

"And pray," said old Culpepper, "why should you do that? 'Tis just as natural for young people to like folly, as it is for old people to be tired of it. And I am certain you have never seen so much of fashion as to be surfeited with it already."

The nephews respectfully assented.

It had already come to the knowledge of Mrs. Brigham (who was busily occupied up stairs in filling with new feathers some pillow-ticks which Fanny was making) that a party of distinguished strangers had arrived. "Fanny, Fanny," she exclaimed, opening the door of the adjoining room, in which Fanny was seated at her sewing, "there are great people below stairs. Get fixed in a moment, and go down and speak to them. I am glad your father has had sense enough to take them into the front parlour."

"But, mother," replied Fanny, "I saw them from the window when they got out of the stage. They are all men people, and I know I shall be ashamed, as they are quite strange to me, and I suppose are very great gentlemen. Won't it suit better for you to go?"

"Don't you see how the feathers are all over me?" said Mrs. Brigham: "it will take me an hour to get them well picked off, and myself washed and dressed. Get fixed at once, and go down and let the strangers see that the women of the house have proper manners. If you think you'll feel better with something in your hands, make some milk punch, and take it in to them."

Fanny's habitual neatness precluded any real necessity for an alteration in her dress—but still she thought it expedient to put on a new glossy blue gingham gown, and a clean muslin collar with a nicely plaited frill round it. This dress would have been very well, but that Fanny, in her desire to appear to great advantage, added a long sash of red and green plaid riband, and a large white satin bow deposited in the curve of her comb. Then, having turned herself round three or four times before the glass, to ascertain the effect, she descended the stairs, and in the entry met Oliver, who had just come in at the front door, and had seen from the barn-yard the arrival of the guests.

"Fanny," said Oliver, "why have you put on that great white top-knot? It makes you look like one of the cockatoos in the Philadelphia Museum. Let me take it off."

"Oh! Oliver, Oliver!" exclaimed Fanny, putting her hands to her head, "how you have spoiled my hair!"

"And this long sash streaming out at one side," pursued Oliver, "how ridiculous it looks!" And he dexterously twitched it off, saying, "There, take these fly-traps up stairs—they only disfigure you. I thought so the other day when you wore them at Mary Shortstitch's sewing frolic. You are much better without them."

"But I am *not*," said Fanny, angrily snatching them from his hand; "look how you've crumpled them up! Instead of finding fault with me for wishing to look respectfully to the strangers, you had best go and make yourself fit to be seen."

"I always am fit to be seen," replied Oliver, "and you know very well that I always do put myself in order as soon as I have done my work. But as for dressing up in any remarkable finery on account of four or five strange men, it is not in my line to do so. If, indeed, there were some smart girls along, it would be a different thing: but it is not my way to show too much respect to any man."

"I believe you, indeed," remarked Fanny.

"Well, well," said Oliver, "your hair is pretty enough of itself—and you fix it so nicely that it wants no top-knot to set it off; and this party-coloured sash only spoils the look of your waist. I hate to see you make a fool of yourself."

Fanny tossed her head in affected disdain, but she smiled as she ran up stairs to put away the offending ribands. She found her mother leaning down over the banisters, and looking very happy at Oliver's desire that Fanny should not make a fool of herself.

Fanny, having prepared the milk-punch in the best possible manner, filled half a dozen tumblers with it, grating a profusion of nutmeg over each, and then arranged them on a small waiter. When she entered the parlour with it, Mr. Culpepper, who called himself a confirmed invalid, was engaged in giving her father a particular description of all his ailments; and the four nephews were listening with an air of intense interest, as if it was the first they had heard of them.

"This is my daughter, Fanny," said Colonel Brigham, and Mr. Culpepper stopped short in his narrative, and his nephews all turned their eyes to look at her. When she handed the milk-punch the old gentleman declined it, alleging that the state of his health did not permit him to taste any sort of liquor. His nephews were going to follow his example, till he said to them peremptorily—

"Take it—there is nothing the matter with any of you. If there is, say so."

The Mr. Lambleys all rose to receive their tumblers, their uncle having made them a sign to that purpose, and Fanny thought herself treated with great respect, and curtsied, blushingly, to every one as he set down his glass.

"From such a Hebe it is difficult to refuse nectar," said the old gentleman, gallantly.

"A Hebe, indeed!" echoed the nephews.

The uncle frowned at them, and they all looked foolish—even more so than usual.

"Now, Fanny, my dear," said her father, "you may go out, and send in Oliver."

"Mother," said Fanny, as she joined Mrs. Brigham in the pantry, "I like these strangers quite well. They were very polite indeed—but they called me *Phebe*—I wonder why?"

When Oliver made his appearance, Colonel Brigham introduced him as "a boy he had raised, and who was just the same as a son to him." Mr. Culpepper surveyed Oliver from head to foot, saying, "Upon my word—a fine-looking youth! Straight—athletic—brown and ruddy—dark hair and eyes—some meaning in his face. See, young men—there's a pattern for you."

The four Mr. Lambleys exchanged looks, and tried in vain to conceal their inclination to laugh.

"Behave yourselves," said the uncle, in a stern voice.

The nephews behaved.

The supper table was now set, and Mr. Culpepper had become so gracious with his landlord, as to propose that he and his nephews should eat with the family during their stay. "That is what my guests always do," said Colonel Brigham; "and then we can see that all is right, and that they are well served."

When supper came in, Mr. Culpepper declined leaving the fire-side; and having previously had some cocoa brought from one of his travelling boxes, and prepared according to his own directions, he commenced his repast on a small round table or stand, that was placed beside him, declaring that his evening meal never consisted of anything more than a little cocoa, sago, or arrow-root.

But after taking a survey of the variety of nice-looking things that were profusely spread on the supper-table, the old gentleman so far broke through his rule, as to say he would try a cup of tea and a rusk. When Mrs. Brigham had poured it out, the four nephews, who at their uncle's sign manual had just taken their seats at the table, all started up at once to hand him his cup, though there was a black boy in attendance. The business was finally adjusted by one of the Mr. Lambleys taking the tea-cup, one the cream-jug, one the sugar-dish, and one the plate of rusk; and he of the cup was kept going all the time, first to have more water put into it, then more tea, then more water, and then more tea again. The invalid next concluded to try a cup of coffee, to counteract, as he said, any bad effects that might arise from the tea; and he ventured, also, on some well-buttered buckwheat cake and honey. He was afterwards emboldened to attempt some stewed chicken and milk toast, and finally finished with preserved peaches and cream.

All these articles were carried to him by his nephews, jumping up and running with an *empressement*, that excited the amazement of Mrs. Brigham, the pity of Fanny, the smiles of her father, and the indignation of Oliver.

The females retired with the supper equipage; and finding that Colonel Brigham had served in the war of independence, Mr. Culpepper engaged him in recounting some reminiscences of those eventful times; for the veteran had seen and known much that was well worth hearing.

The Mr. Lambleys, unaccustomed to feel or to affect an interest in anything that was not said or done by their uncle, looked very weary, and at last became palpably sleepy. They all sat in full view, and within reach of old Culpepper, who, whenever he perceived them to nod, or to show any other indication of drowsiness, poked at them with his cane, so as effectually to rouse them for a time, causing them to start forward, and set their faces to a smile, stretching up their eyes to keep them wide open.

At last the colonel, who was much amused by the absurdity of the scene, came to a full pause. "Go on," said Culpepper, "never mind their nodding. I'll see that they do not go to sleep."

The colonel, out of compassion to the young men, shortened his story as much as possible, and finally, on Mrs. Brigham sending in the black boy with bed-candles, Mr. Culpepper looked at his watch, and rose from his chair. The nephews were all on their feet in a moment. One tied the old man's fur tippet round his neck, to prevent his taking cold in ascending the staircase, another put on his hat for him, and the two others contended for the happiness of carrying his cloak. "What are you about?" said Mr. Culpepper; "do not you see my greatcoat there on the chair? Take that, one of you."

He bade good night, and the procession began to move, headed by Peter, the black boy, lighting them up stairs.

As soon as they were entirely out of hearing, Colonel Brigham, who had with difficulty restrained himself, broke out into a laugh, but Oliver traversed the room indignantly.

"I have no patience," said he, "with such fellows. To think that full-grown men—men that have

hands to work and get their own living, should humble themselves to the dust, and submit to be treated as lacqueys by an old uncle (or, indeed, by anybody), merely because he happens to be rich, and they expect to get his money when he sees proper to die, which may not be these twenty years, for it is plain that nothing ails him. 'I'd rather be a dog and bay the moon,' as I once heard an actor say in the Philadelphia play-house. Now I talk of Philadelphia; I have engaged all our next barley to Wortley & Hopkins. They pay better than Maltman & Co. But these Lambleys, Sheepleys rather—I saw them from the barn, handing the old fellow out of the stage. I almost expected to see them lift his feet for him; I was glad he scattered them all as soon as he had got down the steps. I dare say if he rides on horseback, they all four run beside him and hold him on his horse. Now I talk of horses, I've concluded to keep the two bay colts, and raise them myself. Tom Martingale shall not have them for the price he offers. To see how these chaps fetch and carry, and rise up and sit down, just at that old fellow's beck. It would be harder work for me than following the plough from sunrise to sunset, were I obliged to do so. Now I talk of ploughing; I bought another yoke of oxen yesterday, and hired a Dutchman. I shall put the five-acre field in corn. That old villain! you may see by his eye that he is despising them all the time. Why should not he? ninnies as they are. I wonder where they all came from? I do not believe they are Americans."

"And yet," said Colonel Brigham, "they do not speak like Englishmen, and I am sure they are neither Scotch nor Irish."

"I hear them all pacing about up stairs in the old fellow's room," said Oliver; "think of four men putting one man to bed, or of any one man allowing four to do it. But 'their souls are subdued to what they work in,' as I heard another play-actor say. By-the-bye, the old rogue has forgotten his red box, and left it on the mantel-piece. I wonder what is in it?"

"Maybe it is full of gold money," said Mrs. Brigham, who had just entered the room with Fanny; the daughter proceeding to put back the chairs, while the mother swept up the hearth.

"Bank notes rather," said Oliver.

"Jewels, I think," said Fanny.

"Deeds of property, perhaps," said the colonel.

"Well, well," said Mrs. Brigham, "'tis time for all good people to be in bed, so we'll let the strangers and their box rest till to-morrow."

"I think," observed the colonel, "the box had best be carried up to them. Take it, Oliver."

"I just heard the young men leave their uncle's room to go to their own," said Mrs. Brigham. "May be it won't do to disturb him, now he's in bed."

"Then let it be taken to the young men," returned the colonel. "Where have you put them?"

"I told Peter to show them all to the four-bedded room, at the other end of the house," answered Mrs. Brigham, "as they seemed to be alike in everything. I supposed they always prefer sleeping in the same place. All the four beds have exactly the same blue and white coverlets."

"Well," said Oliver, "I'll take them the box as I pass their room on the way to my own. But I must go first to the stable, and see how Sorrel's foot is; I cannot be satisfied if I do not look at it once more to-night."

The other members of the family now retired to their apartments, and Oliver took a lantern and went to the stable, to inspect again the state of the disabled horse.

When the four Lambleys waited on their uncle out of the parlour, they all perceived that the old gentleman had for the first time forgotten to take the red morocco box with him, and they all exchanged glances to this effect, being used to each other's signs. After they had gone through the tedious process of seeing him to bed, and carefully folding up his numerous garments, they held a consultation in their own room; and, accustomed to acting in concert, they concluded that as soon as the house was quiet, they would all go down stairs together and bring up the red box. Fortunately for them, they knew Mr. Culpepper to be a sound sleeper (notwithstanding his constant assertions to the contrary), and that he always went to sleep as soon as he was in bed.

When they came into the parlour, where all was now dark and silent, they set their candle on the table, and taking down the red box, one of them said, "At last we have an opportunity of satisfying ourselves."

"Tis the first time," said another, "that the box has ever been out of the old villain's possession. How strange that he should not have missed it! He must have had something in his head more than usual to-night."

"He even forgot to take his lozenges before he went to bed," said the third.

"James," said the fourth, "did you slip the little key out of his under waistcoat pocket, as I signed to you to do while you were folding it up?"

"To be sure I did," replied James, "here it is," (dangling it by the red ribbon that was tied to it). "But do *you* open the box, George, for I am afraid."

"Give me the key, then," said George, "for we have no time to lose."

"What a lucky chance!" said Richard Lambley.

"Now," said William, "we shall learn what we have been longing to discover for the last five years."

The key was turned, and the box opened. A folded parchment lay within it, tied round with red tape. Each of the brothers simultaneously put out a hand to grasp it.

"One at a time," said the elder, taking it out and opening it; "just as we suspected. It is the old fellow's will, regularly drawn up, signed and witnessed."

They looked over each other's shoulders in intense anxiety, while the eldest of the brothers, in a low voice, ran over the contents of the parchment. There was a unanimous exclamation of surprise that amounted almost to horror, when, after the usual preamble, they came to some explicit words by which the testator devoted the whole of his property to the endowment of a hospital for idiots. They had proceeded thus far, when they were startled by the entrance of Oliver, who saw in a moment in what manner they were all engaged. They hastily folded up the will, and replaced it in the box, of which they directly turned the key, looking very much disconcerted.

"I was coming," said Oliver, setting down his lantern, "to get that box and take it to you, that you might keep it safe for your uncle till morning. I have been detained at the stable longer than I expected, doing something for a lame horse."

There was a whispering among the Lambleys.

"Very well," said one of them to Oliver, "the box can stand on the mantel-piece till morning, and then when my uncle comes down he can get it for himself. He must not be disturbed with it to-night; and no doubt it will be safe enough here."

The truth was, they were all justly impressed with the persuasion, that if Mr. Culpepper knew the box to have been all night in their room, he would believe, as a thing of course, that they had opened it by some means, and examined its contents. Servility and integrity rarely go together.

They whispered again, and each advanced towards Oliver, holding out a dollar.

"What is this for?" said Oliver, drawing back.

"We do not wish you," said one of the Lambleys, "to mention to any one that you found us examining this box."

"Why should I mention it?" replied Oliver; "do you suppose I tell everything I see and hear? But what is that money for?"

"For you," said the Lambleys.

"What am I to do for it?"

"Keep our secret."

Oliver started back, coloured to his temples, contracted his brows, and clenching his hands, said, "I think I could beat you all four. I am sure of it. I could knock every one of you down, and keep you there, one after another. And I will; too, if you don't put up that money this instant."

The Lambleys quickly returned the dollars to their pockets, murmuring an apology; and Oliver paced the room in great agitation, saying, "I'll go west. I'll go to the backest of the back woods; nobody there will affront me with money."

The Lambleys hastily replaced the red box on the mantel-piece, and taking an opportunity when Oliver, as he walked up and down, was at the far end of the room, with his back to them, they all stole past him, and glided up stairs, to talk over the discovery of the night.

Having no longer the same motive for submitting to the iron rule of their uncle, they were eager to be emancipated from his tyranny, and they spent several hours in canvassing the manner in which this was to be effected. They had not candour enough to acknowledge that they had inspected the will, nor courage enough to break out into open rebellion; still, knowing what they now did, they feared that it would be impossible for them to persevere in their usual assiduities to Mr. Culpepper, for whom they could find no term that seemed sufficiently opprobrious.

Habit is second nature. The morning found them, as usual, in their uncle's room to assist at his toilet, with all their accustomed submission. The one that had purloined the key of the red box, took care to contrive an opportunity of slipping it unperceived into the pocket, as he unfolded and handed Mr. Culpepper his under waistcoat.

After he was shaved and dressed, and ready to go down stairs, the old gentleman suddenly missed the red box, and exclaimed, "Why, where is my box? What has gone with it? Who has taken it?"

The nephews had all turned their faces to the windows, and were steadfastly engaged in observing the pigeons that were walking about the roof of the porch.

"Where's my red box, I say?" vociferated the old man. "Go and see if I left it down stairs last night. A thing impossible, though. No—stay—I'll not trust one of you. I'll go down myself."

He then actually *ran* down stairs, and on entering the parlour where the breakfast table was already set, and the family all assembled, he espied the red box standing quietly on the mantel-piece.

"Ah!" he ejaculated, "there it is. I feared I had lost it." And he felt in his waistcoat pocket to ascertain if the key was safe.

To Mrs. Brigham's inquiry, of "how he had rested," Mr. Culpepper replied in a melancholy tone, that he had not slept a wink the whole night. On her asking if anything had disturbed him, he replied, "Nothing whatever; nothing but the usual restlessness of ill health." And he seemed almost offended, when she suggested the possibility of being asleep without knowing it.

Though he assured the family, when he sat down, that he had not the slightest appetite, the bowl of sago which had been prepared by his orders was soon pushed aside, and his breakfast became the counterpart of his supper the night before.

In taking their seats, the Lambleys, instead of their customary amicable contention, as to which of them should sit next their uncle, now, in the awkwardness of their embarrassment, all got to the other side of the table, and ranged themselves opposite to him in a row. Mr. Culpepper looked surprised, and invited Fanny and Oliver to place themselves beside him.

The four young men were very irregular and inconsistent in their behaviour. As often as their uncle signified any of his numerous wants, their habitual sycophancy caused them to start forward to wait on him; but their recent disappointment with regard to the disposal of his wealth, and their secret consciousness of the illicit means they had made use of to discover the tenor of his will, rendered them unable to watch his countenance, and anticipate his demands by keeping their eyes on his face as heretofore.

Their uncle saw that they were all in a strange way, and that something unusual was possessing them, and frequently in the midst of his talk with Colonel Brigham, he stopped to look at them and wonder. Something having reminded him of a certain ridiculous anecdote, he related it to the great amusement of the Brighams, who heard it for the first time. Mr. Culpepper, on looking over at his nephews, perceived that instead of laughing in concert (as they always did at this his favourite joke), they all appeared *distrait*, and as if they had not paid the slightest attention to it. He bent forward across the table, and fixing his keen eyes upon them, said, with a scrutinizing look, and in an under tone, "you have been reading my will."

The poor Lambleys all laid down their knives and forks, turned pale, and nearly fell back in their chairs.

"Don't expose yourselves farther," whispered Culpepper, leaning across to them, "I know you all;" and then turning to Colonel Brigham, he with much *sang froid* pursued the conversation.

Oliver (who alone of the family understood what was passing) began to feel much compassion for the poor young men. The scene became very painful to him, and finding that his aversion to the uncle was increasing almost beyond concealment, he hastily finished his coffee, and quitted the room.

When breakfast was over, and they were all leaving the table, old Culpepper said aside to his nephews: "In founding a hospital for idiots, I still give you an opportunity of benefiting by my bounty."

They reddened, and were about to quit the parlour, when their uncle, taking a chair himself, said to them: "Sit down, all of you." They mechanically obeyed, looking as if they were about to receive sentence of death. Fanny began to feel frightened, and glided out of the room; her mother having just followed the departure of the breakfast things. Colonel Brigham rose also to go, when Mr. Culpepper stopped him, saying: "Remain, my good friend. Stay and hear my explanation of some things that must have excited your curiosity."

He then took down the red box. The nephews looked at each other, and a sort of whisper ran along the line, which ended in their all jumping up together, and bolting out at the door.

Mr. Culpepper gazed after them awhile, and then turned towards Colonel Brigham, with a sardonic laugh on his face. "Well, well," said he, "they are right. It is refreshing to see them for once acting naturally. It was, perhaps, expecting too much, even of them, to suppose they would sit still and listen to all I was likely to say, for they know me well. Yet, if they had not read my will, they would not have dared to quit the room when I ordered them to remain."

He then proceeded to relate that he was a native of Quebec, where, in early life, he had long been engaged in a very profitable commercial business, and had been left a widower at the age of forty. A few years afterwards, he married again. His second wife was a lady of large fortune, which she made over to him, on condition that he should take her family name of Culpepper. The Mr. Lambleys were the nephews of his wife, being the children of her younger sister. On the death of their parents, he was induced by her to give them a home in his house.

The four Lambleys had very little property of their own, their father having dissipated nearly all that he had acquired by his marriage. They had been educated for professions, in which it was soon found that they had neither the ability nor the perseverance to succeed; their whole souls seeming concentrated to one point, that of gaining the favour of their uncle (who lost his second wife a few years after their marriage), and with this object they vied with each other in a course

of unremitting and untiring servilities, foolishly supposing it the only way to accomplish their aim of eventually becoming his heirs.

All that they gained beyond the payment of their current expenses, was Mr. Culpepper's unqualified contempt. He made a secret resolution to revenge himself on their duplicity, and to disappoint their mercenary views by playing them a trick at the last, and he had a will drawn up, in which he devised his whole property to the establishment of a hospital. This will he always carried about with him in the red morocco box.

He had come to the United States on a tour for the benefit of his health, and also to satisfy himself as to the truth of all he had heard respecting the unparalleled improvement of the country since it had thrown off the yoke which his fellow-subjects of Canada were still satisfied to wear.

"And now," continued Mr. Culpepper to his landlord, "you have not seen all that is in the red box. I know not by what presentiment I am impelled; but, short as our acquaintance has been, I cannot resist an unaccountable inclination to speak more openly of my private affairs to you, Colonel Brigham, than to any person I have ever met with. I feel persuaded that I shall find no cause to regret having done so. It is a long time since I have had any one near me to whom I could talk confidentially." And he added, with a sigh: "I fear that I may say with Shakspeare's Richard, 'there is no creature loves me.'"

Mr. Culpepper then opened the red box, and took out from beneath the will and several other documents that lay under it, a folded paper, which he held in his hand for some moments in silence. He then gave it to Colonel Brigham, saying, "Do you open it; I cannot. It is more than twenty years since I have seen it."

The Colonel unfolded the paper. It contained a small miniature of a beautiful young lady, in a rich but old-fashioned dress of blue satin, with lace cuffs and stomacher, her hair being drest very high, and ornamented with a string of pearls, arranged in festoons. Colonel Brigham looked at the miniature, and exclaimed in a voice of astonishment: "This is the likeness of Oliver's mother!"

"Oliver's mother!" ejaculated Mr. Culpepper, in equal amazement; "Oliver—what, the young man that lives with you—that you call your adopted son? This is the miniature of my daughter, Elizabeth Osborne."

"Then," replied the Colonel, "your daughter was Oliver's mother."

"Where is she?" exclaimed Culpepper, wildly. "Is she alive, after all?—When I heard of her death I believed it.—Do you know where she is?"

"She is dead," said Colonel Brigham, passing his hand over his eyes.—"I saw her die;—I was at her funeral.—I can bring you proof enough that this is the likeness of Oliver's mother.—Shall I tell my wife of this discovery?"

"You may tell it to your whole family," answered Mr. Culpepper, throwing himself back in his chair.—"You are all concerned in it.—Why, indeed, should it be a secret?"

Colonel Brigham left the room, and shortly after returned, conducting his wife, who was much flurried, and carried an enormously large pocket-book, worked in queen-stitch with coloured crewels. She was followed by Fanny, looking very pale, and bringing with her some sewing, by way of "having something in her hands." They found Mr. Culpepper with his face covered, and evidently in great agitation.

"See," said Mrs. Brigham, sitting down before him, and untying the red worsted strings of the pocket-book, "here's the very fellow to that likeness." She then took out an exact copy of the miniature. There were also some letters that had passed between the father and mother of Oliver, previous to their marriage.

"I keep these things in my best pocket-book," continued Mrs. Brigham; "husband gave them into my keeping, and when Oliver is twenty-one (which will not be till next spring), they are all to go to him."

Mr. Culpepper gazed awhile at the miniature, and then turned over the letters with a trembling hand. "I see," said he, "that there is no flaw in the evidence. This is, indeed, a copy of my daughter's miniature. These letters I have no desire to read, for, of course, they refer to the plot that was in train for deceiving me. And they thought they had well succeeded. But their punishment soon came, in a life of privation and suffering, and in an early death to both. May such be the end of all stolen marriages!—Still, she was my daughter; my only child.—So much the worse; she should not have left me for a stranger."

It was painful and revolting to the kind-hearted Brighams to witness the conflict between the vindictive spirit of this unamiable old man, and the tardy rekindling of his parental feelings. In a few moments he made an effort to speak with connexion and composure, and related the following particulars. After the unsuccessful attack on Quebec, by the gallant and ill-fated Montgomery, a young American officer, who had been severely wounded in the conflict, was brought into the city, and received the most kind and careful attendance from the family of a gentleman who had once been intimately acquainted with his father. The family who thus extended their hospitality to a suffering enemy, were the next-door neighbours of Mr. Culpepper, whose name was then Osborne. Captain Dalzel was a handsome and accomplished young man,

and his case excited much interest among the ladies of Quebec, and in none more than in Miss Osborne, who, from her intimacy in the house at which he was staying, had frequent opportunities of seeing him during his long convalescence. A mutual attachment was the consequence, and it was kept a profound secret from her father, who had in view for her a marriage with a Canadian gentleman of wealth and consequence.

When Captain Dalzel was about to return home on being exchanged, he prevailed on Miss Osborne to consent to a secret marriage. Mr. Culpepper acknowledged that on discovering it he literally turned his daughter out of doors, and sent back unopened a letter which she wrote to him from Montreal. From that time he never suffered her name to be mentioned in his presence; and he was almost tempted to consign to the flames a miniature of her, that had been painted for him by an English artist, then resident in Quebec. But a revulsion of feeling so far prevailed, as to prevent him from thus destroying the resemblance of his only child; and he put away the miniature with a firm resolution never to look at it again. Five years afterwards he heard accidentally of Captain Dalzel's having fallen in battle, and that Elizabeth had survived him but a few days.

"And how did you feel when you heard this?" asked Colonel Brigham.

"Feel," replied Culpepper, fiercely; "I felt that she deserved her fate, for having deceived her father, and taken a rebel for her husband, and an enemy's country for her dwelling-place."

Fanny shuddered at the bitter and implacable tone in which these words were uttered, and the Brighams were convinced that, with such a parent, Miss Osborne's home could at no time have been a happy one.

"But," continued old Culpepper, after a pause, "I will confess, that since I have been in your country, I have felt some 'compunctious visitings;' and I had determined not to leave the States without making some inquiry as to my daughter having left children."

"She had only Oliver," replied Colonel Brigham.

"The boy's features have no resemblance to those of his mother," said Culpepper; "still there is something in his look that at once prepossessed me in his favour. But tell me all that you know about his parents?"

The colonel's narrative implied, that he had been well acquainted with Captain Dalzel, who was of the Virginia line, and who was mortally wounded at Yorktown, where he died two days after the surrender; consigning to the care of Colonel Brigham a miniature of his wife, which he said was procured before his marriage from an artist whom he had induced to copy privately one that he was painting for the young lady's father.

The war being now considered as ended by the capture of Cornwallis and his army, Colonel Brigham repaired to Philadelphia, where her husband had informed him that Mrs. Dalzel was living in retired lodgings. He found that the melancholy news of Captain Dalzel's fate had already reached her; and it had caused the rupture of a blood-vessel, which was hurrying her immediately to the grave. She was unable to speak, but she pointed to her child (then about four years old), who was sobbing at her pillow. The colonel, deeply moved, assured her that he would carry the boy home with him to his wife, and that while either of them lived, he should never want a parent. A gleam of joy lighted up the languid eyes of Mrs. Dalzel, and they closed to open in this world no more.

The anguish evinced by Mr. Culpepper at this part of the narrative, was such as to draw tears from Mrs. Brigham and Fanny. The colonel dwelt no further on the death of Mrs. Dalzel, but concluded his story in as few words as possible, saying that he carried the child home with him; that his wife received him gladly; and that not one of the relations of Captain Dalzel (and he had none that were of near affinity) ever came forward to dispute with him the charge of the boy. Captain Dalzel, he knew, had possessed no other fortune than his commission.

When Colonel Brigham had finished his tale,——

"Well," said Mr. Culpepper, making a strong effort to recover his composure, "perhaps I treated my daughter too severely, in continuing to cherish so deep a resentment against her. But why did she provoke me to it? However, the past can never be recalled. I must endeavour to make her son behave better to me. Where is Oliver? Let me see him immediately."

He had scarcely spoken when Oliver entered the porch, accompanied by the four Lambleys, whom he had met strolling about lonely and uncomfortable, and he kindly offered to show them round the farm, not knowing what better he could do for them. They had just completed their tour; and though it was a beautiful farm, and in fine order, the Lambleys had walked over it without observing anything, being all the time engaged in inveighing bitterly to Oliver against their uncle. Oliver regarded them as so many Sinbads ridden by the Old Man of the Sea, and advised them to throw him off forthwith.

"Come in, Oliver," said Colonel Brigham; "you are wanted here."

Oliver entered the parlour, and the Lambleys remained in the porch and looked in at the windows, curious to know what was going on.

"Come in, all of you," said Mr. Culpepper.

They mechanically obeyed his summons, and entered the parlour.

Mr. Culpepper then took Oliver by the hand, and said to him in a voice tremulous with emotion, "Young man, in me you behold your grandfather."

Oliver changed colour, and started back, and Mr. Culpepper was deeply chagrined to see that this announcement gave him anything but pleasure. The story was briefly explained to him, and Mr. Culpepper added, "From this moment you may consider yourself as belonging to me. I like you—and I will leave my money to you rather than to found a hospital."

"You had better leave it to these poor fellows, that have been trying for it so long," said Oliver, bluntly.

The nephews all regarded him with amazement.

"Hear me, Oliver," said Mr. Culpepper; "It is not merely because you are my grandson, and as such my legal heir—unless I choose to dispose of my property otherwise—but I took a fancy to you the moment I saw you, when I could not know that you were of my own blood. As to those fellows, I have had enough of them, and no doubt they have had enough of me. I have towed them about with me already too long. It is time I should cut the rope, and turn them adrift. No doubt they will do better when left to shift for themselves."

The Lambleys exhibited visible signs of consternation.

"Oliver," continued Mr. Culpepper, "prepare to accompany me to Canada. There you shall live with me as my acknowledged heir, taking the name of Culpepper, and no longer feeling yourself a destitute orphan."

"I never have felt myself a destitute orphan," said Oliver, looking gratefully at Colonel and Mrs. Brigham, both of whom looked as if they could clasp him in their arms.

"I promise you every reasonable enjoyment that wealth can bestow," pursued Mr. Culpepper.

"I have all sorts of reasonable enjoyments already," answered Oliver. "A fine farm to take care of; a capital gun; four excellent dogs; and such horses as are not to be found within fifty miles; fine fishing in the Susquehanna; plenty of newspapers to read, and some books too; frolics to go to, all through the neighbourhood; and now and then a visit to the city, where I take care to see all the shows."

"Nonsense," said Mr. Culpepper; "what is all this compared to an introduction to the best society of Quebec?"

"And what better than all this is done by the best society of Quebec?" inquired Oliver.

Mr. Culpepper did not answer this question; but continued: "There is another consideration of still more consequence: As my grandson and heir, I can insure you an opportunity of marrying a lady of family and fortune."

"I would rather marry Fanny," said Oliver.

At this spontaneous and unequivocal announcement, Colonel and Mrs. Brigham each caught one of Oliver's hands, unable to conceal their joy. A flush passed over Fanny's face, and she half rose up, and then sat down again. At last she said, with sparkling eyes, and a curl of her lip, "How do you know that Fanny will have you?" And she pursued her work with such eagerness, that she forgot to replenish her needle, and went on sewing without a thread.

There was a silence a few moments, and then Mr. Culpepper proceeded: "In short, Oliver, you must go with me to Canada, and settle there for life."

"First listen to me," said Oliver, "for I am going to make a speech, and I intend to abide by it.—As to your being my grandfather, that is a thing I cannot help. You must not expect me to be taken with a sudden affection for you, and to feel dutiful all at once, when I never saw you in my life till yesterday. Maybe it might come after awhile; but that is quite a matter of doubt, as I fear we should never suit each other at all. Neither will I ever consent to go and live in Canada, and be under the rule of a king. My father died in trying to get free from one. I like my own country, and I like the way of living I am used to; and I like the good friends that have brought me up. And if Fanny won't have me, I dare say I can find somebody that will."

The Brighams looked reproachfully at their daughter, who held down her head and gave her sewing such a flirt, that it fell from her hand on the floor and the Lambleys picked it up.

"Another thing," proceeded Oliver to Mr. Culpepper, "this is your will, is it not?" (putting his hand on it as it lay beside the red box). "Now tell me if there are any legacies in it?"

"Not one;" replied Mr. Culpepper, "the whole is left to endow a hospital for idiots. I knew nobody that deserved a legacy."

"So much the worse," said Oliver, "it looks as if you had no friends. You had better make another will."

"I intend to do so," replied Culpepper.

"Then," said Oliver, "this is of no use; and the sooner there is an end of it the better;"—and he

threw it into the fire, where it was instantly consumed.

The Lambleys were so frightened at this outrageous act (for so it appeared to them), that they all tried to get out of the room. Mrs. Brigham spread her hands with a sort of scream; her husband could not help laughing; Fanny again dropped her work, and nobody picked it up. Mr. Culpepper frowned awfully; but he was the first to speak, and said, "Young man, how have you dared to do this?"

"I can dare twice as much," replied Oliver;—"I have shot a bear face to face. One hard winter there were several found in the woods not ten miles off. Suppose, Mr. Culpepper, you were to die suddenly (as you possibly may in a fit or something), before you get your new will made! This would then be considered the right one, and your money after all would go to that idiot hospital."

"You are the most original youth I have ever met with," said Culpepper; "I know not how it is; but the more you oppose me, the better I like you."

The nephews looked astonished.

"Still," observed Oliver, "it would never do for us to live together. For myself, I neither like opposing nor submitting; never having been used to either."

"It is not possible," said Culpepper, "that you mean seriously to refuse my offer of protection and fortune?"

"As to protection," replied Oliver; "I can protect myself. And as to fortune, I dare say I can make one for myself. And as to that other thing, the wife, I shall try to get one of my own sort—Fanny, or somebody else. And as to the name of Culpepper, I'll never take it."

"And will you really not go with me to Canada?"

"No! positively I will not. I believe, though, I ought to thank you for your offers, which I now do. No doubt they were well meant. But here I intend to stay, with the excellent people that took me when nobody else would, and that have brought me up as their own child. I know how sorry they would be were I to leave them, and yet they have had the forbearance not to say one word to persuade me to stay. So it is my firm determination to live and die with them."

He then shook hands with each of the old Brighams, who were deeply affected, and threw their arms round him. Fanny, completely overcome, entirely off her guard, flew to Oliver, hid her face on his shoulder, and burst into tears. He kissed her cheek, saying, "Now, Fanny, I hope we understand each other;"—and Colonel Brigham put his daughter's hand into Oliver's.

"So then," said Mr. Culpepper, "I have found a grandson but to lose him. Well, I deserve it."

The nephews looked as if they thought so too.

"What shall I do now?" continued the old man dolorously.

"Take your nephews into favour again," said Oliver.

"They never were in favour," replied the uncle.

"At all events treat them like men."

"It is their own fault. Why do they not behave as such?"

The old gentleman walked about in much perturbation. At last he said to the Lambleys, "Young men, as you took a most nefarious method of discovering my intentions towards you, and as I never had a doubt respecting the real motive of all your obsequiousness to me, there is no use in attempting any farther disguise on either side. When masks are only of gauze, it is not worth while to wear them. Try then if you can be natural for a little while, till I see what can be done with you. You will find it best in the end. And now, I think, we will go away as soon as possible. The longer I stay here, the more difficult I shall find it to leave Oliver."

To be brief.—Mr. Culpepper and his nephews departed in about an hour, in a vehicle belonging to the General Wayne, and which was to carry them to the nearest village from whence they could proceed to New York.

At parting, Mr. Culpepper held out his hand and said, "Oliver, for once call me grandfather."

Oliver pressed his hand, and said, "Grandfather, we part friends." The old gentleman held his handkerchief to his eyes, as he turned from the door, and his nephews looked nohow.

In about a month, Oliver received a parcel from Mr. Culpepper, containing the little red morocco box, in which was a letter and some papers. The letter was dated from New York. The old gentleman informed his grandson, that he had been so fortunate as to engage the affections and obtain the hand of a very beautiful young lady of that city (the youngest of eight sisters, and just entering her seventeenth year), who had convinced him, that she married only from the sincerest love. Finding no farther occasion for his nephews, he had established them all in business in New York, where no doubt they would do better than in Canada. He sent Oliver certificates for bank stock to a considerable amount, and requested him, whenever he wanted more money for the enlargement or improvement of the farm, to apply to him without scruple.

This letter arrived on the day of Oliver's marriage with Fanny; on which day the sign of the

General Wayne was taken down, and the tavern became once more a farm-house only; Mrs. Brigham having been much troubled by the interruptions she sustained from customers, during her immense preparations for the wedding, and determining that on the great occasion itself, she would not be "put out" by the arrival of any guest, except those that were invited.

Colonel Brigham, never having approved of the sign, was not sorry to see it removed; and Mrs. Brigham, thinking it a pity to have it wasted, made it do duty in the largest bedchamber as a chimney-board.

In a few years the Colonel found sufficient employment for most of his time in playing with Fanny's children, and such was his "green old age," that when upwards of seventy, he was still able to take the superintendence of the farm, while Oliver was absent at the seat of the state government, making energetic speeches in the capacity of an assembly-man.

THE OFFICERS:

A STORY OF THE LAST WAR WITH ENGLAND.

——"All furnished, all in arms,
All plumed like estridges."—SHAKSPEARE.

Sophia Clements had just arrived in Philadelphia on a visit to her sister, Mrs. Darnel, the widow of a merchant who had left his family in very affluent circumstances. The children were a son now settled in business at Canton, two very pretty daughters who had recently quitted school, and a boy just entering his twelfth year.

Miss Clements, who (being the child of a second marriage) was twenty years younger than Mrs. Darnel, had resided since the death of her parents with an unmarried brother in New York, where her beauty and her mental accomplishments had gained her many admirers, none of whom, however, had been able to make any impression on her heart.

Sophia Clements was but few years older than her gay and giddy nieces, who kindly offered to pass her off as their cousin, declaring that she was quite too young to be called aunt. But secure in the consciousness of real youth, she preferred being addressed by the title that properly belonged to her.

This visit of Sophia Clements was in the last year of the second contest between England and America; and she found the heads of her two nieces filled chiefly with the war, and particularly with the officers. They had an infinity to tell her of "the stirring times" that had prevailed in Philadelphia, and were still prevailing. And she found it difficult to convince them that there was quite as much drumming and fifing in New York, and rather more danger; as that city, from its vicinity to the ocean, was much easier of access to the enemy.

The boy Robert was, of course, not behind his sisters in enthusiasm for the "pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war," and they were indebted to him for much soldier-news that they would not otherwise have had the felicity of knowing—his time, between school hours, being chiefly spent in collecting it.

On the morning after Miss Clements's arrival, she and her nieces were sitting at their muslin work,—an occupation at that time very customary with the ladies, as no foreign articles of cotton embroidery were then to be purchased. There was much military talk, and frequent running to the window by the two girls, to look out at a passing recruiting party with their drum, and fife, and colours, and to admire the gallant bearing of the sergeant that walked in front with his drawn sword; for recruiting sergeants always have

"A swashing and a martial outside."

"Certainly," said Harriet Darnel, "it is right and proper to wish for peace; but still, to say the truth, war-time is a very amusing time. Everything will seem so flat when it is over."

"I fear, indeed," replied Miss Clements, smiling, "that you will find some difficulty in returning to the 'dull pursuits of civil life.'"

"Aunt Sophy," said Caroline, "I wish you had been here in the summer, when we were all digging at the fortifications that were thrown up in the neighbourhood of the city, to defend it in case of an attack by land. Each citizen gave a day's work, and worked with his own hands. They went in bodies, according to their trades and professions, marching out at early dawn with their digging implements. They were always preceded by a band of music, playing Hail Columbia or Washington's March, and they returned at dusk in the same manner. We regularly took care to see them whenever they passed by."

"The first morning," said Harriet, "they came along so very early that none of us were up till the sound of the music wakened us; and being in our night-clothes, we could only peep at them through the half-closed shutters; but afterwards, we took care to be always up and dressed in time, so that we could throw open the windows and lean out, and gaze after them till they were

out of sight. You cannot think how affecting it was. Our eyes were often filled with tears as we looked at them—even though they were not soldiers, but merely our own people, and had no uniform."

"All instances of patriotism, or of self-devotion for the general good, are undoubtedly affecting," observed Sophia.

"Every trade went in its turn," pursued Harriet, "and every man of every trade, masters and journeymen—none stayed behind. One day we saw the butchers go, another day the bakers; also the carpenters and bricklayers, then the shoemakers and the tailors, the curriers and the saddlers, and the blacksmiths. Often two or three trades went together. There were the type-founders, and the printers, and the book-binders. The merchants also assisted, and the lawyers, and the clergymen of every denomination. Most of the Irishmen went twice—first, according to their respective trades, and again as Irishmen only, when they marched out playing 'St. Patrick's Day in the Morning.' The negroes had their day, also; and we heard them laughing and talking long before we saw them. Only imagine the giggling and chattering of several hundred negroes!"

"Mr. and Mrs. Linley took us out in their carriage to see the fortifications," resumed Caroline. "It was the lawyers' day; and there were some of the principal gentlemen of the city, in straw hats and round jackets, and some in their waistcoats only, with their shirt-sleeves rolled up, digging with pickaxes and spades, and wheeling barrows full of sods. It was delightful to look at them."

"There's a drum and fife again!" exclaimed Harriet. "See, see, Aunt Sophy, do look out; here's another recruiting party—and they have picked up four men, who have actually joined them in the street. How glad I am!"

"Do come and look, aunt," said Caroline; "it is not the same party that passed a little while ago. I know it by the sergeant, who has darker hair and eyes than the other. This is Lieutenant Bunting's recruiting party. He has handbills on all the corners, headed: 'List, list—oh, list!'"

"Aunt Sophy," said Harriet, as they resumed their seats, "you cannot imagine what a lively summer we have had!"

"I can easily imagine," replied Sophia, "that you almost lived out of the window."

"How could we do otherwise," answered Harriet, "when there was so much to look at, particularly during the alarm? Alarms are certainly very exciting."

"Undoubtedly," observed Sophia; "but what was the alarm?"

"Oh! there has been one long alarm all summer; and it is still going on, or our volunteers would not stay so long at Camp Dupont. But there, it seems, they may have to remain till winter drives the British away from the Capes."

"I conclude," said Miss Clements, "the alarm *par excellence* was when the enemy sailed up the Chesapeake to attack Baltimore, and there was an apprehension of their crossing over to Philadelphia."

"The very time," answered Harriet. "We had a troop of horse reconnoitering on the Chesapeake. Their camp was at Mount Bull, near Elkton. They were all gentlemen, and they acted in turn as videttes. One of them arrived here every evening with despatches for General Bloomfield concerning the movements of the enemy—and they still come. You know last evening, soon after your arrival, one of the times that I ran to the window was to see the vidette[73] galloping along the street, looking so superbly in his light-horseman's uniform, with his pistols in his holsters, and his horse's feet striking fire from the stones."

"Once," said Caroline, "we heard a galloping in the middle of the night, and therefore we all got up and looked out. In a few minutes the streets were full of men who had risen and dressed themselves, and gone out to get the news. I was sorry that, being women, we could not do the same. But we sent Bob—you don't know how useful we find Bob. He is versed in all sorts of soldiers and officers, and every kind of uniform, and the right way of wearing it. He taught us to distinguish a captain from a lieutenant, and an infantry from an artillery officer,—silver for infantry, and gold for artillery,—and then there is the staff uniform besides, and the dragoons, and the rifle officers, and the engineers. Of course, I mean the regular army. As to volunteers and militia, we knew them long ago."

"But you are forgetting the vidette that galloped through the street at midnight," said Sophia.

"True, aunt; but when one has so much to tell, it is difficult to avoid digressions. Well, then—this vidette brought news of the attack on Baltimore; and, by daylight, there was as much confusion and hustle in the town, as if we had expected the enemy before breakfast."

"We saw all the volunteers march off," said Harriet, taking up the narrative. "They started immediately to intercept the British on their way to Philadelphia,—for we were sure they would make an attempt to come. We had seen from our windows, these volunteers drilling for weeks before, in the State House Yard. It is delightful to have a house in such a situation. My favourite company was the Washington Guards, but Caroline preferred the State Fencibles. I liked the close round jackets of the Guards, and their black belts, and their tall black feathers tipped with red. There was something novel and out of the common way in their uniform."

"No matter," said Caroline, "the dress of the State Fencibles was far more manly and becoming.

They wore coatees, and white belts, and little white pompons tipped with red; pompons stand the wind and weather much better than tall feathers. And then the State Fencibles were all such genteel, respectable men."

"So were the Washington Guards," retorted Harriet, "and younger besides."

"No, no," replied Caroline, "it was their short, boyish-looking jackets that gave them that appearance."

"Well, well," resumed Harriet, "I must say that all the volunteer companies looked their very best the day they marched off in full expectation of a battle. I liked them every one. Even the blankets that were folded under their knapsacks were becoming to them. We saw some of the most fashionable gentlemen of the city shoulder their muskets and go off as guards to the baggage-wagons, laughing as if they considered it an excellent joke."

