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LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE

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POPULAR LITERATURE AND SCIENCE.

DECEMBER, 1877.

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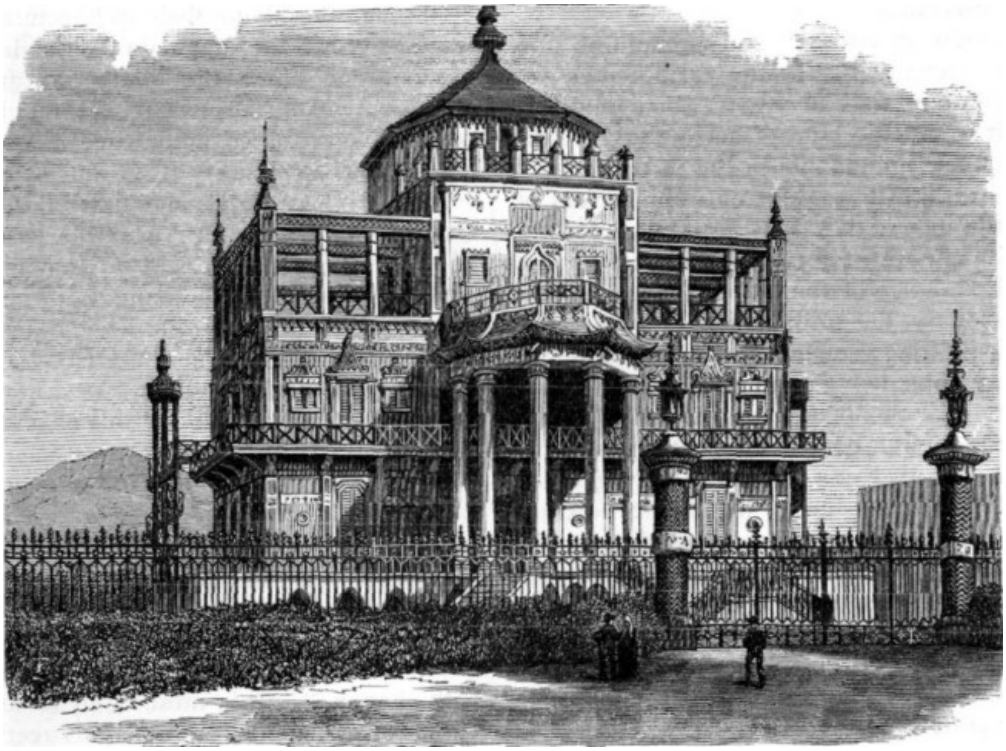
A MONTH IN SICILY.

FIRST PAPER.



LA FAVORITA.

Early on the morning of the first of February we stood on the deck of the steamer for Palermo, watching the sun rise over the water. Far away in the south the blue edge of the sea began to grow bluer with the rising of the distant land. A fresh breeze blew from the shore—not a pleasant feature in February weather at home, but suggesting comparisons with the warmest morning of a New England May. With the swift advance of the steamer the blue line in the south rapidly rose above the level of the sea into the definite shape of a rugged mountain-range: gradually the blueness of distance changed to rich shades of brown and red on the jagged, treeless summits, and to deepest green where long orange-farms border the bases of the mountains. [Pg 650]

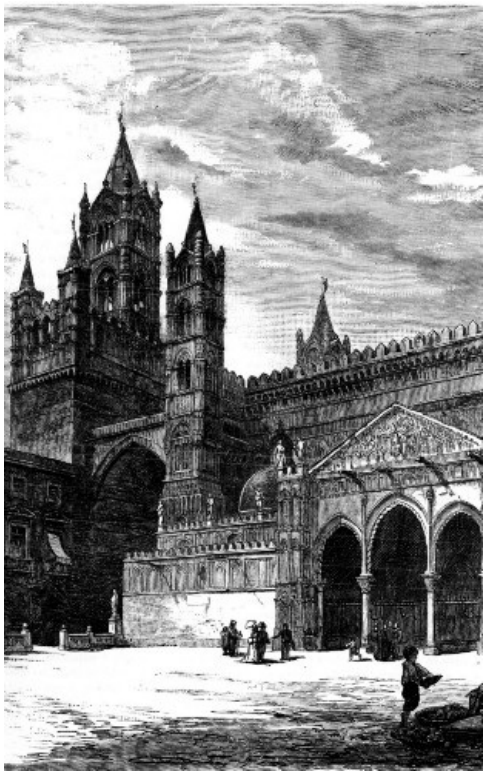
Who has not longed to see Sicily? Every one who loves poetry, romance or the history of ancient civilization must often turn in thought to this beautiful and famous Mediterranean island. To the most ancient poets it was a mysterious land, where dwelt the monster Charybdis and the bloody Læstrigones; where Ulysses met the Cyclops; where the immortal gods waged battles with the giant sons of Earth, and bound Enceladus in his eternal prison. No doubt it was the terrific natural phenomena of Sicily—the earthquakes and the outbursts of Etna—which rendered it so much a land of horrors to the early Greek imagination. But in that far-distant age it was not only the terrors of the place that had worked upon the imaginative Greeks: the almost tropical luxuriance of the country, the unrivalled scenery, the brilliancy of the sky, made it a fitting ground for the adventures of nymphs, heroes and gods. In the fountain of Sicilian Ortygia dwelt Arethusa, the nymph dear to the poets; beside the Lake of Enna, where rich vegetation overran the lips of the extinct volcano, was the spot called in mythology the meeting-place of Pluto and Proserpine—the power of darkness and the springing plant personified; and so through all the country places were found made sacred by the presence of the great divinities, and temples were erected in their honor.

When the age of fable had passed away, far back in the early dawn of European history begins authentic knowledge about Sicily. While wicked Ahaz reigned in the kingdom of Judah, and Isaiah had not ceased to utter his prophecies, the Greek colonization of Sicily began. Seven hundred and thirty-five years before Christ, Theocles with his band of Greeks from Eubœa founded Naxos on the coast, hard by the fertile slopes of Etna. Within three centuries from that time the whole Sicilian coast had been studded with Greek cities, and to such wealth, power and splendor of art had they attained that all succeeding epochs of the island's history seem degenerate times when compared with that early golden age.

It has been truly said that "there is not a nation which has materially influenced the destinies of European civilization that has not left distinct traces of its activity in this island." Phœnicians, Greeks, Romans, Saracens, Normans, Spaniards, French and English have successively occupied the island, and noble monuments of the varied civilizations are standing to this day. Scattered through the island, their architectural remains crown the mountain-tops or lie in confusion along the Mediterranean shore, a series of ruins extending through twenty-five centuries, unmatched in any other country for variety of age and style.

At ten o'clock our steamer entered the Gulf of Palermo, passing near the base of Monte Pellegrino, a wild promontory which towers up two thousand feet from the sea. On the day before I had entered for the first time the famous Bay of Naples, but with less delight than I now looked upon the beauties of this Sicilian gulf. Flanked with lofty mountains, colored with the matchless blue of the Mediterranean, studded with picturesque lateen sails, the bay is a fitting entrance to this fair historic island: a more beautiful approach could hardly be imagined even to the Islands of the Blessed.

The Italians call Palermo *la felice* ("the happy"). It is most happy in its climate, its situation and its noble streets and gardens. Below the city lies the lovely bay: behind it stretches back for miles, between converging mountain-chains, the fruit-producing level of the Golden Shell (*La Conca d'Oro*). The plain is one vast orchard of oranges and lemons which every year distributes its huge crop over half the habitable globe. The city is worthy of its position. The chief streets are broad, clean and handsomely built—a contrast to the universal shabbiness and squalor we had found in Naples. [Pg 651]



CATHEDRAL OF PALERMO.

A traveller is sure to be put in a good humor with the place by the many and unusual comforts which he meets in the great sea-fronting hotel; and the first look from the windows of his apartment confirms the opinion that Palermo is the fairest of Southern cities. The outlook is upon the grand seashore drive, the Marina, as gay and pretty a sight as can be found in any European capital. The broad, tree-shaded avenue, bordered on one side by hotels and palaces, on the other by the waters of the bay, is thronged with private carriages. Beginning at the sea-facing gate of the city, the road commands through all its length a view of the mountains, the bay and the open sea: at its terminus lie the public flower-gardens—acres of our choicest hothouse plants growing in tropical profusion. [Pg 652]

In Palermo, as in so many European towns, the cathedral is the chief architectural attraction. To approach it from the bay the whole length of the city must be traversed on the Corso Vittorio Emmanuele, the chief business street. This corso is crossed at the centre of the town by another of equal width, which also commemorates by its name Italian unity—the Corso Garibaldi. There is one other broad and important street which no American can enter without remembering that even in this distant land the interest and sympathy of the people have been with our country in its struggles and successes: it is the Via Lincoln.

The drive up the Corso gives an opportunity for seeing a remarkably handsome street lined with gay shops, and for studying the peculiar and often fine faces of the Sicilian people; but nothing of striking interest appears until, near the centre of the town, a street opening on the left discloses a vista ending in a small forest of white marble statues. On a nearer view it is found that the statues belong to the immense fountain of the Piazza Pretoria, a work erected about A. D. 1550 by command of the senate of Palermo. It is perhaps the largest and most elaborate fountain in Europe, and, though it is easy to criticise the countless sculptures that adorn it, the whole effect of their combination into an architectural unit is most imposing.

Continuing the drive up the Corso, a broad piazza suddenly opens on the right, flanked by the cathedral. The abruptness of the transition from between the dark lines of buildings into the sunlight of the square adds to the first strong impression produced by the beauty of the vast duomo. In its external architecture the church is unique: the charm of it to one who has been travelling through Italy is its utter dissimilarity to all the Italian churches. Architectural writers call it a building of the "Sicilian Gothic style;" and, though the expression does not convey a vivid image except to the student of art, any one can see its essential difference from the style of the North, and can recognize the rare grandeur and beauty of the church. The form is simple, but the dimensions are grand. Without the boldness of outline of true Gothic churches, the walls are so covered with ornaments of interlacing arches, cornices and arabesque slightly raised on the masonry as to produce an effect of wonderful richness. The style is peculiarly Sicilian, yet every observer of mediæval churches will at once detect the Norman, Italian and Saracenic influences blended in an exquisite harmony. Connected with the church by light arches, but separated from

it by a street, stands the campanile, a mass of enormous solidity, terminating in many pinnacles and one slender and graceful tower rising above them all. Four other lofty towers, springing from the corners of the church, give additional lightness to its elegant design: they were added to the building nearly three centuries after the Norman conquest of Sicily, and yet their minaret-like form and pointed panel ornaments show how strong and lasting had been the influence of Arabian art upon the mediæval architects of Sicily. [Pg 653]

GROTTO OF SANTA ROSALIA.

It is seven hundred years since the foundations of the duomo were laid. In that distant age, and in a land so remote, it is a curious circumstance that its founder was an Englishman: *Gualterio Offamilio* is the amusing Italian corruption by which the name of Walter of the Mill was suited to the Southern tongue. After Roger and his Normans had driven from Sicily the Arab power which had held the land for more than two centuries, and when Christianity had succeeded the Mohammedan religion throughout the island, Archbishop Walter assumed spiritual sovereignty in Palermo, and founded this cathedral on the site of an ancient mosque. Only a part of the original [Pg 654] building remains in the crypt and two walls of the present church. All subsequent ages have changed and added to its original simple form, but often have taken from its beauty. Within the church only a part of the south aisle commands close attention: there in canopied sarcophagi of porphyry reposes the dust of Roger, king of Sicily (1154), of Henry VI., emperor of Germany, and of Frederick II., Roger's most illustrious grandson, king of Sicily, king of Jerusalem and emperor of Germany. In a chapel at the right of the high altar, sacred to Santa Rosalia, rest the bones of the saint enshrined in a sarcophagus of silver. Thirteen hundred pounds of the precious metal are wrought into the shrine, and the whole chapel is sumptuous with marble frescoes and gilding, for to the pious souls of Palermo this is the very holy of holies. The cathedral is dedicated to Rosalia, and almost divine honors are paid to her by the city from which she fled in horror at its wickedness.

Every summer a festival of three days is held in honor of this favorite saint; and again in September a day is kept to commemorate her death, when a vast concourse of people from Palermo climb the side of the neighboring Monte Pellegrino to worship at the grotto of St. Rosalia, a natural cavern situated under an overhanging crag of the summit. Here the faithful Sicilians believe that the holy maiden dwelt in solitude for many years; and here were found in 1624 the bones of the saint, which put a stop to the plague then raging in Palermo. The cave has been made a church by building a porch at the entrance. Twisted columns of alabaster support the roof of the vestibule, but within the cavern the walls are of the natural rock, contrasting strangely with the magnificent workmanship of the high altar, beneath which lies the marble statue of the saint overlaid with a robe of gold, while about the recumbent figure are placed a book and skull and other objects of pure gold. It is a figure of a fair young girl, represented by the artist as dying, with her head at rest upon one hand. Though the statue is the work of no very famous artist, Goethe in the narrative of his Sicilian travel has truly said of it, "The head and hands of white marble are, if not faultless in style, at least so pleasing and natural that one cannot help expecting to see them move."

Under the southern precipices of this Mountain of the Pilgrim lies a royal park, and in the midst of it stands a gaudy and fantastic villa called La Favorita. The house is worth a visit for the sake of seeing what a half-crazy fancy will produce when united with royal wealth. King Ferdinand I., during his stay in Sicily early in this century, amused himself by building this country palace in the style of a Chinese villa, and adorned it with innumerable little bells, to be rung by every movement of the wind.

It was in the Favorita that the old king found himself cornered by Lord William Bentinck and his army during the British occupation of the island in 1812. It is said that his faithful subjects from Palermo encamped by thousands in the neighborhood—not, however, for the sake of defending

their aged monarch, but to enjoy the fun of witnessing a fight in which both sides were hated by them with equal cordiality.

To an enterprising traveller some of the pleasantest hours of a long tour are those when, cutting loose from all guides and books, he wanders alone through the streets of an old city, enjoying with a sense of discovery the scraps of antiquity not described in any book which he is sure to meet with. Palermo and its neighborhood afford a most fertile field for such researches. The Saracenic villas of the suburbs and the early Norman buildings of the town will repay considerable patience spent in looking up the beauties to be found in the details of their construction. For instance, in the plain old church of S. Agostino there is a doorway and wheel window one sight of which is an ample reward for much wandering and searching. [Pg 655]

MONREALE

On a morning too fresh and beautiful for staying in the city we rendered a vivacious cabman ecstatically happy by an engagement to drive us to Monreale. A brisk drive past the royal palace, out of the southern gate and five miles across the orange-covered plain brought us to the foot of an abrupt mountain. Not a half mile away, but far above, on the seemingly unapproachable heights, was perched the quaint village which was our destination: its ancient towering buildings glittered white and hot in the February sun under the canopy of cloudless blue. Ascending for half an hour on the well-constructed zigzag road, we stopped at the gate in the town-wall to buy the luscious-looking fruit of the cactus from a road-side vender, one of those ideal hags, apparently preserved by desiccation under the torrid sun, whom only Italy can produce in perfection. Then onward and upward we pushed through the village street—a street characteristic of these Southern walled villages, narrow, dark, festooned above with interminable lines of drying macaroni, covered below with abundant filth, and bordered by house-walls of enormous thickness, built for resisting heat. At every house-door or on the pavement in front sits the man of the house plying his trade, that all the world may know whether his goods are well made or ill. Up and down the street flow the lines of dark-eyed, swarthy people—women robed in [Pg 656] rags, occasionally set off by a bit of striking color; children who in their astonishment become rigid at the sight of a foreigner; here and there an officer of the Italian army carefully picking his way through the mud; and everywhere produce-laden asses driven toward Palermo by the most picturesque of cut-throats, for without its ever-present force of soldiers Monreale would at once relapse into a hotbed of brigandage, as its recent history shows.

Almost at the summit of the town, facing a broad, paved square, stands the cathedral and its adjacent Benedictine monastery, both built upon the brink of the precipitous mountain, and both in external appearance severely plain, almost to shabbiness.

William II., king of Sicily, called the Good, founded on this Royal Mount a monastery for the Benedictine friars, and built it up with all the strength of a fortress and the magnificence of a palace. Little is left of that original building, which was finished in 1174, but in its few remains have fortunately been preserved the most splendid of cloisters. This scene of centuries of Benedictine meditations is a large quadrangle surrounded by an arcade of multitudinous small pointed arches resting upon pairs of slender white marble columns, like stalks of snow-white lilies in their grace and lightness. Some of the marble shafts are wrought with reliefs of flowers and trailing vines, while most of them were inlaid in bands or spirals of mosaic in gold and colors, now injured by age. The capitals which crown these shafts are exquisitely carved, and all mythology, the legends of the Church and the book of Nature have been ransacked to furnish subjects for the designs; so that out of two hundred or more no two are similar. All the decaying magnificence of the great building is pervaded by an oppressive silence, for it is one of the innumerable religious houses suppressed by the Italian government.

From the monastery to the cathedral is a walk of but a few steps. All disappointment at the external plainness is forgotten in approaching the chief entrance of the church. Michael Angelo said of Ghiberti's doors at Florence that "they were worthy to be the entrance to Paradise." They have rightly become famous through all the world, and yet these doors of Monreale leave on the mind of the beholder a strong impression of their beauty not less lasting than the Baptistery gates at Florence. In the execution of the biblical reliefs which completely encrust the massive leaves of bronze they must yield, of course, to the mature art of Ghiberti's later age; but the

stately height of the solid metal doors, the alternate bands of mosaic and wrought-stone arabesques which flank them and surround over head the Arabian arch, and, above all, the sense that they conceal from view unparalleled splendors beyond, leave on the mind an impression which cannot be effaced.

Perhaps no other building deserves the epithet "splendid" so exactly as the cathedral of Monreale: the whole interior is radiant from the vast extent of its pictured walls. All the walls and vaulting of the nave and aisles, transepts and tribune, are overspread with ancient mosaics on a golden ground. It is natural to compare St. Mark's cathedral at Venice with this church, on account of its immense mosaic-covered surface: its sumptuous interior delights every beholder with the satisfying completeness which belongs to it; yet in all the Oriental splendor of the Venetian church nothing can equal in impressiveness a glance down the nave of Monreale. Wherever the eye turns it rests upon the glowing colors of some sacred picture—scenes from the Old Testament history, bright-robed figures of flying angels, haloed saints in the quaint Byzantine style, apostles and martyrs, patriarchs and prophets, and, high above them all, from a great picture in the vaulting of the apse, a startling face of Christ looking solemnly down through the length of the cathedral. Half the stiffness which characterizes these early mosaics seems to have been cast aside in treating this supreme subject. The colossal size of the figure, the hand raised in blessing the multitude, the sad but awful expression of the countenance, make it an all- [Pg 657] pervading presence in the church. Amid all the glittering splendor of the building, while the gorgeous pomp of a holiday mass progressed and rippling strains of organ-music ran echoing through the arches, through all the bewildering brightness of the spectacle, the majesty of that Presence could not for a moment be forgotten, nor could the eyes avoid straying off from the glitter below to answer again and again to that solemn gaze above.

LA ZIZA.

It is impossible, in any ordinary picture, to convey more than a very faint idea of this building, in [Pg 658] which the peculiar beauties are dependent upon color, unlike the Gothic churches of the North: nothing but an oil painting of minute details could render the effects produced by the bars of sunshine descending through the twilight of the church and striking on the glowing, pictured walls. The extent of surface covered by the mosaics is said to be more than sixty thousand square feet.

By the bounty of the same pious monarch who endowed the neighboring monastery the cathedral was completed just seven hundred years ago. His body lies entombed in the transept: his monument is the wonderful pile whose construction has made his name to be remembered by succeeding ages more than all his other deeds.

Outside the cathedral, adjoining the monastery-wall, a commanding terrace is built upon the verge of the precipice. Leaning from its edge, we gazed almost vertically into the orange-groves below, where the ripe fruit glowed with the brightness of a flame contrasted with the darkness of the foliage. Far and wide were spread the fruit-gardens over the plain, to where the mountains towered up in the east, and northward to the city and the sea. It is one of those bright and satisfying scenes from which a traveller can hardly turn away without a tinge of bitterness in the thought of never seeing them again.

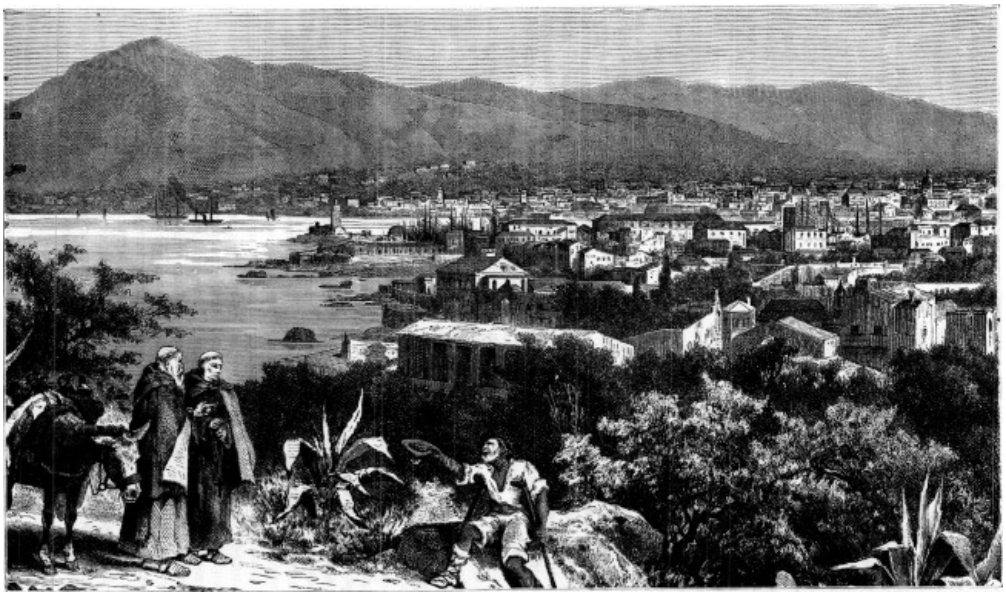
The drive back to the town was pleasantly varied by a détour which brought us to the Capuchin monastery and the Saracenic villa of La Ziza. The vaults of the monastery are mentioned as one of the interesting sights, but it must be a very ghoulish soul that would take pleasure in them. The horrors of the more famous Capuchin vaults at Rome are tame in comparison with these. There the ornaments are skulls and skeletons in a tolerable state of cleanliness: here the departed brethren have been subjected to some mummifying process, and as they lie piled in hideous confusion their withered faces stare horribly in the twilight of the cellar. Numerous fiery-

eyed cats run about with much scratching and scrabbling over the dry bodies, making the place none the pleasanter with their uncanny wails. A very brief visit is sufficient.

La Ziza, the only Saracenic house of this region which is still inhabited, is simply a massive, battlemented tower of unmistakably Arabian appearance. The outside walls are adorned with the depressed panels characteristic of the Saracenic style, but within the Oriental look has almost vanished under the repairs and decorations of many centuries. Only the lofty hallway, arched above with a kind of honeycomb vaulting and cooled by a little cascade of water rushing through it, retains much of the Oriental beauty, and seems like a hall of the Alhambra. Along a wall of the vestibule runs an inscription in Arabic which has been a puzzle to Orientalists, and of which no undisputed interpretation is given. The palace was built as a country pleasure-house by one of the Saracenic princes of Palermo, and can be little less than a thousand years old; indeed, an inscription on its walls, inscribed by one of the Spanish proprietors, claims for the house an antiquity of eleven hundred years.

From the battlements of La Ziza one has the loveliest near view of Palermo and the plain of the Golden Shell. An enthusiastic verse, written over the doorway of the palace, declares it to be the most beautiful scene upon our planet, and while the eyes are resting on the view it is easy to believe the poet; but many of the mountain-views about the city surpass it.

One of the most attractive of the mountain-excursions from Palermo is that to the monastery of San Martino. At a height of seventeen hundred feet above the city, in a lonely spot, the monastery stands on another flank of the mountain on which Monreale is also perched. The mule-path from the suburban village of Boccadifalco to San Martino would be worth traversing for its own wild beauty alone. It first enters a gorge between grand cliffs: then, climbing a rocky ascent which commands a superb view of the plain, it runs through a fruitful valley, where the monastery suddenly appears in the front. [Pg 659]



Palermo.

The monastery of San Martino has been the wealthiest in Sicily. The entrance-hall is on a scale of regal magnificence, adorned with many-colored marbles. The brethren were all of noble extraction. Though the external architecture of the building is not in the best taste, the grand scale on which it is built, and still more the wild, picturesque site, give to the monastery a beauty which even an Italian architect of the last century could not disfigure. Ascending a grand staircase with balustrades of purple marble, an upper hall is reached, from which the wonderful view may be seen to the best advantage. Turning the eye to the north and east across the savage-looking mountains, a short reach of the coast is seen, and beyond is the boundless expanse of sea, dotted on the horizon by the volcanoes of the Æolian Islands, which lie more than a hundred miles away. The abbey abounds in pictures by masters of the seventeenth century, and there is also a museum of Greek and Saracenic remains, but nothing within the walls compares with the interest of the window-views. [Pg 660]

Attractive as are the sights of Palermo, most of them must be passed over or very hastily visited if the tour of the island is to be made in a month, for the Greek cities beyond demand a greater share of time by reason of their immense antiquity and the grandeur of their remains.

Being well prepared for the inland journey, and eager to see antiquities so little known to the outer world, one question arose to give us pause—a question which every year keeps thousands of prudent tourists from exploring a country as full of glorious scenery as Switzerland, possessing more of Greek antiquities than Greece itself, and a far lovelier winter climate than Italy—"Is it safe?" The doubtful question whether this rarely-attempted journey should be accomplished was settled by the friendly advice of the courteous consul of the United States at Palermo. That advice may be of use to travellers in the future: it was to the effect that for two American gentlemen travelling alone and without ostentation through Sicily there is no more danger of capture or violent death than in any civilized country. It is admitted that highway robbery is not impossible, as in many places nearer home, but the simple preventive is to carry as little ready money as

possible over the short spaces of unsettled country, and to forward superfluous baggage by steamer. That there are banditti in certain districts of the island no one denies, but their object is the capture of wealthy Sicilians, whose ransom is sure and ample, while that of a foreigner is uncertain and necessarily long delayed.

A dark afternoon found us comfortably established in the best seats of an old-fashioned stage-coach in front of the general post-office of Palermo, whence the stage-lines radiate to the various parts of the island. After the long deliberation which seems to characterize all business (especially official business) transacted outside of England and America, the mail-bags were delivered, and our journey began in the midst of a shower descending with all the tremendous impetuosity of a semi-tropical rainy season. The cumbersome vehicle dashed on with considerable spirit through streets almost emptied by the violence of the shower, and out through the broad arch of the stately Porta Nuova crowded by multitudes seeking shelter from the storm. Late twilight found us at the end of the first stage in Monreale. From thence onward the journey continued for a while through pitchy darkness. The broad highway is engineered with admirable skill along the sides of mountains and over deep ravines, through a region of most uncommon beauty, it is said, but now hidden from us by the impenetrable gloom. However, as the night advanced the clouds rolled away with surprising suddenness, and left a bright moon rising over the mountains. We began to see something of the beautifully varied country, though viewing [Pg 661] it at a disadvantage through the narrow window of a covered coach. Wherever the rugged nature of the country permitted every rood of ground was under exquisite cultivation, and already had its first soft covering of springing vegetation. The night-air was sweet with the spring-like odors of freshly-turned earth and of wild-flowers: from time to time white masses of flower-laden almond trees flashed past the window, looking in the moonlight wonderfully like the snow-drifts which at this season line the roads in New England.

CONVENT OF SAN MARINO, NEAR PALERMO.

After nightfall the surface of the rich and well-cultivated country seemed as solitary as a [Pg 662] wilderness: not a creature was stirring along the road. The intense silence of the night was broken only by the hum of our coach-wheels and the sharp snap of hoofs from our cavalry guard. How unlike were all the surroundings to those of an ordinary modern night-journey over the mail-routes of Europe! The primitive conveyance, the quiet of the lonely road, the arms of the attendant troop of horsemen flashing in the light of the moon,—all the concomitants of an old-time night-journey seemed to carry us back from the age of railroads to an earlier time.

Eleven drowsy hours of staging, and then a long, slow ascent, brought us up to the hilltop where stands the village of Calatafimi. The chief inn of the town is probably not surpassed in Europe in the number of its small discomforts, animate and inanimate, but it must be made the base of operations for visiting the ruins of Segesta. The remnant of the night spent in sleep prepared us for our investigations on the following day. It was pleasant, rising in the cool early morning, to step out from the comfortless interior of the tavern to enjoy on a southern balcony the temperate warmth of the low sun and to look down on the lovely landscape. Before us lay a fertile rolling country clad with verdure, and rising gradually upward toward the south to an elevation deserving to be called a mountain from its great height, yet from its gentle slope and cultivated sides rather to be called a hill. A field near the crest of that distant hill, marked only by a few white crosses, is a spot memorable in Sicilian history, for there lie the heroes who fell fighting with Garibaldi for the unity of Italy on May 15, 1860. Sicily has in all ages been a battle-ground for the contending races of two continents: on Sicilian soil Athens received her most disabling blow, and here too the Punic power was broken; yet there is hardly one among the battlefields of Sicily upon which greater destinies have been settled than on this field of Calatafimi.

Before the morning was far advanced we started out in search of the village curé, the unfailing friend of strangers, that we might inquire of him about the safety of visiting the ruin and in regard to the pleasantest way of reaching it. Picking our way about through the mud of the

squalid village, we at length found the old gentleman just coming from his little church on the side of the castle hill at the end of the town. Filled with unfeigned delight that the monotony of his existence should be broken by the advent of two foreigners, especially such living wonders as Americans, the benign priest took a lively interest in our case, gave us the information for which we had asked, vouching for the safety of the country, and begged us to walk on with him. For five minutes we followed on together the road cut in the hillside beneath the walls of the Saracenic citadel, our companion all the while talking vehemently, and helping out our lame knowledge of the language with gestures so dramatic that an understanding of his words was hardly needed. Suddenly the road curved round the side of the hill; we stood on the floor of a deserted quarry; the old man ceased speaking and pointed forward: "*Ecco!*" Before us the hill dropped abruptly down in a precipice: far below a deep valley spread out before our eyes, "fair as the garden of the Lord." As the light of the morning sun streamed down through its length, bringing out in great brilliancy the fresh green of spring, it looked like a paradise of luxuriant vegetation. The gray of olive trees and the darkness of orange-groves contrasted with the color of springing plants, and everywhere were scattered the pink-and-white plumes of the blossoming almonds. Beyond the valley a rugged, saddle-shaped mountain rose to an imposing height, and upon the summit line [Pg 663] stood in solitary majesty the Doric temple of Segesta, each column in clear relief against the blue of the sky. It is so far removed from all abodes of men, standing alone for thousands of years in the region of the clouds—so grand in its severe and noble outlines—so venerable in its mysterious antiquity—so blended with the natural beauties of the place,—that it seems rather to belong to the power that raised the mountains than to any workmanship of man. The world cannot show a more wonderful example of art exquisitely harmonized with the grandeur of natural scenery.

Eager for a closer view of the temple, we returned immediately to the town, and, being provided with a guide and a beast, were soon on the way down the winding road to the valley. A bridle-path diverged from the main road: an avenue of over-arching olive trees shaded the way, and on all sides here, as everywhere through the country, the orange-crop loaded the trees almost to breaking—the most beautiful of all crops as the fruit hangs upon the branches. As we passed the lower slopes dotted with browsing sheep, and began the rugged ascent of the mountain on which the temple stands, the pathway crept up the edge of a profound gorge: it was a perilous way, clinging close to the edge of the bank, and at some points, where we could look down a thousand feet to the torrent below, the path was so narrow and broken that even our sure-footed mountain-donkeys hesitated to advance. The picturesque but hard climb at length came to an end at the edge of the broad, flattened summit of the mountain. Again the temple suddenly came in sight, but now near at hand. The mountain-shepherds have planted with wheat the level of the summit, and the pale yellow of the volcanic rock from which the temple is built harmonizes well with the color of its surroundings. It cannot be called a ruin. It stands as the builders left it in the fifth century before Christ. Not a column is broken, not a stone has fallen. The interior was never finished, but the outside is perfect.

The pure outlines of a Doric temple are beautiful in any situation, but the impression which this one made upon us in the bright morning sunlight, standing in the midst of verdure and flowers on the brink of that stupendous chasm and overlooking that glorious country, is not a thing to be conveyed in words.

The interest of the temple is comprised in its size, antiquity and beauty, for no mention of it is made in history. Its approximate age is inferred from the internal evidence of the structure. The subjection of the city of Segesta from B. C. 409 to the powers of Carthage and Rome successively, and the subsequent decline of its own power and wealth, render it certain that no such work as this temple would have been undertaken after that date: moreover, the purity of its simple Doric form places it in the earlier ages of Sicilian history. The Carthaginian invasion of the island was doubtless the event which arrested the building. Cicero has described a wonderful statue of Diana in bronze which the people of Segesta showed him with pride as the greatest ornament of their city: it was of colossal size and faultless beauty, belonging to the best period of Greek art. As the statue was in existence before the Carthaginian invasion, it seems to me highly improbable that the citizens of Segesta would have built so grand a temple for any other purpose than to enshrine their most admired and revered statue and to make it a place of worship for Diana. This theory may explain in part the reason why the building was arrested, for it is known that the image was stolen to adorn the city of Carthage,[A] and its loss, as well as the subsequent poverty of Segesta, would have been a sufficient reason for ceasing to build a temple to contain it. Diana's worshippers of old must have looked upon these lovely mountain-ranges as an abode dear to the queen of the nymphs and the hunter's patron deity. It seems as if nothing less than the presence of the mountain-goddess lingering round her shrine could have kept the temple in its marvellous perfection through the lapse of ages in a land of wars and earthquakes. The houses [Pg 664] of the neighboring city are indistinguishably levelled with the earth, but hardly a stone of the sacred building is displaced.

The position of the temple was outside and below the limits of the ancient city. The mountain-ridge rises near at hand to a somewhat greater height, and terminates in a peak, on the summit and sides of which the town was built. Warned by the decline of the sun, we turned from the Segestan house of worship and began to climb the slope toward the Segestan place of amusement: the Greek theatre still remains with little loss or change. The ascent was interrupted by many lingering backward looks toward the grand colonnade as it appeared at fresh points of view from above. Hardly a living creature appeared on the lonely heights, except that one wandering shepherd, seeing the dress of foreigners, came forward to offer his little stock of coins ploughed from the earth or found in ancient buildings. As usual, most of the pocketful were

corroded beyond recognition, but one piece bore a noble head executed in the Greek style, and the clear inscription, ΠΑΝΟΡΜΙΤΑΛ, a coin of Panormus; which is, in modern speech, Palermo. A few coppers were accepted as an ample equivalent for a coin which will not circulate.

The scattered fragments of a fortress crown the peak; and immediately below, cut in the solid rock of the western slope, lies the theatre. It is not large as compared with buildings of its class at Athens and Syracuse, yet I believe that in its seating capacity it exceeds any opera-house of our time. Entering by a ruined stage-door and crossing the orchestra, we rested on the lower tiers of seats. The great arc, comprising two-thirds of a circle, upon which the spectators were ranged, has still its covering of fine cut-stone seats, complete except at one extremity. Every part of the desolate building gains a new interest when peopled in imagination with its ancient occupants, and when we recall to mind the vast multitudes of many generations who have watched with breathless and solemn interest the stately progress of Greek tragedy before that ruined *scena*.

As we lounged upon the lowest seats, whereon the high dignitaries of the town used to sit, and looked across the open space of the orchestra, there at the centre of its farther side lay the slab which supported the altar of Bacchus, where stood the chorus-leader: near it a line of stone marks the front of the stage, and beyond it is spread an expanse of stage-scenery such as no modern royal theatre can boast. The whole broad prospect commanded from the colonnade below is seen across the stage of the theatre, but widened by the greater height and finished in the foreground by the majestic presence of the temple. All the north-western mountains of the island are taken in with one glance of the eye: beneath us the valley of the little river Scamander opens a long vista northward to the Mediterranean Sea, and far away the port of Castellamare glitters, in contrast with the blue, as white as a polished shell upon the shore. Most distant among the group of peaks is Mount Eryx, the lonely rock by the sea on whose summit stood the temple of Venus Erycina, more renowned in the ancient world than all other shrines of the goddess.

We climbed to the brow of the hill in order to descend through the entire length of the city. Hardly one stone is left upon another of all the streets through which the Segestans proudly conducted Cicero. Here and there appear the circular openings of cisterns which occupied the centres of ancient courtyards. The stones once hewn and carved which are strewn over the slope are now reduced to the roughness of boulders, so that one might cross the tract and catch no sign that it was once a city. Little has been done to discover what remains lie beneath the surface, but at one point, where a small excavation has been made, a heap of fallen Ionic columns cover the fragments of a tomb built on a scale of regal magnificence; and a little lower on the mountain two rooms of a house have been exhumed, the floors of which are still covered with beautiful mosaics.

ALFRED T. BACON.

FOOTNOTES:

[A] The statue was restored to Segesta by Scipio.

"FOR PERCIVAL."

[Pg 665]

CHAPTER IX.

SISSY LOOKS INTO THE MIRROR.

A lady's hero generally has ample leisure. He may write novels or poems, or paint the picture or carve the statue of the season, or he is a statesman and rules the destinies of nations, or he makes money mysteriously in the city, or even, it may be, not less mysteriously on the turf; but he does it in his odd minutes. That is his characteristic. Perhaps he spends his morning in stupendous efforts to gratify a wish expressed in smiling hopelessness by the heroine; later, he calls on her or he rides with her; evening comes, he dances with her till the first gray streak of dawn has touched the eastern sky. He goes home. His pen flies along the paper—he is knee-deep in manuscript; he is possessed with burning enthusiasm and energy; her features grow in idealized loveliness beneath his chisel, or the sunny tide of daylight pours in to irradiate the finished picture as well as the exhausted artist with a golden glory. He has a talent for sitting up. He gets up very early indeed if he is in the country, but he never goes to bed early, or when would he achieve his triumphs? Some things, it is true, must be done by day, but half an hour will work wonders. The gigantic intellect is brought to bear on the confidential clerk: the latter is, as it were, wound up, and the great machine goes on. Or a hasty telegram arrives as the guests file in to dinner. "Pardon me, one moment;" and instantly something is sent off in cipher which shall change the face of Europe. Unmoved, the

hero returns to the love-making which is the true business of life.

There are poetry and romance enough in many an outwardly prosaic life. How often have we been told this! Nay, we have read stories in which the hero possesses a season-ticket, and starts from his trim suburban home after an early breakfast, to return in due time to dine, perhaps to talk a little "shop" over the meal, and, it may be, even to feel somewhat sleepy in the evening. But, as far as my experience goes, the day on which the story opens is the last on which he does all this. That morning he meets the woman with the haunting eyes or the old friend who died long ago—did not the papers say so?—and whose resurrection includes a secret or two. Or he is sent for to some out-of-the-way spot in the country where there is a mysterious business of some kind to be unravelled. At any rate, he needs his season-ticket never again, but changes more or less into the hero we all know.

It is hard work for these unresting men, no doubt, yet what is to be done? Unless the double-shift system can in any way be applied for their relief, I fear they must continue to toil by night that they may appear to be idle men.

And, after all, were the hero not altogether heroic, one is tempted to doubt if this abundant leisure is quite a gain.

Addie Blake, planning some bright little scheme which needed a whole day and an unoccupied squire, said once to Godfrey Hammond, "You can't think what a comfort it is to get some one who hasn't to go to business every day. I hate the very name of business! Now, you are always at hand when you are wanted."

"Yes," he said, "we idle men have a great advantage over the busy ones, no doubt; but I think it almost more than counterbalanced by our terrible disadvantage."

"What is that?" [Pg 666]

"We are at hand when we are not wanted," said Godfrey seriously.

And I think he was right. One may have a great liking—nay, something warmer than liking—for one's companions in endless idle *tête-à-têtes*, but they are perilous nevertheless. Some day the pale ghost—weariness, *ennui*, dearth of ideas, I hardly know what its true name is—comes into the room to see if the atmosphere will suit it, and sits down between you. You cannot see the colorless spectre, but are conscious of a slight exhaustion in the air. Everything requires a little effort—to breathe, to question, to answer, to look up, to appear interested. You feel that it is your own fault, perhaps: you would gladly take all the blame if you could only take all the burden. Perhaps the failing *is* yours, but it is your fault only as it is the fault of an electric eel that after many shocks his power is weakened and he wants to be left alone to recover it.

Still, though there may be no fault, it is a terrible thing to feel one's heart sink suddenly when one's friend pauses for a moment in the doorway as if about to return. One thinks, If weariness cannot be kept at bay in the society of those we love, where can we be safe from the cold and subtle blight? As soon as we are conscious of it, it seems to become part of us, and we shrink from the popular idea of the Hereafter, assured of finding our spectre even in the courts of heaven.

Godfrey Hammond expressed the fear of too much companionship in speech, Percival Thorne in action. He was given to lonely walks if the weather were fine—to shutting himself in his own room with a book if it were wet. He would dream for hours, for I will frankly confess that when he was shut up with a book, his book as often as not was in that condition too.

His grandfather had complained more than once, "You don't often come to Brackenhill, Percival, except to solve the problem of how little you can see of us in a given time." He did not suspect it, but much of the strong attraction which drew him to his grandson lay in that very fact. The latter confronted him in grave independence, just touched with the courteous deference due from youth to age, but nothing more. Mr. Thorne would have thanked Heaven had the boy been a bit of a spendthrift, but Percival was too wary for that. He did not refuse his grandfather's gifts, but he never seemed in want of them. They might help him to pleasant superfluities, but his attitude said plainly enough, "I have sufficient for my needs." He was not to be bought: the very aimlessness of his life secured him from that. You cannot earn a man's gratitude by helping him onward in his course when he is drifting contentedly round and round. He was not to be bullied, being conscious of his impregnable position. He was not to be flattered in any ordinary way. It was so evident to him that the life he had chosen must appear an unwise choice to the majority of his fellow-men that he accepted any assurance to the contrary as the verdict of a small minority. Nor was he conscious of any especial power or originality, so that he could be pleased by being told that he had broken conventional trammels and was a great soul. Mr. Thorne did not know how to conquer him, and could not have enough of him.

It is needful to note how the day after the agricultural show was spent at Brackenhill.

Godfrey Hammond left by an early train. Mrs. Middleton came down to see about his breakfast with a splitting headache. The poor old lady's suffering was evident, and Sissy's suggestion that it was due to their having walked about so much in the broiling sun the day before was unanimously accepted. Mrs. Middleton countenanced the theory, though she privately attributed it to a sleepless night which had followed a conversation with Hammond about Horace.

Percival vanished immediately after breakfast. As soon as he had ascertained that there were no

especial plans for the day, he slipped quietly away with his hands in his pockets, strolled through the park, whistling dreamily as he went, and passing out into the road, crossed it and made straight for the river. He lay on the grass for half an hour or so, studying the growth of willows and the habits of dragon-flies, and then sauntered along the bank. Had he gone to the left it would have led him past Langley Wood to Fordborough. He went to the right. [Pg 667]

It was a gentle little river, which had plenty of time to spare, and amused itself with wandering here and there, tracing a bright maze of curves and unexpected turns. At times it would linger in shady pools, where, half asleep, it seemed to hesitate whether it cared to go on to the county-town at all that day. But Percival defied it to have more leisure than he had, and followed the silvery clue till all at once he found himself face to face with an artist who sat by the river-side sketching.

The young man looked up with a half smile as Percival came suddenly upon him from behind a clump of alders. A remark of some kind, were it but concerning the weather, was inevitable. It was made, and was followed by others. Young Thorne looked, admired and questioned, and they drifted into an aimless talk about the art which the painter loved. Even to an outsider, such as Percival, it was full of color and grace and a charm half understood, vaguely suggestive of a world of beauty—not far off and inaccessible, but underlying the common, every-day world of which we are at times a little weary. It was as if one should tell us of virtue new and strange in the often-turned earth of our garden-plot. Percival was rather apt to analyze his pains and pleasures, but his ideal was enjoyment which should defy analysis, and he found something of it that morning in the summer weather and his new friend's talk.

It was past noon. The young artist looked at his watch and ascertained the fact. "Do you live near here?" he asked.

Percival shook his head: "I live anywhere. I am a wanderer on the face of the earth. But my grandfather lives in that gray house over yonder, and I am free to come and go as I choose. I am staying there now."

"Brackenhill, do you mean? That fine old house on the side of the hill? I am lodging at the farm down there, and the farmer—"

"John Collins," said Percival.

"Entertains me every night with stories of its magnificence. Since we have smoked our pipes together I have learnt that Brackenhill is the eighth wonder of the world."

"Not quite," said Thorne. "But it is a good old manor-house, and, thank Heaven, my ancestors for a good many generations wasted their money, and had none to spare for restoring and beautifying. I don't mean my grandfather: he wouldn't hurt it. It's a quaint old place. Come some afternoon and look at it. He shall show you his pictures."

"Thanks," the other said, but he hesitated and looked at his unfinished work. "I should like, but I don't quite know. The fact is, when I have done for to-day I'm to have old Collins's gig and drive into Fordborough to see if there are any letters for me. I am not sure I shall not have to leave the first thing to-morrow."

"And I have made you waste your time this morning."

"Don't mention it," said the young artist with the brightest smile. "I'm not much given to bemoaning past troubles, and I shall be in a very bad way indeed before I begin to find fault with past pleasures. I may not find my letter after all, and in that case I should like very much to look you up. To-morrow?"

"Pray do." The tone was unmistakably cordial.

"Your grandfather's name is Thorne, isn't it? Shall I ask for young Mr. Thorne?"

"Percival Thorne," was the quick correction: "I have a cousin."

They shook hands, but as Thorne turned away the other called after him: "I say! is there any name to that little wood out there, looking like a dark cloud on the green?"

"Yes—Langley Wood." Percival nodded a second farewell, and went on his way pondering. And this was the subject of his thoughts: "Then, my brother, I have to go through Langley Wood to-morrow evening, and I am afraid to go alone." [Pg 668]

Of course he had not forgotten his promise to Addie, but having made his arrangements and worked it all out in his own mind, he had dismissed it from his thoughts. Now, however, it rose up before him as a slightly disagreeable puzzle.

What on earth did Addie want toward nine at night in Langley Wood? The day before, in haste to answer her request and anxiety not to betray her, he had not considered whether the service he had promised to render were pleasant to him or not. In very truth, he was willing to serve Addie, and he had professed his willingness the more eagerly that he had expected a harder task. She asked so slight a thing that only eager readiness could give the service any grace at all.

But when he came to consider it he half wished that his task had been harder if it might have been different. He liked Addie, he was ready to serve her, but he foresaw possible annoyances to them both from her hasty request. He had no confidence in her prudence.

"Some silly freak of hers," he thought while he walked along, catching at the tops of the tall flowering weeds as he went. "Some silly girlish freak. Why didn't she ask Horace? Wouldn't run any risk of getting him into trouble, I suppose."

Did Horace know? he wondered. "I'm not going to be made use of by him and her: they needn't think it!" vowed Percival in sudden anger. But next moment he smiled at his own folly: "When I have given my word, and must go if fifty Horaces had planned it! I had better save my resolutions for next time." He did not think, however, that Horace *did* know. "Which makes it all the worse," he reflected. "A charming complication it will be if I get into trouble with him about Addie. Suppose some one sees us? Suppose Mrs. Blake is down upon me, questioning, and I, pledged to secrecy, haven't a word to say for myself? Suppose Lottie—Oh, I say, a delightful arrangement this is and no mistake!"

