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Transcriber's note:

Spelling and punctuation are sometimes erratic. A few obvious misprints have been corrected, but in general the original spelling and typesetting conventions have been retained. Accents are inconsistent, and have not been standardised.

This issue contains the index to Volume 64.

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MRS HEMANS.

[641]

Felicia Hemans and the poetesses of England! Such would probably be the form in which the toast would run, if literary toasts were the fashion, or such a mode of compliment the one exactly suited to the case. Not that we would venture positively to assert that Mrs Hemans stands at the head of our poetesses, the first absolutely in point of genius,—though there is but one name, that of Joanna Baillie, which occurs to us, at the moment, as disputing with hers that pre-eminence,—but because she, in a more complete manner than any other of our poetesses, represents the mind, the culture, the feelings, and character, of the English gentlewoman. Her piety, her resignation, her love of nature and of home,—that cheerfulness easily moved by little incidents, that sadness into which reflection almost always settled,—all speak of the cultivated woman bred under English skies, and in English homes. Her attachment to the privacy of life, her wise dislike and avoidance of the *éclat* of literary renown, and the dull, dry, fever-heat of fashionable circles, tend to complete her qualifications as a fitting representative of her fair countrywomen. The cultivation of her mind, in its weakness as well as elegance, savoured, perhaps, too much of what we are compelled to call feminine. Alive at all times to beauty in all its forms, to music, to tender and imaginative thought, she seems to have been almost equally averse to whatever bore the aspect of an analysis of feeling, or an approach to a severe investigation of truth. Present her with the beautiful, but spare her all scientific dissection of it. Let the flower live as her companion; do not rend it to pieces to show its conformation. Let but the faith be tender and *true to the heart*, and disturb her not with rude inquiries whether it possess any other truth or not. That too much melancholy (at least for her own happiness) which is traceable in her poems, arose in part from events in her life, but in part, also, from this too partial and limited cultivation of the mind. The feelings were excited or refined, but the reasoning powers not enough called forth: no task-work was therefore given to the active intellect; and a mind that could not be at rest was left to brood over sentiments, either the sad heritage of all mortality, or the peculiar offspring of afflictions of her own. We are not imputing, in this remark, any shadow of blame to her; we make the remark because we think that, eminent as she was, she still suffered much from the unwise and arbitrary distinction which is made in the education of the two sexes.

The difference between the mental qualities of the sexes is owing, we apprehend, far more to education than to nature. At all events, there is no such natural difference as warrants the distinction we make in the mental discipline we provide for them. There are certain professional studies with which no one thinks of vexing the mind of any one, man or woman, but those who intend to practise the professions; but why, in a good English library, there should be one half of it, and that the better half, which a young woman is not expected to read—this we never could understand, and never reflect on with common patience. Why may not a Locke, or a Paley, or a Dugald Stewart, train the mind of the future mother of a family? or why may not an intelligent [642] young woman be a companion for her brother or her husband in his more serious moods of thought, as well as in his gayer and more trifling? Would the world lose any thing of social happiness or moral refinement by this intellectual equality of the two sexes? You vex the memory of a young girl with dictionaries and vocabularies without end; you tax her memory in every conceivable manner; and at an after-age you give the literature of sentiment freely to her pillage; but that which should step between the two—the culture of the reason—this is entirely forbidden. If she learns a dozen modern languages, she does not read a single book in any one of them that would make her think. Even in her religious library, the same distinction is preserved. Books of sentimental piety—some of them maudlin enough—are thrust with kindest anxiety and most liberal profusion upon her: any work of theology, any work that discusses and examines, is as carefully excluded.

We are not contending that there is no difference whatever in the mental constitution of the two sexes. There may be less tendency to ratiocination in woman; there is certainly more of feeling, a quicker and more sensitive nature. One sees this especially in children. Mark them in their play-hours, in their holiday freedom, when they are left to themselves to find matter of enjoyment,—how much more pleasure does the girl evidently derive from any beautiful or living thing that comes before it than the boy! We have an instance of it almost as we write. There is a group of children on the beach. The little girl is in perfect ecstasies, as she looks at the sparkling waves that come bounding to her feet; she shouts, she leaps, she herself bounds towards them, then springs back as they approach, half frightened and half pleased—she knows not how to express her delight at this great playfellow she has found. Meanwhile the boy, her brother, does nothing but throw stones at it—of that he seems never wearied. The beach is a perfect armoury to him, and he pelts the graceful waves remorselessly. What is their grace to him? So, too, in an inland scene, a garden or a lawn, we have often noticed what exquisite pleasure a little girl will feel, as she watches a sparrow alight near her upon the ground, in search of crumbs or other food. Her little frame quite thrills as this other little piece of life comes hopping and pecking about her. She loads it, but with suppressed voice, with all the endearing epithets her vocabulary supplies. She is evidently embarrassed that they are so few: she makes up by their frequent repetition. She absolutely *loves* the little creature, with all whose movements she seems to have the keenest

sympathy. Her brother, the boy, he has nothing for it but his unfailing stone, or he flings his hat at it. Unfailing, fortunately, the stone is not; for, if his skill as a marksman responded to his destructive zeal, there is nothing that a stone would kill that would be left alive, or that a stone would break that would be left whole. A mere blind animal-activity seems, at that very interesting age, to distinguish the future lord of the creation.

At an after period of life, when thought has educated the youth into feeling, the picture is often entirely reversed. Then, unless the man be bred up a mere pleasure-hunter, seeking what he calls amusement in town or country, the superior education he has received makes him the more feeling, the more imaginative, because the more reflective of the two. That brother who once shocked his little sister by his stupid and cruel amusements, now looks with something like contempt at the frivolous tastes and occupations—at the system of poor artificial enjoyments—to which that sister has betaken herself. Now, if they are at the sea-side together, it is he who finds companionship in the waves, who finds thought grow more expanded, freer and bolder, in the presence of the boundless ocean. She, too, dotes upon the sea, and sits down beside it—to read her novel. Now, if they ride or walk through the country together, it is his eye that sees the bird upon the bough—hers is on the distant dust some equipage is making.

But matters are mending, and will continue to mend. There are so many women of richly [643] cultivated minds who have distinguished themselves in letters or in society, and made it highly feminine to be intelligent as well as good, and to have elevated as well as amiable feelings, that by-and-by the whole sex must adopt a new standard of education. It must, we presume, be by leaders of their own starting out of their own body, that the rest of the soft and timid flock must be led.

Yes, we are mending. Very different are our times from those when Madame de Genlis published her little work, *De l'Influence des Femmes sur la Littérature Française comme Protectrices des Lettres, et comme Auteurs*. She had to contend, with the same acrid energy, for the privilege of a lady to write, as a Turkish dame of the present century might be supposed to display, who should contend for the privilege of walking abroad unveiled, or rather unmuffled. And even she herself thinks it necessary to give certain rules to young women who write—as she would to young women who dance—how to comport themselves with consummate propriety; as not to enter into controversy, or use big words—in short, to deal with printer's ink without soiling the most delicate fingers. As to that argument drawn from the supposed neglect of domestic duties—which it seems, in those days just emerging from barbarity, was still heard of—she dismisses it very briefly. "Comme ces devoirs dans une maison bien ordonnée, ne peuvent jamais prendre *plus d'une heure par jour*, cette objection est absolument nulle." As there is much implied in that "maison bien ordonnée," and as Madame de Genlis did not write for simple gentle-folks, it is to be hoped that the one hour per diem may admit of extension without any forfeiture of literary privileges. In her time, too, there was thought to be a sort of feud between authors and authoresses—a thing which in our day, is quite inconceivable—for she writes, apropos of a charge of plagiarism, against La Fontaine, in the following indignant strain:—"Quelles que soient le bonhomie et la candeur d'un auteur, il sait que, par une loi tacite mais universelle, il est toujours dispensé de convenir qu'il doit à une femme une idée heureuse. Dans ce cas seulement le plagiat et le silence sont également légitimes."

We have changed all that: we have had too many instances of women of talent and of genius to doubt their ability to excel—we make no exception—in any branch of literature whatever. We give them, on the other hand, no monopoly of elegance or grace, or delicacy of touch, as some affect to do. These qualities they are very likely to display; but they will be superior in them to authors of the male sex, only just so far as they are superior to those authors in genius and talent. There is still a practice in many critics to detect the style feminine from the style masculine. The sooner this is laid aside the better. There are styles which, speaking metaphorically, one may say have a feminine grace, or a feminine weakness. Such an observation has been made, by Sir James Mackintosh, on the style of Addison. But to pretend to say of a given page of composition whether a man or a woman has penned it, is absurd. We often hear it said, that none but a woman could have written the letters of Madame de Sévigné. If Cowper had been a woman, people would have said the same thing of his letters. They are unrivalled, at least in our own language, for grace and elegance, and wit and playfulness. No woman, we believe—and the epistolary style is supposed to belong by especial right to the female pen—has ever written such charming letters as those to Lady Hesketh, and his old friend Thomas Hill. As to the letters of Madame de Sévigné, they so evidently come from a mother to a daughter, that it is impossible to forget for a moment the sex of the writer. But if the qualities which have given them literary celebrity are, to be pronounced feminine, half the literature of France is of the same gender. Still less can we tolerate the affectation that pretends to discern a certain weakness, a tremulousness of the hand, when the pen is held by a woman. There is grace and elegance, but, forsooth, a certain hesitation—a want [644] of vigour and certainty of touch. Nonsense. Take *Our Village*, by Miss Mitford, and the *Sketch-Book*, by Washington Irving: they are both of the graceful and elegant order of style; but the lady writes the English language with far more freedom, ease, and vigour, than the gentleman. The poetic element is mingled in her diction with far more taste and judgment. It glitters through her prose as the sunlight in the green tree—throwing its gold amongst the foliage, yet leaving it the same green, and simple, and refreshing object as before.

No—we will grant to woman no monopoly in the lighter elegancies, and presume nothing against her ability to excel in the graver qualities of authorship. We have said that Mrs Hemans was peculiarly the poetess of her countrywomen, but we do not mean to imply by this that her style is

peculiarly feminine—for we do not pretend to know what a feminine style is; we thus characterised her because the sentiments she habitually expresses are those which will almost universally find a response in the minds of her countrywomen.

It seems an ungracious thing to say, but we do wish that the biographical notice of Mrs Hemans, appended to the last edition of her works, had not been written by a sister. So near a relative may be presumed, indeed, to know more of the person whose life she undertakes to narrate than any one else; but she may not know what to tell us. Her very familiarity with the subject is against her: she cannot place it at a distance from her, and regard it with a freshness of view; she does not think of recording, she does not even remember, what to her has none of the interest of novelty. A sister who should give to any impartial biographer the materials he required of her, would be found to contribute far more to our knowledge of the person whose life was written, than by holding the pen herself. Besides, a sister can have none, and show none, but sisterly feelings; and though these are very proper and amiable, we want something more.

The two or three events which we learn from this biographical notice, and which bear upon the education of *the poetess*, are soon recorded, and they are the only class of events we feel particularly interested in. Felicia Dorothea Browne—such was the maiden name of Mrs Hemans—was born at Liverpool, 25th September 1793. She is described as distinguished "almost from her cradle by extreme beauty and precocious talents." When of the age of seven years, her father, who had been a merchant of considerable opulence, met with a reverse of fortune, and the family retired to Wales, "where for the next nine years they resided at Gwrych, near Abergele, in Denbighshire, a large old mansion, close to the sea, and shut in by a picturesque range of mountains,"—a change of residence which was, at all events, highly propitious for the development of the poetic character. "In the calm seclusion of this romantic region, with ample range through the treasures of an extensive library, the young poetess passed a happy childhood, to which she would often fondly revert amidst the vicissitudes of her after-life. Here she imbibed that intense love of nature which ever afterwards 'haunted her like a passion,' and that warm attachment for the 'green land of Wales'—its affectionate, true-hearted people; their traditions, their music, and all their interesting characteristics—which she cherished to the last hours of her existence." A pleasant picture this—the large old house near the sea, and amongst mountains, with Welsh harpers and Welsh traditions, and great store of books, and the little girl ranging at will through all. This, and the picture we have of the young student conning her Shakspeare, her choicest recreation, "in a secret haunt of her own—a seat amongst the branches of an old apple-tree—where she revelled in the treasures of the cherished volume"—are all we learn of her childhood, and all perhaps that remained to tell.

Our poetess was very soon in print. Few have commenced their life of authorship so early. In 1808 some friends, "perhaps more partial than judicious," published a collection of her poems, written at and before the age of fourteen, in a quarto volume. "Its appearance" our fair biographer tells us, "drew down the animadversions of some *self-constituted* arbiter of taste." We [645]
never heard of any critics being constituted by royal patent, or any mode of popular election—certainly not by a committee of authors. Self-constituted! why did not the lady call him a self-conceited knave, while she was about it? Just or unjust, there would have been some meaning in the phrase, at least. We suspect, for our part, that these friends, "more partial than judicious," who published the rhymes of a young girl of fourteen in a quarto volume, were themselves strangely constituted arbiters of taste.