"To think," said Caroline, "of the hardships they have to suffer in camp! After the worst of the alarm had subsided, many of the volunteers obtained leave of absence for a day or two, and came up to the city to visit their families, and attend a little to business. We always knew them in a moment by their sunburnt faces. They told all about it, and certainly their sufferings have been dreadful, for gentlemen. Standing guard at night, and in all weather,—sleeping in tents, without any bedsteads, and with no seats but their trunks,—cooking their own dinners, and washing their own dishes,—and, above all, having to eat their own awful cooking!"

"But you forget the country volunteers," said Harriet, "that came pouring in from all parts of Pennsylvania. We saw them every one as they passed through the city on their way down to Camp Dupont. And really we liked *them* also. Most of the country companies wore rifle-dresses of coloured cotton, trimmed with fringe; for instance, some had blue with red fringe, others green with yellow fringe; some brown with blue fringe. One company was dressed entirely in yellow, spotted with black. They looked like great two-legged leopards. We were very desirous of discovering who an old gray-haired man was that rode at the head. He was a fine-looking old fellow, and his dress and his horse were of the same entire gray. I shall never forget that man."

"I shall never forget anything connected with the alarm," resumed Caroline. "There was a notice published in all the papers, and stuck up at every corner, telling what was to be done in case the enemy were actually approaching the city. Three guns were to be fired from the Navy Yard as a signal for the inhabitants to prepare for immediate danger. You can't think how anxiously we listened for those three guns."

"I can readily believe it," said Miss Clements.

"We knew some families," continued Caroline, "that, in anticipation of the worst, went and engaged lodgings in out-of-the-way places, thirty or forty miles from town, that they might have retreats secured; and they packed up their plate and other valuable articles, for removal at a short notice. We begged of mamma to let us stay through everything, as we might never have another opportunity of being in a town that was taken by the enemy; and as no gentleman belonging to us was in any way engaged in the war, we thought the British would not molest *us*. To say the truth, mamma took the whole alarm very coolly, and always said she had no apprehensions for Philadelphia."

"Maria Milden was at Washington," observed Harriet, "when the British burnt the President's House and the Capitol, and she told us all about it, for she was so fortunate as to see the whole. Nobody seems to think they will burn the State House, if they come to Philadelphia. But I do—don't you, aunt Sophia? What a grand sight it would be, and how fast the State-House bell would ring for its own fire!"

"We can only hope that they will always be prevented from reaching the city at all," replied Miss Clements.

"But don't I hear a trumpet?" exclaimed Caroline; and the girls were again at the window.

"Oh! that is the troop of United States dragoons that Bob admires so much," cried Harriet. "They have recruited a hundred men here in the city. I suppose they are on their way to the lines. Look, look, aunt Sophy,—now, you must acknowledge this to be a fine sight."

"It is," said Sophia.

"Only see," continued Harriet, "how the long tresses of white horse-hair on their helmets are waving in the wind; and see how gallantly they hold their sabres; and look at the captain as he rides at their head,—only see his moustaches. I hope that captain will not be killed."

"But I shall be sorry if he is not wounded," said Caroline. "Wounded officers are always so much admired. You know, Harriet, we saw one last winter with his arm in a sling, and a black patch on his forehead. How sweetly he looked!"

"Nay," said Harriet, "I cannot assent to that; for he was one of the ugliest men I ever saw, both face and figure, and all the wounding in the world would not have made him handsome."

"Well, interesting then,"—persisted Caroline;—"you must own that he looked interesting, and that's everything."

"May I ask," said Miss Clements, "if you are acquainted with any officers?"

"Oh, yes," replied Harriet, "we meet with them sometimes at houses where we visit. How very unlucky it is that brother Francis happens to be living in Canton, just at this time of all others! If he were with us, we could go more into company, and his friends would visit at our house—and of course he would know a great many officers. But mamma is so very particular, and so very apprehensive about us, and she cannot herself be persuaded to go to any public places. I wish Bob were grown up."

"We were very desirous," said Caroline, "of being among the young ladies who joined in presenting a standard, last October, to a regiment of infantry that was raised chiefly in the city, but mamma would not permit us. However, we saw the ceremony from a window. The young ladies who gave the standard were all dressed alike in white muslin frocks and long white kid gloves, with their hair plain and without ornament—they looked sweetly. The regiment had marched into town for the purpose,—for they were encamped near Darby. The young ladies with the flag stood on the steps of a house in Chestnut street, and the officers were ranged in front. She that held the standard delivered a short address on the occasion, and the ensign who received it knelt on one knee, and replied very handsomely to her speech. Then the drums rolled, and the band struck up, and the colours waved, and the officers all saluted the ladies."

"In what way?" asked Sophia.

"Oh, with their swords. A military salute is superb—Bob showed us all the motions. Look now, aunt Sophia, I'll do it with the fly-brush. That's exactly the way."

"I have always considered a military salute extremely graceful," said Miss Clements.

"But we have still more to tell about this regiment," continued Caroline. "You must know we spent a most delightful day in their camp—actually in their camp!"

"And how did you happen to arrive at that pitch of felicity?" asked Sophia.

"Oh!" replied Caroline, "we are, most fortunately for us, acquainted with the family of an officer belonging to this district, and they invited us to join them on a visit to the camp. Our friends had made arrangements for having a sort of picnic dinner there, and baskets of cold provisions were accordingly conveyed in the carriages. The weather was charming, for it was the Indian summer, and everything conspired to be so delightful. First we saw a review: how elegantly the officers looked galloping along the line,—and then the manœuvres of the soldiers were superb,—they seemed to move by magic. When the review was over, the officers were all invited to share our dinner. As they always went to Darby (which was close by) for their meals, they had no conveniences for dining in camp; and the contrivances that were resorted to for the accommodation of our party caused us much amusement. The flies of two or three tents were put together so as to make a sort of pavilion for us. Some boards were brought, and laid upon barrels, so as to form a table; and for table-cloths we had sheets supplied by the colonel. We sat on benches of rough boards, similar to those that formed the table. Plates, and knives and forks, were borrowed for us of the soldiers. We happened to have no salt with us,—some, therefore, was procured from the men's pork-barrels, and we made paper salt-cellars to put it in. But the effect of our table was superb, all the gentlemen being in full uniform—such a range of epaulets and sashes! Their swords and chapeaux, which they had thrown under a tree, formed such a picturesque heap! The music was playing for us all the time, and we were waited upon by orderlies—think of having your plate taken by a soldier in uniform! Wine-glasses being scarce among us, when a gentleman invited a lady to take wine with him, she drank first, and gave him her glass, and he drank out of it—and so many pretty things were said on the occasion. After dinner the colonel took us to his tent, which was distinguished from the others by being larger, and having a flag flying in front, and what they called a picket fence round it. Then we were conducted all through the camp, each lady leaning on the arm of an officer: we almost thought ourselves in Paradise. For weeks we could scarcely bear to speak to a citizen—Mr. Wilson and Mr. Thomson seemed quite sickening."

"What nonsense you are talking!" said Mrs. Darnel, who, unperceived by her daughters, had entered the room but a few moments before, and seated herself on the sofa with her sewing. "When you are old enough to think of marrying (the two girls smiled and exchanged glances), you may consider yourselves very fortunate if any such respectable young men as the two you have mentioned so disdainfully, should deem you worthy of their choice."

"I have no fancy for respectable young men," said Harriet, in a low voice.

"I hope you will live to change your opinion," pursued Mrs. Darnel. "I cannot be all the time checking and reproving; but my consolation is that when the war is over, you will both come to your senses,—and while it lasts the officers have, fortunately, something else to think of than courtship and marriage; and are seldom long enough in one place to undertake anything more than a mere flirtation."

"For my part," said Miss Clements, "nothing could induce me to marry an officer. Even in time of peace to have no settled home; and to be transferred continually from place to place, not knowing at what moment the order for removal may arrive; and certainly in time of war my anxiety for my husband's safety would be so great as entirely to destroy my happiness."

"Well," said Mrs. Darnel, "I wish, for a thousand reasons, that this war was over. Setting aside all more important considerations, the inconvenience it causes in our domestic concerns is too incessant to be trifling. We are not yet prepared to live comfortably without the aid of foreign

importations. The price of everything has risen enormously."

"That is very true, mamma," observed Harriet; "only think of having to give two dollars a yard for slight Florence silk; such silk as before the war *we* would not have worn at all—but now we are glad to get anything,—and two dollars a pair for cotton stockings; cambric muslin a dollar and a half a yard—a dollar for a paper of pins—twenty-five cents for a cotton ball!"

"And groceries!" resumed Mrs. Darnel; "sugar a dollar a pound—lemons half a dollar a piece!"

"I must say," said Caroline, "I am very tired of cream of tartar lemonade. I find it wherever I go."

"Well, all this is bad enough," said Harriet; "but somehow it does not make us the least unhappy, and certainly we are anything but dull."

"And then it is so pleasant," remarked Caroline, "every now and then to hear the bells ringing, and to find that it is for a victory; and it is so glorious to be taking ship after ship from the British. Bob says he envied the New Yorkers the day the frigate United States brought in the Macedonian."

"I own," said Miss Clements, "that the excitement of that day, can never be forgotten by those that felt it. It had been ascertained the evening before that these ships were off Sandy Hook, but in the morning there was a heavy fog which, it was feared, would prevent their coming up to the city. Nevertheless, thousands of people were assembled at daylight on the Battery. At last a sunbeam shone out, the fog cleared off with almost unprecedented rapidity, and there lay the two frigates at anchor, side by side—the Macedonian with the American colours flying above the British ensign. So loud were the acclamations of the spectators, that they were heard half over the city, and they ceased not, till both vessels commenced firing a salute."

The conversation was finally interrupted by the arrival of some female visitors, who joined Mrs. Darnel in lamenting the inconveniences of the times. One fearing that if the present state of things continued, she would soon be obliged to dress her children in domestic gingham, and the other producing from her reticule a pattern for a white linen glove, which she had just borrowed with a view of making some for herself; kid gloves being now so scarce that they were rarely to be had at any price.

A few evenings afterwards, our young ladies were invited to join a party to a ball; where Mr. Wilson and Mr. Thomson were treated with considerable indifference by the Miss Darnels; but being very persevering young men, they consoled themselves with the hope that *le bon temps viendra*. About the middle of the evening, the girls espied at a distance, among the crowd of gentlemen near the door, the glitter of a pair of silver epaulets.

"There's a field-officer, Aunt Sophia," said Harriet: "he wears two epaulets, and is therefore either a major or a colonel. So I am determined to dance with him."

"If you can," added Caroline.

"How will you accomplish this enterprise?" asked Sophia.

"Oh!" replied Harriet, "I saw him talking to Mr. Wilson, who, I suppose, has got acquainted with him somehow. So I'll first dance with poor Wilson, just to put him into a good humour, and I'll make him introduce this field-officer to me."

All this was accomplished. She *did* dance with Mr. Wilson—he *was* put into a good humour; and when, half-laughing, half-blushing, she requested that he would contrive for her an introduction to the field-officer, he smiled, and, somewhat to her surprise, said at once, "Your wish shall be gratified," adding, "he fought bravely at Tippecanoe, and was rewarded with a commission in the regular service."

Mr. Wilson then left her, and in a few minutes returned with the gentleman in question, whom he introduced as Major Steifenbiegen. The major was of German extraction (as his name denoted), and came originally from one of the back counties of Pennsylvania.

When Harriet Darnel had a near view of him, she found that the field-officer, though a tall, stout man, was not distinguished by any elegance of figure, and that his features, though by no means ugly, were heavy and inexpressive, and his movements very much like those of a wooden image set in motion by springs. However, he was in full uniform, and had two epaulets, and wore the U. S. button.

On being introduced by young Wilson to Harriet and her companions, the major bowed almost to the floor, as he gravely requested the honour of Miss Darnel's hand for the next set,—which he told her he was happy to say was a country-dance. On her assenting, he expressed his gratitude in slow and measured terms, and in a manner that showed he had been studying his speech during his progress across the ball-room.

"Madam," said he, "will you have the goodness to accept my most obliged thanks for the two honours you are doing me; first, in desiring the acquaintance of so unworthy an object, and secondly, madam, in agreeing to dance with me? I have never been so much favoured by so fine a young lady."

Harriet looked reproachfully at Mr. Wilson for having betrayed to Major Steifenbiegen her wish for the introduction; but Wilson afterwards took an opportunity of making her understand that

she had nothing to fear; the field-officer being entirely guiltless of the sin of vanity—as far, at least, as regarded the ladies.

In a few minutes a fair-haired, slovenly, but rather a handsome young man, in a citizen's old brown surtout, with an epaulet on his left shoulder, came up to Major Steifenbiegen, and slapping him on the back, said, "Well, here I am, just from Washington. I've got a commission,—you see, I've mounted my epaulet,—and the tailor is making my uniform. Who's that pretty girl you're going to dance with?" he added, in a loud whisper.

"Miss Darnel," replied the major, drawing him aside, and speaking in a tone quite different from that in which he thought proper to address the ladies.

"Is that her sister beside her—the one that's dressed exactly the same?"

"I presume so."

"You know it is—she's the prettiest of the two. So introduce me, and I declare I'll take her out."

"I don't see how you can dance in that long surtout," observed the major.

"Just as well as you can in those long jack-boots."

"But I'm in full uniform," said the major, "and your dress is neither one thing nor t'other."

"No matter for that," replied the youth, "I'm old Virginia, and am above caring about my dress. Haven't I my epaulet on my shoulder, to let everybody know I'm an officer?—and that's enough. Show me the girl that wouldn't be willing, any minute, to 'pack up her tatters and follow the drum.'"

Major Steifenbiegen then introduced to the ladies Lieutenant Tinsley, who requested Miss Caroline Darnel's hand for the next dance. Caroline, consoling herself with the idea that *her* officer, though in an old brown surtout and dingy Jefferson shoes, was younger and handsomer than Harriet's major, allowed him, as he expressed it, to carry her to the dance,—which, he did by tucking her hand under his arm, and walking very fast; informing her, at the same time, that he was old Virginia.

Major Steifenbiegen respectfully took the tips of Harriet's fingers, saying, "Madam, I am highly obligated to you for allowing me the privilege of leading you by the hand to the dance: I consider it a third honour."

"Then you are three by honours," said Tinsley.

Miss Clements, who was too much fatigued by six sets of cotillions to undertake the "never-ending, still-beginning country-dance," remained in her seat, talking to her last partner, and regarding at a distance the proceedings of her two nieces and their military beaux.

It is well known that during the war of 1812, commissions were sometimes bestowed upon citizens who proved excellent soldiers, but whose opportunities of acquiring the polish of gentlemen had been rather circumscribed. There were really a few such officers as Major Steifenbiegen and Lieutenant Tinsley.

The Miss Darnels and their partners took their places near the top of the country-dance. While it was forming, each of the gentlemen endeavoured to entertain his lady according to his own way—the major by slowly hammering out a series of dull and awkward compliments, and the lieutenant by a profusion of idle talk that Caroline laughed at without knowing why; seasoned as it was with local words and phrases, and with boastings about that section of the Union which had the honour of being his birth-place.

"Madam," said the major, "I think it is the duty of an officer—the bounden duty—to make himself agreeable, that is, to be perpetually polite, and so forth. I mean we are to be always agreeable to the ladies, because the ladies are always agreeable to us. Perhaps, madam, I don't speak loud enough. Madam, don't you think it is the duty of an officer to be polite and agreeable to the ladies?"

"Certainly," answered Harriet, "of an officer and of all gentlemen."

"Very true, madam," persisted the major, "your sentiments are quite correct. All gentlemen should be polite to the fair sex, but officers particularly. Not that I would presume to hint that they ought to be so out of gratitude, or that ladies are apt to like officers—I have not that vanity, madam—we are not a vain people—that is, we officers. But perhaps, madam, my conversation does not amuse you."

"Oh! yes it does," replied Harriet, archly.

"Well, madam, if it doesn't, just mention it to me, and I'll willingly stop,—the honour of dancing with so fine a young lady is sufficient happiness."

"Well, Miss," said young Tinsley to Caroline, "you have but a stran*n*ge sort of dancing here to the north. I can't make out much with your cotillions. Before one has time to learn the figure by heart they're over; and as to your sash*a*y and balanj*a*y, I don't know which is which: I'm not good at any of your French capers—I'm old Virginia. Give me one of our own up-country reels—'Fire in the mountains,' or 'Possum up the gum tree,'—I could show you the figure in a minute, with ourselves

and two chears."

The dance had now commenced; and Major Steifenbiegen showed some signs of trepidation, saying to Miss Darnel, "Madam, will you allow me, if I may be so bold, to tax your goodness farther by depending entirely on your kind instructions as to the manœuvres of the dance. I cannot say, madam, that I ever was a dancing character—some people are not. It's a study that I have but lately taken up. But with so fine a young lady for a teacher, I hope to acquit myself properly. I have been informed that Rome was not built in a day. Please, madam, to tell me what I am to do first."

"Observe the gentleman above you," replied Harriet, "and you will see in a moment."

The major did observe, but could not "catch the idea." The music was Fisher's Hornpipe, at that time very popular as a country-dance, and Major Steifenbiegen was at length made to understand that he was first to go down by himself, outside of the line of gentlemen, and without his partner, who was to go down on the inside. He set off on his lonely expedition with rather a *triste* countenance. To give himself a wide field, he struck out so far into the vacant part of the room, that a stranger, entering at the moment, would have supposed that, for some misdemeanor, he had been expelled from the dance, and was performing a solitary *pas seul* by way of penance. His face brightened, however, when a gentleman, observing that he took no "note of time," kindly recalled him to his place in the vicinity of Miss Darnel. But his perplexities were now increased. In crossing hands, he went every way but the right one, and the confusion he caused, and his formal apologies, were as annoying to his partner,—who tried in vain to rectify his mistakes,—as they were diverting to the other ladies. He ducked his head, and raised his shoulders every time he made a dive at their hands, lifting his feet high, like the Irishman that "rose upon sugan, and sunk upon gad."

Harriet could almost have cried with vexation; but the worst was still to come, and she prepared for the crowning misery of going down the middle with Major Steifenbiegen. He no longer touched merely the ends of her fingers, but he grasped both her hands hard, as if to secure her protection, and holding them high above her head, he blundered down the dance, running against one person, stumbling over another, and looking like a frightened fool, while his uniform made him doubly conspicuous. The smiles of the company were irrepressible, and those at a distance laughed outright.

When they came to the bottom, Harriet, who was completely out of patience, declared herself fatigued, and insisted on sitting down; and the major, saying that it was his duty to comply with every request of so fine a young lady, led her to Miss Clements, who, though pained at her niece's evident mortification, had been an amused spectator of the dance. The major then took his station beside Harriet, fanning her awkwardly, and desiring permission to entertain her till the next set. She hinted that it would probably be more agreeable to him to join some of his friends on the other side of the room; but he told her that he could not be so ungrateful for the numerous honours she had done him, as to prefer any society to hers.

In the mean time, Caroline Darnel had fared but little better with Lieutenant Tinsley; and she was glad to recollect, for the honour of the army, that he was only an officer of yesterday, and also to hope (as was the truth) that he was by no means a fair sample of the sons of Virginia. He danced badly and ridiculously, though certainly not from embarrassment, romped and scampered, and was entirely regardless of *les bienséances*.

When they had got to the bottom of the set, and had paused to take breath, the lieutenant began to describe to Caroline an opossum hunt—then told her how inferior was the rabbit of Pennsylvania to the "old yar"[74] of Virginia; and descanted on the excellence of their corn-bread, bacon, and barbecued chickens. He acknowledged, however, that "where he was raised, the whole neighbourhood counted on having the ague every spring and fall."

"Then why do they stay there?" inquired Caroline. "I wonder that any people, who are able to leave it, should persist in living in such a place."

"Oh! you don't know us at all," replied Tinsley. "We are so used to the ague, that when it quits us, we feel as if we were parting with an old friend. As for me, I fit against it for a while, and then gave up; finding that all the remedies, except mint-juleps, were worse than the disease. I used to sit upon the *stars* and shake, wrapped in my big overcoat, with my hat on, and the capes drawn over my head—I'm old Virginia."

Like her sister, Caroline now expressed a desire to quit the dance and sit down, to which her partner assented; and, after conveying her to her party, and telling her: "There, now, you can say you have danced with an officer," he wheeled off, adding: "I'll go and get a *cigyar*, and take a stroll round the *squarr* with it. There's so much noise here that I can't do my think."

The major looked astonished at Tinsley's immediate abandonment of a lady so young and so pretty, and, by way of contrast, was more obsequious than ever to Harriet, reiterating the request which he had made her as they quitted the dance, to honour him with her hand for the next set; telling her that now, having had some practice, he hoped, with her instructions, to acquit himself better than in the last. Harriet parried his importunities as adroitly as she could; determined to avoid any farther exhibition with him, and yet unwilling to sit still, according to the usual ball-room penalty for refusing the invitation of a proffered partner.

Both the girls had been thoroughly ashamed of their epauletted beaux, and had often, during the

dance, looked with wistful eyes towards Messrs. Wilson and Thomson, who were very genteel young men, and very good dancers, and whose partners—two beautiful girls—seemed very happy with them.

The major, seeing that other gentlemen were doing so, now departed in quest of lemonade for the ladies; and, taking advantage of his absence, Harriet exclaimed: "Oh, Aunt Sophy, Aunt Sophy! tell me what to do—I cannot dance again with that intolerable man, neither do I wish to be compelled to sit still in consequence of refusing him. I have paid dearly for his two epaulets."

"My fool had but one," said Caroline, "and a citizen's coat beside, therefore my bargain was far worse than yours. I have some hope, however, that he has no notion of asking me again, and if he has, that he will not get back from his tour round the *squarr* before the next set begins. I wish his cigar was the size of one of those candles, that he might be the longer getting through with it! Oh! that some one would ask me immediately!"

"I am sure I wish the same," said Harriet.

At that moment, they were gladdened by the approach of Mr. Harford, a very ugly little man, whose dancing and deportment were sufficiently *comme il faut*, and no more. And when he requested Caroline's hand for the next set, both the girls, in their eagerness, started forward, and replied: "With pleasure."

Mr. Harford, not appearing to perceive that her sister had also accepted the invitation, bowed his thanks to Caroline, who introduced him to Miss Clements. Harriet, recollecting herself, blushed and drew back; while Sophia, to cover her niece's confusion, entered into conversation with the gentleman.

Presently, Major Steifenbiegen came up with three or four glasses of lemonade on a waiter, and a plate piled high with cakes; all of which he pressed on the ladies with most urgent perseverance, evidently desirous that they should drain the last drop of the lemonade, and finish the last morsel of the cakes.

As soon as they had partaken of these refreshments, Mr. Harford led Caroline to a cotillion that was arranging. While talking to him she felt some one twitch her sleeve, and turning round she beheld Lieutenant Tinsley.

"So, miss," said he, "you have given me the slip. Well, I have not been gone long. My cigyar was not good, so I chuck'd it away in short order; and I came back, and have been looking all about; but seeing nobody prettier, I concluded I might as well take you out for this dance also. However, there's not much harm done, as I suppose you'll have no objection to dance with me next time; and I'll try to get up a Virginia reel."

Caroline, much vexed, replied, "I believe I shall dance no more after this set."

"What! tired already!" exclaimed Tinsley; "it's easy to see you are not old Virginia."

"I hope so," said Caroline, petulantly.

"Why, that's rather a quare answer," resumed Tinsley, after pondering a moment till he had comprehended the innuendo; "but I suppose ladies must be allowed to say what they please. Good evening, miss."

And he doggedly walked off, murmuring, "After all, these Philadelphia girls are not worth a copper."

When Caroline turned round again, she was delighted to perceive the glitter of his epaulet amidst a group of young men that were leaving the room; and the music now striking up, she cheerfully led off with good, ugly Mr. Harford, who had risen highly in her estimation as contrasted with Lieutenant Tinsley.

Meanwhile, Harriet remained in her seat beside her aunt; the major standing before them, prosing and complimenting, and setting forth his humble opinion of himself; in which opinion the two ladies, in their hearts, most cordially joined him. Miss Clements, who had much tact, drew him off from her niece, by engaging him in a dialogue exactly suited to his character and capacity; while, unperceived by the major, Mr. Thomson stepped up, and, after the interchange of a few words, led off Harriet to a cotillion, saying, "Depend upon it, he is not sufficiently *au fait* of the etiquette of a ball room to take offence at your dancing with me, after having been asked by him."

"But, if he *should* resent it——"

"Then I shall know how to answer him. But rely upon it, there is nothing to fear."

It was not till the Chace was danced, and the major, happening to turn his head in following the eyes of Miss Clements, saw Harriet gayly flying round the cotillion with Mr. Thomson, that he missed her for the first time,—having taken it for granted that she would dance with him. He started, and exclaimed—"Well, I certainly am the most faulty of men—the most condemnable—the most unpardonable officer in the army—to be guilty of such neglect—such rudeness—and to so fine a young lady. I ought never to presume to show myself in the best classes of society. Madam, may I hope that you will stand my friend—that you will help me to gain my pardon?"

"For what?" asked Miss Clements.

"For inviting that handsome young lady to favour me again with her hand, and then to neglect observing when the dance was about to begin, so that she was obliged to accept the offer of another gentleman. He, no doubt, stepped up just in time to save her from sitting still, which, I am told, is remarkably disagreeable to young ladies. Madam, I mean no reflection on you—I am incapable of any reflection on you—but (if I may be so bold as to say so) it was *your* fine, sensible conversation that drew me from my duty."

The set being now over, Major Steifenbiegen advanced to meet Mr. Thomson and Miss Darnel, and he accosted the former with—"Sir, give me your hand. Sir, you are a gentleman, and I am much obligated to you for sparing this young lady the mortification of not dancing with me."

("You may leave out the 'not,'" murmured Harriet to herself.)

"Of not enjoying the dance to which I had invited her, and of saving her from sitting still for want of a partner—all owing to my unofficer-like conduct in neglecting to claim her hand. I begin to perceive that I want some more practice in ball behaviour. I thank you again for your humane kindness to the young lady, which, I hope, will turn aside her anger from me."

"Oh, yes!" said Harriet, almost afraid to speak lest she should laugh.

"Will you favour me with your name, sir?" pursued the major.

Mr. Thomson gave it, much amused at the turn that things had taken. The major, after admiring the name, said he should always remember it with esteem, and regretted that his having to set out for Plattsburgh early on the following morning would, for the present, prevent their farther acquaintance. He then made sundry other acknowledgments to Harriet for all the honours she had done him that evening, including her forgiveness of his "letting her dance without him,"—bowed to Caroline, who had just approached with Mr. Harford; and, going up to Miss Clements, he thanked her for her conversation, and finally took his departure. The girls did not laugh till he was entirely out of the room, though Harriet remarked that he walked edgeways, which she had not observed when he was first brought up to her; her fancy being then excited, and her perception blinded by the glitter of his two epaulets.

"Well, Miss Darnel," said Mr. Wilson, who had just joined them, "how do you like your field-officer?"

"Need you ask me?" replied Harriet. "In future I shall hate the sight of two silver epaulets."

"And I of one gold one," added Caroline.

"I will not trust you," said Mr. Thomson, with a smile.

"We shall see," said Mr. Wilson.

"Well, young ladies," observed Miss Clements, "you may at least deduce one moral from the events of the evening. You find that it *is* possible for officers to be extremely annoying, and to deport themselves in a manner that you would consider intolerable in citizens."

"It is intolerable in *them*, aunt," replied Harriet, "particularly when they are stiff and ungainly in all their movements, and dance shockingly."

"And if they are conceited, and prating, and ungenteel," added Caroline.

"Awkward in their expressions, and dull in their ideas," pursued Harriet.

"Talking ridiculously and behaving worse," continued Caroline.

"Come, come," said Sophia Clements, "candour must compel us to acknowledge that these two gentlemen are anything but fair specimens of their profession, which I am very sure can boast a large majority of intelligent, polished, and accomplished men."

"Be that as it may," replied Harriet, "I confess that my delight in the show and parade of war, and my admiration of officers, has received a severe shock to-night. 'My thoughts, I must confess, are turned on peace.'"

"I fear these pacific feelings are too sudden to be lasting," remarked Miss Clements, "and in a day or two we shall find that 'your voice is still for war.'"

The following morning the young ladies did more sewing than on any day for the last two years, sitting all the time in the back parlour. In the afternoon, Harriet read Cœlebs aloud to her mother and aunt, and Caroline went out to do some shopping. When she came home, she told of her having stopped in at Mrs. Raymond's, and of her finding the family just going to tea with an officer as their guest. "They pressed me urgently," said she, "to sit down and take tea with them, and to remain and spend the evening; but I steadily excused myself, notwithstanding the officer."

"Good girl!" said Sophia.

"To be sure," added Caroline, "he was only in a citizen's dress."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Darnel, "that materially alters the case. Had he been in uniform, I am sure your

steadiness would have given way."

In less than two days all their anti-military resolutions were overset, and the young ladies were again on the *qui vive*, in consequence of the promulgation of an order for the return of the volunteers from Camp Dupont, as, the winter having set in, the enemy had retired from the vicinity of the Delaware and Chesapeake. The breaking up of this encampment was an event of much interest to the inhabitants of Philadelphia, as there were few of them that had not a near relative, or an intimate friend among those citizen-soldiers.

On the morning that they marched home all business was suspended; the pavements and door-steps were crowded with spectators, and the windows filled with ladies, eager to recognise among the returning volunteers their brothers, sons, husbands, or lovers,—who, on their side, cast many upward glances towards the fair groups that were gazing on them.

The British General Riall, who had been taken prisoner at the battle of Niagara, chanced to be at a house on the road-side when this gallant band went by, on their way to Philadelphia. It is said that he remarked to an American gentleman near him, "You should never go to war with us—the terms are too unequal. Men like these are too valuable to be thrown away in battle with such as compose *our* armies, which are formed from the overflowings of a superabundant population; while here I see not a man that you can spare."

And he was essentially right.

The volunteers entered the city by the central bridge, and came down Market street. All were in high spirits, and glad to return once more to their homes and families. But unfortunate were those who on that day formed the rear-guard, it being their inglorious lot to come in late in the afternoon, after the spectators had withdrawn, convoying, with "toilsome march, the long array" of baggage-wagons, which they had been all day forcing through the heavy roads of an early winter, cold, weary, and dispirited, with no music to cheer them, no acclamations to greet them. No doubt, however, their chagrin was soon dispelled, and their enjoyment proportionately great, when at last they reached their own domestic hearths, and met the joyous faces and happy hearts assembled round them.

A few days after the return of the volunteers, Mrs. Darnel received a letter from an old friend of hers, Mrs. Forrester, a lady of large fortune, residing in Boston, containing the information that her son, Colonel Forrester, would shortly proceed to Philadelphia from the Canada frontier, and that she would accompany him, taking the opportunity of making her a long-promised visit. Mrs. Darnel replied immediately, expressive of the pleasure it would afford her to meet again one of the most intimate companions of her youth, and to have both Mrs. Forrester and the colonel staying at her house.

The same post brought a letter to Sophia from Mr. Clements, her brother, in New York, who, after telling her of his having heard that Colonel Forrester would shortly be in Philadelphia, jestingly proposed her attempting the conquest of his heart, as he was not only a gallant officer, but a man of high character and noble appearance. Sophia showed this letter to no one, but she read it twice over,—the first time with a smile, the second time with a blush. She had heard much of Colonel Forrester, of whom "report spoke goldenly;" and several times in New York she had seen him in public, but had never chanced to meet him, except once at a very large party, when accident had prevented his introduction to her.

Harriet and Caroline were almost wild with delight at the prospect of an intimate acquaintance with this accomplished warrior; but their joy was somewhat damped by the arrival of a second letter from Mrs. Forrester, in which she designated the exact time when she might be expected at the house of her friend, but said that her son, having some business that would detain him several weeks in Philadelphia, would not trespass on the hospitality of Mrs. Darnel, but had made arrangements for staying at a hotel.

"He is perfectly right," said Sophia. "I concluded, of course, that he would do so. Few gentlemen, when in a city, like to stay at private houses, if they can be accommodated elsewhere."

"At all events," said Harriet, "his mother will be with us, and he *must* come every day to pay his duty to her."

"That's some comfort," pursued Caroline; "and, no doubt, we shall see a great deal of him, one way or another."

Sophia Clements, though scarcely conscious of it herself, felt a secret desire of appearing to advantage in the eyes of Colonel Forrester. Her two nieces felt the same desire, except that they made it no secret. They had worked up their imaginations to the persuasion that Colonel Forrester was the finest man in the army, and therefore the finest in the world, and they anticipated the delight of his being their frequent guest during the stay of his mother; of his morning visits, and his evening visits; of having him at dinner and at tea; of planning excursions with him to show Mrs. Forrester the lions of the city and its vicinity, when, of course, he would be their escort. They imagined him walking in Chestnut street with them, and sitting in the same box at the theatre. Be it remembered, that during the war, officers in the regular service were seldom seen out of uniform, and even when habited as citizens they were always distinguished by that "gallant badge, the dear cockade." Perhaps, also, Colonel Forrester and his mother might accompany them to a ball, and they would then have the glory of dancing with an officer so elegant as entirely to efface their mortification at their former military partners. We need not say

that Messrs. Wilson and Thomson were again at a discount.

The girls were taken with an immediate want of various new articles of dress, and had their attention been less engaged by the activity of their preparations for "looking their very best," the time that intervened between the receipt of Mrs. Forrester's last letter and that appointed for their arrival, would have seemed of length immeasurable.

At last came the eve of the day on which these all-important strangers were expected. As they quitted the tea-table, one of the young ladies remarked:—

"By this time to-morrow, we shall have seen Col. Forrester and his mother."

"As to the mother," observed Mrs. Darnel, "I am very sure that were it not for the son, the expectation of *her* visit would excite but little interest in either of you—though, as you have often heard me say, she is a very agreeable and highly intelligent woman."

"We can easily perceive it from her letters," said Sophia.

Mrs. Darnel, complaining of the headache, retired for the night very early in the evening, desiring that she might not be disturbed. Sophia took some needle-work, and each of the girls tried a book, but were too restless and unsettled to read, and they alternately walked about the room or extended themselves on the sofas. It was a dark, stormy night—the windows rattled, and the pattering of the rain against the glass was plainly heard through the inside shutters.

"I wish to-morrow evening were come," said Harriet, "and that the introduction was over, and we were all seated round the tea-table."

"For my part," said Caroline, "I have a presentiment that everything will go on well. We will all do *notre possible* to look our very best; mamma will take care that the rooms and the table shall be arranged in admirable style—and if you and I can only manage to talk and behave just as we ought, there is nothing to fear."

"I hope, indeed, that Colonel Forrester will like us," rejoined Harriet, "and be induced to continue his visits when he again comes to Philadelphia."

"Much depends on the first impression," remarked Miss Clements.

"Now let us just imagine over the arrival of Colonel and Mrs. Forrester," said Harriet.—"The lamps lighted, and the fires burning brightly in both rooms. In the back parlour, the tea-table set out with the French china and the chased plate;—mamma sitting in an arm-chair with her feet on one of the embroidered footstools, dressed in her queen's-gray lutestring, and one of her Brussels lace caps—I suppose the one trimmed with white riband. Aunt Sophia in her myrtle-green levantine, seated at the marble table in the front parlour, holding in her hand an elegant book—for instance, her beautiful copy of the Pleasures of Hope. Caroline and I will wear our new scarlet Canton crapes with the satin trimming, and our coral ornaments."

"No, no," rejoined Caroline; "we resemble each other so much that, if we are dressed alike, Colonel Forrester will find too great a sameness in us. Do you wear your scarlet crape, and I will put on my white muslin with the six narrow flounces headed with insertion.[75] I have reserved it clean on purpose; and I think Aunt Sophia had best wear her last new coat dress, with the lace trimming. It is so becoming to her with a pink silk handkerchief tied under the collar."

"Well," said Harriet, "I will be seated at the table also, not reading, but working a pair of cambric cuffs; my mother-of-pearl work-box before me."

"And I," resumed Caroline, "will be found at the piano, turning over the leaves of a new music-book. Every one looks their best on a music-stool; it shows the figure to advantage, and the dress falls in such graceful folds."

"My hair shall be *à la Grecque*," said Harriet.

"And mine in the Vandyke style," said Caroline.

"But," asked Sophia, "are the strangers on entering the room to find us all sitting up in form, and arranged for effect, like actresses waiting for the bell to ring and the curtain to rise? How can you pretend that you were not the least aware of their approach till they were actually in the room, when you know very well that you will be impatiently listening to the sound of every carriage till you hear theirs stop at the door. Never, certainly, will a visiter come *less* unexpectedly than Colonel Forrester."

"But you know, aunt," replied Caroline, "how much depends on a first impression."

"Well," resumed Harriet, "I have thought of another way. As soon as they enter the front parlour let us all advance through the folding doors to meet them,—mamma leading the van with Aunt Sophy, Caroline and I arm in arm behind."

"No," said Caroline, "let us not be close together, so that the same glance can take in both."

"Then," rejoined Harriet, "I will be a few steps in advance of you. You, as the youngest, should be timid, and should hold back a little; while I, as the eldest, should have more self-possession. Variety is advisable."

"But I cannot be timid all the time," said Caroline; "that will require too great an effort."

"We must not laugh and talk too much at first," observed Harriet; "but all we say must be both sprightly and sensible. However, we shall have the whole day to-morrow to make our final arrangements; and I think I am still in favour of the sitting reception."

"Whether he has a sitting or a standing reception," said Caroline, "let the colonel have as striking a *coup d'œil* as possible."

Their brother Robert had gone to the theatre by invitation of a family with whose sons he was intimate; and Sophia Clements, who was desirous of finishing a highly interesting book, and who was not in the least addicted to sleepiness, volunteered to sit up for him.

"I think," said she, "as the hour is too late, and the night too stormy to expect any visiters, I will go and exchange my dress for a wrapper; I can then be perfectly at my ease while sitting up for Robert. I will first ring for Peter to move one of the sofas to the side of the fire, and to place the reading-lamp upon the table before it."

She did so; and in a short time she came down in a loose double wrapper, and with her curls pinned up.

"Really, Aunt Sophy," said Harriet, "that is an excellent idea. Caroline, let us pin our hair here in the parlour before the mantel-glass; that will be better still—our own toilet table is far from the fire."

"True," replied Caroline, "and you are always so long at the dressing-glass that it is an age before I can get to it,—but here, if there were even four of us, we could all stand in a row and arrange our hair together before this long mirror."

They sent up for their combs and brushes, their boxes of hair pins, and their flannel dressing-gowns, and placed candles on the mantel-piece, preparing for what they called "clear comfort;" while Sophia reclined on the sofa by the fire, deeply engaged with Miss Owenson's new novel. The girls, having poured some cologne-water into a glass, wetted out all their ringlets with it, preparatory to the grand curling that was to be undertaken for the morrow, and which was not to be opened out during the day.

Harriet had just taken out her comb and untied her long hair behind, to rehearse its arrangement for the ensuing evening, when a ring was heard at the street-door.

"That's Bob," said Caroline. "He is very early from the theatre; I wonder he should come home without staying for the farce."

Presently their black man, with a grin of high delight, threw open the parlour-door, and ushered in an elegant-looking officer, who, having left his cloak in the hall, appeared before them in full uniform,—and they saw at a glance that it could be no one but Colonel Forrester.

Words cannot describe the consternation and surprise of the young ladies. Sophia dropped her book, and started on her feet; Harriet throwing down her comb so that it broke in pieces on the hearth, retreated to a chair that stood behind the sofa with such precipitation as nearly to overset the table and the reading-lamp; and Caroline, scattering her hair-pins over the carpet, knew not where she was, till she found herself on a footstool in one of the recesses. Alas! for the *coup d'œil* and the first impression! Instead of heads *à la Grecque*, or in the Vandyke fashion, their whole *chevelure* was disordered, and their side-locks straightened into long strings, and clinging, wet and ungraceful, to their cheeks. Instead of scarlet crape frocks trimmed with satin, or white muslin with six flounces, their figures were enveloped in flannel dressing-gowns. All question of the sitting reception, or the standing reception was now at an end; for Harriet was hiding unsuccessfully behind the sofa, and Caroline crouching on a footstool in the corner, trying to conceal a large rent which in her hurry she had given to her flannel gown. Resolutions never again to make their toilet in the parlour, regret that they had not thought of flying into the adjoining room and shutting the folding-doors after them, and wonder at the colonel's premature appearance, all passed through their minds with the rapidity of lightning.

Sophia, after a moment's hesitation, rallied from her confusion; and her natural good sense and ease of manner came to her aid, as she curtsied to the stranger and pointed to a seat. Colonel Forrester, who saw at once that he had come at an unlucky season, after introducing himself, and saying he presumed he was addressing Miss Clements, proceeded immediately to explain the reason of his being a day in advance of the appointed time. He stated that his mother, on account of the dangerous illness of an intimate and valued friend, had been obliged to postpone her visit to Philadelphia; and that in consequence of an order from the war-office, which required his immediate presence at Washington, he had been obliged to leave Boston a day sooner than he intended, and to travel with all the rapidity that the public conveyances would admit. He had arrived about eight o'clock at the Mansion House Hotel, where a dinner was given that evening to a distinguished naval commander. Colonel Forrester had immediately been waited upon by a deputation from the dinner-table, with a pressing invitation to join the company; and this (though he did not then allude to it) was the reason of his being in full uniform. Compelled to pursue his journey very early in the morning, he had taken the opportunity, as soon as he could get away from the table, of paying his compliments to the ladies, and bringing with him a letter to Miss Clements from her brother, whom he had seen in passing through New York, and one from his mother for Mrs. Darnel.

Grievously chagrined and mortified as the girls were, they listened admiringly to the clear and handsome manner in which the colonel made his explanation, and they more than ever regretted that all their castles in the air were demolished, and that after this unlucky visit he would probably have no desire to see them again, when he came to Philadelphia on his return from Washington.

Sophia, who saw at once that she had to deal with a man of tact and consideration, felt that an apology for the disorder in which he had found them was to him totally unnecessary, being persuaded that he already comprehended all she could have said in the way of excuse; and, with true civility, she forbore to make any allusion which might remind him that his unexpected visit had caused them discomfiture or annoyance. Kindred spirits soon understand each other.

The girls were amazed to see their aunt so cool and so much at her ease, when her beautiful hair was pinned up, and her beautiful form disfigured by a large wrapper. But the colonel had penetration enough to perceive that under all these disadvantages she was an elegant woman.

Harriet and Caroline, though longing to join in the conversation, made signs to Sophia not to introduce them to the colonel, as they could not endure the idea of his attention being distinctly attracted towards them; and they perceived that in the fear of adding to their embarrassment he seemed to avoid noticing their presence. But they contrived to exchange signals of approbation at his wearing the staff uniform, with its golden-looking bullet buttons, and its shining star on each extremity of the coat skirts.

Colonel Forrester now began to admire a picture that hung over the piano, and Sophia took a candle and conducted him to it, that while his back was towards them, the girls might have an opportunity of rising and slipping out of the room. Of this lucky chance they instantly and with much adroitness availed themselves, ran up stairs, and in a shorter time than they had ever before changed their dresses, they came back with frocks on,—not, however, the scarlet crape, and the six-flounced muslin,—and with their hair nicely but simply arranged, by parting it on their foreheads in front, and turning it in a band round their combs behind. Sophia introduced them to the colonel, and they were now able to speak; but were still too much discomposed by their recent fright to be very fluent, or much at their ease.

In the mean time, their brother Robert had come home from the theatre; and the boy's eyes sparkled, when, on Miss Clements presenting her nephew, the colonel shook hands with him.

Colonel Forrester began to find it difficult to depart, and he was easily induced to stay and partake of the little collation that was on the table waiting the return of Robert; and the ease and grace with which Sophia did the honours of their *petit souper* completely charmed him.

In conversation, Colonel Forrester was certainly "both sprightly and sensible." He had read much, seen much, and was peculiarly happy in his mode of expressing himself. Time flew as if

> "——birds of paradise had lent
> Their plumage to his wings,"

and when the colonel took out his watch and discovered the lateness of the hour, the ladies *looked* their surprise, and his was denoted by a very handsome compliment to them. He then concluded his visit by requesting permission to resume their acquaintance on his return from Washington.

As soon as he had finally departed, and Robert had locked the door after him, the girls broke out into a rhapsody of admiration, mingled with regret at the state in which he had surprised them, and the entire failure of their first impression, which they feared had not been retrieved by their second appearance in an improved style.

"Well," said Bob, "yours may have been a failure, but I am sure that was not the case with Aunt Sophia. It is plain enough that the colonel's impression of *her* turned out very well indeed, notwithstanding that she kept on her wrapper, and had her hair pinned up all the time. Aunt Sophy is a person that a man may fall in love with in any dress; that is, a man who has as much sense as herself."

"As I am going to be a midshipman," continued Robert, "there is one thing I particularly like in Colonel Forrester, which is, that he is not in the least jealous of the navy. How handsomely he spoke of the sea-officers!"

"A man of sense and feeling," observed Sophia, "is rarely susceptible of so mean a vice as jealousy."

"How animated he looked," pursued the boy, "when he spoke of Midshipman Hamilton arriving at Washington with the news of the capture of the Macedonian, and going in his travelling dress to Mrs. Madison's ball, in search of his father the secretary of the navy, to show his despatches to him, and the flag of the British frigate to the President, carrying it with him for the purpose. No wonder the dancing ceased, and the ladies cried."