He could only hope that no one would see them, and that Addie's mystery would prove a harmless one.

He got in just as they were sitting down to luncheon. Horace and Sissy had spent the morning in archery and idleness, Mrs. Middleton in nursing her headache. Mr. Thorne was not there.

"Been enjoying a little solitude?" Horace inquired.

"Not much of that," was the answer. "A good deal of talk instead."

"What! did you find a friend out in the fields?"

"Yes," said Percival, "a young artist." As he spoke he remembered that he was ignorant of his new friend's name. At least he knew it was "Alf," owing to some story the painter had told: "I heard my brother calling 'Alf! Alf!' so I," etc. Alf—probably therefore Alfred—surname unknown.

They were halfway through their meal when Mr. Thorne came noiselessly in and took his accustomed place. He was very silent, and had a curiously intent expression. Horace, who was telling Sissy some trifling story about himself (Horace's little stories generally were about himself), finished it lamely in a lowered voice. Mr. Thorne smiled.

There was a silence. Percival went steadily on with his luncheon, but Horace pushed away his plate and sipped his sherry. The birds were twittering outside in the sunshine, but there was no other sound. It was like a breathless little pause of expectation.

At last Mr. Thorne spoke, in such sweetly courteous tones that they all knew he meant mischief. "Are you particularly engaged this afternoon?" he inquired of Horace.

"Not at all engaged," said the young man. His heart gave a great throb.

"Then perhaps you could give me a few minutes in the library?"

"I shall be most—" Horace began. But he checked himself and said, "Certainly. When shall I come?"

"As soon as you have finished your luncheon, if that will suit you?"

"I have finished." He drank off his wine, and, without looking at the others, walked defiantly to the door, stood aside for his grandfather to pass, and followed him out. [Pg 669]

Mrs. Middleton and Sissy exchanged glances. "Oh, my dear!" the old lady exclaimed. "Oh, I'm so frightened! I am afraid poor Horace is in trouble. Godfrey Hammond was saying only last night—"

She paused suddenly, looking at Percival. He sat with his back to the window, and the dark face was very dark in the shadow. It was just as well perhaps, for he was thinking "Told you so!" a train of thought which seldom produces an agreeable expression.

"What did Godfrey Hammond say?" Sissy asked. But nothing was to be got out of Aunt Middleton, so they adjourned to the drawing-room to wait for Horace's return. Percival read the paper; Mrs. Middleton lay on the sofa; Sissy flitted to and fro, now taking up a book, now her work, then at the piano, playing idly with one hand or singing snatches of her favorite songs. There was a mirror in which, looking sideways, she could see herself reflected as she played and Percival as he read—as much of him, at least, as was not swallowed up in the *Times*. There is something ghostly about a little picture like this reflected in a glass. It is so silent and yet so real: the people stir, look up, their lips move, they have every sign of life, but there is no sound. There are noises in the room behind you, but the people in the mirror make none. The *Times* may be rustling and crackling elsewhere, but Percival's ghost turns a ghostly paper whence no sound proceeds. Sissy is playing a little tinkling treble tune, but at the piano yonder slim white fingers are silently wandering over the ivory keys, and the girl's eyes look strangely out from the polished surface.

Sissy gazed and mused. Perhaps some day Percival will reign at Brackenhill. And who will sit at that piano where the ghost-girl sits now, and what soundless melodies will be played in that silent room?

Sissy's left hand steals down to the bass, striking solemn chords. "If one could but look into the glass," she thinks, "and see the future there, as people do in stories! What eyes would look out at me instead of mine? Ah, well! If I could but see Percival there I would try to be content, even if the girl turned away her face. I *would* be content. I would! I would!"

She turns resolutely away from the mirror, and begins that old royalist song in which yearning for the vanished past and mourning for the dreary present cannot triumph over the hope of far-off brightness—"When the king enjoys his own again." To Mrs. Middleton, to Percival, a mere song—to Sissy a solemn renunciation of all but the one hope. Let her king enjoy his own, and the rest be as Fate wills.

The last note dies away. Moved by a sudden impulse, she lifts her eyes to the ghost Percival. He has lowered his paper a little, and is looking at her with a wondering smile. A voice behind her exclaims, "Why, Sissy!" She darts across the room to the speaker and pushes the *Times* away altogether. "Percival," she says in a low, breathless voice, "does Miss Lisle play?"

"Miss Lisle!" He is surprised. "Oh yes, she plays. But not as well as her brother, I believe."

"And does she sing?"

"Yes. I heard her once. But no better than you sang just now. What has come to you, Sissy? You have found the one thing that was wanting."

"What was that?"

"Earnestness, depth. You sang it as if your soul and the soul of the song were one. Now I can tell you that I fancied you only skimmed over the surface of things—like a bird over the sea. I can tell you now, since I was wrong."

Her cheeks are glowing. "And Miss Lisle?" she says.

"What, now, about Miss Lisle?" He is amused and perplexed at Sissy's persistence.

"She is one of your heroic women;" and Miss Langton nods her pretty head. "Oh, I know! Jael and *Judith* and Charlotte Corday."

"I don't think I said anything about Judith: surely *you* suggested her. And, to tell you the truth, Sissy, I looked in the Apocrypha, and I thought I liked I her the least of the trio. It wasn't a swift [Pg 670] impulse like Jael's, who suddenly saw the tyrant given into her hands, and it wanted the grace of Charlotte Corday's utter self-sacrifice and quick death. Judith had great honor, and lived to be over a hundred, didn't she? I wonder if she often talked about Holofernes when she was eighty or ninety, and about her triumph—how she was crowned with a garland and led the dance? She ran an awful risk, no doubt, but she was in awful peril: it was glory or death. Charlotte Corday had no chance of a triumph: she must have known that success, as well as failure, meant the death-cart and the guillotine. Judith seems to have played her part fairly well to the end, I allow, but don't you think the praises and the after-life spoil it rather?"

Sissy, passing lightly over Percival's views about Charlotte Corday and the widow of a hundred and five who was mourned by all Israel, pounced on a more interesting avowal: "So you looked Judith out and studied her? Oh, Percival!"

"My dear Sissy, shall I tell you how many times I have seen Miss Lisle?" He was answering her arch glance rather than her spoken question. "How few times, I should say. Twice."

"I've made up *my* mind about people when I've only seen them once," said Sissy, apparently addressing the carpet.

"Very likely: some people have that power," said Percival. "Besides, seeing them once may mean that you had a good long interview under favorable circumstances. Now," with a smile, "shall I tell you all that Miss Lisle and I said to each other in our two meetings?" He paused, encountering Sissy's eyes, brilliantly and wickedly full of meaning.

"What! do you remember every word? Oh, Percival!"

"Hush!" said Mrs. Middleton, lifting her head from the cushion: "listen! isn't that Horace?"

"I think so;" and Percival stooped for the *Times*, which had fallen on the floor. Sissy stood with her hand on his chair, making no attempt to conceal her anxiety. The old lady noted her parted lips and eager eyes. "Ah! she does care for Horace. I knew it! I knew it!" she thought.

He came in, looking white and angry: his mouth was sternly set, and there was a fierce spark in his gray eyes. Mrs. Middleton beckoned him to her sofa, and would have drawn the proud head down to her with a tender whisper of "Tell me, my dear." But the young fellow straightened himself and faced them all as he stood by her side. She clasped and fondled his passive hand. "What is the matter, Horace?" she said at last.

"As it happens, there is nothing much the matter," he replied,

"You look as if a good deal might be the matter," said Sissy.

He made no answer for the moment. Then he looked at her with a curious sort of smile: "Sissy, when we were little—when you were very little indeed—do you remember old Rover?"

"That curly dog? Oh yes."

"I used to have him in a string sometimes, and take him out: it was great fun," said Horace pensively. "I liked to feel him all alive, scampering and tugging at the end of the string. It was best of all, I think, to give him an unexpected jerk just when he was going to sniff at something,

and take him pretty well off his legs: he was so astonished and disappointed. But it was very grand too, if he would but make up his mind he wanted to go one way, to pull at him and *make* him go just the opposite. He was obstinate, was old Rover, but that was the fun of it. I was obstinate too, and the stronger. How long has he been dead?"

"I'm sure I don't know—twelve or thirteen years. Why?"

"Is it as long as that? Well, I dare say it is. It has occurred to me to-day for the first time that perhaps it was rather hard on Rover now and then.—Aunt Harriet, why did you let me have the poor old fellow and ill-use him?"

"My dear boy, what *do* you mean? I don't think you were ever cruel—not really cruel, you know. Children always will be heedless, but I think Rover was fond of you." [Pg 671]

"I doubt it," said Horace.

"But what do you mean?" The old lady was fairly perplexed. "What makes you think of having poor old Rover in a string to-day? I don't understand."

"Which things are an allegory." Horace looked more kindly down at the suffering face, and attempted to smile. "It was very nice then, but to-day I'm the dog."

"String pulled tight?" said Percival.

"Jerked." He disengaged his hand. "I think I'll go and have a cigar in the park." Percival was going to rise, but Horace as he passed pressed his fingers on his shoulder: "No, old fellow! not to-day—many thanks. You lecture me, you know, and generally I don't care a rap, so you are quite welcome. But to-day I'm a little sore, rubbed up the wrong way: I might take it seriously. Another time."

And he departed, leaving his lecturer to reflect on this brilliant result of all his outpourings of wisdom.

CHAPTER X.

IN LANGLEY WOOD.

At Brackenhill they invariably dined at six o'clock, nor was the meal a lengthy one. Mr. Thorne drank little wine, and Horace was generally only too happy to escape to the drawing-room at the earliest opportunity. Percival could very well dine at home and yet be true to his rendezvous in Langley Wood.

As the time drew near he became thoughtful and, to tell the truth, a little out of temper. He liked his dinner, and Addie Blake interfered with his quiet enjoyment of it. He would have chosen to lie on the sofa in the cool, quaint, rose-scented drawing-room, and get Sissy to sing to him. Instead of which he must tramp three miles along a dusty white road that July evening to meet a girl he didn't particularly want to see, and to hear a secret which he didn't much want to know, and which he distinctly didn't want to be bound to keep. Decidedly a bore!

It was only twenty minutes past seven when they joined the ladies. Sissy represented the latter force, Aunt Middleton having gone to lie down in the hope of being better later in the evening. Mr. Thorne fidgeted about the room for a minute, and then went off to the library, whereupon Horace stretched himself with a sigh of relief. "Come out, Sissy, and have a turn in the garden."

"But, Percival," she hesitated, "what are you going to do?"

"Don't think about me: I must go out for a little while." He left them on the terrace and started on his mysterious errand. As he let himself out into the road by a little side-gate of which he had pocketed the key, it was five-and-twenty minutes to eight. He had abundance of time. It was not three miles to the white gate into Langley Wood, a little more than three miles to the milestone beyond which he was on no account to go, and he had almost an hour to do it in. Nevertheless, he started on his walk like a man in haste.

The great Fordborough agricultural show lasted two days, and on the second the price of admission was considerably reduced. It had occurred to Percival that the roads in every direction would probably be crowded with people making their way home—people who would have had more beer than was good for them. Addie would never think of such a possibility. It was true that the road from Fordborough which led past Brackenhill would be quieter than any other, but still young Thorne was seriously uneasy as he strode along. It was also true that he met hardly any one as he went, but even that failed to reassure him. "A little too early for them to have come so far, I suppose," was his comment to himself: "at any rate, she shall not wait for me."

He passed the white gate, having encountered only a few stragglers, but before he reached the milestone he saw Addie Blake coming along the road to meet him.

She was flushed, eager, excited, and looked even handsomer than usual. Percival would never fall in love with Addie. That was very certain, but the certainty did not prevent a quick thrill of admiration which tingled through his blood as she advanced in her ripe dark beauty to meet him. By it, as by a charm, the service which had been almost a weariness was transmuted to a happy privilege, and the half-reluctant squire became willing and devoted. [Pg 672]

"You are more than punctual," was his greeting.

She smiled as she held out her hand: "I may say the same of you."

"I was anxious," he confessed. "The roads are not likely to be very quiet to-day. And after sunset —"

"Yes," said Addie. "No doubt it seems strange to you that I should choose this day and this time —"

"I hardly know what I should have done if I had seen nothing of you when I reached the milestone," he went on, interrupting her. His curiosity was awakened now that he was so close to Addie's little mystery, but he was anxious that she should not feel bound to tell him anything she would rather keep to herself—very anxious that she should understand that he would not pry into her secrets.

"If you had gone much farther you would have missed me," she said.

"Which way did you come?"

"I did not come straight from home. Do you see that little red house? I am drinking tea there, and spending a quiet evening."

"How very pleasant!" said Percival. "And who has the privilege of entertaining you?"

"Mrs. Wardlaw. She is the widow of an officer—quite young. She is a friend of mine: she lives with an invalid aunt, an old Mrs. Watson."

"And what does Mrs. Wardlaw think of your taking a little stroll by yourself in the evening?"

"Mrs. Wardlaw asked me there on purpose. Yesterday I saw her at the show, and gave her a little note as we shook hands. This morning came an invitation to me to go and drink tea there. I told mamma and Lottie I should go—papa is out—so one of the servants walked there with me at half-past six, and will call for me again at ten or a little after."

"Very ingeniously managed," said Percival. "And the invalid aunt?"

"Went up to her room and left Mary and me to our devices," smiled Addie. "A delightful old lady. Ah, here is the wood."

"We shall probably have this part of our walk to ourselves," Percival remarked as he swung the gate open. "People going home from the show are not likely to stop to take a turn in Langley Wood."

The sound of a rattling cart and shouts of discordant laughter, mixed with what was intended for a song, came along the road they had just quitted. Addie took a few hurried steps along the path, which curved enough to hide her from observation in a moment. Safe behind a screen of leaves, she paused: "What horrible people! Is that a sample of what I may expect as I go back?"

"I fear so," said Percival. "I shall see you safe to Mrs. Wardlaw's door."

"You shall see me safe if you have good eyes," she answered. "But you will not go to the door with me."

"Ah!" he said. "Mrs. Wardlaw is only half trusted?"

Addie smiled: "What people don't know they can't let out, can they?"

"Pray understand that you are quite at liberty to apply that very wise—mark me, that very wise—discovery of yours to my case," said Thorne, looking straight at her. "You talked about good eyes just now. Mine are good or bad as it suits me." At any rate, they were earnest as they met hers.

"Don't shut them on my account," said Addie. "No, Percival: you are not like Mrs. Wardlaw. I mean to tell you all about it."

But for a moment she did not speak. They were fairly in the wood; the trees were arching high above their heads; their steps were noiseless on the turf below; outside were warmth and daylight still, but here the shadows and the coolness of the night. A leathern-winged bat flitted across their path through the gathering dusk. "They always look like ghosts," said Addie. "Doesn't it seem, Percival, as if the night had come upon us unawares?" [Pg 673]

As she spoke they reached a little open space. The path forked right and left. "Which way?" said Thorne.

"I don't know, I'm sure. There's a cottage on the farther side of the wood, toward the river—"

"Is that your destination? To the right, then." And to the right they went.

"When you promised to help me," Addie began, "do you remember what you said? I was to consider you as—" She paused, fixing her questioning eyes on him.

"As a brother. What then? Have I failed in my duty already?"

She shook her head, smiling: "Percival, what do you think that means to me?"

"Ah, that's a difficult question. Of course we who have no brothers can only imagine—we cannot know. But I have sometimes fancied that the idea we attach to the word brother is higher because no commonplace reality has ever stepped in to spoil it. For it is an evident fact that some people have brothers who are prosaic, and even disagreeable, while all the noble brothers of history and romance are ours. We may take Lord Tresham for our ideal (you remember Tresham in *A Blot in the 'Scutcheon?*), and declare with him—

> I think, am sure, a brother's love exceeds
> All the world's love in its unworldliness."

"Stop!" said Addie. "You are going into the question much too enthusiastically and much too poetically. I don't know anything about your Tresham. And you mustn't class me with yourself, 'we who have no brothers.' I have one, Percival."

"A brother? You have one? Why, I always fancied—"

"Well, a half-brother." Addie made this concession to strict truth with something of reluctance in her tone, as if she did not like to own that her brother could possibly have been any nearer than he was. "It is my brother I am going to meet to-night."

Percival, fluent on the subject of brothers in general, was so astonished at the idea of this particular brother or half-brother that he said "Oh!"

"Papa married twice," Addie explained—"the first time when he was very young. I don't think his first wife was *quite* a lady," she said, lowering her voice as if the beeches might be given to gossiping.

Percival would not have been happy as a dweller in the Palace of Truth. He thought, "Then Mr. Blake's two wives were alike in *one* respect."

"And though Oliver was a dear boy," she went on, "he hasn't been very steady. He has had a good deal of money at one time or another, and wasted it; and he and mamma don't get on at all."

"Ah! I dare say not."

"Naturally, she thinks more about Lottie and me; and Oliver has been very tiresome. He was to be in the business with papa, but he didn't do anything, and he got terribly into debt, and then he ran away and enlisted. Papa bought him off, and found him something else to do; but mamma was dreadfully vexed: she said it was a disgrace to the family."

"Did he do better after that?"

"Not much," Addie owned. "In fact, I think he has spent most of his time since then in running away and enlisting. I really believe he has been in a dozen regiments. We were always having to write to him, 'Private Oliver Blake, Number so and so, C company, such a regiment.' It didn't look well at all."

(Addie, as she spoke, remembered how her mother used to sneer, "No doubt some day you'll meet your *brother* in a red jacket with a little cane, his cap very much on one side, and a tail of nursemaids wheeling their perambulators after him." Such remarks had been painful to Addie, but even then she had felt that Mrs. Blake had cause to complain.)

"He was always bought off, I suppose?" said Percival.

"Once papa declared he wouldn't. Oliver went on very quietly for a little while, and was to be a corporal. Then he wrote and said he was going to desert that day week, and he was afraid it might be very awkward for him afterward, especially if he ever enlisted again, but he would take his chance sooner than stop. Papa knew he would do it, so he had to buy him off again." [Pg 674]

"But is this going on for ever?"

"No: for the last three years Oliver has been in dreadful disgrace, I don't exactly know why, and we were not allowed to mention his name at home. But I don't care," said Addie impetuously: "if he were ever so foolish, and if he had enlisted in every regiment under the sun, he's my brother."

"And Lottie? Does she stand by him as valiantly?"

"Oliver is nothing to Lottie: he never was. He is nine years older than she is, and when she would really begin to remember him he and mamma were always quarrelling. Besides, he always petted me—not Lottie. And now she despises him because he doesn't stick to anything and get on. No—poor old Noll is *my* brother, only mine. No one else cares for him, except papa."

"Mr. Blake hasn't given him up, then?"

"Oh, he is angry with Oliver when they are apart, but he always forgives him when they meet. He was really angry this last time, but Oliver wrote to him, and they made it up. Only, my poor old Noll is to be sent over the sea to Canada with a man papa knows something of."

"And this is good-bye? But surely they can't mind your meeting him before he goes?"

"They do," said Addie. "Papa and mamma saw him in London ten days ago, and he was only forgiven on condition that he went away quietly and said nothing to any one. As if he wasn't sure to tell me! Mamma knows how it has been before: she thinks if papa or I saw him alone he might

get round us, and then he wouldn't go. If he is steady and does well there, he is to come and see us all in two years."

"That isn't very long, is it?" said Percival cheerfully. It was evident to him that this black sheep would be much better away.

"Long! Oh no! Only, you see, Oliver *won't* do well unless there's something very converting in Canadian air. So I may as well say good-bye to him, mayn't I? Mind, Percival, you are not to think he's wicked. He won't do anything dreadful. He'll spend all the money he can get, and then drift away somewhere."

"A sort of Prodigal Son," Thorne suggested.

"Yes. You won't understand him—how should you? You are always wise and well-behaved, and a credit to every one—more like the son who stayed at home."

"Not an attractive character," was his reply. And he remembered Horace a few hours before: "Not to-day, old fellow: you lecture me, you know." He was startled. "Good Heavens!" he thought, "am I a prig?"

Addie laughed: "Well, I am trusting to you to understand *me*, at any rate. Just like Oliver!" she went on. "He came once, years ago, to stay with old Miss Hayward, who left us the house, and he knew something then of the man at this cottage; so he tells me to meet him there, without ever thinking how I should get to the place by myself at nine at night. Hush! what's that?—Oh, Noll! Noll!"

A man's voice was heard at a little distance singing, and she darted forward, her eyes alight with joy. Percival followed, slackening his pace and listening to Mr. Oliver Blake's rendering of "Champagne Charlie is my name." It ceased abruptly. He doubted what to do, took a step or two mechanically, and came suddenly out on the open space at the farther side of the wood, where was the cottage in question. Addie had run forward and forgotten him. He strolled with elaborate unconsciousness to some palings near by, turning his back on Addie and her brother, rested his folded arms there and gazed at the placid landscape. Below ran the little stream by which he had loitered in the morning, hurrying now in a straighter course, like an idle messenger who finds that time has fled much faster than he thought. The river-mist hung white above the level [Pg 675] meadows, and it seemed to Percival as if Nature, falling asleep, had glided into a pallid and melancholy dream. The last gleams of day were blending with a misty flood of moonlight, beneath which the world lay dwarfed and dark. On the horizon a little black windmill with motionless sails stood high against the sky, looking like a toy, as if a child had set it there and gone to bed.

To Percival, as he stood, came the sound, though not the words, of a rapid flow of talk, broken by a short, often-recurring laugh. But at last there was a pause, and the two came toward him. He turned to meet them, and saw in the moonlight that Oliver Blake was big and broad-shouldered, with black hair, curling thickly under a jaunty cap, and bright restless eyes. Addie had her arm drawn fondly through her brother's.

"Oliver," she said, "this is Percival: you have heard me speak of him."

Oliver bent his head in a blunt, constrained way and looked doubtfully at the other. Percival, who was going to extend his hand, withheld it, and made a stately little bow in return.

"That's very magnificent," said Addie to him.—"Why, Noll," she laughed, "you needn't be so cautious. Percival knows. He is to be trusted."

"Ah!" said Oliver. "What does that feel like, now?"

"What does what feel like?" said Thorne as they shook hands. "Being trusted, do you mean?"

"Ay. Being trusted or being to be trusted. I don't know either sensation myself."

"Not likely, dear boy," said Addie, "with your way of going on. And yet Mr. Osborne must have trusted you, or how did you get the money and get away? You weren't to have any till you sailed, were you?"

"Would you like to know?" said Oliver, his dark eyes twinkling. "I tried to persuade him—no good. Then I told him a—don't be horrified—it was a very fine specimen of fiction—"

"Oliver!"

"Which is no doubt set down to the governor's account."

"Did he believe you?"

"Well, he didn't know what to do. I don't think he would have, only if it wasn't true it was so stupendous, you see. He hesitated, and that made him relax his watchfulness a little. So I gave him the slip and pawned part of my outfit, which we bought together the day before."

"You bad boy!"

"I left him a bit of a note. I told him that if he held his tongue I would surely be there again to-morrow, we'd get the things, and no one would be any the wiser. But if he made a row he might whistle for me, and catch me if he could."

"And you don't know the effect of that, I suppose?" said Percival.

"Well, no. I read it over when I'd done to try and judge it impartially. And I made up my mind—considering the character he'd had of me—that if I were Osborne I should say that Blake meant to back out of his bargain with all he could lay his hands on, and was trying to secure two days' start.—What do you think I did, Addie?"

"Something silly, I've no doubt."

"Well," he said, looking at her with an admiring gaze, which partly explained to Percival the secret of her fondness for her brother, "*I* thought it was rather clever. I just popped in the letter I had from you, and your photograph, and if that doesn't convince him, I give him up."

"Oh, Noll! How *could* you? What is he like?"

Blake burst out laughing: "Listen to her! A man has got her photograph: he instantly becomes an interesting object.—Oh, he isn't a bad-looking fellow, Addie. I dare say he's glaring at you now through his spectacles."

"Spectacles! Oliver, you've no business to go giving my photograph to all sorts of people. And I hate him too, because if it hadn't been for him perhaps you wouldn't have been going away to Canada."

"What then?" said he philosophically. "Your mother would have had a dear friend on the point of starting for the Cannibal Islands." [Pg 676]

Percival began to feel a little anxious about time, and to wonder when the real leave-taking was to commence. He looked at his watch after the manner of a stage-aside, and Addie took the hint.

Five minutes later she came toward him with bent head and averted eyes: "I'm ready, Percival." But they had not gone a dozen steps when she sobbed, "Oh, my poor Noll!" and rushed back. As young Thorne looked after her he heard the quick spurt of a match. Oliver had turned on his heel already and was lighting his cigar. "Heartless brute!" said Percival.

The verdict was unjust. Oliver had taken infinite pains to secure this glimpse of his sister, but since it was over it *was* over. He loved her, and she knew it, but he was not the man to stand sentimentally staring at Addie's back as she disappeared into the shadows of Langley Wood. Now, Percival could not have failed in such a matter, though he might have thought no more about it than did Oliver Blake.

When he and Addie were once more on their way he occupied himself solely with the slight difficulties of her path, but before they had gone halfway she was making an effort to talk in her usual style, and succeeding fairly well. They were just at the place where the paths branched off, and Percival was stooping to disentangle her dress, which was caught on a bramble. As he raised himself he heard an approaching step, and quick as thought he laid his hand on Addie's arm. A couple of yards farther and they would be in the one path, and must meet the newcomer. Standing where they were, it was an even chance: he might pass them or might go the other way. Addie stood breathless, and Percival's heart gave a quick throb, more for Addie's sake than his own. But, after all, it might be no one who knew them, and in that dim light—

The moon glided with startling swiftness from behind a fleecy cloud and shone on their white faces. The man, passing close by, started and stepped back, recovered himself with a muttered ejaculation, and said, "Fine evening, Mr. Thorne," as he passed.

"Very," Percival replied. "Good-night."

The other returned a "Good-night, sir," and disappeared in the twilight.

"He knew you," said Addie. She looked frightened. Her parting from Oliver had unnerved her: difficulties which she had made light of in the happiness of anticipation seemed more formidable now. Standing there in the white moonlight and dim shadows of the wood, she suddenly realized the strange and doubtful aspect her expedition with Percival Thorne must wear to ordinary eyes. Nor was her companion likely to reassure her. An air of sombre resolution was more in his line than the light-hearted confidence which would have treated the whole affair as a trifle. He was, as Addie herself had called him, "well behaved." She would have trusted him to the death, only just at that moment a little touch of happy recklessness would have been a greater comfort to her than his anxious loyalty. But Percival could never be reckless: deliberately indifferent he might be, but reckless never.

"He knew you," said Addie, as they resumed their walk.

"Yes, but he would not know you. It does not signify much," was Percival's reply.

"But he does know me."

"Impossible! Oh, you mean he knows your name."

She nodded: "He often passes our house. Always on Thursday, when a lot of people go by. Isn't it a market somewhere?"

"Brookley market. Oh yes, he would go there, no doubt."

"Once or twice I have been walking on the road, and he has driven past. I know his face quite

well, and I'm sure—I should think—he knows mine."

"Very likely he may not have recognized you in this half-light," said Percival.

She shivered: "He did. I felt him look right through me."

"Well, suppose he did. After all, there is no reason why we should not take a walk together on a summer evening if we like, is there?" [Pg 677]

"Where is he going?" said Addie. "To the cottage?"

"Oh dear, no! There are endless paths in the wood. He will turn off still more to the right: he cuts off a corner so going from Fordborough to his home."

"Who and what is he?" was Miss Blake's next question as they emerged into the road.

"Silas Fielding. He farms a little bit of old Garnett's land, and I rather think he rents an outlying field or two of my grandfather's. A horsey sort of fellow. I am not particularly fond of Mr. Silas Fielding," said Percival, and they walked a little way in silence.

"You mustn't come any farther," said Addie. "Percival, I don't know how to thank you."

"Don't do it, then. I see no occasion."

"But I see occasion—very great occasion."

"Then we will consider it done," said Percival.

Mrs. Wardlaw's house was very near. "I'm not late, am I?" said Addie.

He looked at his watch: "A little more than a quarter to ten—very good time. I shall watch you along this last little bit of road, and see you let in. Good-night."

"Good-night." She went quickly away, and he waited as he had promised. She looked back at him once, and saw him stand, dark and motionless like a bronze statue. She reached the garden-gate, and just as a farmer's gig, with one man in it, dashed past, she ran up the little flight of steps, knocked, and was instantly admitted, as if Mrs. Wardlaw stood inside with her hand on the latch. Percival, seeing this, turned to begin his homeward walk, but as the gig rattled up to him its speed was slackened.

"Mr. Thorne! Isn't it Mr. Percival Thorne?"

It was the young artist driving back to the farm in Mr. Collins's old gig, and inducing Mr. Collins's old horse to go at a headlong pace. "I thought it was you standing in the moonlight," he said. "Can't I give you a lift?"

Percival accepted, and they started off, if possible more vehemently than before.

"I must look sharp," explained the young man whose name was Alf, "or I shall be late at the farm."

"You have only just come from Fordborough?" said Percival.

"No. I put up the horse and stayed later than I meant. I'd no idea that dull little hole of a town could wake up so. Why, it is flapping with flags from one end to the other. I never saw such a lot of tramps and drunken men in my life."

"Charming idea you have of waking up!"

"And brass bands and gypsies," the other went on. "When I wanted to come away the hostler was drunk and couldn't find the horse, and I couldn't find the gig; that is, I could find a score all exactly like this one, but as to knowing which of all the gigs in the yard belonged to old Collins, I couldn't have told to save my life."

"You got it at last, I suppose?" said Thorne.

The other was cautious: "Well, I got *this*. The man put the horse in somehow, and then he was so far gone he began to talk to himself and undo the harness again. I believe he thought he'd put in a pair by mistake, and was trying to take one out. However, I stopped that, and got away after a fashion."

"They are early birds at the farm, no doubt?"

"Early? Rather! At half-past nine old Collins creaks up stairs, and Mrs. Collins goes into the kitchen and rakes out the cinders for fear of fire. I was out late one night last week, and she couldn't wake the old man up to let me in. It was twenty minutes to eleven."

"Did she come herself?" said Percival. "I know Mrs. Collins by daylight, but I can't imagine Mrs. Collins aroused from her first sleep."

"'Where ignorance is bliss.' The dear old lady kept me on the doorstep for ten minutes or so while she was trying to make up her mind whether she would keep her nightcap on, or whether she would take it off and put on the light-brown front she ordinarily wears. At last she made up her mind to retain the nightcap and add the front by way of a finish. But I have it on her own authority that she was flurried and all of a shake, so she didn't carry out her idea skilfully. The [Pg 678]

cap was half off and the front was only half on. I saw her forehead getting lower and lower as she spoke to me."

"Could she ever forgive you for seeing her so?"

"Oh yes. I'm rather a favorite, I think. She beamed on me just the same the next morning."

"She did?" said Thorne. "A wonderful woman!"

"I think I shall ask her for a lock of her chestnut hair to-morrow before I go, to show that my faith in it is—well, as implicit as ever. Ah! by the way, I got my letter. I thought most likely I should. I leave the first thing in the morning."

"Sorry to hear it," said Percival. But it occurred to him that the artist's departure would prevent any talk the next day of the circumstances of their meeting that evening. He jumped down, with hasty thanks to his new friend when they came to the little gate. "You'll be in a ditch if you don't look out," he called after him.

"All right!" was shouted back, and old Collins's gig vanished into the outer darkness with the young artist, whom Percival Thorne has never chanced to meet again to this day.

He let himself in with his key and hurried up to the house. The door which opened on the terrace was unfastened as usual. The lights were burning in the drawing-room, but no one was there, and the bright vacant room had a strange ghostly aspect, a little island of mellow radiance in the vast silence and darkness of the night. He felt like one in a dream, and stood idly thinking of the young painter rattling in old Collins's gig to Willow Farm; of Silas Fielding striding across the meadows with thoughts intent on his bargains; of Oliver Blake turning in with a yawn when his cigar was done; of Addie forcing back her unshed tears and hiding deep in her heart the well-spring of her tenderness for her poor Noll. He had not done justice to Addie Blake. Something of the feeling of underlying beauty, unsought or ignored, which he gained from his artist-friend's talk in the morning, had come to him in a slightly altered form with Addie that evening. With Alf it was the every-day world which revealed new beauty—with Addie it was shown in what Percival had taken for a prosaic and commonplace character. He found himself wondering whether he might not have failed to do justice to others besides Addie. He had looked far away for his ideal, and had found a fair faint dream, when it might be that the reality was close at hand. Since the wayside had blossomed with unexpected loveliness, what grace and charm and hidden treasure might be his prize who should win his way into the fenced garden of Sissy's sweet soul!

He started from his reverie, and was surprised to find that it had lasted only two or three minutes: it seemed to him as if he had been dreaming a long while in that bright loneliness. He walked to the window, with "Where can they all be?" on his lips. And for an answer to his question, standing at the far end of the terrace was Sissy. As he hurried through the hall to join her the library-door opened an inch or two and a voice inquired, "Who is that?"

"It is I—Percival," he answered in haste.

At the word "Percival" the door opened wider, and Mr. Thorne looked out: "Oh! where is Sissy?"

"On the terrace."

"And Horace?"

"I don't know," still chafing to be gone.

"Sissy ought to come in. It's a quarter-past ten." He looked up at the great hall-clock. "Yes, a quarter-past ten, and she will be catching cold."

"I'll tell her."

"Did you come in for a shawl for her? Take her one—anything."

"I will;" and Percival made a dash at the row of pegs and caught down the first thing which looked moderately like a cloak. Then he escaped. [Pg 679]

Sissy was coming to the house, but so leisurely that the journey was likely to take her a considerable time. "At last!" she said as he came up to her: "Why, which way—Oh, it's *you*, Percival!"

"You thought I was Horace?" he said as he put the cloak round her.

"Yes, for the moment I did. What are you muffling me up like this for?"

"Orders," said Percival. "My grandfather said you were to come in, and that I was to bring you a shawl."

"What is the good of this thing if I'm to go in?"

"Very sensibly put. Evidently no good at all. So we will turn round and go to the end of the terrace and back, unless you are tired."

She was not tired.

"And you took me for Horace? I always said we were alike."

"You are not a bit alike."

"Oh no, of course not."

"Don't be absurd," said Sissy. "Anybody's like anybody if it's pitch dark and they don't speak."

"I rather suspect Horace and I might be alike if it were a half-light, and if we *did* speak," said Percival. "Remember the photograph. But where is Horace all this time? What have you been doing with yourself?"

"He's somewhere about," said Sissy. "First of all, we had a little croquet. Then it got too dark to play, so I went to see after Aunt Harriet. Her head was worse; so she said she would go to bed."

"Poor old lady! Best thing she could do. She'll be better to-morrow, I hope."

"Then Horace and I thought we would go and look up his old nurse. She has been teasing me ever so long, wanting to see 'Master Horace,' and it's only across a couple of fields. But she wasn't at home, and the cottage was shut up."

"Gone to Fordborough for the day, most likely."

"I dare say. She has a niece there. Then we came back, and Horace didn't much want to go in, because of this afternoon, you know; so we stayed in the long walk, and he smoked and we listened to the nightingales."

"Very delightful," said Percival. "The long walk and the nightingales, I mean."

"And then there was a little pinkish light in the sky, and he thought there was a fire somewhere. So he went into the park to get a better view, and after I had waited for him a little while I came up here and met you."

A quick step was heard on the gravel behind them.

"Oh, here you are!" said Horace. "The fire doesn't seem to be anything, Sissy, after all. The light got fainter and fainter, and it's all gone now."

"Where did you think it was?" Percival inquired.

"Well, I thought from the direction that it must be at old Garnett's Upland Farm, but it can't have been much. So you have got back?"

"Yes. Hadn't we better go in? You must mind what you are about, Horace, though it *is* warm. That cough of yours—"

"Stuff and nonsense about my cough!" But he turned to go in nevertheless.

"By the way," said Percival, as he walked between them, "you've been out all the evening: does any one know I've been away?"

"No," said Sissy. "Why, don't you want—"

"I would rather they didn't," he replied. (The stars in their courses seemed to fight for Addie and her secret, had it not been for that untoward meeting with Silas Fielding.)

Horace wore a knowing expression. He was rather pleased that his lecturer should be compelled to seek a pledge of secrecy from him. It made him feel more on a level with the well-conducted and independent Percival. "All right!" he said.

"You may trust me," in a softly earnest voice on the other side.

"Thank you both," said Percival, but his eyes thanked Sissy.

"What have you been after?" asked Horace. "I thought most likely you were off to the friend you met this morning." [Pg 680]

The astonishing way in which circumstances conspired to aid in guarding the mystery! "I have been with him," said Percival.

(We value the opinion of others too much very often for our own peace. Queer, unsubstantial things those opinions often are. "I have been with him." Sissy felt a little glow of kindliness toward the unknown: it might have been, "I have been with her." She was prejudiced in his favor, and sure that he was a nice fellow. Horace was ready to stake something on his conviction that he was a bad lot, this fellow Percy had picked up, and that Percy knew it.)

Percy was still warm with the chivalrous devotion which had been kindled in him that evening. It was reserved for the colder morning light to reveal to him that what with Lottie on the hillside and Addie in Langley Wood he was plunging into little adventures which were hardly consistent with the character of a most prudent young man. Yet such was the character he was supposed to have undertaken to support in the world's drama.

They reached the door, and Horace went in, but Sissy lingered yet a moment on the threshold. "Isn't it all beautiful?" she said, taking one more look: "if it could only last!"

Percival smiled: "Sissy, have *you* learnt that?"

"November—bare boughs and bitter winds—I hate to think of it," she said.

"I would say, 'Don't think of it,' but it would be no good," he replied. "When the thought of change has once occurred to you while you look at a landscape, it is a part of every landscape thenceforward. But it gives a bitter charm."

"Spring will come again," she said; "but death and parting and loss—they are so dreadful! And growing old! Oh, Percival, why must they all be?"

He shrugged his shoulders: "The whole world echoes your 'Why?' Sissy, I wish I could help you, but I can't. I can only tell you that I understand what you feel. It is very terrible looking forward to age—to loss of powers, hopes and friends. One feels sometimes as if one could not tread that long gray road to the grave."

Sissy shivered, as if she saw it drawn out before her eyes.

"But after all it may be brighter than we think," he went on after a pause. "There is joy and beauty in change, as well as bitterness. If everything in the world were fixed and unalterable, would not that be far more terrible? As it is, we have all the possibilities on our side. Who knows what gladness may grow out of endless change?" Yet even as he spoke he was conscious of a wild, impotent longing to snatch her—she was so delicate and sweet—from beneath the great revolving wheels of time, with a cry of

> Stay as you are, and be loved for ever.

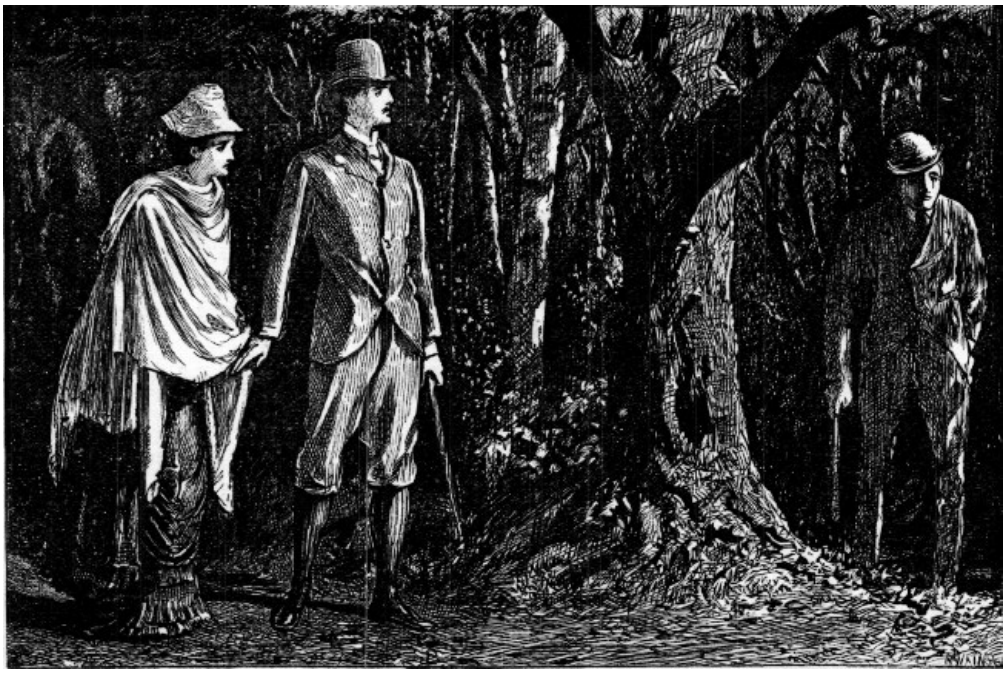
But the poet's very words carry the sentence of doom in the memory that the blossom to which they were uttered must have perished years ago.

"Sissy," he said suddenly, "surely there cannot be much suffering reserved for you. Oh, poor child! I wish I could take it all in your place." He spoke in all earnestness, yet could he have looked into the future he would have seen that her suffering would not be long, but very keen, and his not to bear, but to inflict.

CHAPTER XI.

MEANWHILE.

Percival Thorne had never thought much on the subject of revenge. He rather took it for granted that deliberate revenge was an extraordinary and altogether exceptional thing. People give way to bursts of passion which pass away and leave no trace: they are so hot with fury which comes to nothing at all that at the first glance it seems as if the anger which bears fruit must be something different in kind. But it is possible that if Percival had considered the matter he might have arrived at the conclusion that revenge does not depend only on intensity of passion, but on intensity of passion and aptness of opportunity together. Disembodied hate soon dies unless it is fiendish in its strength. [Pg 681]



"ADDIE STOOD BREATHLESS, AND PERCIVAL'S HEART GAVE A QUICK THROB."—Page 676.

He had had fair warning at the birthday party. Lottie, smarting with humiliation, had looked him full in the face with a flash of such bitter enmity as springs from the consciousness of one's own folly. And Lottie's eyes conveyed their meaning well. That very afternoon, when Percival looked [Pg 682] up as he lay on the turf at her feet, they had been most eloquent of love. "Foolish child!" he had thought, "she is only seventeen to-day, and childish still." When he encountered the sudden flash

of hate he would hardly have been surprised at some instant manifestation of it. Had she carried a dagger, like

> Our Lombard country-girls along the coast,

vengeance might have come at once. But she spoke to him later in her ordinary voice, and touched his hand when she bade him good-night; and it was only natural to conclude that nothing would follow her glance of fury. Something of bitterness might linger for a while, but Lottie was only seventeen, and that afternoon she had loved him.

He was right enough. There was nothing fiendish in Lottie's hatred: it would soon have spent its strength in helpless longings and died. But that very night it flew straight to Horace Thorne, and unobserved found shelter there. It assumed a shape not clearly defined as yet, but a shape which time would surely reveal. It drew Lottie to the young man's side while the tears of pain and shame were hardly yet dry upon her burning cheeks.

In spite of the talk on her birthday morning, Lottie hardly understood the relative positions of the Thornes. Percival was disinherited and Horace was the heir. Naturally, she supposed that Horace was the favorite, and that the old man was displeased with Percival. She concluded that the small income of which the latter had spoken was probably a grudging allowance from Mr. Thorne. His grandfather protected and patronized him now, and no doubt it would be in Horace's power to protect and patronize him hereafter. Lottie hardly knew what she dreamed or wished, but she felt that she should indeed be avenged if the dole might in any way be regulated by her caprice, given or withheld according to the mood of the moment.

Meanwhile, Percival drifted contentedly on, unconscious that Lottie had vowed vengeance and Sissy devotion. Mr. Thorne went about with an air of furtive triumph, as if he were tasting the sweetness of having outwitted somebody. Horace divided his time between divers pleasures, but contrived to run down to Fordborough once just before he went yachting with a friend. He took to letter-writing with praiseworthy regularity, and yet his accustomed correspondents were curiously unaware of his sudden energy. He too had his look of triumph sometimes, but it was uneasy triumph, as if he were not absolutely certain that some one might not have outwitted him. Oliver Blake on board the good ship Curlew had passed the period of sea-sickness, and was flirting desperately with a lively fellow-passenger, while Addie followed him with anxious thoughts. About this time his father went in secret to consult a London doctor, and came away with a grave face and a tender softening of his heart toward his only son. A visit to his lawyer ensued, and of this also Mrs. Blake knew nothing. The girls played croquet as before, Lottie won the ivory mallet on the great field-day of the Fordborough club, and Mrs. Rawlinson and Miss Lloyd hated her with their sweetest smiles. Week after week of glorious weather went by. Brackenhill lay stretched in the sleepy golden sunshine, and the leaves in Langley Wood, quivering against the unclouded blue, had lost the freshness of the early summer. The shadows and the sadness were to come.

CHAPTER XII.

> Well, what's gone from me?
> What have I lost in you?—R. BROWNING.

Percival awoke one day to the consciousness that the world was smaller, grayer and flatter than he had supposed it. At the same moment he became aware that a burden was lifted from his shoulders and that a disturbing element was gone out of his life.

This is how the change in the universe was effected. Percival met Godfrey Hammond, and they talked of indifferent things. As they were parting Hammond looked over his shoulder and came back: "I knew there was something I wanted to ask you. Have you heard that the young lady with the latent nobility in her face is going to be married?" [Pg 683]

"What young lady?" said Percival stiffly. He knew perfectly well, and Hammond knew that he knew.

"Miss Lisle."

"No, I hadn't heard. Who is he?"

"The happy man? Lord Scarbrook's eldest son."

"Who told you?"

"You are incredulous, but I fear I can't soften the blow. The man who told me heard Lisle talking about it."

"There's no blow to soften," said Percival, "I assure you I don't feel it."

"Ah," said Hammond, "there was once a man who didn't know that his head had been cut off till he sneezed—wasn't there? Take great care of yourself, Percival." And nodding a second farewell Godfrey left him, and Percival went on his way through that curiously shrunken world.

And, after all, the blow was premature. Mr. Lisle had only talked of a probability which he earnestly hoped would be realized.

But Percival did not doubt it. He tried to analyze his feelings as he walked away. He had known but little of Judith Lisle, but when first he saw her face he felt that the vague dream which till then had approached, only to elude him, in clouds, in fire, in poems, in flowers, in music, had taken human shape and looked at him out of her gray eyes. Percival had no certain assurance that she *was* his ideal, but from that time forward he pictured his ideal in her guise.

He did not dream of winning her. Mr. Lisle had boasted to him one evening, as they sat over their wine, of all that he meant to do for his daughter, and of the great match he hoped she would make. Percival had a feeling of peculiar loyalty to Mr. Lisle as the friend whom his dead father had trusted most of all. He could not think of Judith, for he could never be a fit husband for her in Mr. Lisle's eyes. Had he been heir to Brackenhill—But he was not.

So he acquiesced, patiently enough. He did not attempt to do anything. What was there to do? By the time that he had struggled through the crowd and got his foot on the first round of that ladder which *may* lead to fortune, Judith would probably be married. He did not even know certainly that she was the woman he wanted to win. Why should he force the lazy stream of his existence into a rough and stony channel that he might have a chance—infinitesimally small—of winning her.

Yet there were moments of exaltation when it seemed to him as if his acquiescence were tame and mean—as if his life would miss its crown unless he could attain to his ideal. At such moments he felt the stings of shame and ambition. Yet what could he do? The mood passed, and left him drifting onward as before.

But now all thought of Judith Lisle was over. Even if she were in truth his ideal woman, it was certain that she was no longer within his reach. That haunting possibility was gone. All that it had ever done for him was to make him dissatisfied with himself from time to time, and yet he found himself regretting it.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

CAPTURED BY COSSACKS.