Not long after this first publication of her poems, the next great event of her life took place—her introduction to Captain Hemans. "The young poetess was then only fifteen, in the full glow of that radiant beauty which was destined to fade so early. The mantling bloom of her cheeks was shaded by a profusion of natural ringlets, of a rich golden brown; and the ever-varying expression of her brilliant eyes gave a changeful play to her countenance, which would have made it impossible for any painter to do justice to it." No wonder that so fair a being should excite the admiration of a gallant captain. And the love on both sides was ardent and sincere: it supported the absence of three years; for Captain Hemans, soon after their introduction, was called upon to embark with his regiment for Spain. On his return, in 1812, they were married. Of their domestic happiness, or unhappiness, nothing is said; but six years after, in 1818, we are simply told that the Captain went to Rome—and never returned. The separated pair never met again.

"To dwell on this subject," says her biographer, "would be unnecessarily painful; yet it must be stated, that nothing like a permanent separation was contemplated at the time, nor did it ever amount to more than a tacit conventional arrangement, which offered no obstacle to the frequent interchange of correspondence, nor to a constant reference to their father in all things relating to the disposal of her boys. But years rolled on—seventeen years of absence, and consequently alienation; and from this time to the hour of her death, Mrs Hemans and her husband never met again."

We are not in general anxious to pry into the domestic afflictions of any pair whom wedlock has mismatched. If we feel a little curiosity to know more than the sister has told us, in this instance, it is merely from a wish to learn how far the poetic temperament of Mrs Hemans could be assigned as the real cause of her matrimonial unhappiness. Did the Captain grow weary of the society of one whose feelings were pitched in too high a key for him to sympathise with?—was there too much of poetry mingled with the daily food of life?

"Men, by St Thomas! cannot live like bees."

Did he yearn for something more homely, as she, on her side, yearned for something more

elevated? Had he been made to feel that he did not approach the ideal of her imagination, and that the admiration she once had given was withdrawn? Or should we say of her, in lines of her own:—

> There are hearts
> So perilously fashioned, that for them
> God's touch alone hath gentleness enough
> To waken, and not break, their thrilling strings.

Of this perhaps some future biographer may tell us. There are many passages in her poetry which show an intense longing for the sympathy of other minds; which show that, while her feelings were of a rare order for their refinement and elevation, she yet sought—what for such a one it was difficult to obtain—for the kindred sympathy of others. She could not worship her goddesses alone. This tendency of mind many of her verses indicate; and there is one sweet little poem where, if our fancy does not mislead us, she secretly reproves herself for having exacted too much in this respect from others: we do not say from any one in particular, for the verses bear reference to a brother, not a husband. Yet some personal reminiscence, or regret of this kind, might lead to the strain of thought so beautifully expressed in the following lines:—

KINDRED HEARTS. [646]

Oh! ask not, hope not thou too much
  Of sympathy below;
Few are the hearts whence one same touch
  Bids the sweet fountains flow:
Few—and by still conflicting powers,
  Forbidden here to meet;
Such ties would make this life of ours
  Too fair for aught so fleet.

It may be that thy brother's eye
  Sees not as thine, which turns
In such deep reverence to the sky
  Where the rich sunset burns:
It may be that the breath of spring,
  Born amidst violets lone,
A rapture o'er thy soul can bring—
  A dream, to his unknown.

The tune that speaks of other times—
  A sorrowful delight!
The melody of distant chimes,
  The sound of waves by night;
The wind that, with so many a tone,
  Some chord within can thrill—
These may have language all thine own,
  To *him* a mystery still.

Yet scorn thou not, for this, the true
  And steadfast love of years;
The kindly, that from childhood grew,
  The faithful to thy tears!
If there be one that o'er the dead
  Hath in thy grief borne part,
And watched through sickness by thy bed—
  Call *his* a kindred heart!

But for those bonds all perfect made,
  Wherein bright spirits blend;
Like sister-flowers of one sweet shade,
  With the same breeze that bend;
For that full bliss of thought allied,
  Never to mortals given—
Oh! lay thy lonely dreams aside,
  Or lift them unto heaven.

We follow no further the events of her biography. We have here all that reflects a light upon the poems themselves. That Welsh life among the mountains—the little girl with her Shakspeare in the apple-tree—that beauty of fifteen, full of poetry and enthusiasm and love—marriage—disappointment—and the living afterwards, with her children round her, in a condition worse than widowhood;—here is all the comment that her biography affords on her sweet and melancholy verse.

And how vividly the verse reflects the life! How redolent of nature is her poetry! how true her pictures of mountain, and forest, and river, and sky! It requires that the reader should have been himself a long and accurate observer of rural scenes, to follow her imagination, and feel the truth of her rapid and unpretending descriptions. It is singular how, without the least apparent effort,

all the persons she brings before us are immediately localised on the green earth—trees wave around them, flowers spring at their feet, as if this were quite natural and unavoidable. How sweet a part does the quiet charm of nature take in the piece called

THE VOICE OF HOME TO THE PRODIGAL.

Oh! when wilt thou return
  To thy spirit's early loves?
To the freshness of the morn,
  To the stillness of the groves?

The summer birds are calling
  The household porch around,
And the merry waters falling
  With sweet laughter in their sound.

And a thousand bright-veined flowers,
  From their banks of moss and fern,
Breathe of the sunny hours—
  But when wilt thou return?

Oh! thou hast wandered long
  From thy home without a guide;
And thy native woodland song
  In thine altered heart hath died.

Thou hast flung the wealth away,
  And the glory of thy spring;
And to thee the leaves' light play
  Is a long-forgotten thing.

There is something very touching in the simplicity of these pleasures, contrasted with what imagination immediately suggests of the career and the tastes of the prodigal.

One great spectacle in nature alone, seems strangely to have lost its fascination upon our poetess—she never kindled to the sea. She seemed to view it as the image only of desolation and of ruin; to have associated it only with tempests and wreck, and have seen in it only the harmless waste of troubled waters. More than once she adopts a scriptural phrase—"And there shall be no more sea," as an expression of singular joy and congratulation. We question whether a single reader of her poems has ever felt the force of the expression as she did. The sea, next to the sky, is the grandest and most beautiful thing given to the eyes of man. But, by some perverse association, she never saw it in its natural beauty and sublimity, but looked at it always as the emblem of ruthless and destroying power. In *The Last Song of Sappho*, it is singular how much more the dread sea, into which Sappho is about to fling herself, possesses her imagination than the moral [647] tempest within of that hapless poetess:—

Sound on, thou dark unslumbering sea!
Sound in thy scorn and pride!
I ask not, *alien world*, from thee
  What my own kindred earth has still denied.
  . . . . .

Yet glory's light hath touched my name,
  The laurel-wreath is mine—
With a lone heart, a weary frame,
  O restless deep! I come to make them thine!

Give to that crown, that burning crown,
  Place in thy darkest hold!
Bury my anguish, my renown,
  With hidden wrecks, lost gems, and wasted gold.

And with what an indignant voice, and with what a series of harshest epithets, does she call upon the sea to deliver up its human prey, in the fine spirited poem, called—

THE TREASURES OF THE DEEP.

What hidest thou in thy treasure-caves and cells,
Thou hollow-sounding and mysterious main?
Pale glistening pearls and rainbow-coloured shells,
Bright things which gleam unrecked of and in vain!
Keep, keep thy riches, melancholy sea!
  We ask not such from thee.

Yet more, the depths have more!—what wealth untold,
Far down, and shining through their stillness, lies!
Thou hast the starry gems, the burning gold,
Torn from ten thousand royal Argosies!

Sweep o'er thy spoils, thou wild and wrathful main!
Earth claims not *these* again.

Yet more, the depths have more!—thy waves have rolled
Above the cities of a world gone by!
Sand hath filled up the palaces of old,
Sea-weed o'ergrown the halls of revelry—
Dash o'er them, ocean! in thy scornful play!
Man yields them to decay.

Yet more! the billows and the depths have more!
High hearts and brave are gathered to thy breast!
They hear not now the booming waters roar,
The battle-thunders will not break their rest.
Keep thy red gold and gems, thou stormy grave!
Give back the true and brave.

Give back the lost and, lovely!—those for whom
The place was kept at board and hearth so long!
The prayer went up through midnight's breathless gloom,
And the vain yearning woke midst festal song.
Hold fast thy buried isles, thy towers o'er-thrown,
But all is not thine own.

To thee the love of woman hath gone down;
Dark flow thy tides o'er manhood's noble head—
O'er youth's bright locks, and beauty's flowery crown;
Yet must thou hear a voice—Restore the dead!
Earth shall reclaim her precious things from thee!
Restore the dead, thou sea!

But if she loved in nature, pre-eminently, the beautiful and the serene—or what she could represent as such to her imagination—it was otherwise with human life. Here the stream of thought ran always in the shade, reflecting in a thousand shapes the sadness which had overshadowed her own existence. Yet her sadness was without bitterness or impatience—it was a resigned and Christian melancholy; and if the spirit of man is represented as tossed from disappointment to disappointment, there is always a brighter and serener world behind, to receive the wanderer at last. She writes *Songs for Summer Hours*, and the first is devoted to Death! and a beautiful chant it is. Death is also in Arcadia; and the first thing we meet with in the land of summer is the marble tomb with the "Et in Arcadia Ego." One might be excused for applying to herself her own charming song,—

A WANDERING FEMALE SINGER.

Thou hast loved and thou hast suffered!
Unto feeling deep and strong,
Thou hast trembled like a harp's frail string—
I know it by thy song!

Thou hast loved—it may be vainly—
But well—oh! but too well—
Thou hast suffered all that woman's heart
May bear—but must not tell.

Thou hast wept and thou hast parted,
Thou hast been forsaken long;
Thou hast watch'd for steps that came not back—
I know it by thy song!

By its fond and plaintive lingering
On each word of grief so long,
Oh! thou hast loved and suffered much—
I know it by thy song!

But with this mournful spirit we have no quarrel. It is, as we have said, without a grain of [648]
bitterness; it loves to associate itself with all things beautiful in nature; it makes the rose its emblem. It does so in the following lines to

THE SHADOW OF A FLOWER.

'Twas a dream of olden days,
That Art, by some strange power,
The visionary form could raise
From the ashes of a flower:

That a shadow of the rose,
By its own meek beauty bowed,

Might slowly, leaf by leaf, unclose,
  Like pictures in a cloud.
    . . . . .

  A fair, yet mournful thing!

For the glory of the bloom
  That a flush around it shed,
And the soul within, the rich perfume,
  Where were *they*?—fled, all fled!

Naught but the dim, faint line
  To speak of vanished hours—
Memory! what are joys of thine?
  Shadows of buried flowers!

We should be disposed to dwell entirely on the shorter pieces of Mrs Hemans, but this would hardly be just. There is one of her more ambitious efforts which, at all events, seems to demand a word from us. *The Vespers of Palermo* is not perhaps the most popular, even of her longer productions—it is certainly written in what is just now the most unpopular form—yet it appears to us one of the most vigorous efforts of her genius. It has this advantage too—it can be happily alluded to without the necessity of detailing the plot—always a wearisome thing, to both the critic, and the reader: every body knows the real tragedy of the Sicilian Vespers. The drama is unpopular as a form of composition, because the written play is still considered as a production, the chief object of which is missed if it is not acted; and the acting of plays is going into desuetude. When the acting of tragedies shall be entirely laid aside, (as it bids fair to be,)—that is, as an ordinary amusement of the more refined and cultivated classes of society—and the drama shall become merely a class of literature, like all others, for private perusal—then its popularity, as a form of composition, will probably revive. For there is one order of poetry—and that the more severe and manly—which seems almost to require this form. When an author, careless of description, or not called to it by his genius, is exclusively bent on portraying character and passion, and those deeper opinions and reflections which passion stirs from the recesses of the human mind, the drama seems the only form natural for him to employ.

The opinion we have ventured to express on the inevitable decease of the acting drama—of tragic representations—as a general amusement of an age increasing in refinement, will probably subject us, in certain quarters, to an indignant reproof. Shakspeare, and the legitimate drama! seems, with some, to have all the sacredness of a national cause. Shakspeare, by all means—Shakspeare for ever! eternally!—only we would rather read him—if we could creep up there—with little Felicia Browne, in the apple-tree. Shakspeare supports the stage—so far as it remains supported—not the stage Shakspeare. And can he support it long? Consider what sort of amusement it is which tragic representation affords—for of comedy we say nothing—consider that it must either thrill us with emotions of a most violent order, (which the civilised man in general avoids), or it becomes one of the saddest platitudes in the world. Your savage can support prolonged ennui, and delights in excitement approaching to madness; your civilised man can tolerate neither one nor the other. Now your tragedy deals largely in both. It knows no medium. Every body has felt that, whether owing to the actor or the poet, the moment the interest of the piece is no longer at its height, it becomes intolerable. You are to be either moved beyond all self-control, which is not very desirable, or you are to sit in lamentable sufferance. In short, you are to be driven out of your senses, one way or the other. Depend upon it, it is a species of amusement which, however associated with great names—though Garrick acted, and Dr Johnson looked on—is destined, like the bull-fights of Spain, or the gladiatorial combats of old Rome, to fall before the advancing spirit of civilisation.