"Did you observe him," said Harriet, "when he talked of Captain Crowninshield going to Halifax to bring home the body of poor Lawrence, in a vessel of his own, manned entirely by twelve sea-captains, who volunteered for the purpose?"

"And did not you like him," said Caroline, "when he was speaking of Perry removing in his boat

from the Lawrence to the Niagara, in the thickest of the battle, and carrying his flag on his arm? And when he praised the gallant seamanship of Captain Morris, when he took advantage of a tremendous tempest to sail out of the Chesapeake, where he had been so long blockaded by the enemy, passing fearlessly through the midst of the British squadron, not one of them daring, on account of the storm, to follow him to sea and fight him."

"The eloquence of the colonel seems to have inspired you all," said Sophia.

"Aunt Sophy," remarked Caroline, "at supper to-night, did you feel as firm in your resolution of never marrying an officer, as you were at the tea-table?"

"Colonel Forrester is not the only agreeable man I have met with," replied Miss Clements, evading the question. "It has been my good fortune to know many gentlemen that were handsome and intelligent."

"Well," said Robert, "one thing is plain enough to me, that Colonel Forrester is exactly suited to Aunt Sophy, and he knows it himself."

"And now, Bob," said Sophia, blushing, "light your candle, and go to bed."

"Bob is right," observed Harriet, after he had gone; "I saw in a moment that such a man as Colonel Forrester would never fancy *me*."

"Nor me," said Caroline.

Sophia kissed her nieces with more kindness than usual as they bade her good-night. And, they, retired to bed impatient for the arrival of morning, that they might give their mother all the particulars of Colonel Forrester's visit.

In a fortnight, he returned from Washington, and this time he made his first visit in the morning, and saw all the ladies to the best advantage. His admiration of Sophia admitted not of a doubt. Being employed for the remainder of the winter on some military duty in Philadelphia, he went for a few days to Boston and brought his mother (whose friend had recovered from her illness), to fulfil her expected visit. The girls found Mrs. Forrester a charming woman, and, fortunately for them, very indulgent to the follies of young people. The colonel introduced to them various officers that were passing through the city, so that they really *did* walk in Chestnut street with gentlemen in uniform, and sat in boxes with them at the theatre.

Before the winter was over, Sophia Clements had promised to become Mrs. Forrester as soon as the war was at an end. This fortunate event took place sooner than was expected, the treaty having been made, though it did not arrive, previous to the victory of New Orleans. The colonel immediately claimed the hand of the lady, and the wedding and its preparations, by engaging the attention of Harriet and Caroline, enabled them to conform to the return of peace with more philosophy than was expected. The streets no longer resounded with drums and fifes. Most of the volunteer corps disbanded themselves—the army was reduced, and the officers left off wearing their uniforms, except when at their posts. The military ardour of the young ladies rapidly subsided—citizens were again at par—and Harriet and Caroline began to look with complacence on their old admirers. Messrs. Wilson and Thomson were once more in favour—and, seeing the coast clear, they, in process of time, ventured to propose, and were thankfully accepted.

PETER JONES.

A SKETCH FROM LIFE.

"Let the players be cared for."—SHAKSPEARE.

In the early part of the present century, there lived in one of the long streets in the south-eastern section of Philadelphia, a tailor, whom we shall introduce to our readers by the name of Peter Jones. His old-fashioned residence, which (strange to say) is yet standing, was not then put out of countenance by the modern-built structures that have since been run up on each side of it. There were, it is true, three or four new houses nearly opposite, all of them tenanted by genteel families—but Peter's side of the way (at least for the length of a square), was yet untouched by the hand of improvement, his own domicile being the largest and best in the row, and moreover of three stories—an advantage not possessed by the others. It had a square-topped door lighted by three small square panes—the parlour window (there was but one) being glazed to match, also with small glass and heavy wood work. The blue-painted wooden door-step was furnished with a very convenient seat, denominated the porch, and sheltered above by a moss-grown pent-house. The whole front of the mansion was shaded by an enormous buttonwood tree, that looked as if it had been spared from the primeval forest by the axe of a companion of William Penn. The house, indeed, might have been the country seat of one of the early colonists. Under this tree stood a pump of excellent water.

Adjoining to the house was a little low blue frame, fronting also the street—and no ground speculator could pass it without sighing to think that so valuable a lot should be thus wasted. But Peter Jones owned both house and shop—his circumstances were comfortable, his tastes and ideas the reverse of elegant, and he had sense enough to perceive that in attempting a superior

style of life he should be out of his element, and therefore less happy. Assisted at times by a journeyman, he continued to work at his trade because he was used to it, and that he might still have the enjoyment of making clothes for three or four veterans of the revolution; and also for two old judges, who had been in Congress in those sensible times when that well-chosen body acted more and talked less. All these sexagenarians, having been enamoured of Peter Jones's cut when he was the Watson of his day, still retained their predilection for it; liking also to feel at ease in their own clothes, and not to wear garments that seemed as if borrowed from "the sons of little men." These gentlemen of the old school never passed without stopping at the shop window to chat a few words with Peter; sometimes stepping in, and taking a seat on his green Windsor chair—himself always occupying the shop-board, whether he was at work or not.

Our hero, though a tailor, was a tall, stout, ruddy, well-looking old man, having a fine capacious forehead, thinly shaded with gray hair, which was tied behind in a queue, and a clear, lively blue eye. He had acquired something of a martial air while assisting in the war of Independence, by making regimental coats—and no doubt this assistance was of considerable importance to the cause, it being then supposed that all men, even Americans, fight better, and endure hardships longer, when dressed in uniform.

Peter Jones was a very popular man among his neighbours, being frank, good-natured, and clever in all manner of things. As soon as the new houses opposite were occupied, he made acquaintance with their inhabitants, who all regarded him as what is called a character; and he never abused the degree of familiarity to which they admitted him. He was considered a sort of walking directory—but when applied to, by a new settler, for the "whereabout" of a carpenter who might be wanted for a job, his usual answer was—"I believe I will bring over my saw and plane, and do it myself"—also, if a lock-smith or bell-hanger was inquired for, Peter Jones generally came himself, and repaired the lock or re-fixed the bell; just as skilfully as if he had been "to the manner born."

He took several of the opposite gardens under his special protection, and supplied them with seeds and roots from his own stock. He was as proud of their morning-glories, queen margarets, johny-jump-ups, daffydowndillies (for so in primitive parlance he called all these beautiful flowers), as if they had been produced in his own rather extensive ground, which was always in fine order, and to see which he often invited his neighbouring fellow-citizens. In flower season, he was rarely seen without a sprig or two in one of the button-holes of his lengthy waistcoat, for in warm weather he seldom wore a coat except on Sundays and on the Fourth of July, when he appeared in a well-kept, fresh-looking garment of bottle-green with large yellow buttons, a very long body, and a broad, short skirt.

His wife, Martha, was a plump, notable, quiet, pleasant-faced woman, aged about fifty-five, but very old-fashioned in looks and ideas. During the morning, when she assisted her servant girl, Mrs. Jones wore a calico short gown, a stuff petticoat, and a check-apron, with a close muslin cap —in the afternoon her costume was a calico long gown, a white linen apron, and a thinner muslin cap with brown ribbon; and on Sundays a silk gown, a clear muslin apron, and a still thinner and much larger cap trimmed with gray ribbon. Everything about them had an air of homely comfort, and they lived plainly and substantially. Peter brought home every morning on his arm an amply-filled market basket; but on Sundays their girl was always seen, before church time, carrying to the baker's a waiter containing a large dish that held a piece of meat mounted on a trivet with abundance of potatoes around and beneath, and also a huge pudding in a tin pan.

Peter Jones, who proportioned all his expenses so as to keep an even balance, allowed himself and his wife to go once in the season to the theatre, and that was on the anniversary of their wedding, an event of which he informed his neighbours he had never found cause to repent. This custom had been commenced the first year of their marriage, and continued ever since; and as their plays were few and far between, they enjoyed them with all the zest of novices in the amusement. To them every actor was good, and every play was excellent; the last being generally considered the best. They were not sufficiently familiar with the drama to be fastidious in their taste; and happily for them, they were entirely ignorant of both the theory and practice of criticism. To them a visit to the theatre was a great event; and on the preceding afternoon the neighbours always observed symptoms of restlessness in Peter, and a manifest disinclination to settle himself to anything. Before going to bed, he regularly, on the eve of this important day, went round to the theatre to look at the bills that are displayed in the vestibule a night in advance; being too impatient to wait for the announcement in the morning papers. When the play-day actually came, he shut up his shop at noon, and they had an earlier and better dinner than usual. About three, Peter appeared in full dress with a ruffled shirt and white cravat, wandering up and down the pavement, going in and out at the front-door, singing, whistling, throwing up his stick and catching it, stopping every one he knew, to have a talk with them on theatricals, and trying every device to while away the intervening hours. At four, the tea-table was set, that they might get over the repast in good time, and, as Mrs. Jones said, "have it off their minds."

The play-day was late in the spring, and near the close of the season; and while the sun was yet far above the horizon, Mr. and Mrs. Jones issued from their door, and walked off, arm-in-arm, with that peculiar gait that people always adopt when going to the theatre: he swinging his clouded cane with its ivory top and buckskin tassel, and she fanning herself already with a huge green fan with black sticks; and ambling along in her best shoes and stockings, and her annual silk gown, which, on this occasion, she always put on new.

As they went but once a year, they determined on doing the thing respectably, and on having the best possible view of the stage; therefore they always took seats in an upper front box. Arriving so early, they had ample time to witness the gradual filling of the house, and to conjecture who was coming whenever a box door was thrown open. To be sure, Peter had frequent recourse to his thick, heavy, but unerring silver watch, and when he found that it still wanted three quarters of an hour of the time for the curtain to rise, his wife sagely remarked to him that it was better to be even two hours too early than two minutes too late; and that they might as well get over the time in sitting in the play-house as in sitting at home. Their faces always brightened exceedingly when the musicians first began to emerge from the subterrany below, and took their places in the orchestra. Mrs. Jones pitied extremely those that were seated with their backs to the stage, and amusing herself with counting the fiddles, and observing how gradually they diminished in size from the bass viol down; till her husband explained to her that they diminished up rather than down, the smallest fiddle being held by the boss or foreman of the band. Great was their joy (and particularly that of Peter), when the increasing loudness of the instruments proclaimed that the overture was about to finish; when glimpses of feet appearing below the green curtain, denoted that the actors were taking their places on the stage, when the welcome tingle of the long-wished-for bell turned their eyes exultingly to the upward glide of the barrier that had so long interposed between them and felicity.

Many a listless and fastidious gentleman, having satiated himself with the theatre by the nightly use of a season ticket (that certain destroyer of all relish for dramatic amusements), might have envied in our plain and simple-minded mechanic the freshness of sensation, the unswerving interest, and the unqualified pleasure with which he regarded the wonders of the histrionic world.

To watch Peter Jones at his annual play was as amusing as to look at the performance itself (and sometimes much more so), such was his earnest attention, and his vivid enjoyment of the whole; as testified by the glee of his laugh, the heartiness of his applause, and the energy with which he joined in an encore. If it chanced to be a tragedy, he consoled his wife in what she called the "forepart of her tears," by reminding her that it was only a play; but as the pathos of the scene increased, he always caught himself first wiping his eyes with the back of his hand; then blowing his nose, trumpetwise, with his clean bandanna pocket-handkerchief; and then calling himself a fool for crying. Like Addison's trunk-maker, he frequently led the clap; and on Peter Jones's night there was certainly more applause than usual. The kindness of his heart, however, would never allow him to join in a hiss, assuring those about him that the actors and the play-writers always did their best, and that if they failed it was their misfortune, and not their fault.

That all the old observances of the theatre might be duly observed, he failed not to produce between the play and farce an ample supply of what children denominate "goodies," as a regale for Mrs. Jones and himself; also presenting them all round to every one within his reach; and if there were any little boys and girls in the vicinity, he always produced a double quantity.

It is unnecessary to say that Mr. and Mrs. Jones always stayed to the extreme last; not quitting their seats till the curtain had descended to the very floor, and shut from their view, for another year, the bows and curtsies of the actors at the final of the *finale* in the concluding scene of the after-piece. Then our happy old couple walked leisurely home, and had a supper of cold meat and pickles, and roasted potatoes; and talked of the play over the supper-table; and also over the breakfast-table next morning; and also to all their acquaintances for a month or two afterwards.

In those days, when Peter Jones found the enjoyment of one play sufficient to last him a twelvemonth, the Philadelphia theatre was in its "high and palmy state." There was an excellent stock company, with a continual succession of new pieces, or judicious revivals of old ones of standard worth. The starring system, as it is called, did not then prevail. The performers, having permanent engagements, were satisfied to do their duty towards an audience with whose tastes they were familiar. Each actor could play an infinite number of parts—each singer could sing an infinity of songs—and all considered it a portion of their business to learn new characters, or new music.

Having seen Mr. Bluster in Hamlet, Pierre, and Romeo, we were not expected, after a short interval, to crowd again to the theatre to applaud Mr. Fluster in Romeo, Pierre, and Hamlet. Having laughed sufficiently at Mr. Skipabout in Young Rapid, Bob Handy, and Rover, we were not then required, in the lapse of a few weeks, to laugh likewise at Mr. Tripabout in Rover, Bob Handy, and Young Rapid. Also, if we had been properly enraptured with Madam Dagolini Dobson in Rosina and Rosetta, we were not compelled, almost immediately, to re-prepare our *bravos* and *bravissimas* for Madame Jomellini Jobson in Rosetta and Rosina.

The list of acting plays was not then reduced to about five comedies, and six tragedies; served out night after night, not in the alternate variety of one of each sort successively, but with a course of tragedy for a hero of the buskin, and a course of comedy for the fortunate man that was able to personate a lively *gentleman*. Neither were the lovers of vocal harmony obliged to content themselves with the perpetual repetition of four musical pieces, regularly produced, "when certain stars shot madly from their spheres" in the brilliant and *recherché* opera-houses of Europe (where princes and kings pay for a song in diamonds), to waste their glories on yankees, buckeyes, and tuckahoes, whose only idea of pay is in the inelegant form of things called dollars.

It is true that in those days the machinery and decorations of the Philadelphia stage, and the costume of the actors, were far inferior to the *materiel* of the present time; but there was always a regular company of sterling excellence, the pieces were various and well selected, and the

audience was satisfied.

Years had passed on, and Peter and Martha Jones were still "keeping the even tenor of their way," and enjoying the anniversary play with all their might, when a house on the other side of the street was taken by a respectable hair-dresser, whose window soon exhibited all the emblems of his profession, arranged with peculiar taste, and among them an unusual assortment of wigs for both sexes.

Now, if Mrs. Jones had a failing (and who is perfect), it was in indulging a sort of anti-barber prejudice, very unaccountable, certainly—but so are most prejudices. This induced her rather to discourage all demonstrations of her husband's usual disposition to make acquaintance with the new neighbours, whom she set down in her own mind as "queer people"—a very comprehensive term. To be sure, Mr. Dodcomb's looks and deportment differed not materially from those of any other hair-dresser; but Peter Jones could not help agreeing that the appearance of his family were much at variance with the imputed virtues of the numerous beautifying specifics that were set forth in his shop. For instance, notwithstanding the infallibility of his lotions and emollients, and creams and pastes, the face and neck of Mrs. Dodcomb obstinately persisted in remaining wrinkled, yellow, speckled, and spotty. And in spite of Macassar oil, and bear's oil, and other certain promoters of luxuriant, soft, and glossy tresses, her locks continued scanty, stringy, stiff, and disorderly. By-the-bye, though there were "plenty more in the shop," she always wore a comb whose teeth were "few and far between."

Though Mr. Dodcomb professed to cut hair in a style of unrivalled elegance, the hair of his children was sheared to the quick, their heads looking nearly as bald as if shaved with a razor; and this phrenological display was rather unbecoming to the juvenile Dodcombs, as their ears were singularly prominent and donkey-like. Then as to skin, the faces of the boys were sadly freckled, and those of the girls surprisingly coarse and rough.

Mrs. Jones came to a conclusion that their new neighbour must be a remarkably close man, and unwilling to waste any of his stock in trade upon his own family; and Peter thought it would be more politic in Mr. Dodcomb to use his wife and children as pattern cards, exhibiting on their heads and faces the success of his commodities; which Mrs. Jones unamiably suspected to be all trash and trickery, and far inferior to plain soap and water.

Things were in this state when election day came; and on the following morning Mr. Dodcomb came over to look at Mr. Jones's newspaper, and see the returns of the city and county; complaining that ever since he had lived in the neighbourhood, his own paper had been shamefully purloined from the handle of the door so early as before the shop was open. To steal a newspaper appeared to honest Peter the very climax of felony, for, as he said, it was stealing a man's sense and knowledge; and, being himself the earliest riser in the neighbourhood, he volunteered to watch for the offender. This he did by rising with the first blush of dawn, and promenading the pavement, stick in hand. It was not long before he discovered the abstractor in the person of an ever-briefless lawyerling, belonging to the only family in the neighbourhood who professed aristocracy, and discountenanced Peter Jones. And our indignant old hero saw "the young gentleman of rank" issue scarcely half dressed from his own door, pounce rapidly upon the newspaper, and carry it off. "Stop thief!—stop thief!" was loudly vociferated by Peter, who, brandishing his stick, made directly across the street, and the astonished culprit immediately dropped the paper, and took refuge in his own patrician mansion.

As soon as the Dodcomb house was opened, Peter Jones went over with the trophy of his success. Mr. Dodcomb was profuse of thanks, making some remarkably handsome speeches on the occasion, and Peter went home and assured his wife that, though a barber, their new neighbour was a very clever man and well worth knowing. Mrs. Jones immediately saw things in their proper light, did not perceive that the Dodcombs were at all queerer than other people, concluded that they had a right to look as they pleased, and imputed their indifference to hair and cosmetics to the probability that they were surfeited with the sight of both; as confectioners never eat cakes, and shoemakers' families are said to go barefoot.

The same evening, Mrs. Jones accompanied her husband to make a neighbourly visit to the Dodcombs, whom, to their great surprise, they found to be extremely *au-fait* of the theatre; Mr. Dodcomb being barber to that establishment, and his sister-in-law, Miss Sarah Ann Flimbrey, one of the dressmakers.

The progress of the intimacy between the Jones and Dodcomb families now increased rapidly, making prodigious strides every day. By the next week, which was the beginning of January, they had made up a party to go together to the theatre on New Year's night; Peter Jones having been actually and wonderfully over-persuaded to break through his time-honoured custom of going but once a twelvemonth. The Dodcombs had an irregular way of seeing the plays from between the scenes, from the flies over the stage, and from all other inconvenient and uncomfortable places where they could slip in "by virtue of their office;" but on New Year's night they always went in form, taking a front box up stairs, that their children might have an uninterrupted view of the whole show; Mr. Dodcomb on that evening employing a deputy to arrange the heads of the performers.

Early on New Year's morning, Peter Jones put into the hands of his neighbour two dollars, to pay for the tickets of himself and wife; and during the remainder of the day (which, fortunately for him, was at this season a very short one) he had his usual difficulty in getting through the time.

It was in vain that the Joneses were dressed at an early hour and had their usual early tea. The Dodcombs (to whom the theatre was no novelty) did not hurry with *their* preparations, and on Peter going over to see if they were ready, he found them all in their usual dishabille, and their maid just beginning to set the tea-table. That people (under any circumstances) could be so dilatory with a play in prospect, presented to the mind of the astonished Peter a new view of the varieties of the human species. But as all things must have an end, so at last had the tea-drinking of the Dodcombs; and luckily their toilets did not occupy much time, for they only put themselves in full dress from their waist upward; to the great surprise of Mrs. Jones, who was somewhat scandalized at their oldish shoes and dirtyish stockings.

To the utter dismay of the Joneses, the curtain, for the first time in their lives, was up when they arrived; and to this misfortune the Dodcombs did not seem to attach the least consequence, assuring them that in losing the first scene of a play they lost nothing.

The five children were ranged in front, each of the three girls wearing a rose-bud on one side of her closely trimmed head, which rose-bud, as Mrs. Jones afterwards averred to her husband, must have been stuck there and held in its place by some hocus pocus, which no one but a play-house barber could contrive or execute. During the progress of the play, which was a melo-drama of what is called "thrilling interest," Peter Jones, who always himself paid the most exemplary attention to the scene before him, was annoyed to find that his wife was continually drawn in to talk, by the example of Mrs. Dodcomb and Miss Flimbrey, one of whom sat on each side of her, and who both kept up a running fire of questions, answers, and remarks during the whole of the performance—plays, as they said, being mere drugs to them.

"How do you like that scarlet and gold dress?" said Mrs. Dodcomb.

"Oh! it's beautiful!" replied Mrs. Jones, "and he's a beautiful man that wears it! What handsome legs he has?—and what a white neck for a man!—and such fine curly hair—"

"You would not say so," said Mrs. Dodcomb, "if you were to see him in daylight without his paint, and without his chestnut wig (they have all sorts of wigs, even flax, tow, and yarn). His natural face and hair are both of the same clay-colour. As to his neck, it's nothing when it is not coated all over with whitening—and then his stage legs are always padded."

"Mr. Jones, you are a judge of those things—what do you suppose that man's dress is made of?" asked Mr. Dodcomb.

"Scarlet cloth and gold lace."

"Fudge! it's only red flannel, trimmed with copper binding."

"I'm sorry to hear that," observed Mrs. Jones—and during the remainder of the piece she designated him as "the man in the flannel jacket."

"That's a pretty hat of his sweetheart's," she remarked, "that gauze hat with the long white feathers—how light and airy it looks!"

Miss Flimbrey now giggled. "I made it myself, this morning," said she, "it's only thin catgut, with nothing at all outside—but at a distance, it certainly may be taken for transparent gauze."

From this time Mrs. Jones distinguished the actress as "the woman with the catgut hat."

The hero of the piece appeared in a new and magnificent dress, which was very much applauded, as new and showy dresses frequently are. It was a purple velvet, decorated profusely with gold ornaments, somewhat resembling rows of very large buttons; each button being raised or relieved in the centre, and having a flat rim round the edge. They went up all the seams of the back, and down the front of the jacket, and round the cuffs; and, being very bright and very close together, the effect was rich and unique. Also, one of them fastened the plume and looped up the hat, and two others glittered in the rosettes of the shoes.

"Oh! how grand!—how very grand!" exclaimed Mrs. Jones. "This dress beats all the others!"

"Upon my word, that trimming is fine," said Peter.

"Ain't they big gold buttons, put very close together?" asked his wife.

"Why, no," replied Peter. "They ain't buttons at all—not one of them. Surely I ought to know buttons, when they *are* buttons. I can't make out these things exactly. But they're handsome, however."

Mr. Dodcomb now began to laugh. "I'll tell you," said he, "the history of these new-fashioned ornaments. It was a bright idea of the actor's own when he was planning his new dress. He went to one of the great hardware stores in Market Street, and bought I don't know how many gross of those shining covers that are put over the screw-holes of bedsteads to hide the screws, and that are fastened on by a small thing at the top of each, like a loop, having a hole for a little screw, to fix them tight in their places. And these holes in the loops were just convenient for the needle to go through when they were sewed on to the dress. So you see what a good show they make now."

"Of all contrivances!" exclaimed Peter. "To think that bed-screw covers should trim so well!"

"Wonders will never cease!" ejaculated Mrs. Jones. And whenever the actor reappeared, she jogged her husband, and reminded him that "here came the man all over bed-screws."

"What beautiful lace cuffs and collars all those gentlemen have, that are gallanting the ladies to the feast!" said Mrs. Jones.

"Cut paper, my dear—only cut paper," replied Mrs. Dodcomb. "Sally Flimbrey cuts them out herself—don't you, Sally?"

Miss Flimbrey (who was not proud), nodded in the affirmative—"You would never guess," said she, "my dear Mrs. Jones, what odd contrivances they have—did you observe the milk-maid's pail in the cottage scene?"

"Yes—it was full to the brim of fine frothy new milk—I should like to have taken a drink of it."

"You would have found it pretty hard to swallow, for it was only cotton wadding," said Miss Flimbrey.

"Well now! if ever I heard the beat of that!" interjected Mrs. Jones.

"How do you like the thunder and lightning?" said Mr. Dodcomb to Mr. Jones.

"It's fine," replied Peter, "and very natural."

"I'll tell you what it is," replied Dodcomb, "the lightning is made by sprinkling a handful of powdered rosin into a ladle heated over a pan of charcoal. A man stands between the scenes and does it whenever a flash is wanted. The thunder is produced by a pair of cannon balls joined across a bar to which is fixed a long wooden handle like the tongue of a child's basket wagon, and by this the balls are pushed and hauled about the floor behind the back scene."

"Astonishing!" exclaimed Mr. Jones. "But the rattling of the rain—*that* sounds just as if it was real."

"The rain!" answered Mr. Dodcomb. "Oh, the rain is done by a tall wooden case, something on the plan of a great hour glass, lined with tin and filled half full with small shot, which when the case is set on end, dribbles gradually down and rattles as it falls."

"Dear me," ejaculated Mrs. Jones, "what a wonderful thing is knowledge of the stage! I never *shall* see a thunder-gust again (at the play-house, I mean) without thinking all the time of rosin and ladles, and cannon balls with long handles, and the dribbling of shot."

"Then for snow," pursued Mr. Dodcomb, "they snip up white paper into shreds, and carry it up to the flies or beams and rafters above the stage, and scatter it down by handfuls."

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Mrs. Jones—

"Well—now the storm is over," said Mrs. Dodcomb, "and here is a castle scene by moonlight."

"And a very pretty moon it is," observed Mrs. Jones, "all solemn and natural."

"Not very solemn to me," said Mr. Dodcomb, "as I know it to be a bit of oiled linen let into a round hole in the back scene, with a candle put behind it."

"Wonders will never cease!" ejaculated Mrs. Jones. "And there's an owl sitting up in that old tumble-down tower—how natural he blinks!"

"Yes," said Mr. Dodcomb, "his eyes are two doors, with a string to each; and a man climbs up behind, and keeps jerking the doors open and letting them shut again—that's the way to make an owl blink. But here comes the bleeding ghost, that wanders about the ruins by moonlight."

The children all drew back a little, and looked somewhat frightened; it happening to be the first ghost they had ever seen.

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Jones, drawing her shawl closely round her, "what an awful sight a ghost is, even when we know it's only a play-actor! This one seem to have no regular clothes, but only those white fly-away things—how deadly pale it is—and just look at the blood, how it keeps streaming down all the time from that great gash in the breast!"

"As to the paleness," explained Miss Flimbrey, "it's only that the face is powdered thick all over with flour; and as to what looks to you like blood, it's nothing but red ribbon, gathered a little full at the top where the wound is, and the ends left long to flow down the white drapery."

"Why this beats all the rest!" exclaimed Mrs. Jones, "Well—I never *shall* see a bloody ghost again without thinking of meal and red ribbon."

Previous to the last act of the melo-drama, a man belonging to the theatre came and called Mr. Dodcomb out of the box to ask him if he would be so obliging as to go on the stage for a senator in the trial scene, one of the big boys that usually assisted in making out this august assemblage having unexpectedly run away and gone to sea. Mr. Dodcomb (who was not entirely unused to lending himself to similar emergencies) kindly consented; and, after returning to whisper the circumstance to his wife, he slipped out unobserved by the rest of the party. When the drop-curtain again rose, eight or ten senators, with venerable white wigs, were seen sitting in a sort of pews, and wearing pink robes and ermine capes; which ermine, according to Miss Flimbury, was only white paper spotted over with large regular splotches of ink at equal distances.

Presently, on recognising their beloved parent among the conscript fathers, the Dodcomb

children became rather too audible in expressing their delight, exclaiming: "Oh! there's pappy. Only see pappy on the stage. Don't pappy look funny?"

The pit-people looked up, and the box-people looked round, and Mrs. Dodcomb tried to silence the children by threats of making them go home. Peter Jones quieted them directly by stopping their mouths with cakes from his well-stored pocket; thus anticipating the treat he had provided for them as a regale between the play and after-piece.

The scene over, Mr. Dodcomb speedily got rid of his senatorial costume, and returned to the box in *propriâ personâ*, where he was loudly greeted by his children, each insisting on being "the one that first found out their pappy among the men in wigs and gowns."

"Well if ever!" exclaimed Mr. Jones. "There's no knowing what good's before us! Little did we expect when we came here to-night, that we should be sitting here in the same box with anybody that ever acted on the stage. I am so glad."

The after-piece was the Forty Thieves, which Peter and Mrs. Jones had never seen before, and which had extraordinary charms for the old man, who in his youth had been well versed in the Arabian Tales. Giving himself up, as he always did, to the illusion of the scene, he could well have dispensed with the explanations of the Dodcombs, who began by informing Mrs. Jones that the fairy Ardanelle, though in her shell-formed car she seemed to glide through the water, was in reality pulled along by concealed men with concealed ropes.

When the equestrian robbers appeared one by one galloping across the distant mountains, and Mrs. Jones had carefully counted them all to ascertain that there was the full complement of exactly forty, Miss Flimbrey laughed, and assured her that in reality there were only three, one mounted on a black, one on a bay, and one on a white horse, but they passed round and appeared again, till the precise number was accomplished. "And the same thing," said she, "is always done when an army marches across the stage, so that a few soldiers are made to seem like a great many."

"You perceive, Mrs. Jones," said Mr. Dodcomb, "these robbers that ride over the distant mountains are not the real men; but both man and horse is nothing more than a flat thin piece of wood painted and cut out."

On Peter remarking that there was certainly a look of life or reality in the near leg of each rider as it was thrown over the saddle, Mr. Dodcomb explained that each of these equestrian figures was carried by a man concealed behind, and that one arm of the man was thrust through an aperture at the top of the painted saddle; the arm that hung over so as to personate a leg, being dressed in a Turkish trowser, with a boot drawn on the hand.

"Do you mean," said Peter, "that these men run along the ridge, each carrying a horse under his arm?"

"Exactly so," replied Dodcomb, "the horse and rider of painted board being so arranged as to hide the carrier."

"Well—I never did hear anything so queer," said Mrs. Jones, "I wonder how they can keep their countenances. But, there are so many queer things about play-acting. Dear me! what a pug-nose that cobbler has! Let me look at the bill and see who he is—why I saw the same man in the play, and his nose was long and straight."

"Oh! when he wants a snub nose," replied Miss Flimbrey, "he ties up the end with a single horse-hair fastened round his forehead, and the horse hair is too fine to be seen by the audience."

During the scene in which Morgiana destroys the thieves, one at a time, by pouring a few drops of the magic liquid into the jars in which they are hidden, Mrs. Jones found out of her own accord that the jars were only flat pieces of painted board; but Mrs. Dodcomb made her observe that as each of the dying bandits uttered distinctly his own separate groan, the sound was in reality produced from the orchestra, by he of the bass viol giving his bow a hard scrub across the instrument.

"Well," said Mrs. Jones on her way home, "now that my eyes are opened, I must say there is a great deal of deception in plays."

"To be sure there is," replied Peter, "and that we knew all along, or might have known if we had thought about it; but people that go to the theatre only once a year are quite willing to take things as they see them; and they have pleasure enough in the play itself and in what passes before their eyes, without wondering or caring about the contrivances behind the scenes. I never supposed their finery to be real, or their handsome looks either; but that was none of our business, as long as they appeared well to us—I said nothing to *you*, for I know if you were once put on the scent, you would be the whole time trying to find out their shams and trickeries."

Next morning, while talking over the play in Peter's shop, Mr. Dodcomb kindly volunteered to procure for him and Mrs. Jones, bones or orders from the managers or chief performers, that would insure a gratuitous admission. Peter, much as he liked plays, demurred awhile about availing himself of this neighbourly offer, but the urgency of his wife prevailed on him to consent; and a day or two after, Mr. Dodcomb put into his hand two circular pieces of lettered ivory, which on giving them to the doorkeeper admitted Mr. and Mrs. Jones to the house for that evening; and thus, for the first time in their lives, they found themselves at the theatre twice in one week.

In this manner they went again and again; and a visit to the theatre soon ceased to be an event. It was no longer eagerly anticipated, and minutely remembered. The sight of one play almost effaced the recollection of another. The edge of novelty was fast wearing off, and the sense of enjoyment becoming blunted in proportion. Weariness crept upon them with satiety, and they sometimes even went home before the concluding scene of the farce, and at last they did not even stay to see the first. Often they caught themselves nodding shamefully during the most moral and instructive dialogues of sentimental comedy, and they actually slept a duett through the four first acts of the Gamester, in which, however, they were accompanied by a large portion of the audience.

Their friends the Dodcombs escorted them one afternoon all through the interior of the theatre, so that they obtained a full comprehension of the whole paraphernalia, with all its illusions and realities; and of this knowledge Mrs. Jones made ample use in her comments at night during the performance.

As Peter's enjoyment of the drama grew less, he became more fastidious, particularly as to the ways and means that were employed to produce effect. He now saw the ridicule of the armies of the rival roses being represented by half a dozen men, who when they belonged to King Richard were distinguished by white stockings, but clapped on red ones when, in the next scene, they personated the forces of Richmond. The theatrical vision of our hero being cleared and refined, he ceased to perceive a moving forest when the progress of Birnam Wood to Dunsinane was represented by six or seven men in plaid kilts, each holding up before his face, fan-wise, a little bunch of withered pine twigs. He now discovered that the proper place for the ghost of Banquo was a seat at the table of his murderer, in the midst of the company, and not on a modern parlour chair, set conspicuously by itself near one of the stage doors. He also perceived that in Antony's oration over Cæsar, the Roman populace was illy represented by one boyish-looking, smooth-faced young man (plebeians must have been strangely scarce) who at the words, "Good friends, sweet friends, let me not stir you up to sudden mutiny"—always made sundry futile attempts to look mutinous.[76]

To conclude—in the course of that season and the next, Peter Jones and his wife by dint of bones and Dodcombs, became so familiar with theatricals that they ceased entirely to enjoy them; and it finally became a sort of task to go, and a greater task to sit through the play.

Mrs. Jones thought that the old actors had all fallen off, and that the new ones were not so good as the old ones; but her more sagacious husband laid the fault to the right cause, which was, "that plays were now a drug to them."

The Dodcombs removed to New York, and the Joneses gave up without regret the facilities of free admission to the theatre. After a lapse of two years, they determined to resume their old and long-tested custom of seeing one single play at the close of the season, and on the anniversary of their wedding. But the charm was broken, the illusion was destroyed; the keenness of their relish was palled by satiety, and could revive no more.

In a less humble sphere of life, and in circumstances of far greater importance than the play-going of Peter Jones, how often is the long-cherished enjoyment of a temperate pleasure destroyed for ever by a short period of over-indulgence!

THE OLD FARM-HOUSE.

"Her charm around, the enchantress Memory throws."—Rogers.

Edward Lindsay had recently returned from Europe, where a long series of years passed in the successful prosecution of a lucrative mercantile business, had gained for him an independence that in his own country would be considered wealth. Continuing in heart and soul an American, it was only in the land of his birth, that he could resolve to settle himself, and enjoy the fruits of well-directed enterprise, and almost uninterrupted good fortune.

Early impressions are lasting; and among the images that frequently recurred to the memory of our hero, were those of a certain old farm-house in the interior of Pennsylvania, and its kind and simple-hearted inhabitants. The farmer, whose name was Abraham Hilliard, had been in the practice of occasionally bringing to Philadelphia a wagon-load of excellent marketing, and stopping with his team at the doors of several genteel families, his unfailing customers. It was thus that Mr. and Mrs. Lindsay obtained a knowledge of him, which eventually induced them to place in his house, as a boarder, their only surviving child Edward: that during the summer season, the boy, whose constitution was naturally delicate, might have a chance of acquiring confirmed health and hardihood, united with habits of self-dependence; it being clearly understood by all parties, that young Lindsay was to be treated, in every respect, like the farmer's own children. The experiment succeeded: and it was at Oakland Farm that Edward Lindsay's summers were chiefly spent from the age of eight to eighteen, at which time he was sent to Bordeaux, and placed in the counting-house of his maternal uncle. And twice when Philadelphia was visited by the malignant fever which in former years spread such terror through the city, and whose ravages were only checked by the return of cold weather, the anxious parents of our hero made him stay in the country till the winter had fairly set in.

During his long residence in Europe, Edward Lindsay was so unfortunate as to lose both father and mother, and, therefore, his arrival in his native town was accompanied by many painful feelings. The bustle of the city, and the company into which the hospitality of his friends endeavoured to draw him, were not in accordance with his present state of mind, and he imagined that nothing would be more soothing to him than a visit to the country, and particularly to the place where so much of his boyhood had been passed. While his mother lived, she had frequently sent him tidings of his old friends at Oakland Farm, none of whom were letter writers; but since her death, they seemed to be lost sight of, and it was now many years since Edward had heard anything of them.

Oakland Farm was not on a public road, and it was some miles remote from the route of any public conveyance. As the season was the close of spring, and the weather delightful, Lindsay determined to go thither on a fine horse that he had recently purchased; taking with him only a small valise, it being his intention to remain there but a few days.

He set out in the afternoon, and passed the night at a tavern about ten miles from the city, formerly known as the Black Bear, but now dignified with the title of the Pennsylvania Hotel, expressed in immense gilt letters on a blue board above the door. Lindsay felt something like regret at the ejectment of his old acquaintance Bruin, who, proclaiming "Entertainment for Man and Horse," had swung so many years on a lofty sign-post under the shade of a great buttonwood tree, now cut down to make room for four slender Lombardy poplars, which, though out of favour in the city, had become fashionable in the country.

We will pass over many other changes which our hero observed about the new-modelled inn, and accompany him as he pursued his way along the road which had been so familiar to him in his early youth, and which, though it retained many of its original features, had partaken greatly of the all-pervading spirit of improvement. The hills were still there. The beautiful creek, which in England would have been termed a river, meandered everywhere just as before, wide, clear, and deep; but its rude log bridges had now given place to substantial structures of masonry and wood-work, and he missed several well-known tracts of forest-land, of which the very stumps had long since been dislodged.

His eye, for years accustomed to the small farms and miniature enclosures of Europe, now dwelt with delight on immense fields of grain or clover, each of them covering a whole hill, and frequently of such extent that a single glance could not take in their limits. He saw vast orchards that seemed to contain a thousand trees, now white with blossoms that, scattered by the slightest breeze, fell around them like showers of scented snow. He missed, it is true, the hawthorn hedges of England; those beautiful walls of verdure, whose only fault is that their impervious foliage shuts out from view the fields they enclose; while the open fences of America allow the stranger to regale his eye, and satisfy his curiosity with a free prospect of the country through which he is travelling.

Oakland Farm, as we have said, lay some miles from the great highway, and Lindsay was glad to find with how much ease he recollected the turnings and windings of the by-roads. It even gave him pleasure to recognise a glen at the bottom of a ravine thickly shaded with crooked and moss-grown trees, where half a century ago a woman had been guilty of infanticide, and whose subsequent execution at the county town is talked of still; it being apparently as well remembered as an event of yesterday. The dogwood and the wild grape vine still canopied the fatal spot, for the thicket had never been cleared away, nor the ground cultivated. A little beyond, the road lay through a dark piece of woods that countrywomen, returning late from the store, were afraid to ride through after night-fall; as their horses always started and trembled and laid back their ears at the appearance of a mysterious white colt, which was frequently seen gamboling among the trees, and which no sensible people believed to be a real or living colt, as one horse is never frightened at the sight of another. Shortly after, our traveller stopped for a few moments to gaze at the transformation of a building on the verge of a creek. He had remembered it as a large old house chequered with bricks alternately blackish and reddish, and having dark red window-shutters with holes cut in them to admit the light; some of the apertures being in the form of hearts, others in the shape of crescents. There had been a red porch, and a red front door which for years had the inconvenient property of bursting open in the dead of night; at which time, a noise was always heard as of the hoofs of a calf trotting in the dark, about the rooms up stairs. This calf was finally spoken to by a very courageous stranger, who inquired its name. The calf made not a word of answer, but from that night was heard no more. This house, being now painted yellow, and the red shutters removed, had been altered into an establishment for carding and spinning wool, as was evident by surrounding indications, and by the noise of the machinery, which could be heard plainly as far as the road. Lindsay began to fear that he should never again see Polly Nichols, a tall, gaunt, hard-featured spinning girl, whose untiring strength and immoveable countenance, as she ran all day at the "big wheel," had often amazed him, and whom Mrs. Hilliard considered as the princess of wool-spinners. His conscience reproached him with having one day, while she was at dinner, mischievously stolen the wheel-finger of the said Polly Nichols, and hidden it in the dough trough, thereby occasioning a long search to the industrious damsel, and the loss of an hour's spinning to Mrs. Hilliard.

He next came to the old well-known meeting-house, embosomed in large elms of aboriginal growth. He saw it as in former days, with its long range of stalls for the horses of the congregation, and its square horse-blocks at the gate with steps ascending on all their four sides, to which the country beaux gallantly led up the steeds of the country belles. Just beyond the meeting-house, he looked in vain for a well-known little brook, distinguished of old as "Blue

Woman's Run," and which had formerly crossed the road, murmuring over its bed of pebbles. It had derived this cognomen from the singular apparition of a woman in a blue gown, with a pail of water on her head, which had on several Sundays boldly appeared even in the brightness of the noon-day sun, and was seen walking fearlessly among the "meeting folks," and their horses, as they stopped to let them drink at the brook; coming no one knew from whence, and going no one knew where; but appearing and disappearing in the midst of them. But the streamlet was no longer there, diverted perhaps to some other channel, and the hollow of its bed was filled up and made level with the road.

About two miles further, our hero looked out for a waste field at some distance from the road, and distinguished by an antique persimmon tree of unusual size. This field he had always known of a wild and desolate aspect, bristled with the tall stalks of the mullein. Here, according to tradition, had once lived a family of free negroes, probably runaways from the south. They had lost their children by an epidemic, buried them at the foot of the persimmon tree, and soon after quitted the neighbourhood. All vestiges of their hut had vanished long before Edward Lindsay had known the place, but the graves of the children might have been traced under the grass and weeds. The deserted field had the reputation of being haunted, because whoever had the temerity to cross it, even in broad daylight, never failed, that is if they had faith, to see the faces of two little black boys looking out from behind the tree, and laughing merrily. But on approaching the tree no black boys were there.

There is considerable variety in American ghosts. In Europe these phantoms are nearly all of the same stamp: either tall white females that glide by moonlight among the ruined cloisters of old abbeys; or pale knights, in dark armour, that wander, at midnight, about the turrets and corridors of feudal castles. In our country, apparitions go as little by rule as their living prototypes; and are certainly very prosaic both in looks and ways.

The old persimmon tree was still there; but the field had been cultivated, and was now in red clover, and Lindsay knew that mind had marched over it.

He now came to a well-remembered place, the low one-story school-house under the shade of a great birch tree, whose twigs had been of essential service in the hands of Master Whackaboy, and whose smooth and paper-like bark was fashionable in the seminary for writing-pieces. The door and windows were open, and Lindsay expected as formerly, to hear the master say to his scholars, at the sound of horses' feet—"Read out—read out—strangers are going by—;" which order had always been succeeded by a chorus of readers as loud and inharmonious as what children call a Dutch Concert. As Lindsay passed the school-house, he could not forbear stopping a moment to look in; and instead of Bumpus Whackaboy in his round jacket, he saw a young gentleman in a frock coat, seated at the master's desk, with an aspect of great satisfaction, while a lad stood before him frowning and stamping desperately, and reciting Collins's Ode on the Passions.

Our traveller now perceived by certain well-remembered landmarks, that he was approaching the mill in whose scales he had frequently been weighed: a ceremony never omitted at the close of his annual visit to Oakland, that he might go home rejoicing in the number of pounds he had gained during his sojourn in the salubrious air and homely abundance of the farm. When he came to the place, he found three mills; and he was, for a while, puzzled to recollect which of them was his old acquaintance. On the other side of the road were now a tavern, a store, and a blacksmith's shop, with half a dozen dwelling-houses. "This, I suppose, is an incipient city," thought Lindsay—and so it was, as he afterwards found: the name being Candyville, in consequence, perhaps, of the people of the neighbourhood having left off tobacco and taken to mint-stick, for which, and other *bonbons* of a similar character, the demand was so great that the storekeeper often found it necessary to take a journey to the metropolis chiefly for the purpose of bringing out a fresh supply.

At length our hero came to a hill beyond which he recollected that a turn in the road would present to his view the house of Abraham Hilliard, as it stood on the very edge of the farm. It was a lovely afternoon. The sunbeams were dancing merrily on the creek, whose shining waters beautifully inverted its green banks, overshadowed with laurel bushes now in full bloom and covered with large clusters of delicate pink flowers.

He saw the top of the enormous oak that stood in front of the house, and which had been spared for its size and beauty, when the ground was first redeemed from the primeval forest by the grandfather of the present proprietor.

Lindsay turned into the lane. What was his amazement when he saw not, as he expected, the well-known farm-house and its appurtenances!—It was no longer there. The dilapidated ruins of the chimney alone were standing, and round them lay a heap of rubbish. He stopped his horse and gazed long and sadly, on finding all his pleasant anticipations turned at once to disappointment. Finally he dismounted, and securing his bridle to a large nail which yet remained in the trunk of the old tree, having been placed there for that purpose, he proceeded to take a nearer view of what had once been the Oakland Farm-House.