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EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF A FRENCH OFFICER IN 1813.[B]

COSSACKS AND FRENCH PRISONERS.

WISMAR, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, March 8, 1813.

MY DEAR PARENTS: I regret to announce that recent public events have sadly disturbed the relatively comfortable circumstances which favored my convalescence. Since the 26th ult. our lines have been drawn in, and I have accompanied my detachment to this place, where the expected arrival of General Morand from Pomerania will probably be the signal of a hasty retreat. The lamentable fate of our grand army in barbarous Russia is now casting its shadows upon us. It is because so many of our friends remained *there* that we shall have to move from *here*. Possibly, a speedy return to the home I left nine years ago may afford some compensation for this

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inglorious retreat. The cities of Hamburg and Lubeck are in open revolt and ill-treating and driving away the French authorities. If only we had once the Elbe in our rear! The Cossacks are not far off, and the whole country is awaiting them with open arms. Adieu for to-day.

WISMAR, 13th March, 1813.

General Morand and his command arrived here at noon to-day. My brothers, Frank and Louis, are with him and in the best of health. Our trio held a council of war an hour ago, and unanimously resolved to remain at the post of honor whatever may betide. I reported in person to the general, who, after viewing my scar from the Hamburg bullet, assured me that my name would appear on the next recommendation for promotions. All the members of our brigade who had been on coast-guard duty in Mecklenburg are being reorganized into a special battalion, in which I retain the rank of first lieutenant. Frank holds a sergeant's commission, while little Louis remains a private fusilier. An order of the day announces that furloughs are out of the question, and that deserters will be dealt with as every one knows how. The latter bit of information is for the special benefit of our Saxon allies, of whom our command embraces twelve hundred. The remainder of it consists of three hundred artillery-men, four hundred marines, two hundred and fifty coast-guards and a squad of civil and military functionaries—all French and well armed and equipped. To-morrow the homeward march begins.

ACROSS THE ELBE! WINSEN-ON-THE-LUCKE, 18th March.

As the enemy is close upon our heels, we left Wismar in double-quick time. On the 16th, on leaving Moellen, Frank and I visited the grave of the famous German jester Eulenspiegel, but did not take time to drive memorial nails into the surrounding trees, as thousands of pilgrims had done before us.

Not far from there we suddenly came upon a band of Cossacks resting their jaded nags in a marshy meadow. It was something of a mutual surprise. A single glance down our line convinced the hostile commander that we could not consistently give him time to get away. Hence, waving a white streamer at the butt end of a lance, he rode forward and called in passable German for a *parlementaire*. My anxiety to learn all about this new and singular race of people induced me to request this appointment, which was promptly granted by the commander of our van. No diplomatic chicaneries hampered my mission, which was accomplished in a very few minutes. The result was an unconditional surrender. The poor fellows were the victims of an excess of zeal, having ridden ahead of us while they imagined themselves on our flank. The terms of our future relations being mutually agreed upon, the commander, who had acquired his German in the Prussian service, and was no stranger to Virgil and Horace, offered me a hearty shake of his right hand, while the other, deftly unbuckling a holster, drew forth a sample of genuine Mecklenburger Kuemmel schnapps, which proved not unworthy of cementing a treaty of peace. While the prisoners were being marshalled into custody I had ample opportunity to scan the fifty specimens of exotic humanity before me, but utterly failed to discover in their outward features the proverbial elements of popular terror. Though generally nimble and well-proportioned, they were scarcely above the average French voltigeur in stature, and a bullet or rapier would find the way through their untanned sheepskin jackets just as easily as through any more civilized uniform. Apart from their lances, which they are said to handle with dangerous skill, these scouts carry no weapons worth mentioning. Their rusty horse-pistols are almost harmless toys. A more uncouth-looking soldier than a Cossack on foot can hardly be imagined. Perhaps it is not fair to judge them in this abnormal predicament. When they were informed that they would be treated just like ordinary prisoners, a grin of satisfaction lighted up their countenances with an expression of droll humor not suspected before. In the pockets of their cloaks and *portemanteaux* were found an amount and variety of pelf somewhat difficult to account for in the possession of warriors who had not yet reached the enemy's country. Among the rest I will only mention gold, silver and copper coins, medals, breastpins, ear- and finger-rings, watches and chains, seals, meerschaum pipes, snuff-boxes, brass buttons, beads, tea-spoons, feminine miniatures, locks of flaxen hair of the same sex, and, last and strangest, bottles of Jean Marie Farina's veritable eau de Cologne! It may be charitably assumed that the latter three suggestive articles were the heart's gifts of patriotic North German maidens to their long-prayed-for liberators. *Honni soit qui mal y pense.* But it is hardly probable that the original possessors of the more intrinsic valuables had parted with them from equally sentimental motives. Hence our lads wisely discriminated in their disposition of the captured treasures, the coins, jewelry, tea-spoons and meerschaums being temporarily confiscated "until the proper owners could be found." *À la guerre comme à la guerre.*

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In the night of the 16th-17th we reached Bergdorff, where we halted until next afternoon. Just before dusk, at the crossing of a stream, we (the van) were attacked by a partisan column, who relieved us of a dozen prisoners, and in exchange left a few dead upon the field. We are looking for more of this sort of warfare until strongly reinforced. We have to contend not only with the Russians and Prussians, but with all the people on our way, who have raised their hands against the French. Evidently, we have made few friends in this country, which—*entre nous*—to an unbiassed mind does not seem at all strange. Somehow, even when not personally molested, we are continually losing baggage. I carry only my most indispensable effects on my horse. My large trunk, though far behind me now, is in trusty hands, with your address in case anything serious should befall its owner. Frank's baggage is on the general train, while Louis carries all his worldly possessions in his knapsack, which begins to act as a powerful sudorific upon the dear little fellow.

BREMEN, 24th March.

This city has not yet risen in open rebellion, though the faces here are sullen enough. General Carra St. Cyr, with two battalions of cohortes and fifteen hundred coast-guards, has succeeded so far in keeping down the popular temper. But Bremerloe, six leagues from here, is occupied by a formidable band of armed rebels, and at this very moment a detachment is being sent out to attend to them. Among the young recruits of St. Cyr's command I found quite a number of Alsatians, some from my own birthplace, Saverne. They are all in the highest of spirits and eager to go ahead. Considering the sacrifice of precious lives our country has made within the last twenty years, the enthusiasm of these boys is truly wonderful.

25th March.

Bremerloe was captured and the enemy routed. None of your sons were at the fray, but while I write my horse is being saddled and all is getting ready for a return march toward the Elbe. Has a victory improved the situation in our rear, or do some of our retreating brethren need our support? We do not know. The order is to march.

Lüneburg, Braunschweig, 1st April, 10 p. m.

Since our departure from Bremen no bed but the open field or the barest floor has rested my limbs until this evening, when, for the first time in a week, I enjoyed the luxury of a change of clothes. How sweet it is to rest after a hard day's work! This town, surrounded by an old-style ditch and wall, was even this forenoon in possession of the enemy. About eighty Cossacks, eight hundred German recruits and the whole male population, armed with muskets, spears and pitch-forks, defended the place for two hours. But as we had sixteen field-guns, and they none fit for use, we defeated them with inconsiderable loss. The greater part of the civilians, fearing severe punishment, fled with the Cossacks. Our gunners poured in the shot and grape until there is [Pg 687] scarcely a whole window in the western half of the town. Two of our companies headed the Saxons in the assault over the wall, while the rest pressed in through the battered-down gates. Louis was in the lead, and landed inside without a scratch. Having lost his knapsack in a skirmish on the road, he had no surplus weight to carry. Frank was close behind me in the rush through the Bardowicker gate. Though this day may never be honored with a line in the annals of the great Napoleonic wars, it was quite as hot for a while as any other of greater fame for those immediately concerned. The street-scenes were ghastly, and forcibly reminded me of certain others of saddest memory, when, a boy of only nine years of age, I followed you, my dear parents, over the dead and mangled bodies of citizens and soldiers out of the town of Saverne, disgraced and blood-stained by a revolutionary mob. With this difference, however, that here the dead and wounded were our inveterate foes, while there they wore the features of our most cherished friends and neighbors.

DON COSSACKS AND BASHKIRS.

In a Village Near Boitzenburg, 4th April. [Pg 688]

How quickly the leaf has turned! At the date of my last we were victors: to-day we are not only vanquished, but prisoners.

Do not be alarmed, however, dearest parents. All three of your sons are alive and well, even relatively comfortable. No complaint even from poor Louis, who was caught by the Cossacks, robbed of his coat and purse, then turned over to the citizens, who, after unspeakable insults and brutal treatment, stripped him of everything but his shirt and drawers. My own story is too complex to be related to-day. I will only state in brief what you may have already divined—that on the day following the capture of Lüneburg we were surprised in and around the town by a vastly superior force, and worsted after a resistance which was all the more desperate that we knew what to expect from such an enemy in case of defeat. The ferocity of the German burgher, backed by his liberators in overwhelming strength, literally baffles description. I fell in a melée in front of the eastern gate under a blow from a spear-shaft, which broke the visor clasp of my shako right over my left ear. When I recovered my senses I was in the custody of a young "Death Hussar," of whose generous treatment of me more hereafter.

SAME DAY, afternoon.

The number of my companions in misfortune now collected here is nearly three hundred. Our departure Russia-ward, which had been fixed for noon to-day, seems to have been countermanded for the present.

Our surprise is mainly attributed to some laxity on the part of our Saxon friends, whose German hearts have naturally mellowed since the French eagles have taken their homeward flight. This forenoon our brave general, mortally wounded in his effort to retrieve the disgrace, was buried with the honors of war at Boitzenburg, half a mile from here. We lost altogether five hundred dead and wounded, but inflicted a severe loss on the enemy, who was the attacking party. As near as I can learn, his force consisted of a large brigade of cavalry, four companies of Russian and three of Prussian infantry, artillery in proportion, besides the few hundred Cossacks and armed citizens we had scared out of Lüneburg on the day before.

Now to return to my story. Perhaps you have not forgotten, my dear parents, my reference, four years ago, to the notorious Schill, chief of a corps of Prussian partisans, a brave and devoted patriot, who gave us no little trouble. Shortly after that time he was pursued by a force of Danes and Hollanders, our allies, all the way to Stralsund, and killed in a brave fight. His brother now commands the "Death Hussars" in the Prussian service. My captor is a Brunswicker of noble birth and character, who speaks very good French, and recognized me by name and face in connection with an incident near Hamburg which had impressed him favorably with my humanity. He seemed to have resolved to do all in his power for my protection except directly favoring my escape. After he had shielded me from the burghers' mob and furnished me with a modest suit of citizen's clothes in order to disguise my rank, I was still encumbered by my regulation hat, which betrayed me to every eye. He proposed to provide me with a skull-cap from a friend's wardrobe, and left me to wait for him in a seemingly deserted lane, a square only from his lodgings. Scarcely, however, had he turned the corner when I was overtaken by an athletic journeyman baker, who, pouncing upon me with frantic yells, attracted two other citizens to the spot, and all now seized hold of me with a vigor conveying the soothing impression that my agony would be brief. Acting upon the old adage, that while there is life there is hope, I protracted my existence by twining my arms around a small linden tree and dealing out such blows with my heavy riding-boots as I could in that awkward position. At the same time I summoned to my aid all the power of a healthy pair of lungs, which my mother often predicted would yet make some noise in the [Pg 689] world, and just before my wind gave out under the pressure of the bakerman's thumbs, my strategy resulted in the desired success. Shouting and running at the top of his might, my noble rescuer was soon on the spot with the skull-cap in one hand and his drawn sabre in the other. In a twinkling the flat of his blade had loosened the hold of my executioners, whom he fearlessly berated as cowardly villains for laying hands upon a prisoner already in his power, and whom he pursued with threats that visibly quickened their retreating pace. Thanking Heaven for the favor of permitting him to save my life once more, he now informed me that he had done all for me that his own oath and duty permitted, and hoped I should be able to make the best use of my improved situation. At my urgent request, however, he consented to accompany me to my lodgings, where I had that very morning left my portfolio and a gold watch, not dreaming of the surprise that subverted my fate in the course of the day. My landlord, still gratefully reminiscent of my courteous behavior toward him and his family on the day of our victory, promptly delivered my property, with hearty apologies for his inability to do more for me at present; and, significantly referring to a Prussian captain then at supper in the lower story, he quietly pressed into my hand a shining silver thaler, which I as quietly returned with thanks, for the simple reason that I was even then more able to give than he. "God bless you, my gracious gentleman!" were his last words as I pressed his honest fist and assured him that if ever in my power his kindness should be remembered.

Night had closed around me when I reached the sombre street with my magnanimous protector. After exchanging names, birthplace and the residence of our respective parents in our memorandum-books, I thanked him for all with a fulness of heart to which the moisture of his own thoughtful blue eyes most eloquently responded, and as he rapidly walked away my reflections upon the humanity of war were not such as would have recommended my promotion to the great captain in whose thankless service I am daily exposing my life.

Here, then, I was left absolutely friendless in a hostile town in

which my life was at the mercy of almost every inhabitant. And my poor brothers, what had become of them? How could I find out? My rescuer had informed me that the prisoners had already been transported into the country, and that the wounded were being cared for at the town-hall. In this dilemma my choice was not difficult. Deliberately walking into a tavern where the Russian staff were engaged in brewing punch, I declared myself a prisoner, hungry, and anxious to join my comrades, whose fate I wished to share. I did not conceal the fact that I hoped to find two brothers among them. To my agreeable surprise, I found these officers kindly-disposed, well-educated men, speaking either French or German fluently. Supper was instantly ordered for me, but, though a fast of fifteen hours was gnawing at my stomach, I could not prevail upon myself to taste anything before having seen our wounded, which I asked and obtained leave to do immediately. An orderly was directed to conduct me to the town-hall across the square. Here I was distressed to find over sixty of our men and officers of all arms more or less severely hurt, but none fatally, the unfortunates of that category, as rumor goes, having been *finished by the citizens* before the military took charge of them. I anxiously looked into every familiar face, but my brothers were not there. No one could tell me the names of our dead. Frank was seen alive after I fell, just before the close of the fight, but of Louis nothing whatever was known. Still, I breathed more freely. A Prussian surgeon in attendance with our own having called my attention to the contusion over my left ear, which had now swollen to the size of a small egg, I had it bathed and dressed.

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BASHKIR.

During my supper at the tavern two of the Russian officers, taking seats around my table, conversed very freely upon the topics of the day, and, I must confess, with much delicate regard for the feelings of an enemy in my condition. They had seen Napoleon in Moscow, and hoped soon to return his visit in Paris. All Europe was tired of him, his own people not excepted. The Bourbons would be restored and universal peace would follow. This was their favorite theme, to which, I candidly own, your son's heart was not a total stranger. I have long been convinced that Germany could not be permanently subdued, and that French rule was the most unpopular of all. My impression is that this nation will henceforth unite and fight until the foreign yoke is shaken off for ever.

Supper over, I was informed that I could not be conveyed to my fellow-prisoners until morning, and that I might share the mattress of a French sergeant-major confined in an upper room, which turned out to be the garret. Imagine my surprise on recognizing my favorite Delâtre, though his face was black with mud and powder and his elegant form disguised in the linen gown of a Mecklenburger teamster! His sleep was too sweet and precious to be disturbed, and I much enjoyed his wonder when, awaking at the break of day, he beheld the countenance of one whom he had numbered among the dead. Our mutual stories were soon told. Delâtre had made an attempt to escape, but was recaptured, did not tell a very plausible tale, and was held for better identification in the morning. Of my brothers he knew only that they were both alive when I fell. It was supposed by the survivors of the company that if I was not killed by the blow I must have been crushed to death by horses' hoofs and cannon-wheels soon afterward.

My presence in the house proved to be a fortunate coincidence for my friend Delâtre, since it required my written statement and parole of honor to clear him of the suspicion of being a spy. These formalities accomplished, three very slightly wounded fusiliers from the hospital were added to our number, and we were at once conveyed to this hamlet, on the east side of the Elbe, where we found our fellow-sufferers quartered in the spacious outbuildings of a comfortable-looking farm. A deafening shout arose from one corner of the captive throng so soon as our faces could be distinguished; and need I, dear parents, describe the scene which immediately followed when all three of your sons, after a heart's agony of twenty-four hours, once more, alive and well, fell into each other's arms?

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Frank, with the exception of a few buttons, was still in possession of his full regimentals, but poor Louis's condition, as already mentioned, was pitiable enough. My vest and overalls and half of my necktie restored him to relative decency, and out of a blanket which I purchased at the farmhouse he is at this moment engaged in planning an elegant-looking Talma cloak.

It is significantly remarked that among the three hundred prisoners—destined to Siberia, I suppose—there is not a single Saxon. There are reasons of state for this discrimination without a doubt.

On a Halt, 5th April, noon.

It was not far from sunset last evening when we began to move under the escort of about sixty Cossacks. Our course lay along the east bank of the Elbe, and we are *promised* to be taken to Russia by way of Berlin. It was near ten o'clock last night before we reached an enclosed farmyard secure enough to hold so many birds, and we went supperless to bed on a munificent litter of straw. Frank's humorous stories and mimicry of our friends the enemies answered admirably for dessert.

I was one of the first on foot this morning to take a good look at our escort. These semi-barbarians feel so secure in our utter helplessness that scarcely half a dozen of them remained on guard after the break of day. Here they lay stretched in the dew in every conceivable attitude of well-earned repose, snoring in concert almost under the very feet of their ponies, who enjoy in a standing position their equine dreams of home on the distant steppe. The whole barnyard scene, riders, horses and prisoners, composed one of the most striking pictures of which I ever formed a part, and to which my hasty sketches, herewith enclosed, do not aspire to do justice.

These Cossacks, or more properly Bashkirs, seem to belong to a different tribe from the Knights of the Don we captured nearly three weeks ago, and represent mentally and physically a less advanced type. There is no picturing to yourself exactly such faces as these unless you have once seen a specimen, upon which your imagination may then work *ad libitum*, without fear of exaggeration in the direction of the grotesque. A mythological cross between the fabled satyr and the domestic creature which furnishes the Westphalia ham is the nearest approach I can suggest to this type of humanity. How much of their dusky complexion is due to the sun and how much to the earth could only be determined by an exhaustive experiment with soap and water, the virtue of which, to them, is still an undiscovered blessing. To describe the extent to which the Bashkir carries his contempt for cleanliness in every function of daily life would require pages, and prematurely disgust you with my interesting subject. The atmosphere for half a hundred feet around a middle-aged Bashkir has no parallel in any sensation known to the human nostril. His sheepskin cloak, jacket or vest, as the case may be, teems with animal life, of which the wearer alone seems to be unconscious. In feature these people approach the Tartar type, of which, however, the stiff, wispy, yellow hair and beard, the small piggish eye, flat nose and fleshy Ethiopian lips seem to mark a characteristic variety. Many of them walk clumsily or with a stoop, and show other symptoms of grovelling habits and strong drink. As a rule, the Bashkirs, like the Cossacks, are armed with lances; among our custodians several carry long rifles; and at Lüneburg I even saw a few of these singular warriors with bows and arrows, though perhaps more for show than for use. As fighting soldiers they strike me as greatly overrated: their native instincts seem to qualify them much better for scouts and marauders. Both the Bashkir and Cossack when in action excel in the arts of self-preservation, skilfully manœuvring around the verge of danger, seeking the weak points, and if by force of numbers and long lances now and then succeeding in a charge *à fond* upon a baggage-train, yet easily persuaded into wholesome prudence by a bristling line of bayonets or a well-directed volley. Their battle-cry is the same as that of the English, "Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!" only more melodious; and the same may be said of [Pg 692] their songs, which fall much more agreeably upon a musical ear than the popular ballads and comical rhymes of our Britannic neighbors. I wish I could speak as favorably of their religious devotions, which combine the most bigoted and ludicrous exercises I ever heard of in a Christian sect. Both the Don and the Bashkir Cossacks belong to the Greek Church, but whether their mode of worship is the orthodox form or adulterated with Bashkir improvements, I am not able to state. It is interesting to note here that the most extravagant professions are indulged in by the older members of the congregation, while the younger seem content to go through the principal motions, and not a few even slyly exchange quizzical glances over the prostrate backs of their seniors in superstition. Perhaps light will dawn some day even on the benighted banks of the Don and the Volga.

CIBULSKY.

Of the most rudimentary education these simple people do not exhibit a trace. Reading and writing appear to them the acme of human science, which the poor Cossack may never hope to reach on this side of the Styx. When a map is spread before them at random, they promptly inquire which is the side of the rising sun, and then turn that very properly to their right, but beyond that their intelligence comes to a halt. Streams, roads and boundary-lines are to them only a labyrinth of confusion. Even as scouts and foragers they would be nearly useless without local guides; hence German officers have been added to their native leaders since they left the Russian border. The commander of this force is a renegade Pole, a Prussian subject, by name Cibulsky, *anglicé* onion-man—a remarkable coincidence, in view of his favorite diet. Though he treats me with becoming respect, he is not the sort of man to win my affections.

Though intellectually obtuse, the Cossack must not be supposed to lack either sagacity or common sense. On the contrary, the keenness of his instinct and perception, as in the case of most savages, is quite remarkable.

Human nature seems to him an open book, and it is instructive to watch his ingenuity in getting the upper hand in a bargain, a bet or a game of chance. This morning I felt anxious to secure a sketch of one of their typical faces, undisfigured by the traditional beard, but coaxing did not succeed. A few silbergroschen which I then displayed—all I claimed to possess—were merrily gobbled up by right of conquest and divided among the group around me. I felt near the end of my wits, when, observing a dirty pack of cards protruding from the pocket of my subject, I asked permission to show him a trick. It was one of those parlor-magic sleights of hand—like Columbus's egg, the simplest trick in the world when you know it. I never saw Bashkirs' eyes look half as large as on that occasion, and half a dozen beards at once were put upon the market at the same price. For want of time, however, I had to decline all except the one I had first selected, which rapidly fell under the dexterous scissors of brother Frank; and opposite is my sketch.

Of military drill there is very little in Cossack training in the French or Prussian sense of the word, although the discipline is much better than might be expected from such irregular troops. Their control of their horses is unsurpassable, and greatly assisted by the natural docility of the animal itself. In size below the standard of our lightest cavalry, these ugly little beasts display [Pg 693] uncommon strength and endurance. Possibly a cross between the Arab and the Percheron might, on a larger scale, produce a heavy and yet spirited head like that of the bright-eyed Cossack or Ukraine horse, but to attain an equally fantastic neck and rump some less symmetrical elements would have to be resorted to.

Speaking of horses, I am on foot at present, as you may well suppose, but that only brings me all the nearer to my fellow-sufferers, who, like myself, are in need of all the sympathy within their reach. Our Bashkirs being, upon the whole, a good-natured set of fellows and much the worse for wear, we hope to get along without serious trouble; and for my part I shall keep a sharp lookout once we reach a familiar section of country. It looks as if our route would take us through Dömitz, one of my former posts. If so, patience!

COLIS, near Dömitz, Tuesday, 6th April.

Yesterday, at 2 P. M., we halted near a village five miles from here to secure the first decent meal since we broke camp. Our sub-officers and privates received good pickled meat with vegetables, pumpernickel (black bread) and rye whiskey. The officers were taken into the village and billeted on comfortable houses for refreshments. Before I started I cut out of the belt of my drawers six napoleons d'or, which I divided between my brothers, informing them that we were not far from Dömitz. They understood me well, and wished me God-speed, promising to follow my example if any opportunity occurred before they were exchanged. Their last injunction was to report them to you, my dear parents, in good health and spirits and bravely resigned to fate; and it was mainly the hope and desire to treat you to this satisfaction that nerved me to the risk and pain of separation from the dear boys in their deplorable condition. I would have given one half of my remaining life to be able to carry them away in my breeches pockets. It was because they truly felt this that they cheerfully forgave me this desertion. God bless and protect them for ever, for better sons and brothers and truer soldiers never lived!

BASHKIR SHORN AND COMBED.

It was here that I had resolved to attempt my escape, as for many miles around I had, during a protracted occupancy, gained a number of personal friends, whose feelings I hoped to find unaltered by reverse of fortune. By the favor of Heaven I was destined to succeed, so far, beyond expectation. My captain, sub-lieutenant and myself were billeted on one of the last houses on the road leading to Dömitz, and in charge of a single Bashkir, a grizzly, good-humored old fellow, and not the very brightest of the lot. After seeing us comfortably seated around a savory dinner, he squarely established himself in the front-door, where he was soon absorbed in the dissection of a huge plate of fishes steeped in fragrant linseed oil. I should here add that spoons and forks seem unknown to the Bashkir family, except as trophies of war, especially when they happen to be of silver. After replenishing my French stomach by means of a regular Mecklenburger appetite, I left my companions engaged in garnishing their pockets with the remnants of the feast, and stepped out into the yard bareheaded and carelessly picking my teeth. Having secured the good-will of my Bashkir [Pg 694] friend by tasting a bite or two of his greasy fish, I proceeded to entertain him with a variety of gymnastic pranks, especially challenging his admiration by balancing his lance on the end of my nose until it looked as flat as his own. This complimentary trick delighted him to such an extent that the corners of his mouth carried the tips of his broom-sedge moustache several inches behind his ears. There was not a human being in the street or yard, the bulk of the population having flocked out to stare at the rest of the prisoners. Pretending to play with the Bashkir's horse, which was despatching its oats near the garden-gate, I passed repeatedly around the corner of the house, gradually increasing the intervals of my reappearance until I had succeeded in fastening the bridle to the fence by the nearest imitation possible of a gordian knot. Then coming into view once more, and beholding my confiding jailer about to seal the fate of his last fish, I again put the corner of the house between him and me, this time to return no more.

My next prank was to leap from the saddle of the Cossack steed over the fence into the garden, and thence over another fence into a shady orchard, without being seen by mortal eye. At the outer end of an adjoining barnyard an old shed with a sunken thatched roof beckoned me into its friendly shelter, and there, between some old hay-ladders and broken wheels, I twisted myself through the rotten straw into a cavity to which I confided my trembling body until dusk. There was of course a moment of critical suspense, but except the faint, hesitative bark of a small dog that rushed past my hiding-place and suddenly turned back as if on a false alarm, there was not a sound or a sign indicating that my movements had been observed or that search was being made for the fugitive. Did not the jolly old hero know the difference between two and three, or had he forgotten me over his fish?

However that may be, the last stroke of the village curfew found me once more in the open air. There were just stars enough peeping out between the fleeting clouds to light my devious path through brush and field to the house of a trusty friend, whom I aroused from his peaceful slumber at eleven o'clock. He is the same forester (*Oberförster*) of whose attachment for me I mentioned several instances in my last year's correspondence. His delight on recognizing me was unfeigned, and he would have been too happy to shelter me for any length of time but for the fact that the same hostile command that had captured us in Lüneburg was now retreating toward Dömitz, having again been driven across the Elbe by the expected advance of Marshal Davoust's corps. Of course I cannot remain here to compromise my friend, but shall proceed two leagues farther, to the house of a wealthy farmer, where I may be concealed until enabled to reach the South Baltic coast. There, at Christinenfeld, near Klütz, I shall find more friends, my trunk with money, clothes and other effects, if this property has not been betrayed into the enemy's hand.

ELDENA, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, 15th April.

Here I am, since the 8th, safely housed with my old friend, the hospitable farmer. Yesterday, in a suitable disguise, I visited a public functionary, son of the county judge (*Oberamtmann*), with whom I was quartered four years ago, and upon whose discretion I could rely. I broached the subject of a pass under an assumed name and nationality wherewith to reach Klütz, only twenty-four leagues away. Speaking as I do the German language, and even the Plattdeutsch dialect, almost like a native, I had hoped that my friend would not hesitate to assume that risk. But upon his exhibiting to me the stringent orders lately received upon that subject, and mentioning the penalty attached to detection, I did not insist upon my request. I shall undertake the journey as best I can, without a passport, *à la garde de Dieu*.

CHRISTINENFELD, 17th April.

Yesterday morning, Good Friday, I rode from Eldena to Ludwigslust in company with a gamekeeper well known in this section. Thence I walked to Schwerin, the capital of the duchy, [Pg 695] thence took stage to Gravismühlen, and lastly footed it again to Klütz, accomplishing the journey of twenty-four leagues between 3 A .M. and 9 P. M. Here I found the people as kindly disposed as ever, and my trunk unmolested. My dear mother, who never rated me as the wittiest if the most accomplished of her boys, may possibly feel more hopeful upon learning by what *ruse de guerre* I managed to traverse the capital of Mecklenburg-Schwerin without a passport in such times as these. In addition to the usual civil police, every gate of the city was guarded by a military argus not likely to be caught napping. In Ludwigslust I had read a proclamation offering a reward for every Frenchman captured within the state. While resting on a milestone a short distance out of Schwerin, and wiping the sweat of agony from my brow, I noticed the establishment of a florist on the other side of the road. Thither I stepped at once, and selecting a beautiful early rose in full bloom, I had it potted for transportation. Then dusting off my boots and disarranging my cravat, I placed the flower-pot in my cap, and taking this novel passport upon my left arm, I abstractedly sallied forth toward the redoubtable gate. Very much as I expected, all eyes were turned upon the beautiful early flower, whose carrier passed unobserved. I felt so exultant over the success of my stratagem that I had the audacity to call for half a bottle of French wine, with bread and cheese, at the first inn I came to, and to enjoy my treasonable meal right under the nose of a vociferous Prussian *Kürassier-hauptmann* expounding the latest news from the seat of war to what I took to be a knot of terrified civil functionaries. The drift of it all was that the beak of the French eagle was once more turned to the East. *Inde Iræ.*

AT A COUNTRY-SEAT IN HOLSTEIN, Danish ground.

My stay near Klütz was of short duration, owing to another proclamation from the ruler of this duchy, ordering the arrest of all straggling Frenchmen, and their delivery to the nearest Russian or Prussian outpost, under penalty of treason. My friends, whom I did not wish to expose any longer, kindly recommended me to this place, where I have been very hospitably received. How long this may last is, however, uncertain, as it is feared Sweden may compel Denmark into an alliance against the French.

SCHWANENSEE, Mecklenburg, 29th May.

I was driven from Danish soil by a false alarm in regard to Swedish movements, and am the guest here of another old friend, Baron Hässeler, with whom I was quartered three years ago. But this is Mecklenburg again, and not safe either for me or my generous host. This Wandering-Jew sort of a life is demoralizing me fast: I cannot hold out much longer.

CASTLE BÜLOW, at Gudow, Duchy of Lauenburg, 6th June.

Thank Heaven! Mecklenburg is once more behind me. This is still the enemy's country, but its

little sovereign has not yet issued any proclamation thirsting for French blood. After leaving my Danish retreat I spent a few weeks at Klütz under the tile-roof of a henhouse, where I was nearly crazed by the heat and confinement. Dropping crumbs to a family of friendly mice who have not heard of the proclamation was my only pastime. At Schwanensee I made the acquaintance of the Landmarschallin von Bülow, a noble and accomplished lady, who managed to convey me to this manor, her place of residence. She is one of the few in the land who has not yet learned to hate us Frenchmen "as we deserve." She is the mother of two sons, the elder of whom, like all young men of his class, is in the field against us. To the younger, a bright lad of sixteen, I was introduced this morning as his preceptor, Mr. Fr. J. Dierks, a native of Freiburg, Baden. This is my identity for all who may know me here. The lord of this manor, who, for reasons of public business, resides at Ratzeburg, a few miles from here, knows me in no other capacity. He seems to think much of me, and placed a horse and his hunting-ground at my disposal. Even my trunk [Pg 696] was sent after me here through the kindness of the countess. But in the midst of all this comfort, right from the Klützer henhouse, I feel restless and unhappy. My place is not here. Had I remained on the Danish side I could now, as things have turned out, pass through Holstein to Hamburg, which is again in possession of Davoust's corps. I may accomplish it yet.

GUDOW, 7th July.

I hope soon to be able to forward you my letters, which I have just now finished transcribing from the cipher. Since the middle of last month there reigns some sort of a truce, but up to date I have tried in vain to get off my mail or to slip through the outposts in person. The Cossacks are swarming through this section, and have doubled all the picket-lines. It is part of my duty here to furnish supplies to those stationed within the Landmarschall's domain; and though, in that capacity, I am on the best of terms with our protectors, they have shown no disposition yet to help me across the Stekenitz, a muddy stream which forms the neutral line between the hostile armies. Think of it, my dear parents, only a few miles off I should find the French flag, French uniforms, comrades, friends, almost home once more! It is very trying to hold up my head under a false rôle and to sign my false name daily to a dozen papers. If detected now, so near the lines, no power on earth could save me from the death of a spy, and it is very difficult for me sometimes not to look upon myself as a deserter.

July 10th.

From the countess I learned to-day that the crown-prince of Sweden (ex-Marshal Bernadotte), commanding the invading army, having learned that a French officer or spy was concealed on Baron Hässeler's domain, quartered upon him a squad of hussars, who are making diligent search for me. They may find my trail to this place at any hour. I am on the wing this moment.

STOWE, a country-seat near Ratzeburg, 1st August.

If ever I was in a tight place, it is now. General Tettenborn, a Badener by birth, commanding the Russian forces posted five miles from Gudow, wishes to make the personal acquaintance of his countryman, Mr. Dierks. The Swedish hussars have furnished him my description, and the protégé of the countess von Bülow is suspected to be no other than the mysterious guest of Baron Hässeler. My disguise and concealment here at the house of a most generous friend has successfully baffled detection so far, but the old Landmarschall having joined in the pursuit of me to vindicate his own loyalty, I am not safe here any longer. My devoted host has just devised a plan for my conveyance to Klütz, whence I must absolutely try to reach Holstein and Hamburg without delay.

KLÜTZ, 6th August.

The night of the 2d-3d inst. saw me safely landed here. The place is full of Swedish troops, and several officers are quartered in the house of which my hen-coop is a dependancy. I have but little paper left to write for pastime, but my faithful mice have not forgotten me. Very unlike many human beings, they are gratefully looking up toward the source of their daily bread, and even standing on their hind legs against the wall, as if anxious to pay me a visit.

9th August.

No change yet in the situation within or without. If I could hope that Davoust's corps would push across the Elbe at once and drive the Swedes, Russians and Prussians to where they belong, I would remain here and await his coming. But that is still uncertain, and my position is becoming untenable. I have wished a thousand times I had never left my brothers. Their fate is enviable compared to mine. To-night I shall get a reply to a proposition I made for my transfer to Holstein by water. I have ample funds to accomplish it if all else is favorable. The French advance has reached Lubeck. [Pg 697]

LUBECK, 12th August.

Heaven be praised, dearest parents! I am free and once more among my own!

In the night of the 10th-11th my plans culminated at last in my conveyance in a fisherman's boat across the south-west corner of the Baltic to Neustadt, in Danish Holstein, whence I proceeded to this city as fast as the best horse within reach could carry me. I must forbear, from want of time, giving you to-day the particulars of this dangerous and providential escape, which would appear to you almost incredible. I cannot but attribute the special protection of a kind Providence to a recognition of such of my qualities of heart as you, my dear parents, have so religiously cultivated

in your children, and which nine years' absence from home and the varied experiences of a cruel and relentless war have never yet obliterated. I believe I have always striven to be faithful to my duty, kind and just to my inferiors and humane to our enemies. It is this consciousness that ever sustained my hope in the darkest hour of peril. It told me that I was too good to die ignominiously at the end of a Mecklenburger pitchfork or hempen rope. Again, thanks and praise to Whom they are due!

LÜNEBURG, 25th August.

I lost no time in reporting to head-quarters at Lubeck, and was at once ordered here, where I found again united all of our command who fought their way out of this place on the day of my capture. Of our poor prisoners, only one, Sautier, a corporal of artillery, seems to have made his escape. This occurred at Colberg, Prussia, on the Baltic, where our boys were embarked for Russia, Riga being their port of destination. At that time both Frank and Louis enjoyed remarkably good health, and, summer approaching, Russia had lost much of its terror in their minds. The trip by land was performed in short marches and without any unusual hardships. Long before they reached Berlin their escort was replaced by another of exclusively Don Cossacks. Sautier reached Denmark by water from Wismar, where he had travelled in various disguises, principally following the coast. My own escape was not discovered by Captain Cibulsky until next day. It appears that the old Bashkir, on returning my captain and sub-lieutenant to the caravan after dinner, made no report concerning the missing lieutenant, and when the roll-call betrayed my absence next morning the clannish Bashkirs played so adroitly into each other's hands that the commander could not determine whom to hold accountable for the offence, and, after notifying the civil authorities to keep a lookout for me, resumed his march. After that accident, however, the captive officers were not permitted to leave camp for any purpose except under escort equal to their own number—one Cossack one prisoner, one Cossack one prisoner, and so on—which would not leave room for miscounts. I heartily rejoice over the impunity of my old friend of the doorsill, and only regret now not having had the presence of mind to tie a napoleon d'or into that treacherous knot in his bridle. But, *qui sait?* we may meet again!

27th August.

Yesterday I received my full pay in arrears, and am again blazing forth in complete regimentals after a *bourgeois* negligé of nearly five months. To-day, when taking my first official round through the town, I suddenly found myself face to face with the journeyman baker who had undertaken to put a stop to my earthly career on the fatal 2d of April. He turned pale as death, and seemed riveted to the ground. Taking hold of his chin, I asked him whether he would think it strange to be sent before a court-martial and shot before next sunrise. The cowardly bully looked so contrite and chapfallen that I pitied him, and the fear that he might be dealt with just as he deserved caused me to dismiss him with an impressive admonition, of which the bystanders of his class may have taken to heart their respective shares. Before night the magnanimity of the French officer was the gossip of the town.

I almost forgot to mention that I have also recovered my horse, which had been appropriated by a civil functionary and smuggled into the country upon the return of our forces. Although I shall not be reassigned to the coast-guard service, I am permitted to retain the animal at my own expense. We learn to-day that Marshal Davoust is advancing rapidly through Mecklenburg, and has already issued a proclamation from Schwerin, where roses count for passports. In a very few days we shall be sufficiently reorganized to follow. Every step will bring me nearer to my brothers. God bless you all, my dear parents and sisters! These leaves at last will be wafted homeward to-day. More in a few days from our eastward line of march. [Pg 698]

NOTE.—Lieutenant Diss Debar served in the corps of Davoust until the departure of Napoleon for Elba. The second invasion found him promoted to a captaincy, and engaged in the defence of Neu Breisach, which closed his military career. After the restoration of the Bourbons the influence of his father's Legitimist friends procured for him a comfortable position in the administration of "Waters and Forests," which he retained through all the political changes up to within a few years of his death, in 1864, in the eighty-fifth year of his age. His brother Frank was exchanged in 1815, and returned to France, but "poor little Louis" was not destined to the same good fortune. He died at Riga in January, 1814, from amputation of his frozen feet, the result of barbarous exposure.

FOOTNOTES:

[B] The writer of these letters, Joseph Diss Debar, served with the corps of Marshal Davonst. Before the French Revolution his father had filled the office of intendant of domains of the prince-cardinal de Rohan-Guéménée, of royal necklace memory, then residing on his estates at Saverne, Alsace, in the diocese of Strassburg, of which he was the beneficiary. Soon after the capture of the Bastille the revolutionary movement spread to this locality, and destroyed, imprisoned or drove into exile all the avowed adherents of the royal cause, including the cardinal and his friends. The greater part of the Saverne refugees gathered at Ettenheim in Baden, only one league from the Rhine, where a large stipend, allowed to the cardinal by the British government, enabled him to keep his friends and followers above want until they could find other means of support. Thirteen years later Ettenheim also attracted the unfortunate duc d'Enghien, who in March, 1804, was kidnapped by orders of Bonaparte and shot in the ditch at Vincennes. The terror inspired by this high-handed *coup d'état*, which destroyed the *émigrés'* safety upon neutral soil,

caused many of the younger generation of exiles to return to their native country and to enter the army, the military career being the only one open to them. Among these were the writer and his two brothers, the oldest being then twenty-four and the youngest seventeen years of age.

A PORTRAIT.

Every day I passed there in going between the room where I lodge and my business. It was an old shop, full of trash, ambitious of being a bric-à-brac establishment, but its contents had neither beauty nor pedigree to recommend them, only age and cheapness. Its doorsill lay even with the pavement, inviting custom by an easy access, while repelling it by its squalor. The light entered hesitatingly through a cobwebbed window, as if loath to touch the unsightly objects within. Of these, some few had strayed through the door and stood in blinking confusion on the sidewalk—chairs with three legs, desks with no shelves, sofas without seats, clocks eternally silent, and ornaments maimed, cracked, and seamed with glue.

It was in this company I first saw him. He had dark eyes with heavy lids, that gave a pathetic look to his face, and one eyebrow was slightly pointed near its termination on the temple, while the other was straight—an irregularity often found in persons of erratic temperament. His nose, sensitive and refined, was in beautiful proportion to the face: his full lips and square chin were partly concealed by a curling brown beard and moustache, and the hair, which met a forehead rather broad than high, was of the same color. Perhaps I should have mentioned that *he* was a portrait.

How had he arrived among his present surroundings, standing on the dirty street, smeared with mud that passing feet cast in his face, splashed by rain, and torn from contact with the edges of chairs or the careless canes of pedestrians—even showing the print of a boot-heel impressed on one cheek? At times he disappeared for days together, as if lost in the maze within: then again I would see his tragic eyes gazing at me through a pelting storm or his skin blistering under a blinding sun. Was it any wonder that I sought to save him from his capricious fate—that I pitied him, that I bought him?

I took the opportunity of doing so when the owner of the shop, whom I respectfully christened Sticks, was absent, and was thereby enabled to purchase the portrait from a shock-headed boy in charge for the modest sum of two francs.

My acquisition gave me much pleasure, but, unfortunately, it immediately became the subject of an altercation between my two selves. I must here say that my inner and outer self seldom agree, [Pg 699] the latter being a practical man and a clerk in a retail lace business, while the former is an idealist who despises the other's employment and ridicules his opinions, frequently bewailing the lot that links him to a clod without aspirations.

It was to settle this dispute that I resolved, if possible, to discover some facts about the portrait's history, and for this purpose I stopped at the shop next morning, fortunately finding the shock-headed boy alone. Old Sticks would not have *given* even an answer, his business being buying and selling.

"Where did you get that picture I bought of you yesterday?" I began.

"Think it's an old master?" he asked with a wink.

"Will you answer my question, you blockhead?" I said, threatening him with my stick.

"I brought it from No. 42 Rue Notre Dame de Lorette," he whimpered, avoiding the cane as if it recalled disagreeable memories.

"To whom did it belong?"

"I don't know."

"Speak out, my man, and you shall have this for your reward." The proffered half-franc made him voluble.

"I was sent for it to No. 42. The concierge gave it to me. He had it carefully wrapped up: that made me laugh when I saw it opened."

"How long ago did this happen?"

"About six months. Where do *you* live?"

"What is that to you, my young friend?"

"You had better not pass here often: the old man is furious that I sold the picture—asked me all about how you looked, and if you ever passed the shop. I told him I never saw you before, and that you had black hair and squinted."

"Why did you say that?"

"I owe him one. He beat me last night, and went off this morning without giving me a bite to eat. Last thing he said was, 'You are sure he squints?' I said, 'Yes, sure.'"

Then, as I gave him the silver, the boy said, "Just mind the shop a moment, while I run and get something to eat;" and off he went, leaving me in charge.

"What are you going to do about it?" asked my inner self ironically.

"I am going to No. 42;" and without awaiting the boy's return I set out.

A few minutes brought me to the street. I passed No. 42 in review from the opposite side of the way, thinking I might get some idea of its occupants from the exterior. The house, wedged in by similar houses, possessed no particular physiognomy. I gazed at each window in turn, and finally crossing the street asked the concierge, "What is the name of the artist living in this house?"

"Only respectable people live here," he answered in a surly tone.

"When did he leave?" I went on, determined not to notice his rudeness.

"There has never been one here since I came."

"How long have you been here?"

"I can't remember."

"But you can remember a picture that you sold to a furniture-dealer in the Rue St. Lazare about six months ago."

"No I can't. I never sold one."

"His boy told me he got it from you."

"He is mistaken: I never sold one."

"Perhaps it merely passed through your hands. No harm will come to you if you tell me what you know about it."

"I know nothing," he exclaimed angrily, and began to pick up some scraps on the floor, so that I could not see his face.

Evidently suspecting there was something wrong, and that he might be held accountable, the man was prepared to deny everything, and my time being limited I left. As I did so I saw a plainly-dressed individual approach him, and on once looking back I thought from their gestures they were speaking of me. Of course my inner self exclaimed, "Absurd!"

For two days after I was confined to my room by a slight illness, but on the third, as I neared the furniture-shop, I noticed Sticks disconsolately seated in what might be called his best chair, seeing that the cover, though faded, was whole, and it lacked but one arm. This total disregard for the sanctity of his wares struck me as ominous, but confident, from the boy's description of me, that I should not be recognized, I went boldly forward. What was my astonishment to see him as I passed start from his seat and exclaim, "Is it you?" [Pg 700]

"The boy has betrayed us," said I to my inner self.

"Perhaps he was bribed by another half-franc," replied he, as if sneering at my liberality.

"Let us see what old Sticks will do," I remarked in order to change the subject.

Thereupon we stopped before the excited man, who was trying vainly to calm himself while he asked nervously, "Can I show monsieur something? Something cheap, *cheap*—a bargain, artistic, grand, beautiful."

"Not this morning, thanks."

"Ah, this is not kind. Enter a moment: the opportunity is there; do not disappoint it."

He stood before me, and laying one knotty hand on my sleeve gently pushed me over the threshold, while he murmured, "A bargain, beautiful, cheap." Mephistopheles could not have looked more persuasive as, pointing his other hand—which matched his wares by the loss of a finger—to a worm-eaten cabinet, he leered at me with the only eye he had left.

"I could not carry it," I said with a shrug.

"I will send the article," he answered, eagerly pulling a soiled bit of paper and the end of a pencil from his pocket. "What is monsieur's address?"

"He is anxious to know where I live: that is evident," said I to my usual confidant as I moved on and stopped before a table which had once been inlaid, but which now presented the appearance of a painted beauty whose rouge has dropped off.

"Monsieur's choice is wise," said the merchant, following me. "Real Louis Quatorze: and besides its beauty it has a secret drawer to recommend it. That, however, I can only show you in the privacy of your own apartment."

"I think he wants to steal the portrait," I remarked to the invisible presence accompanying me.

Then I asked the dealer, watching him closely the while, "Have you any pictures to sell?"

Sticks coughed nervously, looked about him, and walked the whole length of his shop, dusting the things with his red cap, before he spoke. He must have been much preoccupied thus rashly to destroy the venerable appearance of his stock. Then he said, "Perhaps *you* might have one you would sell?"

"I suppose you mean the one I bought of you. Why do you want it? In what does its value lie? What is the secret connected with it?"

The old man could not repress an involuntary "Hush!" Then recovering himself, he asked, "Will you sell it? I offer double what you gave."

I shook my head negatively.

"Name your price," he begged eagerly.

I obstinately continued to shake my head. There must be some reason for his wanting it back, and I resolved to find this out before I parted with it. Thereupon my inner self ejaculated "Nonsense!" but the dealer's anxiety was too evident, and his liberality too unusual, not to be suspicious.

"I must bid you good-morning," I said, in order to bring the matter to a crisis.

"Stay a moment: I will explain, I will tell you all. A poor widow sold me the picture: it was a portrait of the husband of her youth. Yesterday she came to buy it back: she had saved the money for this purpose sou by sou. Monsieur will not be cruel, and I promise to divide the profits equally with him."

"I can name my price?" I asked, stopping at the door.

"Certainly, monsieur."