But to Mrs Hemans' *Vespers of Palermo*. It was not the natural bent of genius which led her to [649]
the selection of the dramatic form; and when we become thoroughly acquainted with her temperament, and the feelings she loved to indulge, we are rather surprised that she performed the task she undertook with so much spirit, and so large a measure of success, than that she falls short in some parts of her performance. Nothing can be better conceived, or more admirably sustained, than the character of Raimond de Procida. The elder Procida, and the dark revengeful Montalba, are not so successfully treated. We feel that she has designed these figures with sufficient propriety, but she has not animated them; she could not draw from within those fierce emotions which were to infuse life into them. The effort to sympathise, even in imagination, with such characters, was a violence to her nature. The noble and virtuous heroism of the younger Procida was, on the contrary, no other than the overflow of her own genuine feeling. Few modern dramas present more spirit-stirring scenes, than those in which Raimond takes the leading part. Two of those we would particularly mention—one when, on joining the patriot-conspirators, and learning the mode in which they intended to free their country, he refuses, even for so great an object, to stain his soul with assassination and murder; and the other, where, towards the close of the piece, he is imprisoned by the more successful conspirators—is condemned to die for imputed treachery to their cause, and hears that the *battle* for his country, for which his spirit had so longed, is going forward. We cannot refrain from making a quotation from both these parts of the drama. We shall take the liberty of omitting some lines, in order to compress our extracts.

The conspirators have met, and proclaimed their intended scheme—

Sicilians. Be it so!
If one amongst us stay the avenging steel
For love or pity, be his doom as theirs!
Pledge we our faith to this.

Raim. (*rushing forward indignantly.*) Our faith to *this!*
No! I but *dreamt* I heard it: Can it be?
My countrymen, my father!—Is it thus
That freedom should be won?—Awake!—awake
To loftier thoughts!—Lift up, exultingly,
On the crowned heights, and to the sweeping winds,
Your glorious banner!—Let your trumpet's blast
Make the tombs thrill with echoes! Call aloud,
Proclaim from all your hills, the land shall bear
The stranger's yoke no longer!—What is he
Who carries on his practised lip a smile,
Beneath his vest a dagger, which but waits
Till the heart bounds with joy, to still its beatings?
That which our nature's instinct doth recoil from,
And our blood curdle at—ay, yours and mine—
A murderer! Heard ye?—Shall that name with ours
Go down to after days?

Mont. I tell thee, youth,
Our souls are parched with agonising thirst,
Which must be quenched though death were in the draught:
We must have vengeance, for our foes have left
No other joy unblighted.

Pro. O, my son!
The time has passed for such high dreams as thine:
Thou knowest not whom we deal with. We must meet
Falsehood with wiles, and insult with revenge.
And, for our names—whate'er the deeds by which
We burst our bondage—is it not enough
That, in the chronicle of days to come,
We, through a bright "For ever," shall be called
The men who saved their country.

Raim. Many a land
Hath bowed beneath the yoke, and then arisen,
As a strong lion rending silken bonds,
And on the open field, before high heaven,
Won such majestic vengeance as hath made
Its name a power on earth.

Mon. Away! when thou dost stand
On this fair earth as doth a blasted tree,
Which the warm sun revives not, *then* return
Strong in thy desolation; but till then,
Thou art not for our purpose;—we have need
Of more unshrinking hearts.

Raim. Montalba! know,
I shrink from crime alone. Oh! if my voice
Might yet have power among you, I would say,
Associates, leaders, *be* avenged! but yet
As knights, as warriors!
Mon. Peace! Have we not borne
Th'indelible taint of contumely and chains?
We are *not* knights and warriors: Our bright crests
Have been defiled and trampled to the earth.
Boy! we are slaves—and our revenge shall be
Deep as a slave's disgrace.

Raim. Why, then, farewell:
I leave you to your counsels. What proud hopes [650]
This hour hath blighted!—yet, whate'er betide,
It is a noble privilege to look up
Fearless in heaven's bright face—and this is mine,
And shall be still. [Exit.

Our other extract is from a later scene in the drama, which we think very happily conceived. Raimond, accused of treachery, and condemned to die by his own father, is in chains and in prison. The day of his execution has arrived, but the Sicilians are called on to give battle before their gates; he is left alone, respited, or rather forgotten, for the present. His alternation of

feeling, as he at first attempts to respond to the consolations of the priest Anselmo, and then, on hearing of the battle that is being fought for his country, breaks out into all that ardent love of glory, which was the main passion of his soul, is very admirably expressed.

Ans. But thou, my son!
Is thy young spirit mastered, and prepared
For nature's fearful and mysterious change?

Raim. Ay, father! of my brief remaining task
The least part is to die! And yet the cup
Of life still mantled brightly to my lips,
Crowned with that sparkling bubble, whose proud name
Is—glory! Oh! my soul from boyhood's morn
Hath nursed such mighty dreams! It was my hope
To leave a name, whose echo from the abyss
Of time should rise, and float upon the winds
Into the far hereafter; there to be
A trumpet-sound, a voice from the deep tomb,
Murmuring—Awake, Arise! But this is past!
Erewhile, and it had seemed enough of shame
To sleep *forgotten* in the dust; but now,
Oh God! the undying record of my grave
Will be—Here sleeps a traitor! One whose crime
Was—to deem brave men might find nobler weapons
Than the cold murderer's dagger!

Ans. O my son!
Subdue these troubled thoughts! Thou wouldst not change
Thy lot for theirs, o'er whose dark dreams will hang
The avenging shadows, which the blood-stained soul
Doth conjure from the dead!

Raim. Thou'rt right. I would not.
Yet 'tis a weary task to school the heart,
Ere years or griefs have tamed its fiery spirit
Into that still and passive fortitude
Which is but learned from suffering. Would the hour
To hush these passionate throbbings were at hand!

Ans. It will not be to-day. The foe hath reached
Our gates, and all Palermo's youth, and all
Her warrior men, are marshalled and gone forth.
Thy father leads them on.

Raim. (*starting up.*) They are gone forth!
my father leads them on!
All—all Palermo's youth! No! *one* is left,
Shut out from glory's race! They are gone forth!
Ay, now the soul of battle is abroad—
It burns upon the air! The joyous winds
Are tossing warrior-plumes, the proud white foam
Of battle's roaring billows! On my sight
The vision bursts—it maddens! 'tis the flash,
The lightning-shock of lances, and the cloud
Of rushing arrows, and the broad full blaze
Of helmets in the sun! Such things are
Even now—and I am here!

Ans. Alas, be calm!
To the same grave ye press—thou that dost pine
Beneath a weight of chains, and they that rule
The fortunes of the fight.

Raim. Ay, *thou* canst feel
The calm thou wouldst impart, for unto thee
All men alike, the warrior and the slave,
Seem, as thou say'st, but pilgrims, pressing on
To the same bourne.

Vittoria, who had taken a leading part in the conspiracy, now rushes in, bringing the intelligence that the Sicilians are worsted—are in flight. Procida still strives—

But all in vain! The few that breast the storm,
With Guido and Montalba, by his side,
Fight but for graves upon the battle-field.

Raim. And I am *here*! Shall there be power, O God!
In the roused energies of fierce despair.
To burst my heart—and not to rend my chains?

Vittoria, however, gives orders for his release, and he rushes forth to the field, where he turns the tide of battle, and earns that glorious death he sighed for.

The failure of the play at Covent Garden theatre was attributed, amongst the friends of the authoress, to the indifferent acting of the lady who performed the part of Constance. In justice to the actress, we must confess she had a most difficult part to deal with. There is not a single speech set down for Constance, which, we think, the most skilful recitation could make effective. The failure of Mrs Hemans, in this part of the drama, is not very easily accounted for. Constance is a gentle, affectionate spirit, in love with the younger Procida, and the unfortunate cause of the [651] suspicion that falls upon him of being a traitor. It is a character which, in her lyrical effusions, she would have beautifully portrayed. But we suppose that the exclusion from her favourite haunts of nature—the inability of investing the grief of her heroine in her accustomed associations of woods, and fields, and flowers—the confinement of her imagination to what would be suitable to the *boards* of a theatre—embarrassed and cramped her powers. Certain it is, she seems quite at a loss here to express a strain of feeling which, on other occasions, she has poured out with singular fluency and force. Constance has no other manner of exhibiting her distress but swooning or dreaming, or thinking she must have been dreaming, and recovering herself to the remembrance of what no mortal so situated could ever have forgotten—the most common, and, to our taste, one of the most unfortunate expedients that dramatists and novelists have recourse to. We are loath to quote any thing half so uninteresting as instances of this practice; we shall content ourselves with giving, in a note below, two brief passages to exemplify what we mean.[1]

It ought to be borne in remembrance, however, that the *Vespers of Palermo*, although not the "first" with respect to publication, was the first written of Mrs Hemans' dramatic works. It was produced in solitude, and away from the bustle of theatres, and, be it also confessed, probably with a very scanty knowledge of what stage-representation required. Indeed, the result proved this to be the case. The *Siege of Valencia*, written on a different principle, although probably even less adapted for stage representation, possesses loftier claims as a composition, and, as a poem, is decidedly superior. Its pervading fault consists in its being pitched on too high a key. All the characters talk in heroics—every sentiment is strained to the utmost; and the prevailing tone of the author's mind characterises the whole. We do not say that it is deficient in nature—it overflows alike with power and tenderness; but its nature is too high for the common purposes of humanity. The wild, stern enthusiasm of the priest—the inflexibility of the father—the wavering of the mother between duty and affection—the heroic devotion of the gentle Ximena, are all well brought out; but there is a want of individuality—the want of that, without which elaboration for [652] the theatre is vain, and with which, compositions of very inferior merit often attract attention, and secure it.

Passing over *Sebastian of Portugal*, and the two or three sketches in the *Scenes and Hymns of Life*, as of minor importance, *De Chatillon* is the only other regular drama that Mrs Hemans subsequently attempted. Unfortunately for her, the *Vespers*, although long prior in point of composition, had not been brought out when the *Siege of Valencia* was written; and, consequently, she could not benefit by the fate and failure which was destined for that drama. This is much to be lamented, for *De Chatillon*, as a play, far exceeds either in power and interest. The redundancies in imagery and description, the painting instead of acting, which were the weaker side of its precursors, were here corrected. It is unfortunate that it wanted the benefit of her last corrections, as it was not published till some years after her death, and from the first rough draft—the amended one, which had been made from it, having been unfortunately lost. But, imperfect in many respects as it may be found to be, it is beyond compare the best and most successful composition of the author in this department. Without stripping her language of that richness and poetic grace which characterises her genius, or condescending to a single passage of mean baldness, so commonly mistaken by many modern dramatists as essentially necessary to the truth of dialogue, she has in this attempt preserved adherence to reality, amid scenes allied to romance; brevity and effect, in situations strongly alluring to amplification; and, in her delineation of some of the strongest as well as the finest emotions of the heart, she has exhibited a knowledge of nature's workings, remarkable alike for minuteness and truth.

When we consider the doubtful success which attended the only drama of Mrs Hemans which was brought out, we cannot wonder that she latterly abandoned this species of writing, and confined herself to what she must have felt as much more accordant with her own impulses. The most laboured of all her writings was *The Forest Sanctuary*, and it would appear that, in her own estimation, it was considered her best. Not so we. It has many passages of exquisite description, and it breathes throughout an exalted spirit; but withal it is monotonous in sentiment, and possesses not the human interest which ought to have attached to it, as a tale of suffering. To us *The Last Constantine*, which appears to have attracted much less attention, is in many respects a finer and better poem. Few things, indeed, in our literature, can be quoted as more perfect than the picture of heroic and Christian courage, which, amid the ruins of his empire, sustained the last of the Cæsars. The weight of the argument is sustained throughout. The reader feels as if breathing a finer and purer atmosphere, above the low mists and vapours of common humanity; and he rises from the perusal of the poem alike with an admiration of its hero and its author.

The Last Constantine may be considered as the concluding great effort of Mrs Hemans, in what

of her writings may be said to belong to the classical school. She seems here first to have felt her own power, and, leaving precept and example, and the leading-strings of her predecessors, to have allowed her muse to soar adventurously forth. The *Tales and Historic Scenes*, the *Sceptic*, *Dartmoor*, and *Modern Greece*, are all shaped according to the same model—the classical. The study of modern German poetry, and of Wordsworth, changed, while it expanded, her views; and the *Forest Sanctuary* seems to have been composed with great elaboration, doubtless, while in this transition state. In matter it is too flimsy and etherial for a tale of life; it has too much sentiment and too little action. But some things in it it would be difficult to rival. The scenery of Southern America is painted with a gorgeousness which reminds us of the Isle of Palms and its fairy bowers; and the death and burial at sea is imbued with a serene and soul-subduing beauty.