There were indications of the last fire that had ever gladdened the hearth, the charred remains of an immense backlog, now half hidden beneath a luxuriant growth of the dusky and ragged-leaved Jamestown weed. In a corner of the hearth grew a sumach that bid fair in a short time to overtop all that was left of the chimney. These corners had once been furnished with benches on which the children used to sit and amuse themselves with stories and riddles, in the cold autumnal

evenings, when fires are doubly cheerful from being the first of the season.

Of the long porch in which they had so often played by moonlight, nothing now remained but a few broken and decaying boards with grass and plantain-weeds growing among them; and some relics of the rough stone steps that had ascended to it, now displaced and fallen aside by the caving in of the earth behind.

The well that had supplied the family with cold water for drinking, had lost its cover—the sweep had fallen down, and the bucket and chain were gone. The dark cool cellar was laid open to the light of day, and was now a deep square pit, overgrown with thistles and toad-flax.

From the cracks of the old clay oven that had belonged to the chimney (and which was now half hidden in pokeberry plants), issued tufts of chick-weed; and when Lindsay looked into the place which he had so often seen filled with pies and rice-puddings, the glare of bright eyes and a rustling noise denoted that some wild animal had made its lair in the cavity. Suddenly a large gray fox sprung out of the oven-mouth, and ran fearfully past him into the thicket. Lindsay thought in a moment of the often-quoted lines of Ossian.

At the foot of the little eminence on which the house was situated, there had formerly been what its inhabitants called the *harbour* (probably a corruption of arbour), a shed rudely constructed of poles interwoven with branches, and covered with a luxuriant gourd-vine. Here the milk-pans and pails were washed, and much of the "slopping-work" of the family done in the summer. A piece of rock formed the back-wall of a fire-place in which an immense iron pot had always hung. A slight water-gate opened from this place on a branch of the creek, over which a broad thick board had been laid as a bridge, and a short distance below there was a miniature cascade or fall, at which Edward, in his childhood, had erected a small wooden tilt-hammer of his own making; and the strokes of this tilt-hammer could be heard, to his great delight, as far as the house, particularly in the stillness of night, when the sound was doubly audible.

The cauldron had now disappeared, leaving no trace but the blackened stone behind it; the remains of the water-gate were lying far up on the bank; the board had fallen into the water; the rude trellis was broken down; and masses of the gourd-vine, which had sprung from the scattered seeds, were running about in wild disorder wherever they could find anything to climb upon.

Lindsay turned to the spot "where once the garden smiled," and found it a wilderness of tall and tangled weeds, interspersed with three or four degenerate hollyhocks, and a few other flowers that had sowed themselves and dwindled into insignificance. And in the division appropriated to culinary purposes, were some straggling vegetables that had returned to a state worse than indigenous—with half a dozen rambling bushes that had long since ceased to bear fruit.

Lindsay had gazed on the gigantic remains of the Roman Coliseum, on "the castled crag of Drachenfels," and on the ivy-mantled arches of Tintern, but they awakened no sensation that could compare with the melancholy feeling that oppressed him as he explored the humble ruins of this simple farm-house, where every association came home to his heart, reminding him not of what he had read, but of what he had seen, and known, and felt, and enjoyed.

As he stood with folded arms contemplating the images of desolation before him, his attention was diverted by the sound of footsteps, and, on looking round, he perceived an old negro coming down the road, with a basket in one hand, and in the other a jug corked with a corn-cob. The negro pulled off his battered wool-hat, and making a bow and a scrape, said: "Sarvant, masser—" and Lindsay, on returning his bow, recognised the unusual breadth of nose and width of mouth that had distinguished a free black, well known in the neighbourhood by the name of Pharaoh, and in whom the lapse of time had made no other alteration than that of bleaching his wool, which was now quite white.

"Why, Pharaoh—my old fellow!" exclaimed Lindsay, "is this really yourself?"

"Can't say, masser," replied Pharaoh. "All people's much the same. Best not be too personal. But I b'lieve I'm he."

"Have you no recollection of Edward Lindsay?" inquired our hero.

"Lawful heart, masser!" exclaimed the negro. "I do b'lieve you're little Neddy, what used to come from town and stay at old Abram Hilliard's of summers, and what still kept wisiting there, by times, till you goed over sea."

"I am that identical Neddy," replied Lindsay, holding out his hand to the old negro, who evinced his delight by a series of loud laughs.

"Yes—yes," pursued Pharaoh, "now I look sharper at you, masser, I see plain you're 'xactly he. You've jist a same nose, and a same eyes, and a same mouth, what you had when you tumbled down the well, and fall'd out the chestnut tree, and when you was peck'd hard by the big turkey-cock, and butted by the old ram."

"Truly," said Lindsay, "you seem to have forgotten none of my juvenile disasters."

"To be sure not," replied Pharaoh, "I 'member every one of them, and a heap more, only I don't want to be personal."

"And now," said Lindsay, "as we have so successfully identified each other, let me know, at once,

what has happened to my good friends the Hilliards, who I thought were fixed here for life. Why do I see their house a heap of ruins? Have the family been reduced to poverty?"

"Lawful heart, no," exclaimed the negro: "Masser Neddy been away so long in foreign parts, he forget how when people here in 'Merica give up their old houses, it's a'most always acause they've got new ones. Now old Abram Hilliard he got richer and richer every minute—though I guess he was pretty rich when you know'd him, only he never let on. And so he build him fine stone house beyont his piece of oak-woods, and there he live this blessed day.—And we goes there quite another road.—And so he gove this old frame to old Pharaoh; and so I had the whole house carted off, all that was good of it, and put it up on the road-side, just beyont here, in place of my old tumble-down cabin what I used to live in, that I've altered into a pig-pen. So now me and Binkey am quite comfabull."

"Show me the way," said Lindsay, "to the new residence of Mr. Hilliard. I have come from Philadelphia on purpose to visit the family."

"Bless your heart, masser, for that," said the old negro, as he held the stirrup for Lindsay to mount; and walking by his side, he proceeded with the usual garrulity of the African race, to relate many particulars of the Hilliards and their transit.

"Of course, Masser Neddy," said Pharaoh, "you 'member old Abram's two boys Isaac and Jacob, what you used to play with. You know Isaac mostly whipped you when you fout with him. Well, when they growed up, they thought they'd help'd their father long enough, and as they wanted right bad to go west, the old man gove 'em money to buy back land. So each took him horse—Isaac took Mike, and Jacob took Morgan, and they started west, and went to a place away back—away back—seven hundred thousand miles beyont Pitchburg. And they're like to get mighty rich; and word's come as Jacob's neighbours is going to set him up for congress, and I shouldn't be the least 'prized if he's presidump. You 'member, Masser Neddy, Jacob was always the tonguiest of the two boys."

"And where are Mr. Hilliard's daughters?" asked Lindsay.

"Oh, as to the two oldest," replied Pharaoh, "Kitty married Billy Pleasants, as keeps the store over at Candyville, and Betsey made a great match with a man what has a terrible big farm over on Siskahanna. And old Abram, after he got into him new house, sent him two youngest to the new school up at Wonderville, where they teaches the gals all sorts of wit and larning."

"And how are your own wife and children, Pharaoh?" inquired Lindsay; "I remember them very well."

"Bless your heart for that, masser!" replied the negro; "why Rose is hired at Abram Hilliard's—you know they brungt her up. And Cato lives out in Philadelphy—I wonders masser did not see him. And as for old Binkey, she holds her own pretty well. You know, masser, Binkey was always a great hand at quiltings, and weddings, and buryings, and such like frolics, and used to be sent for, high and low, to help cook at them times. But now she's a getting old,—being most a thousand,—and her birthday mostly comes on the forty-second of Feberwary—and so she stays at home, and makes rusk and gingerbread and molasses beer. This is molasses I have in the jemmy-john; I've jist come from the store. So she sells cakes and beer—that's the reason we lives on the road-side—and I works about. We used to have a sign that Sammy Spokes the wheelwright painted for us, for he was then the only man in these parts that had paints. There was two ginger-cakes on it, and one rusk, and a coal-black bottle with the beer spouting up high, and falling into a tumbler without ever spilling a drap. We were desperate pleased with the sign, for folks said it looked so nateral, and Sammy Spokes made us a present of it, and would not take it out in cakes and beer, as we wanted him, and that shewed him to be very much of a gemplan."

"As no doubt he is," remarked Lindsay; "I find, since my return to America, that gentlemen are 'as plenty as blackberries.'"

"You say very true, masser," rejoined the negro; "we are all gemplans now-a-days, and has plenty of blackberries. Well, as I was saying, we liked the sign a heap. But after Nelly Hilliard as was—we calls her Miss Ellen now—quit Wonderville school, where she learnt everything on the face of the yearth, she thought she would persecute painting at home, for she had a turn that way and wanted to keep her hand in. So she set to, and painted a new sign, and took it all out of her own head; and gove it to old Binkey and axplaned it to us. There's a thing on it that Miss Ellen calls a urn or wase—*that* stands for beer—and then there's a sugarcane growing out of it—*that* stands for molasses. And then there's a thick string of green leaves, with roots twisted amongst 'em—*that* answers for ginger, for she told us that ginger grows like any other widgable, and has stalks and leaves, but the root is what we uses. Yet, somehow, folks doesn't seem to understand this sign as well as the old one. A great many thinks the wase be an old sugar-dish with a bit of a corn-stalk sticking out of it, and some passley and hossreddish plastered on the outside, and say they should never guess cakes and beer by it."

"I should suppose not," said Lindsay.

"But, Masser Neddy," pursued the old negro, "all this time, we have been calling Abram Hilliard 'Abram,' instead of saying squire. Only think of old Abram; he has been made a squire this good while, and marries people. After he move into him new house, he begun to get high, and took to putting on a clean shirt and shaving every day, which Rose says was a pretty tough job with him at first; but he parsewered. And he's apt to have fresh meat whenever it's to be got, and he won't

eat stale pies: and so they have to do small bakings every day, instead of big ones twice a week. And sometimes he even go so far as to have geese took out of the flock, and killed and roasted, instead of saving 'em all for feathers. And he says that now he's clear of the world, he *will* live as he likes, and have everything he wants, and be quite comfabull. And he made his old woman leave off wearing short gownds, and put on long gownds all the time, and quit calling him daddy, which Rose says went very hard with her for a while. The gals being young, were broke of it easy enough; and now they says pappy."

"Pshaw!" ejaculated Lindsay, whose regret at the general change which seemed to have come over the Hilliard family now amounted nearly to vexation.

"Now, Masser Neddy," continued Pharaoh, "we've got to the new house—there it stands, right afore you. An't you 'prised at it? I always am whenever I sees it. So please a jump off, and I'll take your hoss to the stable, and put him up, and tell the people at the barn that Masser Neddy's come; and you can go into the house and speak for you'mself."

Lindsay, at parting, put a dollar into the hand of the old negro. "What for this, Masser Neddy?" asked Pharaoh, trying to look very disinterested.

"Do whatever you please with it," answered Lindsay.

"Well, masser," replied the negro, "I never likes to hurt a gemplan's feelings by 'fusing him. So I'll keep it, just to 'blige you. But, I 'spect, to be sure, Masser Neddy'll step in some day at negor-man's cabin, and see old Binkey, and take part of him dollar out in cakes and beer. I'll let masser know when Binkey has a fresh baking."

Pharaoh then led off the horse, and Lindsay stood for a few moments to take a survey of the new residence of his old friends. It was a broad, substantial two-story stone house. There was a front garden, where large snow-ball trees

> "Threw up their silver globes, light as the foamy surf,"

and where the conical clusters of the lilac, and the little May roses, were bursting into fragrance and beauty, and uniting their odours with those of the tall white lily, and the lowly but delicious pink. Behind the house ascended a woodland hill, whose trees at this season exhibited every shade of green, in tints as various as the diversified browns of autumn.

Lindsay found the front door unfastened, and opening it without ceremony, he entered a wide hall furnished with a long settee, a large table, a hat-stand, a hanging lamp, a map of the United States, and one of the world. There was a large parlour on each side of the hall, and Lindsay looked into both, the doors being open. One was carpeted, and seemed to be fitted up for winter, the other had a matted floor, and was evidently the summer sitting-room. The furniture in both, though by no means showy, was excellent of its kind and extremely neat; and in its form and arrangement convenience seemed to be the chief consideration. Lindsay thought he had never seen more pleasant-looking rooms. In the carpeted parlour, on the hearth of the Franklin stove, sat a blue china jar filled with magnolia flowers, whose spicy perfume was tempered by the outer air that came through the venetian blinds which were lowered to exclude the sunbeams. One recess was occupied by a mahogany book-case, and there was a side-board in the other. The chimney-place of the summer parlour was concealed by a drapery of ingeniously cut paper, and the various and beautiful flowers that adorned the mantel-piece had evidently been cultivated with care. Shelves of books hung in the recesses, and in both rooms were sofas and rocking-chairs.

"Is it possible," thought Lindsay, "that this can be the habitation of Abraham Hilliard?" And he ran over in his mind the humble aspect of their sitting-room in the old farm-house, with its home-made carpet of strips of listing; its tall-backed rush chairs; its walnut table; its corner cupboard; its hanging shelves suspended from the beams that crossed the ceiling, and holding miscellaneous articles of every description.

Having satisfied his curiosity by looking into the parlours, he proceeded through the hall to the back door, and there he found, in a porch canopied with honeysuckle, a woman busily engaged in picking the stems from a basket of early strawberries, as she transferred the fruit to a large bowl. Time had made so little change in her features, that, though much improved in her costume, he easily guessed her to be his old hostess Mrs. Hilliard. "Aunt Susan!" he exclaimed; for by that title he had been accustomed to address her in his boyhood. The old lady started up, and hastily snatched off her strawberry-stained apron.

"Have you no recollection of Edward Lindsay?" continued our hero, heartily shaking her hand.

She surveyed him from head to foot, till his identity dawned upon her, and then she ejaculated —"It is—it must be—though you are a gentleman, you *must* be little Neddy—there—there, sit down—I'll be back in a moment."

She went into the house, and returned almost immediately, bringing with her a small coquelicot waiter, with cakes and wine, which she pressed Lindsay to partake of. He smiled as he recollected that one of the customs of Oakland Farm was to oblige every stranger to eat and drink immediately on his arrival. And while he was discussing a cake and a glass of wine, the good dame heaped a saucer with strawberries, carried it away for a few minutes, and then brought it back inundated with cream and sugar. This was also presented to Lindsay,

recommending that he should eat another cake with the strawberries, and take another glass of wine after them.

On Edward's inquiring for her husband, Mrs. Hilliard replied that he was somewhere about the farm, and that the girls were drinking tea with some neighbours a few miles off; but she said she would send the carriage for them immediately, that they might be home early in the evening.

In a short time Abraham Hilliard came in, having seen Pharaoh at the barn, who had informed him of the arrival of "Master Neddy." The meeting afforded equal gratification to both parties. The old farmer looked as if quite accustomed to a clean shirt and to shaving every day; and Lindsay was glad to find that his manner of expressing himself had improved with his circumstances. Aunt Susan, however, had not, in this respect, kept pace with her husband, remaining, to use her own expression—"just the same old two and sixpence." Women who have not in early life enjoyed opportunities of cultivating their minds are rarely able at a late period to acquire much conversational polish.—With men the case is different.

Mrs. Hilliard now left her husband to entertain their guest, and, "on hospitable thoughts intent," withdrew to superintend the setting of a tea-table abounding in cakes and sweetmeats; the strawberry bowl and a pitcher of cream occupying the centre. This repast was laid out in the wide hall, and while engaged in arranging it, Mrs. Hilliard joined occasionally in the conversation which her husband and Lindsay were pursuing in her hearing, as they sat in the porch.

"Well, Edward," proceeded Mr. Hilliard, "you see a great alteration in things at the farm: and I conclude you are glad to find us in a better way than when you left us."

"Certainly," replied Lindsay.

"Now," said the penetrating old farmer, "that 'certainly' did not come from your heart.—Tell me the truth—you miss something, don't you?"

"Frankly, then," replied Lindsay, "I miss everything—I own myself so selfish as to feel some disappointment at the entire overthrow of all the images which during my long absence had been present to my mind's eye, in connexion with my remembrances of Oakland Farm. Thinking of the old farm house and its inhabitants, precisely as I had left them, and believing that time had passed over them without causing any essential change, I must say that I cannot, just at first, bring myself to be glad that it is otherwise. The happiness that seemed to dwell with the old house and the old-fashioned ways of its people, had been vividly impressed upon my feelings. And I fear—forgive me for saying so—that your family cannot have added much to their felicity by acquiring ideas and adopting habits to which they so long were strangers."

"There you are mistaken, my dear boy," answered the farmer. "I acknowledge that if, in removing to a larger house, and altering our way of living, we had in any one instance sacrificed comfort to show, or convenience to ostentation—which, unfortunately, has been the error of some of our neighbours—we should, indeed, have enjoyed far less happiness than heretofore. But we have not done so. We have made no attempts at mimicking what in the city is called style; and I have forbidden my daughters to mention the word fashion in my presence."

"Yes—yes," said Mrs. Hilliard, "I hope we have been wiser than the Newman family over at Poplar Plains. As soon as they got a little up in the world, they built a shell of a house that looks as if it was made of white pasteboard; and figured it all over with carved work inside and out; and stuck posts and pillars all about it with nothing of consequence to hold up; and furnished the rooms with all sorts of useless trumpery."

"Softly—softly—wife!" interrupted old Abraham—and turning to our hero, he proceeded—"well, as I was telling you, Edward, I endeavour to enjoy what I have worked so hard to acquire, and to enjoy it in a manner that really improves our condition, and renders it in every respect better. You know, that in former times, though I had very little leisure to read, I liked to take up a book whenever I had a few moments to spare, if I was not too tired with my work; and when I went to town with marketing, I always bought a book to bring home with me. Also, I took a weekly paper. As soon as I could afford it, I brought home more than one book, and took a daily paper. I gave my children the benefit of the best schooling that could be procured without sending them to town for the purpose; but at the same time, I was averse to their learning any showy and useless accomplishments."

"Well," rejoined Mrs. Hilliard, "we were certainly wiser than the Newmans, who sent their girls to a French school in Philadelphia, and had them taught music, both guitar and piano. And the Newman girls mix up their talk with all sorts of French words that sound very ugly to me. Instead of 'good night' they say *bone swear*;[77] and a 'trifle' they call a *bagtau*;[78] and they are always talking about having a *Gennessee Squaw*;[79] though what they mean by that I cannot imagine; for, I am sure I never saw any such thing in this part of the country. And the tunes they play on the piano seem to me like no tunes at all, but just a sort of scrambling up and down, that nobody can make either head or tail of. And when they sing to the guitar, it sounds to me just like moaning one minute, and screaming the next, with a little tinkling between whiles."

"Wife—wife," interrupted Abraham, "you are too severe on the poor girls."

"Well—well," proceeded Mrs. Hilliard, "I'll say nothing more, only this: that the airs they take on themselves make them the talk of the whole country—And then they've given up all sorts of work. The mother spends most of her time in taking naps, to make up, I suppose, for having had to rise

early all the former part of her life. The girls sit about all day in stiff silk frocks, squeezed so tight in them that they can hardly move. Or they go round paying morning visits, interrupting people in the busy part of the day. And they invite company to their house, and give them no tea; and say they're having a *swearey*.[80] To be sure it's a shame for me to say so, but it's well known that they never have a good thing on their table now, but pretend it's genteel to live on bits and morsels that have neither taste nor substance. And no doubt that's the reason the whole family have grown so thin and yellow, and are always complaining of something they call dyspepsy."

"*They* have certainly changed for the worse," remarked Lindsay. "I remember the Newmans very well—a happy, homely family living in a long, low, red frame house, and having everything about them plain and plentiful."

"So had we in our former dwelling," said Mr. Hilliard, "yet I think we are living still better now."

"I have many pleasant recollections of the old house," said Lindsay.

"For you," observed the farmer, "our old house and the manner in which we then lived, owed most of their charms to novelty, and to the circumstance that children are seldom fastidious. I doubt much, if you had found everything in *statu quo*, and the old house and its inhabitants just as you left them, whether you could have been induced to make us as long a visit as I hope you will now."

"My husband," said Mrs. Hilliard, "is different from most men of his age. Instead of dwelling all the while upon old times, he stands up for the times we live in, and says everything now is better than it used to be. And he's brought me to agree with him pretty much—I never was an idle woman, and I keep myself busy enough still, but I do think it is pleasanter to keep hired people for the hard work than to have to help with it myself, as you know I used to. Though I never complained about it, still I cannot say, now I look back, that there was any great pleasure in helping on washing-days and ironing-days, or in making soft soap, and baking great batches of bread and pies—to be sure, my soft soap was admired all over the country, and my bread was always light, and my pie-crust never tough. Neither was there much delight in seeing my two eldest girls paddling to the barn-yard every morning and evening, through all weathers, to milk the cows; or setting them at heavy churnings, and other hard work. And then at harvest-time, and at killing-time, and when we were getting the marketing ready for husband to take to town in the wagon, we were on our feet the whole blessed day. To be sure, they were used to it, but I often felt sorry for Abraham and the boys, when they came home from the field in a warm evening, so tired with work they could hardly speak, and were glad to wash themselves, and get their supper, and go to bed at dark. And the girls and I were always glad enough, too, to get our rest as soon as we had put away the milk and washed the supper things; knowing we should have to be up before the stars were gone, to sweep the house and do the milking, and get the breakfast, that the men might be off early to work."

"I remember all this very well," said Lindsay.

"To be sure you do," pursued Mrs. Hilliard. "Then don't you think it's pleasant for us now not to be overworked during the day, so that in the evening, instead of going to bed, we can sit round the table in a nice parlour, and sew and knit; or read, for them that likes it. Husband and the girls always did take pleasure in reading—and, for my part, now I've time, I'm beginning to like a book myself. Last winter, I read a good deal in the second volume of the Spectator. In short, I have not the least notion of grieving after our way of living at the old house."

"Nor I neither," added Abraham; "and I really find it much more agreeable to superintend my farm, than to be obliged to labour on it myself."

"And now let us proceed with our tea," said Mrs. Hilliard; "and, Neddy, if you do not eat hearty of what you see before you, I shall think you are fretting after the mush and milk, and sowins, and pie and cheese, that we use to have on our old supper table, and which I do not believe you could eat now if they were before you. Come, you must not mind my speaking out so plainly. You know I always was a right-down sort of woman, and am so still."

Edward smiled, and pressed her hand kindly, acknowledging that all she had said was justified by truth and reason.

The carriage—they kept a very plain but a very capacious one—brought home the girls shortly after candle-light. Lindsay ran out to assist them in alighting, and was glad to find that on hearing his name they retained a perfect recollection of him, though they were in their earliest childhood at the time of his departure for Europe. When they came into the light, he found them both very pretty. Their skins had not been tanned by exposure to the sun and wind, nor their shoulders stooped, nor their hands reddened by hard work; as had been the case with their two elder sisters. They were dressed in white frocks, blue shawls, and straw bonnets with blue ribbons; neatly, and in good taste.

The evening passed pleasantly, and Lindsay soon discovered that the daughters of his host were very charming girls. Ellen, perhaps, had a little tinge of vanity, but Lucy was entirely free from it. Diffidence prevented her from talking much, but she listened understandingly, and when she did speak, it was with animation and intelligence. Lindsay felt that he should not have liked her so well had she looked, and dressed, and talked as he remembered her elder sisters.

When he retired for the night, his bed and room were so well furnished, and looked so inviting,

that he could not regret the little low apartment with no chimney and only one window, that he had occupied in the old farm-house; and he slept quite as soundly under a white counterpane as he had formerly done under a patch-work quilt.

We have no space to enter more minutely into the details of our hero's visit, nor to relate by what process he speedily became a convert to the fact that even among country-people the march of improvement adds greatly to their comfort and happiness; provided always, that they do not mistake the road, and diverge into the path of folly and pretension.

Suffice it to say, that he protracted his stay to a week, during which he broke the girls of the habit of saying "pappy," substituting the more sensible and affectionate epithet of "father." When Pharaoh announced the proper time, he made a visit to the refectory of old Binkey, whom he afterwards desired the Candyville storekeeper to supply at his charge, with materials for her cakes and beer, *ad libitum*, during the remainder of her life.

The visit of Edward Lindsay to Oakland was in the course of the summer so frequently repeated, that no one was much surprised when, early in October, he conducted Lucy Hilliard to Philadelphia as his bride: acknowledging to himself that he could never have made her so, had she and her family continued exactly as he had known them at the OLD FARM-HOUSE.

THAT GENTLEMAN:

OR,

PENCILLINGS ON SHIP-BOARD.

> "Yon sun that sets upon the sea
> We follow in his flight."—BYRON.

"And now, dear Caroline, tell us some particulars of your passage home," said Mrs. Esdale to her sister, as they quitted the tea-table on the evening of Mr. and Mrs. Fenton's arrival from a visit to Europe.

"Our passage home," replied Mrs. Fenton, "was moderately short, and generally pleasant. We had a good ship, a good captain, splendid accommodations, and an excellent table, and were not crowded with too many passengers."

"Yet, let us hear something more circumstantial," said Mrs. Esdale.

"Dear Henrietta," replied her sister, "have I not often told you how difficult it is to relate anything amusingly or interestingly when you are expressly called upon to do so; when you are expected to sit up in form, and furnish a regular narrative, with a beginning, a middle, and an end."

"But indeed," rejoined Mrs. Esdale, "we have anticipated much pleasure from hearing your account of the voyage. Come,—let us take our seats in the front parlour, and leave your husband and mine to their discussion of the political prospects of both hemispheres. The girls and myself would much rather listen to your last impressions of life on ship-board."

"Do, dear aunt," said both the daughters of Mrs. Esdale, two fine girls of seventeen and fifteen—and taking their seats at the sofa-table, they urged Mrs Fenton to commence.

"Well, then," said Mrs. Fenton, "to begin in the manner of the fairy tales—once upon a time there lived in the city of New York, a merchant whose name was Edward Fenton—and he had a wife named Caroline Fenton. And notwithstanding that they had a town-house and a country-house, and a coach to ride in, and fine clothes, and fine furniture, and plenty of good things to eat and to drink, they grew tired of staying at home and being comfortable. So they sailed away in a ship, and never stopped till they got to England. And there they saw the king and queen, with gold crowns on their heads, and sceptres in their hands—(by-the-bye it was lucky that we arrived in time for the coronation)—and they heard the king cough, and the queen sneeze: and they saw lords with ribands and stars, and ladies with plumes and diamonds. They travelled and travelled, and often came to great castles that looked like giants' houses: and they went all over England and Wales, and Ireland and Scotland. Then they returned to London, and saw more sights; and then they were satisfied to come back to America, where they expect to live happily all the rest of their lives."

"Now, aunt, you are laughing at us," said Juliet Esdale—"your letters from Europe have somewhat taken off the edge of our curiosity as to your adventures there: and it is just now our especial desire to hear something of your voyage home."

"In truth," replied Mrs. Fenton, "I must explain, that on this, the first evening of my return, I feel too happy, and too much excited, to talk systematically on any subject whatever; much less to arrange my ideas into the form of a history. To-morrow I shall be engaged all day at my own house: for I must preside at the awakening of numerous articles of furniture that have been indulged during our absence with a long slumber; some being covered up in cases, and some shut up in closets, or disrespectfully imprisoned in the attics. But I will come over in the evening; and,

if we are not interrupted by visiters, I will read you some memorandums that I made on the passage. I kept no regular journal, but I wrote a little now and then, chiefly for my amusement, and to diversify my usual occupations of reading, sewing, and walking the deck. Therefore excuse me to-night, and let me have my humour, for I feel exactly in the vein to talk 'an infinite deal of nothing.'"

"Aunt Caroline," said Clara, "you know that, talk as you will, we always like to hear you. But we shall long for to-morrow evening."

"Do not, however, expect a finished picture of a sea-voyage," said Mrs. Fenton, "I can only promise you a few slight outlines, filled up with a half tint, and without lights or shadows; like the things that the Chinese sometimes paint on their tea-chests."

On the following evening, the gentlemen having gone to a public meeting, and measures being taken for the exclusion of visitors, Mrs. Esdale and her daughters seated themselves at the table with their work, and Mrs. Fenton produced her manuscript book, and read as follows: having first reminded her auditors that her husband and herself, instead of embarking at London, had gone by land to Portsmouth, and from thence crossed over to the Isle of Wight, where they took apartments at the principal hotel in the little town of Cowes, at which place the ship was to touch on her way down the British channel.

Having amply availed ourselves of the opportunity (afforded by a three days' sojourn) of exploring the beauties of the Isle of Wight, we felt some impatience to find ourselves fairly afloat, and actually on our passage "o'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea." On the fourth afternoon, we walked down to the beach, and strolled amid shells and sea-weed, along the level sands at the foot of a range of those chalky cliffs that characterize the southern coast of England. It was a lovely day. A breeze from the west was ruffling the crests of the green transparent waves, and wafting a few light clouds across the effulgence of the declining sun, whose beams danced radiantly on the surface of the water, gilding the black and red sails of the fishing-boats, and then withdrawing, at intervals, and leaving the sea in shade.

"Should this wind continue," said Mr. Fenton, "we may be detained here a week, and have full leisure to clamber again among the ruins of Carisbrook Castle, and to gaze at the cloven chalk-rocks of Shankline Chine, and the other wonders of this pleasant little island."

We then approached an old disabled sailor, who was smoking his pipe, seated on a dismantled cannon that lay prostrate on the sands, its iron mouth choked up with the sea-weed that the tide had washed into it; and on entering into conversation with him, we found that he was an out-pensioner of Greenwich hospital, and that for the last ten years he had passed most of his time about Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight.

"Have you ever known a ship come down from London with such a wind as this?" inquired Mr. Fenton.

"No," replied the sailor.—"After she doubles Beachy Head, this wind would be right in her teeth."

"Then," said Mr. Fenton, turning to me—"till it changes, we may give up all hope of seeing our gallant vessel."

"What ship are you looking for?" asked the sailor.

"The Washington."

"Oh! an American ship—ay, *she'll* come down. *They* can make their way with any sort of wind." [81]

He had scarcely spoken, when the flag of our country appeared beyond the point, its bright stars half obscured by the ample folds of the white and crimson stripes that, blown backward by the adverse breeze, were waving across them. In a moment the snowy sails of the Washington came full into view, shaded with purple by the setting sun.

"There she is!" exclaimed my husband. "There she comes—is not an American ship one of the most beautiful objects created by the hand of man? Well, indeed, do they merit the admiration that is so frankly accorded to them by every nation of the earth."

My husband, in his enthusiasm, shook the hand of the old sailor, and slipped some money into it. We remained on the beach looking at the ship till

> "——o'er her bow the rustling cable rung,
> The sails were furl'd; and anchoring round she swung."

A boat was then lowered from her stern, and the captain came off in it. He walked with us to the hotel, and informed us that he should leave Cowes early the following day. We soon completed the preparations for our final departure, and before eight o'clock next morning we had taken our last step on British ground, and were installed in our new abode on the world of waters. Several of the passengers had come down in the ship from London; others, like ourselves, had preferred commencing their voyage from the Isle of Wight; and some, as we understood, were to join us at

Plymouth.

We sailed immediately. The breeze freshened, and that night and the next day, there was much general discomfort from sea-sickness; but, fortunately for us both, I was very slightly affected by that distressing malady, and Mr. Fenton not at all.

On the third day, we were enabled to lay our course with a fair wind and a clear sky: the coast of Cornwall looking like a succession of low white clouds ranged along the edge of the northern horizon. Towards evening we passed the Lizard, to see land no more till we should descry it on the other side of the Atlantic. As Mr. Fenton and myself leaned over the taffrail, and saw the last point of England fade dimly from our view, we thought with regret of the shore we were leaving behind us, and of much that we had seen, and known, and enjoyed in that country of which all that remained to our lingering gaze was a dark spot so distant and so small as to be scarcely perceptible. Soon we could discern it no longer: and nothing of Europe was now left to us but the indelible recollections that it has impressed upon our minds. We turned towards the region of the descending sun—

> "To where his setting splendours burn
> Upon the western sea-maid's urn,"

and we vainly endeavoured to direct all our thoughts and feelings towards our home beyond the ocean—our beloved American home.

On that night, as on many others, when our ship was careering through the sea, with her yards squared, and her sails all trimmed to a fresh and favouring breeze, while we sat on a sofa in the lesser cabin, and looked up through the open skylight at the stars that seemed flying over our heads, we talked of the land we had so recently quitted. We talked of her people, who though differing from ours in a thousand minute particulars, are still essentially the same. Our laws, our institutions, our manners, and our customs are derived from theirs: we are benefited by the same arts, we are enlightened by the same sciences. Their noble and copious language is fortunately ours—their Shakspeare also belongs to us; and we rejoice that we can possess ourselves of his "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn," in all their original freshness and splendour, unobscured by the mist of translation. Though the ocean divides our dwelling-places: though the sword and the cannon-shot have sundered the bonds that once united us to her dominion: though the misrepresentations of travelling adventurers have done much to foster mutual prejudices, and to embitter mutual jealousies, still we share the pride of our parent in the glorious beings she can number among the children of her island home, for

> "Yet lives the blood of England in our veins."

On the fourth day of our departure from the Isle of Wight, we found ourselves several hundred miles from land, and consigned to the solitudes of that ocean-desert, "dark-heaving-boundless—endless—and sublime"—whose travellers find no path before them, and leave no track behind. But the wind was favourable, the sky was bright, the passengers had recovered their health and spirits, and for the first time were all able to present themselves at the dinner-table; and there was really what might be termed a "goodly company."

It is no longer the custom in American packet ships for ladies to persevere in what is called a sea-dress: that is, a sort of dishabille prepared expressly for the voyage. Those who are not well enough to devote some little time and attention to their personal appearance, rarely come to the general table, but take their meals in their own apartment. The gentlemen, also, pay as much respect to their toilet as when on shore.

The *coup d'œil* of the dinner-table very much resembles that of a fashionable hotel. All the appurtenances of the repast are in handsome style. The eatables are many of them such as, even on shore, would be considered delicacies, and they are never deficient in abundance and variety. Whatever may be the state of the weather, or the motion of the ship, the steward and the cook are unfailing in their duty; constantly fulfilling their arduous functions with the same care and regularity. The breakfast-table is always covered with a variety of relishes, and warm cakes. At noon there is a luncheon of pickled oysters, cold ham, tongue, &c. The dinner consists of fowls, ducks, geese, turkeys, fresh pork or mutton; for every ship is well supplied with live poultry, pigs and sheep. During the first week of the voyage there is generally fresh beef on the table, it being brought on board from the last place at which the vessel has touched: and it is kept on deck wrapped closely in a sail-cloth, and attached to one of the masts, the salt atmosphere preserving it. Every day at the dessert there are delicious pies and puddings, followed by almonds, raisins, oranges, &c.; and the tea-table is profusely set out with rich cakes and sweetmeats. For the sick there is always an ample store of sago, arrow-root, pearl-barley, tamarinds, &c. Many persons have an opportunity, during their passage across the Atlantic, of living more luxuriously than they have ever done in their lives, or perhaps ever will again. Our passengers were not too numerous. The lesser cabin was appropriated to three other ladies and myself. It formed our drawing-room; the gentlemen being admitted only as visiters. One of the ladies was Mrs. Calcott, an amiable and intelligent woman, who was returning with her husband from a long residence in England. Another was Miss Harriet Audley, a very pretty and very lively young lady from Virginia, who had been visiting a married sister in London, and was now on her way home under the care of the captain, expecting to meet her father in New York. We were much amused during the voyage with the coquetry of our fair Virginian, as she aimed her arrows at nearly all the single gentlemen in turn; and with her frankness in openly talking of her designs, and animadverting on

their good or ill success. The gentlemen, with the usual vanity of their sex, always believed Miss Audley's attacks on their hearts to be made in earnest, and that she was deeply smitten with each of them in succession; notwithstanding that the smile in her eye was far more frequent than the blush on her cheek; and notwithstanding that rumour had asserted the existence of a certain cavalier in the neighbourhood of Richmond, whose constancy it was supposed she would eventually reward with her hand, as he might be considered, in every sense of the term, an excellent match.

Our fourth female passenger was Mrs. Cummings, a plump, rosy-faced old lady of remarkably limited ideas, who had literally passed her whole life in the city of London. Having been recently left a widow, she had broken up housekeeping, and was now on her way to join a son established in New York, who had very kindly sent for her to come over and live with him. The rest of the world was almost a sealed book to her, but she talked a great deal of the Minories, the Poultry, the Old Jewry, Cheapside, Long Acre, Bishopsgate Within, and Bishopsgate Without, and other streets and places with, appellations equally expressive.

The majority of the male passengers were pleasant and companionable—and we thought we had seen them all in the course of the first three days—but on the fourth, we heard the captain say to one of the waiters, "Juba, ask that gentleman if I shall have the pleasure of taking wine with him." My eyes now involuntarily followed the direction of Juba's movements, feeling some curiosity to know who "that gentleman" was, as I now recollected having frequently heard the epithet within the last few days. For instance, when almost every one was confined by sea-sickness to their state-rooms, I had seen the captain despatch a servant to inquire of that gentleman if he would have anything sent to him from the table. Also, I had heard Hamilton, the steward, call out, —"There, boys, don't you hear that gentleman ring his bell—why don't you run spontaneously—jump, one of you, to number eleventeen." I was puzzled for a moment to divine which state-room bore the designation of eleventeen, but concluded it to be one of the many unmeaning terms that characterize the phraseology of our coloured people. Once or twice I wondered who that gentleman could be; but something else happened immediately to divert my attention.

Now, when I heard Captain Santlow propose taking wine with him, I concluded that, of course, that gentleman must be visible in *propriâ personâ*, and, casting my eyes towards the lower end of the table, I perceived a genteel-looking man whom I had not seen before. He was apparently of no particular age, and there was nothing in his face that could lead any one to guess at his country. He might have been English, Scotch, Irish, or American; but he had none of the characteristic marks of either nation. He filled his glass, and bowing his head to Captain Santlow, who congratulated him on his recovery, he swallowed his wine in silence. There was an animated conversation going on near the head of the table, between Miss Audley and two of her beaux, and we thought no more of him.

At the close of the dessert, we happened to know that he had quitted the table and gone on deck, by one of the waiters coming down and requesting Mr. Overslaugh (who was sitting a-tilt, while discussing his walnuts, with his chair balanced on one leg, and his head leaning against the wainscot) to let him pass for a moment, while he went into No. eleventeen for that gentleman's overcoat. I now found that the servants had converted No. 13 into eleventeen. By-the-bye, that gentleman had a state-room all to himself, sometimes occupying the upper and sometimes the under berth.

"Captain Santlow," said Mr. Fenton, "allow me to ask you the name of that gentleman."

"Oh! I don't know"—replied the captain, trying to suppress a smile—"at least I have forgotten it—some English name; for he is an Englishman—he came on board at Plymouth, and his indisposition commenced immediately. Mrs. Cummings, shall I have the pleasure of peeling an orange for you?"

I now recollected a little incident which had set me laughing soon after we left Plymouth, and when we were beating down the coast of Devonshire. I had been trying to write at the table in the Ladies' Cabin, but it was one of those days when

> "Our paper, pen and ink, and we
> Roll up and down our ships at sea."

And all I could do was to take refuge in my berth, and endeavour to read, leaving the door open for more air. My attention, however, was continually withdrawn from my book by the sound of things that were dislodged from their places, sliding or falling, and frequently suffering destruction; though sometimes miraculously escaping unhurt.

While I was watching the progress of two pitchers that had been tossed out of the washing-stand, and after deluging the floor with water, had met in the Ladies' Cabin, and were rolling amicably side by side, without happening to break each other, I saw a barrel of flour start from the steward's pantry, and running across the dining-room, stop at a gentleman that lay extended in a lower berth with his room door open, and pour out its contents upon him, completely enveloping him in a fog of meal. I heard the steward, who was busily engaged in mopping up the water that had flowed from the pitchers, call out, "Run, boys, run, that gentleman's smothering up in flour—go take the barrel off him—jump, I tell you!"

How that gentleman acted while hidden in the cloud of flour, I could not perceive, and immediately the closing of the folding doors shut out the scene.

For a few days after he appeared among us, there was some speculation with regard to this nameless stranger, whose taciturnity seemed his chief characteristic. One morning while we were looking at the gambols of a shoal of porpoises that were tumbling through the waves and sometimes leaping out of them, my husband made some remark on the clumsy antics of this unsightly fish, addressing himself, for the first time, to the unknown Englishman, who happened to be standing near him. That gentleman smiled affably, but made no reply. Mr. Fenton pursued the subject—and that gentleman smiled still more affably, and walked away.

Nevertheless, he was neither deaf nor dumb, nor melancholy, but had only "a great talent for silence," and as is usually the case with persons whose genius lies that way, he was soon left entirely to himself, no one thinking it worth while to take the trouble of extracting words from him. In truth, he was so impracticable, and at the same time so evidently insignificant, and so totally uninteresting, that his fellow-passengers tacitly conveyed him to Coventry; and in Coventry he seemed perfectly satisfied to dwell. Once or twice Captain Santlow was asked again if he recollected the name of that gentleman; but he always replied with a sort of smile, "I cannot say I do—not exactly, at least—but I'll look at my manifest and see"—and he never failed to turn the conversation to something else.

The only person that persisted in occasionally talking to that gentleman, was old Mrs. Cummings; and she confided to him her perpetual alarms at "the perils of the sea," considering him a good hearer, as he never made any reply, and was always disengaged, and sitting and standing about, apparently at leisure while the other gentlemen were occupied in reading, writing, playing chess, walking the deck, &c.

Whenever the ship was struck by a heavy sea, and after quivering with the shock, remained motionless for a moment before she recovered herself and rolled the other way, poor Mrs. Cummings supposed that we had run against a rock, and could not be convinced that rocks were not dispersed every where about the open ocean. And as that gentleman never attempted to undeceive her on this or any other subject, but merely listened with a placid smile, she believed that he always thought precisely as she did. She not unfrequently discussed to him, in an under tone, the obstinacy and incivility of the captain, who she averred, with truth, had never in any one instance had the politeness to stop the ship, often as she had requested, nay implored him to do so even when she was suffering with sea-sickness, and actually tossed out of her berth by the violence of the storm, though she was holding on with both hands.

One day, while we were all three sitting in the round-house (that very pleasant little saloon on the upper deck, at the head of the cabin-staircase), my attention was diverted from my book by hearing Mrs. Cummings say to that gentleman, "Pray, sir, can you tell me what is the matter with that poor man's head? I mean the man that has to stand always at the wheel there, holding it fast and turning it. I hear the captain call out to him every now and then (and in a very rough voice too, sometimes), 'How is your head?' and 'How is your head now?' I cannot understand what the man says in answer, so I suppose he speaks American; but the captain often tells him 'to keep it steady.' And once I heard the captain call out 'Port—port,' which I was very glad of, concluding that the poor fellow had nearly given out, and he was ordering a glass of port wine to revive him. Do you think, sir, that the poor man at the wheel has a constant headache like my friend Mrs. Dawlish of Leadenhall street, or that he has hurt his head somehow, by falling out of the sails, or tumbling down the ropeladders—(there now—we've struck a rock!—mercy on us—what a life we lead! I wish I was on Ludgate Hill.) Talking of hurts, I have not escaped them myself, for I've had my falls; and yet the captain is so rude as to turn a deaf ear, and keeps sailing on all the same, even when the breath is nearly knocked out of me, and though I've offered several times to pay him for stopping, but he only laughs at me. By-the-bye, when I go back again to dear old England, and I'm sorry enough that I ever left it (as Mr. Stackhouse, the great corn-chandler in Whitechapel, told me I certainly should be), I'll see and take my passage with a captain that has more feeling for the ladies. As for this one, he never lets the ship rest a minute, but he keeps forcing her on day and night. I doubt whether she'll last the voyage out, with all this wear and tear—and then if she *should* give in, what's to become of us all? If he would only let her stand still while we are at table, that we might eat our dinners in peace!—though it's seldom I'm well enough to eat anything to speak of—I often make my whole dinner of the leg and wing of a goose, and a slice or two of plum-pudding; but there's no comfort in eating, when we are one minute thrown forward with our heads bowing down to the very table-cloth, and the next minute flung back with them knocking against the wall."

"There was the other day at breakfast you know, we had all the cabin windows shut up at eight o'clock in the morning, which they called putting in the dead-lights—(I cannot see why shutters should be called lights)—and they put the lid on the skylight, and made it so dark that we had to breakfast with lamps. There must have been some strange mismanagement, or we need not have been put to all that inconvenience; and then when the ship almost fell over, they let a great flood of sea come pouring down among us, sweeping the plates off the table, and washing the very cups out of our hands, and filling our mouths with salt water, and ruining our dresses. I wonder what my friend Mrs. Danks, of Crutched Friars, would say if she had all this to go through—she that is so afraid of the water, she won't go over London Bridge for fear it should break down with her, and therefore visits nobody that lives in the Borough—there now—a rock again! I wish I was in St. Paul's Church Yard! Dear me!—what will become of us?"

"Upon my word I can't tell," said that gentleman, as he rose and walked out on deck.

I then endeavoured to set the old lady right, by explaining to her that the business of the man at

the wheel was to steer the vessel, and that he was not always the same person, the helmsman being changed at regular periods. I also made her understand that the captain only meant to ask in what direction was the head of the ship—and that "port—port," signified that he should put up the helm to the larboard or left side.