"Tell the poor widow she had better spend her savings in buying a new husband instead of an old portrait. You can mention me as a pretender." With that I walked off, believing that I could come sooner to the truth by feigning indifference.

Several times during the day I imagined some one was watching me, and returning home at night I was sure I was followed; which proved to be true, as on reaching my door the shock-headed boy from the shop passed and whispered, "Be careful! They are on your track;" then disappeared before I could ask an explanation. [Pg 701]

"I wonder if Sticks meditates a night-attack, and has sent the boy to reconnoitre?" said I to my confidential friend.

"You had better bribe him to tell you," replied this ironical adviser.

But nothing happened until morning, when a woman, the concierge of the house I live in, knocked at the door and asked if it would be convenient for me to pay my rent that day: it would oblige the proprietor. This was an unusual request, the rent not being due for a week to come; but I counted out the necessary sum, and handing it to her went on with my preparations to go out. Still she remained, and when I turned to see what detained her, I saw her eyes fixed on the portrait.

"It is so like my son," she said, observing my regard. "Monsieur has not had it long?"

"No, a few days only."

"My poor son was killed," she continued, wiping her eyes: "he was a mason and fell from a scaffolding. If he had only been contented to be a street-paver, as I begged him, he would never have fallen."

"Blessed are the lowly-minded, for being already down they cannot fall!" This voiceless remark I made to my other self as a warning.

"It is such a broken-up portrait that monsieur cannot want it. I would like to buy it for a little sum if monsieur would sell it. My poor son! That hole in the forehead especially looks like Jean when I saw him last." Here she covered her eyes.

"How much did that one-eyed man give you to come and buy that portrait?" asked I, guessing that this was an envoy of Sticks.

"He?" she said, confused: "it was no *he*." Then recovering herself: "Monsieur is mistaken if he thinks I would take a bribe;" after which the lady withdrew.

"Was not my question well thought of?" asked I of my other self in triumph.

"I think you are becoming a monomaniac," was his complimentary reply.

The day passed uneventfully, although I still had a suspicion that I was watched, but I had no means of making it a certainty. When I returned home my first look was toward the portrait. It was still safe.

At that moment there was a knock at the door. I opened it, and found there my washerwoman, or I should say my washerwoman's substitute, one whom I had never before seen. She was a bright,

talkative little thing, a pearl of soapsuds, and said glibly that my usual attendant was ill, and she had come instead. I told her I was glad she had.

While putting down her basket her brown eyes took in the whole of my room, and she remarked with a shiver, "What a sad home you live in!—gloomy, ugly little chamber."

"Does your young man have a better one, my dear?"

"You are not my confessor," she answered saucily.

"I wish I were."

"Let me be yours."

"No objections."

"Who is the *joli garçon* you condemn to share with you this gloomy apartment?" She pointed to the portrait.

"A dear friend of mine."

"He looks as if he drank absinthe, and had broken his head on the pavement; nevertheless, I like him. Bring him to see me."

"Willingly: when shall we call?"

"As soon as possible: meanwhile I will carry this with me." She lightly jumped on a chair, took my portrait and retreated with it to the door, saying, "Rue Notre Dame de Lorette, No. 42, to-morrow."

"Not so fast, please," said I, taking the canvas from her hand.

"Stingy fellow! you might let me have it. He would be so much surprised when you brought him *chez moi* to see it hanging on the wall. Give it to me;" and she held out her hand with a charming gesture. [Pg 702]

"No, no, my dear: you may come and see it here whenever you like, but here it must remain."

I turned and hung it on its accustomed nail: when I looked again she was gone. Not even the sound of her foot on the stairs nor a moving shadow on the steps when I looked over the balustrade.

"Either the world is going mad, or I am," I exclaimed.

"You need not be in doubt which."

"Any one would think it odd. Could she be the forlorn widow in search of the portrait of the husband of her youth?"

"No."

"Does old Sticks look as if he could play a practical joke?"

"No."

"Or my concierge?"

"No."

"Or my washerwoman?"

"No."

"And this radiant little bubble of soapsuds who was just here, what do you think of her?"

But my other self, having nothing more to say, was sensible enough to keep silent, and we slept.

In dreams the pretty washerwoman and the portrait became mixed inextricably. I believed she looked like the portrait—that she was the portrait; and when I awoke in the morning and saw the melancholy eyes hanging opposite my bed, I could not help exclaiming, "Pardi! she does look like him! It is true her eyes are brighter and her dimpled chin rounder; otherwise the faces are the same. And did she not invite me to the house from which the portrait had been brought? I must see her again—the sooner the better." With this I arose and hurriedly dressed, my other self protesting against my resolution the while; but as the physical power is all on my side, he was obliged to accompany me.

We went to No. 42 Notre Dame de Lorette, and were met by the same disagreeable concierge that we had seen before. To my questions he answered that no washerwoman lived in the house, and when I insisted he exclaimed pathetically, "For Heaven's sake go away! I have a wife and six children."

I was so impressed by this startling information that I ejaculated, "What a philanthropist!" whilst my inner self, who luckily has not the gift of speech, said, "What a fool!" Then I remembered that asking after a washerwoman in Paris without knowing her name was rather quixotic, and I went my way.

During the day I still had the disagreeable sensation of being watched. Men appeared to be noticing me from alleys, street-corners and windows, and once I made a sale to an individual who I was sure observed me more than the lace he was purchasing. When I passed the shop in the evening, Sticks neither looked at me nor returned my salutation, and when I half stopped to examine a new piece of dilapidation on the sidewalk he whispered abruptly, "Move on, I beg of you: *your* custom is not wanted here."

Was it strange that a series of the wildest conjectures should fill my mind? It was just before the Franco-German war, when the whole of Paris was in a fever of excitement and every event seemed to predict a political crisis. But in what manner could I, a simple lace-selling clerk, be connected with it? This last reflection of course emanated from my plain-talking self, who would rather believe the whole world mad than that anything important should happen to me. I was "not made of the stuff that distinction loves," he said, and begged me not to think that the eyes of the Empire were upon me.

As I entered the house I tried to question my concierge about the pretty girl who had brought home my clothes, but found my efforts useless. The woman said she knew nothing of my washerwoman, not even her name. I tried by describing the girl to get a more definite answer. She intimated that she would have little to do if she looked at every one going up or down the stairs; then burst into tears, and begged me to leave her—that she was dependent on her place for support; that her reputation was all she had; and more to the same effect, which I avoided by making a precipitate retreat. [Pg 703]

I rushed to my room and to my glass, eagerly scanning the reflection therein to see if any change in my appearance within the last few days could cause people thus to avoid me, suspect me, and treat me as if contaminated. It was the same insignificant face I had known from childhood, with what my other self called a "stupidly innocent expression." I next thought of examining the portrait, taking it from the wall for this purpose. It was certainly modern: the slightest acquaintance with art settled this beyond doubt. (I must here acknowledge that my second self is rather a cultivated man; his discrimination has often been praised by the members of our firm; and it is owing to his delicate taste that I have been sent several times to Belgium to make large purchases of lace for our house; therefore I could rely on his judgment in this matter.) But might it not conceal another? I held it between me and the light, and could see through it, not only where there were holes, but everywhere between the interstices of the thinly-painted, badly-made canvas. I turned the back: there was nothing but the name of the seller stamped upon it: it was not likely he would remember who had bought this particular article. There was no frame, and I detached the cloth from the stretcher, that nothing might escape me. Not the slightest clew—no bit of paper, message or token. I put back the tacks, and was hanging my unsolved puzzle on the wall when I heard a knock at the door.

This time it was my *bonâ-fide* washerwoman, who came for the soiled clothes the other in her hasty retreat had forgotten, and as she gathered them together I carelessly asked after the fair unknown.

"She is my niece," was the reply.

"Does she live with you?"

"No: she lives in the country."

"Where?"

"I don't know."

"What is her name?"

"I don't know."

By this time the dame ended her task by tying the clothes in a bundle, and seemed in haste to be off.

"Is it not rather strange that you should know neither your niece's name nor where she lives?"

"I don't care," she said, defiantly resting a hand on either hip: "I will have nothing more to do with it." Here the bundle at her feet received a kick which sent it spinning over the floor, and she would have left the room had I not stood in her way.

"Why did you begin it?" I asked quickly, seeing here a chance of solving the mystery.

"She would take no refusal; and besides, she gave me twenty francs."

"What for?"

"Merely to allow her to carry home your wash. I hope you found nothing missing?"

"Nothing. But listen: I will give you another twenty francs if you tell me all you know about her."

"Make it thirty," she said eagerly.

"It shall be thirty."

"The young girl—"

"The brown-eyed one who brought my wash?"

"Yes. She came to my house on Friday last. Madame Trois, your concierge, had given her my address. The girl said she must see you in your room, and must have an excuse for going there—all for a bit of fun. But Madame Trois told me to-day that it was a picture she wanted, for she gave her fifty francs the day before for trying to get it, and promised her as much more as it might cost if you should consent to sell it. When Madame Trois failed, the girl asked what other woman went to your room, and she sent her to me."

"Then she is no niece of yours?"

"If I had a niece she would not be running about alone in that way; but the girl said if you should question me I must tell you she is my niece, and give her any name I pleased. As if I did not have enough trouble naming my own children without puzzling over one for her! especially when she gave me but twenty francs, and Madame Trois throwing it in my teeth that she got fifty! I am even with her now;" and she held out her hand for the money with the pose of a malignant Victory. [Pg 704]

"Is that all?"

"All about her, but Madame Trois says there is something wrong, for the house is watched by the police."

"Police!"

"Yes. Madame Trois is up to their tricks. Her husband that is dead was a policeman, and she says those that don't dress in uniform are the worst."

"Madame Trois says a great deal; for instance, she told me she knew nothing about the girl, nor of you either, not even your name," I remarked.

"*She* was paid enough not to tell; besides, she is dreadfully afraid of the police; and no wonder. Such a dance as her husband led her! though I must say she deserved it. We have been friends for years."

I saw there was nothing more to gain, so I paid the woman and dismissed her, while my two selves both talked at once, making a distracting duet that nearly set me wild.

Here was confirmation of my worst fears. I was under suspicion, for what cause I knew not, but the picture must be in some way connected with it. Had the portrait been stolen, and did its possession implicate me in the theft? Yet who would care to recover so worthless a thing? Should I destroy it and thus end the ravel? No, if innocent why should I fear? and was not this the only connecting link between me and the brown-eyed girl who strangely resembled it?

"Come what will, the picture shall be preserved," I exclaimed finally.

Nevertheless, my night was restless, and the day following it more so. I went about my business distraught, mixing the distinctions between Alençon and Chantilly, and not having even the poor satisfaction of quarrelling with my confidant, who now kept up a moody silence. I was glad when evening came that I might be free to think, but evening brought a new complication.

On entering the Rue St. Lazare, I saw a person who in the shadow of a porte-cochère appeared to await me. As I passed him he leaned forward and placed in my hand a packet wrapped and rewrapped with twine, whispering, "For the cause." Then I recognized the shock-headed boy from the furniture-shop. I was too much surprised at this to notice, as I should otherwise have done, two men who at this moment seemed to start from the darkness and keep near me until I reached my door. There they seized me by the arms, and before I could think of resistance had placed me in a cab standing in readiness.

We drove very quietly along the street until we stopped at what I found to be the police head-quarters. I omitted to say that one of my captors had grasped my hand holding the packet when he first seized me. This man never relaxed his grasp during our ride, nor while descending from the cab, nor while we threaded a long corridor leading to an antechamber; and when we finally stood before a person who appeared to be high in authority he still retained my hand. Thus I had no chance of getting rid of what I feared might be my ruin.

"Confront the prisoner," ordered the high personage briefly.

"I am here," replied one of my captors, whom I now recognized as the same individual to whom I had sold lace two days before.

"What is your charge?"

"This man is suspected of being connected with a secret society the principles of which are inimical to the Empire."

"Have you any proofs?"

"I saw him receive a secret communication to-night: it is here." With this he raised my hand.

"Stand forward."

I moved toward the light, while the officer unclosed my fingers, to which I offered no resistance.

There lay the packet enclosed with its many cords.

"What does it contain?" asked the great man.

"I have not ventured to touch it," answered he at my right obsequiously.

"Cut the cords."

This was done amid profound silence: my anxiety may be imagined as I awaited the result. There was as much wrapping-paper as string, and when the last fold had been carefully undone it revealed—two large sous. I breathed more freely. [Pg 705]

There was a pause of blank amazement on the part of the officials, a whispered conference, and the paper was held to the light, heated by the fire, and examined with a glass, without result. The sous were handled in the same manner, and finally their date and description were written in a book; after which came an order in the same quiet tone that had been used before: "Search the prisoner."

In five minutes more all the clothing upon me had been cut into shreds and minutely examined: even my hat did not escape, and my watch was opened. Of course nothing was found, but that did not alter the fact that my best suit of clothes was a heap of ruins. My pocket-book was turned inside out, and my passport, that I always carry with me, it being often necessary to start on my employers' business at a moment's notice, received a great deal of attention. At last other clothes nearly identical with those I had lost were handed me, and when I donned them I was given a hat; my pocket-book, passport and watch were returned; and the conductor of ceremonies begged my pardon for the slight (he called it *slight*) trouble he had occasioned me, said he found the suspicions of my accuser unfounded, and ordered him to "conduct the gentleman to his residence;" which was accordingly done.

When there, I could neither read nor sleep, and to escape the tormenting round of questions and answers that brought no solution to the mystery surrounding me, I resolved to spend the evening at the theatre. I went to the Français. It was useless: the dialogue unremittingly kept up between my two selves prevented my hearing that on the stage.

My eyes were wandering in dreamy abstraction over the mass of faces partly turned toward me during the entr'acte, when I was suddenly roused to full consciousness by recognizing in one of them the features of my portrait. The man was regarding me as if waiting to catch my eye: when he saw by my start of surprise that he had succeeded, he made a movement with his lips and turned away. In a moment he was lost in the crowd.

My inner self, who always doubts the evidence of the senses, suggested that it was a mistake. "Would this person, even were he the original of the portrait, know you or make you a sign?" said he, adding thereto other arguments, which, though I emphatically disbelieved, I was too agitated to contradict.

I tried to remain during the second act, hoping to verify my first impression, but after twisting my neck in order to look behind, and straining my eyes in front, receiving angry glances and "'Sh! 'sh!" from my neighbors, annoyed by these movements, I concluded to leave.

Close to the Fountain Molière I thought I heard footsteps following me: there was one pair besides my own in the street. I listened to them for some time, and finally they seemed to regulate themselves with mine.

"'Tis the police!" I confided to my other self.

"Always fearful," was his reply.

"You can be very cool: *you* have no neck in danger."

"I am happy to say *my* ideas need not be influenced by such paltry considerations. In fact, you are a coward!"

"You are a fool!" I returned.

At this desperate juncture the quarrel fortunately ended by its object coming nearer and in a deep musical voice saying, "Good-evening, friend."

"Good-evening," I answered gruffly.

"You don't appear to know me."

He took a shabby cap from his head and turned his face: a chill ran through me when in the dim street-light I recognized my portrait, moving, speaking, living. A black patch above the brow made me wonder if the wound it concealed passed through the head, as did that in the picture, and his eyes were more brilliant and eager than the painted ones, with their pathetic look changed to one of defiance, as if a devil had taken possession of those beautiful features. For a moment superstition kept me silent, then I said briefly, "I don't know you."

"Allow me to introduce myself—Favart the International. You are delighted to make my acquaintance, no doubt. Calm your transports: time does not admit of them. We start for Belgium to-night." [Pg 706]

"Who start?" I asked, now thinking the man a maniac.

"I, you, all of us."

"I am none of you."

"But you are suspected of being, which is worse, much worse. Hold! I will sketch your position accurately. Let us enter this cabaret: it is kept by one of us." I followed him mechanically, and when we were seated in a dark corner, with some wine he called for before us, he continued: "I divide the sketch into three heads, historical, personal and political. There is a theory called Socialism—a people called Socialists, or Chartists, or Communists: they have different names in different countries. You may have heard of them in the past: you shall hear more of them in the future. They have a good organization and magnificent sympathies."

"But you called yourself an International."

"Just so. Socialism is the idea, Internationalism is its result. And now the historic is mingled with the personal. This society was lately meditating a *coup:* it was necessary to have meetings, and we had to devise a signal for rallying. I submitted one to the committee, which was unanimously adopted as simple yet efficient. My portrait—I was not then sufficiently known to make it suspicious—was to stand outside the door of the shop where you found it on the days when a meeting would be held. The old furniture-dealer is one of us: so is the concierge of No. 42 Notre Dame de Lorette. About a week ago the former came to me in distress, saying the portrait had been sold in his absence: he did not even know to whom. I told him it must be recovered at all hazards, as it would cause great inconvenience and loss of time to fix on another signal. The next day you were supposed to have it through the inquiries you made at No. 42, where you frightened the concierge nearly out of his wits, he taking you for a spy. He immediately informed his friend the furniture-dealer that the police were on our track, and when told of the sale of the picture said you must have it. However, they did not dare bring mere conjectures to me: they watched and waited. On the third day after you passed the shop: the dealer knew you through the concierge's description, inveigled you in, and easily obtained the information he wanted about the picture, but failed to gain possession of it. Then Sidonia took the matter in hand—Sidonia always helps us out of a difficulty—but her attempts also failed, though she discovered not only that you were no spy, but that you were yourself under suspicion. The police were following us closely: they had found out the use we made of the portrait, which rendered its recovery profitless to us. I resolved to drop both you and it. Shortly after I perceived that it would be necessary for us to leave the city, and you being implicated, Sidonia insisted on my warning you before we went, though, as you do not belong to us, I could see no use in it."

"So, then, it was not the dealer's boy who informed on me?"

"No: he gave a description calculated to mislead. I believe he has by listening gained some half truths, and thinks *you* are an International: it was for that cause he gave you the packet which brought you into trouble this evening. Ha! ha! ha!"

"How do you know I have been in trouble?"

"Through one of our spies in the police service: he was present at your examination, and was detailed to watch you to-night. He told me of your being at the theatre; hence my opportunity of speaking to you. I can say no more: the political part of my sketch you have had a specimen of at the police-station to-night; if you stay you are likely to see more. Believe me, they only liberated you so politely in order, by watching you, to find your companions. To-morrow, after we are gone, there will be discoveries made through this same agent of ours in their employ. As they are already on our track, we take this method to gain their confidence for our man. If you fancy another examination by the police, remain." [Pg 707]

"But I am innocent!"

"Unfortunately, you are. You know absolutely nothing with which to buy your liberty. What I have told you will be of no service: it will be already theirs. If you wish to go to Belgium ask at No. 33 Rue Lafitte for a travelling suit: you will receive one like mine."

He looked down at his heavy shoes, soiled overalls and tattered blouse, then touching the latter with his fingers, continued: "I use it now for a disguise, but the day will come when this blouse will be our standard—the laborer shall possess the earth. He who works shall live, and idleness, with the riches that foster it, will end. Necessities shall be plenty and luxuries unattainable. Palaces shall fall to give material for poor men's dwellings; monuments that glorify one man at the expense of his brothers must disappear; and churches, promises of another world, can no longer trick us out of our share, our birthright, in this. Paris will arise a new and better Sparta. Sparta, great mother of communes! I salute you! Leonidas! Favart aspires to eclipse your glory! Not for one nation does he labor, but for humanity—for the workers of the world, whose rightful dues are filched from them by the drones. Nature resents this wrong: the drones must die."

He had risen as he pronounced these words, low but rapidly: a moment he stood before me, his face glowing, his hand clenched, then his expression rapidly changed, and he said briefly, "It is a time for action, not for words. Good-night!"

A conflagration, an electric spark, was this shabby man, and I could easily believe what I afterward heard of his influence with the people.

He left me with my mind more perplexed than ever. What had been the *coup* these people were meditating, in which I, in the eyes of the police, was implicated? Murder? Treason? Arson?

Nothing was beyond them with their magnificent sympathies. Perhaps this might be my only chance of escape; yet in doing so did I not cast my lot with theirs? should I not make myself doubly suspected? Embarrassing questions, to which neither self was ready with an answer. There was the prospect, too, of losing my situation if I remained long away, but in opposition to this practical consideration was the remembrance of my air-bath and the doubt about my future if I remained. In this chaos of thought can you guess what decided me? It was Favart's words: "We are all going." Did not *we* include her whom he called Sidonia, who had visited my room and had insisted I should be warned? Yes.

Not in disguise: I was in no humor to complicate the situation. Having my passport in my pocket, and knowing the policeman who was watching me would not prevent my flight, I simply walked to the station and took a first-class ticket to Brussels. First class, for I knew the man in the blouse must travel third, and I was anxious to be as far from him as possible.

I reached the frontier in safety. My examination ended, the officer turned to my only travelling companion, a lady who up to this time appeared to have been sleeping. As he threw the light of his lantern into her face I also looked at her. Good Heavens! could I be mistaken? The hair, it is true, was blond, and the dress a robe of deep mourning, but the eyes were the eyes of my portrait, the eyes of Favart, the eyes of my pretty washerwoman—Sidonia! The ordeal passed, the door shut, the train moved on.

"Have I your permission to speak, mademoiselle?" I asked in an agitated voice.

"If you wish, monsieur." She turned toward me a sad, tear-stained face that well suited her mourning.

"You are suffering: you have been weeping. Has anything occurred? Why this dress?"

"Nothing has occurred *yet*," she answered, trying to smile. "The danger for my brother is over once more. This dress is simply a disguise. God grant I may not soon be wearing it in token of sorrow!" [Pg 708]

"Is Favart your brother?" I asked eagerly.

"Yes, my only one. I cannot bear to lose him. And you too have become implicated: it seemed as if Fate led you on."

I did not dare tell her how I felt that any fate was blessed that brought me to know her, to see her again. The thrill I experienced at this unexpected meeting revealed to me the strength of my feelings.

"In a few days I think matters will be arranged so that you can return to Paris," she went on, "but I thought it best for you to be absent at first. I hope it will not put you to inconvenience. What do you do?"

I told her my employment, not without wishing it was higher, but she said sweetly, "I am glad you are a working-man: your hands are so white I feared you were an idler."

"You endorse your brother's principles, mademoiselle? You too are a Socialist?"

"I honor labor—any and all kinds of labor. They say they admire it, but do they work? Ah no! Once my Charles was different. We come of laboring people. Our father owned a few fields, which we cultivated ourselves. I kept the dairy and assisted in harvest and at the vintage. Those were happy days. The good curé taught us to read and write, and lent my brother books, but Charles has forgotten his kindness. He was discontented even then, and would throw stones at the park-wall that surrounded the château near our property, and scowl at the little marquises as they passed us on horseback when we were afoot."

"How did you come to Paris?" I asked, seeing that in her present state of excitement speaking relieved her.

"Our parents died: my brother had a taste for painting, and wished to go to Paris and study. Monsieur le curé had given him some lessons and was proud of his talent: he counselled me to accompany Charles, and came with us to get me a place in a shop and recommend Charles to an artist of his acquaintance; and yet Charles says the curés are not our friends! The rent of our fields, with what I received, supported us. We had two little rooms and lived together, Charles and I. He made such rapid progress! The portrait you bought he painted at my request in the evening, while I sewed beside him. We were so happy. O mon Dieu! why could it not have lasted?"

She covered her face with her hands and burst into tears, but only for a moment: before I could think what to say to comfort her she was again speaking: "I do not often weep, but this dress depresses me: it is ill-omened."

"Do not think so: you are tired, over-wrought, to-night. The danger is past, and maybe you can persuade your brother to return to his art, and happier days will come."

"Impossible! When he first joined the society I tried in vain. Now he belongs to it heart and soul. He has set an example of communism by selling our land and giving the proceeds to the cause, and he now lives on contributions, which he is not ashamed to take, because he believes that what the earth produces is common to all, and he only receives his rightful share."

"But you also belong—is it not so?"

"When I found he would not return I followed: we could not be separated."

"And you share all his danger?"

"All," she answered firmly. "Danger shared is lessened, you know. Where he is, I am. But I wished to speak of your affairs. I forgot myself: sorrow is selfish. You must write to your employers and give some explanation of your absence: in a week at furthest I trust you will be able to return without annoyance. I will see that information which will exculpate you is given to the authorities. And, as far as my brother and myself are concerned, I know from your face I can trust you."

I would sooner have had my homely features at that moment than those of Apollo. When I arrived in Brussels I wrote to my employers, as she requested, but after excusing my sudden departure I [Pg 709] begged them to recommend me to some firm in that city, for I resolved not to leave until I had offered Sidonia the protection of a husband. The answer to my letter was most favorable. I had the pleasure of showing it to Sidonia and telling her my plans, from which she tried to dissuade me with all the eloquence in her power.

"We are dangerous acquaintance, dangerous friends and dangerous enemies. The sooner we fade from your life the better," she said; but I would not listen.

The happiest month of my life I spent in Brussels. I found employment: I saw Sidonia every day, and if possible admired her hourly more. She had a quick judgment, born of the experience she had gained through the part she took in her brother's affairs. She knew whom to trust, and I am happy to say she trusted me; but, though frank, I never again saw the manner she had adopted when she came to my room: inclining naturally to be gay, she was always dignified. Once I ventured to apologize for the way I had spoken to her during that visit.

"My behavior gave rise to it," she answered. "I was obliged to act a part. But you gentlemen should have more respect for those poor girls whose daily wants often expose them to insult."

"After a man loves one good woman he learns to respect all women for her sake. You have taught me that lesson."

She taught me much more, my wise, my sensible Sidonia. With the example of her busy hands and the advocacy of her sweet lips my second self was brought to recognize the beauty and nobility of honest toil. Favart's life afforded an illustration of how the most exalted opinions can lead a man astray; and he humbly confessed that had my course been modelled according to his views, I should not now be able to offer Sidonia a home, which he heartily approved of my doing. I in turn acknowledged that I owed much in the estimation of my darling to his cultivation. I saw that she respected his acquirements, and that his longest conversations were agreeable to her; while had I been left with only the merits of lace to expatiate upon I should have failed to please.

But with my love my fears for her increased. Favart was seldom at home—now in England, now in Germany, now in Italy. What new scheme was he meditating? what new danger was he recklessly preparing for his sister? Tormented by misgivings, I resolved to make an effort to turn him from his course, and, failing in that, to gain his consent to a speedy marriage between me and Sidonia. Knowing his egotism, I approached him with a compliment: "Sidonia tells me you are the painter of the portrait that brought me into trouble: from its merit I should venture to predict great things of your future."

"Your prediction is likely to be fulfilled, but my fame will rest on something more profitable to humanity than painting."

"Do you never intend to paint again?" I ventured.

"Never: my time is employed in nobler work."

"Do you ever think of the danger you incur? do you ever count the suffering to others you may cause in attaining your object?"

"I think of success!" As he said these words the devil in his eyes flashed a triumphant glance, and I noticed for the first time the change for the worse that a few weeks had made in him. His face was haggard, his movements were restless: a life of constant excitement was telling on mind and body.

"And your sister?"

"She is worthy of me. With a mind fertile in resources she has an undaunted courage: we could not do without her. Twice she has saved my life, and once her address turned away the police from a meeting where there would have been at least twenty of our leading men arrested had they found us."

"And you never think of the danger she is exposed to? You never realize what an improper, what a cruel position it is in which to place a young and beautiful girl—you who are her natural protector? Listen to me, I beseech you: leave this life before it is too late; spare yourself, spare her; return to the ambition that made you happy before this frenzy seized you. I know now of [Pg 710] some lace designs you could get to make: it would be a beginning, and—"

"Lace designs!" he interrupted, contemptuously. "He seeks to bind a man's ambition with *lace*! he

would stifle the breath of purpose with *lace*! he would swaddle a sublime project in *lace*, until it is as weak as his own courage, as petty as his own soul! The noble idea!"

"I suppose it is nobler to live on contributions," I answered hotly.

"I take but my own. Nature provides enough for all if we behave as children of one parent and divide her bounty."

"Live as you please, run what risks you like, but spare your sister."

"That is, give her to you," he sneered.

"Yes, give her to me. I love her: *my* ambition will be to protect her. I ask for none better. And surely if you are not utterly selfish, when in peril you will be glad to know of her safety. Give her to me."

"Never! never! never! I waste time in talking to you. Your understanding is less even than I thought, but if Sidonia likes to have a tame cat about to amuse her leisure, I have no objections. As for a marriage with you, neither she nor I would think of it." So saying, with his usual abrupt manner he left me.

I made a passionate appeal to Sidonia. "Be my wife and leave the Internationals," I said. "What is the use of your sacrificing yourself for principles in which you do not believe? It is true, I can only offer you safety and love."

"Safety?" she repeated sadly. "Could it include my brother I would ask Heaven for no other blessing."

I begged, I pleaded, I argued, but to all she answered, "Who will save him if I am absent?"

I was obliged to wait and hope.

Now came the war, when disaster followed disaster until the Germans had completed the investment of Paris: then she begged me to go.

"Your country needs you: join the army of the Loire and do what you can to help it. You have been with us too long: already it would be difficult to make people believe that you do not belong to us. But if you serve suspicion will be averted. For my sake, go!"

"For your sake I stay."

"You are mistaken: if I need your protection you will be in a better position to give it by going than by staying."

"If you need my protection, will you let me give it?"

"I will."

"The protection of my name, the protection of a husband?"

"Yes, the protection of a husband."

It was an invention of her goodness, my darling! Knowing the monstrous plot the Socialists were meditating, she wished me to be absent. And I went, regretting only our present separation and fearing nothing for the future.

I was defeated with Motterouge, and afterward fought with D'Aurelle and Chanzy until hostilities ceased. On the third of March Paris was evacuated by the Germans, and fifteen days after followed the revolt of the Commune. Heaven only knows how I suffered during that time. I would have given my life to know she was safe: I would have risked it by deserting could I have hoped to find and protect her. But had she not said, "Where he is, I am"? and would not Favart be in the thickest of the fight? Oh cruel necessity! My best chance of meeting her was at the point of the bayonet with the troops.

Fort Valérien was taken: we entered Paris, and like a living web encircled the insurgents. Step by step they retreated, step by step we followed: we could not miss the way; ruin and blood marked their path.

On the twenty-sixth of May but one barricade remained standing. I was in the front rank when the order was given to charge on it, and amid smoke and noise and the glare of burning buildings we obeyed. There I saw Favart: almost face to face we met. His eyes the color of blood and starting from his head, his nostrils distended, his face livid, his hair and moustache bristling with rage, his hoarse voice shouting commands, he stood indifferent to danger, fighting like a wild beast, furious as a madman. A moment, and then, a bullet entering his forehead, he fell, and a [Pg 711] woman's shriek rang on the air.

Oh for the strength of a thousand men! oh for wings! oh for power! Might my whole life be contained in that moment could I but save her! Suddenly the street, the barricade, the houses on either side, trembled, heaved and leapt into the air. A tremendous explosion, with flame and debris, forced what remained of us to retreat—forced also the poor remnant of our enemy to surrender. A cordon was formed around the quarter, so that none escaped. Wounded, blackened, bleeding, torn, they crawled by, and she was among them, my darling, my angel—among those shameless women, those hardened men!

I could not save her, tried, convicted and sentenced at Versailles, my beautiful, innocent Sidonia. I wrote letters; my perseverance gained me admission to the highest authorities; I prayed, I wept, I pleaded, but the name of Favart closed every avenue to pity. The most active, the most cruel, the most merciless in the Commune, foremost in destruction, indefatigable in barbarity, her brother, the shadow of her life, was the cause of her death.

I heard the sentence pronounced, "Transportation for life:" it did not seem to move her. Wan, her once neat dress in disorder, a shadow of her former self, she sat immovable. Once I met her eye, but she did not recognize me: only when the wind accidentally blew back the torn sleeve from her white arm I saw a moment's consciousness, and she blushed as she replaced it. Haply, she was deaf to the cries of "Pétroleuse!" and shouts of imprecation that met her as she was taken through the crowd; but what fearful suffering must that sensitive mind have endured before its faculties were thus benumbed!

I gained one slight concession: I was permitted to write one letter to her before she was sent away. I begged her not to lose hope that after the first excitement was over I might gain for her a commutation of the sentence—to have courage and trust me. I received no answer. I do not even know if her condition permitted her to receive one ray of comfort from my love: I only know she died. She never reached Cayenne. The transport-ship was her deathbed, and the ocean my martyr's grave.

But I cannot die. Memory, the portrait, and I live together—the portrait at once recalling the angel, the devil, the joy, the sorrow of my life. Yet let me not curse him: he was her brother, and she loved him. I would not vex my Sidonia in heaven.

ITA ANIOL PROKOP.

"GOD'S POOR."

Who are "God's poor"?
  Not they alone who stand
  With empty, pleading hand
At Dives' door
  (Thou mayst be sure
  Such only are *man's* poor);
But they who therein stay,
  And every soul deny
  That lifts its needy cry.
"God's poor"—ay, *poorest* they!

E. R. CHAMPLIN

DAYS OF MY YOUTH.

[Pg 712]

The life depicted in the Waverley novels seems to me scarcely more remote than that in Virginia before the war. As is well known, the land, the wealth, the influence, the education were possessed by comparatively few families; and I think there has never been so much happiness enjoyed by any other community or class of people in this country as those families enjoyed for generations. Whatever may be said of their social system—and I am aware that it was not the best—it was perfect of its kind. From their point of view, everything was as it should be, always excepting the acts of one or the other party in politics. Life was made easy, and such exacting cares and responsibilities as could not be honorably evaded were met without friction, without struggle, without question. Beyond the observance of a few perfectly-defined habits and customs we did not feel it necessary to wander in search of social law. What a vast amount of the worry that perplexes too many other people we escaped! What does the world think? what will people say? whom shall we recognize? how do we appear?—such questions, that bring so many of my sex to premature gray hairs, disturbed us not. If one's standing was what it should be, all Virginia knew it; and that was the end of it. If one's standing was not what it should be, all Virginia knew that; and there, again, was the end of it. It is not easy for ladies reared under less settled conditions to realize how much this heritage meant to us. We loved our time-honored pleasures; we loved our friends; we loved the old homes and old ways in which our ancestors, undisturbed by the restlessness of the North and West, had lived and died before us; we loved our State.

To voluntarily put all this behind me after the meridian of life was passed; to take poverty for my companion and go forth into a world I had never seen; to send an only son to fight against the traditions, the kindred, the State that were so dear,—what this cost may Heaven spare the women of the North from ever knowing! *They* could hope and pray for the preservation of what they cherished and for the destruction of what they condemned. But the Southern woman who was loyal, view it as she would, could but hope and pray for the destruction of what she loved. Looking back now on those dreadful days, sorrowing for the sad necessities of the case, I can but

thank God for the fortitude and insight with which He then endowed me, for the result that at length justified my trust, and put away all other recollections of the later time as something too painful to dwell upon even in thought. The Virginia that shall live in my memory is one that is gone for ever.

Living as we did on a spur of the Blue Ridge, in the most salubrious part of the State, one would have thought there was no necessity for going elsewhere during the hot months. But my mother, near half a century ago, thought differently. About the first of July we always started on what I used to call, when a girl, our "pilgrimage." In an old-fashioned coach, round as an apple and lifted high in the air—which in my childish fancy was ever associated with the one the fairy made from Cinderella's pumpkin—with a fat old coachman, and horses as fat and lazy as he, we would make the distance of twenty miles a day. We accomplished about half this in the cool morning, stopping at some country tavern during the heat of the day, and driving another ten miles amid the shades of evening. Behind us, at a respectful distance, trundled our baggage-wagon. We had relations in every county, as all true Virginians were bound to have; and we would tarry for days with them on our journeys, with as little regard to reaching a definite place at a definite time as if a thousand years remained to us. [Pg 713]

One of these summer jaunts, when I was a girl, on which I first saw Mr. Madison, is particularly impressed on my memory. We sojourned several days at his lovely seat, Montpelier, Mrs. Madison being an old friend of my mother's. The venerable ex-President was then much emaciated, and I thought was failing rapidly. He lay most of the time on a couch in the middle of the room adjoining the dining-room, wrapped in a black silk dressing-gown elaborately quilted, and did not look larger than a boy of thirteen. At dinner the first day I was attacked by ague, and Mrs. Madison, leading me into the next room, placed me on his couch. I awoke an hour or two after in a high fever, and the look of his face which has outlived all others in my recollection is that of amusement which lighted the wan features on beholding the expression of bewilderment and confusion which overspread mine as I opened my eyes, half delirious, and found him lying beside me.

In her long talks with us on this occasion Mrs. Madison told many incidents of her life in Philadelphia and Washington. The two following are in her own words, as nearly as I can repeat them: "One day in Philadelphia," she said, "I was sitting in my parlor with a very dear friend, Mrs. R. B. Lee, when in walked Payne Todd [her son] dressed in my calico bed-gown. While we were laughing at the figure he cut, the servant threw open the door and announced General and Mrs. Washington. What to do with that dreadful boy I didn't know. He could not face the President in that garb. Neither could he leave the room without meeting them, for the door they were entering was the only one. I made him crawl quickly under a low, broad settee on which I was sitting. I had just time to arrange the drapery when the Washingtons entered. After the courtly greeting and the usual compliments of the season, there came from under the settee a heavy sigh, which evidently attracted the general's notice. However, I only talked and laughed a little louder, hoping to divert his attention, when—oh me!—there came an outcry and a kick that could not be ignored. So I stooped down and dragged Payne out by the leg. General Washington's dignity left him for once. Laugh? why he fairly roared! He nearly went into convulsions. The sight of that boy in that gown, all so unexpected, coming wrong end first from under my seat,—it was too much."

Mr. and Mrs. Madison would in private sometimes romp and tease each other like two children, and engage in antics that would astonish the muse of History. Mrs. Madison was stronger as well as larger than he. She could—and did—seize his hands, draw him upon her back and go round the room with him whenever she particularly wished to impress him with a due sense of man's inferiority. Speaking of their flight from Washington on the 24th of August, 1814, she said: "After Mr. Madison had left the White House for Fairfax, I busied myself in gathering up the little things I prized and packing them in the carriage, which stood ready at the door. I had placed a servant at the gate to warn me of the approach of the English troops. I had just left the sitting-room with a cup and saucer which had belonged to Marie Antoinette when in rushed my sentinel. After securing the portrait of Washington, and getting that into the carriage, I jumped in myself, and away we went for the Chain Bridge. I was dreadfully frightened, and expected to be pursued. We drove as fast as we could without breaking the carriage to pieces. I looked out of the back window, thinking I might see what was going on in Washington; and, sure enough, to my horror there was a British officer galloping after us at full speed, followed by some soldiers. I was so alarmed that I opened the door and sprang into the road. I had no bonnet—only a purple turban—on my head, and my face, I knew, was red as a poppy. In my excitement I thought I could run faster than the carriage. The officer passed me, wheeled suddenly, bowed low, and asked me if he saw Mrs. Madison, the President's lady, at the same time placing his hand in the bosom of his coat. I inclined my head, expecting that he would draw forth nothing less than a pistol. But it was [Pg 714] a package instead of a pistol that he offered, saying, 'I was requested to place this in your hands by Lady —— of England, and finding you had just left your residence, I questioned your servants and took the liberty of following you.' He turned with a low bow, and was gone, leaving me overwhelmed with mortification."

The seat that inspired *Swallow Barn* was the home of my aunt. John P. Kennedy was her nephew and my cousin. In its main features the book is singularly true, as an artist would say, in its effects. The prominent character of Mr. Tracy is almost a literal portrait. To me, so familiar with the real scenes, there seemed an appearance of rather too much restraint, as if the conscientious author felt too constantly the fear that his hand, gentle as it was, might transgress the laws of

hospitality and decorum. This feeling on my part arose, no doubt, from the single fact that I did know the reality, and thus knew many episodes that would have made the sketches richer to us giddy young people of that jolly household, but which did not commend themselves to the practised writer. He took pains to place Swallow Barn on the lower James. But it was west of the Blue Ridge, in Jefferson county. The mother of Kennedy was a very beautiful and highly accomplished woman. She was known among her friends as "Kennedy's angel." She excelled particularly in music, always tuning her piano herself, and giving her preference to the works of Mozart. Here at her sister's, Mrs. Dandridge's—at "Swallow Barn," as we may now call it—she and Kennedy's father passed their later years, and here many of Cousin John's happiest days were spent. He always retained his boyish love of fun. He and Washington Irving would come up to the old place together, and then beware! No one escaped their mischief. They spared neither age, sex nor previous condition. Such pranks, such absurdities, such good-natured deviltry, as reigned supreme till they were gone! During harvest they would take their seats under the trees with the hands at the long dinner-tables, and assiduously bottle up quaint sayings and odd doings for future use.

One adventure in particular, which I think is not alluded to in *Swallow Barn*, should have formed a chapter there. Kennedy himself was the ringleader, and his wife's father the victim. The old gentleman was expected to arrive on a certain day, as a visitor, from Baltimore. It was not long after Nat Turner's insurrection, and he had conceived an exaggerated idea of the affair. He was a little timid, in consequence, about travelling into Virginia alone at that particular time. John knew that his father-in-law was decidedly "nervous" on the subject. So he, with what we used to call "the clan," the endless line or circle of cousins—Dandridges, Kennedys, Pendletons—blacked their faces, clothed themselves like plantation hands, carrying old muskets, spades and forks, with cocks' feathers in the hats of the leaders, and marched to meet their prey. When "attacked" by the gang, the old gentleman gave himself up for lost. They surrounded his carriage, but before dragging him forth to his doom they began delivering to him the most preposterous harangue; which, notwithstanding his fright, led him to detect a son-in-law under the disguise of the principal desperado. Anger was useless with such a party, and by the time he reached the house his prayers for mercy had changed to laughter. Prominent in "the clan" and its diversions in those days was Colonel Strother, subsequently "Porte Crayon:" "Cousin Dave" was his title then.

When Hon. Charles J. Faulkner was married he was keeping bachelor's hall, and it was proposed that he should give his bride a breakfast the next morning. Kennedy was the master spirit in the arrangements. The table was covered with a cloth that was far from immaculate, and set with broken, cracked and odd pieces of china. The viands were bacon, corn-bread, etc., arranged in the most grotesque manner possible. When the bridal-party were ushered in, profoundly ignorant of the joke, they stood horror-stricken. Kennedy, solemn as an owl, clad as a butler and with [Pg 715] white apron, advanced and presented to the bride about a peck of great rusty keys strung on a chain that might have drawn a plough, the whole so heavy she could not lift them. And the speech in which he presented them! Any attempt to repeat or describe its drollery would only spoil it. I believe he never wrote anything so witty, so inimitably funny. He wound up by saying that he resigned, with tears in his eyes—which were tears of laughter—all authority and control over the establishment. When the farce was played out there was another announcement, and then a breakfast fit for the gods was served in earnest.

John P. Kennedy had no children, but was passionately fond of the children of his relations, especially those of his brothers, who in turn almost worshipped him. Making all allowances, of course, for the differences in their surroundings, the geographical difference in their homes, it always seemed to me that there was an interesting resemblance between him and Irving in many little things that the world could scarcely know. In what they have written the similarity of their humor and style must be apparent to every one, and Kennedy's literary character was fashioned very much, I think, by the influence of his more famous friend's. When quite a young man Kennedy edited, with some kindred spirits, a kind of Salmagundi paper in Baltimore, ridiculing most effectively a certain class of people whose pretensions so far exceeded their social worth as to make them legitimate game for his shafts. It was called *The Red Letter*. Many suspected, but none of the victims knew, who were the writers. Some amusing incidents grew out of it, the aforesaid victims being afraid to invite the aforesaid kindred spirits to their parties, but still more afraid not to invite them. Lest some reader should have a doubt about the attitude of this genial, gentle and true man on one important public question, let me add that one of the last things I knew of his doing was to induce Sheridan to send an escort of cavalry through to Martinsburg to bring out a young girl whose parents were Unionists and were then cut off by Southern troops, taking her to his house and educating her as if she had been his daughter. The last time I saw his friend Irving was when Kennedy was retiring from the Secretaryship of the Navy. The new administration had come in, and the members of the old cabinet were very busy in closing up and turning over their portfolios and arranging their personal affairs for departure. The domestic concerns of the retiring Secretary, whose guest Irving had been during the winter, were therefore in the same state of upheaval as were affairs at the department. I called to take leave of the family, but not a soul was in the house except Irving. I inquired lightly how he would dispose of himself in the general break-up, "Well," answered the quizzical old bachelor with mock plaintiveness, "I suppose Mrs. Kennedy will pack me up with the rest of the old crockery."

American country-life can hardly again be so picturesque as it was on some of the plantations of Virginia in my young days. The cavalcades of huntsmen returning with a fox-brush in the cap of the foremost rider, or counting their partridges on the porch before the ladies—partridges being the birds known as quails in the North; the riding in the great carriage to church, surrounded by

a retinue on horseback; the coming and going of company to spend the day, which meant from noon till twilight; the gathering of the rose-leaves to be dried and sprinkled over the table- and bed-linen for the odor they imparted;—an atmosphere whose charm cannot be reproduced envelopes these scenes of the far-away past.

The chief agricultural event of the year in the region where I lived was the harvesting of the grain. All the laboring white men who could be of service were employed with the slaves at such times. Their dinners were eaten at long tables under the trees, with a tub of iced toddy or mint-julep in the shade near by. Supper, when the day's work was done, brought hot coffee, rolls and biscuits, and a dance on the grass to the music of fiddle and banjo closed the scene at bedtime. [Pg 716] The long lines of "cradlers," following their leader and laying the golden swaths smoothly across hill and valley, were a sight which was lost with keen regret by me. I shall never forget when the first reaping-machine came clattering into the wheat-fields, sounding the knell of all that was most pleasing in the harvest-time. What a commotion that first reaper made! A certain distinguished Senator of the United States—I think he was then Speaker of the House—came from afar to witness its operations and to consider its introduction on his own rather unproductive plantation. After silently taking in its movements, his hands meditatively in his pockets and his chin buried solemnly in his neckcloth, he turned away in disgust, with a comment that was brief and to the point: "Wouldn't have such a d——d *fast* thing on my place!" Much of the distrust, however, with which improved utensils were regarded had a better reason. Complicated and delicate machines in the hands of plantation negroes were too much like "all the modern improvements" in the terrible hands of Biddy.

I saw personally but little of the darker side of slavery. The worst pictures I could draw from my own personal knowledge would not be sufficiently hideous to be interesting. The fairest I could draw would be of my old black "mammy." From my infancy she was the comforter, counsellor and guide whose sympathy and assistance never failed me. As dignified as a duchess; as neat in her striped, home-made dress, kerchief and turban as it was possible for mortal to be; jealous of the honor of the family; serene, affectionate, proud of her usefulness,—she is among the first from whom I expect a loving welcome in heaven. My father gave her free papers after she had nursed a sick member of the family with especial faithfulness on one occasion. She locked them up in her trunk, and that was the end of them, except when she took them out to show to her friends. I think it gratified her to receive them, however. I recollect the incredulity of a good lady from Boston, who asked her if she would not like to live there, where there were no masters and mistresses. "No indeed, honey!" was the reply.