Diminishing space warns us to betake ourselves again to the lyrics and shorter pieces, where so much poetry "of purest ray serene" lies scattered. Of these we prefer such as are apparently the expressions of spontaneous feelings of her own to those which are built upon some tale or [653] legend. It happens too, unfortunately, that in the latter case we have first to read the legend or fable in prose, and then to read it again in verse. This gives something of weariness to the *Lays of Many Lands*. Still less fortunate, we think, is the practice Mrs Hemans indulges in of ushering in a poem of her own by a long quotation—a favourite stanza, perhaps—of some celebrated poet. We may possibly read the favourite stanza twice, and feel reluctant to proceed further. For instance, she quotes the beautiful and well-known passage from Childe Harold upon the spring, ending with—

I turned from all she brought to all she could not bring;

and on another occasion, that general favourite, beginning—

And slight, withal, may be the things which bring;

and then proceeds to enlarge upon the same sentiments. Her own strain that follows is good—but not *so* good. Is it wise to provoke the comparison?—and does it not give a certain frivolity, and the air of a mere exercise, to the verse which only repeats, and modifies, and *varies*, so to speak, the melody that has been already given? Or if the quotation set out with is looked on as a mere prelude, is it good policy to run the risk of the prelude being more interesting than the strain itself? The beautiful passage from Southey—

They sin who tell us love can die, &c.,

is too long to be quoted as merely a key-note to what is to follow, and is too good to be easily surpassed.

But this is a trifling remark, and hardly deserving of even the little space we have given to it. It is more worthy of observation, that Mrs Hemans, a reader and admirer of German poetry, contrived to draw a deep inspiration from this noble literature, without any disturbance to her principles of taste. A careful perusal of her works, by one acquainted with the lyrical poetry of Germany, will prove how well and how wisely she had studied that poetry—drawing from it just that deeper spirit of reflection which would harmonise with her own mind, without being tempted to imitate what, either in thought or in manner, would have been foreign to her nature.

We fancy we trace something of this Teutonic inspiration in the poem, amongst others, that follows:—

THE SILENT MULTITUDE.

A mighty and a mingled throng
  Were gathered in one spot;
The dweller, of a thousand homes—
  Yet midst them voice was not.

The soldier and his chief were there—
  The mother and her child:
The friends, the sisters of one hearth—
  None spoke—none moved—none smiled.

There lovers met, between whose lives
  Years had swept darkly by;
After that heart-sick hope deferred,
  They met—but silently.

You might have heard the rustling leaf,
  The breeze's faintest sound,
The shiver of an insect's wing,
  On that thick-peopled ground.

Your voice to whispers would have died
  For the deep quiet's sake;
Your tread the softest moss have sought,
  Such stillness not to break.

What held the countless multitude

Bound in that spell of peace?
How could the ever-sounding life
Amid so many cease?

Was it some pageant of the air,
Some glory high above,
That linked and hushed those human souls
In reverential love?

Or did some burdening passion's weight
Hang on their indrawn breath?
Awe—the pale awe that freezes words?
Fear—the strong fear of death?

A mightier thing—Death, Death himself,
Lay on each lonely heart!
Kindred were there—yet hermits all,
Thousands—but each apart.

In any notice of Mrs Hemans' works, not to mention *The Records of Woman* would seem an unaccountable omission. Both the subject, and the manner in which it is treated especially characterise our poetess. Of all these *Records* there is not one where the picture is not more or less pleasing, or drawn with more or less power and fidelity. Estimated according to sheer literary merit, it would perhaps be impossible to give the preference to any one of them. Judging by the peculiar pleasure which its perusal gave us, we should select, for our favourite, *The Switzer's Wife*. Werner Stauffacher was one of the three confederates of the field of Grutli. He had been marked out by the Austrian bailiff as a fit subject for pillage; but it was to the noble [654] spirit of his wife that he owed the final resolution he took to resist the oppressor of his country. The whole scene is brought before us with singular distinctness. It is a beautiful evening in the Alpine valley,—

For Werner sat beneath the linden tree,
That sent its lulling whispers through his door,
Even as man sits, whose heart alone would be
With some deep care, and thus can find no more
Th' accustomed joy in all which evening brings
Gathering a household with her quiet wings.

His wife stood hushed before him, sad, yet mild
In her beseeching mien,—he marked it not.
The silvery laughter of his bright-haired child
Rang from the greensward round the sheltered spot,
But seemed unheard; until at last the boy
Raised from his heaped up flowers a glance of joy,

And met his father's face; but then a change
Passed swiftly o'er the brow of infant glee,
And a quiet sense of something dimly strange
Brought him from play to stand beside the knee
So often climbed, and lift his loving eyes,
That shone through clouds of sorrowful surprise.

Then the proud bosom of the strong man shook;
But tenderly his babe's fair mother laid
Her hand on his, and with a pleading look
Through tears half-quivering, o'er him bent and said,
"What grief, dear friend, hath made thy heart its prey,
That thou shouldst turn thee from our love away?

"It is too sad to see thee thus, my friend!
Mark'st thou the wonder on thy boy's fair brow,
Missing the smile from thine? Oh, cheer thee! bend
To his soft arms, unseal thy thoughts e'en now!
Thou dost not kindly to withhold the share
Of tried affection in thy secret care."

He looked up into that sweet earnest face,
But sternly, mournfully: not yet the band
Was loosened from his soul.

He then tells how the oppressor's envious eye "had been upon his heritage," and to-morrow eve might find him in chains. The blood leaves her cheek, and she leans back on the linden stem, but only for a moment; the free Alpine spirit wakes within her—

And she that ever through her home had moved
With the meek thoughtfulness and quiet smile

Of woman, calmly loving and beloved
  And timid in her happiness the while,
Stood brightly forth, and steadfastly, that hour—
Her clear glance kindling into sudden power.

Ay, pale she stood, but with an eye of light,
  And took her fair child to her holy breast,
And lifted her soft voice, that gathered might
  As it found language:—"Are we thus oppressed?
Then must we rise upon our mountain-sod,
And man must arm, and woman call on God!

"I know what thou wouldst do;—and be it done!
  Thy soul is darkened with its fears for me.
Trust me to heaven, my husband; this, thy son,
  The babe whom I have borne thee, must be free!
And the sweet memory of our pleasant hearth
May well give strength—if aught be strong on earth.

"Thou hast been brooding o'er the silent dread
  Of my desponding tears; now lift once more,
My hunter of the hills, thy stately head,
  And let thine eagle glance my joy restore!
I can bear all but seeing *thee* subdued—
Take to thee back thine own undaunted mood.

"Go forth beside the waters, and along
  The chamois' paths, and through the forests go;
And tell in burning words thy tale of wrong
  To the brave hearts that midst the hamlets glow,
God shall be with thee, my beloved!—away!
Bless but thy child and leave me—I can pray!"

It is ever thus with all her women,—gentle, courageous, full of self-devotion, and, alas! of sorrow and suffering. This is her ideal of woman, from which she rarely departs—a heart, overflowing with tenderest affection—ill-requited—yet refusing to receive any earthly boon as a substitute for the returned affection it seeks. Fame is no compensation—

Away! to me, a woman, bring
Sweet waters from affection's spring.

Genius when she sings to Love is made to say—

They crown me with the glistening crown,
  Borne from a deathless tree;
I hear the pealing music of renown—
  O Love, forsake me not!
  Mine were a lone dark lot,
    Bereft of thee!
They tell me that my soul can throw
  A glory o'er the earth;
From thee, from *thee*, is caught that golden glow!
  Shed by thy gentle eyes,
  It gives to flower and skies
    A bright new birth!
Genius singing to Love.

It is not often we find the superstitions of dark and ignorant ages dealt with in so gentle and [655]
agreeable a manner as by Mrs Hemans. She seizes, in common with others, the poetic aspect these present, but diffuses over them, at the same time, a refinement of sentiment gathered entirely from her own feelings. A subject which from another pencil would have been disagreeable and offensive to us, is made by her graceful touches to win upon our imagination. Witness the poem called *The Wood Walk and Hymn*; we will quote the commencement of it.

WOOD WALK AND HYMN.

"Move along these shades
In gentleness of heart—with gentle hand
Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods."
WORDSWORTH

FATHER—CHILD.

Child.—There are the aspens with their silvery leaves
Trembling, for ever trembling; though the lime
And chestnut boughs, and these long arching sprays
Of eglantine, hang still, as if the wood
Were all one picture!

Father.—Hast thou heard, my boy,
The peasant's legend of that quivering tree?

Child.—No, father; doth he say the fairies dance
Amidst the branches?

Father.—Oh! a cause more deep,
More solemn far, the rustic doth assign
To the strange restlessness of those wan leaves!
The cross, he deems, the blessed cross, whereon
The meek Redeemer bow'd his head to death,
Was framed of aspen wood; and since that hour,
Through all its race the pale tree hath sent down
A thrilling consciousness, a secret awe,
Making them tremulous, when not a breeze
Disturbs the airy thistle down, or shakes
The light lines of the shining gossamer.

An eminent critic in the *Edinburgh Review* has spoken of the neatness and perfect finish which characterise female writers in general, and Mrs Hemans in particular. Now, these qualities imply a certain terseness and concentration of style, which is no more a peculiarity of all authoresses than of all authors, and which we should not pronounce to be peculiarly characteristic of Mrs Hemans' poetry. To us it often appears wanting in this very conciseness; we occasionally wish that some lines and verses were excluded—not because they are faulty in themselves, but because they weaken the effect, and detract from the vigour of the whole: we wish the verses, in short, were more closely packed together, so that the commencement and the close, which are generally both good, could be brought a little nearer to each other. It is not so much a redundancy of expression, as of images and illustrations, that we have sometimes to complain of in Mrs Hemans. She uses two of these where one would not only suffice, but do the work much better. There is a very pleasing little poem, called *The Wandering Wind*: we will quote—first, because it is thus pleasing; and, secondly, because we think it would have been rendered still more so had there been somewhat more of concentration and terseness in the style. The lines which we have printed in italics, and which contain the pith and marrow of the whole, would then have struck upon the ear with more distinctness and prominence.

THE WANDERING WIND.

The wind, the wandering wind
  Of the golden summer eves—
Whence is the thrilling magic
  Of its tones amongst the leaves?
Oh! is it from the waters,
  Or from the long tall grass?
Or is it from the hollow rocks
  Through which its breathings pass?

Or is it from the voices
  Of all in one combined,
That it wins the tone of mastery?
  The wind, the wandering wind!
No, no! the strange, sweet accents
  That with it come and go,
They are not from the osiers,
  Nor the fir trees whispering low.

They are not of the waters,
  Nor of the cavern'd hill,
'Tis the human love within us
  that gives the power to thrill.
They touch the links of memory
  Around our spirits twined,
And we start, and weep, and tremble,
  To the wind, the wandering wind!

The verses beginning "I dream of all things free" might also be cited as an instance of this tendency to over-amplify—a tendency which seems the result of a great affluence of poetical imagery. This would be a more powerful poem merely by being made shorter. We wait too long, and the imagination roves too far, before we arrive at the concluding lines, which contain all the point and significance of the piece:— [656]

"My heart *in chains* is bleeding,
And I dream of all things free."

Of the measures and the melody of a lyrical poet something is expected to be said. But what we feel we have chiefly to thank Mrs Hemans for here is, that, in the search after novelty and variety of metre, she has made so few experiments upon our ear, and that she has not disdained to write with correctness and regularity. She has not apparently laboured after novelties of this kind, but

has adopted that verse into which her thoughts spontaneously ran. An author who does this is not very likely to select a rhythm, or measure, which is incongruous with the subject-matter of his poem; nor, do we think, could many instances of such a fault be detected in Mrs Hemans.

We will close our extracts with a strain that fairly exemplifies the serene and lucid current of sentiment, and the genuine natural pathos, of our poetess. It is thus she makes the Hebrew mother sing to her first-born, whom she has devoted to the Lord.

Alas! my boy, thy gentle grasp is on me;
The bright tears quiver in thy pleading eyes;
And now fond thoughts arise,
And silver cords again to earth have won me,
And like a vine thou claspest my full heart—
How shall I hence depart?

How the lone paths retrace where thou wert playing
So late along the mountains at my side?
And I, in joyous pride,
By every place of flowers my course delaying,
Wove, e'en as pearls, the lilies round thy hair
Beholding thee so fair!

And oh! the home whence thy bright smile hath parted,
Will it not seem as if the sunny day
Turn'd from its door away!
While through its chambers wandering, weary-hearted,
I languish for thy voice, which past me still
Went like a singing rill?

Under the palm-tree thou no more shalt meet me,
When from the fount at evening I return,
With the full water urn;
Nor will thy sleep's low dove-like breathings greet me,
As midst the silence of the stars I wake,
And watch for thy dear sake.