I could not forbear repeating to Captain Santlow the ludicrous mistake of Mrs. Cummings, and her unfounded sympathy for the man at the wheel. He laughed, and said it reminded him of a story he had heard concerning an old Irish woman, a steerage passenger, that early in the morning after a stormy night, was found by the mate, cautiously creeping along the deck and looking round at every step, with a bottle of whiskey half-concealed under her apron. On the mate asking her what she was going to do with the whiskey, she replied, "I'm looking for that cratur Bill Lay, that ye were all calling upon the whole night long, and not giving him a minute to rest himself. I lay in my bed and I heard ye tramping and shouting over head!—'twas nothing but Bill Lay[82] here, and Bill Lay there, and Bill Lay this, and Bill Lay that—and a weary time he's had of it—for it was yourselves that could do nothing without him, great shame to ye. And I thought I'd try and find him out, the sowl, and bring him a drop of comfort, for it's himself that nades it."

Mrs. Cummings's compassion for the helmsman was changed into a somewhat different feeling a few days after. The captain and Mr. Fenton were sitting near the wheel earnestly engaged in a game of chess. The wind had been directly ahead for the last twenty-four hours, and several of the passengers were pacing the deck, and looking alternately at the sails and the dog-vane—suddenly there was an exclamation from one of them, of "Captain—captain—the wind has changed—it has just gone about!" Captain Santlow started up, and perceived that the little flag was apparently blowing in another direction; but on looking at the compass, he discovered the truth—it was now found that the steersman, who happened to understand chess, was so interested with the game which was playing immediately before him, that he had for a moment forgotten his duty, and inadvertently allowed the head of the ship to fall off half a dozen points from the wind. The error was immediately rectified; and Captain Santlow (who never on any occasion lost his temper) said coolly to the helmsman, "For this, sir, your grog shall be stopped."

This little incident afforded an additional excitement to the ever-ready fears of Mrs. Cummings, who now took it into her head that if (as she phrased it) the wheel was turned the wrong way, it would overset the ship. Upon finding that the delinquent was an American, she opined that there could be no safety in a vessel where the sailors understood chess. And whenever we had a fresh breeze (such as she always persisted in calling a violent storm) she was very importunate with the captain not to allow the chess-man to take the wheel.

"Ah!" said Mrs. Cummings, "I am sure there is no such thing in his majesty's ships, as sailors knowing chess or any of those hard things that are enough to set one crazy to think of. In my own dear country, people are saving of their wits; but you Americans always know more of everything than you ought to. I don't wonder so few of you look plump and ruddy. You all wear yourselves out with head-work. Your eyes are not half so big as ours, for they are fairly sunk in your heads with thinking and contriving. To be sure, at our house in the Minories we always kept a pack of cards in the parlour closet. But we never played any but very easy games, for it was not our way to make a toil of pleasure. Mercy on me!—what a rock!—I wish I was at the Back of St. Clements—How I have seen the Potheridge family in Throgmorton street, ponder and study over a game of whist as if their lives depended on every card. I had to play whist whenever I drank tea there, for they were never satisfied unless they were at it every night; and I hated it, because I always happened to get old Miss Nancy for a partner, and she was so sharp and so cross, and was continually finding fault with me for something she called reneaging. Whenever I gave out that I was one by honours, she always said it was no such thing; and she downright scolded, when after she had played an ace I played a king; or when she had trumped first and I made all sure by trumping too. Now what I say is this—a trick can't be too well taken. But I'm not for whist—give me a good easy game where you can't go wrong, such as I've been used to all my life; though, no doubt when I get to America, I shall find my son Jacky playing chess and whist and despising Beggar my neighbour."

In less than a fortnight after we left the British Channel, we were off the Banks of Newfoundland; and, as is frequently the case in their vicinity, we met with cold foggy weather. It cleared a little about seven in the morning, and we then discovered no less than three ice-bergs to leeward. One of them, whose distance from us was perhaps a mile, appeared higher than the mainmast head, and as the top shot up into a tall column, it looked like a vast rock with a light-house on its pinnacle. As the cold and watery sunbeams gleamed fitfully upon it, it exhibited in some places the rainbow tints of a prism—other parts were of a dazzling white, while its sharp angular projections seemed like masses of diamonds glittering upon snow.

The fog soon became so dense, that in looking over the side of the ship we could not discern the sea. Fortunately, it was so calm that we scarcely moved, or the danger of driving on the ice-bergs would have been terrific. We had now no other means of ascertaining our distance from them, but by trying the temperature of the water with a thermometer.

In the afternoon, the fog gathered still more thickly round us, and dripped from the rigging, so that the sailors were continually swabbing the deck. I had gone with Mr. Fenton to the round-house, and looked a while from its windows on the comfortless scene without. The only persons then on the main-deck were the captain and the first mate. They were wrapped in their watch-coats, their hair and whiskers dripping with the fog-dew. Most of the passengers went to bed at

an early hour, and soon all was awfully still; Mrs. Cummings being really too much frightened to talk, only that she sometimes wished herself in Shoreditch, and sometimes in Houndsditch. It was a night of real danger. The captain remained on deck till morning, and several of the gentlemen bore him company, being too anxious to stay below.

About day-break, a heavy shower of rain dispersed the fog—"the conscious vessel waked as from a trance"—a breeze sprung up that carried us out of danger from the ice-bergs, which were soon diminished to three specks on the horizon, and the sun rose bright and cheerfully.

Towards noon, the ladies recollected that none of them had seen that gentleman during the last twenty-four hours, and some apprehension was expressed lest he should have walked overboard in the fog. No one could give any account of him, or remember his last appearance; and Miss Audley professed much regret that now, in all probability, we should never be able to ascertain his name, as, most likely, he had "died and made no sign." To our shames be it spoken, not one of us could cry a tear at his possible fate. The captain had turned into his berth, and was reposing himself after the fatigue of last night; so we could make no inquiry of him on the subject of our missing fellow-passenger.

Mrs. Cummings called the steward, and asked him how long it was since he had seen anything of that gentleman. "I really can't tell, madam," replied Hamilton; "I can't pretend to charge my memory with such things. But I conclude he must have been seen yesterday—at least I rather expect he was."

The waiter Juba was now appealed to: "I believe, madam," said Juba—"I remember something of handing that gentleman the bread-basket yesterday at dinner—but I would not be qualified as to whether the thing took place or not, my mind being a good deal engaged at the time."

Solomon, the third waiter, disclaimed all positive knowledge of this or any other fact, but sagely remarked, "that it was very likely that gentleman had been about all yesterday, as usual; yet still it was just as likely he might not; and there was only one thing certain, which was, that if he was not nowhere, he must, of course, be somewhere."

"I have a misgiving," said Mrs. Cummings, "that he will never be found again."

"I'll tell you what I can do, madam," exclaimed the steward, looking as if suddenly struck with a bright thought—"I can examine into No. eleventeen, and see if I can perceive him there." And softly opening the door of the state-room in question, he stepped back, and said with a triumphant flourish of his hand—"There he is, ladies, there he is in the upper berth, fast asleep in his double-cashmere dressing-gown. I opinionate that he was one of the gentlemen that stayed on deck all night, because they were afraid to go to sleep on account of the icebergers.—Of course, nobody noticed him—but there he is *now*, safe enough."

Instantly we proceeded *en masse* towards No. eleventeen, to convince ourselves: and there indeed we saw that gentleman lying asleep in his double cashmere dressing-gown. He opened his eyes, and seemed surprised, as well he might, at seeing all the ladies and all the servants ranged before the door of his room, and gazing in at him: and then we all stole off, looking foolish enough.

"Well," said Mrs. Cummings, "he is not dead, however,—so we have yet a chance of knowing his name from himself, if we choose to ask him. But I'm determined I'll make the captain tell it me, as soon as he gets up. It's all nonsense, this making a secret of a man's name."

"I suspect," said Mr. Fenton, who had just then entered the cabin, "we shall find it

> ——'a name unpronounce*able*,
> Which nobody can speak and nobody can spell.'"

"I never," observed Mrs. Cummings, "knew but one name that could neither be spoke nor spelt—and that was the great general's, that was so often in the papers at the time people were talking about the Poles."

"Sczrynecki?" said Mr. Fenton.

"Oh! I don't know how *you* call him," replied Mrs. Cummings; "but Mr. Upshaw of Great Knight Rider street, said it was 'Screw him sky high.' And Dr. Mangleman of Cateaton street (who was always to me a very disagreeable person, because he always talked of disagreeable things), said it was 'Squeeze neck and eyes out.' A very unpleasant person was Dr. Mangleman. His talk was enough to make well people sick, and sick people sicker—I'm glad he's not on board o' ship with us. He told us one day at Mrs. Winceby's dinner-table, when some of us were eating calf's head, and some roast pig, about his dissecting a man that was hanged, and how he took his knife and —"

"I really believe," said I, wishing to be spared the story, "that we have actually struck a rock this time."

"There now," exclaimed Mrs. Cummings, "you see I am right, after all. If it is not a rock, it is one of those great hills of ice that has turned about and is coming right after us—Mercy on us! I wish I was in Middle Row, Holborn! Let us go on deck, and see."

We went on deck, and saw a whale, which was spouting at a distance. While looking at it, we

were joined by Captain Santlow, and the conversation turning entirely on whales, that gentleman and his name were again forgotten.

Among the numerous steerage passengers was a young man whose profession was that of a methodist preacher. Having succeeded in making some religious impressions on the majority of his companions, he one Sunday obtained their consent to his performing divine service that evening in the steerage: and respectfully intimated that he would be highly gratified by the attendance of any of the cabin passengers that would condescend to honour him so far. Accordingly, after tea, we all descended to the steerage at early candle-light, and found everything prepared for the occasion. A barrel, its head covered with a piece of sail-cloth, served as a desk, lighted by two yellowish dip candles placed in empty porter bottles. But as there was considerable motion, it was found that the bottles would not rest in their stations; therefore, they were held by two boys. The chests and boxes nearest to the desk, were the seats allotted to the ladies and gentlemen: and the steerage people ranged themselves behind.

A hymn was sung to a popular tune. The prayer and sermon were delivered in simple but impressive language; for the preacher, though a poor and illiterate man, was not deficient either in sense or feeling, and was evidently imbued with the sincerest piety. There was something solemn and affecting in the aspect of the whole scene, with all its rude arrangement; and also in the idea of the lonely and insulated situation of our little community, with "one wide water all around us." And when the preacher, in his homely but fervent language, returned thanks for our hitherto prosperous voyage, and prayed for our speedy and safe arrival at our destined port, tears stood in the eyes of many of his auditors. I thought, when it was over, how frequently such scenes must have occurred between the decks of the May-flower, during the long and tempestuous passage of that pilgrim band who finally

"moored their bark
On the wild New England shore,"

and how often

"Amid the storm they sung,
And the stars heard, and the sea—"

when the wise and pious Brewster lifted his voice in exhortation and prayer, and the virtuous Carver, and the gallant Standish, bowed their heads in devotion before him.

Another of the steerage passengers was a lieutenant in the British army, a man about forty years old, of excellent education, polished manners, and a fine military deportment. He was accompanied by his family, and they excited much sympathy among the ladies and gentlemen of the cabin. He had a wife, a handsome, modest, and intelligent looking woman, and five very pretty children, three boys and two girls. Being reduced to half-pay, seeing no chance of promotion, and weary of living on "hope deferred that maketh the heart sick," Lieutenant Lynford had resolved to emigrate, and settle on a grant of land accorded to him in Canada in consequence of his having been in service there during our last war. He believed that the new world would offer better prospects to his children, and that he could there support his family at less expense than in Europe. Unable to afford the cost of their passage in the cabin, he was under the painful necessity of bringing them over in the steerage, amidst all its unimaginable and revolting inconveniences.

It was impossible to regard this unfortunate and misplaced family without emotions of deep interest and sincere commiseration; they were so evidently out of their proper sphere, and it must have been so painful to the feelings of a gentleman and lady to live in almost immediate contact with the coarse and vulgar tenants of that crowded and comfortless part of the vessel.

Mr. Fenton, and others of the gentlemen, took great pleasure in conversing with Lieutenant Lynford; though, according to rule, the poor officer was not permitted, as a steerage passenger, to come aft the mainmast. Therefore, their conversations had to take place at the extreme limits of the boundary line, which the lieutenant was scrupulous in never overstepping.

His wife, a lady both in appearance and manner, was seldom seen on deck, except when her husband prevailed on her to come up with him to look at something that made a spectacle, or an event, in the monotony of our usual sea-view. We understood that they had surrounded the narrow space allotted to their beds with a sort of partition, made by suspending a screen of quilts and blankets, so as to interpose a slight barrier between themselves and the disgusting scenes, and frequently disgusting people with whom it was their hard fate to be associated during the voyage; and whose jealousy and ill-will would have been immediately excited by any attempt on the part of the captain or the cabin passengers, to alleviate the discomforts to which the unfortunate Lynfords were subjected.

The regulation that no light shall be allowed in the steerage, except on some extraordinary occasion (and which originates in the danger of the ship being carelessly set on fire), must have been an almost intolerable grievance to Lieutenant Lynford, and his wife and children. I often thought of them while we were spending our evenings so agreeably in various amusements and occupations round the cabin tables, brightly illuminated by the elegant lamps that were suspended from the ceiling. I felt how long and how dismally *their* evenings must have passed, capable as they were in mind, in taste, and in education, of the same enjoyments as ourselves; and therefore feeling with double intensity the severe pressure of their hard and unmerited

condition.

After crossing the Banks we seemed to feel ourselves on American ground, or rather on American sea. As our interest increased on approaching the land of our destination, that gentleman was proportionably overlooked and forgotten. He "kept the even tenor of his way," and we had become scarcely conscious that he was still among us: till one day, when there was rather a hard gale, and the waves were running high, we were startled, as we surrounded the luncheon table, by a tremendous noise on the cabin staircase, and the sudden bursting open of the door at its foot. We all looked up, and saw that gentleman falling down stairs, with both arms extended, as he held in one hand a tall cane stool, and in the other the captain's barometer, which had hung just within the upper door; he having involuntarily caught hold of both these articles with a view of saving himself. "While his head, as he tumbled, went nicketty nock," his countenance, for once, assumed a new expression, and the change from its usual unvarying sameness was so striking, that, combined with his ludicrous attitude, it set us all to laughing. The waiters ran forward and assisted him to rise; and it was then found that the stool and the barometer had been the greatest sufferers; one having lost a leg, and the other being so shattered that the stair-carpet was covered with globules of quicksilver. However, he retired to his state-room, and whether or not he was seen again before next morning, I cannot positively undertake to say.

On the edge of the Gulf Stream, we had a day of entire calm, when "there was not a breath the blue wave to curl." A thin veil of haziness somewhat softened the fires of the American sun (as it was now called by the European passengers), and we passed the whole day on deck, in a delightful state of idle enjoyment; gazing on the inhabitants of the deep, that, like ourselves, seemed to be taking a holiday. Dolphins, horse-mackerel, and porpoises were sporting round the vessel, and the flying-fish, "with brine still dropping from its wings," was darting up into the sun-light; while flocks of petrels, their black plumage tinged with flame-colour, seemed to rest on the surface of the water; and the nautilus, "the native pilot of his little bark," glided gayly along the dimpling mirror that reflected his tiny oars and gauzy sail. We fished up large clusters of sea-weed, among which were some beautiful specimens of a delicate purple colour, which, when viewed through a microscope, glittered like silver, and were covered with little shell-fish so minute as to be invisible to the naked eye.

It was a lovely day. The lieutenant and his family were all on deck, and looked happy. That gentleman looked as usual. Towards evening, a breeze sprung up directly fair, and filled the sails, which all day had been clinging idly to the masts; and before midnight we were wafted along at the rate of nine knots an hour, "while round the waves phosphoric brightness broke," the ship seeming, as she cleaved the foam, to draw after her in her wake a long train of stars.

Next day, we continued to proceed rapidly, with a fair wind, which we knew would soon bring us to the end of our voyage. The ladies' cabin was now littered with trunks and boxes, brought from the baggage-room that we might select from them such articles as we thought we should require when we went on shore.

But we were soon attracted to the deck, to see the always interesting experiment of sounding with the deep-sea lead. To our great joy, it came up (though from almost immeasurable depth) with a little sand adhering to the cake of tallow at the bottom of the plummet. The breeze was increasing, and Mr. Overslaugh, whose pretensions to nautical knowledge were considered very shallow by his fellow amateurs, remarked to my husband: "If this wind holds, I should not wonder if we are aground in less than two hour."

Before Mr. Fenton could reply, Mrs. Cummings exclaimed: "Aground, did you say!"—And she scuttled away with greater alacrity than we had ever seen her evince on any former occasion. Some time after, on entering the ladies' cabin, I found that the old dame, with her usual misconstruction of sea-phrases, had rejoicingly dressed herself in a very showy suit prepared for her first landing in America, and was now in the act of buttoning at the ankles a pair of frilled leggings to "go aground in," as she informed me.

I explained to her her mistake, at which she was wofully disappointed, and proportionately alarmed, ejaculating—"Oh! if I was only back again—anywhere at all—even in the very out-scouts of London—rather than stay another night in this dreadful ship!—To think, that after all my sufferings at sea, I may be blown headforemost ashore, and drowned on dry land at last!"

However, I succeeded in calming her terrors; and seeing her engaged in taking off her finery to resume the black silk she had worn during the voyage, I left Mrs. Cummings, and returned to my husband. The wind, though still fair, had decreased towards the close of the day, and was now mild and balmy. When I saw the white wings of a flight of curlews glancing against the bright crimson glories of the sunset sky, I could not help saying, "those birds will reach their nests at twilight, and their nests are in America."

We remained on deck the whole evening, believing it probably the last we should spend together; and the close companionship of four weeks in the very circumscribed limits of a ship, had made us seem like one family.

We talked of the morrow, and I forgot that that gentleman was among us, till I saw him leave the deck to retire for the night. The thought then struck me, that another day, and we should cease perhaps to remember his existence.

I laid my head on my pillow with the understanding that land would be discovered before morning, and I found it impossible to sleep. Mr. Fenton went on deck about midnight, and

remained there till dawn. What American, when returning to his native country, and almost in view of its shores, is not reminded of that night, when Columbus stood on the prow of the Santa Maria, and watched in breathless silence with his impatient companions, for the first glimpse of the long wished-for land—that memorable night, which gave a new impulse to the world already known, and to that which was about to be discovered!

Near one o'clock, I heard a voice announcing the light on the highlands of Neversink, and in a short time all the gentlemen were on deck. At day-break Mr. Fenton came to ask me if I would rise, and see the morning dawn upon our own country. We had taken a pilot on board at two o'clock, had a fine fair breeze to carry us into the bay of New York, and there was every probability of our being on shore in a few hours. When I reached the deck, tears came into my eyes as I leaned on my husband's arm, and saw the light of Sandy Hook shining brilliantly in the dimness of the closing night, and emulating the morning star as it sparkled above the rosy streak that was brightening in the eastern horizon. We gazed till the rising sun sent up his first rays from behind the kindling and empurpled ocean, and our native shore lay clear and distinct before us.

Soon after sunrise we were visited by a news-boat, when there was an exchange of papers, and much to inquire and much to tell.

We were going rapidly through the Narrows, when the bell rung for breakfast, which Captain Santlow had ordered at an early hour, as we had all been up before daylight. Chancing to look towards his accustomed seat, I missed that gentleman, and inquired after him of the captain. —"Oh!" he replied, "that gentleman went on shore in the news-boat; did you not see him depart? He bowed all round, before he went down the side."

"No," was the general reply; "we did not see him go." In truth, we had all been too much interested in hearing, reading, and talking of the news brought by the boat.

"Then he is gone for ever," exclaimed Mrs. Cummings—"and we shall never know his name."

"Come, Captain Santlow," said Mr. Fenton, "try to recollect it.—'Let it not,' as Grumio says, 'die in oblivion, while we return to our graves inexperienced in it.'"

Captain Santlow smiled, and remained silent. "Now, captain," said Miss Audley, "I will not quit the ship till you tell me that gentleman's name.—I cannot hold out a greater threat to you, as I know you have had a weary time of it since I have been under your charge. Come, I set not my foot on shore till I know the name of that gentleman, and also why you cannot refrain from smiling whenever you are asked about it."

"Well, then," replied Captain Santlow, "though his name is a very pretty one when you get it said, there is a little awkwardness in speaking it. So I thought I would save myself and my passengers the trouble. And partly for that reason, and partly to tease you all, I have withheld it from your knowledge during the voyage. But I can assure you he is a baronet."

"A baronet!" cried Miss Audley; "I wish I had known that before, I should certainly have made a dead set at him. A baronet would have been far better worth the trouble of a flirtation, than you, Mr. Williams, or you, Mr. Sutton, or you, Mr. Belfield, or any of the other gentlemen that I have been amusing myself with during the voyage."

"A baronet!" exclaimed Mrs. Cummings; "well, really—and have I been four weeks in the same ship with a baronet—and sitting at the same table with him,—and often talking to him face to face?—I wonder what Mrs. Thimbleby of Threadneedle street would say if she knew that I am now acquainted with a baronet!"

"But what is his name, captain?" said Mr. Fenton; "still you do not tell us."

"His name," answered the captain, "is Sir St. John St. Leger."

"Sir St. John St. Leger!" was repeated by each of the company.

"Yes," resumed Captain Santlow—"and you see how difficult it is to say it smoothly. There is more sibilation in it than in any name I know.—Was I not right in keeping it from you till the voyage was over, and thus sparing you the trouble of articulating it, and myself the annoyance of hearing it? See, here it is in writing."

The captain took his manifest out of his pocket-book, and showed us the words, "Sir St. John St. Leger, of Sevenoaks, Kent."

"Pho!" said Mrs. Cummings. "Where's the trouble in speaking that name, if you only knew the right way—I have heard it a hundred times—and even seen it in the newspapers. This must be the very gentleman that my cousin George's wife is always talking about. She has a brother that lives near his estate, a topping apothecary. Why, 'tis easy enough to say his name, if you say it as we do in England."

"And how is that?" asked the captain; "what can you make of Sir St. John St. Leger?"

"Why, Sir Singeon Sillinger, to be sure," replied Mrs. Cummings; "I am confident he would have answered to that name. Sir Singeon Sillinger of Sunnock—cousin George's wife's brother lives close by Sunnock in a yellow house with a red door."

"And have I," said the captain, laughing, "so carefully kept his name to myself, during the whole

passage, for fear we should have had to call him Sir St. John St. Leger, when all the while we might have said Sir Singeon Sillinger?"

"To be sure you might," replied Mrs. Cummings, looking proud of the opportunity of displaying her superior knowledge of something. "With all your striving after sense you Americans are a very ignorant people, particularly of the right way of speaking English. Since I have been on board, I have heard you all say the oddest things—though I thought there would be no use in trying to set you right. The other day there was Mr. Williams talking of the church of St. Mary le bon—instead of saying Marrow bone. Then Mr. Belfield says, Lord Cholmondeley, instead of Lord Chumley, and Col. Sinclair, instead of Col. Sinkler; and Mr. Sutton says Lady Beauchamp, instead of Lady Beachum; and you all say Birmingham, instead of Brummagem. The truth is, you know nothing about English names. Now that name, Trollope, that you all sneer at so much, and think so very low, why Trollope is quite genteel in England, and so is Hussey. The Trollopes and Husseys belong to great families. But I have no doubt of finding many things that are very elegant in England, counted quite vulgar in America, owing to the ignorance of your people. For my part, I was particularly brought up to despise all manner of ignorance."

In a short time a steamboat came alongside into which we removed ourselves, accompanied by the captain and the letter bags; and we proceeded up to the city, where Mr. Fenton and myself were met on the wharf, I need not tell how, and by whom.

Captain Santlow informed us during our little trip in the boat, that soon after breakfast, the steward had brought him a letter which he had just found on the pillow in that gentleman's birth. It was directed to Lieutenant Lynford. The captain immediately went forward and presented it to him, and the poor officer was so overcome after opening it, that he could not forbear making known to Captain Santlow that it contained a draft for five hundred dollars on a house in New York, and a few lines signed St. John St. Leger, requesting Lieutenant Lynford to oblige the writer by making use of that sum to assist in settling his family in Canada.

We were now all warm in our praise of that gentleman's generosity. And Mrs. Cummings recollected that she had heard from her cousin George's wife that her brother of Sunnock often said that, though he never spoke if he could help it, nobody did kinder things in his own quiet way than Sir Singeon Sillinger.

THE SERENADES.

"Sleep you, or wake you, lady bright?"—Lewis.

"And now tell me the reason of your giving us the slip on Tuesday night," said Charles Cavender to Frederick Merrill, as they came out of court together, and walked into the shade of the beautiful double row of linden trees that interlace their branches in front of the Philadelphia State House, perfuming the atmosphere of early summer with the fragrance of their delicate yellow blossoms.

"To tell you the truth," replied Merrill, "I never had much fancy for these regular serenading parties. And as, on Tuesday night, I had a presentiment that the course of ours was not going to run smoothly, and as I found it impossible to play with such a second as Dick Doubletongue, I resigned my flute to Walton, and went home for my guitar, being very much in the notion of taking a ramble on my own account, and giving a little unpretending music to several pretty girls of my own acquaintance."

"Ah! that guitar!" exclaimed Cavender: "Since you first heard Segura, no Spaniard can be more completely fascinated with the instrument. And, to do Segura justice, he has made an excellent guitar player of you, and cultivated your voice with great success."

"But how did you proceed after I left you?" asked Merrill.

"Oh! very well!" replied Cavender; "only that infernal piano, that Harry Fingerley insisted on being brought along with us, was pretty considerable of a bore."

"So I thought," responded Merrill; "to me there appeared something too absurd in conveying through the streets at night so cumbrous an instrument—carrying it on a hand-barrow, like porters."

"Well," observed Cavender, "there were, however, enough of us to relieve each other every square. By-the-bye, I suspect that your true reason for deserting was to avoid taking your turn in carrying the piano."

"You are not far wrong," replied Merrill, smiling.

"It was a ridiculous business," resumed Cavender. "As Fingerley cannot touch an instrument without his notes, and always chooses to show off in difficult pieces, a lantern was brought along, which one of us was obliged to hold for him whenever he played. Unluckily, a music stool had been forgotten, and poor Harry, who, you know, is one of the tallest striplings in town, was obliged to play kneeling: and he wore the knees of his pantaloons threadbare, in getting through a long concerto of Beethoven's, before Miss Flickwire's door."

"To what place did you go after I left you?" inquired Merrill.

"Oh! to serenade that saucy flirt, Miss Lawless, Frank Hazeldon's flame. We ranged ourselves in front of the house, set down the piano and its elegant supporter, the hand-barrow, upon the pavement, and all struck up the Band March, with our eyes turned upwards, expecting that we should see the shutters gently open, and the pretty faces of Lucy Lawless and her two sisters slyly peeping down at us. But we looked in vain. No shutters opened, and no faces peeped."

"Perhaps," said Merrill, "the family were all out of town?"

"No, no," replied Cavender; "a bright light shone through the fan-glass over the door, which opened at last, just as we had concluded the Band March, and out came Bogle, followed by two or three other waiters of rather a more decided colour, who stood a little aloof. 'Gentlemen,' said Bogle, 'Miss Lawless desires her respects and compliments to you all, and wishes me to inquire if there is one Mr. Hazeldon among you?'—'Yes; I am Mr. Hazeldon,' said Frank, stepping out.—'Then,' resumed Bogle, with his usual flourish of hand, 'Miss Lawless presents her further respects and compliments, and requests me to make you acquainted that she has a party to-night, and as Frank Johnson was pre-engaged, and could not come, she desires you will play a few cotillions for the company to dance—and if there are any more gentlemen-fiddlers present, she will thank them to play too.'

"There was a general burst of mingled indignation and laughter. Some of the serenaders advanced to put Bogle into the gutter, but he very naturally resisted, justly declaring that he ought not to be punished for obeying the lady's orders, and delivering the message systematically, as he termed it.

"The windows of the front parlour were now thrown open, and Miss Lawless with her sisters appeared at them, dressed in lace and flowers. Both parlours were lighted up with chandeliers, and filled with company.

"'Mr. Hazeldon,' said Miss Lawless, 'you and your friends have come precisely at the right time. Nothing could be more apropos than your arrival. We were all engaged with the ice-creams and jellies while you were playing the Band March (which, to do you justice, you performed very respectably), or we should have sent Bogle out to you before. Pray, Mr. Hazeldon, give us "Love was once a little boy;"—it makes an excellent cotillion—and we shall then be able to decide between the merits of your band and that of Mr. Francis Johnson.'—'But we are all gentlemen, madam,' said the simple Bob Midgely, 'and this is a serenade.'—'The more convenient,' replied Miss Lawless, who is really a very handsome girl; 'a serenade may thus be made to answer a double purpose—killing two birds with one stone, in proverbial parlance.'

"Poor Frank Hazeldon was so much annoyed as to be incapable of reply, being also vexed and mortified at having no invitation to his lady-love's party.

"But I went forward, and said to Miss Lawless, that if she and her friends would come out, and perform their cotillions on the pavement, we would have much pleasure in playing for them. To this she replied, that she now perceived we had no tambourine with us, and that a dance without that enlivening instrument must always be a very spiritless affair. Therefore she would excuse, for the present, the services of Mr. Hazeldon and his musical friends.

"She then closed the window, and we bowed and moved off; resolved that for the future we would take care to avoid the awkward *contre-tems* of serenading a lady when she is in the act of having a party. Frank Hazeldon loudly protested against the insolence of his dulcinea, 'who,' said he, 'would not dare to say and do such things, only that she knows herself to be (as she certainly is), the most beautiful creature on the face of the earth.' However, he averred that he had done with Miss Lawless entirely, and would scrupulously avoid all further acquaintance with her, now that she had not only affronted himself, but his friends. We advised him to consider it not so deeply."

"He seems to have taken your advice," observed Merrill; "for there he is, just turning the corner of Sixth street with her—she laughing at him as usual, and he, as usual, thankful to be laughed at by her. But where else did you go?"

"We went to two other places," replied Cavender; "where nothing particular happened, except that at one of them the ladies threw flowers down to us. Afterwards, Dick Doubletongue proposed our going into Market street to serenade two very pretty girls, the daughters of a wealthy tradesman, who, being an old-fashioned man, persevered in the convenience of living in the same house in which he kept his store. Unluckily, it was the night before market-day. We began with 'Life let us cherish,' which Dick assured us was a special favourite with the young ladies—and our music soon aroused the market-people, some of whom were sleeping in their carts that stood in the street, others, wrapped in coverlets, were bivouacking on the stalls in the market-house, to be ready on the spot for early morning. They started up, jumped down, gathered around us, and exclaimed—'Well, did ever!'—'Now, that's what I call music!'—'There, Polly, there's the right sort of fiddling for you!'—'Well, this beats *me*!'—'Law, Suz!—how they do play it up!'—and other equally gratifying expressions. And one woman called out to her husband—'Here, daddy, take up the baby, and bring him out of the cart, and let him hear some music-playing, now he has a chance.' So the baby was brought, and daddy held him close up to the flute-players, and the baby cried, as all babies should do when they are taken up in the night to hear music.

"To crown all, the concert was joined by a dozen calves, who awoke from their uneasy slumbers in the carts, and began bleating in chorus; and by the crowing of various fowls, and the quacking

of various ducks that were tied by the legs in pairs, and lying under the stalls. Every moment fresh market-carts came jolting and rattling over the stones, and we would have gone away at the conclusion of 'Life let us cherish,' only that Dick begged us to remain till we saw some indications of the ladies being awake and listening to us—a circumstance always gratifying to serenaders. While we were in full performance of 'The Goddess Diana,' we saw a light in a room up stairs, a window was opened, and there appeared at it two young ladies, who had evidently taken the trouble to arrange their hair, and attire themselves very becomingly in pink gowns and white collars, for the purpose of doing honour to the musicians and themselves. After this, we could do no less than play another of their favourites. When it was finished, we bowed up to the window, and they curtsied down to us, and the market-women approved, saying—'Law, now, if that a'n't pretty!—all making their manners to one another!—well, if we a'n't in luck to-night!'"

"The combination of noises that accompanied your Market street serenade," observed Merrill, "reminds me of a ridiculous incident that occurred one night, when I and my flute were out with Tom Clearnote and Sam Startlem; Clearnote having his Kent bugle, and Startlem making his first public essay on the trombone, which he had taken a fancy to learn. We went to a house in Chestnut street, where there were three charming girls, who we soon saw had all properly disposed themselves for listening at the windows. We commenced with the March in Masaniello. Unfortunately, Sam Startlem, from having a cold, or some other cause, and being but a novice on the trombone, found it impossible to fill the instrument, or to produce any sound but a sort of hollow croak, that went exactly like 'Fire! fire!'—the cry which so often frights our town from its propriety.

"Just then the watchman was passing with a dog that always followed him, and that had a habit of howling whenever he heard the alarm of fire. On meeting the strange sounds, half guttural, half nasal, from Startlem's trombone, he very naturally mistook them for the announcement of a conflagration, and set up his customary yell.[83] In a few minutes, the boys issued from all quarters, according to their practice, by day and by night whenever there is anything to be seen or heard that promises a mob. The supposed cry of fire was reiterated through the street; and spread all round. Presently two or three engines came scampering along, bells ringing, trumpets braying, torches flaring, and men shouting—all running they knew not whither; for as yet the bell of the State House had not tolled out its unerring signal.

"In the general confusion, we thought it best to cease playing, and quietly decamp, being ashamed (for the honour of our musicians) to inform the firemen of the real cause of the mistake; so we gladly stole out of the crowd, and turned into a private street.—But excuse me for interrupting you.—Finish your narrative."

"There is little more to be said," resumed Cavender. "By the time we had afforded sufficient amusement to the market-people, the moon had long since set, and the stars begun to fade. So we all put up our instruments, and wearily sought our dwelling-places;—Harry Fingerley wisely hiring relays of black men to carry home the piano.

"But we have been talking long enough under these trees," continued Cavender; "let us walk up Chestnut street together, and tell me what befell yourself while serenading according to the fashion of Old Castile. Of course, you went first to Miss Osbrook?"

"I did," replied Merrill, smiling, and colouring a little; "and I played and sung for her, in my very best style, several of my very best songs. And I was rewarded by obtaining a glimpse of a graceful white figure at the window, as she half unclosed it, and seeing a white hand (half hidden by a ruffle) resting gently on one of the bars of the Venetian shutter—and as the moon was then shining brightly down, I knew that my divine Emily also saw *me*.

"From thence I went to the residence of a blooming Quaker girl, who, I understood from a mutual friend, had expressed a great wish for a serenade. She came to the window, and was soon joined by an old nurse, who, I found by their conversation, had been kindly awakened by the considerate Rebecca, and invited by her to come to the front room and listen to the music; on which the half-dozing matron made no comment, but that 'sometimes the tune went away up, and sometimes it went right down.'

"Having commenced with 'The Soldier's Bride,' I was somewhat surprised at the martial propensities of the fair Quakeress, who in a loud whisper to her companion, first wished that Frederick Merrill (for she had at once recognised me) would play and sing 'The Soldier's Tear,' and then 'The Soldier's Gratitude.' When I had accomplished both these songs, I heard her tell the old woman, that she was sure 'The Battle of Prague' would go well on the guitar. This performance, however, I did not think proper to undertake, and I thereupon prepared to withdraw, to the audible regret of the lovely Rebecca.

"As I directed my steps homeward, I happened to pass the house of a young lady whose family and mine have long been somewhat acquainted, and who has acquired (I will not say how deservedly) a most unfortunate *sobriquet*. At a fancy ball, last winter, she appeared in the character of Sterne's Maria, dressed in a white jacket and petticoat, with vine leaves in her hair, and a flageolet suspended by a green riband over one shoulder. Her mother, a very silly and illiterate woman, announced her as 'Strange Maria'—absurdly introducing her by that title, and saying repeatedly through the evening to gentlemen as well as to ladies—'Have you seen my daughter yet?—Have you seen Strange Maria?—There she is, sitting in that corner, leaning her head upon her hand—it is a part of her character to sit so—and when she is tired, she gets up and dances. She appears to-night as Strange Maria, and it suits exactly, as her name is really Maria.

Her aunt, Mrs. Fondlesheep, chose the character for her out of some book, and Madame Gaubert made the jacket.'

"From that night, the poor girl has gone unconsciously by this foolish nickname. And, unfortunately, she is almost as much of a simpleton as her mother, though she was educated at a great boarding-school, and said a great many long lessons.

"I took my seat on the marble carriage-step in front of the house, and the moon having declined, I played and sung 'Look out upon the stars, my love.' Soon after I commenced, I saw a window in the second story thrown open, and the literal Maria doing exactly as she was bid, in earnestly surveying the stars—turning her head about that she might take a view of them in every direction.

"I then began the beautiful serenading song of 'Lilla, come down to me,' with no other motive than that of hearing myself sing it. At the conclusion of the air, the front door softly opened, and Strange Maria appeared at it, dressed in a black silk frock, with a bonnet and shawl, and carrying a bundle under her arm.

"She looked mysterious, and beckoned to me. I approached her, somewhat surprised. She put the bundle into my hands, and laying her finger on her lips, whispered—'All's safe—we can get off now—I have just had time to put up a change of clothes, and you must carry them for me.'

"'My dear Miss Maria,' said I, 'what is it you mean? Excuse me for saying that I do not exactly comprehend you.'

"'Now, don't pretend to be so stupid,' was the damsel's reply; 'did you not invite me in the song to come down and run away with you? You sung it so plain that I heard every word. There could not be a better opportunity, for ma's in the country, and there is never any danger of waking pa.'

"'Really, Miss Maria,' said I, 'allow me to say that you have totally misunderstood me.'

"'No such thing,' persisted the young lady. 'Did I not hear you over and over again say, "Lilla, come down to me?" Though I never was allowed to see a play or read a novel, I am not such a fool that I cannot understand when people want to run away with me. By Lilla you of course meant me, just as much as if you had said Maria.'

"'On my honour,' I expostulated, 'you are entirely mistaken. Only permit me to explain'—

"'Nonsense,' interrupted the lady; 'the song was plain enough. And so I got ready, and stole down stairs as quickly as possible. Alderman Pickwick always sits up late at night, and rises before day to write for the newspapers. He lives just round the corner, and never objects to marry any couple that comes to him. So let's be off.'

"'I entreat you,' said I, 'to listen to me for one moment.'

"'Did you bring a ring with you?' continued the fair eloper, whose present volubility surprised me no less than her pertinacity, having hitherto considered her as one of the numerous young ladies that are never expected to talk.

"'A ring!' I repeated; 'you must pardon me, but I really had no such thought.'

"'How careless!' exclaimed Maria. 'Don't you know that plain rings are the only sort used at weddings? I wish I had pulled one off the window curtain before I came down. I dare say, Squire Pickwick would never notice whether it was brass or gold.'

"'There is no need of troubling yourself about a ring,' said I.

"'True,' replied she, 'Quakers get married without, and why should not we? But come, we must not stand parleying here. You can't think, Mr. Merrill, how glad I am that you came for me before any one else. I would much rather run away with you, than with Mr. Simpson, or Mr. Tomlins, or Mr. Carter. Pa' says if ever he does let me marry, he'll choose for me himself, and I have no doubt he'll choose some ugly fright. Fathers are such bad judges of people.'

"'Miss Maria,' said I, 'you mistake me entirely, and this error must be rectified at once. I must positively undeceive you.'

"At that moment, the door half opened—a hand was put out, and seizing the arm of Maria, drew her forcibly inside. The door was then shut, and double locked; and I heard her receding voice, loudly exclaiming—'Oh! pa'—now, indeed, pa'—who'd have thought, pa', that you were listening all the time!'

"I stood motionless with joy and surprise at this opportune release—and I recollected that once during our scene on the door-step, I had thought I heard footsteps in the entry.

"Presently the father put his head out of his own window and said to me—'Young man, you may go, I have locked her up.'—I took him at his word and departed, not a little pleased at having been extricated in so summary a way from the dilemma in which the absurdity of Strange Maria had involved me."

About a week after this conversation, Cavender inquired of his friend, who was visiting him at his office, if he had again been out solus on a serenading excursion.

"No," replied Merrill, "I have had enough of that nonsense. There is no better cure for folly, and particularly for romantic folly, than a good burlesque; and I find I have been parodied most ridiculously by that prince of fools, old Pharaby, the bachelor in an auburn wig and corsets, that lives next door to Miss Osbrook. This said Pharaby assumes a penchant for my opposite neighbour, the rich and handsome young widow, Mrs. Westwyn. Taking a hint from my serenading Emily Osbrook, but far outdoing me, he has every night since presented himself under the windows of the fair widow, and tinkled a guitar—which instrument he professes to have learned during a three months' consulship in one of the Spanish West India Islands. He plays Spanish, but sings Italian; and with a voice and manner to make Paggi tear his hair, and Pucci drop down dead.

"Mrs. Westwyn, whom I escorted home last evening from a visit to Miss Osbrook, was congratulating herself on the appearance of rain; as it would of course prevent her from being disturbed that night by her usual serenader, the regularity of whose musical visitations had become, she said, absolutely intolerable.

"About twelve o'clock, however, I heard the customary noise in front of Mrs. Westwyn's house, notwithstanding that the rain had set in, and was falling very fast. I looked out, and beheld the persevering inamorato standing upright beneath the shelter of an umbrella held over his head by a black man, and twitching the strings of his guitar to the air of 'Dalla gioja.' I was glad when the persecuted widow, losing all patience, raised her sash, and in a peremptory tone, commanded him to depart and trouble her no more; threatening, if he ever again repeated the offence, to have him taken into custody by the watchman. Poor Pharaby was struck aghast; and being too much disconcerted to offer an apology, he stood motionless for a few moments, and then replacing his guitar in its case, and tucking it under his arm, he stole off round the corner, his servant following close behind with the umbrella. From that moment I abjured serenades."

"What! all sorts?" inquired Cavender.

"All," replied Merrill—"both gregarious and solitary. The truth is, I this morning obtained the consent of the loveliest of women to make me the happiest of men, this day three months; and therefore I have something else to think of than strumming guitars or blowing flutes about the streets at night."

"I congratulate you, most sincerely," said Cavender, shaking hands with his friend; "Miss Osbrook is certainly, as the phrase is, possessed of every qualification to render the marriage state happy. And though I and my other associates in harmony have not so good an excuse for leaving off our musical rambles, yet I believe we shall, at least, give them up till next summer—and perhaps, by that time, we may have devised some other means of obtaining the good graces of the ladies."

"But apropos to music," continued Cavender; "if I can obtain my sister's permission, I will show you a letter she received some time since from a young friend of hers with whom she is engaged in a whimsical correspondence under fictitious names, somewhat in imitation of the ladies of the last century. Both girls have been reading the Spectator, and have consequently taken a fancy to the Addisonian plan of occasionally throwing their ideas into the form of dreams or visions; addressing each other as Ariella Shadow and Ombrelina Vapour."

Cavender then withdrew to his sister's parlour, and in a few minutes returned with the letter, which he put into Merrill's hand, telling him to read it while he finished looking over some deeds that had been left with him for examination.

Merrill opened the letter, and perused its contents, which we will present to our readers under the title of

A DREAM OF SONGS.

My Dear Ombrelina,

Last evening, on my return from Melania Medley's musical party, where nothing was played or sung that had been out more than two or three weeks, I could not but reflect on the fate that attends even the most meritorious compositions of the sons of song: honoured for awhile with a short-lived popularity, and then allowed to float down the stream of time unnoticed and forgotten—or only remembered as things too entirely *passé* to be listened to by "*ears polite*"—or even mentioned in their presence. It is true that as soon as a song becomes popular it ceases to be fashionable; but is not its popularity an evidence of its merit, or at least of its possessing melody and originality, and of its sounds being such as to give pleasure to the general ear? Who ever heard a dull and insipid tune played or sung in the streets, or whistled by the boys?

Falling asleep with these notions in my head, they suggested a dream in which I imagined myself visited by impersonations of almost innumerable songs, many of which had been "pretty fellows in their day," but have now given place to others whose chief characteristic is that of having no character at all.

The following outline may give you, dear Ombrelina, a slight idea of my vision, making due allowance for the confusion, incoherence, and absurdity that are always found in those pictures that imagination, when loosened from the control of reason, presents to

the mind's eye of the slumberer.

"I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls," being mistress of a handsome and spacious mansion in a fine romantic country, whose hills and woodlands sloped down towards the ocean. I seemed to be duly prepared for the reception of a numerous party of visiters, whom I recognised intuitively, as soon as I saw them, for the heroes and heroines of certain well-known songs—also being familiar with the characters of many of them from my intimate acquaintance with Aunt Balladina's old music-books.

The earliest of my guests were some much-esteemed friends, descendants of the "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled"—they wore "The Tartan Plaidie" and "The White Cockade"—and they looked as if they had all been "Over the Water to Charlie." I felt particularly honoured by the presence of that gallant chieftain, "Kinloch of Kinloch," who, for the express purpose of making me a visit, had relinquished for a time his grouse-shooting excursions "O'er the moor among the heather"—had given up his musings on "The banks and braes o' Bonnie Doon," and bade for awhile "Adieu, a heartwarm fond adieu" to "The Birks of Aberfeldy."