When a girl I passed a winter in the White House. It was during the last term of General Jackson. That high white head; the perpendicular hair; the clear blue eyes—one moment melting with a woman's tenderness, the next blazing like an angry lion's—peering earnestly from under the great shaggy eyebrows and over the top of the silver spectacles; the furrowed, pained face, worn with suffering and perpetual warfare, but occasionally lighted by a sudden gleam of the old fire, which nothing but death could quench, when his cane would come down with a thump and "By the Eternal!" would break forth—the nearest approach to profanity ever heard from his lips by me, or by anybody, I think, at that period of his life,—how vividly all these come back! I saw him at his best. The storms of life had wellnigh passed. His beloved wife was beckoning him to a world of rest and peace. He was the idol of a majority of his countrymen. He occupied a second time, in obedience to their voices, what he regarded as the most honorable position that any man could hold on earth—the Presidency of the United States. In pursuing what he took to be right he had conquered everybody and everything that opposed him. He had ever been the incarnation of chivalry toward women. It is natural, therefore, that under all these circumstances, in those last days of his and first days of mine, he should have appeared to me a higher type of man than many people would judge him to be from a strictly dispassionate consideration of his whole life. I was never given to hero-worship, but at that time I did come near worshipping this old hero. I am not here questioning the justice of his latest and completest biography—Mr. Parton's—but would simply remark how difficult it is for me, seeing him as I did, and only so, to realize that he was the same being who enlivens some of the earlier scenes of that book. Toward the women he [Pg 717] respected—and there hardly seemed to be one whom he did not respect—he had a courtliness of bearing, a considerateness, a gentleness, a nobility—in short, a charm of manner—which made him, as a mere "carpet knight," the most winning old *gentleman* I ever knew.

In speaking of the superstitions of the Scotch-Irish, Mr. Parton says: "General Jackson himself, to the end of his life, never liked to begin anything of consequence on Friday, and would not if it could be avoided without serious injury to some important interest." So far from abstaining from any undertaking on Friday, the general has told me himself that he made it a point to start on a journey and begin such things on that day; and he laughed at the superstition. Nevertheless, I am inclined to suspect that this very fact should be taken as evidence that the superstition did exist in him; that he was conscious of it; that his judgment told him it was an unworthy weakness; and that he was determined to conquer it. He acknowledged its influence by the care he took to defy it.

In those days visitors to the White House knocked or rang as they would at the mansion-door of any private gentleman. One rainy day a visitor thus announced himself, but for some reason no servant appeared immediately to admit him. The family heard it, and so did the general in his office, where he was writing. It did not occur to me or any one else that interference with the servants' duties was necessary. Suddenly there was a rustle of papers and an apparition. "What!" thundered the President. "A citizen of the United States stands knocking at my door in the rain,

and it isn't opened!" The door was opened soon after that remark.

One day the general received a letter of four or five pages of foolscap from Ireland—I do not know whether it came from Carrickfergus or not—in which the writer said that he was a cousin of the President's, and that he recollected perfectly when the general was born, and gave the exact locality and all the attendant circumstances. He closed by saying he would like to come over. Jackson laughed over the letter, and expressed his surprise that he should have been born in Ireland and in Carolina too.

It was his custom, when he had no one dining with him besides the family, to say, as he raised his single glass of wine, "Here's to absent friends!" Then, glancing toward me, he would add in a low tone, "And sweethearts, too,——."

On one occasion, when I was ill, the general called in Dr. Hunt, his family physician. The doctor was a tall, lank, ugly man—"as good as gold," but with none of the graces that are supposed to win young ladies; yet he was married to one of the loveliest young creatures I ever knew. General Jackson accompanied him to my room, and after my pulse had been duly felt and my tongue duly inspected, they drew their chairs to the fire and began to talk.

"Hunt," suddenly exclaimed the President, "how came you to get such a young and pretty wife?"

"Well, I'll tell you," replied the doctor. "I was called to attend a young lady at the convent in Georgetown. Her eyes were bad: she had to keep them bandaged. I cured her without her ever having had a distinct view of me. She left the institution, and a year afterward she appeared here in society, a belle and a beauty. At a ball I introduced myself, without the slightest ulterior design, as the physician who had restored her sight, although I supposed she had never really seen me. She instantly expressed the most heartfelt gratitude. It seemed so deep and genuine that I was touched. That very evening she informed me that she had a severe cold, and that I must again prescribe for her. Well! it don't look reasonable, but I did it. I wrote my name on a bit of paper, folded it and handed it to her, telling her she must take that prescription. She read it and laughed. 'It's a bitter pill,' she said, 'and must be well gilded if ever I take it.' But whether it was bitter or whether it was gilded, we were married." [Pg 718]

The hospitality of the White House at that time, like that of the Hermitage, has become proverbial. Very few brought letters of introduction who were not invited to dinner. Consequently, the table was almost always full. It seemed to me that Jackson never heard of a wrong to any human being, or what he conceived to be such, without trying to right it.

When Aaron Burr was at the Hermitage in 1805 he wrote in his diary, for the entertainment of Theodosia: "The general has no children, but two lovely nieces made a visit of some days, contributed greatly to my amusement, and have cured me of all the evils of my wilderness jaunt. If I had time I would describe to you these two girls, for they deserve it." The temptation is strong to give the descriptions omitted by Mr. Burr, but it would lead me too far. They were nieces of Mrs. Jackson rather than the general's. One of them, whom he had adopted as his daughter, married her cousin, A. J. Donelson—her own maiden name being also Donelson—who was secretary to the President when I knew them, afterward minister to Austria, and candidate for Vice-President in 1856 on the ticket with Mr. Fillmore.

One Sunday evening, after dinner, Mrs. Donelson, Mrs. Jackson and I, with several other ladies, were gossiping in the Blue Room. This Mrs. Jackson, who had been a pretty Philadelphia girl, was the wife of another cousin and nephew who was born a Donelson, but who was adopted by the general, took the name of Jackson and inherited the Hermitage. Mr. Van Buren, then Secretary of State, had what is now known as "the inside track" for the succession. He, was the friend and choice of Jackson; and that settled it in the minds of those who knew both men. Mrs. Jackson—the lady mentioned above, of course, for the General's wife did not live to see the White House—disliked Van Buren for some reason. Mrs. Donelson, turning to me with affected gravity, said, "When you are Mrs. President Van Buren, I want you to send my husband to England as minister." I solemnly assured her she should have whatever she wished. Then Mrs. Barker appealed to me in behalf of her husband as collector at Philadelphia. Turning to Mrs. Jackson, I asked what she would like. "Nothing at Mr. Van Buren's hands," was the sudden reply. At that instant I heard a rustle behind me. There stood Mr. Van Buren! He was smiling, and evidently amused. We were so completely caught that there was no resource but the suppressed giggling little scream that never fails a true woman when no other strategy is possible. He gave no intimation of having heard a word. Indeed, I never saw Mr. Van Buren's perfect self-possession fail him but once: that was when he fell off his horse for me on Pennsylvania Avenue. And with this ridiculous performance these rambling reminiscences must end.

One fine spring morning the President insisted that we should invite the Cass girls, the Forsyths and some others, make a riding-party, and return with them all to the White House for lunch. He sent to Mr. Blair for the white horse he had ridden in a grand procession at New York, which Blair had bought. This fiery charger, very appropriate for such a horseman as General Jackson on a state occasion, was so spirited and appeared so unmanageable that I was afraid to touch him. But the general had made up his mind that I should ride that horse on that occasion, and I knew what it meant when his mind was made up. He put me on himself, saying, "Why, child, if you can't ride him, you couldn't ride a sheep." We reached the avenue very well, when the horse seemed to remember New York and General Jackson. He reared, plunged and dashed off. Mr. Van Buren, in trying to seize the reins, was drawn from his own saddle and dragged some distance. His position for a few moments was rather undignified, but he came up smiling and

unhurt, and made as creditable an appearance as could be expected. We had a happy day in spite of the mishap, but not even the will of General Jackson ever got me on that horse again.

M. T.

A LAW UNTO HERSELF.

[Pg 719]

CHAPTER XIX.

The reason which Mr. Van Ness offered for Jane's disappearance, he protested, would suggest itself to everybody as the only possible one: her grief had deranged her, and she had wandered away bent on self-destruction. But the house was filled now with the friends of the captain, among them Judge Rhodes and Mrs. Wilde, and he read doubt and lurking suspicion on every face. The judge, it is true, directed the hurried searches through the grounds and the dragging of the lake.

"But I wish the captain had not pushed the marriage so hard. Drill-major to the last gasp. I was to blame in suggesting it at first," he said, point-blank to Van Ness.

"Suicide? Nothing of the kind," said Mrs. Wilde. "Jane is eccentric, as every thoroughly truthful woman is. But sane. One of the sanest people I know."

She summoned Betty, and the two women were closeted together for half an hour.

"You should have sent for me," she said when the story was ended. "The child should not have been left to the tender mercies of these men. Call him in."

When Van Ness appeared he saw that the old lady's eyes were red.

"You are going in pursuit of her? Mrs. Nichols has told me all," she said blandly.

"I shall search for her, undoubtedly. Her mind was evidently shaken. There is a bare chance that she may have gone on the train. But the river being so near and her grief so great, I fear the worst, Mrs. Wilde."

"No doubt, no doubt! But if you do follow her on the train—How was she dressed, Betty?"

"In gray. Black hat and gray feather," said Betty like a parrot.

"Thank you! That will be of assistance to me.—They are trying to help her escape," he thought as he went out, with a bow and melancholy smile. He had waited to talk with Mr. Lampret. He asked him for a certificate of the marriage.

"If my wife is living and wandering insane through the country, it will be necessary to prove my right to claim her."

To his surprise, the clergyman grew red and stammered, with a painful anxiety in his boyish face.

"I fear we were too hasty, Mr. Van Ness. Are you quite sure she consented freely to the marriage? There was no moral compulsion used?"

"There was none," coldly. "My marriage, as I believe, had in it all the elements of future happiness. Besides, that is hardly a question, it appears to me, for you to consider now. Whether suitable or not, the marriage was legal. When can you give me the certificate?"

Mr. Lampret did not speak for a moment. "I suppose it is irrevocable," he said with a long breath. "The making out of the certificate will involve a delay of a couple of hours."

"I shall wait for it," said Van Ness.

It was midnight before he left The Hemlocks and took the train into New York. There he had other work to do, which consumed an hour or two. He must lay plans to free himself from any hold which Charlotte had upon him. He had not courage to live, in even the rare delights to which he looked forward as Jane's husband, with that sword at his throat. He could find no trace of Charlotte. But he wakened up a lawyer (not the eminent counsel who systematized his vast benevolent schemes), and gave him full instructions and a blank cheque.

"I must have this connection closed at once. And at any price," he said as he left the door at one o'clock in the morning.

"To Desbrosses street ferry. In time to catch the Philadelphia express," he ordered the cabman. [Pg 720]

He had not tried to find a clew to her in New York. She was unknown there—not likely to be recognized even by officials on the trains running up to The Hemlocks.

"She would try to escape from a place where she is a stranger. But it would cut her deeply to leave her father unburied," he argued shrewdly. "She would go direct to their old home in

Philadelphia, where the associations with him were strongest. She is full of such foolish notions!" He glowed with admiration of these warm affections, so becoming to a beautiful woman, as he leaned back in his seat in the car. Van Ness had indeed a keen appreciation of fine sentiments in books or in people. A noble thought fitly uttered or a pathetic strain of music would bring the tears to his eyes. All his friends will testify to-day that he is a man of most sensitive nature. He remembered this admirable trait in himself as he sat thinking over his future married life that night. It was one of the means by which he would be sure to win the love of his wife, and drive away her grief for the poor old captain. He took out a tiny volume from his pocket and studied it carefully by the dull light of the lamp overhead. The conductor, who knew the great Christian financier by sight, looked on reverently at a distance. It was some epitome of wisdom that he pored over: perhaps the Book of books. There was, in fact, a little mirror set in the inside of the binding. Van Ness studied the glisten on his yellow beard, the gluey softness of his blue eyes. "There never was a woman who would not yield to me," he thought, shutting the book. "But it does not matter whether she does or not," he added, his fingers searching for the marriage certificate in his pocket and closing on it with a fierce grip.

CHAPTER XX.

Van Ness had really but slight knowledge of the places in which Jane's early life had been passed. On reaching Philadelphia he was forced to search through old directories for the houses in which the captain had lived, and go to them in turn—a tedious process enough, as the old man had migrated, as his whim or purse dictated, from Kensington to Southwark, from a close-built block in the business quarter to a tumble-down cottage on the Wissahickon. It was near night before he arrived at the old house surrounded by trees in the Neck which had been their last home in Philadelphia. Disappointment and secret rage had only made the unctuous sweetness of his manner a little coarser in flavor. The woman who came to the door adjusting a pink bow at her collar found his familiar greeting exactly suited to the level of her own breeding.

"A young lady? With blue eyes and yellow hair? Oh yes, sir. Colored pretty much like yourself. But she don't favor you, either. Come in! come in! My name's Crawford. Young lady's yer sister, likely?"

"At what time was she here?"

"Just at breakfast-time. Well, say seven. She didn't come in no furder than this room. Said she'd lived here with a friend, and would like to take a look ag'in at the old place. She sat there, on that settee, and looked in the fire a while, and then went out to the garden and walked up and down. I suspicioned she wa'n't right in her mind," volubly. "The idee of comin' back to look at a house and yard! I guess I was right. Somethin' wantin'—eh?" touching her forehead.

"Yes. Do you know in which direction she went, Mrs. Crawford?"

"I haven't the least notion. If I'd ha' had any intimation, now, that she had escaped from her friends, I'd ha' done all I could to help 'em. My George could hev' followed her all day, for that matter. What was the cause, now? Religious excitement? Disappintment?"

"Both, both! You did not observe her dress, I suppose?"

"Oh yes, I did. Brown waterproof and brown hat. 'Twouldn't be easy to trace her by her dress."

"Did she speak of returning here?"

"No. I wish I'd incouraged her!" her zeal reaching fever-heat in this hinted tragedy. "She come in an' thanked me very gravely, an' said she would probably never see the old house ag'in. Poor thing! She gave George some money, which wa'n't at all necessary, I'm sure." [Pg 721]

"If she did not expect to see the house again, she meant to leave the city," said Van Ness when he was again in the street. "She will be easily traced at the railway-stations."

But in this he was disappointed. Young women dressed in the uniform travelling costume daily came and went in troops through the avenues of travel: a dozen indifferent ticket-agents had hazy recollections of this especial traveller on her way to Boston, to San Francisco, to Baltimore. Mr. Van Ness, too, found that his own social dignity and prominence sorely hindered his researches. Everybody in the city knew Pliny Van Ness by sight. It would not do for him, as for any common man, to go from office to office inquiring for the heroine of a mysterious elopement. The Christian humanitarian must keep his garments clean of suspicion as jealously as Caesar's wife.

Reporters, too, had their eyes upon him, turn which way he would, for the opinions and movements of Mr. Van Ness had long furnished welcome material for the columns of "Personals" in the morning journals. What if a hint of this episode of his marriage and his wife's disappearance should creep into the blatant newspapers? He moved, threatened, hampered, by this open-day terror, one unsuccessful day slipping into another until three weeks had gone by.

Early one chilly October morning he found himself without any definite aim knocking at Mrs. Crawford's door, and was welcomed by her with effusion, for she had supposed her chance of any share in the tragedy to be gone.

"And you hain't found her yet, eh? Dear! dear! If I'd only knowed in time! It's told on you, sir. Yes,

indeed. You've aged considerable in this month."

The only real change in Van Ness was a certain new alien expression which was now and then perceptible under the blandishment of his smile, like some savage beast peeping out from behind the painted canvas of his cage. His news from the lawyer in New York was unsatisfactory; he was baffled at every turn by insignificant difficulties in his search for Jane; there was every temptation for the beast which was in him to break its bonds. But luck had turned for him.

"Dear! dear!" continued Mrs. Crawford. "Have you tried the police? Though they're of little account. She could not have come to any bodily harm. The dog would protect her."

"Dog? You said nothing about a dog. Had she that damnable brute with her?" starting up.

"A large hound; sir. Why, to be sure, I told you!—Lord! he's gone!"

Here at last was a clew! It proved effectual. The agent at the Pennsylvania Railroad office remembered distinctly the young girl who wished to take her dog with her down to some station on the coast, and the difficulty which the train-master meant to make about it. "But she took him," he added. "She was a very beautiful woman. Nobody cared to refuse her."

Van Ness went down to the Branch, to Beach Haven, Manasquan, all the fishing-villages along the coast, among the rest to Sutphen's Point. He talked to old Sutphen himself, his foot resting on a barnacle-eaten log where Jane herself had sat the day before. But the old man was loyal. He was stupid, stared vacantly at Van Ness, had seen no young woman and no dog: there had never been any such at the Point. Van Ness went hurriedly on to the next station, spent a couple of days in the search, and returned to Philadelphia.

"So the young lady came back before you?" said the agent, nodding familiarly as he passed the ticket-window.

"Yes. You saw her?"

"Oh, she bought her ticket of me. Yesterday, you know."

"For what point?" Van Ness's voice was so hoarse that the man heard him with difficulty. [Pg 722]

"Richmond. Took the dog, too."

"Give me a ticket for Richmond, please. When does the next train go?"

"In half an hour. She has twenty-four hours the start of you, sir," with a significant laugh as he handed out the ticket and change.

Van Ness arrived at dawn the following morning at the little wooden shed with its garden of dahlias and lilacs which called itself a dépôt on the outskirts of the drowsy country town so lately the focus on which had rested the eyes of the civilized world. Two or three negroes bustled into activity as the train rolled in: an old woman dusted the rocking-chairs about the stove. They all remembered the tall, handsome young lady with the dog, who had flung about her money so freely the day before.

"I brought her breakfast, sah. I'm Dabney. Everybody knows Dabney's reliable. Mighty fine hound, sah. De young lady went on to Morganton, Nothe Callina. Oh, tank you, sah!"

Morganton is a village perched on a spur of the Blue Ridge, made dusky by shadows of overhanging hills. The garrulous landlord of the inn was ready to point out his prey to Van Ness.

"A lady? Miss Swendon, you mean? I've known her since she was a child. Captain Swendon came to the Balsam Mountings for years for the hunting. Allays brought the little girl. She's broken down terrible. Her father's death's interrupted her, powerful."

"She is here, then?" lowering his voice.

"No. She went on to the captain's camping-ground on the Old Black. Seemed as if she must go every place where he had been. He allays buried himself among the mountings. I doubt if you can find the place."

"Where Miss Swendon can go I surely can follow."

"Dunno. She's used to the mountings. P'raps you can get a guide at Asheville. It's the last place whah human beings live—high up on the Black: an old hunter, Glenn and his wife—kind, decent people, but not jest civilized. The captain was allays in cahoot with them, and they was powerful fond of Jane."

There was no regular conveyance then across the Blue Ridge to Asheville. Van Ness crossed the range on horseback with a guide: the horse broke down, and caused a delay of a day. He arrived, therefore, at the little hill-town late in the afternoon of Friday. Miss Swendon had gone up into the mountains two days before, he learned, with the old hunter Glenn, who happened to be in the village with a load of roots and peltry.

"I must go on to-night," said Van Ness urgently.

The ex-Confederate colonel who kept the inn surveyed him leisurely. "Glenn's house lies about thirty miles up in the Balsam Range," he said deliberately. "The passes are dangerous in daylight:

it would be impossible to make the ascent at night. I shall not be able to find a guide for you until to-morrow."

Van Ness was exhausted in mind and body. The night's rest was tempting.

"I shall find her at this man Glenn's? She will not go farther?"

The colonel laughed: "Not unless she turns hermit or takes up her lodging with the wild beasts. Glenn's hut is the last human habitation on the mountains. You have her, sure."

"Then I will take supper and a bed."

He slept soundly that night, and sipped his coffee at breakfast comfortably, smiling now and then to himself. The silly creature was making herself happy this morning in the mountain-fastness, going over her father's old haunts, thinking that she was hidden where he would never find her. But how easily he had run her down! The horses and guide were waiting at the door. Before the sun set he would have her in his hold securely, as easily as he could grasp that bird in its cage yonder.

Glenn's house was in fact but a rambling log hut built under the shelter of one of the peaks of the Old Black. The Appalachian ranges at this point reach their highest altitude on the continent. The unbroken primeval forest came up to the very door of the hut. A few feet off a stream, the head-water of the Swannanoa, dashed over the precipice. [Pg 723]

As the sun was setting that evening, the old hunter's wife waited in the door to meet Jane, who came slowly down the gorge, with the dog beside her. The two women stood together watching the red ball of fire go down behind Old Craggy. It threw sharp shafts of light into the heavy cloud that hung halfway up the peak, while overhead the sky was green and translucent as the sea.

The hunter's wife did not speak to Jane as she stood beside her, and did not watch her. The incurious habit of silence of these mountaineers rested the girl. They had been her friends when she was a little girl: she had come back, as sure of finding their friendship as the rock on which their house was built. She had come up with her heart and brain full of unwholesome sickness to be cured in these silent solitudes of the world. The cure was begun. Her eye was clearer, the hopeless load was lifted from her life. What did pain matter? Or death? There was about her here a great repose in which these things faded out.

She looked at the glittering stream close by, at the unending slopes of underbrush blazing scarlet with the rowan and the shonieho, and then beyond these lower hills—fold and fold of living color—to the great bare peak wrapped in clouds, a few dead trees climbing its base, which stands like a mighty warder of the Atlantic coast. The tears rose to her eyes.

"One must have a mean and selfish soul to be unhappy here," she thought. The twilight fell suddenly. The sides of the mountains went into shadow: only the sky about the peaks burned redly. Jane went in and sat down by the old hunter before the big log-fire.

"I wish you to let me stay with you," she said. "I have a little money, which will last a long time here. After it is gone I can make more, somehow."

Glenn for answer only put out his hand and touched hers gently. The hand was as bony as her father's, and his hair was as white. That comforted the girl more than any words. His wife, who was always the speaker, said, "You've always been welcome, Jane. You know that. You won't need money. We get our living out of the mountings for the taking of it. When your father was gone it was nateral for you to come straight here, an' to stay."

"Yes, I will stay," said Jane.

Presently the old man raised his hand: "Hark! There's folks coming."

"I hear nothing, father," said Mrs. Glenn.

"Yes. There's horses at the lower ford. Two of 'em. They're acrost now. It's more'n a year since anybody's bin up the mounting. Kin it be any one a-followin' you, Jane?"

She got up slowly: "Who could follow me?"

The next moment the hoofs of the horses rang on the shelving rocks outside. The door opened, and Van Ness stood on the threshold.

CHAPTER XXI.

The Scotia was within a few hours of Liverpool. The passengers were all gathered on deck—the women, eager and garrulous, eying each other a little curiously in their new costumes—even the most *blasé* traveller among them roused by the smell of land. Miss Fleming, however, sat quietly apart, with Mr. Neckart beside her. The other passengers were accustomed to see these two together, silent and uncommunicative even to each other. Cornelia had early understood that Neckart's ailment, whatever it was, whether mood or disease, craved quiet. She instantly suited herself to its need. Captain Swendon had always rejoiced in her as one of the most loquacious

and sociable of human beings. Bruce, on the contrary, was strongly attracted by the aloofness and unconscious repose of this taciturn woman, who held herself apart from the vulgarly fashionable crowd in the cabins, not being of their kind. He fell into the habit of taking his seat near her, partly to avoid the others, partly for the comfort of being able to sleep, talk, or be silent [Pg 724] undisturbed. After a few days he began to be conscious of a fine similarity of taste and convictions between them. Whether it was a question of political law or the color of a curling wave, Cornelia's thought about it evidently ran in the same groove as his own, though more weakly, as became the intellect of a woman. A word or a laughing glance was enough to convey this subtle sympathy between them. It had undeniably soothed and brightened the passage.

Bruce Neckart, at night, alone in his state-room, knew that he had left ambition, love, happiness, behind him—that he was cut off from all the chances of life. At night the indescribable feeling of vacancy at the base of the brain, the stricture as of an iron band about his jaws, the occasional sudden numbness of nerve and thought, as though he were stricken for the instant with extreme old age, were hints which brought his approaching fate before him as with a horror of great darkness. But on deck, in daylight, the swell lapping the vessel, his feeble appetite gratified by a well-cooked meal, there was some interest yet to be found in the Southern problem or the claims of the Pre-Raphaelites; and he was grateful to Chance for this companion who sat ready to grasp any subject which attracted him, with a woman's fine intuition, but who demanded only the personal courtesy due to an innocent, manly boy. She showed him, too, during the voyage, much womanly, personal kindness, for which, being of an honest, affectionate nature, he was grateful.

Now that they were nearing land, therefore, Mr. Neckart's thoughts as he sat beside her were wholly busied with his companion. He was heartily sorry for her. Ordinary observers, he reflected, would mistake her for one of the strong-minded Advanced Sisterhood, but he knew her to be sensitive and delicate in the extreme. He felt a certain sense of ownership in her as his discovery. How was she to find her way alone in Europe? He had meant to cut absolutely loose from every tie of his past life on landing, but this thread held him still. Could he arrange any future occasional intercourse with her? He did not mean to hamper himself at all. Still, he might be useful to her, etc., etc. In short, the pillow on which he had rested his aching head had been warm and pleasant to him, and he threw it away reluctantly. There really was no reason, he argued (according to the invariable argument of men concerning this woman), no reason whatever, why firm and fervent friendships should not exist between persons of opposite sex. He would have been insulted at a hint that this sympathy, *bonne camaraderie*, with the little woman in green beside him involved disloyalty to Jane. The little woman, however, gave neither of these fine names to their traffic of sentiment. The Cornelias of their sex make no mistakes in this matter.

It was a sombre, foreboding day. The passengers were gathered on the forward deck. Neckart and Cornelia were alone, the gray fog shutting them in. She sat with her head turned from him, immovable, but he was conscious, through the strong subtle magnetism that belonged to this woman, of the powerful excitement which she controlled. He quite forgot his own trouble. This delicate, lonely creature venturing into the world! He asked her some questions as to her plans on landing, but she answered vaguely. She heard only the throb of the steamer beating out the few moments left to her. Her whole life was risked upon this voyage. Had she failed? There was but an hour left. What woman could do she had done. Good God! why must she be silent? Her whole soul had called out for this man for years: she had loved him with a man's force of passion. Why could she not speak now and tell him so? She must sit beside him dumb, lifeless, unless he put out his hand to take her!

"Half-past four," said Neckart, looking at his watch. "I am sure you are sorry the voyage is so nearly over."

She did not speak, but he caught a gleam in her eye that startled him. Under all her coldness she [Pg 725] was a strange, vivid creature well worth study. He leaned forward eagerly,

"Your undertaking terrifies you, now that the time has come. You would rather turn back?"

She moved restlessly under his keen scrutiny, as though it hurt her. Her hands were clasped on her knees, her eyes fixed on the black line on the horizon which marked land. "No, I will go on."

"Cornelia," with warm kindness in his face and voice, "I am afraid you have overrated your devotion to your work. A woman must be possessed by her art as by a demon to enable her to endure years of solitude in a foreign country, homeless and friendless. Have you counted all the cost? When you leave me you cut yourself loose from all your old life." She turned her head away, but made no reply. "I do not believe you are strong enough, poor child!" he said presently.

Silence pleaded for her as no words of her own could have done. Neckart saw the strained eyes, the quivering chin: his interest suddenly became alive, intense—a feeling quite apart from the kindliness which his words expressed.

"I begin to think you have mistaken your vocation altogether. You are too dependent, too tender a woman, for an artist. You should have chosen a domestic life, Cornelia." And, after an embarrassed pause of a moment, "You should have married."

He saw the quick shudder: his own blood beat feverishly. He had always been curious about women. He would push the probe a little deeper: "If there had been any friend who was more to you than your art?—"

She turned her head slowly. The bleached face and burning eyes fastened on his own told her story before she spoke: "I have had no friend but you, Bruce."

Neckart started to his feet, hot from head to foot like a blushing girl. He paced the deck dumb with shame and confusion. It was long before he found courage to look at her. Her hands were clasped over her face: she was sobbing in a helpless, strengthless way that seemed to put her on the ground at his feet. He looked toward the land. Would it never come nearer? Finally, feeling himself wholly a scoundrel, and moved by a great compassion and as great annoyance, he pushed the green cloak aside and sat down hastily on the bench beside her, beginning to talk rapidly. If the limb must come off, the quicker the better.

"I understand just what you mean, Miss Fleming. You need a friend, an adviser, being here in Europe alone. Of course you turn to me, remembering old times in Delaware, and—and—" She had stopped sobbing now, and was watching him breathlessly, her eyes following his lips as he spoke. Neckart, looking at her, broke down.

"How can I do it?" he thought. "This woman's whole life has been given to me, and I did not know it!—It's natural," he began again aloud, "that you should turn to me. You know how gladly I would be your friend—"

She shook her head, her straining eyes on his. "Yes, gladly—thankfully!" (Surely, it was only right to soften the blow.) "You cannot know how—how dear you have always been to me, Cornelia. But I can have nothing to do with friendship or any other relation which makes a man's life worth endurance. I am barred out from so much of my birthright by my blood."

"What do you mean, Bruce?"

"You know the fate of the Davidges: I need not go over the story. God knows it is not a pleasant subject for me to dwell upon. But for the last year I have had unmistakable proof that I have the hereditary disease. That is the reason why I have given up my business and every tie in life, and expatriated myself."

As he spoke she rose, shaken with excitement; her face took on a new meaning; for the moment she was a young and beautiful woman: "Oh, Bruce! Bruce! you are all wrong! Is it possible that you have never been undeceived? There is not a drop of the Davidge blood in your veins!"

"What do you mean?" [Pg 726]

"I have heard the story from my mother a hundred times. Your father was married twice—the first time in Maryland, where you were born. Your mother died at your birth. He came to Kent county and married Miss Davidge, who never had any children. It was the first symptom of her insanity that she conceived the idea that you were her own son, and your father willingly humored her in the belief. You were deceived too as a child, lest you might betray the real facts to her. But I thought when you were a man you would be told the truth."

"How could I?" said Neckart, bewildered. "My father died when I was a boy of ten, and my mother—But she was not my mother!" His eyes filled: he turned hastily away. It seemed to him as if the dear old mother had just then died to him.

Cornelia timidly touched his arm: "But you do not understand. You are not a Davidge. You are free from the Davidge disease."

"Free?" It was not easy to turn back the convictions and terrors of a lifetime in a moment. He stared at her stunned: "Then these symptoms have been only caused by overwork, as the doctors said? I—I am like other men?"

"Yes."

"Merciful God!"

Cornelia leaned over the taffrail. Would he come to her? The blood ebbed weakly in her veins; the rush of the water below roared like thunder; as the minutes passed a deadly sickness came into her breast. She looked to find him. He was at the other end of the deck, talking with the captain, his swarthy face glowing, his eyes like coals of fire.

"The Russia is the first steamer to New York," she heard the captain say. "You can board her to-night. This is a very sudden resolution, Mr. Neckart?"

"Yes. But I must return to my business at once. There are other matters too which—matters which I have neglected."

"But your health? You mentioned a cerebral disorder which required rest?"

"Oh, I am much better! The sea-voyage—I am another man, sir!"

He walked down the deck, his back toward her. It was the heavy figure, the swinging awkward gait, which she remembered twenty years ago on the old farm-road. The world was born anew to him: health, work, chances—he had but to stretch out his hands and clutch them all again, and under all was the sweet triumphant passion.

"Jane! Jane!"

His eyes strained back over the long waste of water. But as for Cornelia, he had forgotten that

she was in the world.

When the people were leaving the steamer to go on the tug, she came up to him. It was easier to bear another turn of the rack than be utterly dropped out of remembrance.

"We part here, Mr. Neckart," with an admirably cordial little smile, holding out her gloved hand.

Neckart stammered with sudden remorse and pity: "'Pon my soul, Miss Fleming, I forgot that you were going ashore! Forgive me. But a man reprieved with the axe at his neck can't be expected to have his senses at call."

"You go back, then?"

"Oh, immediately! I must regain my—my work. What can I do for you?" zealously. "Your baggage, now? There will be nothing dutiable, of course. Will you have it sent to London or direct to the Continent? You told me your plans, but—"

"You have forgotten them," smiling. "The baggage is already on its way. You forget I am one of the capable, self-reliant sisterhood. No. You can do nothing for me but to say good-bye."

Neckart caught her hand and wrung it vehemently, but it lay with its smooth kid covering passive in his palm. He began to say something to her about her art and success, but the words seemed a ghastly mockery and died in his throat.

"Oh, I shall succeed, undoubtedly, but in a low grade. My ability is of inferior quality. I know all my limitations," with a sudden metallic laugh.

"You will return in a year or two, and—"

"No, I shall not return. I shall never see you again," looking for the first time in his face. [Pg 727]

Neckart glanced beyond her to the strange city, vast and dreary in the twilight and drizzle and falling soot. The docks were swarming with life. Some of their fellow-passengers had already landed and been met by eager friends, and were driven away to their homes. This woman was going friendless into the night and crowd. She was so little and lonely and hardly used! But what could he do? He had not a minute to lose if he would board the Russia.

"Miss Fleming, I owe a fresh lease of life to you. I shall always think of you with gratitude."

"What I gave you was a free gift," she said in a very quiet voice. "I want no gratitude in return for it. Good-bye."

"Good-bye."

She suddenly raised his hand and kissed it.

"Cornelia!"

But she was gone, and in a moment was lost in the hurrying crowds, on which a sullen rain was beginning to fall.

Before midnight Neckart was ploughing his way back. His brain was quite clear—no threats of paralysis or sudden age. He lay awake building honest air-castles—new plans for the paper, dreams of happiness for Jane as fresh and sweet as a boy's of his first love. But through them all the kiss on his hand burned like fire. He rubbed it again and again angrily.

He wanted no guilty damned spot about him when he came to Jane.

CHAPTER XXII.

When the door of the hut opened Bruno growled furiously. Mr. Van Ness appeared on the threshold, smiling, benign, a goodly sight, from his blond head and the yellow topaz on his snowy shirt-front to the polished boots.

"Down, Bruno, down!" said Jane.

The old hunter observed that though she stood erect she could not bring her voice above a whisper. She looked at Van Ness like a kid that the dogs were going to tear to death. Glenn came up hastily between her and the stranger. He had the dog's sudden antipathy to him and to his smile.

"What is your business?"

Van Ness advanced and held out his hand cordially. The mountains had had their effect upon him: his irritated nerves lay now quieted out of sight in the thick cool flesh. As he ascended the heights he had laid his plans. Gentleness first, force if need be: gentle measures would no doubt suffice. The law would ensure to him immediate possession of his wife. She had the devilish obstinacy of a mule, but she was his wife. He would bring her to love him at last, and their future life would be eminently respectable and comfortable. Laidley's estate must yield now, on an average? The remainder of the ride had passed in pleasant calculation. Never had his temper been more serene or firm than when he presented himself before his wife.

"What's your business?" said the old man.

"My business," gently, "is with that lady. I have followed her here from New York, and I thank you heartily, sir, for taking care of her."

"Of course I'll take care of Jane. I'll not allow her to be follered or disturbed, neyther.—Do you want to see this man, child?"

Jane did not hear him. Her eyes were fastened on the handsome figure, all light and benignity. She had thought she was done with it for ever. It seemed to her now as if it never would leave her sight again.

"You kin see clearly that you're unwelcome to her," said Glenn.—"Wife, take Jane into her own room until this gentleman is gone."

"When I go," said Van Ness with a pleasant, airy wave of the hand, "she goes with me. You are kind, my dear sir, but unreasonable. I have a claim upon this lady which even you will allow is sufficient."

"What claim has he on you, Jane?" turning his back abruptly on Van Ness. "Has he any right to talk in this way?" [Pg 728]

"Yes. I am his wife."

"Wife! Married! Not accordin' to law?"

"There is the certificate."

At the sight of this slip of paper, and with the rustle of it in Glenn's hand, her strength ebbed away from Jane. It was the Law. Her prejudices and dislikes seemed suddenly insignificant, helpless, in this mighty force. It had the same effect on the ignorant, law-abiding mountaineer.

"I don't see but as it's correct," turning it over, perplexed. "She's yer legal wife."

"No matter ef she were his wife a hundred times," cried his wife: "she shall not go back ef she chooses to stay. P'raps he's abused her. He shall not force her away."

"I have no wish to force her to leave you," in the same gentle, cheerful tone. "Be rational, dear friends. I leave Jane to answer whether I have ever used toward her a word or action that was not loving and tender."

"No," said Jane, dully.

"Do you know anything of me which would justify your flight? Answer me candidly. Is there a single reason why you should not honor and respect me as your husband?"

Jane was silent. The law within her gave a savage answer. But what was that but blind prejudice? She must answer according to the judgment of the outside world.

"Is there any reason?"

"No—none."

Van Ness nodded cheerfully, and motioned the hunter and his wife confidentially to his side: "I will explain the matter to you precisely as it stands," his light eyes looking over their heads to Jane.

She stood irresolutely a moment, and then went into the little room which had been set apart for her. She could not draw her breath so near to him.

Van Ness, peering through the open door, saw that there was but one narrow window inside, opening over a sheer descent of rocks. "It is quite natural that you should love Jane and wish to defend her, as you knew her when she was a child," he said, raising his voice that she might hear. "But you do not understand. She married me of her own free will by the bedside of her dying father. His last act was to give her to me with his blessing. You can judge whether he would have chosen an unworthy husband for her."

"'Tain't likely," said Glenn. But his wife shook her head.

"An hour after his death Jane escaped: left her dead father—left me whom she loved. The only rational way of accounting for her course is that the nervous strain had proved too much for her, and that she was temporarily insane. You can question her whether I have stated the facts correctly."

The old people glanced doubtfully in at the tall figure standing motionless at the open window.

"She don't contradict you in nothin', sir. I'm sorry ef I was onjust to you," said the old man slowly.

"I honor you for it! You could have no claim to my friendship as strong as your affection for my wife."

"Yes," with deliberation, "we've allays been powerful fond of Jane. But marriage is marriage. We won't interfere. Them as God hes jined together—"

Van Ness rose: "I shall take her with me to Asheville. Her mental trouble may make her seem disinclined to go. But firmness and affectionate care will soon restore her." He walked to the door: "Come, my dear wife."

Jane turned and faced him. Her very lips seemed withered: "I have given you the money."

"I want *you*."

Van Ness waited smiling, without a word after that, his white hands held out.

"Come, my pretty!" whispered the old woman, stroking her arm soothingly. "Suppose you don't like him so much at first? You'll grow into it. Hundreds of women marry without love. You must give up to the law."

The law, the whole world, were against her.

Van Ness came closer, step by step, with the inexorable steadiness of Fate in his eye. Mrs. Glenn drew back and left them alone. [Pg 729]

"You married me."

"I wanted to give you the money. There was my mistake."

"You cannot repair it. There is no one to help you."

She looked out at the bare peaks and the sky near at hand, and raised her arms, clasping her hands back of her head. Her lips moved. "God will help me," Van Ness thought he heard her say.

He put his hand on her shoulder: "Come. We must return to-night, at least part of the way," with quiet authority.

He drew her toward him, stooped to kiss her lips.

At that moment there was a loud knocking at the outer door, and a man and woman entered. Van Ness saw them. His hand fell from Jane's arm, his countenance relaxed: for a moment he stood unnerved: then with quick decision he stepped boldly forward to meet them, drawing to the door of the chamber behind him.

"Charlotte?"

"Yes," with a shrug, "or Princess Trebizoff, Madame Varens, what you choose. By any other name I am as dear to you. Heavens! what a chase!" perching herself airily on the settle in front of the fire. "I am one living ache.—I can't congratulate you on your roads, madam. But your scenery! Ah, that goes to the heart!"

Mr. Neckart stood beside her, calmly waiting until Van Ness should turn to him. The great reformer was brought to bay: he was alert, prompt, ready.

"You followed me here, Mr. Neckart?" turning sharply.

"Yes."

"For what purpose?"

"To bring your wife to you," glancing at Charlotte.

"I inferred that was the story which this poor creature had imposed upon you. Surely, you know her character, Neckart? Why, she has levied blackmail for years by just such ingenious devices. I did not suppose any statement of hers would bear a minute's investigation from a shrewd, practical man like yourself. So she really deceived you, eh?" with a discordant laugh.

Charlotte, drying her dainty feet at the fire, looked contemptuously over her shoulder at him.

"There is no need of any discussion in the matter," said Neckart dryly. "We are not here to play melodrama. The matter is easily understood. I returned from Europe last week, and went direct to the Hemlock Farm. From the servants I heard the details of the forced marriage and of Jane's flight. I followed her."

"How did you find her here?"

"Betty Nichols knew that she was coming."

"Damn her! She hid it from me, her husband!"

Neckart stepped hastily forward, then controlled himself and drew back: "She had given the route to Charlotte also. I overtook her at Baltimore. She had stopped to obtain legal proof of your marriage to her in 1847. We followed an hour behind you from Richmond."

Even in this imminent moment Van Ness secretly wondered how this passionate brute of a Neckart held himself in check and talked coolly to the man who had stolen from him the woman that he loved. It would have been in character for him to tear his life out, like Bruno. But this was admirable self-command! It really gratified Van Ness's taste, tottering on the verge of ruin as he was. The truth was, that Neckart was conscious of little else than that Jane was in the hut. The rage against this scoundrel which had maddened him through the long journey had strangely died out. He had not harmed her. He was like a fangless snake, to be trampled under foot at any moment.

But she was there! He had caught a glimpse of the proud, delicate head and its crown of yellow

hair behind the door as Van Ness closed it.

The door moved. It opened, and she came out among them. Neckart rose, his head bent upon his breast. He was deaf and blind for the time—could not tell whether she spoke to him or not. [Pg 730]

She went directly up to Van Ness: "I am not your wife?"

He cowered for a moment. Then, rapidly shifting his defence, he stood up, benevolent, impregnable: "I do not deny that I was once married to this woman. It was a mad error of my youth, long since repented of. I was divorced from her last June."

"Ta, ta, Pliny, take care!" interrupted Charlotte. "The application for divorce was not made until after your marriage to Miss Swendon. I told you you would not risk a criminal trial for her sake. But I underrated your affection. You did it."

"Then I am free?" said Jane.

"You are free," said Charlotte.

Jane turned to the door and went into the open air without a word.

"I took a good deal of trouble to come here," resumed Charlotte, brushing some dust from her flounces, "to tell her that. I shouldn't have done it for any other woman. But you remember that day when I was shamming death, how she kissed me, Pliny? I didn't forget that kiss."

Van Ness stood silent, hesitating. The firelight shone upon his tall figure, the dainty gray clothes, the shining stone, like a watchful evil eye, upon his breast. He was a perfect presentation of prosperity and peace. He looked at Neckart, but he was looking through the open door at a slight figure moving among the rocks.

Van Ness rubbed his hands softly. "I do not see," he said with unctuous precision, "that further discussion will be of any use in this matter. I was evidently mistaken as to point of time in the divorce. No one who knows me will suspect me of any worse error than a mistake. I will accompany you to Asheville, Charlotte, with pleasure. I owe you no grudge for the bitter wrong you have done me."

Charlotte rose and laughed good-naturedly: "You have your virtues, no doubt, Pliny. So have I. I always thought we were well mated. Shall we continue one? You may have to fall back upon my blackmailing devices, after all. I forgot to tell you that there was an inquiry last week into the disposition of the funds entrusted to you for the Home for Friendless Children, and that they were reported *nil*."

For the first time in his life Van Ness blenched. The story of the marriage could be smothered. But this was total ruin.

"The sooner you go the better," said the hunter, tapping him on the shoulder. "Ef I understand right, you're not the kind of man as ought to pizen these mountings long."

Van Ness moved heavily to the door. But he turned on the threshold with a sickly smile: "I forgive you your rudeness, my friend. It is not my nature to bear malice.—Farewell, Mr. Neckart. You have mistaken my motives in this matter. But I shall think of you kindly.—I shall bear you all to the throne of grace in my prayers." He shook his hand as if scattering blessings, and went out with a lofty step and head erect.

Charlotte lingered and went up to Neckart.

"You are going to cling to that poor wretch?" he said.

"Well, he's down now, you see. There's nobody but me to stay by him. And I can always draw on him when I'm out of funds."

"You will remember what I told you of the school in Indiana? You could live in respectability and comfort; bring your boy home too."

"My boy? Home?" Her eyes filled with tears. "These are very tempting words, Mr. Neckart. But oh-h! Respectability is such a bore! I must go my own gait to the end;" and with a merry laugh and shrug she followed Van Ness.

When they were out of sight down the gorge, Neckart rose and went slowly out to the cleft in the rock where the girl sat alone.

"Jane," he said, "the way is open between us at last. Will you come to me?"

I cannot write Finis to the story of any of these people. They are all alive to-day, and the current of each life goes on with very little change.

You may still see Van Ness on the platform at all large religious or benevolent meetings in the great cities. There was much talk of the missing funds, but he quieted it satisfactorily. Cynical reporters throw out hints of ugly shadows in his life, but his disciples gather more solidly about him, trust their souls to his direction and their money to his pockets. Simple followers of Jesus [Pg 731]

fear to condemn a light which shines so splendidly in the market-place, and men who are not His followers accept it as Christianity, and damn the religion as spurious and a fraud.

Charlotte is just now the successful leader of an English opera-bouffe company which is travelling in the West. She gave the proceeds of her benefit in every town to the poor last winter, which was supposed by all respectable people to be an advertising trick. But it was not. The little woman would do more than that to buy herself an entrance into the heaven where her boy is going. She would do anything, in fact, but lead a decent life.

Miss Fleming is still in Rome. She belongs to the modern school which regards the nice reproduction of drapery and dry goods as the highest art. She sends home pictures, which sometimes gain a place by sufferance in a dark corner at the spring exhibition.

Mr. Neckart once bought one, a *Lady's Toilette*.

"A fair specimen of the millinery cult," he said, showing it to Judge Rhodes, "Poor Cornelia! Why is it that she never, even by chance, paints a clean-minded woman?" He sent a cheque for double the price asked for it. But he threw the picture on the market again, not wishing to take it home. He had married a singularly clean-minded woman.

Cornelia's first impulse was to send the cheque back. But, instead, she bought a ring with a single costly ruby in it, and has worn it ever since, though she has been hungry for bread many a time. Hungry or not, she makes her studio one of the pleasantest resorts for the young artists in Rome. She has cut her hair short, wears a jaunty velvet coat and man's collar: her arms are bony, but she bares them, and still shoots languishing glances from out of the crowsfeet. The young men laugh to each other. "A good fellow, Corny," they say, "but what a pity that she is not a man!"

The Home for Friendless Children is at last a reality in New York, though Van Ness is not a director. It was established by the editor Neckart, whose wife, it is said, endowed it with her own fortune. This charitable deed left them with but a very moderate competency. Neckart managed to buy in the Hemlock Farm, out of his income, for her and the boy.

He drives them over once a week to see the children in the Home, each of whom Jane knows and tries to spoil.

"You are glad that we made this act of reparation, Jane?" he said to her one day.

"Reparation?" She hesitated, and then said, "I know that I made many mistakes when I was a law to myself. You are my law now, Bruce."

"But you are satisfied that it was right to give back the money?" he insisted.

"Oh, of course! The money was unlucky! It made you uncomfortable too. And I look on it as a free gift from Swendon here to the poor little babies," taking her boy on her knee and stroking his curls. "But," she added in a low voice, "the money was mine. I was quite right when I burned the will."

Neckart laughed good-humoredly, and touched the horses with his whip. There is no man living who loves his wife more tenderly; and Jane is the most simple and prosaic of women. Yet there are times when she seems, even to him, a woman whose acquaintance he has scarcely made, and whom he can never hope to know better.

REBECCA HARDING DAVIS

OUIDA'S NOVELS.

[Pg 732]

For a number of years the novels of Ouida have been the delight of their readers and the scorn and laughing stock of reviewers. Every new volume that has appeared has given a thrill of occasionally guilty delight to those whose studies are confined to the shelves of the circulating library, while critics have beaten the air with their attacks against this writer's frequent coarseness of tone, her hodge-podge of learning, and the superfine elegance which makes the air of most of her stories so heavy and enervating. Nothing could show more thoroughly the futility of criticism than the powerlessness of all the evil-minded notices of her many books. The reviewer may have spoken words of wisdom that would have honored Solomon, but the public did not care how inaccurate Ouida's Latin quotations and classical references were: they were entertained by her novels, and disregarded him who denounced her, just as those who are running to a house where they will hear music, breathe perfumes and see fine dresses pass by the hungry man who stands outside shaking his fist and growling at pleasure-seekers. People who are anxious to waltz do not care to stop and discuss with political economists the advisability of giving up luxuries, nor to hear the band begin the best of Beethoven's symphonies: they want to hear the opening notes of one of Strauss's compositions. The same love of amusement is at the root of all novel-reading—unless indeed it be a feeling of social duty which brings so many readers to George Eliot's novels—and Ouida is pretty sure to give her admirers a full dose of highly-seasoned entertainment which cannot fail to please unsensitive palates.