And thou, will slumber's dewy cloud fall round thee,
Without thy mother's hand to smooth thy bed?
Wilt thou not vainly spread
Thine arms when darkness as a veil hath wound thee,
To fold my neck, and lift up, in thy fear,
A cry which none shall hear?

What have I said, my child? Will *He* not hear thee,
Who the young ravens heareth from their nest?
Shall He not guard thy rest,
And in the hush of holy midnight near thee,
Breathe o'er thy soul, and fill its dreams with joy?
Thou shalt sleep soft, my boy.

I give thee to thy God—the God that gave thee
A well-spring of deep gladness to my heart!
And, precious as thou art,
And pure as dew of Hermon, He shall have thee,
My own, my beautiful, my undefiled!
And thou shalt be His child.

"Therefore farewell! I go—my soul may fail me,
As the hart panteth for the water brooks,
Yearning for thy sweet looks.
But thou, my first-born, droop not, nor bewail me,
Thou in the Shadow of the Rock shalt dwell,
The Rock of Strength—Farewell!"

We must now draw to a conclusion. One great and pervading excellence of Mrs Hemans, as a writer, is her entire dedication of her genius and talents to the cause of healthy morality and sound religion. The sentiment may be, on occasion, somewhat refined; it may be too delicate, in some instances, for the common taste, but never is it mawkish or morbid. Never can it be construed into a palliative of vice—never, when followed out to its limits, will it be found to have led from the paths of virtue. For practical purposes, we admit that her exemplars are not seldom too ideal and picturesque. The general fault of her poetry consists in its being rather, if we may use the term, too *romantical*. We have a little too much of banners in churches, and flowers on graves,—of self-immolated youths, and broken-hearted damsels;—too frequent a reference to the Syrian plains, and knights in panoply, and vigils of arms, as mere illustrations of the noble in character, or the heroic in devotion. Situations are adduced as applicable to general conduct, which have only occurred, or could only have occurred, in particular states of society, and are

never likely, from existing circumstances, to occur again. Far better this, however, than a [657]
contrary fault; for it is the purpose of poetry to elevate, and not to repress. Admitting that the effervescence is adventitious, still it is of virtuous growth, and proceeds from no distortion of principle. If not the reflection of human nature as it actually is, it is the delineation of the *fata morgana* of a noble mind—of something that occurs to us "in musings high," and which we sigh to think of as of something loftier and better, to which that nature would willingly aspire. We can readily conceive, that to a woman of the exquisite taste possessed by Mrs Hemans, any attempt at the startling or *bizarre*, either in conception or subject, was a thing especially to be avoided. We do not mean to imply by this, that, as every true poet must have, she had not a manner of her own. To this honour, no author of our day has higher or less equivocal claims. She knew what to admire in others, but she felt that she had a mission of her own. To substantiate this, we have only to suppose her productions blotted out from our literature, and then remark whether or not any blank be left; for, wherever we have originality, we have accession. We admit that originality is of all shades and grades, from a Burns to a Bloomfield, from a Crabbe to a Clare—still the names of the second and the fourth are those of true poets, as well as those of the authors of "The Cottar's Saturday Night," and "Sir Eustace Gray,"—Parnassus, as Dr Johnson observes, having its "flowers of transient fragrance, as well as its cedars of perennial growth, and its laurels of eternal verdure." In the case of Mrs Hemans, this question is set at rest, from her having become the founder of a school, and that only eclipsed in the number of its adherents and imitators by those of Scott, Byron, and Wordsworth. In America especially has this been the case; a great part of the recent poetry in that country—more particularly that of its female writers—has been little more than an echo of her *Records of Woman*, and *Lays of Many Lands*, and lyrical strains; and, from Mrs Sigourney—"the American Mrs Hemans"—downwards, there are only corroborative proofs of a Cisatlantic fact, that no copyist, however acute and faithful, has ever yet succeeded in treading on the kibes of his master, far less of outstripping him in the struggle for excellence.

Like all original writers, Mrs Hemans has her own mode and her own province. In reading the poetry of Wordsworth, we feel as if transferred to the mountainous solitudes, broken only by the scream of the eagle and the dash of the cataract, where human life is indicated but by the shieling in the sheltered holm, and the shepherd boy, lying wrapt up in his plaid by the furze-bush, with his "little flock at feed beside him." By Scott we are placed amid the men and things of departed ages. The bannered castle looms in the distance, and around it are the tented plain—the baron and his vassals—all that pertains to "ladye-love and war, renown and knightly worth." We have the cathedral-pomp, and the dark superstition, and the might that stands in the place of right,—all the fire and air, with little of the earth and water of our elemental nature. The lays of Wilson reflect the patriarchal calm of life in its best, and purest, and happiest aspects—or, indeed, of something better than mere human life, as the image of the islet in the sunset mirror of the lake is finer and fairer than the reality. Coleridge's inspiration is emblemed by ruins in the silver and shadow of moonlight,—quaint, and queer, and fantastic, haunted by the whooping owl, and screamed over by the invisible nighthawk. Campbell reminds of the Portland vase, exquisite in taste and materials, but recalling always the conventionalities of art.

When placed beside, and contrasted with her great cotemporaries, the excellences of Mrs Hemans are sufficiently distinct and characteristic. There can be no doubt of this, more especially in her later and best writings, in which she makes incidents elucidate feelings. In this magic circle—limited it may be—she has no rival. Hence, from the picturesqueness, the harmony, the delicacy and grace, which her compositions display, she is peculiarly the poet of her own sex. [658]
Her pictures are not more distinguished for accuracy of touch than for elegance of finish. Every thing is clear, and defined, and palpable; nothing is enveloped in accommodating haze; and she never leaves us, as is the trick of some late aspiring and mystical versifiers, to believe that she must be profound because she is unintelligible. She is ever alive to the dignity of her calling, and the purity of her sex. Aware of the difficulties of her art, she aspired towards excellence with untiring perseverance, and improved herself by the study of the best models, well knowing that few things easy of attainment can be worth much. Her taste thus directed her to appropriate and happy subjects; and hence it has been, as with all things of sterling value, that her writings have not been deteriorated by time. They were not, like the ice-palace of the Empress Catherine, thrown up to suit the whim of the season, or directed to subjects of mere occasional interest, to catch the gale of a passing popularity. Mrs Hemans built on surer foundations, and with less perishable materials. The consequence is, that her reputation has been steadily on the increase. Of no one modern writer can it be affirmed with less hesitation, that she has become an English classic; nor, until human nature becomes very different from what it now is, can we imagine the least probability that the music of her lays will cease to soothe the ear, or the beauty of her sentiment to charm the gentle heart.

ON THE MISERIES OF IRELAND, AND THEIR REMEDIES.

In resuming this subject, we feel that we cannot be justly accused of going out of our own province, or of meddling with matters which concern only our neighbours. In the present state of this country, we not only recognise the people of Ireland as our fellow-subjects, but we practically feel, as we ought to do, that their miseries are reflected upon us. This might be

illustrated in various ways, but there is one illustration which comes peculiarly home to all people of this country at this moment. Much has been said and written, of late years, on the sanitary condition of the great towns of this country, and on the importance of thorough cleansing and draining, as a preservative against the epidemic diseases which have so often lately afflicted, and in some instances nearly decimated, our population; and when we state that, in the neighbouring city of Glasgow, during last year only, the mortality was one in nineteen of the population, and that the number of deaths exceeded the number of births by more than sixteen thousand,—that the mortality from fever, in particular, is known very generally to fall upon those who, in a worldly point of view, are the most valuable lives in society, and that a new and still more appalling epidemic is already among us—we have surely said enough to show that there cannot be a more important or serious object of contemplation, or of inquiry, than the means of purification and sanitary improvement of such graves of the human race, as so many parts of that and others of our great towns are at this moment.

It is equally certain that "atmospheric impurity" has been justly charged as the most general and effective of all the causes, which so depress the vital energies as to dispose the living human body to suffer, and sink under, such visitations of Providence.

But, in order to understand how this prolific cause of evil acts on the human race, it is necessary not only to look to the draining, sweeping, and cleaning of streets, courts, and closes, but to enter the houses, and attend to the "conditions of existence" of their inmates, in the lowest and most unhealthy portions of all our great towns. When we do this, we find that, in all those houses which are the chief seats of epidemic disease, there are congregated together in small and dirty rooms such masses of destitute human beings, usually ill-clothed and inadequately protected from cold, that it is mere mockery to speak of improving the atmosphere of their rooms, [659] especially during the night, by any appliances to the streets or courts from which they are entered, or even by any means of ventilation to which, at least in cold weather, the inmates will submit.

It is even in vain that we issue directions for the cleansing of the rooms, or regulations, in the case of lodging-houses, for limiting the number of persons to be taken into them, or that we form model lodging-houses, in which a certain number of persons may be decently accommodated. All such measures have a good effect on a certain number of the people; but those among whom the epidemic diseases are always found making most progress have no means of availing themselves of these advantages: they can no more pay for clean or well-aired rooms than they could pay for any of the luxuries of civilised life. "Their state of destitution binds them firmly to one description of locality," and forces them to congregate together in masses, necessarily implying such a contamination of the atmosphere in which they live, as no such measures can counteract for six hours.

Now, if we inquire further into the history of the inhabitants who live crowded together in this miserable way, we shall find, no doubt, a certain number, in every great town, in whom this state of destitution is the result of disease, death of relations, or personal profligacy; and of the best means to be adopted to limit the evils resulting from these causes, we do not propose to speak at present, only observing that they may be and are met much more effectually in some countries and some towns than in others. But we maintain, also, with perfect confidence, from much personal observation and many inquiries, that at this moment, in all the great towns of this country, the most numerous class of the destitute poor, among whom epidemic diseases prevail—from whom they extend to other ranks of society, and by whose illness or death their families become a burden on all other ranks—are not more profligate or less deserving of compassion and assistance than the great body of our labouring classes, and have no distinctive peculiarity but this, that *they are Irish*.[2] Many of them have had possession of bits of land, others have been labourers, or are families of labourers: they have formed part of that enormous immigration of human beings, from Ireland to Britain, which has been going on for many years, which has given Irish labourers to all our public works, has formed an Irish quarter in every one of our great towns, and has impressed all the promoters of our schemes of philanthropy with the intimate conviction, that "if we would cut off the sources of mendicity and misery, we must *first cut off Ireland*;" *i. e.*, looking on the Irish as fellow-subjects, if we wish to perform towards them, or towards all who suffer in common with them, the great Christian duty of charity, we must endeavour to ascertain and counteract, in Ireland itself, whatever causes have swelled that flood of poverty and destitution which has been so prolific of evils to us.

Now, without entering on any abstruse discussions, either metaphysical or economical, we think it quite possible to state certain principles, drawn from observations of human nature, and generalised in the same manner as any general truths in physical science, by which the phenomenon in question may be explained; and the only truly effective remedies that can be devised for the present peculiarly miserable condition of Ireland must be applied and regulated.

In the present state of that country, all her peculiar sufferings may be ranked under the single head of redundant population, or, what is the same thing, an overstocked labour market,—a population greater than is required for all the works, productive or unproductive, for which the possessors of capital, or the richer classes generally, are willing to pay; and, in consequence, great numbers of the lower classes whose employment is precarious, whose wages are scanty, [660] whose mode of life is irregular and debased, who are continually liable to disease from poor living and insufficient clothing, and whose sufferings under disease and destitution are greater, and extend their effects more among the higher classes in their own country, and among neighbouring nations—England, Scotland, even America—than those of any other nation in

Europe. As long as this miserable condition of the Irish poor exists, it must be regarded both as a national disgrace, indicating that, notwithstanding the boasted excellence of our constitution, the British government is really less effective as regards one-third of its subjects, in securing the main object of all governments, *ut cives feliciter vivant*, than that of any other civilised country.

Now, whatever secondary causes for a redundant population may be assigned, all who attend carefully to the subject must admit that the great, primary, and fundamental cause for it in all countries is, the power of reproduction granted by nature to human beings, and which is capable of multiplying the species more rapidly than the means of their subsistence can be increased.

If it be true that this is a general law of human nature, and yet that, in other countries, where ample time and opportunity have been afforded for similar indications of redundant population to show themselves, these are altogether absent, the first question for consideration is not, why are not the resources of Ireland more developed, but why has not the population accommodated itself better to the resources that exist? Comparing Ireland with other countries long inhabited, we find that in many others,—viz. in Switzerland, in many districts of England, in Sweden, Norway, &c.,—although the resources of the country and the demand for labour are small, the population has accommodated itself to them; it has remained nearly stationary for ages, or has gradually increased only as the productions of the country and the demand for labour extended; and the miseries of redundant population are comparatively unknown.

Continuing this line of inquiry, we observe that the most powerful and the only desirable check on population, by which it is habitually restrained from passing the limits which the demand for labour may be regarded as imposing, is that to which political economists give the name of *moral restraint*, by which we know that men and women, in all ranks of society, may frequently, and, to a certain degree, uniformly limit the reproduction of the species greatly within the bounds of its possible increase, rather than allow their progeny to incur any imminent risk of descent in the scale of society, and of abject destitution.