Next arrived the ancient laird "Logie o' Buchan;" and then "Auld Robin Gray" came tottering along supported by his pensive daughter Alice, and by "Duncan Gray," his laughter-loving son, well known among the lasses as "The Braw Wooer." The Gray family took their seats at "The Ingle Side," where old "John Anderson" and his wife had already established themselves close together in two arm-chairs. "Logie o' Buchan" joined them; but his habits being somewhat taciturn, it was not till they talked of "Auld lang syne" that he was induced to mingle in the conversation—yet the ice once broken, he was as merry in his reminiscences as either of his companions.

Robin Gray reminded the laird of Buchan of his elopement with that extreme blonde the "Lassie wi' the lint-white locks," who, when only "Within a mile of Edinburgh," had given him the slip and ran off with "Jockey to the Fair." The laird retaliated by laughing at Robin for having been one of the six-and-thirty suitors of that ugliest of heiresses, "Tibby Fouller o' the Glen." John Anderson was made to recollect his having been deserted in his youth by the beautiful but mercenary "Katrine Ogie," who afterwards became "Roy's wife of Aldivalloch," and in taking the carle and leaving her Johnnie, furnished another illustration of the fallacy of the remark, "Oh! say not woman's heart is bought."

These old stories were at first very amusing, but they continued so long and with so many episodes and digressions, that we at length discovered "We were a' noddin." Finally they were interrupted by the arrival of "Bonnie Jean," "The Lass of Patie's Mill," "Bessie Bell and Mary Gray," and other "Flowers o' the Forest," who were following that gay deceiver "Robin Adair," himself a verification of the well-known fact that "Though love is warm awhile, soon it grows cold."

Robin Adair, whose mind, after all, seems to have run chiefly on balls and plays (a visit to Paris having quite spoiled him for the society of "The Braes of Balquither"), had first made love to the unfortunate "Highland Mary," and then gayly and heartlessly quitted her with that useless piece of advice which nobody ever took, "Sigh not for love." Next he paid his devoirs to "Jessie the flower o' Dumblane," as he met her one morning "Comin' thro' the rye." And he had subsequently entered into a flirtation with "Dumbarton's bonny Belle"—a young lady whose literary and scientific achievements had lately procured for her the unique title of "The Blue Bell of Scotland." But it was whispered in the most authentic circles that she had recently frightened him away by asking him that puzzling question "Why does azure deck the sky?"

Yet, however the follies and inconstancies of Robin Adair might have rendered him a favourite with the ladies (who often tapped him with their fans, saying, "Fly away pretty moth"), he did not seem to be held in equal esteem by his manly compatriots. On his presuming to clap "Young Lochinvar" on the shoulder, and accost him as "Friend of my soul," that high-spirited chieftain immediately proceeded to "Draw the sword o' Scotland," with a view of chastising his familiarity. But "Swift as the flash," Robin eluded the blow, and danced out of the room singing "I'd be a Butterfly."

At the desire of several of the ladies, I accompanied them to the veranda to look at the prospect of the beautiful surrounding country, and our attention was soon arrested by notes of distant music.

"What airy sounds!" was our unanimous exclamation; and we almost fancied that they must have proceeded from the "Harp of the winds," till presently we heard the tramp of horses, and beheld a numerous company descending by its circuitous path the hill that rose in front of the house. As "I saw them on their winding way," I had no difficulty in recognising each individual of the troop.

Foremost came "The Baron of Mowbray" mounted on his "Arab Steed," and accompanied by a "Captive Knight" whom he had rescued from a Saracen prison, and I soon discovered that it was "Dunois the young and brave." Dunois was followed by his accomplished but wilful page, "The Minstrel Boy," who, having broken his harp in a fit of spite, was obliged to substitute an inferior instrument, and to strike "The Light

Guitar," which he retained as "The Legacy" of a "Gallant Troubadour" who had fallen beside him in battle, and of whose untimely fate he had sent notice to his "Isabelle" by a "Carrier Pigeon."

Behind the youthful minstrel strode a "Happy Tawny Moor" performing powerfully on "The Tartar Drum."

"The Young Son of Chivalry" brought with him a beautiful damsel whom he had found in a "Bower of Roses by Bendameer's Stream"—and whose eyes, resembling those of "The Light Gazelle," identified her as "Araby's Daughter." "Rich and rare were the gems she wore;" and she had testified her readiness to "Fly to the Desert" with her bravo Dunois; to glide with him "Thro' icy valleys," in the wilds of Siberia; or to accompany him even across "The sea—the sea—the open sea." No music would have sounded so sweetly in her ear as "The Bridemaid's Chorus," and she would willingly have given all her pearls and diamonds in exchange for "The plain gold ring."

Next came a gentleman in naval uniform, whom I gladly recognised as my former acquaintance, "The Post Captain;" for the last time "We met—'twas in a crowd"—and I had not an opportunity of saying more than a few words to him. He was not in his usual spirits, having lately been jilted by the beautiful but "Faithless Emma," who knew not how to value "The Manly Heart" that had so long been devoted to her. He was accompanied by a "Smart Young Midshipman," and followed at a respectful distance by some hardy-looking "Tars of Columbia," who, whether exposed to the storms of "The Bay of Biscay," or sailing before the wind with "A wet sheet and a flowing sea," or engaged in contest with "The Mariners of England," are always ready to venture life and limb in the cause of "America, Commerce, and Freedom."

After them came a motley group whose homes were to be found in every part of the world, and amongst whom even "The Gipsies' Wild Chant" was heard at intervals. Looking as if he had just issued from "The vale of Ovoca," and wrapping around him a damp overcoat, threadbare wherever it was whole, came an "Exile of Erin," who proved to be the famous serenading robber, "Ned of the Hills." Near him was another outlaw, "Allen-a-Dale," who, being something of an exquisite (notwithstanding his deficiency in ploughland and firewood) looked with hauteur on "The wayworn Traveller." The Hibernian freebooter was not, it is true, as well supported as when "Proudly and wide his standard flew;" having found by recent experience that it is not always safe to go a-robbing with flying colours: but he was not without his followers (what Irishman is?) and he and they returned with interest the contemptuous glances of the English brigand.

There were representatives of every nation and of every period in which the voice of music has been heard. Some were serious and some were gay—some were dignified, and others very much the contrary—some had always moved in the first circle, and some were in the people's line. I saw a "Bavarian Broom Girl" endeavouring to persuade "Mynheer Van Clam" to waltz with her round the hill: but finding it impossible to induce in him a rotatory motion, and that his steps never could be made to describe a circle, she wisely gave him up for a "Merry Swiss Boy," who whirled round with her to her heart's content, though his sister would not dance, but was perpetually wailing "Oh! take me back to Switzerland." There was also the disdainful "Polly Hopkins" sailing round her ill-used but persevering lover, "Tommy Tompkins." Among others came the foolish "Maid of Lodi," ambling on her poney; the deplorable "Galley Slave;" the moaning "Beggar Girl;" and several others with whose company I could well have dispensed.

The sound of voices now came from the sea, and we saw several boats approaching the shore—"Faintly as tolls the evening chime," we distinguished the Canadian rowers. Next came the fellow-fishermen of Masaniello chanting their Barcarole; and next we recognised the swiftly-gliding and "Bonnie Boat" of a party of musical Caledonians on their return from a fruitless attempt to wake the "Maid of Lorn." I looked in vain for my sensible and excellent friend, "The Pilot," whom I was afterwards informed by his daughter, "Black-eyed Susan," had gone to the assistance of an endangered vessel, whose "Minute Gun at Sea" he had heard the night before.

I went down with the other ladies to the portico to receive the company that was every moment arriving, and I found the avenue that led to it already filled. Among the Hibernians, we saw a wandering musician who had "Come o'er the sea" to pursue his profession. However, he succeeded but badly; after several attempts, finding it impossible even to "Remember the glories of Brian the Brave." The truth is, he was confused and disconcerted by discovering, when too late, that the harp he had in haste brought with him, was the identical one which had hung so long on Tara's walls that its soul of music was undoubtedly fled; all the strings being broken. This *contre-tems* excited the sneers of the English part of his audience, but I besought them to "Blame not the bard," whose countrymen I saw were beginning to kindle in his behalf, and knowing that "Avenging and bright are the swift swords of Erin," I made peace by ordering refreshments to be brought out, and sending round among them the "Crooskeen Lawn."

Again the sound of distant music floated on the air from "Over the hills and far away."

At first, we thought that "The Campbells were coming" (none of that noble and warlike clan having accompanied the numerous "Sons of the Clyde" that had already arrived), and the male part of our company were preparing to "Hurrah for the Bonnets of Blue." But as the sounds approached, they were easily distinguished for the ever-charming and exhilarating notes of "The Hunters' Chorus," that splendid triumph of musical genius. We soon saw the bold yagers of the Hartz forest descending the path that led round the hill, their rifles in their hands, their oak-sprigs in their hats, and looking as much at home as if they were still in their "Father-land."

I welcomed the whole company, though well aware that among them all there was "Nobody coming to marry me;" and, as "Twilight dews were falling fast," I invited them into the house, which fortunately was large enough to accommodate them. The evening was spent in much hilarity. "Merrily every bosom boundeth," and "Away with melancholy," was the general feeling. A toast was suggested in compliment to their hostess; but unwilling that they should "Drink to me only," I proposed "A health to all good lasses," and it went round with enthusiasm.

Our festivity met with a little interruption from "The Maid of Marlivale," who, while taking one of her usual moonlight rambles, had been frightened by something that she supposed to be "The Erl King," and she rushed in among us, in a state of terror which we had some difficulty in appeasing.

After supper, at which "Jim Crow" was chief waiter (till his antics obliged me to dismiss him from the room), music and dancing continued till a late hour. At length "I knew by the smoke" that the lamps were about to expire, and I was not sorry when the party from Scotland broke up the company by taking leave with "Gude night, and joy be wi' you a'"—and in a short time "All the blue bonnets were over the border." I must tell you in confidence, my dear Ombrelina, that "A chieftain to the highlands bound" presented me "The last rose of summer," and was very importunate with me to become the companion of his journey and the lady of his castle; but I had no inclination to intrust my happiness to a stranger, and to bid "My native land, good night."

Hitherto, whenever, "I've wandered in dreams," it has generally been my unlucky fate to lose all distinct recollection of them before "The morn unbars the gates of light." This once I have been more fortunate. But still, my dear Ombrelina, I think it safest to intrust to your care this slight memorandum of my singular vision. And should you lose it, and I forget it, we have still the consolation that "'Tis but fancy's sketch."

ARIELLA SHADOW.

"In truth," said Merrill, folding up the letter, after making various comments upon it, "on the subject of music, this young lady seems quite *au naturel*. I fear for her success in society."

"Then," observed Cavender, "you must exert your influence in inducing her to change or suppress her opinion on this topic, and perhaps on some others in which she may be equally at variance with *les gens comme il faut*."

"My influence?" replied Merrill. "Is it possible that I know the lady?"

"You know her so well," answered Cavender, "that I wonder you are unacquainted with her autograph; but I suppose your courtship has been altogether verbal."

"Emily Osbrook!" exclaimed Merrill. "Is she, indeed, the author of this letter? It is singular enough that I have never yet happened to see her handwriting; and once seen, I could not have forgotten it. But I can assure you that she has sufficient knowledge of the art to be fully capable of appreciating its difficulties and understanding its beauties, and of warmly admiring whatever of our fashionable music is really good; that is, when the sound is not only a combination of beautiful tones, but also an echo to the sense. We have often lamented that so many fine composers have deigned to furnish charming airs for common-place or nonsensical poetry, and that some of the most exquisite effusions of our poets are degraded by an association with tasteless and insipid music. But when music that is truly excellent is 'married to immortal verse,' and when the words are equal to the air, who does not perceive that the hearers listen with two-fold enjoyment?"

"Two-fold!" exclaimed Cavender.—"The pleasure of listening to delightful notes, with delightful words, uttered with taste and feeling by an accomplished and intellectual singer, is one of the most perfect that can fall to the lot of beings who are unable to hear the music of the spheres and the songs of Paradise."

SOCIABLE VISITING.

"Shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it."—ADDISON.

After a residence of several years at their country-house in the vicinity of Philadelphia, circumstances induced Mr. Heathcote to establish himself again in the city. This removal gave great satisfaction to his family, particularly to his wife and to his two elder children, Harriet and

Albert, as they all had very good reasons for preferring a decided town-life to the numerous conveniences of ruralizing at a villa both in winter and summer. They were called on in due time by all their former city friends; most of whom, indeed, had sedulously kept up their acquaintance with the Heathcote family by frequent visits to them during their long sojourn in the country.

By all these friends, the Heathcotes were invited to tea in form, sometimes to large parties, sometimes to small parties, and sometimes to meet only the family circle. And Mrs. Heathcote had made a return for these civilities by giving an evening party, which included the whole range of her friends and acquaintances, while her husband got rid of his similar obligations by a series of dinners.

These duties being over, and the family settled quietly down into every-day life, the invitations for particular times became less frequent; gradually subsiding into pressing entreaties from their friends to waive all formality, and to come sociably and take tea with them whenever they felt an inclination, without waiting for the ceremony of being regularly asked. These intimations were at once declined by Mrs. Heathcote, who declared herself "no visitor," her large family (for she had eight children) giving her always sufficient occupation at home. Such excuses, however, were not admitted from Harriet, who was handsome, lively, and intelligent, and much liked by all who knew her. She was fond of society, and had no objection to visiting in all its branches. Her days were generally passed in constant and rational employment, and though her evenings were pleasant enough at home, still she liked variety, and thought it would be very agreeable to visit her friends occasionally on the terms proposed; and she anticipated much quiet enjoyment at these extemporaneous tea-drinkings. We must premise that the sociable visits performed by our heroine did not, in reality, all follow each other consecutively, though, for the sake of brevity, it is expedient for us to relate them in that manner. Between some of them were long intervals, during which she, of course, received occasional invitations in regular form; and a due proportion of her evenings was spent in places of public amusement. Our present design is merely to give a sketch of the events which ensued when Harriet Heathcote, taking her friends at their word, availed herself of their earnest entreaties to visit them *sociably*: that is, without being either invited or expected.

In compliance with the oft-repeated request of her old acquaintances, the two Miss Drakelows, to spend a long afternoon with them, coming early and bringing her sewing, our heroine set out on this visit at four o'clock, taking her work-basket in her hand. The Miss Drakelows, indeed, had urged her to come immediately after dinner, that they might have the longer enjoyment of her company; and Harriet, for her part, liked them so well (for they were very agreeable girls), that she had no apprehension of finding the visit tedious.

On arriving at the house, the servant who opened the door informed her that both the young ladies were out. Harriet, much disappointed, was turning to go home again, when their mother, old Mrs. Drakelow, appeared at the door of the front parlour, and hastening forward, seized her by both hands, and insisted on her coming in, saying that Ellen and Fanny had only gone out shopping with Mrs. Eastwood (their married sister), and that she was in momentary expectation of their return. Harriet found it so difficult to resist the entreaties of the old lady, who was always delighted to see visiters, that she yielded and accompanied her into the parlour.

"Well, my dear Miss Harriet," said Mrs. Drakelow, "I am really very glad that you have come, at last, just as we wished you, without any ceremony. I always think a visit the more agreeable for being unexpected. Do take off your cloak. My daughters will be at home in a few minutes, and I dare say they will bring Mrs. Eastwood with them, and then we will make her stay to tea. We shall have a charming evening."

Miss Heathcote took out her work, and Mrs. Drakelow resumed her knitting, and endeavoured to entertain her guest by enumerating those among her own acquaintances that persisted in using knitting-sheaths, and those that could knit just as well without them by holding the needles in a different manner. She also discussed the relative merits of ribbed welts and rolled welts, and gave due honour to certain expeditious ladies that could knit a pair of large stockings in three days; and higher glory still to several that had been known to perform that exploit in *two* days.

In truth, the old lady was one of those dull wearisome people, that are only tolerated because they are good and respectable. She had no reading; no observation, except of trifles not worth observing; no memory, but of things not worth remembering, and her ideas, which were very limited in number, had all her life flowed in the same channel. Still, Mrs. Drakelow thought herself a very sensible woman, and believed that her conversation could not be otherwise than agreeable; and therefore, whenever she had an opportunity, she talked almost incessantly. It is true, that when her daughters were present, she was content to be comparatively silent, as she regarded them with great deference, and listened to them always with habitual admiration.

Evening came, and the young ladies did not return; though Mrs. Drakelow was still expecting them every moment. Finally, she concluded that Mrs. Eastwood had prevailed on them to go home and take tea with her. "So much the better for me," said Mrs. Drakelow, "for now, my dear Miss Harriet, I shall have you all to myself." She then ordered tea to be brought immediately, and Harriet saw nothing in prospect but a long, tedious evening with the prosing old lady; and she knew that it would be at least nine o'clock, or perhaps ten, before her brother came to see her home.

The evening, as she anticipated, was indeed tedious. Mrs. Drakelow took upon herself "the whole expense of the conversation," talked of cheap shops and dear shops, and specified the prices that

had been given for almost every article of dress that had been purchased by her daughters or herself during the last year. She told a long story of a piece of linen which her friend Mrs. Willett had bought for her husband, and which went to pieces before it was made up, splitting down in streaks during the process of stroking the gathers. She told the rent that was given by all her acquaintances that lived in rented houses, and the precise price paid by those that had purchased their dwellings. She described minutely the particulars of several long illnesses that had taken place among her relations and friends; and the exact number of persons that attended their funerals when they died, as on those occasions she said she made it a rule always to count the company. She mentioned several circumstances which proved to demonstration, that the weather was usually cold in winter and warm in summer; and she gave a circumstantial history of her four last cats, with suitable episodes of rats and mice.

The old lady's garrulity was so incessant, her tone so monotonous, and her narratives so totally devoid of either point or interest, that Miss Heathcote caught herself several times on the verge of falling asleep. She frequently stole anxious glances at the time-piece, and when it was nine o'clock she roused herself by the excitement of hoping every moment for the arrival of Albert.

At length she heard the agreeable sound of the door-bell, but it was only a shoemaker's boy that had brought home a pair of new shoes for Mrs. Drakelow, who tried them on, and talked about them for half an hour, telling various stories of tight shoes and loose shoes, long shoes and short shoes. Finally, Albert Heathcote made his welcome appearance, and Harriet joyfully prepared for her departure; though the old lady entreated her "to sit awhile longer, and not to take away her brother so soon."

"You cannot imagine," said Mrs. Drakelow, "how disappointed the girls will feel, at happening to be from home on this afternoon above all others. If they had had the most distant idea of a visit from you to-day, they would, I am sure, have either deferred their shopping, or made it as short as possible. But do not be discouraged, my dear Miss Harriet," continued the good old lady, "I hope you will very soon favour us with another sociable visit. I really do not know when I have passed so pleasant an evening. It has seemed to me not more than half an hour since tea."

About a fortnight afterwards, Miss Heathcote went to take tea, sociably, with her friend Mrs. Rushbrook, who had been married about eighteen months, and whom she had known intimately for many years. This time, she went quite late, and was glad to be informed that Mrs. Rushbrook was at home. She was shown into the parlour, where she waited till long after the lamp was lighted, in momentary expectation of the appearance of her friend, who had sent down word that she would be with her in a few minutes. Occasionally, whenever the nursery door was opened, Harriet heard violent screams of the baby.

At length Mrs. Rushbrook came down, apologized to Miss Heathcote for making her wait, and said that poor little George was very unwell, and had been fretful and feverish all day; and that he had just been got to sleep with much difficulty, having cried incessantly for more than an hour. Harriet now regretted having chosen this day for her visit (the baby being so much indisposed), and she offered to conclude it immediately, only requesting that the servant-man might see her home, as it had long been quite dark. But Mrs. Rushbrook would not listen to Harriet's proposal of going away so soon, and insisted on her staying to tea as she had intended; saying that she had no doubt the baby would be much better when he awoke. At her pressing instances, Miss Heathcote concluded to remain. In a short time Mr. Rushbrook came home, and his wife detailed to him all the particulars of the baby's illness. Harriet, who was accustomed to children, saw that in all probability the complaint would be attended with no serious consequences. But young married people are very naturally prone to take alarm at the slightest ailment of their first child: a feeling which no one should censure, however far it may be carried, as it originates in the best affections of the human heart.

Though Mr. and Mrs. Rushbrook tried to entertain their visitor, and to listen to her when she talked, Harriet could not but perceive that their minds were all the time with the infant up-stairs; and they frequently called each other out of the room to consult about him.

After tea, the baby awoke and renewed its screams, and Mr. Rushbrook determined to go himself for the doctor, who had already been brought thither three times that day. Finding that it was a physician who lived in her immediate neighbourhood, Harriet wisely concluded to shorten her unlucky visit by availing herself of Mr. Rushbrook's protection to her own door. Mrs. Rushbrook took leave of our heroine with much civility, but with very evident satisfaction, and said to her at parting, "To tell you the truth, my dear Harriet, if I had known that you designed me the pleasure of a visit this evening, I would have candidly requested you to defer it till another time, as poor little George has been unwell since early in the morning."

Harriet's next sociable visit was to the two Miss Brandons, who had always appeared to her as very charming girls, and remarkable for their affectionate manner towards each other. Being left in affluent circumstances at the decease of their father (the mother died while they were children), Letitia and Charlotte Brandon lived together in a very genteel establishment, under the protection of an unmarried brother, who was just now absent on business in the West. Harriet had always imagined them in possession of an unusual portion of happiness, for they were young, handsome, rich, at their own disposal, with no one to control them, and, as she supposed, nothing to trouble them. She did not know, or rather she did not believe (for she had heard some whispers of the fact), that in reality the Miss Brandons lived half their time at open war; both having tempers that were very irritable, and also very implacable, for it is not true that the more easily anger is excited, the sooner it subsides. It so happened, however, that Miss Heathcote had

only seen these young ladies during their occasional fits of good-humour, when they were at peace with each other, and with all the world; and at such times no women could possibly be more amiable.

On the morning before Harriet Heathcote's visit, a violent quarrel had taken place between the two sisters, and therefore they were not on speaking terms, nor likely to be so in less than a fortnight; that being the period they generally required to smooth down their angry passions, before they could find it in their hearts to resume the usual routine of even common civility. There was this difference in the two ladies: Charlotte was the most passionate, Letitia the most rancorous.

When Harriet arrived, she found the Miss Brandons alone in the back parlour, sitting at opposite sides of the fire, with each a book. Charlotte, who was just the age of Harriet, looked pleased at the sight of a visiter, whose company she thought would be preferable to the alternative of passing the evening with her sister in utter silence; and she had some faint hope that the presence of Miss Heathcote might perhaps induce Letitia to make some little exertion to conceal her ill-humour. And therefore Charlotte expressed great pleasure when she found that Harriet had come to spend the evening with them. But Letitia, after a very cold salutation, immediately rose and left the room, with an air that showed plainly she did not intend to consider Miss Heathcote as in part her visiter, but exclusively as her sister Charlotte's.

Charlotte followed Letitia with her eyes, and looked very angry, but after a few moments, she smothered her resentment so far as to attempt a sort of apology, saying, "she believed her sister had the headache." She then commenced a conversation with Harriet, who endeavoured to keep it up with her usual vivacity; but was disconcerted to find that Charlotte was too uncomfortable, and her mind evidently too much abstracted, either to listen attentively, or to take the least interest in anything she said.

In a short time the table was set, and Charlotte desired the servant to go up-stairs and ask Miss Letitia if she was coming down to tea, or if she should send her some. The man departed, and was gone a long while. When he returned—"Is Miss Letitia coming down to tea?" asked Charlotte anxiously; "Miss Letitia don't say," replied the man. Charlotte bit her lip in vexation, and then with something that resembled a sigh, invited Harriet to take her seat at the table, and began to pour out. When tea was about half over, Letitia made her appearance, walking with great dignity, and looking very cross. She sat down in silence, opposite to Harriet. "Sister," said Charlotte, in a voice of half-suppressed anger, "shall I give you black tea or green? you know you sometimes take one and sometimes the other." "I'll help myself," replied Letitia, in a voice of chilling coldness. And taking up one of the tea-pots she proceeded to do so. As soon as she put the cup to her lips, she set it down again with apparent disgust, saying—"This tea is not fit to drink." Charlotte, making a visible effort to restrain herself, placed the other tea-pot within her sister's reach; Letitia poured out a few drops by way of trial, tasted it, then pushed it away with still greater disgust than before, and threw herself back in her chair, casting a look of indignation at Charlotte, and murmuring,—"'Tis always so when I do not preside at the tea-table myself."

Charlotte sat swelling with anger, afraid to trust herself to speak, while Harriet, affecting not to notice what was passing, made an attempt to talk on some indifferent subject, and addressed to Letitia a few words which she did not answer, and handed her some waffles which she would not take. Never had Harriet been present at so uncomfortable a repast, and heartily did she wish herself at home, regretting much that she had happened to pay a visit during this state of hostilities.

After the failure of both sorts of tea, Letitia sat in silent indignation till the table was cleared, leaning back in her chair, eating nothing, but crumbling a piece of bread to atoms, and pertinaciously averting her head both from Charlotte and Harriet.

When tea was over, Harriet hoped that Letitia would retire to her own room, but on the contrary the lady was perversely bent on staying in the parlour. Charlotte and Harriet placed themselves at the sofa-table with their sewing, and Letitia desired the servant-man to bring her one of the new table-cloths that had been sent home that morning. Then making him light a lamp that stood in the corner of the mantel-piece, she seated herself under it on a low chair, and commenced silently and sedulously the task of ravelling or fringing the ends of the table-cloth, while Charlotte looked at her from time to time with ill-suppressed resentment. Now and then, Harriet, in the hope of conciliating Letitia into something like common civility, addressed a few words to her in as pleasant a manner as possible, but Letitia replied only by a cold monosyllable, and finally made no answer at all. Charlotte was too angry at her sister to be able to sustain anything that could be called a conversation with Miss Heathcote, and Harriet, rather than say nothing, began to describe a very entertaining new novel that had lately appeared, relating with great vivacity some of its most amusing scenes. But she soon found that Charlotte was too much out of humour with her sister to be able to give much attention to the narrative, and that her replies and comments were *distrait* and *mal-à-propos*.

Letitia sat coldly fringing the table-cloth, and showing no sort of emotion, except that she threw the ravellings into the fire with rather more energy than was necessary, and occasionally jogged the foot that rested on a cushion before her; and she resolutely refused to partake of the refreshments that were brought in after tea.

Miss Heathcote sat in momentary dread of an explosion, as she saw that the angry glances of Charlotte towards the lady fringing the table-cloth, were becoming more frequent and more vivid,

that her colour was heightening, and the tremor of her voice increasing. Our heroine was heartily glad of the arrival of her brother about nine o'clock, an hour earlier than she expected him. He explained, in a few words, that being desirous of returning to the theatre to see a favourite after-piece, he had thought it best to come for his sister as soon as the play was over, rather than keep her waiting for him till near eleven, before which time it was not probable that the whole entertainment would be finished. Charlotte, who was evidently impatient for an outbreak, saw Miss Heathcote depart with visible satisfaction, and Letitia merely bowed her head to the adieu of our heroine, who, vexed at herself for having volunteered her visit on this ill-omened day, felt it a relief to quit the presence of these unamiable sisters, and "leave them alone in their glory."

The black girl that had brought down her hood and cloak, ran forward to open the street door, and said in a low voice to Harriet, "I suppose, miss, you did not know before you came, that our ladies had a high quarrel this morning, and are affronted, and don't speak. But I dare say they will come to, in the course of a few weeks, and then I hope you'll pay us another visit, for company's *scace*."

When Harriet equipped herself to pass a *sociable* evening with the Urlingford family, who were among the most agreeable of her friends, she could not possibly anticipate any *contre-tems* that would mar the pleasure of the visit. She arrived about dusk, and was somewhat surprised to find the whole family already at their tea. Mrs. Urlingford and the young ladies received her very cordially, but looked a little disconcerted, and Harriet apologized for interrupting them at table, by saying, that she thought their tea-hour was not till seven o'clock.

Mrs. Urlingford replied, that seven o'clock *was* their usual hour for tea, but on that evening they had it much earlier than usual, that it might be over before the arrival of some of their musical friends, who were coming to practise with her daughters.

"Really, my dear Harriet," pursued Mrs. Urlingford, "I am rejoiced that you happened to fix on this evening for favouring us with an unceremonious visit. Though I know that you always decline playing and singing in company, and that you persist in saying you have very little knowledge of music, yet I think too highly of your taste and feeling not to be convinced of your fondness for that delightful art, and I am certain you will be much gratified by what you will hear to-night, though this is only a private practising; indeed a mere rehearsal. Next week we will have a general music-party, the first of a series which we have arranged to take place at intervals of a fortnight, and to which we intend ourselves the pleasure of sending invitations to you and all our other friends. This, of to-night, is, I repeat, nothing more than a rehearsal, and we expect only a few professional musicians, whose assistance we have secured for our regular musical soirées. I am very glad, indeed, my dear Harriet, that you chance to be with us this evening. As I said, we have tea earlier than usual, that the music may begin the sooner, and at ten o'clock we will have coffee and other refreshments handed round."

By this time, the table was newly set, fresh tea was made, and some additional nice things were produced. Harriet, who was very sorry for having caused any unnecessary trouble, sat down to her tea, which she despatched in all possible haste, as she knew that Mrs. Urlingford must be impatient to have the table cleared away, previous to the arrival of the musicians, who were now momentarily expected. Just as Harriet was finishing, there came in a German that played on the violon-cello, and was always very early. On being asked if he had taken tea, he replied in the affirmative, but that he would have no objection to a little more. Accordingly he sat down and made a long and hearty meal, to the evident annoyance of the family, and still more to that of Harriet Heathcote, who knew that the table would long since have been removed, had it not been detained on her account. There was nothing now to be done, but to close the folding-doors, and shut in the German till he had completed his repast, as others of the company were fast arriving. And though Harriet had been told that this was merely a private practising, she soon found herself in the midst of something that very much resembled a large party; so many persons having been invited exclusive of the regular performers. She understood, however, that nobody had been asked to this rehearsal, who had not a decided taste for music.

Our heroine, for her part, had no extraordinary talent for that difficult and elegant accomplishment; and, after taking lessons for about a year, it was considered best that she should give it up, as her voice was of no great compass, and there was little probability of her reaching any proficiency, as an instrumental musician, that would compensate for an undue expense of time, money, and application. Therefore, Harriet had never advanced beyond simple ballads, which she played and sang agreeably and correctly enough, but which she only attempted when her audience consisted exclusively of her own family; and none of her brothers and sisters had as yet shown any taste for that sort of music which is commonly called scientific.

The Urlingfords, on the contrary, could all sing and play; the girls on the harp, piano, and guitar; and the boys on the flute, and violin. They all had voices of great power, and sung nothing but Italian.

The evening was passed in the performance of pieces that exhibited much science, and much difficulty of execution: such pieces, in short, as Dr. Johnson wished were "impossible." Being totally at variance with the simplicity of Harriet's taste, she found them very uninteresting, and inconceivably fatiguing, and after a while she had great difficulty in keeping herself awake. Of course, not a word was uttered during the performance, and the concertos, potpourris, arias, and cavatinas succeeded each other so rapidly that there was no interval in which to snatch a few moments of conversation. It is true the purport of the meeting was music, and music alone.

Miss Heathcote almost envied a young lady, who, having learnt all her music in Europe, had come home with an enthusiasm for feats of voice and finger, that on all these occasions transported her into the third heaven. She sat with her neck stretched forward, and her hands out-spread, her lips half open, her eyes sometimes raised as in ecstasy, and sometimes closed in overpowering bliss. But Harriet's envy of such exquisite sensations was a little checked, when she observed Miss Denham stealing a sly glance all round, to see who was looking at her, and admiring her enthusiasm. And then Harriet could not help thinking how very painful it must be (when only done for effect) to keep up such an air and attitude of admiration during a whole long evening.

Our heroine was also much entertained in the early part of the performance, particularly during a grand concerto, by observing the musician who officiated as leader, and was a foreigner of great skill in his profession. In him there was certainly no affectation. To have the piece performed in the most perfect manner, was "the settled purpose of his soul." All the energies of his mind and body were absorbed in this one object, and he seemed as if the whole happiness of his future life, nay, his existence itself, depended on its success. The piece was proceeding in its full tide of glory, and the leader was waving his bow with more pride and satisfaction than a monarch ever felt in wielding his sceptre, or a triumphant warrior in brandishing his sword. Suddenly he gave "a look of horror and a sudden start," and turning instantly round, his eyes glared fiercely over the whole circle of performers in search of the culprit who had been guilty of a false note; an error which would scarcely have been noticed by any of the company, had it not been made so conspicuous by the shock it had given to the chief musician. The criminal, however, was only discovered by his injudiciously "hiding his diminished head." Better for him to have been "a fine, gay, bold-faced villain."

Harriet could not help remarking that though the company all applauded every song that was sung, and every piece that was played, and that at the conclusion of each, the words "charming," "exquisite," "divine," were murmured round the room, still almost every one looked tired, many were evidently suppressing their inclination to yawn—some took opportunities of looking privately at their watches; and Mr. Urlingford and another old gentleman slept a duet together in a corner. The entrance of the coffee, &c., produced a wonderful revival, and restored animation to eyes that seemed ready to close in slumber. The company all started from the listless postures into which they had unconsciously thrown themselves, and every one sat up straight. As soon as she had drunk a cup of the refreshing beverage, Miss Heathcote was glad to avail herself of her brother's arrival and take her leave; Mrs. Urlingford, congratulating her again on having been so fortunate as to drop in exactly on that evening, and telling her that she should certainly expect her at all her musical parties throughout the season.

And Harriet might perhaps have gone to the first one, had she not been so unluckily present at the rehearsal.

On the next uninvited visit of our heroine, she found her friends, the three Miss Celbridges, sitting in the parlour with their mother, by no other light than that of the fire, and all looking extremely dejected. On inquiring if they were well, they answered in the affirmative. Her next question was to ask when they had heard from Baltimore, in which place some of their nearest relations were settled. The reply was, that they had received letters that morning, and that their friends were in good health. "Well, girls," said Harriet, gayly, "you see I have taken you at your word, and have come to pass the evening with you *sans ceremonie*."

The Miss Celbridges exchanged looks with their mother, who cast down her eyes and said nothing; and one of the young ladies silently assisted Harriet in taking off her walking habiliments. There was an air of general constraint, and our heroine began to fear that her visit was not quite acceptable. "Is it possible," thought she, "that I could unconsciously have given any offence at our last meeting?" But she recollected immediately, that the Miss Celbridges had then taken leave of her with the most unequivocal evidences of cordiality, and had earnestly insisted on her coming to drink tea with them, as often as she felt a desire, assuring her that they should always be delighted to see her "in a sociable way."

The young ladies made an effort at conversation, but it was visibly an effort. The minds of the Miss Celbridges were all palpably engrossed with something quite foreign to the topic of discussion, and Harriet was too much surprised, and too much embarrassed to talk with her usual fluency.

At length Mr. Celbridge entered the room, and after slightly saluting Miss Heathcote, asked why the lamp was not lighted. It was done—and Harriet then perceived by the redness of their eyes, that the mother and daughters had all been in tears. Mr. Celbridge looked also very melancholy, and seating himself beside his wife, he entered into a low and earnest conversation with her. Mrs. Celbridge held her handkerchief to her face, and Harriet could no longer refrain from inquiring if the family had been visited by any unexpected misfortune. There was a pause, during which the daughters evidently struggled to command their feelings, and Mr. Celbridge, after a few moments' hesitation, replied in a tremulous voice: "Perhaps, Miss Heathcote, you know not that to-day I have become a bankrupt; that the unexpected failure of a house for which I had endorsed to a large amount, has deprived me of the earnings of twenty years, and reduced me to indigence."

Harriet was much shocked, and expressed her entire ignorance of the fact. "We supposed," said Mrs. Celbridge, "that it must have been known universally—and such reports always spread with too much rapidity." "Surely," replied Harriet, taking the hand of Mrs. Celbridge, "you cannot

seriously believe that it was known to *me*. The slightest intimation of this unfortunate event, would certainly have deterred me from interrupting you with my presence at a time when the company of a visitor must be so painfully irksome to the whole family."

She then rose, and said that if Mr. Celbridge would have the kindness to accompany her to her own door, she would immediately go home. "I will not dissemble, my dear Miss Heathcote," replied Mrs. Celbridge, "and urge you to remain, when it must be evident to you that none of us are in a state to make your visit agreeable to you, or indeed to derive pleasure from it ourselves. After the first shock is over, we shall be able, I hope, to look on our reverse of fortune with something like composure. And when we are settled in the humble habitation to which we must soon remove, we shall be glad indeed to have our evenings occasionally enlivened by the society of one whom we have always been so happy to class among our friends."

Mr. Celbridge escorted Harriet to her own residence, which was only at a short distance. She there found that her brother, having just heard of the failure, and knowing that she intended spending the evening at Mr. Celbridge's, had sent her from his office a note to prevent her going, but it had not arrived till after her departure.

Among Miss Heathcote's acquaintances was Mrs. Accleton, a very young lady recently married, who on receiving her bridal-visits, had given out that she intended to live economically, and not to indulge in any unnecessary expense. She emphatically proclaimed her resolution never to give a party; but she did not even insinuate that she would never go to a party herself. She also declared that it did not comport with her plans (young girls when just married are apt to talk much of their plans) to have any regularly invited company; but that it would always afford her the greatest possible pleasure to see her friends *sociably*, if they would come and take tea with her, whenever it was convenient to themselves, and without waiting for her to appoint any particular time. "My husband and I," said Mrs. Accleton, "intend spending all our evenings at home, so there is no risk of ever finding us out. We are too happy in each other to seek for amusement abroad; and we find by experience that nothing the world can offer is equal to our own domestic felicity, varied occasionally by the delightful surprise of an unceremonious visit from an intimate friend."

It was not till after the most urgent entreaties, often reiterated, that Harriet Heathcote undertook one of these visits to Mrs. Accleton. After ringing at the street-door till her patience was nearly exhausted, it was opened by a sulky-looking white girl, who performed the office of porteress with a very ill grace, hiding herself behind it because she was not in full dress; and to Harriet's inquiry if Mrs. Accleton was at home, murmuring in a most repulsive tone that "she believed she was."

Our heroine was kept waiting a considerable time in a cold and comfortless, though richly-furnished parlour, where the splendid coal-grate exhibited no evidences of fire, but a mass of cinders blackening at the bottom. At length Mrs. Accleton made her appearance, fresh from the toilet, and apologized by saying, that expecting no one that afternoon, she had ever since dinner been sitting up stairs in her wrapper. "About twelve o'clock," said she, "I always, when the weather is fine, dress myself and have the front-parlour fire made up, in case of morning-visiters. But after dinner, I usually put on a wrapper, and establish myself in the dining-room for the remainder of the day. My husband and I have got into the habit of spending all our evenings there. It is a charmingly comfortable little room, and we think it scarcely worth while to keep up the parlour-fire just for our two selves. However, I will have it replenished immediately. Excuse me for one moment." She then left the room, and shortly returning, resumed her discourse.

"I determined," said she, "from the hour I first thought of housekeeping, that it should be my plan to have none but white servants. They are less wasteful than the blacks; less extravagant in their cooking; are satisfied to sit by smaller fires; and have fewer visiters. The chief difficulty with them is, that there are so many things they are unwilling to do. Yesterday my cook left me quite suddenly, and to-day a little girl about fourteen, whom I hired last week as a waiter, was taken away by her mother; and I have just now been trying to persuade Sally, the chambermaid, to bring in the coal-scuttle and make up the fire. But she has a great objection to doing anything in presence of strangers, and I am rather afraid she will not come. And I do not much wonder at it, for Sally is a girl of a very respectable family. She has nothing of the servant about her."

"So much the worse," thought Harriet, "if she is obliged to get her living in that capacity."

After a long uncomfortable pause, during which there were no signs of Sally, Mrs. Accleton involuntarily put her hand to the bell, but recollecting herself, withdrew it again without pressing the spring. "There would be no use," said she, "in ringing the bell, for Sally never takes the least notice of it. She is principled against it, and says she will not be rung about the house like a negro. I have to indulge her in this laudable feeling of self-respect, for in everything that is essential she is a most valuable girl, and irons my dresses beautifully, and does up my collars and pelerines to admiration."

So saying, Mrs. Accleton again left the parlour to have another expostulation with Sally, who finally vouchsafed to bring in the coal-scuttle, and flinging a few fresh coals on the top of the dying embers (from which all power of ignition had too visibly fled), put up the blower, and hurried out of the room. But the blower awakened no flame, and not a sound was heard to issue from behind its blank and dreary expanse. "I am afraid the fire is too far gone to be revived without a regular clearing out of the grate," said Mrs. Accleton, "and I doubt the possibility of prevailing on Sally to go through all that. Anthracite has certainly its disadvantages. Perhaps we

had better adjourn to the dining-room, where there has been a good fire the whole day. If I had only known that you intended me the pleasure of this visit! However, I have no doubt you will find it very comfortable up stairs."

To the dining-room they accordingly went. It was a little narrow apartment over the kitchen, with a low ceiling and small windows looking out on the dead wall of the next house, and furnished in the plainest and most economical manner. There was a little soap-stone grate that held about three quarts of coal, which, however, *was* burning; a small round table that answered for every purpose; half a dozen wooden-bottomed cane-coloured chairs; and a small settee to match, covered with a calico cushion, and calculated to hold but two people. "This is just the size for my husband and myself," said Mrs. Accleton, as she placed herself on the settee. "We had it made on purpose. Will you take a seat on it, Miss Harriet, or would you prefer a chair? I expect Mr. Accleton home in a few minutes." Harriet preferred a chair.

The conversation now turned on housekeeping, and the *nouvelle mariée* gave a circumstantial detail of her various plans, and expressed some surprise that, notwithstanding the excellence of her system, she found so much difficulty in getting servants to fall into it. "I have the most trouble with my cooks," pursued Mrs. Accleton. "I have had six different women in that capacity, though I have only been married two months. And I am sure Mr. Accleton and myself are by no means hard to please. We live in the plainest way possible, and a very little is sufficient for our table. Our meat is simply boiled or roasted, and often we have nothing more than a beefsteak. We never have any sort of dessert, considering all such things as extremely unwholesome." "What is the reason," thought Harriet, "that so many young ladies, when they are first married, discover immediately that desserts are unwholesome; particularly if prepared and eaten in their own houses?"

Mrs. Accleton made frequent trips back and forward to the kitchen, and Harriet understood that tea was in agitation. Finally, Sally, looking very much out of humour, came and asked for the keys; and unlocking a dwarf side-board that stood in one of the recesses, she got out the common tea-equipage and placed it on the table. "You see, Miss Harriet, we treat you quite *en famille*," said Mrs. Accleton. "We make no stranger of you. After tea, the parlour will doubtless be warm, and we will go down thither." Harriet wondered if the anthracite was expected to repent of its obstinacy, and take to burning of its own accord.

Mr. Accleton now came home, and his wife, after running to kiss him, exclaimed: "Oh! my dear, I am glad you are come! You can now entertain Miss Heathcote while I go down and pay some attention to the tea, for Sally protests that she was not hired to cook, and, if the truth must be told, she is very busy ironing, and does not like to be taken off. This is our regular ironing-day, and one of my rules is never, on any consideration, to have it put off or passed over. Method is the soul of housekeeping."

Mr. Accleton was naturally taciturn, but he made a prodigious effort to entertain Harriet, and talked to her of the tariff.

It was near eight o'clock before Sally condescended to bring up the tea and its accompaniments, which were a plate containing four slices of the thinnest possible bread and butter, another with two slices of pale toast, and a third with two shapeless whitish cakes, of what composition it was difficult to tell, but similar to those that are called flap-jacks in Boston, slap-jacks in New York, and buckwheat cakes in Philadelphia.[84] In the centre was a deep dish with a dozen small stewed oysters floating in an ocean of liquor, as tasteless and insipid as dish-water. The tea also was tasteless, and for two reasons—first, that the Chinese herb had been apportioned in a very small quantity; and secondly, that the kettle had not "come to a boil."

"We give you tea in a very plain style," said Mrs. Accleton to Harriet; "you see we make no stranger of you, and that we treat you just as we do ourselves. We know that simple food is always the most wholesome, and when our friends are so kind as to visit us, we have no desire to make them sick by covering our table with dainties. It is one of my rules never to have a sweetcake or sweetmeat in the house. They are not only a foolish expense, but decidedly prejudicial to health."

The hot cakes being soon despatched, there was considerable waiting for another supply. Mr. and Mrs. Accleton were at somewhat of a nonplus as to the most feasible means of procuring the attendance of Sally. "Perhaps she will come if we knock on the floor," said Mrs. Accleton; "she *has* done so sometimes." Mr. Accleton stamped on the floor, but Sally came not. Harriet could not imagine why Sally's pride should be less hurt by coming to a knock on the floor than to a ring of the bell; but there is no accounting for tastes. Mr. Accleton stamped again, and much more loudly than before. "Now you have spoiled all," said his wife, fretfully; "Sally will never come now. She will be justly offended at your stamping for her in that violent way. I much question if we see her face again to-night."