The materials with which she brews her fiery and somewhat heady draughts are almost

monotonously alike. Her heroes are beauteous, long-limbed, silky-haired, graceful men: if the scene is laid in England, they are generally officers, always of high family and terribly dissipated. Beneath a quiet, courteous demeanor they hide passionate feeling, indomitable bravery and great capacity for friendship. They are adorned by every vice, and are consequently loved by every woman. As for the women, who except Ouida can describe them? They are faultlessly beautiful, exceedingly headstrong and full of fascinating peccadilloes. Next to the *beaux sabreurs* come the gifted artists, and alongside of the wicked ladies of rank appear the ladies without rank, but with every other charm of the sinful sort. Brandy and soda, hock and seltzer and cigarettes almost deserve mention among the *dramatis personæ*: they serve to delight her aristocracy, and for the aristocracy Ouida has a most plebeian esteem. Its faults are virtues in disguise: gambling away a large fortune in a night is heroism; faithlessness in love is its first duty; anything like decorum is the most "caddish" Philistinism. These being Ouida's literary principles, and also the delight of her readers, it is easy to see how absolutely useless would be any solemn attempt to prove that there is anything good in the world except wickedness. Ouida has pages of pseudo-rhythmical soliloquy in which she alleges the truth of her statements about lords and ladies, but, whether true or false, there is a charm to her readers in her flowery account of what their social betters do. Scandal never fails of a listener, and who can serve such huge banquets of scandal as will Ouida at a moment's notice? She offers no mere crumb that has dropped from a rich table, but a mass that concerns every duke and duchess and earl and countess in the peerage. Victor Hugo has taught a docile generation the power of the melodrama, and Ouida, an apt pupil, has written in English the most violent protests against human beings as they are, and has encouraged the use of exaggeration in the representation of life. She employs the much-abused method of [Pg 733] contrast. She draws a man who is stained with every vice, and to outweigh his crying faults she makes him tell the truth under difficult circumstances, or keep a promise, or possibly do a generous action, and the reader, who has admired the hero at his worst, thrills with fervent pride in his colossal right-doing at last.

The air of worldly wisdom with which her books are filled is another powerful attraction. Persons who know so much about wickedness must have, it would seem, a rare knowledge of human life and human beings; and the poor reader, whose worst notion of vice is working embroidery on Sunday, has forced down her throat stenographic reports of the talk in demireps' parlors, with occasional interludes in which the author charges her critics with squeamishness for objecting to her parade on the dung-hills of life. But it is useless to make too much mention of her faults. She is like most of the writers who reject all limitations and say they must describe people as they are, and then seek in the mire for people to write about.

Putting aside the question of the impropriety which taints by no means all her work, it is well to find what constitutes her power in other directions. She has a large following, and many who utterly condemn her gross faults are very anxious to read her new books as fast as they appear. In the first place, she has a good deal of real power. It is not accuracy, or refinement, or the accomplishment of much by moderate means, but a great accumulation of effective points, that carries the reader through her books. It is not a man whom she takes for a hero, but a picturesque combination of attractive failings, united with an impossible beauty and grace. It is a vulgar ideal that she worships, and it is vulgarer in fact than as she sees it; but she worships it with positive adoration, and she warms the reader with something of her own fervor. She is in earnest, and she has the gift of expression, often of tawdry, bombastic expression, but often powerful and impressive.

Take *Chandos*, for instance: it is the melodrama run mad. Chandos belongs to one of the best families in England; he has genius in all directions; he writes books that sell as only very good and very poor books sell; he is as beautiful as the figures that adorn tailors' patterns; his wealth seems boundless; in immorality Don Juan was but a blundering schoolboy by his side. This cold description does him no manner of justice: any one who knows Ouida's novels will readily recall the type, and he stands head and shoulders above the rest. He warms a snake in his bosom in the guise of a friend, who manages his affairs and leads the lordly Chandos to total bankruptcy. The languid voluptuary goes out into the world and knows every kind of suffering: at length, twenty years afterward, he is restored to his rights, and by a magnanimous effort he pardons the treacherous friend, who, he finds, is his illegitimate brother, and all ends well. But the reader's feelings are reached in a way that no one would suspect from this meagre statement. Chandos lives in halls of porphyry, and does everything for the man who betrays him; he is absolutely above suspicion, just as the other man is without a scrap of virtue or kindliness; and the contrast between his high and his low estate is done in black and white, with lights and shadows as distinct as if the book had been written under a calcium flame. That the book has considerable crude force cannot be denied even by those who are ready to sneer most loudly at its glaring faults. By dint of exaggerating virtues and vices the author dulls for a time the inevitable revolt of the reader against such unnatural representations of life. This story—or it may be other readers have been struck by some other of the series—impresses itself upon the memory for a time, just as a play would in which we seem to see a man jump out of a third-story window, but in both cases we should be inclined to question the author's respect for literature. All such work is like scene-painting, but if a man prefers gazing at chromo-lithographs to visiting the Pitti Gallery, he cannot be talked out of his tastes.

The reaction against realism shows itself now-a-days in many curious ways. Alongside of an [Pg 734] intense devotion to science there flourishes the vulgarest superstition regarding the occupations and intellectual capacity of departed spirits, and the imagination of the present day finds its frequent expression in coarse melodrama. But even for the melodrama Ouida, clever as she is,

lacks one important element—namely, a sense of humor. There is a monotonous seriousness in her stories, and frequently an unrelieved pathos, which is in direct violation of the law that commands grotesqueness and misery to be put in close antithesis by the writer who is anxious to win fame. The airy *badinage* of some of her characters is singularly void of lightness and frolicsomeness. Their unfailing cynicism alone makes good this noticeable deficiency. This fault distinguishes Ouida very clearly from Dumas and Victor Hugo, for Dumas's high spirits seldom failed him, while Victor Hugo combines contrasting qualities in his novel as carefully as if he were making a salad. But Ouida can relieve the strain she makes upon her readers' feelings only by a profuse display of worldly wisdom. Every-day experience shows that vulgar, unrelieved cynicism is an easily-learned accomplishment: any credulous person, inclined to gossip and ashamed of being thought decorous, can be hand and glove with Ouida in a very short time, although it is by no means every one who out of such tawdry material can weave a story that shall be generally interesting. The double nature of this writer is an instance of a rather rare combination. She can be as vulgar as a gossiping dressmaker with a keen love of scandal, and yet she has a vein of poetical sensitiveness, of strong feeling, which stands in strange contrast with her heavy-handed cynicism. In fact, she gilds in her own fashion the crudest display of coarseness and selfishness. Possibly it is too much to say that she *gilds*: she hangs round with tinsel all sorts of subjects, over which she rejoices as a raw schoolboy rejoices over his first cigar; and this with an infantile delight in her own *savoir vivre* and an ecstatic vain-glory in her faults which throw real merits into the shade.

A melodramatic imagination—by which is meant a proneness to look at things as Ouida looks at them, an inclination to see crude picturesqueness of effect—apparently fills its owner or victim with the most puffed-up pride. Anything like moderation or exactness is despised, good workmanship is regarded as the plodding of stupidity, and all chance of cultivating what talents the writer may have is thrown over to find place for strong effect. All of Ouida's desultory reading seems to have taught her nothing except that by heaping up agonizing incidents a point will be reached at last when even the most hardened reader will have to succumb and give his sympathy to much-persecuted innocence or to fascinating guilt; and her power of inventing harrowing scenes is practically unlimited. So many writers are cold and unlifelike that Ouida's exaggeration seems to many a most pardonable fault, so far indeed as it seems to be a fault. Her perpetual references to the classics probably appear to the ignorant reader like the profoundest lore: her chatter about French literature, especially about books seldom discussed in mixed company, furthers this delusion. Indeed, it is pitiable to go through one of her novels and pick out the rubbish she collects and sets in order for the delight of an eager public. Here are some gems from *In a Winter City*. The present condition of Florence, disguised as Floralia, is thus compared with its past glories: "It is Belisarius turned croupier to a gaming-table; it is Cæsar selling cigars and newspapers; it is Apelles drawing for the *Albums pour Rire*; it is Pindar rhyming the couplets for *Fleur de Thé*; it is Praxiteles designing costumes for a calico ball; it is Phidias forming the poses of a ballet." That gem is on the first page of the book, which is more like a tenth-rate French novel than any English story that has appeared for some time.

Here are a few lines from *Chandos*, describing the revels of the aristocracy in a "summer villa at Richmond belonging to him [the hero, of course], where most of these Bohemian dinners and suppers *à la Régence* were given—a charming place, half covered in flowering trees and pyramids of May blossoms,... with the daintiest and cosiest banqueting-room in the world, hung with scarlet silk, drawn back here and there to show some beautiful picture by Titian, Greuze, Regnault or La Tour; large enough to hold twenty people, but small enough to fill *à huis clos* like a cabinet; with the air scented by dreamy incenses and dishes and wines under the mellowed light that would have entranced even Lucullus had he been throned there on his ivory chair....

[Pg 735]

"'The art of life is—to enjoy!' cried Chandos that night, lifting up to crown the sentiment a deep glass of glowing red Roussillon.

"'Toast worthy of Lucullus and Ovid! and you are a master of the science,' said John Trevenna, who was perhaps the only one who saw quite clearly through that intoxicating atmosphere of pastilles, and perfumes, and wines, and crushed flowers, and bruised fruits, and glancing tresses, and languid eyes, and lips fit for the hymns of a Catullus.

"'He is the darling of the gods!' cried Flora de l'Orme, that magnificent Arlésienne, with her melting, Greek-like glance, and her cheek like a peach in the sun, while she leaned over him and twisted, Catullus-like, in the bright masses of his long, golden hair a wreath of crimson roses washed in purple Burgundy."

Probably, if the pink-cheeked beauties on glove- and handkerchief-boxes could be filled with the breath of life, and be set down in a land of which the only authentic representations are those on a drop-curtain, this is the way they would talk and act; and the same refined taste that goes to the painting of such figures and scenery is manifested in the production of such literature as makes up the bulk of many of Ouida's novels.

And yet a writer who so handicaps herself with vulgarity and actual indecency and the grossest snobbishness has underneath that unattractive varnish a fervent passion that is at least impressive. While revelling in such scenes as made the notoriety of the author of *Guy Livingstone*, she has touches of real pathos, over-wrought possibly, but cold in comparison with her absurdest writings. In *Signa*, for instance, the whole story of Bruno's love for his betrayed sister's child has certain elements of fineness which atone for much of the rubbish swept into some of Ouida's earlier novels. The book is not one for the Sunday-school library, nor will any one

be injured by not reading it, but there is more ability in it than one will find in a great many books by more discreetly-admired writers. It is a romance of a kind not over common in English fiction, and it forms a grateful change from the arid records of the cool love-making of English curates and home-bred young women as sung by this writer's contemporaries. The book has the faults that surely mark an untrained writer, but there is nothing petty in it: indeed, there is a generous breadth of treatment which shows most strongly how Ouida's natural gifts, which had been wasted by glorifying club-talk and midnight suppers, blossomed forth under the influence of Italy. She was possessed by its charm, and inspired by it to put all her new feeling into this story of passion. There is no trace of the confining bounds that had previously kept her busy turning over unworthy material: she spoke out boldly; and if this is not a great book, it is at least a book with some of the qualities of greatness in it. Indeed, it is of a sort that makes one regret that the author had not been exposed to more favorable influences: wiser blame and more temperate praise might possibly have freed her from the faults that show their head even here much more than is desirable. But what is fine in it is something no one could have taught her—the sympathy with ambitious youth, the struggle for fame on the part of the hero, his uncle's stern nature, and the cleverness with which some of the lesser characters are drawn: all these things, which are to be found beneath the facile sing-song of the prose and the perpetual exaggeration of everything good as well as of everything bad, are surely the proof of rare original power. Her very [Pg 736] excellence at times serves but to make the reader impatient with her faults, which more than anything are *vulgar*; and genius and vulgarity do not agree well.

But her good qualities are best seen in some of her short stories, and most of all in those collected in a single volume entitled *Leaf in the Storm, and Other Stories*, the others being entitled "A Dog of Flanders," "A Branch of Lilac," and "A Provence Rose;" all of which first appeared in *Lippincott's Magazine*. These are free from the faults of taste which so generally mar her work, although at times the reader comes on exaggerated touches which lessen rather than intensify the pathos; but on the whole it is impossible not to admire, and to admire warmly, the author's power. Ouida here shows her true feeling, and feeling is not over-abundant in contemporary fiction. There is plenty of acute observation, clever description and more or less good-natured satire, but all these things are slight and meagre by the side of strong and genuine feeling. The greatest novel-writer will combine both, and will not sacrifice one to the other; but only too often Ouida throws aside actual and imaginary probability for the sake of melodramatic effect. Of these short tales just mentioned, the one giving its name to the book and "A Branch of Lilac" are especially to be mentioned with respect, and they justify almost any amount of wrath on the part of the reader with the author's excessive abuse of her gifts. In her reaction against conventionality and everything that is humdrum she continually falls into worse pitfalls, but here she is really tragic and really pathetic. In three of these tales she draws the sufferings of struggling genius, which she is fond of describing, though she has never done it so well as here; and in two of them, "A Dog of Flanders" and "A Provence Rose," she combines in the story unusual ingredients, one being told by a rose that witnesses the incidents, while in the other the dog's feelings are set forth at great length. This is always a difficult thing to do; and it is to be noticed that in both disguises we find Ouida under other names, but yet there is enough that is touching in the treatment to dispel harsh criticism. This is not the only time that Ouida has introduced this transmigration of souls into her books, for *Puck* is a story told by a dog, but unfortunately the dog has the author's ineradicable preference for low company, and a sort of nineteenth-century Moll Flanders has an undue prominence in the book. *Bébée*, on the other hand, reminds the reader of the innocent short tales: it is a charming little story without the ambitious tawdriness of the longer romances. *In a Winter City*, again, reeks with fashionable follies and is written in Ouida's most approved worst style.

Ariadne, the latest of her novels, shows in many ways a marked improvement over her earlier work. The story is an admirably invented one: almost every incident is of course crammed with pathos, while the main plot is exceedingly touching. It is supposed to be narrated by an accomplished Roman cobbler, who is a sound critic of art as well as an expert repairer of shoes. He comes across one day a young girl of great beauty who has been wonderfully educated in the classics by her father, and who now, after her parent's death, has come to Rome to find her grandfather, a miserly Jew. This unnatural grandfather drives her from his door, and the cobbler, finding her in great misery, offers her his room, when she at once falls sick, while he lives in his stall. When she has recovered she begins to carve statues—her father had been a sculptor—and these coming to the sight of a great French artist, Maryx by name, he makes her his pupil. Gradually her teacher comes to love her, but there appears on the stage a great poet, Hilarion—there is never any lack of greatness in these novels—who is faultlessly beautiful and whom every woman infalliby loves at sight. Of course, Ariadne is not an exception, so that one day Maryx and the cobbler are surprised to find that Hilarion and she have run away together. It would be unnecessary to describe the book too closely from this point: it is enough to say that Hilarion soon wearies of her, while she never changes in her feeling toward him. When she is deserted in [Pg 737] Paris the cobbler goes there and brings her back to Rome, when Maryx learns again the hopelessness of his love, and later Hilarion shoots him in a duel. After a time Ariadne dies broken-hearted, just as Hilarion has learned really to love her, so that he survives to mourn hopelessly the evil he has done. However this may sound in a cold abstract, it cannot be denied that the reader receives a deep impression of the tragedy which is the subject of the book. Ouida never fails to supply the tragic element in great abundance, but here it is given us not on the writer's mere assertion, but with such exposition of the characters as marks some of her later stories, but is perhaps more prominent here than elsewhere. The heroine, for instance, is well drawn: her intensity and purity, and indeed her genius, are all clearly brought before the reader.

It is something rare to conceive such a character, but it is infinitely rarer to find any definite image of it conveyed by a writer to any one else. To be sure, this is done with a great waste of purple ink, but yet there are touches which indicate not power alone, but also that acuteness of observation and intelligent knowledge of method which are needed to give even great power its value. Maryx too is well represented, and everywhere, even when the captious would complain of too much melodrama, there are scenes and bits of talk that are good because they are natural. In time justice will be done to the ability of a writer who, when the short-hand report of talk over tea-cups was the fashion, was able to rise above such mechanical handiwork and write a story full of passion. Faulty, tawdry and theatrical as much of Ouida's writing is, she does know—and knowing she at times describes—genuine passion, as she has done here. Much as she has spun out the tale, it is a fine one, and an admirable example of her best side. The revenge that Ariadne makes in carving a statue of Hilarion as he seemed to her, so that even he felt some shame at his inferiority to her conception of him, is impressive. The way, too, in which Rome is kept as a background for all the events described is worthy of notice. But here as elsewhere the main fault is this, which is best described in her own characteristic language: "How one wishes that they had told us the fate of Nausicaa! When she leaned against the pillar and bade her farewell to the great wanderer, we know her heart was heavy: never again could she play by the shore glad-hearted with her maidens: when she had passed, that day, out between the silver dogs of Hephæstus, through the west wind and the pomegranate-blossoms, to the sea, she had left her happy youth behind her. So much we feel sure of, but we would fain know more. Were it a modern poem, how it would be amplified! how much we should hear of her conflict of silence and sorrow! No modern would have the coldness to leave her there, leaning against the column in Alcinöus's hall, and never add a word of her fate. But that is our weakness: we cannot 'break off the laurel-bough' shortly and sharply, unburnt, as they did of old."

Not only is she unable to "break off the laurel-bough:" she decks it with gewgaws and tinsel; she sets the reader's teeth on edge with references to the "Scipii" and to the "gens Quintilii," and never lets pass a chance to bring some bit of ancient or mediæval Roman history into the story, which is also weighed down with superfluous sentiment. It would be hard to find a writer more affected by the "weakness" of redundant description and expression. Then, too, the glorification of all her characters, her way of giving them unlimited wealth, beauty or genius, is like that play of the imagination of children which they exhibit by talking of the time when they will be rich and will give one another hundreds of thousands of dollars. Every one of the longer novels is marred by this fictitious extravagance: it is in her short stories alone that she manages to touch the earth, and in them her pathos is genuine and direct.

THOMAS SERGEANT PERRY.

A KENTUCKY DUEL.

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TWO PARTS.—II.

CHAPTER IV.

When Walter Brown heard of the delicacy of his clerk in keeping the name of his family out of that foolish altercation, and saw the masterly summary he had made of the business confided to his hand, the bold operator in pork recognized a value in his clerk. To his remonstrances Bob said, "It's a closed account, sir, and I must pay the balances. If I let the police interfere, I shall have a dozen rows on hand, and could not manage the roughs in the yard."

But, though Mr. Brown saw that he could not interfere without injuring Bob's reputation, he resolved that she who had made the quarrel should stop it. He sent the dowager, packed with her prejudices, to the police magistrate. "Hold up your hand. You swear L. B. Mason, Esq., and ——Nettles contemplate a breach of the peace?" said the judge.

"I can't swear of my own knowledge," said she. "It is incredible a nettles "—with a small *n*—"should meet a Brown," with a four-line pica *B*. And it did seem incredible to the august dowager.

"Really, madam, we have nothing to found a warrant upon," said the court.—"Show the lady out, and call the next case."

In fact, as decided in *Ex-parte Jones*, the right of personal redress was recognized by law in Kentucky, and an elective judiciary cared neither to ignore nor acknowledge the case. But in going out she heard a policeman make some reference to the duel in conversing with a comrade.

"Of what were you speaking just now?" asked the dowager.

"Of a little game between a low-down dead-beat and a gent," said the policeman.

"If I understand you," said the dowager, "I am glad to find such correct feeling in men of your class."

"Oh, it's so on the Force," said the man. "Short-stop is quite a favo-rite with the tip-toppers. You may ha' heerd o' him. T'other's a sort o' stool-pigeon—name Mason. They do say as a rich aunt o'

his'n got him into it. Blest if she'll get much of him out of it when Nettles is done with him! Why, Nettles beats professionals!—Now, boy, you going to drive your missis' carriage, or shall I? This ain't no place to scrouge about and stare."

Aunt Fanny sank back astounded. Was she a Moabitish mother who had sacrificed her nephew to a professional duellist? "Drive to Lawyer Winnett's," she said—"quick!"

"Your information was sufficient," said the lawyer with that contempt the profession has for irregular police proceedings, "but the code is a bastard child of the law. If you had a warrant the officers would not execute it."

"But," said the dowager, brought face to face with a family prejudice in favor of the code, "it is too horrible to suppose that peace-officers will stand coolly by and see homicide contemplated and executed without interference."

"True, nevertheless," said the lawyer, too familiar with contradictions of the law to regard it. "But, in fact, I wished to speak to you of your nephew's affairs. Captain Mason sent a schedule of his liabilities this morning, saying you had authorized their settlement. I don't regard Captain Mason's stories usually, but there was something about a family marriage included, which, knowing your wishes, I think justifies me in referring to it."

"The wretch!" said his aunt. "I have authorized nothing of the kind."

"No? Well, excuse my reference to it. It just occurred to me if such an arrangement was contemplated we might kill two birds with one stone."

"How?" asked the dowager. "I want this atrocious duel stopped. The rabble have my name mixed in it, as if I counselled or approved. I am shocked at it, and it must be stopped at any cost." [Pg 739]

"Of course," said the lawyer, his professional coolness contrasting with the dowager's fierce temper. "I might buy up Captain Mason's notes in the hands of Walker or Levi, and have him arrested in civil proceedings as about to leave the State to avoid his creditors. That writ would go into the hands of the sheriff, and I do not doubt its execution. Captain Mason's credit is such at present he cannot find security. If necessary, I could put on some others," looking over the schedule. "I have no doubt it will hold him until the matter is stopped. If you instruct me to that effect, you can go home, madam, and leave it to me."

How refreshing it was to meet a practical, sound head in all that confusion! Much relieved, Aunt Fanny hurried home to comfort Sudie, just wakened to grief by her father's visit.

The dowager's appreciation of the shrewd lawyer's hypothesis was heightened almost immediately by a visit from Wylde Payne with a note from her nephew soliciting pecuniary assistance. The dowager fairly clapped her hands. It began to assume all the interest of a race or a match game at whist. "We shall take every trick, child," said she; "and this Mister Payne, my overseer's grandson, who made all this trouble, shall be laid by the heels to begin with."

She kept him in the anteroom while she despatched a swift messenger to her lawyer asking for a policeman to take Payne into custody. Lind Mason's second, it will be observed, had had every assurance that his principal was fighting his aunt's quarrel, and looked for no small share of commendation for his own zeal and services. He had time to hear the regular movements of a great household revolving about the pivotal dinner-hour before he rang a second time. Then the mulatto maid, Memmie, appeared: "This way, sah. Yalla Memmie done knowed ye when ye could tie you'se'f in a cawnah o' yo' pock't-hankchah and put yo'se'f in yo' pock't."

Pondering on such precocious jugglery of his early years, he was ushered into the dowager's boudoir, where she sat with Sudie and ma'amselle.

"Be seated, Mr. Payne," she said with that royal gesture of command habitual to power in her sphere. "I am glad to see you. You are at the bottom of this bloody business."

Payne took breath as from a sudden douche, and began a speech conned over in the carriage: "In a crisis involving the honor of a noble family—"

"I know the false and criminal jargon by which you justify your barbarous code," interrupted the haughty dowager. "It lacks that manly directness I require in all who address me. Why, sir, did you avail yourself of a quick-tempered old woman's hasty words to force her wretched nephew into wicked folly? How dared you intercept my messenger?" sharply, as if at a new and sudden offence just sprung.

All this was astounding to Payne as the caresses of a tigress; but his too was a bold, high temper when aroused, and he retorted: "Madam, if you desire your nephew to be kicked and cuffed and driven from his cousin's house, it cannot be as Wylde Payne's friend. Your messenger was excluded by Captain Mason's orders, he having matters more important in hand than the intermeddling of a lady who had forced him into this business, but who now makes a merit of deserting him and abusing those who decline to act as treacherously."

The hot shot went home to the magazine, for the dowager rose blazing: "I know you for murder's lackey, and the cheap notoriety you seek, at the cost of your friend's courage and life, as the witness of his assassination, ready to testify it was well and fairly done—the base policeman of murder, to guard guilt in its guiltiness as the law protects the innocent in innocency. But you shall not escape: mark that!"

"I am responsible for my actions and easy to find," said Payne. "I scorn a law that presumes to enter into my feelings and judge the measure of my wounded honor."

"Weigh your words well," said the dowager—"you who presume to sit in judgment on the honor of a Brown! Public opinion is ripe to break the shackles of this vile code. No mail of chivalry protects the second who stands coolly by, a participant and accessory without risk or danger, to justify the black murder done on his bosom friend. When wealth and social influence are thrown into the scale against one who caught up a rash woman's hasty word, as hastily repented, we shall know what the law thinks of one who excluded her messenger of peace and pressed his victim on to the murdering-ground." [Pg 740]

Angry as she was, the old lady was putting her points well. Payne's position was already very equivocal. Common rumor presented him as forcing that Boabdil Mason to the mark; but he answered contemptuously, "You have already appealed to the law, and know the result."

"I do," interrupted the dowager, crumpling the lawyer's unread note in her hand. "You will find your friend's quarters in the Louisville jail, and a policeman at the door to escort you to him."

Payne rose hastily and left the room without ceremony.

"Oh, aunty!" said little Sue, who had listened to the roar of great guns in awe and terror, "it will make you sick."

"Sick!" said the dowager, looking almost real in her affected youth with congenial excitement: "it is life, child. But let us see what Winnett says."

Before reading the lawyer's note let us follow Payne. The reader will understand that Mason was now in the condition of Ivanhoe after his wager with the Templar of the precious reliquary, and before he was relieved by the gratitude of Isaac of York. He lacked the means to get to his Ashby de la Zouche. But at Payne's rueful face in telling of his interview with the dowager the graceless scamp threw his fat figure on the bed, cracking his sides with laughter.

"I don't see the fun," said Payne sulkily. "I wish I was well out of it. The dowager talked devilish strong."

"If my aunt won't help us," said Mason, "my uncle will. You must just take my stop-watch to the three balls.

> Farewell to my golden repeater!
> We've come to my uncle's old shop!"

Payne was just leaving when a voice in the next room stopped him. "It's that infernal pawnbroker," said he in a rage.

The man came in, smooth, civil, obsequious. "I thought you'd like to have this thing off your mind," said he, presenting a note of Mason's.

The two looked at each other blankly.

"See here, Levison," said Mason coaxingly: "you know my aunt will settle all these things, and I want money right now. Payne was just going to see you."

"She'll pay some—not this," said the man coolly. "In fact, I am just from Winnett's. He has paid Levi and Walker"—at which Mason stared—"and taken out a writ in summary proceedings. In fact, I come to warn you, and one good turn deserves another: pay it and go."

Mason by chaffering got a small sum on his watch over the debt. He was clear at last. Payne had left, and Mason was taking a final drink at the bar when a man tapped his shoulder. Aunt Fanny had played her trump and won: it was the sheriff.

"All right!" said Levison, laughing. "Whenever you *have* anything, you know, I am accommodating, but—"

We can now return and read Aunt Fanny's correspondence.

CHAPTER V.

When the lawyer's note, by anticipation, announced the arrest described in the last chapter, Aunt Fanny, like an old spirit of the turf, began to groom for that other match. I declare it was not an unlovely sight to see the two women, youth and its affectation, wrapping arms about each other in joyous mood over this double victory.

The dowager took occasion to praise her nephew's gallantry, the chivalry that prompted him to take up an old woman's quarrel, with hints that the other party, even if his rhymes had been unintentional, betrayed a rudeness that ill became the Vere de Vere. Perhaps this part, as it included little Sue, had as well have been left out, but Aunt Fanny had her points to make, and always played a bold, high game. [Pg 741]

As the two sang pæans of victory another note came from the lawyer, which quite altered the complexion of things. That ready gamester, Lind Mason, had played again and completely turned the tables on Aunt Fanny, using her own weapons to wrench victory from her:

"Dear Mrs. Brown: I regret to say your nephew and his accomplice Levison have played us a scoundrelly trick. Levison came to me and proposed to bail your nephew. Not knowing the parties were in collusion, and satisfied that your nephew was in the sheriff's custody, I tried to put Levison off. But he told me coolly that he knew my object was to detain Captain Mason—that if I had taken up his first note for fifty dollars, he might have let this other one for two hundred and fifty alone; but he must take care of himself. He intended to bail every writ until his claim was taken up. If I chose to assume all the captain's liabilities first, very well, but it was in my discretion to secure him first. No one else would try the same bold game. Under your instructions, which were peremptory, I had no choice but to accept the offer; which I did. There was necessarily a minute's interval in preparing the new writ on Levison's claim, which I sued out at once, Captain Mason and the sheriff being in the room, and your nephew acquiescing in the arrangement, as I thought. But he stepped out: the sheriff went instantly in pursuit by my directions, but with unexampled effrontery Captain Mason demanded by what authority he was detained. Of course, as, technically speaking, the writ of arrest was not yet served, the sheriff could do nothing, and Mason taking the streetcar, the minute's interval of returning for the writ allowed him to get off. The sheriff has gone to the ferry and put officers at the bridge and elsewhere, but it is impossible yet to know the result.

"We must now seize the other party. I have heard of one Joe Skinner, who could testify certainly to the contemplated breach of the peace by Mr. Nettles. If there was any way to detain that gentleman an hour, until the lawyer could get his hands on Skinner!"

"Humph! detain Mr. Nettles!" said the dowager, glancing from the lawyer's note to the pale, pretty face before her. "You look pale, child: a drive will help you.—Memmie, have the double racing-buggy and the trotter Marmette brought to the door."

"Oh no, aunty," said Sue, shrinking: "it would be wrong while—" While her lover was going to his death, Sue thought.

"Pshaw, child!" said the dowager, writing. "We'll see.—Ma'amselle, dress Miss Sue for a drive; and a touch of rouge, Hortense: she is too pale."

While the yielding child, ignorant of her aunt's scheme, was being dressed like a victim for sacrifice, Bob Nettles read the tinted note:

> "Dear Mr. Nettles: My niece, Susie Brown, tells me you have an engagement to drive with her this afternoon. Being unwilling to trust the dear child in a vehicle at livery, permit an old lady to put one of her buggies and fast trotters at your service."

If Bob Nettles had one dearer wish than another, it was to see his little playmate once more, and make up that dispute before facing her cousin's pistol. Aunt Fanny's plan of detaining him was likely to thrive.

Sudie came down, pale and tremulous as a little white withering rosebud—very pretty and timid and tender. There was a forced smile at meeting, and but few words. He had intended to say how sorry he was to have offended her, but he did not. He saw or felt that there was nothing to forgive between them now. His was but a shallow, practical mind, and she was only a timid, silly little girl; yet they knew of that unspoken love between them, and that there was a great trouble, without words.

The mare stooped to her work and shook herself into a trot, the spokes whirling into feathery fans down the silvery-dusted pike cityward, and then, skirting its southern flanks, on golden-cushioned country roads, rolling smoother and lighter, and the swift wheels growing more wing-like at top speed; under silver-leafed poplars and lombardies tapering like road-side steeples; by thoroughfare and farm-gate; under beech and maple copses and broad oaks on the park-like common; by scarp and counterscarp and over the smooth glacis of earthworks, memorials of the late war; by woodlands of ash and beech, and over low fallow of redeemed marsh, right into the golden eyelashes of the sun. The great summer city lay northward under its nebulous canopy of dust, a soft hazy picture, dimpled with domes and spires. By surburban villas; by farmsteads overflowed by the swelling city; by log churches in cool nooks, contradicting the pretentious architecture about them; by happy evening lovers, and wives waiting at the gate for their home-coming husbands; by noisy German gardens, and revellers in quaint picturesque costumes; by rival coaches, and racing-buggies of the sporting gentry that tried to pass them, but soon gave out under the black mare's long, tireless stride; about the great city till the broad river lay all ablush before them with sunset. And then curving back into town, the soft dazzle melting into umber; through streets breaking into brilliants of parallel burners that end in a star, to the utter confusion of geometric definition; through streets of home-going multitudes, and by open summer windows showing the spread cloth and tableware; over the hoarse drum-beat of the bridge, and by the marble palaces of the dead looking cool and tranquil in the rising moon; winding the shell drive between Osage orange hedges; and then the half-aërial flight of those wing-like wheels is over for ever and for ever. [Pg 742]

Then Sudie spoke. She felt she must say something, utter some protest of her womanhood against that wicked, wicked business: "Mr. Nettles, do you not think it wrong to fight a duel?"

"Yes, Miss Sue," said he gravely, "it is a very wicked thing."

She looked for some equivocation, some excuse or palliation of the wrong, which she would have to controvert—poor little logician of love!—and show him how bad it was; and then he would not do it. She hardly knew what to say to that speech.

"I don't think I could love any one that fights duels," was the next effort, still, poor child! offering her coin, her woman's affections, in that cruel, heedless market of men.

He said nothing: he felt it was right she should say that, and that he should bear it in silence.

At the door he stopped to part with her for ever. She could not bear it. She was deathly white, the touch of rouge starting out like a blood-spot.

"Cannot you help it?" she asked.

"No, Miss Sue," he said simply, "I can't."

She said nothing: just put up her lips and kissed him, and fled up stairs swiftly and softly, poor weeping, breaking little heart, crushed under the iron wheels of that cruel code!

"Come in, Mr. Nettles," said the dowager: "there is some one waiting here to see you."

He entered and found Mr. Winnett, a short, stout, dark-eyed gentleman, who shook hands with him laughingly as he said, "We have heard of this business, Mr. Nettles, and mean to stop it: it involves Mrs. Brown's name, you see. But she will send you with the officer in her carriage to avoid any exposure."

"Has Captain Mason been arrested?" asked Bob.

"No, but—"

He could say no more. Bob laid a hand on the broad sill of the open window, and crashed down among the running roses.

"Stop him!" cried Mr. Winnett.

"Here, my little feller!" said Policeman X——.

Bob was not short-stop for nothing. The man's heels went up as Bob leaped into the buggy and drove off, the policeman following. [Pg 743]

"The man's a fool," said Aunt Fanny.

"You mean Nettles?"

"The man who tries to beat my trotter," said she. "Well, we have played and lost."

Yes, lost; for that artful gamester, Mason, after his arrest had taken Levison aside and put it to that bold operator that his aunt's object was to break up the duel, and that she would pay any claim to do it, but if he was detained by the writs of Levi and Walker the opportunity was lost. He agreed to give Levison a pre-dated note for two hundred and fifty dollars for one hundred and twenty-five dollars cash if he (Levison) would release him from the present arrest. We know the result. Instead of stopping her nephew, Aunt Fanny had lent him wings to fly. While the lawyer explained this the bell rang and a card—Deane Lee, to see Captain Nettles—was brought in.

"Who is Deane Lee?" she asked.

"How fortunate!" said the lawyer. "It is Mr. Nettles's second."

"We can appeal to his feelings," said the dowager.

"Do," said he. "I will remain outside, and use an appeal men of his sort understand better."

"Pray be seated, Captain Lee," said the dowager.

"This," thought Lee, "is the lady who made the duel: she looks game to carry it through;" but he only bowed.

"I may be the first to inform you," said she, "that my nephew will necessarily require a postponement of his affair with your friend. We hope to have your help, sir."

Deane fingered his cap and bowed again.

"To be entirely frank," said she graciously, "Captain Mason lacks means. He applied to me, but of course I cannot furnish it for such a purpose."

"Certainly not," said Lee: "the matter has been too much talked of already; but not by our side, ma'am."

"Yes," said she. "You will, I trust, give us your assistance."

"Certainly—yes'm," said Lee: "it shall be done accordin' to Hoyle. Beg pardon, but give yourself no trouble about it."

"What a burden you remove!" said the dowager. "Such a delicate matter, and my nephew feels

that his honor is involved. Oh, you men! you men! But I am so fortunate to have met you!"

The dowager was really impressed and pleased with his prompt acquiescence in the postponement.

"Yes'm," continued Deane, "I'll see to it at once. Nettles needn't know a word."

"Thank you," said the dowager, sunning him with a royal grace of manner—"so delicate and considerate in you! Yes, I should prefer that." She evidently thought he referred to her nephew's impecuniosity; and he did, but not as she supposed.

"Not a word," continued Deane, thinking she must be a right jolly old girl, after all. "Of course, ma'am, you couldn't advance the money to Captain Mason: it 'ud look ugly for a lady. But the boys shall have their fun: I'll lend him the shads myself."

"Sir!" shrieked the dowager.

"I beg, ma'am, you'll take no trouble," said Deane, anxiously polite. "It's no inconvenience whatever—in fact, to my advantage. I've got two or three little bets out the thing'll come off; so I'm bound to come out even."

The dowager flashed up, and rang the bell violently, her whole face convulsed with passion: "Show this man out! show him off the place!"

Lee walked out gravely, fingering his cap. At the door he turned to the mulatto and said sympathetically, "Does she have 'em often?"

"What, young marsta?"

"Fits," said Lee sententiously, and walked off.

But he was not through yet. The lawyer waited under the gaslight, and as the soldier, pondering the late interview curiously, approached, he addressed him: "Captain Lee, I believe?"

"Them's my initials," said Deane. "What about it?"

"A shrewd young fellow like you might make something out of this duel." [Pg 744]

"As how?" asked Deane.

"The old lady would pay handsomely to have it postponed," said the lawyer.

"Whe-ew-ew!" whistled Lee, a light breaking on him. "What a mule's head I've been!"

"You see the chance, eh?" asked the lawyer.

"Lookee here," said Deane, taking him confidentially by the arm: "I don't mind letting you into a secret if you'll keep dark."

The lawyer nodded gravely.

"*You* can make a pot of money out of it," continued Deane.

It was not exactly the line of suggestion anticipated, and it was Mr. Winnett's turn to ask "How?"

"I've strictly private and confidential information, you know—"

"Of course, of course," acquiesced the lawyer.

"That the other side is devilish hard up," said Deane in an emphatic whisper. "See 'em privately on that p'int. It's no use talking to us: we're flush."

With that he strode abruptly into the dark, leaving Mr. Winnett to puzzle out whether he had just heard a serious proposition or had been subjected to the hoax of a solemn wag.

That ended the efforts to stop the duel, and night with its grief and penitence came on all interested in the parties to it. On the dowager in her cushioned chair, with a finger in the prayer-book, seeing the portrait of her only son brought home stricken to death by his own gun thirty years ago, as it changed from the long curls and blue eyes of childhood to a handsome but weak bearded face of a man, dreadfully like that other face as she saw it on the bed under the white seals of death. On a homely old mother lying in the back room of a village store, and a short, square man walking up and down and saying, "Don't take on so, old gal: you'll hurt yourself. It's just them newspaper lies. Our Bob wouldn't fight no dule." And the woman's sob: "Lost, body and soul! soul and body!—our boy Bob, John! our boy Bob!" On poor little Sue with her headache as she answers her mother's inquiry that she's "Better, mamma;" but as her father asks the same question she puts up her arms about his neck, and says, "Oh, papa! oh, papa!" and the shrewd, worldly man kneels down and prays with her for the life of that alien sinner yonder as he has not prayed since he was a man. On Bob himself at the hotel quietly reading to the listening major, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live," as if every comforting word was a denunciation.

CHAPTER VI.

After his victory over his aunt, Mason's spirits had been continually rising. That humorist Payne,

who thought it such a hoax to pit two cocktails against each other and pull the strings of the puppets, writhed under his merciless chaff. Mason had called for candles, and, chipping balls of the spermaceti blacked in an æsthetic spirit with pencil-dust, had used them for practice with a parlor pistol, alleging that the leaden balls damaged the furniture. When Lee came to cast bullets, using the brazier's furnace in the room, Mason made him sit down, took the moulds and threw them in the Brown duelling pistol-case, and set himself to entertain the party and chaff Payne. He lolled back in his chair, his handsome figure showing to advantage, now rallying Payne on the prospect of figuring in a "ring-tailed gaberdine" as a victim of the dowager's anger, and now reciting marvellous horse-stories, mixed with anecdotes pertinent and impertinent. The party consisted of an editor, a surgeon, a German geologist prospecting that wonderful fossil bed of the Falls, and evidently looking on Mason as a miracle excelling anything dug up, and the seconds.

Mason rattled on with his racing and racy anecdotes: "Yes, sir, it was a perfectly white mare, sky-blue mane and tail. I put her in the racing-buggy on Aunt Fanny's round quarter-track, and she spun around so fast the off wheels never touched the turf from the quarter-post to the judges' [Pg 745] stand. Fact, gentlemen! fastest trotting-time on record. Rather peculiar color too."

"Very," said the German in admiration of his host. "A remarkable peculiarity in the pigment granules. What became of this singular animal?"

"Singular, as you say," said Mason easily. "She took navicular and jolted off her pins: trotted ten miles an hour on the stubs after she cast her hoofs."

"Eggsdraordinary vitality!" ejaculated the German in deep gutturals, and looking around as if distrustful of Mason's rapid utterance. "How did you call it?"

"Skylight," said Mason carelessly. "Imp. Milky Way by dam Cerulean, as the stud-books rather profanely style it. Tremendous vitality, though!" passing a pair of moulds to Lee and winking to attract his attention, "I thought to preserve the hair and hide as a curiosity. Wouldn't do—wouldn't begin to do! Digestive function so strong action continued from the skin. Had to substitute brickdust and charcoal. Drop into my private museum some day. Happy to show you that and some other curiosities picked up in my rather remarkable adventures."

Lee was now busy casting bullets, and Mason's spirits seemed to rise with the operation. Some listened, others laughed, but Mason had a cool way of perking up his eyebrows and going on negligently, as much as to say, "If you deprive yourself of the satisfaction of believing, the fault lies with the listener." He seemed divided between a wish to distract Lee from careful observation of his employment and to chaff Payne. Once Payne started suddenly as if about to say something to Lee, but a look quenched him.

"Friend of my youth, this goblet sip," laughed Mason. "For what says the Psalmist?—'Let the galded jade wince, our wethers is unwrung.' But never be it said," rising and speaking with theatrical emotion—"Not while Reason holds her throne in this distracted globe—never, while Mason lives, shall his Damon, his caster, be cast in prison-bonds by a ravaging female she-aunt. Never shall penitential garb encase those manly limbs nor base turnkey's shears clip those auburn locks for which ripe beauty in melting accents is wont to plead in vain."

"You're devilish generous," growled Payne. "You know the old griffin doesn't propose to bag me unless you get hit."

"Is it possible," asked the German, catching a meaning in this raillery, "the second of an American duel is imprisoned if his principal is shot? I ask for information."

"You have come to the right shop now," said Lind. "He is, invariably. Some rather curious contretemps grow out of it. Duelling is very popular among us, very—especially with the fair sex," kissing his hand to an indefinite noun of multitude. "A great favorite being imprisoned for acting as second, the people took it up—elected him governor by an overwhelming majority. It was supposed, of course, he would pardon himself; but no: he was a Roman, the noblest Roman of them all. 'The prerogative of executive clemency,' he said, 'had already been grossly abused. It would ill repay the generous confidence of his constituents to exercise it in his own behalf and in order to escape the just penalty of the law.' He refused to pardon himself, and so served out his term in both offices."

This struck the German as something heroic.

"True, sir, true," said Lind: "rather inconvenient, however. When the legislature met, as it necessarily did, in the penitentiary, you could not tell a member from a convict. Rather awkward, you see, if the wrong body adjourned itself by mistake."

The party broke up late, and Mason, throwing off his coat, called for Webster's *Quarto* and Watson's *Poetical Quotations*, saying he would address his aunt in such an Orphic strain as would make her wig curl and ma'amselle's rouge-pot chalky. Watson's *Poetical Quotations* was not in the hotel; but with the big *Quarto* before him, arms akimbo, his legs spread out under the table, Mason went at his task, pausing to shout a passage at Payne, and swear it would liquefy the [Pg 746] crystal of his aunt's frigid humor like a hot collar in July, or to scratch his head over some fickle-vowelled monosyllable that defied orthography; and the soft dark night deepened to the gray, lustreless morning.

An early marketer from Jeffersonville spread a rumor that R. Nettles was shot through the lungs, and poor little Sue read it in the paper an hour later. An eager reporter recognized the hotel-van from over the river, with a tarpaulin thrown over its contents. "Anything of Captain Mason's party?" he asked.

"Stout, rosy man, good deal o' gas?" asked the porter.

"Yes! yes! what of him?"

"Nothing: I guess he won't gas no more," motioning toward the tarpaulin. "Them's his'n. Do you know where his aunt lives?"

Anybody knows; the van drives off; the rumor flies—both parties slain.

Let us follow the van. At Aunt Fanny's the tarpaulin is thrown off, and reveals nothing worse than a trunk, gun-case, etc., but the man's story confirms the worst. He has a letter for the dowager, and it is sent up. The dowager calls ma'amselle to read, which she does with strong emotion and French accent:

"My Dear and Venerated Aunt—"

"Hand me the vinaigrette, and don't read so loud: I am not deaf," said the dowager.

The poor maid subdued her tones as she best could, and read:

"Now is the hour when churchyards yawn and graves give up their dead. It is midnight's holy hour. I hear the rush of the Falls like a mill-sluice, and it recalls 'the happy, happy hours of childhood.' But ere another day I may ride upon the Styx, and hear the dam loud roaring no more."

"Ride upon a stick, and hear *what*?" ejaculated the dowager at poor Lind's rhetoric.

"Mais oui, madame," translates the French maid, "c'est la fleuve de l'enfer et les cris des âmes perdues."

"Oh, the Styx!" said the dowager, taking snuff.—"Use your handkerchief, Hortense, and go on."

She obeys:

"Ere my venerated aunt peruses this calligraphy an eagle soaring in its pride of place will be by a mousing Nettles hawked at and killed."

"Poor boy!" said his aunt. "I must have a black grenadine, trimmed with bugles and flounced very deep, for mourning.—Don't forget it, Hortense."

"My last thoughts," continued the reader, "are with my revered relative; for who forgave the boyish trick, and fed me on a candy-stick, and nursed me when it made me sick?—My aunt. Who taught me to back a colt or make a book? Who entered me for the purse with Cousin Fanny Alison, but the filly bolted with Bob Ascot?—My aunt."

"Patience alive!" cried the dowager: "what does the man mean, with his doggerel poetry and slang of the stables at such a time?"

"Oh, madame! it is noble," said the poor maid with streaming eyes, and then continued:

"She besought me with the salt rheum in her optical organs to suppress my fury; but who can restrain the wrath of a Brown? She denied me the spondulics—a Latin word for cash—to carry out my nefarious purpose, though it grieved her generous heart."

"That's well thought of," said the dowager. "People talk so. We must get it to those newspaper-men. Poor Lind!"

"To those who assert a mercenary motive I triumphantly respond, 'She paid up my little bills, and has doubtless destroyed the evidences of them.'"

"They are in the steel casket," said the dowager. "Burn them. But he never would have paid."

"When she honors my sight draft," read ma'amselle, "for two-fifty to settle up my present expenses in this business, she will pay the last debt of him who has paid the last debt of Nature. For if the knave do cut but deep enough, I'll pay it instantly with all my heart. (*Shakespeare*.)