If we next inquire what are the circumstances in which this beneficial limitation on our population operates most efficiently, and what are those which counteract its influence, we shall find distinctly and unequivocably—whether we limit our observations to individuals, where we can assure ourselves of the most influential motives of conduct, or extend our views to large communities, and so avoid the fallacies attending partial collections of facts—that the only security for the existence of moral restraint is the habit of comfort, and the feeling of artificial wants which that habit gradually imposes on the human mind; and that those who are brought up in a state of destitution, who are themselves strangers to that habit and feeling in early life, hardly ever look forward to the means of securing the supply of these wants for their children, and yield to the instincts of nature, as to the propagation of their species, almost as blindly and recklessly as animals do.

If this be so, it is obvious that the first subject for consideration, as to the social state of any country, and the only means by which we can hope to avert the evils, which the known tendency of human nature to multiply more rapidly than the means of its subsistence would otherwise involve, is to extend and secure the habit of comfort among the poorer classes of society, and preserve them from sinking into those habits of alternate physical suffering and reckless indulgence, which abject destitution implies. And we have the more confidence in this conclusion, as it is in strict accordance with the distinct, authoritative, and frequently repeated injunction of [661] Scripture, as to the duty of those who have the means, to supply the wants of the poor.

This being so, the question as to the means of preventing or correcting the evils of redundant population in any country, resolves itself simply into the question, how the lower ranks of society there may be best and most permanently preserved in habits of comfort? And this question, likewise, is held to be sufficiently decided by experience.

A moment's reflection is enough to show that there can be no claim on the higher ranks in any country to place the poor—*i. e.*, those who are unable to work from age, sex, or infirmity, or who are unable to find work—on a better footing than the lowest of those who can maintain themselves by labour, and that any such attempt would speedily tend to disorder and do injury to the whole frame of society, and especially to the working classes; but it is confidently maintained, that a country in which these classes are regularly and uniformly preserved, by the contributions of the higher ranks, from falling into lower habits than those which prevail among the poorest of the people who maintain themselves by regular labour,—is also that in which the population will adapt itself most strictly to the demand for labour—remaining, if necessary for this purpose, quite stationary for ages together.

There are different modes in which the contributions of the rich for these purposes have been received and applied; but it may be stated with perfect confidence, as the result of experience, that the only truly and uniformly effectual means is, to give them the security and uniformity of a legal enactment. For several ages, the general mode throughout Europe was through the intervention of the Christian church, for "the distribution of alms and food by the clergy was not merely a voluntary charity, but was a legal obligation. It was a rule of ecclesiastical discipline throughout Europe, and was a condition expressed in all the grants by which they held their possessions, and in every appropriation of benefices to the regular orders." The maintenance of the religious houses was thus the poor-law of the Middle Ages; and when their property was alienated, the necessity of another law, to secure the same object, soon became manifest throughout the greater part of Europe.

We need not inquire how it has happened that no such law for the benefit of the poor has succeeded to the alienation of the church lands from the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, during the long interval that has elapsed between that event and the present time; but, on the contrary, that various laws, securing to the higher ranks the undisturbed possession of their property, and repressing all claims of the lower ranks, have succeeded to that change. It is enough for our purpose to state the fact, and to observe that, consistently with the principles above stated, all the results which have followed were naturally to be expected. That unprofitable but important portion of every social fabric—the poor, as distinguished from the working classes—has been left to precarious and insufficient charity. The consequences have been, a general reduction of the diet, clothing, lodging, and whole habits of the whole lower classes; frequent destitution, and its uniform attendant, a peculiar liability to epidemic diseases; much vagrancy and mendicity; the general prevalence of an irregular, precarious, reckless mode of life; a general failure of the grand preventive check on population; a continually-increasing redundancy; a minute subdivision of the land to support this redundancy, and a ruinous competition for these small portions of land, keeping the cultivators of the soil in a constant dependence on the proprietors; much voluntary emigration; and, both among the emigrants and the lower orders at home—all feeling these miseries, but few of them rightly comprehending the cause—a blind hatred at their rulers, very generally diffused. In thus asserting the powerful operation of this legal neglect of the poor in producing the miseries of Ireland, it is not, of course, intended to deny that various causes have co-operated in different parts of the country—*e. g.*, the ignorance of the people, and the effect of the Roman Catholic religion in checking, rather than encouraging, [662]
any habits of thought or reflection; the absence of so many proprietors, and their habitual estrangement from the cultivators of the soil; political excitement, and the bad passions generated by it and religious dissensions: all these have been injurious; but the experience of other nations may show us that they could not have produced this specific effect on population, if they had not been aided by that general predisposing cause of redundancy—*neglect of the poor*.

This state of things has, however, naturally rendered residence in Ireland much less agreeable to the feelings of the proprietors of the soil, than residence in almost any other country. Those sufferings of their neighbours and dependants, which the laws of other countries would have imposed on them the duty of mitigating at their source, have, in consequence, fallen rarely under their personal observation; while the frauds and falsehoods by which poverty, when taking the form of mendicity, always attempts to arrest attention and procure sympathy, have been constantly obtruded on them. Add to this, that they have continually been told that the peculiarity of their situation, which absolved them from any legal obligation to relieve the wants of their poor—which secured to them the rights of property, and released them from its obligations—was a wise and judicious regulation, and a great advantage to themselves and their country; and without attributing to the Irish proprietors, and particularly to the absentees, more carelessness or selfishness than we must all admit to be a common attribute of human nature, we can easily understand that the general conduct of the Irish proprietors and capitalists must be such as to aggravate, instead of relieving, the miseries resulting from the over-population of their country.

To this state of things we do not pretend to apply a single specific; but we assert with confidence, that experience has sufficiently demonstrated the efficacy and expediency of several powerful remedies, and that, by the combined influence of these, a gradual improvement may be certainly obtained.

The first step has been already taken in the enactment of a law—unfortunately delayed till nearly half a century had elapsed after the union with England,—probably imperfect, and brought first into operation at a time of famine, therefore beginning to act in the most unfavourable circumstances possible, but by which the right to relief, under circumstances of destitution, is granted to every description of the poor. By the gradual operation of this law, correcting the habits of vagrancy and mendicity, it maybe expected that the process of degradation hitherto extending among the Irish poor may be corrected, and the same motives which, in other nations, are found to restrain excessive population, will gradually be introduced. But a more immediate effect of the law is on the views and habits of the proprietors. When the aged poor, the sick poor, the widows and orphans, and the unemployed poor, become immediately a charge on the land and capital of the country, it becomes the obvious and undoubted interest of every proprietor and capitalist, first, to throw all obstacles in his power in the way of early marriages, and excessive reproduction of the species; and, secondly, to exert himself to procure for the existing population as much as possible of remunerative employment. Such employment as he would hardly regard as remunerative, with a view only to his own profits, becomes an object of real importance to him, when the alternative is the maintenance of able-bodied labourers in idleness. That these motives are already operating extensively among the Irish proprietors, appears from their general complaint of the hardship of being obliged to maintain the poor in unremunerating employment, and from their increased anxiety to clear their estates of cottars and small crofters, among whom the most rapid redundancy of population shows itself. If the law is firmly and steadily administered, they will not be allowed to rid themselves of the burden of these poor; and the true question will be, Whether they are to maintain them in idleness, or devise for them [663]
reproductive labour? Thus it may be hoped that the resources of the country will be gradually developed, and its power of supporting industry be increased contemporaneously with a diminution of vagrancy and mendicity, and an improvement of the habits of the people.

But it must be observed, that this expectation proceeds on two suppositions—*first*, That resources not yet developed for the maintenance of industry do exist in the country; and, *secondly*, That the proprietors have the means and the knowledge necessary to enable them to

avail themselves of these. The first of these, we are fully assured, is truly the case; but the latter supposition, although we may expect it to be realised in the course of time, is certainly very far from being an element in the existing condition of the country; nor can it become so within such a time as would be requisite to enable us to reckon on it as a means of meeting a pressing emergency. And although the newly-enacted Irish Poor-Law is equally just as that under which all English proprietors have for centuries held their possessions, yet it must be admitted that, in the present circumstances of Ireland, as to redundancy of population, it must fall with peculiar severity on that country, and that, in some districts, the sacrifice thus required of the proprietors —particularly on such of them as may not comprehend the means which we believe to be in their power, for the improvement of the country—may almost amount to a confiscation of their property.

Now, if the foregoing exposition of the main cause of the redundant population in Ireland is correct, it follows that the legislature of this country, which has so long approved and sanctioned that state of the laws which withhold from the suffering population of Ireland the right of relief, as it has shared the national sin, ought also to share the sacrifices by which the consequences of that sin may be expiated. For a time, therefore, and particularly after the famine which has befallen their country, the proprietors and capitalists in Ireland may reasonably expect a certain amount of aid from the legislature of England (granted, of course, with proper safeguards against abuse or misapplication), to enable them to perform their newly-prescribed duties towards their own poor.

Now, there are two modes of relief, both to the proprietors and the poor in Ireland, which may be afforded by government, or rather which may be aided and directed by government, to a much greater degree than has been yet done—certainly at a much less expense than the relief-works of the year 1846, when several millions, contributed from the British treasury, were expended on the roads in Ireland, with an injurious rather than beneficial effect;—and the results of which, if they are carried into effect with common prudence, may be expected to be so distinctly beneficial, as assuredly to reconcile the British public to the expenditure.

The first is Emigration to the colonies, on a larger scale than has been yet undertaken, and with a more earnest desire, on the part of government, to make it a really effective means of relief than has been yet shown—the arrangements to be made, and the vessels to be contracted for and victualled, at the public expense, and the emigrants, therefore, having no further pecuniary burdens imposed on them than the means of supporting themselves from the time of their landing until they can procure employment. Even this last difficulty of emigrants may undoubtedly be much lessened by a little pains, and a little well-directed expense, on the part of the colonial governments, to ascertain during the winter season, and make known to those arriving in spring, the precise districts where there is the most demand for their labour; and it seems impossible to doubt that, if there were a regular provision made by government, for a few seasons, for receiving, from the different parts of Ireland, families recommended by the clergy of all persuasions in the different districts, as proper for emigration, and unable to afford the passage-money, and for removing these families at the public expense to Canada or Australia—directing them at once to the proper points—a very considerable relief could be afforded to the most crowded districts in Ireland, at the same time that the danger of such sufferings during the [664] passage, and after arrival in the colonies, as befel too many of the emigrants of 1847, and deterred too many of their countrymen from following their example, may be almost certainly avoided.

Emigration, however, even on these terms, (which it is certainly within the power of government to arrange,) should only be recommended to those who can command the means of tolerably comfortable outfitting, and subsistence for a short time after their arrival in the colonies. For a much larger number of the Irish poor, the resource so perseveringly advocated by Mr P. Scrope and others, is the only one yet shown to be really available, viz., their employment on some of the waste lands, ascertained to be reclaimable, which abound in Ireland itself. The improvement of these, chiefly by spade labour, would give employment to nearly all the labourers now in Ireland; and, when reclaimed, they might be divided into allotments of from five to eight acres each, which should afterwards become the property of the men by whose labour they have chiefly been reclaimed, on the payment of a moderate quit-rent.

There may be some difference of opinion as to the details of this plan, and particularly as to the kind and extent of the direct assistance which the government should give; and we know that in all countries, and perhaps more especially in Ireland, there will be a disposition on the part of many persons to avail themselves of and to abuse this public aid, by no means confined to the poorest classes of society, and against which it behoves a beneficent government to be constantly on their guard. The simplest mode of procedure seems to be, that the waste lands destined for this purpose (and on which government officers, employed at a great expense to the public, have already reported)—should be purchased by government, by compulsion if necessary—in all the distressed parts of the country; that these should be presented to the different poor-law unions, on condition of their being reclaimed by the labours of their able-bodied paupers, and in conformity with plans to be proposed, and the execution of which shall be superintended by persons employed by government. The preliminary operations of drainage, and of making roads for the benefit of these lands only, may likewise be undertaken by government; and with this aid, and under this direction, it is reasonable to expect, that the operations by which certain of the waste lands are to be reclaimed, and the unions to be gradually provided with productive farms, let to industrious cottars, may serve as a model for similar improvements by individuals. There

are difficulties of detail, which the government of the United Kingdom may be expected to foresee and to surmount. But as to the principle that it is wise and right for the legislature of Britain;—nay, that it is incumbent on that legislature, looking to its duty towards all classes of the people, to the extent of misery in Ireland, and the disgrace and injury thereby brought on itself, to the legal neglect of the poor in Ireland, so long sanctioned by the British legislature, and to the deficiency of capital actually existing in that country,—to direct and aid the operations by which its surplus population may be reduced, and its resources for the maintenance of population in future may be augmented; and that these operations, if skilfully conducted, must eventually lead to a great increase, both of wealth and of happiness, in Ireland and in the colonies,—are propositions which we hold to be fully demonstrated, and which, we think, the periodical press of this country cannot at this moment be better employed than in keeping constantly before the public, and impressing, by all possible means, on the attention of the legislature. The property of those lands remaining, in part, in the poor-law unions, the produce raised on them will contribute to the support of the poor, and the relief of the rate-payers in Ireland, in all time coming.