At last, after much canvassing, it was decided that Mr. Accleton should go to the head of the stairs and venture to call Sally; his wife enjoining him not to call too loudly, and to let his tone and manner be as mild as possible. This delicate business was successfully accomplished. Sally at last appeared with two more hot cakes, and Mrs. Accleton respectfully intimated to her that she wished her to return in a few minutes to clear away the table.

Mr. Accleton, who was a meek man, being sent down by his wife to reconnoitre the parlour fire, came back and reported that it was "dead out." "How very unlucky," said Mrs. Accleton, "that

Miss Heathcote should happen to come just on this evening! Unlucky for herself, I mean, for we must always be delighted to see her. However, I am so fond of this snug little room, that for my own part I have no desire ever to sit in any other. My husband and I have passed so many pleasant hours in it."

The ladies now resumed their sewing; Mrs. Accleton talked of her plans, and her economy, and Sally; and Mr. Accleton pored over the newspaper as if he was learning it all by heart, even to the advertisements; while his wife, who had taken occasion to remark that the price of oil had risen considerably, managed two or three times to give the screw of the astral lamp a twist to the left, which so much diminished the light that Harriet could scarcely see to thread her needle.

About an hour after tea, Mrs. Accleton called her husband to the other end of the room, and a half-whispered consultation took place between them, which ended in the disappearance of the gentleman. In a short time he returned, and there was another consultation, in the course of which Harriet could not avoid distinguishing the words—"Sally refuses to quit her clear-starching." "Well, dear, cannot I ask you just to do them yourself?" "Oh, no! indeed, it is quite out of the question; I would willingly oblige you in anything else." "But, dear, only think how often you have done this very thing when a boy." "But I am not a boy now." "Oh, but dear, you really must. There is no one else to do it. Come now, only a few, just a very few." There was a little more persuasion; the lady seemed to prevail, and the gentleman quitted the room. A short time after, there was heard a sound of cracking nuts, which Mrs. Accleton, consciously colouring, endeavoured to drown by talking as fast and as loudly as possible.

We have said that Mr. Accleton was a meek man. Having finished his business down-stairs, he came back looking red and foolish; and after awhile Sally appeared with great displeasure in her countenance, and in her hands a waiter containing a plate of shellbarks, a pitcher of water, and some glasses. Mr. Accleton belonged to the temperance society, and therefore, as his wife said, was principled against having in his house, either wine, or any other sort of liquor.

The arrival of Albert Heathcote put an end to this comfortless visit; and Mrs. Accleton on taking leave of Harriet, repeated, for the twentieth time, her regret at not having had any previous intimation of it.

Our heroine could not but wonder why marriage should so soon have have made a change for the worse, in the lady with whom she had been passing the evening, and whom she had known when Miss Maiden, as a lively, pleasant, agreeable girl, not remarkable for much mind, but in every other respect the reverse of what she was now. Harriet had yet to learn that marriage, particularly when it takes place at a very early age, and before the judgment of the lady has had time to ripen by intercourse with the world, frequently produces a sad alteration in her habits and ideas. As soon as she is emancipated from the control of her parents, and when "her market is made," and a partner secured for life, all her latent faults and foibles are too prone to show themselves without disguise, and she is likewise in much danger of acquiring new ones. Presuming upon her importance as a married lady, and also upon the indulgence with which husbands generally regard all the sayings and doings of their wives in the *early* days of matrimony, woman, as well as man, is indeed too apt to "play fantastic tricks when dressed in a little brief authority."

Next day, Harriet was surprised by a morning visit from Mrs. Accleton, who came in looking much discomposed, and, after the first salutations, said in a tone of some bitterness, "I have met with a great misfortune, Miss Heathcote. I have lost that most valuable servant, Sally. The poor girl's pride was so deeply wounded at being obliged to bring in the waiter before company (and as her family is so respectable, she of course has a certain degree of proper pride), that she gave me notice this morning of the utter impossibility of her remaining in the house another day. I tried in vain to pacify her, and I assured her that your coming to tea was entirely accidental, and that such a thing might never happen again. All I could urge had no effect on her, and she persisted in saying that she never could stay in any place after her feelings had been hurt, and that she had concluded to live at home for the future, and take in sewing. So she quitted me at once, leaving me without a creature in the house, and I have been obliged to borrow mamma's Kitty for the present. And I have nearly fatigued myself to death by walking almost to Schuylkill to inquire the character of a cook that I heard of yesterday. As to a chambermaid, I never expect to find one that will replace poor Sally. She was so perfectly clean, and she clear-starched, and plaited, and ironed so beautifully; and when I went to a party, she could arrange my hair as well as a French barber, which was certainly a great saving to me. Undoubtedly, Miss Heathcote, your company is always pleasant, and we certainly spent a delightful evening, but if I had had the least intimation that you intended me the honour of a visit yesterday, I should have taken the liberty of requesting you to defer it till I had provided myself with a cook and a waiter. Poor Sally—and to think, too, that she had been ironing all day!"

Harriet was much vexed, and attempted an apology for her ill-timed visit. She finally succeeded in somewhat mollifying the lady by presenting her with some cake and wine as a refreshment after her fatigue, and Mrs. Accleton departed in rather a better humour, but still the burthen of her song was, "of course, Miss Heathcote, your visits must be always welcome—but it is certainly a sad thing to lose poor Sally."

Our heroine's next attempt at a sociable visit was to her friend Amanda Milbourne, the eldest daughter of a large family. As soon as Harriet made her entrance, the children, with all of whom she was a great favourite, gathered round, and informed her with delighted faces, that their father and mother were going to take them to the play. Harriet feared that again her visit had

been ill-timed, and offered to return home. "On the contrary," said Mrs. Milbourne, "nothing can be more fortunate, at least for Amanda, who has declined accompanying us to the theatre, as her eyes are again out of order, and she is afraid of the lights. Therefore she will be extremely happy to have you spend the evening with her." "It is asking too much of Harriet's kindness," said Amanda, "to expect her to pass a dull evening alone with me; I fear I shall not be able to entertain her as I would wish. The place that was taken for me at the theatre will be vacant, and I am sure it would give you all great pleasure if Harriet would accept of it, and accompany you thither." This invitation was eagerly urged by Mr. and Mrs. Milbourne, and loudly reiterated by all the children, but Harriet had been at the theatre the preceding evening, the performances of to-night were exactly the same, and she was one of those that think "nothing so tedious as a twice-seen play," that is, if all the parts are filled precisely as before.

Mrs. Milbourne then again felicitated Amanda on being so fortunate as to have Miss Heathcote to pass the evening with her. "To say the truth," said the good mother, "I could scarcely reconcile myself to the idea of your staying at home, particularly as your eyes will not allow you to read or to sew this evening, and you could have no resource but the piano." Then turning to Harriet, she continued, "When her eyes are well, it may be truly remarked of Amanda, that she is one of those fortunate persons 'who are never less alone than when alone;' she often says so herself."

Accordingly Harriet was prevailed on to go through with her visit. And as soon as tea was over, all the Milbourne family (with the exception of Amanda) departed for the theatre.

Harriet produced her bead work, and endeavoured to be as amusing as possible, but her friend seemed silent, abstracted, and not in the vein for conversation, complaining at times of the pain in her eyes, which, however, looked as well as usual. Just after the departure of the family, Amanda stole softly to the front-door and put up the dead-latch, so that it could be opened from without. After that, she resumed her seat in the parlour, and appeared to be anxiously listening for something. The sound of footsteps was soon heard at the door, and presently a handsome young gentleman walked in without having rung the bell, and as he entered the parlour, stopped short, and looked disconcerted at finding a stranger there. Amanda blushed deeply, but rose and introduced him as Captain Sedbury of the army. Harriet then recollected having heard a vague report of an officer being very much in love with Miss Milbourne, and that her parents discountenanced his addresses, unwilling that the most beautiful and most accomplished of their daughters should marry a man who had no fortune but his commission.

The fact was, that Captain Sedbury, after an absence of several months at his station, had only arrived in town that morning, and finding means to notify his mistress of his return, it had been arranged between them that he should visit her in the evening, during the absence of the family, and for this purpose Amanda had excused herself from going to the theatre. He took his seat beside Amanda, who contrived to give him her hand behind the backs of their chairs, and attempted some general conversation, catching, at times, an opportunity of saying in a low voice a few words to the lady of his love, whose inclination was evidently to talk to him only.

Harriet Heathcote now found herself in a very awkward situation. On this occasion she was palpably what the French call *Madame de Trop*, a character which is irksome beyond all endurance to the lady herself, if she is a person of proper consideration for the convenience of others. Though conscious that they were wishing her at least in Alabama, she felt much sympathy for the lovers, as she had a favoured inamorato of her own, who was now on his return from Canton. She talked, and their replies were tardy and *distrait*; she looked at them, and they were gazing at each other, and several times she found them earnestly engaged in a whisper. She felt as if on thorns, and became so nervous that she actually got the headache. The dullness of Mrs. Drakelow, the sick baby of Mrs. Rushbrook, the feuds of the Miss Brandons, the failure of Mr. Celbridge, the music-practising of the Urlingfords, the maid Sally of the Accletons, had none of them at the time caused our heroine so much annoyance as she felt on this evening, from the idea that she was so inconveniently interrupting the stolen interview of two affianced lovers. At last she became too nervous to endure it any longer, and putting away her bead work, she expressed a desire to go home, pleading her headache as an excuse. Captain Sedbury started up with alacrity, and offered immediately to attend her. But Amanda, whose eyes had at first sparkled with delight, suddenly changed countenance, and begged Harriet to stay, saying, "You expect your brother, do you not?"

"Certainly," replied Harriet, "but as the distance is short, I hope it will be no great encroachment on Captain Sedbury's time. And then," she added with a smile, "he will of course return hither and finish his visit, after he has deposited me at my own door."

Amanda still hesitated. She recollected an instance of a friend of hers having lost her lover in consequence of his escorting home a pretty girl that made a "deadset" at him. And she was afraid to trust Captain Sedbury with so handsome a young lady as Miss Heathcote. Fortunately, however, Harriet removed this perplexity as soon as she guessed the cause. "Suppose," said she to Amanda, "that you were to accompany us yourself. It is a fine moonlight night, and I have no doubt the walk will do you good, as you say you have not been out for several days."

To this proposal Amanda joyfully assented, and in a moment her face was radiant with smiles. She ran up stairs for her walking equipments, and was down so quickly that Harriet had not much chance of throwing out any allurements in her absence, even if she had been so disposed. The captain gave an arm to each of the ladies, and in a short time the lovers bade Miss Heathcote good night at the door of her father's mansion.

Harriet now comprehended why her friend Amanda "was never less alone than when alone."

Three weeks afterwards, when Miss Milbourne and Captain Sedbury had effected a runaway marriage, and the parents had forgiven them according to custom, Amanda and her husband made themselves and Harriet very merry by good-humouredly telling her how much her accidental visit had incommoded them, and how glad they were to get rid of her.

We have only to relate one more instance of Harriet Heathcote's sociable visits. This was to her friends the Tanfields, a very charming family, consisting of a widow and her two daughters, whom she was certain of finding at home, because they were in deep mourning, and did not go out of an evening.

Harriet had been detained by a visiter, and it was nearly dark when she reached Mrs. Tanfield's door, and was told by the coloured man who opened it, that all his ladies had set out that morning for New York, having heard that young Mr. Tanfield (who lived in that city) was dangerously ill. Harriet was sorry that her friends should have received such painful intelligence, and for a few moments could think of nothing else, for she knew young Tanfield to be one of the best of sons and brothers. Her next consideration was how to get home, as there was no possibility of staying at Mrs. Tanfield's. Her residence was at a considerable distance, and "the gloomy night was gathering fast." She thought for a moment of asking Peters, the black man, to accompany her; but from the loud chattering and giggling that came up from the kitchen, (which seemed to be lighted with unusual brightness), and from having noticed, as she approached the house, that innumerable coloured people were trooping down the area-steps, she rightly concluded that Mrs. Tanfield's servants had taken advantage of her absence to give a party, and that "high life below stairs" was at that moment performing.

Fearing that if she requested Peters to escort her, he would comply very ungraciously, or perhaps excuse himself, rather than be taken away from his company, Miss Heathcote concluded on essaying to walk home by herself, for the first time in her life, after lamplight. As she turned from the door, (which Peters immediately closed) she lingered awhile on the step, looking out upon the increasing gloom, and afraid to venture into it. However, as there seemed no alternative, she summoned all her courage, and set off at a brisk pace. Her intention was to walk quietly along without showing the slightest apprehension, but she involuntarily shrunk aside whenever she met any of the other sex. On suddenly encountering a row of young men, arm in arm, with each a segar in his mouth, she came to a full stop, and actually shook with terror. They all looked at her a moment, and then made way for her to pass, and she felt as if she could have plunged into the wall to avoid touching them.

Presently our heroine met three sailors reeling along, evidently intoxicated, and singing loudly. She kept as close as possible to the curbstone, expecting nothing else than to be rudely accosted by them, but they were too intent upon their song to notice her; though one of them staggered against her, and pushed her off the pavement, so as almost to throw her into the street.

Her way home lay directly in front of the Walnut Street Theatre, which she felt it impossible to pass, as the people were just crowding in. And she now blessed the plan of the city which enabled her to avoid this inconvenience by "going round a square." The change of route took her into a street comparatively silent and retired, and now her greatest fear was of being seized and robbed. She would have given the world to have met any gentleman of her acquaintance, determining, if she did so, to request his protection home. At last she perceived one approaching, whose appearance she thought was familiar to her, and as they came within the light of a lamp, she found it to be Mr. Morland, an intimate friend of her brother's. He looked at her with a scrutinizing glance, as if he half-recognised her features under the shade of her hood. Poor Harriet now felt ashamed and mortified that Mr. Morland should see her alone and unprotected, walking in the street after dark. She had not courage to utter a word, but, drawing her hood more closely over her face, she glided hastily past him, and walked rapidly on. She had no sooner turned the corner of the street, than she regretted having obeyed the impulse of the moment, lamenting her want of presence of mind, and reflecting how much better it would have been for her to have stopped Mr. Morland, and candidly explained to him her embarrassing situation. But it was now too late.

Presently there was a cry of fire, and the State House bell tolled out north-east, which was exactly the contrary direction from Mr. Heathcote's residence. Immediately an engine came thundering along the street, accompanied by a hose, and followed by several others, and Harriet found herself in the midst of the crowd and uproar, while the light of the torches carried by the firemen glared full upon her. But what had at first struck her with terror, she now perceived to be rather an advantage than otherwise, for no one noticed her in the general confusion, and it set every one to running the same way. She found, as she approached her father's dwelling, that there was no longer any danger of her being molested by man or boy, all being gone to the fire, and the streets nearly deserted. Anxious to get home at all hazards, she commenced running as fast as she could, and never stopped till she found herself at her own door.

The family were amazed and alarmed when they saw Harriet run into the parlour, pale, trembling, and almost breathless, and looking half dead as she threw herself on the sofa, unable to speak; and she did not recover from her agitation, till she had relieved the hurry of her spirits by a flood of tears.

It was some minutes before Harriet was sufficiently composed to begin an explanation of the events of the evening.

"It is true," said she, "that I have not been actually molested or insulted, and I believe, after all, that in our orderly city there is little real danger to be apprehended by females of respectable appearance, when reduced to the sad necessity of walking alone in the evening. But still the mere supposition, the bare possibility of being thus exposed to the rudeness of the vulgar and unfeeling, will for ever prevent me from again subjecting myself to so intolerable a situation. I know not what could induce me again to go through all I have suffered since I left Mrs. Tanfield's door.—And this will be my last attempt at sociable visiting."

We submit it to the opinion of our fair readers, whether, in nine cases out of ten, the visits of ladies do not "go off the better," if anticipated by some previous intimation. We believe that our position will be borne out by the experience both of the visiters and the visited. Our heroine, as we have seen, did not only, on most of these occasions, subject herself to much disappointment and annoyance, but she was likewise the cause of considerable inconvenience to her entertainers; and we can say with truth, that the little incidents we have selected "to point our moral and adorn our tale," are all sketched from life and reality.

COUNTRY LODGINGS.

"Chacun a son gout."—*French Proverb.*

It has often been a subject of surprise to me, that so many even of those highly-gifted people who are fortunate enough to possess both sorts of sense (common and uncommon), show, nevertheless, on some occasions, a strange disinclination to be guided by the self-evident truth, that in all cases where the evil preponderates over the good, it is better to reject the whole than to endure a large portion of certain evil for the sake of a little sprinkling of probable good. I can think of nothing, just now, that will more aptly illustrate my position, than the practice so prevalent in the summer-months of quitting a commodious and comfortable home, in this most beautiful and convenient of cities, for the purpose of what is called boarding out of town; and wilfully encountering an assemblage of almost all "the ills that flesh is heir to," in the vain hope of finding superior coolness in those establishments that go under the denomination of country lodgings, and are sometimes to be met with in insulated locations, but generally in the unpaved and dusty streets of the villages and hamlets that are scattered about the vicinity of Philadelphia.

These places are adopted as substitutes for the springs or the sea-shore; and it is also not unusual for persons who have already accomplished the fashionable tour, to think it expedient to board out of town for the remainder of the summer, or till they are frightened home by the autumnal epidemics.

I have more than once been prevailed on to try this experiment, in the universal search after coolness which occupies so much of the attention of my fellow-citizens from June to September, and the result has been uniformly the same: a conviction that a mere residence beyond the limits of the city is not an infallible remedy for all the *désagrémens* of summer; that (to say nothing of other discomforts) it is possible to feel the heat more in a small house out of the town than in a large one in it.

The last time I was induced to make a trial of the delights of country lodgings, I had been told of a very genteel lady (the widow of an Englishman, said to have been highly connected in his own country), who had taken a charming house at a short distance from the city, with the intention of accommodating boarders for the summer; and I finally allowed myself to be prevailed on to become an inmate of her establishment, as I had just returned from the north, and found the weather still very warm.

Two of my friends, a lady and gentleman, accompanied me when I went to engage my apartment. The ride was a very short one, and we soon arrived at a white frame house with green window-shutters, and also a green gate which opened into a little front garden with one gravel walk, two grass plats, and four Lombardy poplar trees, which, though excluded in the city, still keep their ground in out-of-town places.

There was no knocker, but, after hammering and shaking the door for near five minutes, it was at last opened by a barefooted bound-girl, who hid herself behind it as if ashamed to be seen. She wore a ragged light calico frock, through the slits of which appeared at intervals a black stuff petticoat: the body was only kept together with pins, and partly concealed by a dirty cape of coarse white muslin; one lock of her long yellow hair was stuck up by the wreck of a horn comb, and the remaining tresses hung about her shoulders. When we inquired if Mrs. Netherby was at home, the girl scratched her head, and stared as if stupified by the question, and on its being repeated, she replied that "she would go and look," and then left us standing at the door. A coloured servant would have opened the parlour, ushered us in, and with smiles and curtsies requested us to be seated. However, we took the liberty of entering without invitation: and the room being perfectly dark, we also used the freedom of opening the shutters.

The floor was covered with a mat which fitted nowhere, and showed evidence of long service.

Whatever air might have been introduced through the fire-place, was effectually excluded by a thick chimney-board, covered with a square of wall-paper representing King George IV. visiting his cameleopard. I afterwards found that Mrs. Netherby was very proud of her husband's English origin. The mantel-piece was higher than our heads, and therefore the mirror that adorned it was too elevated to be of any use. This lofty shelf was also decorated with two pasteboard baskets, edged with gilt paper, and painted with bunches of calico-looking flowers, two fire-screens ditto, and two card-racks in the shape of harps with loose and crooked strings of gold thread. In the centre of the room stood an old-fashioned round tea-table, the feet black with age, and the top covered with one of those coarse unbleached cloths of figured linen that always look like dirty white. The curiosities of the centre-table consisted of a tumbler of marigolds: a dead souvenir which had been a living one in 1826: a scrap work-box stuck all over with figures of men, women, and children, which had been most wickedly cut out of engravings and deprived of their backgrounds for this purpose: an album with wishy-washy drawings and sickening verses: a china writing-apparatus, destitute alike of ink, sand, and wafers: and a card of the British consul, which, I afterwards learnt, had once been left by him for Mr. Netherby.

The walls were ornamented with enormous heads drawn in black crayon, and hung up in narrow gilt frames with bows of faded gauze riband. One head was inscribed Innocence, and had a crooked mouth; a second was Beneficence, with a crooked nose; and a third was Contemplation, with a prodigious swelling on one of her cheeks; and the fourth was Veneration, turning up two eyes of unequal size. The flesh of one of these heads looked like china, and another like satin; the third had the effect of velvet, and the fourth resembled plush.

All these things savoured of much unfounded pretension; but we did not then know that they were chiefly the work of Mrs. Netherby herself, who, as we learned in the sequel, had been blest with a boarding-school education, and was, according to her own opinion, a person of great taste and high polish.

It was a long time before the lady made her appearance, as we had arrived in the midst of the siesta in which it was the custom of every member of the establishment (servants included) to indulge themselves during the greatest part of the afternoon, with the exception of the bound-girl, who was left up to "mind the house." Mrs. Netherby was a tall, thin, sharp-faced woman, with an immense cap, that stood out all round, and encircled her head like a halo, and was embellished with an enormous quantity of yellowish gauze riband that seemed to incorporate with her huge yellow curls: fair hair being much affected by ladies who have survived all other fairness. She received us with abundance of smiles, and a profusion of flat compliments, uttered in a voice of affected softness; and on making known my business, I was conducted up-stairs to see a room which she said would suit me exactly. Mrs. Netherby was what is called "a sweet woman."

The room was small, but looked tolerably well, and though I was not much prepossessed in favour of either the house or the lady, I was unwilling that my friends should think me too fastidious, and it was soon arranged that I should take possession the following day.

Next afternoon I arrived at my new quarters; and tea being ready soon after, I was introduced to the other boarders, as they came down from their respective apartments. The table was set in a place dignified with the title of "the dining-room," but which was in reality a sort of anti-kitchen, and located between the acknowledged kitchen and the parlour. It still retained vestiges of a dresser, part of which was entire, in the shape of the broad lower-shelf and the under-closets. This was painted red, and Mrs. Netherby called it the side-board. The room was narrow, the ceiling was low, the sunbeams had shone full upon the windows the whole afternoon, and the heat was extreme. A mulatto man waited on the tea-table, with his coat out at elbows, and a marvellous dirty apron, not thinking it worth his while to wear good clothes in the country. And while he was tolerably attentive to every one else, he made a point of disregarding or disobeying every order given to him by Mrs. Netherby: knowing that for so trifling a cause as disrespect to herself, she would not dare to dismiss him at the risk of getting no one in his place; it being always understood that servants confer a great favour on their employers when they condescend to go with them into the country. Behind Mrs. Netherby's chair stood the long-haired bound girl (called Anna by her mistress, and Nance by Bingham the waiter), waving a green poplar branch by way of fly-brush, and awkwardly flirting it in every one's face.

The aspect of the tea-table was not inviting. Everything was in the smallest possible quantity that decency would allow. There was a plate of rye-bread, and a plate of wheat, and a basket of crackers: another plate with half a dozen paltry cakes that looked as if they had been bought under the old Court House: some morsels of dried beef on two little tea-cup plates, and a small glass dish of that preparation of curds, which in vulgar language is called smearcase, but whose *nom de guerre* is cottage-cheese, at least that was the appellation given it by our hostess. The tea was so weak that it was difficult to discover whether it was black or green; but, finding it undrinkable, I requested a glass of milk: and when Bingham brought me one, Mrs. Netherby said with a smile, "See what it is to live in the country!" Though, after all, we were not out of sight of Christ Church steeple.

The company consisted of a lady with three very bad children; another with a very insipid daughter, about eighteen or twenty, who, like her mother, seemed utterly incapable of conversation; and a fat Mrs. Pownsey, who talked an infinite deal of nothing, and soon took occasion to let me know that she had a very handsome house in the city. The gentlemen belonging to these ladies never came out till after tea, and returned to town early in the morning.

Towards sunset, I proposed taking a walk with the young lady, but she declined on account of the dew, and we returned to the parlour, where there was no light during the whole evening, as Mrs. Netherby declared that she thought nothing was more pleasant than to sit in a dark room in the summer. And when we caught a momentary glimpse from the candles that were carried past the door as the people went up and down stairs, we had the pleasure of finding that innumerable cockroaches were running over the floor and probably over our feet; these detestable insects having also a fancy for darkness.

The youngest of the mothers went up stairs to assist her maid in the arduous task of putting the children to bed, a business that occupied the whole evening; though the eldest boy stoutly refused to go at all, and stretching himself on the settee, he slept there till ten o'clock, when his father carried him off kicking and screaming.

The gentlemen talked altogether of trade and bank business. Some neighbours came in, and nearly fell over us in the dark. Finding the parlour (which had but one door) most insupportably warm, I took my seat in the entry, a narrow passage which Mrs. Netherby called the hall. Thither I was followed by Mrs. Pownsey, a lady of the Malaprop school, who had been talking to me all the evening of her daughters, Mary Margaret and Sarah Susan, they being now on a visit to an aunt in Connecticut. These young ladies had been educated, as their mother informed me, entirely by herself, on a plan of her own: and, as she assured me, with complete success; for Sarah Susan, the youngest, though only ten years old, was already regarded as quite a phinnominy (phenomenon), and as to Mary Margaret, she was an absolute prodigal.

"I teach them everything myself," said she, "except their French, and music, and drawing, in all which they take lessons from the first masters. And Mr. Bullhead, an English gentleman, comes twice a week to attend to their reading and writing and arithmetic, and the grammar of geography. They never have a moment to themselves, but are kept busy from morning till night. You know that idleness is the root of all evil."

"It is certainly the root of *much* evil," I replied; "but you know the old adage, which will apply equally to both sexes—'All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.'"

"Oh! they often play," resumed Mrs. Pownsey. "In the evening, after they have learned their lessons, they have games of history, and botany, and mathematics, and all such instructive diversions. I allow them no other plays. Their minds certainly are well stored with all the arts and science. At the same time, as I wish them to acquire a sufficient idea of what is going on in the world, I permit them every day to read over the Marianne List in our New York paper, the Chimerical Advertiser, that they may have a proper knowledge of ships: and also Mr. Walsh's Experts in his Gazette; though I believe he does not write these little moral things himself, but hires Mr. Addison, and Mr. Bacon, and Mr. Locke, and other such gentlemen for the purpose. The Daily Chronicle I never allow them to touch, for there is almost always a story in every paper, and none of these stories are warranted to be true, and reading falsehoods will learn them to tell fibs."

I was much amused with this process of reasoning, though I had more than once heard such logic on the subject of fictitious narratives.

"But, surely, Mrs. Pownsey," said I, "you do not interdict all works of imagination? Do you never permit your daughters to read for amusement?"

"Never," replied this wisest of mothers; "amusement is the high-road to vice. Indeed, with all their numerous studies, they have little or no time for reading anything. And when they have, I watch well that they shall read only books of instruction, such as Mr. Bullhead chooses for them. They are now at Rowland's Ancient History (I am told he is not the same Rowland that makes the Maccassar oil), and they have already got through seven volumes. Their Aunt Watson (who, between ourselves, is rather a weak-minded woman) is shocked at the children reading that book, and says it is filled with crimes and horrors. But so is all the Ancient History that ever I heard of, and of course it is proper that little girls should know these things. They will get a great deal more benefit from Rowland than from reading Miss Edgeworth's story-books, that sister Watson is always recommending."

"Have they ever read the history of their own country?" said I.

"I suppose you mean the History of America," replied Mrs. Pownsey. "Oh! that is of no consequence at all, and Mr. Bullhead says it is never read in England. After they have got through Rowland, they are going to begin Sully's Memoirs. I know Mr. Sully very well; and when they have read it, I will make the girls tell me his whole history; he painted my portrait, and a most delightful man he is, only rather obstinate; for with all I could say, I could not prevail on him to rub out the white spots that he foolishly put in the black part of my eyes. And he also persisted in making one side of my nose darker than the other. It is strange that in these things painters will always take their own course in spite of us, as if we that pay for the pictures have not a right to direct them as we please. But the artist people are all alike. My friend, Mrs. Oakface, tells me she had just the same trouble with Mr. Neagle; in that respect he's quite as bad as Mr. Sully."

She paused a moment to take breath, and then proceeded in continuation of the subject. "Now we talk of pictures, you have no idea what beautiful things my daughters can paint. The very first quarter they each produced two pieces to frame. And Mary Margaret is such a capital judge of these things, that whenever she is looking at a new souvenir, her first thought is to see who did the pictures, that she may know which to praise and which not. There are a great many artists

now, but I remember the time when almost all the pictures were done by Mr. Sculp and Mr. Pinx. And then as to music! I wish you could hear my daughters. Their execution is wonderful. They can play crotchets quite as well as quivers; and they sing sollos, and dooets, and tryos, and quartetties equal to the Musical Fund. I long for the time when they are old enough to come out. I will go with them everywhere myself; I am determined to be their perpetual shabberoon."

So much for the lady that educated her daughters herself.

And still, when the mother is capable and judicious, I know no system of education that is likely to be attended with more complete success than that which keeps the child under the immediate superintendence of those who are naturally the most interested in her improvement and welfare; and which removes her from the contagion of bad example, and the danger of forming improper or unprofitable acquaintances. Some of the finest female minds I have ever known received all their cultivation at home. But much, indeed, are those children to be commiserated, whose education has been undertaken by a vain and ignorant parent.

About nine o'clock, Mrs. Netherby had begun to talk of the lateness of the hour, giving hints that it was time to think of retiring for the night, and calling Bingham to shut up the house: which order he did not see proper to obey till half-past ten. I then (after much delay and difficulty in obtaining a bed-candle) adjourned to my own apartment, the evening having appeared to me of almost interminable length, as is generally the case with evenings that are passed without light.

The night was warm, and after removing the chimney-board, I left the sash of my window open: though I had been cautioned not to do so, and told that in the country the night air was always unwholesome. But I remembered Dr. Franklin's essay on the art of sleeping well. It was long before I closed my eyes, as the heat was intense, and my bed very uncomfortable. The bolster and pillow were nearly flat for want of sufficient feathers, and the sheets of thick muslin were neither long enough nor wide enough. At "the witching time of night," I was suddenly awakened by a most terrible shrieking and bouncing in my room, and evidently close upon me. I started up in a fright, and soon ascertained the presence of two huge cats, who, having commenced a duel on the trellis of an old blighted grape-vine that unfortunately ran under the back windows, had sprung in at the open sash, and were finishing the fight on my bed, biting and scratching each other in a style that an old backwoodsman would have recognised as the true rough and tumble.

With great difficulty I succeeded in expelling my fiendish visiters, and to prevent their return, there was nothing to be done but to close the sash. There were no shutters, and the only screen was a scanty muslin curtain, divided down the middle with so wide a gap that it was impossible to close it effectually. The air being now excluded, the heat was so intolerable as to prevent me from sleeping, and the cats remained on the trellis, looking in at the window with their glaring eyes, yelling and scratching at the glass, and trying to get in after some mice that were beginning to course about the floor.

The heat, the cats and the mice, kept me awake till near morning; and I fell asleep about daylight, when I dreamed that a large cat stood at my bed-side, and slowly and gradually swelling to the size of a tiger, darted its long claws into my throat. Of course, I again woke in a fright, and regretted my own large room in the city, where there was no trellis under my windows, and where the sashes were made to slide down at the top.

I rose early with the intention of taking a walk, as was my custom when in town, but the grass was covered with dew, and the road was ankle-deep in dust. So I contented myself with making a few circuits round the garden, where I saw four altheas, one rose-tree, and two currant-bushes, with a few common flowers on each side of a grass-grown gravel walk; neither the landlord nor the tenant being willing to incur any further expense by improving the domain. The grape-vine and trellis had been erected by a former occupant, a Frenchman, who had golden visions of wine-making.

At breakfast, we were regaled with muddy water, miscalled coffee; a small dish of doubtful eggs; and another of sliced cucumbers, very yellow and swimming in sweetish vinegar; also two plates containing round white lumps of heavy half-baked dough, dignified by the title of Maryland biscuit; and one of dry toast, the crumb left nearly white, and the crust burnt to a coal.

After breakfast, there came walking into the room a tame white pigeon, which Mrs. Netherby told us was a turtle-dove. "Dear sweet Phebe," she exclaimed, taking up the bird and fondling it, "has it come for its breakfast; well, then, kiss its own mistress, and it shall have some nice soft bread."

The pigeon was then handed round to be admired (it was really a pretty one), and Mrs. Netherby told us a long story of its coming to the house in the early part of the summer with its mate, who was soon after killed by lightning in consequence of sitting on the roof close by the conductor during a thunderstorm, and she was very eloquent and sentimental in describing the manner in which Phebe had mourned for her deceased companion, declaring that the widowed *dove* often reminded her of herself after she had lost poor dear Mr. Netherby.

Our hostess then crumbled some bread on the floor, and placed near it a saucer of water, and she rose greatly in my estimation when I observed the fixed look of delight with which she gazed on the pet-bird, and her evident fondness as she caressed it, and carried it out of the room, after it had finished its repast. "Notwithstanding her parsimony and her pretension," thought I, "Mrs. Netherby has certainly a good heart."

I went to my own room, and could easily have beguiled the morning with my usual occupations,

but that I was much incommoded by the intense heat of my little apartment, whose thin walls were completely penetrated by the sun. Also, I was greatly annoyed by the noise of the children in the next room and on the staircase. It was not the joyous exhilaration of play, or the shouts and laughter of good-humoured romping (all that I could easily have borne); but I heard only an incessant quarrelling, fighting, and screaming, which was generally made worse by the interference of the mother whenever she attempted to silence it.

Shortly before dinner, the bound-girl came up and went the rounds of all the chambers to collect the tumblers from the washing-stands, which tumblers were made to perform double duty by figuring also on the dining-table. This would have been no great inconvenience, only that no one remembered to bring them back again, and the glasses were not restored to our rooms till after repeated applications.

The dinner consisted of very salt fried ham; and a pair of skeleton chickens, with a small black-looking leg of mutton; and a few half-drained vegetables, set about on little plates with a puddle of greasy water in the bottom of each. However, as we were in the country, there was a pitcher of milk for those that chose to drink milk at dinner. For the dessert we had half a dozen tasteless custards, the tops burnt, and the cups half-full of whey, a plate of hard green pears, another of hard green apples, and a small whitish watermelon.

"What a fine thing it is to be in the country," said Mrs. Netherby, "and have such abundance of delicious fruit! I can purchase every variety from my next neighbour."

The truth is, that even where there is really an inclination to furnish a good table, there is generally much difficulty and inconvenience in procuring the requisite articles at any country place that is not absolutely a farm, and where the arrangements are not on an extensive scale. Mrs. Netherby, however, made no apology for any deficiency, but always went on with smiling composure, praising everything on the table, and wondering how people could think of remaining in the city when they might pass the summer in the country. As the gentlemen ate their meals in town (a proof of their wisdom), ours were very irregular as to time; Mrs. Netherby supposing that it could make no difference to ladies, or to any persons who had not business that required punctual attention.

Two days after my arrival, the dust having been laid by a shower, Mrs. Pownsey and myself set out to walk on the road, in the latter part of the afternoon. When we came home, I found that the washing-stand had been removed from my room, and the basin and pitcher placed in the corner on a little triangular shelf that had formerly held a flower-pot. The mirror was also gone, and I found as a substitute a little half-dollar Dutch glass in a narrow red frame. The two best chairs were also missing, one chair only being left, and that a broken one; and a heavy patch-work quilt had taken the place of the white dimity bed-cover. I learnt that these articles had been abstracted to furnish a chamber that was as yet disengaged, and which they were to decorate by way of enticing a new-comer. Next morning, after my room had been put in order, I perceived that the mattrass had been exchanged for a feather-bed, and on inquiring the reason of Mrs. Netherby she told me, with much sweetness, that it had been taken for two southern ladies that were expected in the afternoon, and who, being southern, could not possibly sleep on anything but a mattrass, and that she was sorry to cause me any inconvenience, but it would be a great disadvantage to *her* if they declined coming.

In short, almost every day something disappeared from my room to assist in fitting up apartments for strangers; the same articles being afterwards transferred to others that were still unoccupied. But what else was to be done, when Mrs. Netherby mildly represented the impossibility of getting things at a short notice from town?

My time passed very monotonously. The stock of books I had brought with me was too soon exhausted, and I had no sewing of sufficient importance to interest my attention. The nonsense of Mrs. Pownsey became very tiresome, and the other ladies were mere automatons. The children were taken sick (as children generally are at country lodgings), and fretted and cried all the time. I longed for the society of my friends in the city, and for the unceremonious visits that are so pleasant in summer evenings.

After a trial of two weeks, during which I vainly hoped that custom would reconcile me to much that had annoyed me at first, I determined to return to Philadelphia; in the full persuasion that this would be my last essay at boarding out of town.

On the day before my departure, we were all attracted to the front-garden, to see a company of city volunteers, who were marching to a certain field where they were to practise shooting at a target. While we were lingering to catch the last glimpse of them as long as they remained in sight, the cook came to Mrs. Netherby (who was affectedly smelling the leaves of a dusty geranium), and informed her that though she had collected all the cold meat in the house, there was still not enough to fill the pie that was to be a part of the dinner.[85] "Oh! then," replied Mrs. Netherby, with perfect sang-froid, and in her usual soft voice, "put Phebe on the top of it—put Phebe on the top." "Do you mean," said the cook, "that I am to kill the pigeon to help out with?" "Certainly," rejoined Mrs. Netherby, "put Phebe in the pie."

There was a general exclamation from all present, except from the automaton young lady and her mamma; and the children who were looking out of the front windows were loud in lamentations for the poor pigeon, who, in truth, had constituted their only innocent amusement. For my part, I could not forbear openly expressing my surprise that Mrs. Netherby should think for a moment of

devoting her pet pigeon to such a purpose, and I earnestly deprecated its impending fate.

Mrs. Netherby reddened, and forgetting her usual mildness, her eyes assumed a very cat-like expression as she replied to me in a loud sharp voice. "Upon my word, miss, this is very strange. Really, you astonish me. This is something quite new. I am not at all accustomed to having the ladies of my family to meddle in my private affairs. Really, miss, it is excessively odd that you should presume to dictate to me about the disposal of my own property. I have some exquisite veal-cutlets and some delicious calves-feet, but the pie is wanted for a centre dish. I am always, as you know, particular in giving my table a handsome set-out."

In vain we protested our willingness to dine without the centre dish, rather than the pigeon, whom we regarded in the light of an intimate acquaintance, should be killed to furnish it, all declaring that nothing could induce us to taste a mouthful of poor Phebe. Mrs. Netherby, obstinately bent on carrying her point (as is generally the case with women who profess an extra portion of sweetness), heard us unmoved, only replying, "Certainly, miss, you cannot deny that the bird is mine, and that I have a right to do as I please with my own property. Phillis, put Phebe in the pie!"

The cook grinned, and stood irresolute; when suddenly Bingham the waiter stepped up with Phebe in his hands, and calling to a black boy of his acquaintance, who lived in the neighbourhood, and was passing at the moment: "Here, Harrison," said he, "are you going to town?" "Yes," replied the boy, "I am going there of an errand." "Then take this here pigeon with you," said Bingham, "and give it as a gift from me to your sister Louisa. You need not tell her to take good care of it. I know she'll affection it for my sake. There, take it, and run." So saying, he handed the pigeon over the fence to the boy, who ran off with it immediately, and Bingham coolly returned to the kitchen, whistling as he went.

"Well, if I ever saw the like!" exclaimed Mrs. Netherby. "But Bingham will always have his way; he's really a strange fellow." Then, looking foolish and subdued, she walked into the house. I could not help laughing, and was glad that the life of the poor pigeon had been saved on any terms, though sorry to find that Mrs. Netherby, after all, had not the redeeming quality I ascribed to her.

To conclude,—I have no doubt that summer establishments may be found which are in many respects more agreeable than the one I have attempted to describe. But it has not been my good fortune, or that of my friends who have adopted this plan of getting through the warm weather, to meet with any country lodgings (of course, I have no reference to decided farm-houses), in which the comparison was not decidedly in favour of the superior advantages of remaining in a commodious mansion in the city, surrounded with the comforts of home, and "with all the appliances, and means to boot," which only a large town can furnish.

CONSTANCE ALLERTON;

OR,

THE MOURNING SUITS.

"But I have that within which passeth show."—SHAKSPEARE.

Mr. Allerton, a merchant of Philadelphia, had for some years been doing business to considerable advantage, when a sudden check was put to his prosperity by the unexpected failure of a house for which he had endorsed to a very large amount. There was no alternative but to surrender everything to his creditors; and this he did literally and conscientiously. He brought down his mind to his circumstances; and as, at that juncture, the precarious state of the times did not authorize any hope of success if he recommenced business (as he might have done) upon borrowed capital, he gladly availed himself of a vacant clerkship in one of the principal banks of the city.

His salary, however, would have been scarcely adequate to the support of his family, had he not added something to his little stipend by employing his leisure hours in keeping the books of a merchant. He removed with his wife and children to a small house in a remote part of the city; and they would, with all his exertions, have been obliged to live in the constant exercise of the most painful economy, had it not been for the aid they derived from his sister Constance Allerton. Since the death of her parents, this young lady had resided at New Bedford with her maternal aunt, Mrs. Ilford, a quakeress, who left her a legacy of ten thousand dollars.

After the demise of her aunt, Miss Allerton took lodgings at a private house in New Bedford; but on hearing of her brother's misfortunes, she wrote to know if it would be agreeable to him and to his family for her to remove to Philadelphia, and to live with them—supposing that the sum she would pay for her accommodation might, in their present difficulties, prove a welcome addition to their income. This proposal was joyfully acceded to, as Constance was much beloved by every member of her brother's family, and had kept up a continual intercourse with them by frequent letters, and by an annual visit of a few weeks to Philadelphia.

At this period, Constance Allerton had just completed her twenty-third year. She had a beautiful face, a fine graceful figure, and a highly cultivated mind. With warm feelings and deep sensibility, she possessed much energy of character—a qualification which, when called forth by circumstances, is often found to be as useful in a woman as in a man. Affectionate, generous, and totally devoid of all selfish considerations, Constance had nothing so much at heart as the comfort and happiness of her brother's family; and to become an inmate of their house was as gratifying to her as it was to them. She furnished her own apartment, and shared it with little Louisa, the youngest of her three nieces, a lovely child about ten years old. She insisted on paying the quarter bills of her nephew Frederic Allerton, and volunteered to complete the education of his sisters, who were delighted to receive their daily lessons from an instructress so kind, so sensible, and so competent. Exclusive of these arrangements, she bestowed on them many little presents, which were always well-timed and judiciously selected; though, to enable her to purchase these gifts, she was obliged, with her limited income of six hundred dollars, to deny herself many gratifications, and, indeed, conveniences, to which she had hitherto been accustomed, and the want of which she now passed over with a cheerfulness and delicacy which was duly appreciated by the objects of her kindness.

In this manner the family had been living about a twelvemonth, when Mr. Allerton was suddenly attacked by a violent and dangerous illness, which was soon accompanied by delirium; and in a few days it brought him to the brink of the grave.

His disease baffled the skill of an excellent physician; and the unremitting cares of his wife and sister could only effect a slight alleviation of his sufferings. He expired on the fifth day, without recovering his senses, and totally unconscious of the presence of the heart-struck mourners that were weeping round his bed.

When Mr. Allerton's last breath had departed, his wife was conveyed from the room in a fainting-fit. Constance endeavoured to repress her own feelings, till she had rendered the necessary assistance to Mrs. Allerton, and till she had somewhat calmed the agony of the children. She then retired to her own apartment, and gave vent to a burst of grief, such as can only be felt by those in whose minds and hearts there is a union of sense and sensibility. With the weak and frivolous, sorrow is rarely either acute or lasting.

The immortal soul of Mr. Allerton had departed from its earthly tenement, and it was now necessary to think of the painful details that belonged to the disposal of his inanimate corpse. As soon as Constance could command sufficient courage to allow her mind to dwell on this subject, she went down to send a servant for Mr. Denman (an old friend of the family), whom she knew Mrs. Allerton would wish to take charge of the funeral. At the foot of the stairs, she met the physician, who, by her pale cheeks, and by the tears that streamed from her eyes at sight of him, saw that all was over. He pressed her hand in sympathy; and, perceiving that she was unable to answer his questions, he bowed and left the house.

In a short time, Mr. Denman arrived; and Mrs. Allerton declaring herself incompetent to the task, Constance saw the gentleman, and requested him to make every necessary arrangement for a plain but respectable funeral.

At such times, how every little circumstance seems to add a new pang to the agonized feelings of the bereaved family! The closing of the window-shutters, the arrival of the woman whose gloomy business it is to prepare the corpse for interment, the undertaker coming to take measure for the coffin, the removal of the bedding on which the deceased has expired, the gliding step, the half-whispered directions—all these sad indications that death is in the house, fail not, however quietly and carefully managed, to reach the ears and hearts of the afflicted relatives, assisted by the intuitive knowledge of what is so well understood to be passing at these melancholy moments.

In the evening, after Louisa had cried herself to sleep, Constance repaired to the apartment of her sister-in-law, whom, about an hour before, she had left exhausted and passive. Mrs. Allerton was extended on the bed, pale and silent; her daughters, Isabella and Helen, were in tears beside her; and Frederick had retired to his room.