L. Brown Mason." [Pg 747]

"Give me the cheque-book, and let the man come up," said the dowager.

The man was questioned, and had but little to tell. He was told Captain Mason had been shot, and to bring the letter. After he was dismissed the dowager said, "Let Fanny bring the chocolate. I hope the cream is better: it curdled yesterday. Poor Lind! He had a good heart."

About the time his aunt was cashing his last draft, and reckoning that that little enterprise of marrying Sue Brown to Captain Mason had cost her a thousand dollars for failure, Captain Mason, with a party in the carriage, stood on Mrs. Walter Brown's front steps explaining to her

that at a little expense in cutting down her ornamental trees and grubbing up her rare exotic shrubbery the front lawn could be converted into a beautiful quarter-track, and offering his services to effect the desirable change. Then advancing, he graciously held out his hand to poor, pale, red-eyed little Sudie, still hysterical over that dreadful paragraph.

"No," said Sue tartly. "Mamma may shelter you from the police, but you ought to be hung. There! And I won't shake a *murderer's* hand. There! I won't! I won't! I won't! There!"

Mason's jolly face looked queer. "I see," said he. "'Twas ever thus from childhood's hour. I never bucked a card or colt, but what some fellow held the bower or else that horse was sure to bolt. When, at pensive evening's hour, I stroll among the tombs, I read the virtues of the—erra—clammy, the clammy. As I read the testimony of the rocks, of the rocks, it strikes me the wicked never die, and I long to be—erra—wicked. There is no raising that card," wagging his head solemnly at little Sue, who stared in spite of herself, "until Gable—I believe his name is Gable—turns trump. But I have brought you all that is mortal of the late R. Nettles."

He turned to the door as he spoke, while the shocked, terrified girl hid her face, thinking of the vision in that very parlor under the white seals of death.

But Bob Nettles's cheery, commonplace tones interrupted: "How'd do, Miss Sue? how'd do, Mrs. Brown? Captain Mason said he'd break it to you, and I thought—"

But Sue had turned her face to the wall in a corner, and stood shaking her plump shoulders and stamping her little feet like a pettish child, as she said, "Go 'way from me, Bob Nettles! I'll never speak to you again as long as I live; and as for Cousin Lind," with a shake and a stamp, "I hate him!"

"See what it is to lose the virtues of the clammy," said Mason, pulling his beard and grinning at Bob's blank looks. "But I must go to my aunt. By a shocking oversight we forgot to settle the hotel-bill at Jeffersonville, and I am afraid the greedy landlord has forwarded a note to have been delivered to her in case of accident, and a draft. It is humiliating to think she has paid it, and honor requires I should promptly settle it with an I.O.U. As for Payne—"

"Dry that up," said Payne.

"Well, I'll only say the next duel I fight may Payne load the pistols!" added the captain.

What that meant is the unsolved mystery of the duel. Deane Lee insists that it was a fair, honest, stand-up fight. True, he had used the wrong moulds the night before in casting bullets, but he had seen Payne load the famous Brown duelling-pistols.

But Mason's old comrades wink at the story of the wax bullets blacked with pencil-dust by Mason to represent the real thing, and say Payne was so cowed by the dowager's threat and Mason's chaff that no power could have made him charge with dangerous missiles. Mason himself says that neither he nor Nettles could have hit a barn-door; but a mere index of the veracious stories of that famous duel, as told by Mason, would fill a book. As his debts were paid and the dowager keeps him in feather, and as Bob and Sue were married, that game-bird is right in declaring it the only duel that was ever "satisfactorily adjusted honorably to all parties."

WILL WALLACE HARNEY.

FOLK-LORE OF THE SOUTHERN NEGROES.

[Pg 748]

All tribes and peoples have their folk-lore, whether embodied in tales of daring adventure, as in our own doughty Jack the Giant-killer, or in stories of genii and magic, as in the *Arabian Nights*, or in legends of wraiths, witches, bogles and apparitions, as among the Scotch peasantry; and these fables are so strongly tinged with the peculiarities—or rather the idiosyncrasies—of the race among whom they originate as to furnish a fair index of its mental and moral characteristics, not only at the time of their origin, but so long as the people continue to narrate them or listen to them.

The folk-lore of Africo-Americans, as appearing in our Southern States, is a medley of fables, songs, sayings, incantations, charms and superstitious traditions brought from various tribes along the West African coast, and so far condensed into one mass in their American homes that often part of a story or tradition belonging to one tribe is grafted, without much regard to consistency, upon a part belonging to another people, while they are still further complicated by the frequent infusion into them of ideas evidently derived from communication with the white race.

Any one who will take the trouble to analyze the predominant traits of negro character, and to collate them with the predominant traits of African folk-lore, will discern the fitness of each to each. On every side he will discover evidences of a passion for music and dancing, for visiting and chatting, for fishing and snaring, indeed for any pleasure requiring little exertion of either mind or body; evidences also of a gentle, pliable and easy temper—of a quick and sincere sympathy with suffering wheresoever seen—of a very low standard of morals, combined with remarkable dexterity in satisfying themselves that it is right to do as they wish. Another trait,

strong enough and universal enough to atone for many a dark one, is that, as a rule, there is nothing of the fierce and cruel in their nature, and it is scarcely possible for anything of this kind to be grafted permanently upon them.

Of their American-born superstitions, by far the greater part are interwoven with so-called religious beliefs, and go far to show their native faith in dreams and visions, which they are not slow to narrate, to embellish, and even to fabricate extemporaneously, to suit the ears of a credulous listener; also showing their natural tendency to rely upon outward observances, as if possessed of some *fetish*-like virtue, and in certain cases a horrible debasement of some of the highest and noblest doctrines of the Christian faith. These superstitions must of course be considered apart from the real character of those who are sincerely pious, and upon which they are so many blemishes. They are, in fact, the rank and morbid outgrowth of the peculiarities of religious denominations grafted upon the prolific soil of their native character.

Of the few which may be mentioned without fear of offence, since they belong to the negro rather than to his denomination, the following are examples: Tools to be used in digging a grave must never be carried through a house which any one inhabits, else they will soon be used for digging the grave of the dweller. Tools already used for such a purpose must not be carried directly home. This would bring the family too closely for safety into contact with the dead. They must be laid reverently beside the grave, and allowed to remain there all night. A superstition in respect to posture is by some very rigorously observed. It is, that religious people must never sit with their legs crossed. The only reason given—though we cannot help suspecting that there must be another kept in concealment—is, that *crossing the legs is the same as dancing, and dancing is a sin*.

These are fair samples of Americanized superstitions—puerile, it is true, but harmless. It is only [Pg 749] when we come into contact with negroes of pure African descent that we discover evidences of a once prevalent and not wholly discarded demonolatry. The native religion of the West African, except where elevated by the influence of Mohammedanism, was not—and, travellers tell us, is not yet—a worship of God as such, nor even an attempt to know and honor Him, but a constant effort at self-protection. The true God, they say, calls for no worship; for, being good in and of himself, He will do all the good He can without being asked. But there are multitudes of malignant spirits whose delight is to mislead and to destroy. These must be propitiated by gifts and acts of worship, or rendered powerless by charms and incantations.

No one knows, or has the means of ascertaining, to what extent real devil-worship is practised in America, because it is always conducted in secret; but we have reason to believe that it has almost entirely ceased, being shamed out of existence by the loveliness of a purer and better faith, and a belief in the agency of evil spirits, and consequent dread of their malign powers, although still more or less dominant with the negroes, has also greatly declined.[C] To give a sample of this last: The time was—but it has nearly passed away, or else the writer has not been for many years in the way of hearing of it, as in the days of childhood—when one of the objects of greatest dread among our seaboard negroes was the "Jack-muh-lantern." This terrible creature—who on dark, damp nights would wander with his lantern through woods and marshes, seeking to mislead people to their destruction—was described by a negro who seemed perfectly familiar with his subject as a hideous little being, somewhat human in form, though covered with hair like a dog. It had great goggle eyes, and thick, sausage-like lips that opened from ear to ear. In height it seldom exceeded four or five feet, and it was quite slender in form, but such was its power of locomotion that no one on the swiftest horse could overtake it or escape from it, for it could leap like a grasshopper to almost any distance, and its strength was beyond all human resistance. No one ever heard of its victims being bitten or torn: they were only compelled to go with it into bogs and swamps and marshes, and there left to sink and die. There was only one mode of escape for those who were so unfortunate as to be met by one of these mischievous night-walkers, and that was by a charm; but that charm was easy and within everybody's reach. Whether met by marsh or roadside, the person had only to take off his coat or outer garment and put it on again inside out, and the foul fiend was instantly deprived of all power to harm.

Multifarious, however, as are the forms and aspects of folk-lore among this remarkable and in some respects highly interesting people, the chief bulk of it lies stored away among their fables, which are as purely African as are their faces or their own plaintive melodies. Travellers and missionaries tell us that the same sweet airs which are so often heard in religious meetings in America, set to Christian hymns, are to be recognized in the boats and palm-roofed houses of Africa, set to heathen words, and that the same wild stories of Buh Rabbit, Buh Wolf, and other *Buhs* that are so charming to the ears of American children, are to be heard to this day in Africa, differing only in the drapery necessary to the change of scene.

Almost without exception the actors in these fables are brute animals endowed with speech and reason, in whom mingle strangely, and with ludicrous incongruity, the human and brute characteristics. The *dramatis personæ* are always honored with the title of *Buh*, which is generally supposed to be an abbreviation of the word "brother" (the *br* being sounded without the whir of the *r*), but it probably is a title of respect equivalent to our Mr. The animals which figure in the stories are chiefly Buh Rabbit, Buh Lion, Buh Wolf and Buh Deer, though sometimes we [Pg 750] hear of Buh Elephant, Buh Fox, Buh Cooter and Buh Goose. As a rule, each Buh sustains in every fable the same general character. Buh Deer is always a simpleton; Buh Wolf always rapacious and tricky; Buh Rabbit foppish, vain, quick-witted, though at times a great fool; Buh Elephant quiet, sensible and dignified.

Of the Buh fables, that which is by all odds the greatest favorite, and which appears in the greatest variety of forms, is the "Story of Buh Rabbit and the Tar Baby." Each variation preserves the great landmarks, particularly the closing scene. According to the most thoroughly African version, it runs thus: Buh Rabbit and Buh Wolf are neighbors. In a conversation one day Buh Wolf proposes that they two shall dig a well for their joint benefit, instead of depending upon chance rainfalls or going to distant pools or branches, as they often have to do, to quench their thirst. To this Buh Rabbit, who has no fondness for labor, though willing enough to enjoy its fruits, offers various objections, and finally gives a flat refusal.

"Well," says Buh Wolf, who perfectly understands his neighbor, "if you no help to dig well, you mustn't use de water."

"What for I gwine use de water?" responds Buh Rabbit with affected disdain. "What use I got for well? In de mornin' I drink de dew, an' in middle o' day I drink from de cow-tracks."

The well is dug by Buh Wolf alone, who after a while perceives that some one besides himself draws from it. He watches, and soon identifies the intruder as Buh Rabbit, who makes his visits by night. "Ebery mornin' he see Buh Rabbit tracks—ebery mornin' Buh Rabbit tracks." Indignant at the intrusion, he resolves to set a trap for his thievish neighbor and to put him to death. Knowing Buh Rabbit's buckish love for the ladies, he fits up a *tar baby*, made to look like a beautiful girl, and sets it near the well. By what magical process this manufacture of an attractive-looking young lady out of treacherous adhesive tar is accomplished we are not informed. But listeners to stories must not be inquisitive about the mysterious parts: they must be content to hear.

Buh Rabbit, emboldened by long impunity, goes to the well as usual after dark, sees this beautiful creature standing there motionless, peeps at it time and again suspiciously; but being satisfied that it is really a young lady, he makes a polite bow and addresses her in gallant language. The young lady makes no reply. This encourages him to ask if he may not come to take a kiss. Still no reply. He sets his water-bucket on the ground, marches up boldly and obtains the kiss, but finds to his surprise that he cannot get away: his lips are held fast by the tar. He struggles and tries to persuade her to let him go. How he is able to speak with his lips sticking fast is another unexplained mystery; but no matter: he does speak, and most eloquently, yet in vain. He now changes his tone, and threatens her with a slap. Still no answer. He administers the slap, and his hand sticks fast. One after the other, both hands and both feet, as well as his mouth, are thus caught, and poor Buh Rabbit remains a prisoner until Buh Wolf comes the next morning to draw water.

"Eh! eh! Buh Rabbit, wah de matter?" exclaims Buh Wolf, affecting the greatest surprise at his neighbor's woeful plight.

Buh Rabbit, who has as little regard for truth as for honesty, replies, attempting to throw all the blame upon the deceitful maiden by whom he has been entrapped, not even suspecting yet—so we are to infer—that she is made of tar instead of living flesh. He declares with all the earnestness of injured innocence that he was passing by, in the sweet, honest moonlight, in pursuit of his lawful business, when this girl *hailed* him, and decoyed him into giving her a kiss, and was now holding him in unlawful durance.

The listener ironically commiserates his captive neighbor, and proposes to set him free; when, suddenly noticing the water-bucket and the tracks by the well, he charges Buh Rabbit with his repeated robberies by night, and concludes by declaring his intention to put him to immediate death. [Pg 751]

The case has now become pretty serious, and Buh Rabbit is of course woefully troubled at the near approach of the great catastrophe: still, even in this dire extremity, his wits do not cease to cheer him with some hope of escape. Seeing that his captor is preparing to hang him—for the cord is already around his neck and he is being dragged toward an overhanging limb—he expresses the greatest joy by capering, dancing and clapping his hands—so much so that the other curiously inquires, "What for you so glad, Buh Rabbit?"

"Oh," replies the sly hypocrite, "because you gwine hang me and not trow me in de brier-bush."

"What for I mustn't trow you in de brier-bush?" inquires Mr. Simpleton Wolf.

"Oh," prays Buh Rabbit with a doleful whimper, "please hang me: please trow me in de water or trow me in de fire, where I die at once. But don't—oh don't—trow me in de brier-bush to tear my poor flesh from off my bones."

"I gwine to do 'zactly wah you ax me not to do," returns Wolf in savage tone. Then, going to a neighboring patch of thick, strong briers, he pitches Buh Rabbit headlong in the midst, and says, "Now let's see de flesh come off de bones."

No sooner, however, does the struggling and protesting Buh Rabbit find himself among the briers than he slides gently to the ground, and peeping at his would-be torturer from a safe place behind the stems, he says, "Tankee, Buh Wolf—a tousand tankee—for *bring me home*! De brier-bush *de berry place where I been born*."

Another favorite story is that of the "Foot-Race." Buh Rabbit and Buh Frog are admirers of the beautiful Miss Dinah, and try their best to win her. The lady likes them both, but not being permitted to marry both, she resolves to make her choice depend upon the result of a foot-race.

The distance is to be ten miles—that is, five miles out and five miles in—along a level road densely bordered with bushes. The day arrives. Miss Dinah, seated at the starting-point, is to give the word to the rivals, who stand one on either side, and the goal for the winner is to be a place *in her lap*. By agreement, Buh Rabbit is to take the open road, and Buh Frog, who prefers it, is allowed to leap through the bushes, and both are to halloo to each other at the end of every mile. Buh Rabbit, however, with all his cunning, has this time met his match; for Buh Frog has engaged five of his kinsmen, so nearly like himself in appearance that they cannot be distinguished from him, and has stationed one in concealment near each mile-post, with instructions how to act, while he has provided for himself a nice hiding-place in the bushes near Miss Dinah's seat. At the word Go! the rivals start, Buh Frog leaping into the bushes, where he disappears, and Buh Rabbit capering along the road and flaunting his white tail merrily at the thought of distancing the other so far that he shall never see or hear of him again till after Miss Dinah has been won. At the end of the first mile Buh Rabbit turns his head back and tauntingly halloos, "I here, Buh Frog! How you git 'long?"

To his dismay, however, he hears the voice of the other in the bushes ahead of him singing out, "Boo-noo! I here too! I beat you here, I'll beat you there: I'll beat you back to Miss Dinah's lap!"

On hearing this boast repeated ahead of him in the bushes at each mile-post, Buh Rabbit becomes frantic, and rushes through the last mile as he had never run before. But all in vain. Just as he comes within easy view of the coveted goal he sees Buh Frog leap from the bushes plump into Miss Dinah's lap, and hears him sing, with as good breath as though he had not run a mile,

> "Boo-noo! Before you!
> I beat you there, I beat you here:
> I've beat you back to Miss Dinah's lap!"

Another version makes the competitors Buh Deer and Buh Cooter (the negro name for terrapin or land-tortoise), in which Buh Cooter wins the day by collusion with some of his closely-resembling kin. Substantially the same story is to be heard from the natives of each of the four continents, but whether the African gained his idea of it from Europe or Asia, or whether the European or Asian gained it from Africa, is perhaps past determining. The writer can testify that the story as above narrated, or rather the substance of it, was told him in childhood by negroes supposed to have obtained it direct from Africa. [Pg 752]

Some of these stories are mere laudations of Buh Rabbit's shrewdness and common sense. Buh Wolf has long had a watering of the mouth for rabbit-flesh, but has never been able to gratify it. He finally hits upon the following expedient: He causes a report to be spread that he has suddenly died, and all his neighbors, especially Buh Rabbit, are invited to his funeral. He has no doubt that his plump, short-tailed neighbor, being once enclosed within the walls of his house, will fall an easy prey to himself and his attending cousins. Buh Rabbit, however, is not to be easily ensnared. He goes demurely to the house of mourning, but does not enter. He seats himself on the steps by the side of Buh Cat, who is enjoying the sunshine in the doorway.

"Is Buh Wolf dead, for true and true?" he inquires.

"I suppose so. Eberybody say he dead," answers Buh Cat.

"How did he die, and when?" he continues to inquire.

Buh Cat gives the particulars as reported to him, and Buh Rabbit pretends to receive them with all faith, expressing great sorrow for the loss experienced by the neighborhood. But after a little musing he seems to be struck with a new idea, and turning to Buh Cat he inquires in hopeful tone, "But did he *grin* or *whistle* before he died? People who die *must* do one or t'other; and some, who die hard, do both. I'm a doctor, you know."

This is said in the doorway, near the stiff-looking corpse, and in a whisper loud enough to be heard all through the room. Very soon Buh Wolf is heard to whistle, and then his lips settle into a grin so broad as to show his teeth.

"Buh Cat," says Buh Rabbit, putting his hand on his stomach and screwing up his face as if seized with mortal sickness, "I mus' hurry home and take some yarb tea, or mebbe I'll have to grin and whistle like our poor neighbor. Good-bye, Buh Cat. Come to me, please, after Buh Wolf done berry and tell me all about it. Good-bye."

To the surprise of all who are not in the secret, the corpse gives a loud sneeze, then leaps from the table, throws off his "berryin' clothes," and joins his friends in eating heartily of his own funeral dinner.

His hankering, however, for rabbit-mutton still continues, and he resolves, notwithstanding his recent inglorious defeat, to attempt again to gratify it. With this end in view he makes frequent visits to his neighbor and talks with him across the fence, but is never invited beyond. One day, in the course of conversation, he informs him that there is a fine pear tree on the other side of a neighboring field, loaded with luscious fruit just in condition to be gathered.

"I will go get some."

"When?"

"To-morrow, when the sun is about halfway up the sky."

"Go: I will join you there."

Buh Rabbit rises very early, goes to the tree soon after daybreak, finds the pears uncommonly good, and is laughing to himself to think how he has outwitted his enemy, when he hears a voice under the tree: "Ho, Mr. Rabbit! in the tree a'ready?"

"Yes," replies Buh Rabbit, trembling at the sight of his dreaded foe: "I wait for you, and tink you nebber gwine come. I tell you w'at," smacking his lips, "dem here pear too good."

"Can't you trow me down some?" inquires Buh Wolf, so strongly impressed by the sound of that eloquent smack that he longs to get a taste of the fruit.

Buh Rabbit selects some of the finest, which he throws far off in the soft grass, in order, he says, to avoid bruising, and while Buh Wolf is engaged in eating them, with his head buried in the grass, Buh Rabbit slides quietly from the tree and hurries home. [Pg 753]

A few days thereafter Buh Wolf makes still another attempt. He pays a visit as before, and speaks of a great fair to be held next day in a neighboring town. "I am going," says the rash Buh Rabbit; and he does go, although we might suppose that he would have sense enough to keep out of harm's way. On returning home, late in the day, he sees Buh Wolf sitting on a log by the roadside, at the bottom of a hill, waiting for him. His preparations for escape have already been made in the purchase of a quantity of hollow tinware. Slipping quietly into the bushes, without being seen by the waylayer, he puts a big tin mug on his head and a tin cup on each hand and foot, and, hanging various tin articles around his body, he comes rolling down the hill toward Buh Wolf, who is so frightened at the unearthly noise that he runs off with his tail between his legs, and never troubles Buh Rabbit again.

The struggle between them, however, does not cease even with this triumph of the weaker party. There is a contest now of love and strategem. They both pay their addresses to the same young lady, making their visits to her on alternate evenings. In the progress of the courtship Buh Rabbit learns that his rival has spoken of him contemptuously, saying that he is very dressy and foppish, it is true, but that he has no manliness; adding that he (Buh Wolf) could eat him up at a mouthful. To this Buh Rabbit retorts the next evening by assuring Miss Dinah that Buh Wolf was nothing but his grandfather's old *riding horse*; adding, "I ride him, and whip him too, whenever I choose, and he obeys me like a dog." The next afternoon Buh Rabbit tempts his unsuspecting rival to join him in the play of riding horse, which consists in each in turn mounting the other's back and riding for a while. Buh Rabbit, who has thought out the whole case beforehand, offers to give the first ride, and so times it that the ride ends at his own door about the time for the usual visit to Miss Dinah. He runs into the house and puts on his dandy clothes, pleading that he cannot enjoy a ride unless he is in full dress; and pleading, moreover, that he cannot ride without saddle and bridle and all that belongs to a horseman, he persuades Mr. Fool Wolf to allow a strong, rough bit to be put into his mouth and a close-fitting saddle to be girded to his back, upon which Buh Rabbit mounts, holding in his hand a terrible whip and having his heels armed with a pair of long sharp spurs. Thus accoutred, he prevails upon Buh Wolf to take the road toward Miss Dinah's house, on approaching which he so vigorously applies both whip and spur as to compel his resisting steed to trot up to the door, where Buh Rabbit bows politely to his lady-love, saying, "I told you so: now you see for yourself." Of course he wins the bride.

There is a class of stories approaching somewhat in character those related of our own Jack the Giant-killer, leaving out the giants. The one given below seems to have a common origin with the Anglo-Saxon story of the "Three Blue Pigs." This is entitled "Tiny Pig."

A family of seven pigs leave home to seek their fortunes, and settle in a neighborhood harassed by a mischievous fox. Each of these pigs builds himself a house of dirt, except Tiny Pig, who, though the runt of the litter, is a sensible little fellow and the hero of the tale. He builds his house of stone, with good strong doors and a substantial chimney. In due course of time, Fox, being hungry, comes to the house of one of the brothers, and asks to be admitted, but is refused. The request and refusal, as told by the negroes, is couched in language which is intended to be poetical, and is certainly not without some pretension to the picturesque. Fox's request in each case is—

> "Mr. Pig, Mr. Pig, oh let me in:
> I'll go away soon, and not touch a thing."

And the refusal is—

> "No, no, Mr. Fox, by the beard on my chin!
> You may say what you will, but I'll not let you in."

On being refused, Fox threatens to *blow down* the house and eat up the occupant. Pig continuing to refuse—as what pig would not?—the house is blown down and the owner eaten up. This sad fate befalls in turn each of the six who had been so foolish or so lazy as to build their houses of [Pg 754] dirt. Fox, having finished all six, and becoming again hungry, comes at last to the stone house, where he makes the same hypocritical request, and meets the same heroic refusal. He now threatens to blow down the house. "Blow away and welcome!" retorts the little hero. Fox blows "until his wind gives out," but cannot move the first stone. He then tries scratching and tearing with his paws, but only succeeds in tearing off two of his own toe-nails. "I will come down your chimney," he threatens, leaping as he says so to the roof of the house. "Come soon as you please,"

sturdily replies Tiny Pig, standing before his fireplace with a big armful of dry straw ready to be thrown upon the fire. As soon as Fox has entered the chimney, and come down too far to return quickly, Tiny Pig throws the dry straw upon the fire, which creates such a blaze that Fox is scorched and smoked to death, and Tiny Pig lives the rest of his life in peace, the hero of his neighborhood.

This story certainly furnishes foundation for a moral which we will leave the reader to construct for himself, remarking as we pass that, so far as we know, no moral has ever been drawn. Several other stories may be regarded as inculcating, though feebly, some moral precept.

One of these bears some features of American negro life, grafted probably upon African stock: The denizens of a certain farmyard—ducks, geese, turkeys, pea-fowls, guinea-fowls, hens, roosters and all—were invited by those of another farmyard to a supper and a dance. They all went as a matter of course, headed by the big farmyard rooster, who strutted and crowed as he marched. They were a merry set, and such an amount of quacking, cackling and gabbling as they made was seldom heard. After a few rounds of dancing, just to give them a better appetite for supper and fit them for a longer dance afterward, they were introduced to the supper-room. There they saw on the table a pyramid of eatables high as the old gobbler's head when stretched to its utmost; but, alas! it was, or seemed to be, a pyramid of *corn bread* only—pones upon pones of it, yet nothing but corn bread.

On seeing this the rooster becomes very indignant, and struts out of the house, declaring that he will have nothing to do with so mean a supper, for he can get corn bread enough at home. As he is angrily going off, however, the others, who are too hungry to disdain even the plainest fare, fall to work; and no sooner has the outer layer of corn loaves been removed—for it is only the outer layer—than they find within a huge pile of bacon and greens, and at the bottom of the pile, covered and protected by large dishes, any amount of pies and tarts and cakes and other good things.

Poor Rooster looks wistfully back, and is sorry that he had made that rash speech. But it is too late now, for his word is out, and no one ever knew Rooster take back his word if he had to die for it. He learned, however, a valuable lesson that night, for from that time to this it has been observed that Rooster always *scratches* with his feet the place where he finds, or expects to find, anything to eat, and that he never leaves off scratching until he has searched to the bottom.

Our last story is more purely African, at least in its *dramatis personæ*. Buh Elephant and Buh Lion were one day chatting upon various subjects, when the elephant took occasion to say that he was afraid of no being on earth except man. On seeing the big boastful eyes of the lion stretching wider and his mane bristling, as if in disdain, he added, "You know, Buh Lion, that, although you are held as the most to be dreaded of all beasts, I am not afraid of any of your tribe, for if any of them should attack me I could receive him on my tusk, or strike him dead with my trunk, or even shake him off from my body and then trample him to death under my feet. But man—who can kill us from a distance with his guns and arrows, who can set traps for us of which we have no suspicion, who can fight us from the backs of horses so swift that we can neither overtake him nor escape from him—I do fear, for neither strength nor courage can avail against his wisdom." [Pg 755]

Buh Lion, on hearing this, shook himself, and said that he was no more afraid of man than he was of any other creature which he was in the habit of eating; and added that the only beings on earth he was afraid of were *partridges*.

"Partridges!" exclaims Buh Elephant in wonder. "What do you mean?"

"Why this," says Buh Lion, "that when I am walking softly through the woods I sometimes rouse a covey of partridges, and then they rise all around me with such a whir as to make me start. I am afraid of nothing but partridges."

Not long afterward Buh Elephant heard a gun fired near a neighboring village, followed by a loud, prolonged roar. Going there to learn what was the matter, he saw Buh Lion lying dead by the roadside with a great hole in his body made by a musket-ball. "Ah, my poor friend," said he, "partridges could never have treated you in this way."

WILLIAM OWENS.

FOOTNOTES:

[C] Of the terrible forms of superstition prevalent under the names of Obi, Voodooism, Evil-eye or Tricking, in which a trick-doctor or witch-doctor works against another person's life or health or plans, or seeks to neutralize the influence of another doctor, our subject leads us to say nothing.

SELIM.

Surrender your soul to the spell of enchantment,
And wander with me

Where, river of magical fancies, Euphrates
Flows down to the sea.

What city sleeps fair and mysterious by moonlight
Upon the dark shore?
Oh, those are the minarets gleaming of Basrah
That heavenward soar.

And bright are her flower-lit gardens, whose fountains
Unceasingly rise,
Where oft, when the locust grew shrill and the summer
Shone red in the skies,

The caliph would hasten from camp and from council
To rest and to dream.
To forge, in the workshop of silence, such weapons
As deadliest gleam.

And with him came Selim, the friend of his spirit—
Friend favored and true—
Whose palace of marble Euphrates encircled
With girdle of blue.

There oft by the murmuring waters the caliph
Would calmly recline,
And mark how the stars on that earth-sullied bosom
Seemed trembling to shine,

Until, as one evening the moon rose serenely,
Fair pearl of the sky,
And filled with her presence the palace and desert,
The far and the nigh,
A trouble which hung On the aspect of Selim [Pg 756]
Fell dark on his king,
As clouds 'twixt the sun and the sand-billowed ocean
Their dusky shapes fling.

"O friend of my heart!" quoth the caliph, "what sorrow
Lies deep in thy breast?"
And Selim, replying, the source of his anguish
Thus humbly confessed:

"Great lord of my being! life trembles and quivers
With fulness of joy:
The rays of my hopes are as gold in my pathway,
Undimmed by alloy;

"Thy banners float far on the breezes of India,
Thy counsels are wise;
The thoughts of thy valor and strength to thy people
As light to their eyes;

"Yet still, in the midst of thy glory and power,
Thou deignest to rest
Thy soul on the soul of thy servant, whom daily
Thy favors have blest,

"Till he who once couched on his sheepskin reposes
On cushions of down,
And holds a fair wife in his arms who had only
A steed for his own.

"Thus over the heaven thy grace has illumined
No shadow appears,
Save one, at whose coming thy servant unworthy
Shrinks, falters and fears—

"The shadow of Azraël, angel of terror,
Surpassingly strong,
The roar of whose onrushing wings soundeth louder
Than laughter or song;

"Till I, even I, from the conflict of battle,
The scimitar's sweep,
Turn cowering, fearful of glory's last service
And manhood's best sleep.

"Behold! now the heart of thy servant is open,
And bare to thy view."
Then slowly the caliph replied, while his gaze sought
The firmament blue:

"Dread Prophet of Allah! thou knowest my spirit,
My heart and my life;
Thou knowest the desolate years of my manhood,
Their unended strife;

[Pg 757]

"Thou knowest that never a friend have I cherished
Save only this one,
And now I have lost him; but, Allah il Allah!
Thy will still be done!"

Then, turning, the caliph departed, and Selim,
Like one drunk with wine,
Arose all unconscious and turned to his dwelling,
His heart's inmost shrine,

And followed the gleam of his lamp to the chamber
Where, sheltered and calm,
She peacefully slumbered who faithfully loved him—
That wild heart's "sweet balm."

One arm half encircled her baby, who sturdily
Clenched his round fist,
And lay with his rosy lips parted and eager,
As though lately kissed;

While over them both her soft tresses, all fragrant,
Had rolled in their play:
How fair and how childish they looked in the moonlight,
Scarce purer than they!

One moment stood Selim, while over his being
Hell's bitterness passed:
The next, and his dagger flashed forth like the lightning,
And fell like its blast.

And Selim was wifeless and childless! In silence
He stood by the bed
Where still lay the wife and the child in the moonlight—
Not sleeping, but dead.

One moment he gazed at the faces, still peaceful,
Still tender, still fair,
Then fled to the desert, whose vastness could only
Give space to despair.

But when, in the red eastern morning, the caliph
Stood sternly alone,
And watched the proud river, now mournful for ever
For all that was gone,

Lo! Selim knelt calmly before him: "Great caliph!
Behold now thy slave,
For Azraël, angel of death, have I conquered
And bound in the grave."

ANNIE PORTER.

ENGLISH DOMESTICS AND THEIR WAYS.

[Pg 758]

An American lady, on coming to England and observing the workings of domestic life, is apt to think English servants perfection, and to listen to any complaints of them which she may hear with an ill-concealed smile. "What! complain of these excellent, admirable, respectful, hard-working servants!" she exclaims to her English friends. "If you could only see what we have to endure from these women in our American households, then indeed you would appreciate the quiet and efficient hand-maids whose services you can command here in the mother-country." And, to make good her case against the "help" which hinder our happiness so much in America, she will speak of the high wages given them, the kind treatment they receive, the ingratitude with which they take all favors, their inefficiency, and so on.

But after a short sojourn in England our American lady will see many things in respect to the duties and demands of English servants which were not quite apparent to her at first; and by dint of observation she will soon become aware that an English servant has privileges and requirements which would be thought excessive in our country. In the first place, no English servant will do any washing and ironing, not even for herself. Everything, down to the smallest towel, must be done up by the laundress. Some servants go so far as to stipulate what amount of linen, etc. they may have laundried each week; and in the case of "nice young persons," who like to keep themselves neat and fresh with light calico dresses and tiny white caps and spotless collars and large white aprons, the bill for the servants' washing is apt to swell into quite an item. Again, all English servants exact either beer or beer-money. (How surprised an American housekeeper would be if a new aspirant for the situation of cook or chambermaid should say, "Do you supply me with lager, or give me money to buy it myself?"!) After various struggles with the difficulties presented by this beer question, the generality of English housekeepers have come to the conclusion that it is better to give beer-money than to furnish beer to their servants. When money is given it is likely not to be spent for beer at all, which is quite as well; whereas if there is a servants' cask of beer on tap in the kitchen, there are constant disputes as to how much has been drunk, given away or wasted. The usual allowance for beer when money is given is a shilling a week—a sum which in theory means twenty-five cents of our money, but in actual practice, as prices now range, we may calculate as representing about fifty cents. Thus, fifty cents for beer, and certainly fifty cents more for personal laundry-work, add a dollar a week to the wages of each servant. It is impossible to calculate the cost of the family washing and ironing, but whatever it be, it must come out of the housekeeper's pocket; for, as I have said, no servant will do it. Five dollars a week is not a large calculation for the laundry-bill of a family, especially if there are children. In America this money is generally saved, but at what a price!—the house in disorder with wash-tub and ironing-board during the beginning of every week, grumbling from all servants, anxiety on the part of the members of the family about overcrowding the soiled-linen basket, and often the clean clothes sent up "not fit to be seen."

Another privilege which I find English servants possess, and which I confess surprises me, is that of inviting friends to tea at the mistress's expense. Every Sunday evening one or another servant holds a symposium of choice spirits below stairs, for whom flows the infusion of the costly leaf from far Cathay. No meat is allowed at these repasts, but tea, milk, sugar and bread and butter are permitted to be offered. There is going on now an earnest effort to put a stop to this practice. [Pg 759] Economical housekeepers very justifiably object to paying for treats to their servants' company. But the custom has been handed down from the feudal days, when drinking and eating were the only amusements within the scope of even the very rich, and when every soul who in a friendly spirit passed the castle-walls was welcome to all he could gorge or swill, or carry away in his two arms for those he had left behind in his poor cottage. In what is known now as "noble houses" the practice is still in force to a great extent. Does master or mistress receive a call? Then wine and sweet biscuits are at once to be carried into the drawing-room to beguile the caller's tedium in waiting. Has a tradesman brought a package? Give the good man a mug of beer. Have you come in a cab, and kept it standing outside? Here, quickly take out some beer in a pewter tankard to comfort Cabby, which he tosses off as he sits perched on the high seat of his hansom. In houses as lavish as this a veritable banquet is served each day in the servants' hall, to which the upper servants have the privilege of inviting their friends. And so the custom goes on, dwindling in costliness until it reaches the homes of people in fairly comfortable circumstances, who are struggling, but almost in vain, to crush it. The trouble is, that when an English servant enters a house where giving tea to her friends is not allowed, she is apt to receive such pressure from her mother, who has been probably a servant in the "good old days," and other conservative domestics of the lavish school, that she will make the matter square by slyly appropriating that which she believes should have been legitimately given; and once in this path her peculations are apt to extend to things more valuable than bread and tea. This is a great pity, for as a rule English servants are as honest as the sun. There is not one drop of that Chinese blood which sets the almond-eyed John to pilfering everything he can lay hands on flowing in these honest Saxon veins. Of course there are always exceptions to any rule, but for these exceptions there exists in England that inflexible system of punishment by law whose motto most emphatically is, "It is a sin to steal a pin." To be a thief in England is as poor a business as one would wish to follow.

In engaging a cook in England you find that she makes many demands you never heard of in America. I have alluded to the refusal of all such servants to have any hand in the laundry-work. In rich households (especially in the country) a laundress and laundry-maid are regularly employed, who have no work of any kind to do outside the laundry: they wash and iron for the household, including the servants. In cities, however, and in small families even in the country, the washing is generally done by a laundress outside. No cook would tolerate washing and ironing anywhere about the kitchen.

The next imperative demand your cook will make will probably be to ask you if you keep a scullery-maid or an "under-servant." If your purse will not permit this luxury, what "assistance" is your cook to be furnished with? This means, is she to have a "charwoman" once a week or oftener for the day to clean pots and pans, scrub steps and passage-ways, and scour, dust and rub up generally in the kitchen and rooms adjoining? In England this cleaning business is far more formidable than with us. We lay down so much oilcloth on our stairways and passage-ways, paint or cover with carpeting, matting or oilcloth so many floors, that it is rather an infrequent experience to see our servants down on their hands and knees scrubbing away for dear life. Even in neat Philadelphia, where there is so much of brick sidewalk and of marble doorstep to be cleaned, the use of hose and broom has to a great extent superseded the scrubbing-brush oiled

with elbow-grease. But in England there are so many stone floors and steps to be scrubbed, so much brass-work to be cleaned and polished, so many steel grates, with tongs, poker and shovel, to be brightened till you can see your face in them, that it is no wonder your cook would like to have assistance in these heavy manual exertions. [Pg 760]

Ladies in England have found that when the work in their houses is such that assistance must be had, it is better to keep an "under-servant" for the cook (a position even less exalted than the "scullery-maid" in this complex system of domestic gradations) than to have a charwoman come occasionally. We have no special name for the "charwoman" in America, unless it be simply the generic term, "a woman," or, to be Victor Hugoish, the woman who cleans. Char (pronounced *chair*) is simply the old-fashioned word still popular in New England, *chore*, and the charwoman is merely the woman who does chores. English ladies say she does other and more objectionable things. She drinks, for instance, and finds it necessary to bring a basket with her, which, they think, would be found to be more weighty on leaving (if the matter were tested) than it is when she arrives. Another favorite plan for lightening labor, even with families who are in moderate circumstances, is to keep a "Buttons," a useful little urchin, who is forced to make himself respectable in appearance by wearing a livery provided for him, the distinguishing feature of which is its lavishness in the way of buttons. This boy is expected to do anything and everything—to clean boots, fetch coal, run errands, open the door, assist in waiting at table, rub up knives and silver; in short, to be at the beck and call of everybody in the house for each and any duty. He may be called a sort of light brigade or sharpshooter on the outposts between the heavy cavalry in the kitchen in the shape of cook and the solid infantry which moves with regular step through the housemaid's set round of duties. And whenever the wheels of a household in England are found to creak, additional help in the shape of under-servants is engaged, the matter of the efficiency of the upper-servants being of course first satisfactorily settled. Here is the very kernel of the nut of the question: this it is which makes "all the difference" between the management of a house say in New York and a similar one in London. A family without children, occupying a brown-stone front in New York, will consider that two servants should do all the work of the household, and do it well. I am not speaking of people who live on the "swell" avenues and keep carriages or give frequent balls and parties: I mean unpretending people who own or rent a nice three- or four-story house, and want to live with entire comfort and freedom from rows or disputes with servants, and expect to be well waited on. They engage cook and chambermaid—the chambermaid to act also as waitress, both to act as laundresses. High wages are given, and when the work is done unsatisfactorily more money is offered as a bribe, or else there are disagreeable scenes, ending with the lady saying hotly, "Well, if you can't do my work, I'll find some one else who can." But she is mistaken. She will never find two women who can cook, wash, iron, clean, dust, wait at table and do the work generally of a three- or four-story house as it should be done. In a household of that importance in England there would be hired, at the least, cook and under-servant, housemaid and Buttons, and all the laundry-work put out.

And oh how smoothly life passes in such an English home! How brightly every inch of brass shines! how well dusted is every article you touch! how clear is the crystal for table use! how spotless the napery! how noiselessly your servants move about! how respectfully each addresses the heads of the household whenever required to do so, not otherwise! It is the very perfection of service, and a luxurious satisfaction which we in America rarely get a chance to enjoy. But the times are changing now. It may be possible that in the future the demand-and-supply market for domestic service may have so settled itself that for the money we have hitherto paid as yearly wages to two only tolerable servants we shall obtain the services of as many efficient ones as are needful to make our American homes the equal of those in England for the quiet perfection of their interior management.

OLIVE LOGAN.

OUR MONTHLY GOSSIP. [Pg 761]

FERNAN CABALLERO.

About thirty years ago there appeared in the *Heraldo* of Madrid a novel called *La Gaviota* ("The Sea-gull"). Spanish literature at the present day is poor in novels, and thirty years ago it was much poorer. *La Gaviota* was like a tall tiger-lily suddenly appearing among low-growing exotics. The book was what the French call a *roman de moeurs*: it was signed with an unknown name—Fernan Caballero. Nobody knew Fernan Caballero. Madrid concluded that it must be one of those great living writers whose names could be counted on the first five sticks of a lady's fan. Seville ascribed it to an author of local fame, and Cadiz was amazed by the fact that anything so good could come out of Spain. The novel was eagerly read, even by the Gallicanized element in society, and pronounced a success in all things, except that it was not French. Following *La Gaviota*, *La España* published *Elia* in its columns: then followed *La Familia Alvareda*, *Una en Otra*, *Pobre Dolores*, *Lucas Garcia* and others. It became evident that the masked writer was a woman, but not one of those *femmes auteurs* of whom Louis Veuillot says, with more force than elegance, "Il me semble que si ma femme signait tels livres, j'aurais scrupule à signer ses enfants." Her thoughts were pure and high, and every detail was gifted with life.

The Spanish public was not particularly pleased to discover that its admired Fernan was a

woman. If Cervantes had been a woman, there would have been a precedent for it; but Cervantes was a man. Fernan Caballero's readers would have wavered in their allegiance had her stories not become a part of themselves. It was unfortunate that a woman should write such things. "A blue-stocking!" cries Don Judas Tadéo Barbo, representative of this feeling, in *Una en Otra*. "Ave Maria! A woman who writes and rushes into print! It is a mortal sin! A woman has as much business to write a book as a man would to have a baby. And a pretty woman, too! Who would have believed it? A woman who writes should be old, ugly and decrepit."

In spite of the attention excited by her stories, she was still tenacious of her mask. In a letter to Germonde de Lavigne, one of the French translators of her works, she said: "It was cruel of you to tear away my pseudonym. You know how much I value it. You perhaps wished me to make a buckler of my fan; but, believe me, the beautiful things I have gathered do not need it. I have not tried to put into my stories studies of the heart or the world: there is neither art nor invention nor inspiration, only the exact painting of our actual society. Spanish types of all classes, the manners, the feelings, the witty and poetical language, I have painted from the life. My personality and my name are things outside of these. All that I have written is true. I cannot invent: I possess only the talent of dovetailing facts and placing them in relief. I have passed my life in collecting those treasures of tradition, poetry, stories, legends, pious and poetic beliefs which make an atmosphere of picturesque purity—proverbs like Sancho's, maxims as beautiful as Don Quixote, couched in the forcible and flowery language of the people. I am as proud as an artist of the beauty of my model. The story of *Lucas Garcia* is true; I have known Simon Verde; an old woman told me the story of the lottery in *La Estrella*; in *Una en Otra* everything is true. I have caught nearly all my dialogues from the lips of the people who spoke them. I have gleaned the last grain from a beautiful field, already growing desolate. I have made a sheaf, despised perhaps to-day, although the world has gathered some corn-flowers which fell from it, but which some day will be appreciated." [Pg 762]

"Like Sir Walter Scott," says M. de Mazade in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, "Fernan Caballero has a lively feeling for the traditional and local in regions of which she writes. Her first and only inspiration is Spain. She loves even its miseries, which are not without their grandeur. Her creations, her characters, her combinations, have no reflection of imitation: they are taken from the heart of the national life. They proceed from an observation of the reality and a feeling of the poetry of things—two sentiments which, balancing each other and uniting, form true and original invention.

"Another trait in this rare talent," continues M. de Mazade—"a trait in which the imagination of the woman is shown—is the absence of complication in her tales: they have none of those hard knots that bind up action. Fernan Caballero has a genius for details. She makes everything live. She has an intuition of a thousand shades, often imperceptible to ordinary eyes, which give each mood of Nature a distinct physiognomy. Like Sir Walter—more than Sir Walter Scott—she enjoys digressions, sinuous conversations; she abandons herself to them with delight; she draws pictures and portraits, full of freshness, one after the other; she is prodigal of all that can throw light on manners or character. She passes with graceful ease from the refinements of the aristocratic world to the most humble scenes of popular life."

An author, it seems, is never *sui generis* in the estimation of the critics. Fernan Caballero, compared by M. Mérimée to Sterne and by others to Scott, imagined that if her talent was similar to anybody's it was like Émile Souvestre's; but her models and method were as much like Souvestre's as Spain is like France. Fernan Caballero—or, as she was known in real life, Doña Cæcilia de Baer, marquesa de Arco-Hermosa—may be compared, reservedly, to Miss Mitford. It is true that fiery thoughts and violent passion are not to be found in Miss Mitford's beautifully-enamelled miniatures; but fire and passion were not apparent in the English life she painted, while in the works of the Spanish artist passion glows under the simplest forms, as the red of an orange among its leaves and blossoms. It has been truly said of Madame de Baer that she gave a new world to Castile and Leon—an Andalusian world—almost Arcadian in its newness and simplicity. She showed to the world that the Spain of thirty years ago was still the Spain of Don Quixote. "What was true yesterday," she quotes from Calderon, "is true to-day." Our Don Quixote is not the Spanish Don Quixote. "Sir Roger de Coverley, Sir Charles Grandison and Don Quixote," said Colonel Newcome, "are the finest gentlemen in the world." The Spaniards see in Don Quixote something higher. "In Cervantes," says Madame de Baer, "the mind stifled the heart. It was not his heart that made of Don Quixote a thing for laughter. Neither the casque of Mambrino nor the love of Maritornes makes me laugh: it makes me weep."

Progress—as the word is generally understood—also makes her sad. The Andalusian, surrounded by a world of poetry and beauty, is happy in his ignorance. He reads sermons in the lives of animals, poems in the trees, maxims and proverbs everywhere. Why should he read them in books? In *La Gaviota*, Frederick Stein, a German surgeon who has been thrown upon the charity of some Spanish peasants, hears a shepherd mention an infallible cure for pain in the eyes. Stein asks where this remedy is to be found.

"I cannot tell you," answered the shepherd: "I know that there is such a thing."

"Who can find it, then?" asked Stein.

"The swallows," said José.

"The swallows!"

"Yes, sir. It is an herb called *pito real*, which nobody knows or sees except the swallows. When their little ones lose their sight they rub the little eyes with the *pito real*, and cure them. This herb has also the virtue of cutting iron and everything it touches."

"What absurdities this José swallows like a real shark!" cried Manuel, laughing.—"Don Frederico, he actually believes that snakes never die."

"No, they never die," said the shepherd gravely: "when they see death coming they escape from [Pg 763] their skin and run away. When old they become serpents: little by little scales and wings appear. They become dragons, and return to the desert.—But you, Manuel—you do not wish to believe anything. Do you also deny that the lizard is the friend of man? If you do not believe it, ask Miguel."