That the opinion we have thus given of the feasibility and of the wisdom of the plan of bringing the idle hands of Ireland to bear on the waste lands, is supported by men of thorough knowledge of the subject, of all parties of the state, may be easily shown. Preparations for such a measure [665] were made, and plans of the drainage requisite for the purpose were laid down, at an expense of nearly £50,000 to the country, and deposited in the archives of the Irish government, so long ago as 1814, by the Bog Commission. It was part of the recommendation of the Poor-Law Inquiry Commission in 1836; it was strongly recommended in the report by the Commission of Inquiry into the Tenure of Land, presided over by Lord Devon; it has been frequently proposed, and fully and ably discussed in various publications both by speculative reasoners, and by practical men,—by Mr Mill, in his standard work on Political Economy; by Mr Thornton, in his pamphlets on Over-Population, and on Peasant Proprietorship; by Mr Fagan, member for Wexford, in his work on the Improvement of Ireland by means of her Waste Lands; by Mr Poulett Scrope, in several pamphlets as well as speeches in Parliament, to which nothing like an intelligible answer has been returned; by Mr Douglas, and several other writers in England; by Mr French, and several other Irish members; by public meetings in Ireland—one of them, of the freeholders in Waterford, presided over by Lord Stuart de Decies;—nay, it was announced in the beginning of 1847, under the name of a Waste Lands Bill, by Lord John Russell, as an accompaniment of his Poor-Law Bill, but withdrawn without any reason for the change ever having been assigned. Whether this was done, as has been stated, as a compromise with certain Irish landlords on their withdrawing their opposition to the latter bill, or not, is a matter of small importance to the country, although, certainly, of very considerable importance to the character of any such landlords for judgment or intelligence. A much stronger measure of what appears to them as justice towards the cottar population of Ireland, has been strongly recommended by several intelligent foreigners who have visited and examined the country. But, without quoting any of these authorities in favour of the proposal, let us merely ask what answer can be returned to the following simple statements in support of it by an intelligent and practical author:—"An addition of three million acres of cultivable surface would be an incalculable advantage, and contribute to the health, comfort, and happiness of millions of our fellow-subjects. *We ought not to be behind the Chinese in this work of civilisation.* During my recent examination of the middle and northern districts of China, I noticed every where a great extent of reclaimed land. Every inlet where the sea formerly encroached on the land was embanked, drained, and cultivated. No capital or labour was spared to augment the surface capable of yielding sustenance to man; and I feel satisfied that, *if the extent of bog-land now existing in Ireland were in the central provinces of China, five years would not elapse without its being made fertile and productive*. Ought the people of England or of Ireland to show inferiority to the Chinese in the most requisite of all labour? Ought the government, in deference to some abstract principle, to refuse the fulfilment of the first natural duty—the providing food for its subjects?"[3]

Examples are not wanting in Ireland itself to show the feasibility of this plan of relief to its poverty. "Mr Stuart French, of Monaghan, has reclaimed three hundred acres of mountain-land in four years, and raised its value from two shillings to thirty-five shillings per acre. The entire cost was repaid by the crops in three years. Mr Reade, of Wood-Park, county Galway, reclaimed five hundred acres of moorland and mountain at a cost of from £10 to £17 per acre, which was repaid by the crop of the second year, and the land, formerly worth two shillings and sixpence per acre, now pays twenty shillings per acre annually. This same Mr Reade, who has made the experiment on a large scale, and can speak from experience, says, *there are 128,000 acres of such reclaimable wastes in Galway, where thousands have died during the past year*, and many are now (April 1848) dragging out a miserable and useless existence. Mr Coulthurst, in county Cork, [666] reclaimed a bog farm for which the tenants could not pay four shillings per acre. The drainage and reclamation cost £16 per acre, which was repaid before the fifth year, and the land is now rated at the poor-law valuation at £4 per acre. Sir Charles Sligh, Bart., and his amiable lady, have effected great good on their estate in Donegal, by locating the surplus population on the waste lands, and assisting the poor farmers to cultivate them. This English family gave up their rents for two years, and *permanent employment has been found for six times as many persons as the land could formerly support; and its produce has been multiplied tenfold*."[4]

It may be asked, why are these examples not followed? and doubts have been thrown out as to the accuracy of the statements of the able inquirers who have reported on the Irish waste lands, because they are not actually reclaimed. One simple reason has been stated by Lord Cloncurry, viz., that "arterial drainage on a large scale is indispensable as a commencement, cutting through

many properties, deepening river-beds, perhaps to a considerable distance. Hence government alone can set on foot such undertakings on that comprehensive scale, and with that engineering skill, which is necessary."[5] But a more general answer will suggest itself to any one who knows the general habits and circumstances of the great Irish proprietors. Many of them have not the habits of life or the knowledge which would enable them to superintend or judge of such improvements; and many more have not the means of encountering even the small expense which will be requisite in their commencement. Further, it is always to be observed, that, in the present state of the country, another mode of greatly and rapidly improving the value of their estates, without any such outlay either of skill or capital, always presents itself to the Irish proprietors—viz., that of clearing their estates of the cottar population, and throwing them into large farms, to be cultivated in the improved English or Scotch style of agriculture—or even into pasture; the objection to which is simply that, in that case, they would not require for their cultivation more than a third part of the population now located on them, and, therefore, that this is a system relieving the landlords only, and greatly aggravating all the evils which make the management of Ireland an object of concern to the nation at large.

This leads us to consider the question, which is the most momentous of any that can be proposed on this topic—If the plan of locating the idle hands of Ireland on her waste lands is not adopted, what other resource exists for the relief of the redundant population, which is, as we have stated, so enormous and unquestionable a burden on England and Scotland? It is clear that, in Ireland itself, as the law now stands, two plans only are thought of, and if government does not bring forward a third plan, one or other of these must quickly predominate. Either the main body of the landlords, who are known to be quite incredulous as to any improvements being effected by their cottar tenants, must be allowed to pursue their own system of keeping them on hand—*i.e.*, only as tenants-at-will—and clearing their lands of them as rapidly as possible, with a view to large farms or sheep-pastures; or else that system must be adopted, which is demanded generally by the tenantry and by the Roman Catholic priests in Ireland, of giving to the tenants one form or other of what has been called "fixity of tenure"—*i.e.*, such security against a ruinous rise of rent, or dispossession, as may induce them to exert all their energies, and sometimes to bring forth concealed capital, for the improvement of the soil, and, in many instances, for the reclamation of wastes;—this party maintaining that the main cause of the generally wretched condition of the cottars, and imperfect cultivation of the soil, is not the indolence of the people, but their knowledge that they are constantly liable to a rise of rent, or expulsion from their farms, [667] immediately on its being perceived that they are effecting any improvement.

These are the two remedies for the existing state of matters in Ireland, which these two parties wish to apply, and unless a third plan be adopted by government, one or other of these must quickly predominate. Now, let us consider the results to be expected in either case.

If government does nothing, but merely protects, by an armed force, the proprietors and their agents from the fury of the people, the system of clearance of the estates will be more and more acted on; and we must reckon on one-half or even two-thirds of the still existing population on most of the estates being turned adrift. No doubt the poor-law will make these outcasts a heavy burden on the proprietors; and it is held by many, and very probably with justice, that, instead of turning their cottar tenants adrift, and then having to deal with them as unemployed poor, if they were to accord to them such a tenant-right as exists generally, as a voluntary compact, in Ulster, they might expect the poor-rate to be so much less, the cultivation so to improve and extend, and the payment of rents to become gradually so much more punctual, that their own condition would be gradually amended. But it is certain that *this is not the view that they take of their own position* at this moment, nor that on which they will voluntarily act; *for if it were, the tenant-right, or at least the practice of granting long leases, would be as general* in other parts of Ireland as it now is in Ulster, or in Scotland.

This being so, the poor-law, giving the right to relief to the ejected poor, must either be enforced or not enforced. If it is enforced, and no other resource for the relief of those people is presented, there is every prospect of many of the unions becoming bankrupt, and the proprietors being involved in the ruin. We know that this consummation is already proclaimed by many of the proprietors in Ireland and their friends as nigh at hand; and the only advantage which in that case can be said to be derived from the poor-rate is, that the ruin and degradation, otherwise confined to the lower ranks, will have extended, as in justice they should, to every class of society. Again, if the poor-law is not enforced, and the redundant population is thrown, as heretofore, on its own resources, we have *first*, that *res pessimi exempli*—a law openly violated—that the rich may escape its inflictions, and the poor be deprived of its protection; and *secondly*, we have no other prospect before us but a continuance and increase of all that misery, vagrancy, famine, and pestilence in Ireland, and all that extension of these evils to the great towns of England and Scotland, which have made our connexion with Ireland the bane of this country.

On the other hand, if the legislature were to adopt the only effectual means of restraining the clearances by the landlords—*i.e.*, to grant the desired boon of fixity of tenure, at the existing rent, to all the tenants—or even absolutely require leases of a certain duration to be given to them all—it cannot be denied that they would commit the grave political offence of extensive interference not only with portions of private property, (which, all admit, may be justly taken, on reasonable compensation, for public objects,) but with the whole income of many individuals. This offence is of such a character, that we can hardly expect to see a measure involving it ever adopted by any legislature in this country; and it must be confessed that, however well adapted such a measure may be to the exigency of the present time in Ireland, the precedent thereby established would

go far to justify many acts, as regards other possessions of property, which can hardly be called by any other name than spoliation.

These are the considerations which lead us to believe that, in the present circumstances of Ireland—a population having grown up in the absence of any poor-law—with which a law, enacted tardily, and at a most disastrous period, cannot be expected to cope—the newly-acquired right to existence of the Irish poor must be aided and supported—as was always desired by Mr P. Scrope, and all the more enlightened advocates of that measure, and at one time proposed by the present Premier—by another measure, on the part of government, whereby *employment may be procured for them, the resources of the country improved*, and the proprietors taught, by example much more effectually than they can ever be by precept, how these duties, now legally imposed on them for the benefit of the poor, may be made to consist with improvement of their own position. [668]

What is often said of the impolicy of government coming into the market for the purchase and improvement of lands in Ireland, as deterring private speculators from coming forward, and checking the influx of really productive capital, would be a very fair allegation, if the object in view were merely the economical one of raising the value of the land and the income of the landed proprietors. But this is not adverting to the real difficulty of the case, *the existence of a redundant population*—the result of the causes above explained, *but now possessing a legal right to existence in the country—much more numerous than is required for that improved cultivation of the soil, which would be the most obviously and rapidly profitable to the proprietors*. The problem for solution is, not simply how to enrich the country, but how to enrich it without exterminating any part of this redundant population. This is no object for private speculators, looking only to pounds, shillings, and pence; but it is, or should be, an object of paramount importance to the government of a country, to whom even an increase of wealth ought to be desirable, not for its own sake, but because it is the essential condition, and therefore the exponent, of an extension of human happiness; to whom, therefore, the lives of the poor ought to be at least as sacred as the purses of the proprietors and capitalists in Ireland.

Taking this view of the duty of government, we may cordially acquiesce in the statement of Mr Thornton, quoted and approved by Mill, that the great want of Ireland at this moment is, not the influx of capital (as it might be if we were at liberty to disregard the lives of the people, and look only to the wealth of the country,) but the protection and encouragement of its industry, and such an increase of its capital only as may be consistent with, or even produced by, an increase of the labour of all its able-bodied inhabitants. And it is because it is evident that the existing proprietors cannot in general perceive how this is to be done, or command the means of doing it, that the interference of government appears to be the only possible means of rescuing that unhappy country from misery.