In the fauteuil, near the head of the bed, sat Mrs. Bladen, who, in the days of their prosperity, had been the next door neighbour of the Allerton family, and who still continued to favour them with frequent visits. She was one of those busy people who seem almost to verify the justly-censured maxim of Rochefoucault, that "in the misfortunes of our best friends, there is always something which is pleasing to us."

True it was that Mrs. Bladen, being a woman of great leisure, and of a disposition extremely officious, devoted most of her time and attention to the concerns of others; and any circumstances that prevented her associates from acting immediately for themselves, of course threw open a wider field for her interference.

"And now, my dear friends," said Mrs. Bladen, squeezing Mrs. Allerton's hand, and looking at Constance, who seated herself in an opposite chair, "as the funeral is to take place on Thursday, you know there is no time to be lost. What have you fixed on respecting your mourning? I will cheerfully attend to it for you, and bespeak everything necessary."

At the words "funeral" and "mourning," tears gushed again from the eyes of the distressed family; and neither Mrs. Allerton nor Constance could command themselves sufficiently to reply.

"Come, my dear creatures," continued Mrs. Bladen, "you must really make an effort to compose yourselves. Just try to be calm for a few minutes, till we have settled this business. Tell me what I shall order for you. However, there is but one rule on these occasions—crape and bombazine, and everything of the best. Nothing, you know, is more disreputable than mean mourning."

"I fear, then," replied Mrs. Allerton, "that our mourning attire must be mean enough. The situation in which we are left will not allow us to go to any unnecessary expense in that, or in anything else. We had but little to live upon—we could lay by nothing. We have nothing beforehand: we did not—we could not apprehend that this dreadful event was so near. And you know that his salary—that Mr. Allerton's salary—of course, expires with him."

"So I suppose, my dear friend," answered Mrs. Bladen; "but you know you *must* have mourning; and as the funeral takes place so soon, there will be little enough time to order it and have it made."

"We will borrow dresses to wear at the—to wear on Thursday," said Mrs. Allerton.

"And of whom will you borrow?"

"I do not know. I have not yet thought."

"The Liscom family are in black," observed Isabella; "no doubt they would lend us dresses."

"Oh! none of their things will fit you at all," exclaimed Mrs. Bladen. "None of the Liscoms have the least resemblance to any of you, either in height or figure. You would look perfectly ridiculous in *their* things."

"Then there are Mrs. Patterson and her daughters," said Helen.

"The Pattersons," replied Mrs. Bladen, "are just going to leave off black; and nothing that *they* have looks either new or fresh. You know how soon black becomes rusty. You certainly would feel very much mortified if you had to make a shabby appearance at Mr. Allerton's funeral. Besides, nobody now wears borrowed mourning—it can always be detected in a moment. No—with a little exertion—and I repeat that I am willing to do all in my power—there is time enough to provide the whole family with genteel and proper mourning suits. And as you *must* get them at last, it is certainly much better to have them at first, so as to appear handsomely at the funeral."

"Oh!" exclaimed Mrs. Allerton, sighing, "at such a time, what consequence can we possibly attach to our external appearance? How can we for a moment think of it?"

"To be sure, my dear friend," said Mrs. Bladen, kissing her, "you have had a very severe loss—very severe, indeed. It is really quite irreparable; and I can sincerely sympathize in your feelings. Certainly everybody ought to feel on these occasions; but you know it is impossible to devote every moment between this and the funeral to tears and sobs. One cannot be crying all the time—nobody ever does. And, as to the mourning, that is of course indispensable, and a thing that *must* be."

Mrs. Allerton wept bitterly. "Indeed, indeed!" said she, "I cannot discuss it now."

"And if it is not settled to-night," resumed Mrs. Bladen, "there will be hardly time to-morrow to talk it over, and get the things, and send to the mantua-maker's and milliner's. You had better get it off your mind at once. Suppose you leave it entirely to me. I attended to all the mourning for the Liscoms, and the Weldons, and the Nortons. It is a business I am quite used to. I pique myself on being rather clever at it."

"I will, then, trust to your judgment," replied Mrs. Allerton, anxious to get rid of the subject, and of the light frivolous prattle of her *soi-disant* dear friend. "Be kind enough to undertake it, and procure for us whatever you think suitable—only let it not be too expensive."

"As to that," answered Mrs. Bladen, "crape is crape, and bombazine is bombazine; and as everybody likes to have these articles of good quality, nothing otherwise is now imported for mourning. With regard to Frederick's black suit, Mr. Watson will send to take his measure, and there will be no further difficulty about it. Let me see—there must be bombazine for five dresses: that is, for yourself, three daughters, and Miss Allerton."

"Not for me," said Constance, taking her handkerchief from her eyes. "I shall not get a bombazine."

"My dear creature!" cried Mrs. Bladen; "not get a bombazine! You astonish me! What else can you possibly have? Black gingham or black chintz is only fit for wrappers; and black silk is no mourning at all."

"I shall wear no mourning," replied Constance, with a deep sigh.

"Not wear mourning!" ejaculated Mrs. Bladen. "What, no mourning at all! Not wear mourning for your own brother! Now you do indeed surprise me."

Mrs. Allerton and her daughters were also surprised; and they withdrew their handkerchiefs from their eyes, and gazed on Constance, as if scarcely believing that they had understood her rightly.

"I have considered it well," resumed Miss Allerton; "and I have come to a conclusion to make no

change in my dress. In short, to wear no mourning, even for my brother—well as I have loved him, and deeply as I feel his loss."

"This is very strange," said Mrs. Allerton.

"Excuse me, Miss Constance," said Mrs. Bladen, "but have you no respect for his memory? He was certainly an excellent man."

"Respect for his memory!" exclaimed Constance, bursting into tears. "Yes! I indeed respect his memory! And were he still living, there is nothing on earth I would not cheerfully do for him, if I thought it would contribute to his happiness or comfort. But he is now in a land where all the forms and ceremonies of this world are of no avail; and where everything that speaks to the senses only, must appear like the mimic trappings of a theatre. With him, all is now awful reality. To the decaying inhabitant of the narrow and gloomy grave, or to the disembodied spirit that has ascended to its Father in heaven, of what consequence is the colour that distinguishes the dress of those whose mourning is deep in the heart? What to him is the livery that fashion has assigned to grief, when he knows how intense is the feeling itself, in the sorrowing bosoms of the family that loved him so well?"

"All this is very true," remarked Mrs. Bladen; "but still, custom is everything, or fashion, as you are pleased to call it. You know you are not a Quaker; and therefore I do not see how you can possibly venture to go without mourning on such an occasion as this. Surely, you would not set the usages of the world at defiance?"

"I would not," replied Constance, "in things of minor importance; but on this subject I believe I can be firm."

"Of course," said Mrs. Bladen, "you will not go to the funeral without mourning."

"I cannot go to the funeral at all," answered Constance.

"Not go to the funeral!" exclaimed Mrs. Allerton. "Dear Constance, you amaze me!"

"I hope," observed Mrs. Bladen, looking very serious, "there can be no reason to doubt Miss Allerton's affection for her brother?"

"Oh! no! no! no!" cried the two girls indignantly. "If you had only seen," said Isabella, "how she nursed my dear father in his illness—how she was with him day and night."

"And how much she always loved him," said Helen.

"My dear kind sister," said Mrs. Allerton, taking the hand of Constance, "I hope I shall never again see you distressed by such an intimation."

Mrs. Bladen reddened, looked down, and attentively examined the embroidered corners of her pocket handkerchief. There was a silence of a few moments, till Constance, making an effort to speak with composure, proceeded to explain herself.

"My brother," said she, "has finished his mortal existence. No human power, no human love, can aid him or soothe him now; and we will endeavour to submit with resignation to the will of Omnipotence. I hope—I trust we shall be able to do so; but the shock is yet too recent, and we cannot at once subdue the feelings of nature. It is dreadful to see the lifeless remains of one we have long and dearly loved, removed from our sight for ever, and consigned to the darkness and loneliness of the grave. For my part, on this sad occasion I feel an utter repugnance to the idea of becoming an object of curiosity to the spectators that gaze from the windows, and to the vulgar and noisy crowd that assembles about a burying-ground when an interment is to take place. I cannot expose my tears, my deep affliction, to the comments of the multitude; and I cannot have my feelings outraged by perhaps overhearing their coarse remarks. I may be too fastidious—I may be wrong; but to be present at the funeral of my brother is an effort I cannot resolve to make. And, moreover—"

Here her voice for a few moments became inarticulate, and her sister and nieces sobbed audibly.

"And then," she continued, "I cannot stand beside that open grave—I cannot see the coffin let down into it, and the earth thrown upon the lid till it is covered up for ever. I cannot—indeed I cannot. In the seclusion of my own apartment I shall, of course, know that all this is going on, and I shall suffer most acutely; but there will be no strangers to witness my sufferings. It is a dreadful custom, that of females attending the funerals of their nearest relatives. I wish it were abolished throughout our country, as it is in many parts of Europe."

"But you know," said Mrs. Bladen, "that it is almost universal in Philadelphia; and, 'when we are in Rome we must do as Rome does.' Besides which, it is certainly our duty always to see our friends and relatives laid in the grave."

"Not when we are assured," replied Constance, "that the melancholy office can be properly performed without our presence or assistance. Duty requires of us no sacrifice by which neither the living nor the dead can be benefited. But I have said enough; and I cannot be present at my brother's funeral."

She then rose and left the room, unable any longer to sustain a conversation so painful to her.

"Well, I am really astonished!" exclaimed Mrs. Bladen. "Not wear mourning for her brother! Not

go to his funeral! However, I suppose she thinks she has a right to do as she pleases. But, she may depend on it, people will talk."

Just then a servant came to inform Mrs. Bladen that her husband was waiting for her in the parlour.

"Well, my dear Mrs. Allerton," said she, as she rose to depart, "we have not yet settled about the mourning. Of course, you are not going to adopt Miss Constance's strange whim of wearing none at all."

"What she has said on the subject appears to me very just," replied Mrs. Allerton.

"Aunt Constance is always right," remarked one of the girls.

"As to Miss Allerton," resumed Mrs. Bladen, "she is well known to be independent in every sense of the word; and therefore she may do as she pleases—though she may rest assured that people will talk."

"What people?" asked Mrs. Allerton.

"Everybody—all the world."

Mrs. Allerton thought how very circumscribed was the world in which she and her family had lived since the date of their fallen fortunes.

"It is well known," pursued Mrs. Bladen, "that Miss Constance is able to wear mourning if she chooses it. But you may rely on it, Mrs. Allerton, that if you and your children do not appear in black, people will be ill-natured enough to say that it is because you cannot afford it. Excuse my plainness."

"They will say rightly, then," replied Mrs. Allerton, with a sigh. "We certainly cannot afford it."

"How you talk!" said Mrs. Bladen. "Afford it or not, everybody has to wear mourning, and everybody does, from the highest down to the lowest. Even my washerwoman put all her family (that is herself and her six children) into black when her husband died; notwithstanding that he was no great loss—for he was an idle, drunken Irishman, and beat them all round every day of his life. And my cook, a coloured woman, whose grandfather died in the almshouse a few weeks ago, has as handsome a suit of mourning as any lady need desire to wear."

"May I request," said Mrs. Allerton, "that you will spare me on this subject to-night? Indeed I can neither think nor talk about it."

"Well, then," replied Mrs. Bladen, kissing her, "I will hope to find you better in the morning. I shall be with you immediately after breakfast."

She then took her leave; and Constance, who had been weeping over the corpse of Mr. Allerton, now returned to the apartment of her sister-in-law.

Released from the importunities of Mrs. Bladen, our heroine now mildly and sensibly reasoned with the family on the great inconvenience, and, as she believed, the unnecessary expense of furnishing themselves with suits of mourning in their present circumstances. The season was late in the autumn, and they had recently supplied themselves with their winter outfit, all of which would now be rendered useless if black must be substituted. Her arguments had so much effect that Mrs. Allerton, with the concurrence of her daughters, very nearly promised to give up all intention of making a general change in their dress. But they found it harder than they had supposed, to free themselves from the trammels of custom.

Mrs. Allerton and Constance passed a sleepless night, and the children "awoke to weep" at an early hour in the morning. They all met in tears at the breakfast table. Little was eaten, and the table was scarcely cleared, when Mrs. Bladen came in, followed by two shop boys, one carrying two rolls of bombazine, and the other two boxes of Italian crape. Constance had just left the room.

After the first salutations were over, Mrs. Bladen informed Mrs. Allerton that she had breakfasted an hour earlier than usual, that she might allow herself more time to go out, and transact the business of the morning.

"My dear friend," said she, "Mrs. Doubleprice has sent you, at my request, two pieces of bombazine, that you may choose for yourself.—One is more of a jet black than the other—but I think the blue black rather the finest. However, they are both of superb quality, and this season jet black is rather the most fashionable. I have been to Miss Facings, the mantua-maker, who is famous for mourning. Bombazines, when made up by her, have an air and a style about them, such as you will never see if done by any one else. There is nothing more difficult than to make up mourning as it ought to be.—I have appointed Miss Facings to meet me here—I wonder she has not arrived—she can tell you how much is necessary for the four dresses. If Miss Allerton finally concludes to be like other people and put on black, I suppose she will attend to it herself. These very sensible young ladies are beyond my comprehension."

"I am sure," said Helen, "no one is more easy to understand, than my dear Aunt Constance."

"And here," continued Mrs. Bladen, "is the double-width crape for the veils. As it is of very superior quality, you had best have it to trim the dresses, and for the neck handkerchiefs, and to

border the black cloth shawls that you will have to get."

We must remark to our readers, that at the period of our story, it was customary to trim mourning dresses with a very broad fold of crape, reaching nearly from the feet to the knees.

Mrs. Allerton on hearing the prices of the crape and bombazine, declared them too expensive.

"But only look at the quality," persisted Mrs. Bladen, "and you know the best things are always the cheapest in the end—and, as I told you, nobody now wears economical mourning."

"We had best wear none of any description," said Mrs. Allerton.

"Ah!" cried Mrs. Bladen, "I see that Miss Constance has been trying again to make a convert of you. Yet, as you are not Quakers, I know not how you will be able to show your faces in the world, if you do not put on black. Excuse me, but innovations on established customs ought only to be attempted by people of note—by persons so far up in society that they may feel at liberty to do any out-of-the-way thing with impunity."

"I wish, indeed," said Mrs. Allerton, "that some of those influential persons would be so public-spirited as to set the example of dispensing with all customs that bear hard on people in narrow circumstances."

The mantua-maker now made her appearance, and Mrs. Bladen exclaimed, "Oh! Miss Facings, we have been waiting for you to tell us exactly how much of everything we are to get."

A long and earnest discussion now took place between Mrs. Bladen and the dressmaker, respecting the quality and quantity of the bombazine and crape.

Miss Facings having calculated the number of yards, Mrs. Bladen inquired if there was no yard-measure in the house. One was produced, and the measuring commenced forthwith; Mrs. Allerton having no longer energy to offer any further opposition. She sat with her handkerchief to her face, and her daughters wept also. Sirs. Bladen stepped up to her, and whispered, "You are aware that it will not be necessary to pay the bills immediately."

"Ah!" returned Mrs. Allerton, "I know not when they can be paid. But we will strain every nerve to do it as soon as possible. I cannot bear the idea of remaining in debt for this mourning."

Their business being accomplished, the shop-boys departed, and Miss Facings made her preparations for cutting out the dresses, taking an opportunity of assuring the weeping girls that nothing was more becoming to the figure than black bombazine, and that everybody looked their best in a new suit of mourning.

At this juncture, Constance returned to the room, and was extremely sorry to find that the fear of singularity, and the officious perseverance of Mrs. Bladen, had superseded the better sense of her sister-in-law. But as the evil was now past remedy, our heroine, according to her usual practice, refrained from any further animadversions on the subject.

Little Louisa was now brought in to be fitted: and when her frock was cut out, Constance offered to make it herself, on hearing Miss Facings declare that she would be obliged to keep her girls up all night to complete the dresses by the appointed time, as they had already more work in the house than they could possibly accomplish.

Mrs. Allerton expressed great unwillingness to allowing her sister-in-law to take the trouble of making Louisa's dress. But Constance whispered to her that she had always found occupation to be one of the best medicines for an afflicted mind, and that it would in some degree prevent her thoughts from dwelling incessantly on the same melancholy subject. Taking Louisa with her, she retired to her own apartment, and the frock was completed by next day: though the overflowing eyes of poor Constance frequently obliged her to lay down her sewing. In reality, her chief motive in proposing to make the dress, was to save the expense of having it done by the mantua-maker.

Miss Facings took Mrs. Allerton's gown home with her, saying she would send one of her girls for the two others; and Mrs. Bladen then began to plan the bonnets and shawls. She went off to a fashionable milliner, and engaged a mourning bonnet and four mourning caps for Mrs. Allerton, and a bonnet for each of her daughters. And she was going back and forwards nearly all day with specimens of black cloth for the shawls, black stockings, black gloves, &c.

The girls, at their aunt's suggestion, hemmed the crape veils, and on the following morning, she assisted them in making and trimming the shawls. Still, Constance was well convinced that the expense of the mourning (including the suit bespoken for Frederick) would be greater than they could possibly afford. The cost of the funeral she intended to defray from her own funds, and she took occasion to request Mr. Denman to have nothing about it that should be unnecessarily expensive.

The hour arrived when the sorrowing family of Mr. Allerton were to be parted for ever from all that remained of the husband, the father, and the brother. They had taken the last look of his fixed and lifeless features, they had imprinted the last kiss on his cold and pallid lips; and from the chamber of death, they had to adjourn to the incongruous task of attiring themselves in their mourning habits to appear at his funeral. How bitterly they wept as their friends assisted them in putting on their new dresses; and when they tied on their bonnets and their long veils, to follow to his grave the object of their fondest affection!

Constance, with an almost breaking heart, sat in her chamber, and little Louisa hung crying on her shoulder, declaring that she could not see her dear father buried. But Mrs. Bladen came in, protesting that all the children *must* be present, and that people would *talk* if even the youngest child was to stay away. Mrs. Bladen then put on Louisa's mourning dress almost by force. When this was done, the little girl threw her arms round the neck of her aunt and kissed her, saying with a burst of tears, "When I see you again, my dear dear father will be covered up in his grave." Mrs. Bladen then led, or rather dragged the child to the room in which the family were assembled.

Constance threw herself on her bed in a paroxysm of grief. She heard the slow tread of the company as they came in, and she fancied that she could distinguish the sound of the lid as it was laid on the coffin, and the fastening of the screws that closed it for ever. She knew when it was carried down stairs, and she listened in sympathetic agony to the sobs of the family as they descended after it. She heard the shutting of the hearse-door, and the gloomy vehicle slowly rolling off to give place to the carriages of the mourners. She started up, and casting her eyes towards an opening in the window-curtain, she saw Mr. Denman supporting to the first coach the tottering steps of her half-fainting sister-in-law. She looked no longer, but sunk back on the bed and hid her face on the pillow. By all that she suffered when indulging her grief alone and in the retirement of her chamber, she felt how dreadful it would have been to her, had she accompanied the corpse of her brother to its final resting-place.

In about an hour the family returned, pale, exhausted, and worn out with the intensity of their feelings at the grave. And they could well have dispensed with the company of Mrs. Bladen, who came home and passed the evening with them; as she foolishly said that people in affliction ought not to be left to themselves.

After some days the violence of their grief settled into melancholy sadness: they ceased to speak of him whom they had loved and lost, and they felt as if they could never talk of him again.

The unfortunate family of Mr. Allerton now began to consider what they should do for their support. Constance was willing to share with them her little income even to the last farthing, but it was too small to enable them all to live on it with comfort. Great indeed are the sufferings, the unacknowledged and unimagined sufferings of that class who "cannot dig, and to beg are ashamed"—whose children have been nursed in the lap of affluence, and who "every night have slept with soft content about their heads"—who still retain a vivid recollection of happier times, and who still feel that they themselves are the same, though all is changed around them.

Such was the condition of the Allerton family. "The world was all before them where to choose," and so low were now their finances, that it was necessary they should think and act promptly, and decide at once upon some plan for their subsistence. Constance proposed a school, but the house they now occupied was in too remote a place to expect any success. A lady had already attempted establishing a seminary in the immediate neighbourhood, but it had proved an entire failure. Mrs. Allerton thought that in a better part of the town, and in a larger house, they might have a fair chance of encouragement. But they were now destitute of the means of defraying the expense of a removal, and of purchasing such articles of furniture as would be indispensably necessary in a more commodious dwelling; particularly if fitted up as a school.

Frederick Allerton, who was twelve years old, had just completed his last quarter at the excellent academy in which he had been a pupil from early childhood, and it was now found necessary, after paying the bill, to take him away; as the present situation of the family did not seem to warrant them in continuing him there any longer. He was, however, very forward in all his acquirements, having an excellent capacity, and being extremely diligent. Still it was hard that so promising a boy should be obliged to stop short, when in a fair way of becoming an extraordinary proficient in the principal branches appertaining to what is considered an excellent education. Fortunately, however, a place was obtained for him in a highly respectable book-store.

There was now a general retrenchment in the expenditures of the Allerton family. One of their servants was discharged, as they could no longer afford to keep two—and they were obliged to endure many privations which were but ill compensated by the idea that they were wearing very genteel mourning. Again, as they had begun with black, it was necessary to go through with it. They could not wear their bombazines continually, and as black ginghams and chintzes are always spoiled by washing, it was thought better that their common dresses should be of Canton crape, an article that, though very durable, is at first of no trifling cost.

In the mean time, their only resource seemed to be that of literally supporting themselves by the work of their hands. Constance undertook the painful task of going round among their acquaintances, and announcing their readiness to undertake any sort of needle-work that was offered to them. Nobody had any work to put out just then. Some promised not to forget them when they had. Others said they were already suited with seamstresses. At this time the Ladies' Depository was not in existence; that excellent establishment, where the feelings of the industrious indigent who have seen better days are so delicately spared by the secrecy with which its operations are conducted.

At length a piece of linen was sent to the Allerton family for the purpose of being made up by them into shirts. And so great was their joy at the prospect of getting a little money, that it almost absorbed the painful feelings with which for the first time they employed their needles in really working for their living.

They all sewed assiduously, little Louisa doing the easiest parts. The linen was soon made up, and they then obtained another piece, and afterwards some muslin work. Constance, who was one of the most indefatigable of women, found time occasionally to copy music, and correct proof-sheets, and to do many other things by which she was able to add a little more to the general fund. For a short time, her not appearing in black excited much conversation among the acquaintances of the family: but these discussions soon subsided, and after a while nothing more was said or thought on the subject.

But to pay for the mourning of Mrs. Allerton and her children was a necessity that pressed heavily on them all, and they dreaded the sound of the door-bell, lest it should be followed by the presentation of the bills. The bills came, and were found to be considerably larger than was anticipated. Yet they were paid in the course of the winter, though with much difficulty, and at the expense of much comfort. The unfortunate Allertons rose early and sat up late, kept scanty fires and a very humble table, and rarely went out of the house, except to church, or to take a little air and exercise at the close of the afternoon.

Most of their friends dropped off, and the few that seemed disposed to continue their acquaintance with people whose extreme indigence was no secret, were so thoughtless as to make their visits in the morning, a time which is never convenient to families that cannot afford to be idle. Mrs. Bladen, who, though frivolous and inconsiderate, was really a good-natured woman, came frequently to see them; and another of their visiters was Mrs. Craycroft, whose chief incentive was curiosity to see how the Allertons were going on, and a love of dictation which induced her frequently to favour them with what she considered salutary counsel. Mrs. Craycroft was a hard, cold, heartless woman, who by dint of the closest economy had helped her husband to amass a large fortune, and they now had every sort of luxury at their command. The Craycrofts as well as the Bladens had formerly been neighbours of Mr. and Mrs. Allerton.

Mrs. Bladen and Mrs. Craycroft happened to meet one morning in Mrs. Allerton's little sitting-room. Mrs. Craycroft came in last, and Mrs. Bladen, after stopping for a few minutes, pursued her discourse with her usual volubility. It was on the subject of Mrs. Allerton and her daughter getting new pelisses, or coats as they are more commonly called in Philadelphia.

"I can assure you," said she, "now that the weather has become so cold, people talk about your going to church in those three-cornered cloth-shawls, which you know are only single, and were merely intended for autumn and spring. They did very well when you first got them (for the weather was then mild), but the season is now too far advanced to wear shawls of any sort. You know everybody gets their new coats by Christmas, and it is now after New-Year's."

"We would be very glad to have coats," replied Mrs. Allerton, "but they are too expensive."

"Not so very," answered Mrs. Bladen. "To be sure, fine black cloth or cassimere is the most fashionable for mourning coats. But many very genteel people wear black levantine or black mode trimmed with crape. Handsome silk coats would scarcely cost above twenty or twenty-five dollars apiece."

"We cannot afford them," said Mrs. Allerton. "We must only refrain from going out when the weather is very cold. I acknowledge that our shawls are not sufficiently warm."

"Did you not all get new olive-coloured silk coats, just before Mr. Allerton died?" inquired Mrs. Craycroft.

The abrupt mention of a name which they had long since found it almost impossible to utter, brought tears into the eyes of the whole family. There was a general silence, and Mrs. Bladen rose to depart, saying, "I would recommend to you to get the coats as soon as possible, or the winter will be over without them. And I can assure you as a friend, that people do make their remarks. I am going into Second street; shall I look among the best stores for some black levantine? or would you rather have mode? But I had best bring you patterns of both: and shall I call on Miss Facings and bespeak her to make the coats for you?"

"We thank you much," replied Mrs. Allerton, "but we will not give you the trouble either to look for the silk, or to engage the mantua-maker. We must for this winter dispense with new coats."

Mrs. Bladen then took her leave, saying, "Well, do as you please, but people think it very strange that you should be still wearing your shawls, now that the cold weather has set in."

Constance was glad that Mrs. Bladen had not in this instance carried her point. But she grieved to think that her sister and nieces could not have the comfort of wearing their coats because the olive-colour did not comport with their mourning bonnets. For herself, having made no attempt at mourning, Constance had no scruple as to appearing in hers.

When Mrs. Bladen was gone, Mrs. Craycroft spoke again, and said, "I wonder how people can be so inconsiderate! But Mrs. Bladen never could see things in their proper light. She ought to be ashamed of giving you such advice. Now, I would recommend to you to have your olive silk coats ripped apart, and dyed black, and then you can make them up again yourselves. You know that if you were not in mourning, you might wear them as they are; but as you have begun with black, I suppose it would never do to be seen in coloured things also."

"I believe," replied Mrs. Allerton, "there is generally much trouble in getting articles dyed—at least in this city, and that they are frequently spoiled in the process."

"Your informants," said Mrs. Craycroft, "must have been peculiarly unlucky in their dyers. I can recommend you to Mr. Copperas, who does things beautifully, so that they look quite as good as new. He dyes for Mrs. Narrowskirt and for Mrs. Dingy. I advise you by all means to send your coats to him. And no doubt you have many other things, now lying by as useless, that would be serviceable if dyed black."

"I believe I will take your advice," answered Mrs. Allerton.

Mrs. Craycroft then proceeded: "Situated as you are, Mrs. Allerton, I need not say how much it behooves you to economize in everything you possibly can; now for instance, I would suggest to you all to drink rye coffee. And then as to tea, if you *must* have tea of an evening, I know a place where you can get it as low as half a dollar a pound—to be sure it is only Hyson Skin. In *your* family a pound of tea ought to go a great way, for now, of course, you do not make it strong. And then, I would advise you all to accustom yourselves to brown sugar in your tea; it is nothing when you are used to it. Of course you always take it in your coffee. And there is a baker not far off, that makes large loaves of rye and Indian mixed. You will find it much cheaper than wheat. Of course you are not so extravagant as to eat fresh bread. And as to butter, if you cannot dispense with it altogether, I would suggest that you should use the potted butter from the grocery stores. Some of it is excellent. I suppose that of course you have entirely given up all kinds of desserts, but if you should wish for anything of the kind on Sundays, or after a cold dinner, you will find plain boiled rice sweetened with a very little molasses, almost as good as a pudding. No doubt the children will like it quite as well. You know, I suppose, that if you defer going to market till near twelve o'clock you will always get things much cheaper than if you go in the early part of the day; as towards noon the market people are impatient to get home, and in their hurry to be off, will sell for almost nothing whatever they may chance to have left. In buying wood, let me recommend to you always to get it as green as possible. To be sure green wood does not always make so good a fire as that which is dry, neither does it kindle so well; but then the slower it burns the longer it lasts, and it is therefore the cheapest. And always get gum back-logs, for they scarcely burn at all. I see you still keep your black woman Lucy. Now you will find it much better to dismiss her, and take a bound girl about twelve or thirteen. Then you know you would have no wages to pay, and your daughters, of course, would not mind helping her with the work."

During this harangue, the colour came into Mrs. Allerton's face, and she was about to answer in a manner that showed how acutely she was wounded by the unfeeling impertinence of the speaker: but glancing at Constance she saw something in her countenance that resembled a smile, and perceived that she seemed rather amused than angry. Therefore Mrs. Allerton suppressed her resentment, and made no reply.

When Mrs. Craycroft had departed, the mother and daughters warmly deprecated her rudeness and insolence; but Constance, being by nature very susceptible of the ridiculous, was much more inclined to laugh, and succeeded in inducing her sister and the girls to regard it in the same light that she did.

"After all," said Mrs. Allerton, "I think we will take Mrs. Craycroft's advice about the dyeing. The olive coats may thus be turned to very good account, and so may several other things of which we cannot now make use because of their colour. It is true, that we can ill afford even the expense of dyeing them; but still we are really very much in want of such coats as we may wear in mourning."

Next day, the olive pelisses, which were very pretty and extremely well made, were carefully ripped apart, and the silk was conveyed to the dyer's, together with a small scarlet Canton crape shawl of Mrs. Allerton's, which she thought would be convenient in cold weather to wear over her shoulders when at home. The *materiel* of the dismembered coats was rolled up in as small a compass as possible, wrapped in papers, and carried one afternoon by Isabella and Helen. Mr. Copperas informed them that he only dyed on Thursdays, and as this was Friday afternoon, they had come a day too late to have the things done that week. Therefore the articles could not be put into the dye before next Thursday, and then it would be another week before they could be dressed. Dressing, in the dyer's phraseology, means stiffening and ironing; and very frequently ironing only.

This delay was extremely inconvenient, as Mrs. Allerton and her daughters were absolutely very much in need of the coats; yet there was no remedy but patience. At the appointed time, two of the girls went to bring home the silk, but were told by a small-featured, mild-spoken Quaker woman, employed to attend the customers, that "the things were dyed but not yet dressed."

"Will they be finished by to-morrow afternoon?" asked Isabella.

"I rather think they will not."

"By Saturday, then?"

"It's likely they will."

On Saturday, the girls went again. Still the articles, though dyed, were not yet dressed: but they were promised for Tuesday—if nothing happened to prevent.

Every few days, for near a fortnight, some of the Allerton family repaired to the dyer's (and it was a very long walk) but without any success—the things, though always dyed, were never dressed. And when they expressed their disappointment, the Quaker woman regularly told them: "Thee

knows I did not say positive—we should never be too certain of anything."

Finally, the silk was acknowledged to be dressed, and it was produced and paid for; but the crape shawl was missing. A search was made for it, but in vain; still the woman assured them that it could not be lost, as nothing ever *was* lost in James Copperas's house, adding: "I partly promise thee, that if I live, I will find it for thee by to-morrow."

Next day, when she had done sewing, little Louisa went again for the shawl. The woman now confessed that she had not been able to find it, and said to Louisa: "I think, child, I would not advise thee to trouble thyself to come after it again. It seems a pity to wear out thy shoes too much. One should not be too certain of anything in this life, and therefore I am not free to say that thy shawl is lost; but it seems to me likely that it will never be found."

"My mother will be sorry," said Louisa, "for she really wants the shawl, and will regret to lose it."

The little girl then turned to depart, and had reached the front door when the woman called her back, saying: "But thee'll pay for the dyeing?"[86]

"What!" exclaimed Louisa, "after you have lost the shawl?"

"But I can assure thee it *was* dyed," replied the woman. "It actually *was* dyed, I can speak positive to that, and we cannot afford to lose the dyeing."

Louisa, child as she was, had acuteness enough to perceive the intended imposition, and, without making an answer, she slipped out of the door: though the woman caught her by the skirt, and attempted to stop her, repeating: "But we can't afford to lose the dyeing."

Louisa, however, disengaged herself from her grasp, and ran down the street, for some distance, as fast as possible—afraid to look back lest the Quaker woman should be coming after her for the money she had brought to pay for the shawl, and which she took care to hold tightly in her hand.

In attempting to make up the coats, it was found impossible to put the different pieces together to the same advantage as before. Also, the silk did not look well, being dyed of a dull brownish black, and stiffened to the consistence of paper. The skirts and sleeves had shrunk much in dyeing, and the pieces that composed the bodies had been ravelled, frayed, and pulled so crooked in dressing, that they had lost nearly all shape. It was impossible to make up the deficiencies by matching the silk with new, as none was to be found that bore sufficient resemblance to it. "Ah!" thought Constance, "how well these coats looked when in their original state! The shade of olive was so beautiful, the silk so soft and glossy, and they fitted so perfectly well."

When put together under all these disadvantages, the coats looked so badly that the girls were at first unwilling to wear them, except in extreme cold weather—particularly as in coming out of church they overheard whispers among the ladies in the crowd, of "That's a dyed silk"—"Any one may see that those coats have been dyed."

They trimmed them with crape, in hopes of making them look better; but the crape wore out almost immediately, and in fact it had to be taken off before the final close of the cold weather.

Spring came at last, and the Allerton family, having struggled through a melancholy and comfortless winter, had taken a larger house in a better part of the town, and made arrangements for commencing their school, in which Constance was to be chief instructress. Isabella and Helen, whose ages were sixteen and fourteen, were to assist in teaching some branches, but to continue receiving lessons in others. Louisa was to be one of the pupils.

About a fortnight before their intended removal to their new residence, one afternoon when none of the family were at home, except Constance, she was surprised by the visit of a friend from New Bedford, a young gentleman who had been absent three years on a whaling voyage, in a ship in which he had the chief interest, his father being owner of several vessels in that line.

Edmund Lessingham was an admirer of ladies generally: but during his long voyage he found by his thinking incessantly of Constance, and not at all of any other female, that he was undoubtedly in love with her; a fact which he had not suspected till the last point of Massachusetts faded from his view. He resolved to improve his intimacy with our heroine, should he find her still at liberty, on his return to New Bedford; and if he perceived a probability of success, to make her at once an offer of his hand. When Lessingham came home, he was much disappointed to hear that Constance Allerton had been living for more than a twelvemonth in Philadelphia. However, he lost no time in coming on to see her.

When he was shown into the parlour, she was sitting with her head bent over her work. She started up on being accosted by his well-remembered voice. Not having heard of the death of her brother, and not seeing her in mourning, Edmund Lessingham was at a loss to account for the tears that filled her eyes, and for the emotion that suffocated her voice when she attempted to reply to his warm expressions of delight at seeing her again. He perceived that she was thinner and paler than when he had last seen her, and he feared that all was not right. She signed to him to sit down, and was endeavouring to compose herself, when Mrs. Craycroft was shown into the room. That lady stared with surprise at seeing a very handsome young gentleman with Constance, who hastily wiped her eyes and introduced Mr. Lessingham.

Mrs. Craycroft took a seat, and producing two or three morning caps from her reticule, she said in her usual loud voice, "Miss Allerton, I have brought these caps for you to alter—I wish you to

do them immediately, that they may be washed next week. I find the borders rather too broad, and the headpieces too large (though to be sure I did cut them out myself), so I want you to rip them apart, and make the headpieces smaller, and the borders narrower, and then whip them and sew them on again. I was out the other day when you sent home my husband's shirts with the bill, but when you have done the caps I will pay you for all together. What will you charge for making a dozen aprons of bird's eye diaper for my little Anna? You must not ask much, for I want them quite plain—mere bibs—they are always the best for babies. Unless you will do them very cheap, I may as well make them myself."

The face of Lessingham became scarlet, and, starting from his chair, he traversed the room in manifest perturbation; sympathizing with what he supposed to be the confusion and mortification of Constance, and regretting that the sex of Mrs. Craycroft prevented him from knocking her down.

Constance, however, rallied, replying with apparent composure to Mrs. Craycroft on the points in question, and calmly settling the bargain for the bird's-eye aprons—she knew that it is only in the eyes of the vulgar-minded and the foolish that a woman is degraded by exerting her ingenuity or her talents as a means of support.

"Well," said Mrs. Craycroft, "you may send for the aprons to-morrow, and I wish you to hurry with them as fast as you can—when I give out work, I never like it to be kept long on hand. I will pay you for the other things when the aprons are done."

Mrs. Craycroft then took her leave, and Constance turned to the window to conceal from Lessingham the tears that in spite of her self-command were now stealing down her cheeks.

Lessingham hastily went up to her, and taking her hand, he said, with much feeling: "Dear Constance—Miss Allerton I mean—what has happened during my absence? Why do I see you thus? But I fear that I distress you by inquiring. I perceive that you are not happy—that you have suffered much, and that your circumstances are changed. Can I do nothing to console you or to improve your situation? Let me at once have a right to do so—let me persuade you to unite your fate with mine, and put an end, I hope for ever, to these unmerited, these intolerable humiliations."

"No, Mr. Lessingham," said Constance, deeply affected, "I will not take advantage of the generous impulse that has led you thus suddenly to make an offer, which, perhaps, in a calmer moment, and on cooler consideration, you may think of with regret."

"Regret!" exclaimed Lessingham, pressing her hand between both of his, and surveying her with a look of the fondest admiration, "dearest Constance, how little you know your own value—how little you suppose that during our long separation—"

Here he was interrupted in his impassioned address by the entrance of Mrs. Allerton and her daughters. Constance hastily withdrew her hand and presented him as Mr. Lessingham, a friend of hers from New Bedford.

Being much agitated, she in a few minutes retired to compose herself in her own apartment. The girls soon after withdrew, and Lessingham, frankly informing Mrs. Allerton that he was much and seriously interested in her sister-in-law, begged to know some particulars of her present condition.

Mrs. Allerton, who felt it impossible to regard Mr. Lessingham as a stranger, gave him a brief outline of the circumstances of Constance's residence with them, and spoke of her as the guardian-angel of the family. "She is not only," said her sister-in-law, "one of the most amiable and affectionate, but also one of the most sensible and judicious of women. Never, never have we in any instance acted contrary to her advice, without eventually finding cause to regret that we did so." And Mrs. Allerton could not forbear casting her eyes over her mourning dress.

Lessingham, though the praises of Constance were music in his ears, had tact enough to take his leave, fearing that his visit was interfering with the tea-hour of the family.

Next morning, the weather was so mild as to enable them to sit up stairs with their sewing; for latterly, the state of their fuel had not allowed them to keep fire except in the parlour and kitchen. Lessingham called and inquired for Constance. She came down, and saw him alone. He renewed, in explicit terms, the offer he had so abruptly made her on the preceding afternoon. Constance, whose heart had been with Lessingham during the whole of his long absence, had a severe struggle before she could bring herself to insist on their union being postponed for at least two years: during which time she wished, for the sake of the family, to remain with them, and get the school firmly established; her nieces, meanwhile, completing their education, and acquiring, under her guidance, a proficiency in the routine of teaching.

"But surely," said Lessingham, "you understand that I wish you to make over to your sister-in-law the whole of your aunt Ilford's legacy? You shall bring me nothing but your invaluable self."

Though grateful for the generosity and disinterestedness of her lover, Constance knew that the interest of her ten thousand dollars was, of course, not sufficient to support Mrs. Allerton and her children without some other source of income; and she was convinced that they would never consent to become pensioners on Lessingham's bounty, kind and liberal as he was. She therefore adhered to her determination of remaining with her sister and nieces till she had seen them fairly afloat, and till she could leave them in a prosperous condition. And Lessingham was obliged to

yield to her conviction that she was acting rightly, and to consent that the completion of his happiness should accordingly be deferred for two years.

He remained in Philadelphia till he had seen the Allerton family established in their new habitation, and he managed with much delicacy to aid them in the expenses of fitting it up.

The school was commenced with a much larger number of pupils than had been anticipated. It increased rapidly under the judicious superintendence of Constance: and in the course of two years she had rendered Isabella and Helen so capable of filling her place, that all the parents were perfectly satisfied to continue their children with them. At the end of that time, Lessingham (who, in the interval, had made frequent visits to Philadelphia) came to claim the promised hand of his Constance. They were married—she having first transferred the whole of her little property to her brother's widow.

At the earnest desire of Lessingham, Mrs. Allerton consented that Louisa should live in future with her beloved aunt Constance; and consequently the little girl accompanied them to New Bedford.

Mrs. Allerton and her family went on and prospered—her son was everything that a parent could wish—her children all married advantageously—and happily she has not yet had occasion to put in practice her resolution of never again wearing mourning: though principle, and not necessity, is the motive which will henceforward deter her from complying with that custom.

THE END.

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[1] Thick sour milk.

[2] The author takes this occasion to remark, that the illustrious artist to whom so many of his countrymen erroneously give the title of Sir Benjamin West, never in reality had the compliment of knighthood conferred on him. He lived and died *Mr.* West, as is well known to all who have any acquaintance with pictures and painters.

[3] A celebrated coloured waiter in Philadelphia.

[4] The French pronunciation of Richard.

[5] The old papa, and the old mamma.

[6] The young Sammy.

[7] Old Court.

[8] Bluntness, roughness.

[9] Customs of polite society.

[10] A person of strong mind, superior mind.

[11] Perfectly destroyed, plunged into an abyss of despair.

[12] My friend, my dear.

[13] A little blunt—a little rough. It is his character.

[14] "Ah! pine-apples—my dear—(to her husband)—mamma—papa—see—see—pine-apples!"

[15] Ah! what a scene—a real tragedy!

[16] My beloved Alphonse.

[17] Much obliged to you.

[18] Mamma, you do not eat with a good appetite. Ah! I understand—you wish for some cream with your pine-apple.

[19] Absolutely frightful.

[20] Juice.

[21] My dear papa, you have not finished already?

[22] Is it possible?

[23] Old mamma.

[24] Old papa.

[25] Eh! my dear, this little collation comes very seasonably, as our breakfast was nothing but a bad salad.

[26] What horror! What abomination! It is really too much!

[27] Goodness of heart.

[28] The mild Sammy—the gentle Sammy.

[29] The vulgar French think that the English term for all sorts of roasted meat is *rosbif*—thus *rosbif de mouton—rosbif de porc*. Potatoes plainly boiled, with the skins on, are called, in France, *pommes de terre au naturel*.

[30] Speak French.

[31] Yes, sir.

[32] My pretty Annette.

[33] My dear.

[34] I am delighted at it.

[35] Now, my dear, let us begin—let us begin immediately.

[36] My dear child.

[37] Perfectly well.

[38] Properly.

[39] I am in despair.

[40] "I am thrown in an abyss of grief," is perhaps nearest the meaning of this very French expression.

[41] Bad person—bad child.

[42] But come, let us try again.

[43] Oh! what a pity!

[44] But no matter—let them alone.

[45] Like an angel.

[46] Ah! what roguery—the little jade! What an instance of imposture and wickedness!

[47] I am frozen with horror!—I tremble!—I shiver!

[48] A little supper.

[49] The gentle Sammy and the lovely Fanchette.

[50] *Soupe à la jambe de bois—musettes de mouton—lapins en lorgnettes—poulardes en bas de soie—pommes de terre en chemise.* See Ude, &c.

[51] Easy chair.

[52] My lovely Lulu, my darling Mimi, and my little angel Gogo.

[53] Her beloved niece, Miss Robertine.

[54] Hair-dressers.

[55] Sugar and water.

[56] No matter.

[57] Farce, in French cookery, signifies chopped meat, fish, poultry, well seasoned and mixed with other ingredients.

[58] Perfect love.

[59] Ah! how touching are these sublime sentiments!

[60] My dear friend, permit me to weep a little for the sad fate of innocence and virtue—unfortunate Paul—hapless Virginia.

[61] Old Philip.

[62] Let us always speak French.

[63] Yes, I know it.

[64] Yes, perfidious man—traitor—almost rascal—tremble. I know you—tremble, tremble. I tell you—I—it is I that am speaking to you.

[65] Idiot—he does not understand French.

[66] Plebeian as you are.

[67] Knave.

[68] Ah! how difficult it is to stifle my emotions! No matter, I must make a great effort.

[69] Listen.

[70] Ah! villain—monster—ogre.

[71] Afterwards General Worth.

[72] Miss Julianna Bater, an old Moravian lady, from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, who was well known in Philadelphia, many years since, as a teacher of embroidery.

[73] *Estafette*, we believe, is the proper term, but the military couriers of that period were always called *videttes* by the citizens.

[74] Hare.

[75] In those days, white muslin dresses were worn both in winter and summer.

[76] All these things the author has seen.

[77] Bonsoir.

[78] Bagatelle.

[79] Je ne sais quoi.

[80] Soirée.

[81] This implied compliment to our vessels and seamen was really made by a British sailor, in a similar conversation with an American gentleman.

[82] Belay—a sea-term, signifying to secure or make fast a rope.

[83] Fact.

[84] Query? Which epithet is the most elegant, flap or slap? We rather think "the flaps have it."

[85] Fact.

[86] Fact.

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