"Does he know it?"

"Without doubt. He was sleeping in a field; a snake glided near him; a lizard, which lay in the furrow, saw the snake, and presented itself to defend Miguel. The lizard was large, and it fought with the snake; but Miguel not awaking, the lizard pressed its tail against his nose, and ran off as if its paws were on fire. The lizard is a good little beast: it never sleeps in the sun without descending the wall to kiss the earth."

Imagination in the Andalusian supplies the place of knowledge. He has a precedent for everything. Tradition is the light that guides his feet. Let him alone, says Fernan Caballero. Would he be happier if his wants were greater—if his life were less simple? Would he be happier if he believed less? If he thinks, with the good Maria in *La Gaviota*, that the Jews formerly had caudal appendages, and that they are only now prevented from wearing them by the ring that governs in place of the queen, *qu' importe* so long as a sick Jew will be treated as tenderly as a sick Christian? If you could alter their ardent natures, if you could cut out the firm love that often changes to fierce jealousy and deadly hate, you would improve them and lessen crime; but that you cannot change until you can change the climate. Change Spain to England, and you can have schools, trades-unions, and all the modern improvements; but while Spain is Spain you of the North can neither understand nor reform her.

And strange it is that this author, who has identified herself with Spain, is not Spanish. Her father was John Nicolas Böhl de Fabre, who migrated from Hamburg to Cadiz: to him Spain owes a collection of ancient poetry, *Floresta de Rimas Antiquas Castellanas*. His daughter Cæcilia was born in 1797 at Morges in Switzerland. The publication of her first work was due to the advice and encouragement of Washington Irving. She first wrote an exquisite idyl of Andalusian life, *The Alvareda Family*, in German, and then translated it into Spanish. Irving admired it in manuscript, and induced her to go to work on another, which appeared under the title of *La Gaviota*—a title borrowed from its wild and untamable heroine, Marisalada Santalo. This second story at once made her reputation in Europe. It stands at the head of her numerous works. The character of the uncontrollable heroine is developed as by a master-hand, and the handling of the story until it culminates in Marisalada's passion for Pepe Vera and the despair of her husband, Stein, is graphic and almost too pitiless. Don Modesto, commandant of Fort San Cristobal, is worthy of the hand of Cervantes. The author has received the greatest compliment that unliterary Spain could pay her: a complete edition of her works was issued—*not* at the expense of the queen—by Don Francesco de Mallado at Madrid.

Madame de Baer was married three times; so, besides her three cognomens, it is well that she has one that will always be remembered—Fernan Caballero. During the reign of Isabella she occupied apartments in the Alcazar of Seville, but after the revolution she removed to the Calle de Burgos, where she lived quietly among those lifelong friends, her flowers and books. During her last illness the ex-queen and the duke and duchess de Montpensier were her frequent visitors. She died on the seventh of April of this year.

M. F. E.

THE OCTROI.

Those travellers who, after an excursion to the suburbs of Paris, see their carriage stopped by an official in a green tunic with silver buttons, who asks solemnly, "Have you anything to declare?" are usually far from imagining that they are witnessing a manifestation of one of the most important of the Parisian financial functions. For such undoubtedly must the *octroi* be [Pg 764] considered. It is the tax that supports Paris—that pays for her improvements, her cleansing, her lighting, her poor-fund—that supports the hospitals, keeps her pavements and sewers in repair, and, in a word, pays all her necessary expenses. It encircles Paris as with an iron hand; it watches at every gate, at every quay, at every entrance-point to the city; it is for ever on the alert to discover fraud. One hundred and twenty-five officers and three thousand subordinates are employed in collecting this colossal tax and in guarding against its being evaded. The revenue thus produced has amounted during the last few years to over twenty-five millions of dollars annually. No wonder that Paris can afford to beautify herself with new adornments continually. She is a millionaire among cities, and can pay for new decorations at will.

The octroi, in its present form, is a comparatively modern institution. It dates from the 18th of October, 1798. Before the law was passed Paris had fallen into a piteous plight. The contractors threatened to cease all operations; nobody had been paid for a long time; the city was not even able to pay the pitiful sum of sixteen thousand francs which was owing to the street-sweepers.

Out of this municipal poverty arose the octroi, and during the first year of its functions it produced over a million and a half of dollars. Yet it was far from bringing in at that time all that it should have done, owing to the insufficient force of agents employed and the gigantic frauds that were perpetrated on all sides. As soon as night came the smugglers set to work at all the unprotected points—and they were many—of the fortifications. Ladders were planted against the walls, and barrels of wine, bottles of brandy, packets of butcher's meat, etc. were lowered into the city by means of cords. Subterranean passages were dug, establishing a communication between the interior and the exterior of the city. It was not till the reign of the First Napoleon that these abuses were definitely suppressed.

Nearly every article of daily consumption that enters Paris is taxed by the octroi—meat, wine, spirits, fruits, vegetables, ice, wood, coal, etc.—and also all building materials. It has been estimated that the octroi-tax on an edifice in Paris that costs twenty thousand dollars amounts to one thousand dollars. The largest part of the revenue is acquired from wines and spirits. Wine pays about twenty-three francs on the hectolitre: it is taxed by quantity, and not *ad valorem*; which is an act of crying injustice to the poor man, whose cup of *petit bleu* must pay as much as does the goblet of old Burgundy of the millionaire. One of the heaviest taxed of all articles is absinthe, owing to the desire of the authorities to suppress the use of it as much as possible. After all claims upon it are acquitted a bottle of absinthe will be found to have been charged nearly four hundred per cent. on its original value.

This law, which strikes not only absinthe, but all other kinds of liqueurs and of spirits, with excessive duties, was passed in 1871, and the effects were immediately manifest, only sixty thousand hectolitres of alcohol being brought into Paris in 1872, against one hundred and sixty-nine thousand in 1871. The immense consumption of absinthe, which just before the war was so marked a feature of the café-life of Paris, has now greatly decreased. But to make this temperance movement on the part of the French authorities fully effectual, the tax on *vin ordinaire* should have been taken off altogether.

These heavy duties have naturally called into being among the quick-witted French an active system of frauds against the octroi; and that is not the least interesting part of the question to study. Against these petty smugglers a band of picked officials, selected for their probity and intelligence from among the whole force of the service of the octroi, has been organized. Eighteen among these act as detectives. They wear no uniform, assume various disguises, and are well acquainted with all the mysterious nooks of Paris and with all the holes and corners of the suburbs. They seem to scent out a fraud as a hunting-dog does game. Thus, a few years ago [Pg 765] two huge blocks of Swiss granite passed the barriers unquestioned. Some keen-witted detective immediately asked himself why and for what purpose had those great masses of stone been brought from such a distance. He prowled about them for a little while, observed a curious depression in one end of the largest block, and ended by discovering that both were hollow and were packed full of contraband goods.

The custom-house authorities have formed a museum of the most curious of the objects that have been captured whilst passing the barriers, and that were constructed for the purposes of fraud. The list is an interesting one, and reflects great credit upon the ingenuity of the smugglers, if not upon their honesty. False busts worn by make-believe wet nurses, false abdomens, hats with double crowns, hollow horse-collars, footstools lined with tin, carriage-seats concealing tin boxes, etc., etc., abound. There, too, may be seen a pile of pieces of linen fastened together with a cord, each of which is simply a box of zinc covered with linen. This trick was really ingenious, and was detected in a very odd way. The wagon that conveyed this merchandise into Paris was marked on the side "Toiles et Nouveautés," and the letters struck the custom-house agents as being a great deal too large and conspicuous. Hence arose suspicion and a thorough examination.

The museum also preserves among its curiosities an ordinary-looking cab, which is a hollow structure made of painted tin. There, too, are to be seen piles of common plates, as innocent-looking as it is possible for crockery to be. The first half dozen plates are all right: the rest are perforated and conceal a tube of tin. It will be seen that all these contrivances are directed toward the smuggling of one article—namely, spirits.

The product of the octroi averages about sixty francs per annum for every inhabitant of Paris. It is an indirect income-tax which is exacted from every dweller in the city. Unfortunately, its operations weigh heavily only on the very poorest classes. The banker of the Faubourg St. Honoré or the noble of the Faubourg St. Germain troubles himself very little about the extra price that he is thus forced to pay for his salmon or his chambertin. But among the very poor, those whose daily expenditure is counted not by sous, but by centimes, this tax is very severely felt. It is argued, however, that the poor man profits even more by the product of this tax than does the rich one, the hospitals, for instance, being chiefly maintained by its means.

L. H. H.

FOREIGN LEADERS IN RUSSIA AND TURKEY.

There is an old regimental tradition, which meets the Eastern traveller at times in Egyptian hotels and Indian mess-rooms, that an English interpreter in the Turkish service, being present at a conference between his pasha and a Russian general, was just commending the two as "admirable specimens of their respective races," when suddenly General Kormiloff and Selim Pasha, after staring at each other for a moment, broke out simultaneously, "Eh, Donald Campbell,

are *ye* here?"—"Gude keep us, Sandy Robertson! can this be *you*?"

This is merely a grotesque version of an actual and very significant fact—viz. that both the Russian and his hereditary enemy have achieved many of their greatest triumphs under the command of foreigners. The prominence of the latter in the military history of both nations is of considerable antiquity. As early as 1397, Sultan Bajazet formed the Christian captives of Nikopolis into the formidable brigade whose title of *Yengi Scheri* ("new soldiers") gave rise to the terrible name of *Janissary*; while several of the earlier czars in like manner surrounded themselves with a foreign body-guard. Coming down to later times, we find the Tartar Skuratoff acting as the right-hand man of Ivan the Terrible (1531-84). In the ensuing century the Russian centre at Smolensk was commanded by the terrible Sir Thomas Dalziel of Binns, afterward the fiercest persecutor of the Scottish Covenanters. Peter the Great's best officer was General [Pg 766] Gordon, a cadet of the Huntley family, and his best engineer was M. Lefort, a native of Geneva. The Turkish service, too, contained at this time several Swiss and Frenchmen (mostly refugees from the religious persecutions of Louis XIV.), some of whom attained high rank.

In the earlier part of the eighteenth century the fame of the new military system established by Frederick William of Prussia and his son, Frederick the Great, led the sovereigns of Russia to give the most liberal encouragement to any German officers who could be persuaded to undertake the training of their ill-disciplined levies. Among these imported generals[D] the most distinguished was the celebrated Marshal Münnich, commander-in-chief of the Russian army under the empresses Anne and Elizabeth, the latter of whom at length banished him to Siberia, whence he was not recalled till the accession of Peter III. in 1762. His Russian successor, Apraxin, was speedily superseded by an Englishman named William Fermor, a distant relation of the beautiful heroine of Pope's *Rape of the Lock*; but the total defeat of this new leader by Frederick the Great at Zorndorf in 1758 ousted *him* in his turn, and the imperial troops were commanded by native Russians up to the end of the Seven Years' War. But under the far-sighted rule of Catherine II., who ascended the throne in 1763, the German element began to predominate once more, and speedily attained such prominence that toward the middle of her reign, before Suvaroff's formidable renown had raised the prestige of the native stock, the proportion of foreign officers (chiefly Germans) in the Russian service was estimated at not less than eighty-five per cent. It was in allusion to this circumstance that the grim old marshal, himself a Russian *pur sang*, answered Catherine's gracious inquiry how she could best reward his services by saying, with characteristic bluntness, "Mother Katrina, make me a German!"

About the same period several Irish soldiers of fortune, driven from home by political troubles, appeared in the Turkish ranks, as well as not a few Poles, dispossessed by the "second partition" of their country, and longing for a chance of avenging the wrong. Several of these adventurers adopted the Mohammedan faith, and, gaining the entire confidence of their adopted countrymen, were enabled to inflict considerable injury upon the invading armies of Russia. But the greatest service rendered to the Crescent by a foreigner at that time (we might almost say the greatest which it ever received) was achieved in 1802 by the French envoy, Colonel (afterward General) Sebastiani. When a British squadron lay off Prinkipos Island, within easy reach of Constantinople, threatening it with instant bombardment, the undaunted ambassador, defying alike the hostile guns and the fury of the fanatical mob, calmly set himself to achieve the same task which General Todleben accomplished in the Crimea half a century later. Under his vigorous superintendence the city was impregnably fortified by the incessant labor of a single week, while a show of negotiation diverted the attention of the English admiral; and the hostile squadron, suddenly confronted by twelve hundred heavy guns, was forced to retire with considerable loss.

The enlightened rule of Alexander I., whose zeal for the improvement of Russia quickened instead of keeping down his appreciation of foreign talent, filled the Russian camp with officers from Western Europe. Benningsen, the most formidable antagonist of Napoleon in 1807; Pfuhl, who constructed the fortified camp of Drissa in 1812; Barclay de Tolly, the Russian commander-in-chief in the early part of that memorable campaign; Wittgenstein, who bore the palm of valor during the invasion of France in 1814; the great strategist Jomini, who was Alexander's aide-de-camp; and Langeron, whose storming of Montmartre sealed the fate of Paris,—were all men of foreign blood. Even after the accession of the Russomaniac Nicholas in 1825, the "over-the-frontier men," as the natives emphatically call them, continued to hold the same prominent place. [Pg 767] The Russian navy, indeed, which in the time of Catherine II. owed to Western Europe the only three competent seamen whom it possessed—Greig, Elphinstone and Dugdale—was by this time officered chiefly by native Russians, though still manned by Finns, Greeks and Livonians; but in the army Count Diebitsch himself, the hero of 1828-29, and his two principal subordinates, Generals Roth and Rüdiger, were of German descent. In the Crimean war the array of foreign names on either side was still more striking. Omar Pasha, perhaps the greatest general whom Turkey has ever possessed, was a Hungarian deserter from the Austrian army, his true name being Theodore Lattos. The defence of Silistria was the work of two English subalterns, Lieutenant Nasmyth and Captain Butler. Ibrahim Aga, the veteran of Sultan Mahmoud's Egyptian wars, was originally Thomas Keith, a gunsmith from the "Old Town" of Edinburgh. Omar Pasha's best cavalry officer in 1853, Iskander Bey, was a Polish refugee, by name Michael Tchaikovski, whose stirring war-songs are still affectionately preserved by his countrymen. Bairam Pasha was merely the Turkish alias of General Cannon. Among the Russians, again, General Todleben, incomparably the greatest name of the war on their side, was a Courlander from Mitau. Prince Paskievitch, the conqueror of Erivan and besieger of Silistria, sprang from a Slavonian family in Transylvania. Generals von Schilders, Aurep and von Lüders, though Russian subjects, were all of foreign extraction, as were also Count Osten-Sacken and General Dannenberg.

But it is in the present war that the foreign element has asserted itself most conspicuously. Whether on the Russian or the Turkish side, almost every leader of note is a foreigner. The Turkish fleet is commanded by an Englishman, who still retains his own name of Augustus Hobart. Another Englishman—the notorious Colonel Valentine Baker, called, like his brother, Sir Samuel, "Baker Pasha"—heads the cavalry of the army of the Danube. The sultan's two best engineers, under whose guidance Shumla has been refortified, though now known to fame as Reschid Pasha and Blum Pasha, were serving not many years since in the German army as Captains Strecker and Blume. Mehemet Ali Pasha himself, the late commander-in-chief, is a Prussian, born in Berlin. Suleiman Pasha's chief of staff is Bielowski, a Pole, known in the Turkish army as General Nihad, and General Mina, recently appointed to the command of a cavalry division at Rasgrad, is a Belgian. On the Russian side, again, Generals Loris-Melikoff and Tergukassoff are Armenians, the former having made his first step to renown by attracting Count Mouravieff's notice as an active young dragoon officer in the Kars campaign of 1855. General Oklobschio, who commanded before Batoum last summer, though for many years in the Russian service, is by birth a Montenegrin, and has the rashness as well as the valor of his warlike countrymen. Baron Krudener, of Plevna notoriety, comes of a German family which settled in Russia toward the close of the last century. The gallant Scobeleff is said to belong to the Ayrshire family of Scobie. General Nepokoitchitski is a Pole. Prince Tcherkasski has a tinge of Tartar, Prince Mirski of Polish, blood. General Gourko springs from a Cossack family of formidable renown in the Turkish and Polish wars of the seventeenth century; and the family name of General Zimmermann, the leader of the Dobrudscha army, speaks for itself.

Nor is all this to be wondered at. The Turk and the Russian, closely alike in many points, are more especially so in this—that both can follow and neither can lead. In steadfast obedience and endurance of every extreme of hardship they have no superior on the face of the earth, but the prompt energy of the man who is accustomed to think and act for himself in every emergency is wanting to both. Under the command of a skilful general both Russian and Turkish troops will advance unflinchingly against the strongest position, or hold their ground with that stubborn tenacity which Frederick the Great aptly illustrated by saying that "when you fight with a Russian you must kill him first and knock him down afterward." But let them once be deprived of their leader or lose their solid formation, and their helplessness becomes instantly manifest. [Pg 768]

D. K.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE IMPERIAL GUARDS.

Moscow, Sept. 11 (Aug. 30, Russian style), 1877.

Excitement here is now a veritable epidemic. Go where you will, charity-boxes, designating the purpose for which alms are solicited, and each boasting the bright crimson cross stamped on a pure white surface, meet your eye. They are affixed to the walls of the various *ooclitzas* (or roads) traversing this mighty city; they greet you at the entrance of every church and cathedral, the charming little English church occupying a site in the Tchernetchefsky Perculok forming no exception to the rule; do you happen to enter "Gurin's," the well-known Muscovitish restaurant, the probability is that your charity "on behalf of the sick and wounded" is instantly demanded by a lady, who, duly escorted by some member of the "nobler sex," has taken upon herself the duty of "begging" in this particular district. The topic of—as also endless incidents attendant upon—this deplorable war meets one at every point—in the lowest *peeteny-dom* (drinking-house); in every shop; in the very *droshky* which one hires, the driver (*eezvostchik*) being invariably well versed in the latest phases of the combat.

To-day a fresh impetus has been given by the departure from Moscow, after a two days' stay here, of a portion of the Imperial Guards from St. Petersburg *en route* for the field—were it not better to say many fields?—of battle. This body, numbering about thirty-six hundred officers and soldiers, was despatched from the modern capital in instalments of six hundred men. The Guards, it must be remembered, constitute the flower and pride of the Russian army, and it is impossible that they could be regarded in any other light. A veritable set of giants, so to speak, they one and all appeared, clad in their rough brown winter gear, with heavy top-boots, and carrying heavy knapsacks with superfluous pairs of nailed high boots strapped thereon.

The organization of the Imperial Guard dates from the reign of the most autocratic of the czars. Peter the Great, left fatherless at an early age, spent his childhood in the village of Preobragensky, situated not many versts from Moscow, where his greatest delight, as he grew in years, was to assemble the youths of the village and train them into a fighting corps, constituting himself their captain. But the youthful hero was not content with this venture. He also made friends with the boys of the neighboring village—Semenovsky by name—and assembled them in like fashion. Hence the names attached to the first and second regiments of the *Infanterie de la Garde*—Preobragensky and Semenovsky. In after-life Peter retained the rank in early days thus self assumed, remaining captain of his favorite Preobragensky regiment.

The Infanterie de la Garde consists of three divisions, each comprising four regiments. The first division, besides the two already named, includes the regiments designated as Ismailovsky and the Chasseurs de la Garde. The regiments of the second division are named, respectively, Pavlovsky, Les Grenadiers de la Garde, Moscovsky, and De Finlande. The third division embraces the Volensky and Letovsky regiments, as also those dubbed L'Empereur d'Autriche and L'Empereur de Prusse. The cavalry has also three divisions, the first comprising the four

regiments named Les Chevalier Gardes, Les Gardes à Cheval, Les Cuirassiers de l'Empereur and Les Cuirassiers de I'Impératrice; the second, Les Hussards de l'Empereur, Les Lanciers du Grand Duc Nicolas, Les Grenadiers à Cheval, and Les Dragons de l'Empereur; and the third, two regiments, Les Lanciers de l'Empereur and Les Hussards de Grodno.

Soon after six o'clock A. M., on a bleak and rainy morning, I found my way in a horribly shaky and shabby droshky to the railway terminus, where the soldiers were gathered, many of them accompanied by friends and near relations, principally, however, women—mothers, wives and [Pg 769] children. Nearly all were seated on the wide platforms stretching in various directions. They sat in clusters, some drinking the inevitable *chipeet* (tea), but perhaps quite as many *votky* (a kind of brandy). The majority were talking fast and gesticulating vigorously in true Russian style. Many, however, were singing and shouting, out of sheer bravado, as it seemed. "Yes, they would meet their fate thus. It were better far than weeping; and there were but two alternatives: why choose the last named?" One bronze-featured Muscovite specially attracted my notice. A burst of noisy song—little short of a scream in fact—came from his lips ever and anon, alternating with a stormy burst of laughter or a sudden flow of tears. I watched him with considerable interest. This, I reflected, was a type of the wellnigh universal Russian temperament—sad to-day, gay to-morrow: in the very depths of despair one moment, brimming over with joy the next. But there were other groups; and herein lay another characteristic feature in the picture. Here and there a soldier was endeavoring to drown not only his own feelings, but also those of the surrounding circle, by plunging into all the wild vagaries of the Russian dance; and furiously his arms as well as his legs worked to do full justice to the famous national jig. "Hurrah! hurrah!" rang cheerily from the lips of many around, still struggling hard with their tears. "Apait! apait!" ("Again! again!"). Knapsacks lay scattered all around. The troops were all ready to be summoned at a word and packed into the various carriages, or rather vans, holding an average number of thirty-five. Alongside the station stood a regiment newly arrived, and waiting to take the place of that which was about to leave.

We passed slowly along the line, glancing at the many heavily-laden wagons, and then at compartment after compartment filled with fine-looking but highly-disconcerted horses, rebelling at the restrictions as regarded space imposed upon them.

"I declare I am as utterly sorry for the horses as for the men," exclaimed a soft-hearted Russian lady. "To think of the poor dumb brutes all going thus helplessly to their fate!"

A tent erected for the officers and their friends stood on our left, and, forming part of a privileged party, we entered it. A long table, supplied with the daintiest of viands, provided by the citizens, extended through its entire length. Many ladies were present, some weeping bitterly. Few waited for a formal introduction before exchanging words. "Your son, madame? it is from him you are about to part?"—"And my husband, madame. All my other sons are there already. May God help and protect them!"—"Amen!" is the involuntary answer.

The officers—most of them chatting, and many of them even laughing gayly—are drinking wine, exchanging felicitations and good-wishes, and touching glasses across the table. In the midst of all I spied a mouse—a tame one, surely—careering about at pleasure.

But in another minute the aspect of affairs had changed. The word of command had suddenly been given, the officers marched out, the troops crouched in such numbers on the platforms rose promptly to their feet, grasping their knapsacks; and then the women's arms were bound fast around the necks of those stepping, now fast, according to orders, into the carriages immediately facing them. The notes of the Russian hymn rose and fell from time to time: many of the voices were more than half choked.

In flocked all, the sobbing women left behind, with heads wrapped up in the thick woollen Russian shawl or extemporized *bashlik*, "crossing" their departing friends three times in earnest and true Russian fashion, praying Heaven to bless them. And then all waited, all was ready: the long line of carriages was already moving off.

"Preicheit!" ("Good-bye!") rose from the lips of those around, but the word was quickly supplemented by another more suggestive of pleasantness—"Dussvedinia!" ("Au revoir!"), which [Pg 770] was echoed again and again. The train moved now more quickly. The soldiers shouted, cried and laughed alternately, waving their caps in signal of adieu. "What matters it?" shouted one: "we must all die once." The officers grasped firmly the hands of those yet marching bareheaded by their side along the platform: the lonely women left behind, many of them gray-headed, fell, some of them, senseless on the ground.

E. S.

A MISSING ITEM.

Among the long and varied list of reasons assigned for the financial reverses of the past five years, we do not recollect to have discovered the falling off of European immigration. This would appear one of the most obvious and controlling of them all. About a million less have been added from abroad to the population of the Union within that time than the figures of a like number of years immediately preceding caused to be expected. If, according to the prevailing estimate, each individual thus acquired is worth a thousand dollars to the country, its aggregate loss in this way far exceeds the sum sunk in superfluous railways, to which extravagance almost exclusively the custom is to ascribe the revulsion. Eight hundred or a thousand millions of money which the

country had under its hands as it were, reckoned among its available assets and used in gauging the immediate future of its industry, suddenly vanished. The direct abstraction from its resources of so large an item could not fail to be seriously felt. It amounts to the reduction of an average State to a desert condition—to the loss of twice as many pairs of stout hands as were sacrificed in the four years of civil war. The homes marked out for them are desolate, the waste places they would have made to bloom given to the weeds, the industries which craved them paralyzed, and the wealth they were to create cancelled.

Such is undoubtedly the economic aspect of this check to the movement of human freight upon the Atlantic. Viewed from the politico-social side, its effects will not be deemed so unfortunate even by those whose confidence in the assimilative power of our institutions is most unqualified. A million and a half or two millions of matriculates at the great modern political school is quite a liberal allowance for one decade. Twice the number might press heavily on the provision made for adequate tuition. The results of the course upon those who have already graduated, born at home or abroad, are not at all too flattering. In the West, where our European guests most do congregate, notions are discoverable of a very helter-skelter description upon divorce, the "rights of labor," and religion in the public schools—notions which, whether sound or the reverse, clearly need settling rather than additional disturbance. The case is similar in cities and densely-peopled districts at the East, where the same element has especial weight. At the same time, it is difficult to say how far this association of facts is accidental or necessary and significant. The proportion of crotchety agitators among the population of foreign birth we believe to be actually less than among the natives. Certainly, our most mischievous "ringmasters" in partisan politics have been Americans. Immigrants do not usually bring that class of men with them. As to the masses, it can rarely be said that the European peasant, as he reaches our shores, is calculated to demoralize his new neighbors in personal and social habits. He is never intemperate, unless he come from the British Isles, and his tastes and amusements are simple and often refined. We are in the habit of supposing that what inferiority the Briton of the lower classes may labor under in these respects is made up by his superior political information and training to free institutions.

The arrivals on our shores represent so many different nationalities that the faults of each may be balanced by the better traits of others, and that the chances of good qualities overpowering bad in the resultant compound is inferable from the exceptionally favorable conditions of life which draw them so far from home. They are so many convergent threads of different strength and fineness, twisted into one on the Cisatlantic spindle, to be then woven into the broad and ever-widening web. The weaving process may possibly be too much hurried; and that is about the only compensation we have for the loss of so many hundreds of thousands of allies in our contest with the wilderness. [Pg 771]

A CRYING EVIL.

Is there no grand jury for the train-boy? Can he not be presented and abated as a nuisance? He runs every day the gauntlet of hundreds of these inquests, strung along the thousands of miles he makes hateful to the traveller. Yet he still treads unchecked and unabashed his endless round of evil-doing. To realize the enormity of the wrong let us fancy him abandoning his stronghold in the railway carriage and adventuring his raids on terra firma. How long would the most patient of publics endure his promenading the sidewalk three times an hour each way, and every time thrusting upon the occupants of every house, at work, at amusement or at meals, a package of candy, a semi-rancid orange, or a wholly rancid novel? He would be clapped into quod and permanently extinguished before completing his third tour of the square.

The railways have no police to do us this good turn. If they have any, this youth of the period has purchased their silence. The passenger is handed over to him like a sheep, his helpless victim, bought with a price. No means of escape are left open. Frowns and cold shoulders are thrown away on him. A calm ignoring of his existence is but a spur to his determination to conquer you. He sets you down as a foeman worthy of his steel. "Ah, old fellow!" he soliloquizes as he takes your measure, "I'll have you yet. If you are not politician enough to want yesterday morning's triple sheet *Tomahawk*, you will want to bury yourself from my reach in the mazy tables of last year's *Railway Guide*, or, if not that, you'll be glad, after a while, to let me soothe you with a willow-leaf Havana." Revolving these thoughts, he strolls imperturbably on, for he understands you perfectly, as he does all the rest of his various victims.

Discouragement is a word he has no use for. He does not seem to sell anything. Sometimes you will listlessly yet curiously observe his career, and settle back into your seat in luxurious satisfaction as he emerges through the rear door without having effected a solitary transaction. Better still, he caught his basket in the doorway, and spilled some of his oranges under the feet of yon slumbering rustic: no, he recovered himself too soon. He never drops anything except of set purpose—a circular or the book it recommends. A passenger will occasionally do it, or be made to seem to do it, and then have of course to purchase the article under foot; but that is a trick of trade, and one the average train-boy is not master of, the leaders of the craft only being adepts in it.

On some lines the train-boy was formerly utilized in summer by handing round ice-water to the thirsty at stated intervals. But the thirsty were a minority: the cans would splash on the sufficiently moist majority, and that device for contriving a *raison d'être* for the train-boy was abandoned. He is now more inexcusable and more ubiquitous than ever. He and cinders are twin evils born of fast schedules. To add four or five miles an hour to the old rate, station refreshment-

booths and platform-peddlers and spark-catchers have been abolished. The local peanut interest has been ruthlessly immolated on the altar of Hurry, and the incense of the same rite poured in, thick and black, at every car-window and ventilator. Let us hope for an early change in the mode of worship. This acolyte is unknown in Europe. Travellers there manage to lunch, read and smoke very comfortably without him; and they can do it here with perfect ease if similar methods are adopted for supplying their real wants.

E. B.

FOOTNOTES:

[D] These adventurers are easily distinguished from their native comrades by the fact of all purely *Russian* names terminating either in "-off" or "-in."

LITERATURE OF THE DAY.

[Pg 772]

The Life of Count Cavour. Translated from the French of Charles de Mazade. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

In this substantial volume M. Charles de Mazade has related in a very interesting manner the history of an extraordinarily interesting career. Cavour's career was a short one—the space of eleven years covers the whole of it, and the shorter space of six years witnessed its most striking achievements—but it was nevertheless one of the most remarkable and most active in the annals of statesmanship. Clearly and harmoniously unfolded as it is in these pages, it reads indeed like a romance or a fairy-tale: there seems almost an element of magic in Cavour's inveterate successes. M. de Mazade is a passionate admirer of his hero, and the story loses in his hands none of its brilliancy of coloring. But it needs no retouching: the naked facts themselves are a drama, with all the necessary requisites—the large and moving argument, the skilful performers, the thickening plot, the moment of suspense, the happy dénouement, the attentive auditory. The work accomplished by Cavour had a peculiar completeness and unity: it was a single, consistent task cut out for him by circumstances. It is sometimes said of him that circumstances had more part in the result than the man himself, and that if they had not happened to combine themselves again and again in a peculiarly favorable manner the liberator of Italy would not have been known beyond the limits of the quiet little kingdom of Piedmont. But M. de Mazade points out that Cavour's greatness was precisely in his marvellous talent for making his occasion—for knowing just the way in which to take hold of circumstances. From the day on which, of his own moment and as the first step in a far-seeing plan, he sent, in the face of domestic opposition, a Piedmontese contingent to the Crimean war, he pursued this vigilant culture of opportunity without faltering or going astray. M. de Mazade characterizes him as an extraordinary mixture of prudence and boldness; and these qualities with him always went hand in hand. He knew equally well how to wait and when to act. But it is the element of discretion, the art of sailing with the current of events, that enabled him to effect a great revolution by means that were, after all, in relation to the end in view, not violent—by measures that were never reckless, high-handed or of a character to force from circumstances more than they could naturally yield. For M. de Mazade, Cavour is the model of the moderate and conservative liberal. Liberal he was, as a friend said of him, "as he was fair-complexioned, lively and witty—by birth." But M. de Mazade constantly emphasizes the fact that his liberalism was untinged by the radical leaven, and that if he was a liberator, he had nothing in common with some of the gentry who aspire to this title. All this is very obvious. Cavour was not only the champion of his country: he was also the servant of his king, and his dream was to see Italy not only united, but brought under the sway of the old Piedmontese crown. He often said, according to M. de Mazade, that no republic can give as much liberty, and as real liberty, as a constitutional monarchy that operates regularly. It is noticeable that, keeping in view his hero's conservative side, M. de Mazade relates in considerable detail the story of the liberation of Italy, with no allusion to Mazzini beyond speaking of him two or three times as a vulgar and truculent conspirator, and with a regrettable tendency to stint the mixture of praise to the erratic but certainly, during a most important period, efficient Garibaldi. But Cavour's nature was a wonderfully rich and powerful one; and there is something very striking in such religious devotion to an idea when it is unaccompanied with fanaticism or narrowness of view, and tempered with good sense and wit and the art of taking things easily.

Cavour had had his idea from the first: he cherished it for a long time very quietly: he was awaiting his opportunity. "We will do something," he said one day in 1850, rubbing his hands—his legendary gesture—as he looked across Lago Maggiore to the Austrian shore. It was not till 1855 that the first serious opportunity came, but he attached himself to this with the quiet zeal and obstinacy of a man who feels that he is driving in the narrow end of the wedge. There were all [Pg 773] sorts of telling objections to be made to the co-operation of Piedmont in the Crimean war, and Cavour was at the disadvantage, for a man who was rigidly and supremely practical, of having to defend his course on ideal and far-fetched grounds. But his idealism proved to be plain good sense: it brought little Piedmont to the notice of Europe, and gave her the right to call attention to her affairs. The young Italian officer spoke the truth who said to a poor soldier struggling with the mud in the Crimean trenches, "Never mind—make the best of it: with this mud we are making

Italy!" As Piedmont had had a hand in the war, so she had a seat at the Congress of Paris which followed it; and here Cavour, finding his auditory ready made to his hand, introduced—a little perhaps by the shoulders—the then comparatively novel "Italian question." This was his second opportunity. The emperor Napoleon had asked him, from an impulse of imperial civility, "If there was any thing he could do for Italy?" and Cavour, taking him at his word, and more than his word, had instantly drawn up a list of *desiderata*. M. de Mazade gives a detailed and very interesting account of the gradual adoption by the emperor of his Italian policy—of the various phases through which it passed, of its complications and interruptions, and of Napoleon's curiously fitful, illusive and at times evasive attitudes. Cavour's relations with Napoleon III. may serve as the best example of his disposition to use the best instruments and opportunities that offered themselves, and not quarrel with them because they were not ideally perfect. This was what the Italian "patriots" of the mere romantic type could never forgive: that Italy should appeal for liberation to the oppressor of France was to them a displeasing and monstrous anomaly. But Cavour had a lively sense of reality in human affairs, and for him the best thing was the best possible thing. It was enough that—for reasons best known to himself—the "Man of December" had taken a fancy to this idea of lending a hand to the oppressed Peninsula: his own duty was to fan the flame. The emperor's sympathy with Italian independence is certainly the most interesting and honorable feature in his career, and its mingled motives and mysterious fluctuations present a very curious study. The desire to do something for Italy was, however, steadfast, and had been an early dream; and the reader of M. de Mazade's pages can easily believe that Cavour's personal influence and magnetism had something—had even a good deal—to do with bringing it to a climax. Napoleon appreciated the Piedmontese statesman, and felt his superiority. From a certain ideal point of view there is something displeasing in seeing the advocate of so noble a cause dancing attendance upon an unscrupulous adventurer, and hanging as it were upon his lips; but we know not what other ways there may have been: we only know that, in fact, a great deal of generous French blood was shed upon the plains of Lombardy.

After the Congress of Paris, Cavour spent two years of eager, anxious waiting and of the most active private agitation. It was by the aid of England and France combined that he proposed to compass his aim, but he had, in the case of England, to content himself with a strictly Platonic sympathy. His mingled ardor and tact during this period, his tension of purpose, and yet his self-restraint, his inveterate skill in turning events to his advantage, are vividly narrated by M. de Mazade. At last, in the summer of 1858, Napoleon sent for him to Plombières, drove him out in a dog-cart, and during the drive told him that he was now ready to "do something" for Italy. Then and there the outline of the war of 1859 was resolved upon. The abrupt conclusion of the war was, at least momentarily, a profound disappointment to Cavour: the Peace of Villafranca, which left half its fruits ungathered, seemed to the Italian party almost an act of treachery on the part of the French emperor. Napoleon was, in fact, alarmed at his work: he had been almost too successful, and he determined to throw up the game. Cavour, in irritation, disgust and despair, immediately withdrew from the ministry, his place being taken by Urbano Rattazzi. The new minister presided at that great breaking-up throughout the rest of Italy for which the expulsion of the Austrians from Lombardy had given the signal, and which took place under the direct patronage of Piedmont. The attitude of the latter state was a very difficult one, and Rattazzi proved but half master of the situation: at the end of six months Cavour was recalled to power. From this point in his work one step succeeds another with a sort of dramatic effectiveness. He was confronted with the constant necessity of presenting an unflinching front to Austria; the necessity, equally imperious, of checking reactionary excesses in Parma and Modena, Bologna [Pg 774] and Tuscany; the need of keeping what had been gained, and at the same time reaching forth for more; of keeping on good terms with France, who had drawn back almost as far as she first advanced; of remaining free, especially, from the reproach of meddling with the papacy—an enterprise for which the occasion was not ripe; of stimulating England, who had advanced in proportion as France withdrew; and of being supremely careful, generally, to commit no faults. The cession of Savoy and Nice brought down upon Cavour a storm of denunciation, but he had counted the cost, and the resolution with which he paid the price of Napoleon's assistance was extremely characteristic of him. It was apparently equally characteristic of Garibaldi, born at Nice and her most illustrious son, that he felt it a mortal affront that by this diplomatic bargain he should have been "deprived of a country." M. de Mazade characterizes very happily Cavour's attitude during Garibaldi's invasion of the Two Sicilies—his silent complicity, his skill in giving his terrible associate rope, as it were, and yet keeping him in hand. Cavour did not live to see the last two acts of his great drama—the occupation of Venetia and of Rome—but they were only, as it were, the epilogue: they were implied in what had gone before. He died of overwork—broke down in the midst of his labors. Great innovator as he had been, he was remarkable for the moderation of his attitude toward the Church; and the last words he uttered to the good friar who attended his deathbed were a repetition of his famous formula—"Libera chiesa in libero stato."

Egypt as it Is. By J. C. McCoan. New York: Henry Holt & Co.

During the three quarters of a century which have elapsed since the French invasion a voluminous Egyptian library has been built up, but it is almost wholly scientific, sentimental or "entertaining." Of the antiquities and the natural history of the country, the temples, mummies and crocodiles, and the humors of Fellah-life, we have been told a great deal. An account of the condition and prospects of the country from an economic point of view has remained a desideratum. This seems the less remarkable when we recall the fluctuations through which the industry, commerce and politics of Egypt have passed since Mehemet Ali seized and commenced repolishing the sceptre of the Pharaohs and the Ptolemies. He and his four successors stood forth as the absolute lords of the land; but it was subject not only to the accidents of their character

and policy, but to the capricious and almost always mischievous interference of their suzerain the Porte, and the often beneficial, but never quite disinterested, control of the great Christian powers.

The progress of the past fourteen years has been more palpable than that of the preceding half century. The khedive Ismaāl succeeded the reactionary Abbas, who stopped, and, as far as in him lay, nullified, the work of Mehemet in 1865. Since that year 971 out of 1126 miles of railway have been built; three or four hundred miles of telegraph have grown to fifty-five hundred; 112 miles of canal have been dug, and a great part of the old system deepened or restored; the great Suez Canal, additional to that, has been undertaken and completed at a net cost to Egypt of sixty-seven millions of dollars; the barrage, or damming for irrigation purposes, of the Lower Nile has been pushed at a cost of five millions; ten millions have been spent on the harbor of Alexandria, one upon lighthouses, which make the coast as safe as that of any European power, and half a million on the bridge at Cairo; schools have been multiplied, remodelled and endowed in like proportion; the judiciary has been recast with the best results, so far as time has permitted them to be shown; and the exports, excluding the transit-trade, which the opening of the Isthmus Canal has diverted from Alexandria, raised from twenty-four millions in 1866 to sixty-three millions in 1875. The cotton production, created about the beginning of the present reign by the civil war in the United States, shows a recovery and re-advance since the loss of that stimulus, shipments from Alexandria having grown from 1,288,797 quintals in 1866 to 2,615,120 in 1875. The blow dealt the commerce of that city by the transfer of the Indian trade to Port Saïd has similarly been "discounted," the mercantile sagacity of Alexander the Great continuing to assert itself in a movement of business and population which cannot fail to be largely aided by the extension of the arable area of Egypt proper and the railway development of Nubia and the Soudan. The population of the first of these three districts has grown to five and a half millions, or 484 to the square mile—a density exceeding that of Belgium. Its multiplication, and the more wonderful [Pg 775] advance in the products of its industry, go to support Mr. McCoan's assertions of its general well-being. In this regard he maintains that the Egyptian peasantry compare favorably with those of any Eastern country. Their mode of life, rude enough in the eyes of Western tourists, is, he holds, the same as under the builders of Thebes, and much the same with what the climate and other local conditions will always make it. Their oppression by the old system of tax-collecting and military conscription has been greatly relieved. We cannot see, indeed, why an army nominally of thirty, but actually of less than twenty thousand, and recruited in great measure from Nubia, should be burdensome. The navy has almost disappeared, a veto from Constantinople having made iron-clads a prohibited luxury, so that impressment for the fleet is unfelt.

Mr. McCoan, though generally fair and practical in his statements, tends to the rose-colored side of things Egyptian. Thus it fares with slavery. Slaves, white and black, are very numerous in Egypt, "nearly all the indoor work of every family above the poorest" being done by slaves. In the town of Mansourah in 1873 an English consular agent, "in rank not even a vice-consul," used his power under a then existing privilege to liberate "seventeen hundred in a single month." Mansourah has but sixteen thousand of population, so that the slave-element must be great. But Mr. McCoan says the institution is strictly patriarchal, and no way comparable to the extinct Western form. This does not seem to be borne out by his other statement, that "few black slaves (the most numerous by far) reach middle age, ten or a dozen years generally sufficing to sweep away a generation, at the end of which the whole have to be replaced." And how are they replaced? By Arab raids among the negro tribes, costing the death, in battle or on the march, of four or five for one that reaches the Nile or the Red Sea. The Circassian supply has been brought pretty well to an end by the Russian conquest of the Caucasus, and is kept up only in a feeble way by the continued habit of selling their daughters yet prevalent among the emigrants from that region who have sought refuge among their coreligionists in the interior of Turkey.

The fortunes of Egypt must be affected by the Turko-Russian war; although, as England is quite able, and seemingly quite determined, to cork up the Dardanelles, it is not likely that the ships of the czar can threaten Port Saïd for generations to come. The interest of the money-changers, too, is to keep her quiet and the hands of her Fellaheen occupied only with the implements of peace—the shovel and the hoe. She is far from warlike, is indisposed in the extreme to quarrelling with Europe or any part of it, and should the Turkish empire go to wreck, will be content to drift out of the wreck as noiselessly as possible. She will, if allowed a chance, be able ere long to set a shining and valuable example of thrift and liberality to the rest of the Moslem world. She has already shown that its crust of bigotry and case-hardened conservatism may be broken, and nobody of any faith be one whit the worse. Her capacity for improvement will not be questioned by any reader of this volume, which is the result of a thorough study of her condition and recent progress.

HOLIDAY BOOKS.

The season for holiday publications has not yet fairly opened, but we notice a few of those which have already reached us, hoping to present a tolerably complete list in our next number.

Californian Pictures in Prose and Verse, by Benjamin Parke Avery (New York: Hurd & Houghton), is not a record of travel, but a description of scenes visited by the author, whose observations extend over a large portion of California, from Mount Shasta to the Santa Cruz Mountains. It is written in a clear and fluent style, but "word-painting" is a form of writing requiring exceptional nicety of execution, and Mr. Avery has not the power or delicacy of language which would be needed to sustain the interest of a volume of this size with little or no aid from incident. There is

no *sauce piquante* to set forth attractively the real merits which the volume possesses. A sincere feeling for Nature appears to have been turned by Mr. Avery into the special channel of enthusiasm for the Sierra scenery, which he has studied with loving and minute care. He explored no new region, but he went beyond the beaten track, and has sought to avoid a repetition of the most worn Californian themes. Yet it is to Californians and to those who have [Pg 776] visited the State that the book must chiefly appeal; and to these it may safely be recommended as a memorial volume, agreeably written, handsomely got up, and embellished with illustrations by various artists and engravers, some of Mr. Thomas Moran's familiar light-bathed distances being perhaps the most noticeable.

Three volumes, bearing the imprint of G. P. Putnam's Sons, are suitable for children of almost any age. Of these, *Six Sinners; or, School-Days in Bantam Valley*, by Campbell Wheaton, is a pleasantly-written story, the warm-hearted, clever, impulsive little heroine being very naturally and sympathetically drawn. There is a good deal of reality in the delineation of the other characters, and the school in which the sensitive Dora was so miserable is no doubt a faithful picture of some boarding-school in New England of twenty years ago. The miseries, though pathetic, are not of long duration: we take leave in the last chapter of a very happy little girl, with friends reconciled and circumstances adjusted in the most delightful way. The story is nicely constructed, and the interest well sustained, but the title seems to have no special fitness beyond that of alliteration.

Patsy (by Leora B. Robinson) goes through all the stages of girlhood, from pinafores and paper dolls to long dresses and young ladyhood, with bewildering celerity. We find her on one page learning the Primer along with the elements of flirtation, and on the next she is finishing her education with all the philosophies and -ologies. There is no lack of funny incidents in the book, but they are too crowded, and the characters are too numerous. This, however, may be no obstacle to children, who have often a faculty for unravelling genealogical problems, and like to have their fun spread thick. They will not even have to skip the moral, which, such as it is, is aimed entirely at parents and guardians.

The Wings of Courage, adapted from the French by Marie E. Field, with illustrations by Lucy G. Morse, contains three rather long stories. But why "adapted"? and why is not George Sand acknowledged as the author? There ought to be an authentic translation of Madame Sand's fairy-tales, which are full of fancy, earnestness and charm. These stories appeal to a more imaginative and cultured audience of boys and girls than that to which the realistic tales of American writers are addressed. The beauty and simplicity of the antique will, we fear, appear dull when compared with the adventures of hoydens and newsboys, and Young America is not partial to the young naturalist unless he justifies the singularity of his pursuit by an abundance of slaughter.

Books Received.

Tales from Foreign Tongues, 3 volumes—"Memories," from the German of Max Müller; "Graziella," from the French of Lamartine; "Marie," from the Russian of Pushkin. Chicago: Jansen, McClurg & Co.

Money and its Laws: Embracing a History of Monetary Theories and a History of the Currencies of the United States. By Henry V. Poor. New York: H. V. and H. W. Poor.

China-Painting: A Practical Manual for the Use of Amateurs in the Decoration of Hard Porcelain. By M. Louise McLaughlin. Cincinnati: Robert Clarke & Co.

History of the Ottoman Turks: From the Beginning of their Empire to the Present Time. By Sir Edward S. Creasy, M.A. New York: Henry Holt & Co.

Through Rome On: A Memoir of Christian and Extra-Christian Experience. By Nathaniel Ramsay Waters. New York: Charles P. Somerby.

The Enchanted Moccasins, and Other Legends of the American Indians. By Cornelius Matthews. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

The Biography of Alfred de Musset. From the French of Paul de Musset, by Harriet W. Preston. Boston: Roberts Brothers.

Last Series of Christian Aspects of Faith and Duty: Discourses by John James Tayler. Boston: Roberts Brothers.

Surly Tim, and Other Stories. By Frances Hodgson Burnett. New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Co.

History of French Literature. By Henri Van Laun. Vol. III. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Music in the House. By John Hullah, LL.D. (Art-at-Home Series.) Philadelphia: Porter & Coates.

Will Denbigh, Nobleman. (No-Name Series.) Boston: Roberts Brothers.

Pauline. By L. B. Walford. New York: Henry Holt & Co.

Diana. By Susan Warner. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

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