Many high authorities are fully convinced that the improvement of the cultivated portion of the land, and even of the rents of the proprietors, may be equally well effected by the *petite culture*, by keeping the cottars in their places, and merely giving them instruction as to cultivation, and security for a fair share of the profits of the improvements they effect—as by clearing the land of them, and enlarging the farms. All who have studied the subject, seem to be agreed as to the very general "almost superhuman" industry of peasant *proprietors*, in all parts of the world, and among all races of men. "The idea of property, however," says Mr Mill, "does not necessarily imply that there should be no rent, any more than that there should be no taxes. It merely implies, that the rent should be a fixed charge, not liable to be raised against the possessor by his own improvements, or by the will of a landlord." "Give a man a secure possession of a bleak rock," says Arthur Young, "and he will turn it into a garden; give him only a nine-years' lease of a garden, and he will convert it into a desert." It is accordingly stated by this author, and by others, as the result of experience, that long leases, at a low rent, will effect wonders, even in Ireland; and in proof of this, Mr Mill refers to the example of a company, called the Irish Waste Land Improvement Society, who have undertaken improvements in Ireland, not by creating large farms, and cultivating them by hind labour, but by farms only of a size sufficient for a single family—giving, however, small advances of capital, and a temporary security of tenure by thirty-one years' leases. Col. Robinson, the manager of this Society, reports of their operations in 1845, —"These 245 tenants and their families have, by spade husbandry, reclaimed and brought into cultivation 1032 acres of land, previously unproductive waste, on which they raised, last year, crops valued at £3896, being the proportion of £15, 18s. each tenant; and their live stock, now on the estates, is valued, according to present prices in the neighbouring markets, at £4162, being at the rate of £16, 19s. for each—£1304, a sum equal to their present annual rent, having been added since February 1844;" and he adds, "By the statistical tables and returns, it is proved that the tenants, in general, improve their little farms, and increase their cultivation and crops, in *nearly direct proportion to the number of available working persons* of both sexes of which their families consist." The occupants of larger farms than 20 acres, he states to be "a class too often deficient in the enduring industry indispensable for the successful prosecution of mountain improvements."[6] Mr Mill's general conclusion is, that "under the new Irish Poor-Law there are no means for the landlords for escaping ruin," (as has been stated above,) "unless, by some potent stimulant to the industrial energies of the people, they can largely increase the produce of agriculture; and since there is no stimulant available so potent as a permanent interest in the soil, either the present landlords, or their English mortgagees, to whom the estates of the more impoverished landowners must inevitably pass, would find it to their advantage, if not to grant at once this permanent interest to their tenants, at least to hold out to them, the prospect of acquiring it."[7] To the same purpose, Sir Robert Kane states his belief that "there are not people [669]

enough in Ireland for the small-farm system" if it were carried on in the manner which the experience of other countries has shown to be practicable, and which requires only a certain amount of instruction and of encouragement to the tenants, to enable them to raise at least as much produce, and pay a better rent, than large farms would do.[8] But although this appears a very probable, as well as hopeful view, of the position of the cultivated parts of Ireland, and of the prospects of individual proprietors undertaking to reclaim the wastes, yet it is obvious that we can have no security for the landlords taking this view of their position, and that it would be a very questionable stretch of power to compel them to act upon it. And what we wish particularly to urge is, that *it is not necessary to come to any decision* on the disputed question of the grand or *petite culture* as applicable to the *cultivated* districts of Ireland, because the *waste* lands fortunately furnish a resource which is *clear addition* to the existing means of maintaining the agricultural population, available at a small preliminary expense only, which, we maintain, ought to be borne by the government of this country. The redundant population being thus disposed of, all the landlords will be left at liberty to try whatever modes of improving their estates they may think fit—subject always to this salutary check, that if by any of these modes they render an additional part of the population redundant, they will be compelled, by the poor-law, to pay more or less for them.

The digest of Lord Devon's report shows, that there were in Ireland, when it was drawn up, "326,089 occupiers of land, whose holdings were under eight acres each, and that the consolidation of these small holdings, up to eight acres, would require the removal of about 192,363 families; but, then, the *first* class of *improvable waste lands* in Ireland (on which we wish to see them employed) would furnish to all those removed families locations of about eight acres each—or, the first and second qualities of improvable waste land, taken together, would furnish them with locations of twenty acres each." These facts seem fully sufficient to justify Mr Mill's conclusion, (formerly quoted,) that if we "suppose such a number drafted off to a state of independence and comfort, together with a very moderate additional relief by emigration, the [670] introduction of English capital and farming over the *remaining surface* of Ireland (at least where the proprietors may think it necessary) would at once cease to be chimerical."[9] At least we feel justified by these facts, by all the statements here made, and by the authorities by whom this plan has been recommended, in demanding that a measure which promises so much relief, not only to the miseries of Ireland, but to the various philanthropic designs in this country—which are so continually thwarted by the influx of Irish poor—should be fairly and openly canvassed; and that, if any serious objections can be stated to it, they should be publicly brought forward and discussed.

As to the simply economical objection, on the score of the outlay that would be required, we do not lay stress on the statement made on no less authority than Lord Devon's Commission, that, in fact, it ought to cost nothing; and that the improved rental of the land ought to bring in a return of ten per cent on the capital invested in the speculation. We may admit that this is too sanguine a view of the matter—that the sums advanced by the government of this country will probably be tardily and only partially repaid. Still, when we reflect on the facts that have been stated as to the actual cultivation of waste lands in Ireland, and on the concurrent opinion of so many able and experienced men, who have examined the country carefully, and report specifically on the facilities for the improvement of its different parts, it seems impossible to doubt, that, if the expenditure of the sums advanced by government is superintended and controlled by the talent and experience which the country may expect that the government can command, the repayment of a considerable part of the outlay, particularly of that which may be advanced on the credit of the poor-law unions, may be expected within a few years. And even if there were ultimately a loss to the extent of one-half of the £10,000,000, which has been stated as the probable expense of the whole change, the money will at all events have gone to the immediate relief of Irish suffering, and been better spent than what was formerly voted for that purpose; and we cannot think that a nation which spent a larger sum, only two years ago, in the mere relief of the sufferings of the Irish people, without any attempt at improvement, and very generally with a deteriorating (because not previously considered) effect on the resources of the country—and which spent £20,000,000 only a few years ago with very questionable effect, but certainly without being grudged, in attempting to assuage the sufferings, and raise the condition of the negroes in the West Indies—can repent the loss of a fourth part of that sum, in an attempt which can hardly by possibility fail of producing considerable effect, to provide remunerative employment for the hordes of Irish labourers in their own country, and arrest those grievous calamities which their diffusion over this country has brought on themselves, and on so many others who have come in contact with them.

In thus stating the grounds of a very decided opinion as to the measure supplementary to the new poor-law, which is most essentially required for Ireland, we do not of course mean to deny, that various other means may be adopted, with more or less of good effect, in furtherance of the same grand object. We have no doubt that both religious and secular education are of the utmost importance to the civilisation and improvement of every country; and although we do not regard education, as some authors do, as the main remedy for the evils of over-population, (being thoroughly persuaded that nature has provided for this object more surely than education can, by that growth of artificial wants in the human mind, which is the result and the reward of pains taken to relieve suffering and secure comfort during youth,) we are as anxious as any of our contemporaries for the extension of education in Ireland. We believe that instruction in agriculture, as well as encouragement to industry, is very much needed in most parts of Ireland; [671] and that measures for the direct communication of such instruction, both to landlords and

tenants, may be very useful. We believe that in Ireland, as in this country, there is great need of sanitary regulations; and we trust that the draining, cleaning, and paving of the Irish towns will be regarded with as much interest as similar purifications in England and Scotland. But we think no one who reflects on the subject can fail to perceive two truths, and to acknowledge their direct bearing on the subject of Irish misery—*first*, that to a people nurtured in destitution and amidst scenes of suffering, something of the great mental stimuli of *employment* and *hope* must be applied, in order to enable them to appreciate, or permanently to profit by, any kind of education; and, *secondly*, that in the existence of laws securing sustenance to all the poor of a country, and at the same time enabling the higher ranks to exact labour as the price of that sustenance, we possess a security such as no other social arrangements can afford, for habitual attention to all means of bettering the condition of the poor, on the part of those who have it in their power to apply those means, and on whose exertions their successful application must necessarily depend. Thus the poor-laws of Ireland, and the subsidiary measures for procuring employment for the poor there, so far from being opposed to any wise system of instruction, or of sanitary improvement, must be regarded as in truth an essential preliminary to the truly beneficial operation of any system that may be devised for either of these purposes.

THE CAXTONS.

[672]

PART VIII.

CHAPTER XXXV.

There entered, in the front drawing-room of my father's house in Russell Street—an Elf!!! clad in white,—small, delicate, with curls of jet over her shoulders;—with eyes so large and so lustrous that they shone through the room, as no eyes merely human could possibly shine. The Elf approached, and stood facing us. The sight was so unexpected, and the apparition so strange, that we remained for some moments in startled silence. At length my father, as the bolder and wiser man of the two, and the more fitted to deal with the eirie things of another world, had the audacity to step close up to the little creature, and, bending down to examine its face, said, "What do you want, my pretty child?"

Pretty child! was it only a pretty child after all? Alas! it would be well if all we mistake for fairies at the first glance could resolve themselves only into pretty children!

"Come," answered the child, with a foreign accent, and taking my father by the lappet of his coat —"come! poor papa is so ill! I am frightened! come—and save him—"

"Certainly," exclaimed my father quickly: "where's my hat, Sisty? Certainly, my child! we will go and save papa."

"But who is papa?" asked Pisistratus—a question that would never have occurred to my father. He never asked who or what the sick papas of poor children were, when the children pulled him by the lappet of his coat.—"Who is papa?"

The child looked hard at me, and the big tears rolled from those large luminous eyes, but quite silently. At this moment, a full-grown figure filled up the threshold, and, emerging from the shadow, presented to us the aspect of a stout, well-favoured young woman. She dropped a curtsy, and then said, mincingly,

"Oh, miss! you ought to have waited for me, and not alarmed the gentlefolks by running up stairs in that way. If you please, sir, I was settling with the cabman, and he was so imperent: them low fellows always are, when they have only us poor women to deal with, sir,—and——"

"But what is the matter?" cried I; for my father had taken the child in his arms, soothingly, and she was now weeping on his breast.

"Why, you see, sir, (another curtsy,) the gent only arrived last night at our hotel, sir—The Lamb, close by Lunnun Bridge—and he was taken ill—and he's not quite in his right mind like:—so we sent for the doctor, and the doctor looked at the brass plate on the gent's carpet-bag, sir,—and then he looked into the *Court Guide*, and he said, 'There is a Mr Caxton in Great Russell Street,—is he any relation?' and this young lady said, 'That's my papa's brother, and we were going there.'—And so, sir, as the Boots was out, I got into a cab, and miss would come with me, and ——"

"Roland—Roland ill!—Quick—quick, quick!" cried my father; and, with the child still in his arms, he ran down the stairs. I followed with his hat, which, of course, he had forgotten. A cab, by good luck, was passing our very door; but the chambermaid would not let us enter it till she had

satisfied herself that it was not the same she had dismissed. This preliminary investigation completed, we entered and drove to The Lamb.

The chambermaid, who sate opposite, passed the time in ineffectual overtures to release my father of the little girl, who still clung nestling to his breast,—in a long epic, much broken into episodes, of the causes which had led to her dismissal of the late cabman, who, to swell his fare, had thought proper to take a "circumbendibus!"—and with occasional tugs at her cap, and smoothings down of her gown, and apologies for being such a figure, especially when her eyes rested on my satin cravat, or drooped on my varnished boots.

Arrived at The Lamb, the chambermaid, with conscious dignity, led us up a large staircase, which [673] seemed interminable. As she mounted the region above the third story, she paused to take breath, and inform us, apologetically, that the house was full, but that, if the "gent" stayed over Friday, he would be moved into No. 54, "with a look-out and a chimbly." My little cousin now slipped from my father's arms, and, running up the stairs, beckoned to us to follow. We did so, and were led to a door, at which the child stopped and listened; then taking off her shoes, she stole in on tiptoe. We entered after her.

By the light of a single candle, we saw my poor uncle's face: it was flushed with fever, and the eyes had that bright, vacant stare which it is so terrible to meet.—Less terrible is it to find the body wasted, the features sharp with the great life-struggle, than to look on the face from which the mind is gone,—the eyes in which there is no recognition. Such a sight is a startling shock to that unconscious habitual materialism with which we are apt familiarly to regard those we love: for, in thus missing the mind, the heart, the affection that sprang to ours, we are suddenly made aware that it was the something *within* the form, and not the form itself, that was so dear to us. The form itself is still, perhaps, little altered; but that lip which smiles no welcome, that eye which wanders over us as strangers, that ear which distinguishes no more our voices,—the *friend* we sought is not there! Even our own love is chilled back—grows a kind of vague superstitious terror. Yes, it was not the matter, still present to us, which had conciliated all those subtle nameless sentiments which are classed and fused in the word "*affection*,"—it was the airy, intangible, electric *something*,—the absence of which now appals us.

I stood speechless—my father crept on, and took the hand that returned no pressure:—The child only did not seem to share our emotions,—but, clambering on the bed, laid her cheek on the breast and was still.

"Pisistratus," whispered my father at last, and I stole near, hushing my breath—"Pisistratus, if your mother were here!"

I nodded; the same thought had struck us both. His deep wisdom, my active youth, both felt their nothingness then and there. In the sick chamber, both turned helplessly to miss the *woman*.

So I stole out, descended the stairs, and stood in the open air in a sort of stunned amaze. Then the tramp of feet, and the roll of wheels, and the great London roar, revived me. That contagion of practical life which lulls the heart and stimulates the brain,—what an intellectual mystery there is in its common atmosphere! In another moment I had singled out, like an inspiration, from a long file of those ministrants of our Trivia, the cab of the lightest shape and with the strongest horse, and was on my way, not to my mother's, but to Dr M—— H——, Manchester Square, whom I knew as the medical adviser to the Trevanions. Fortunately, that kind and able physician was at home, and he promised to be with the sufferer before I myself could join him. I then drove to Russell Street, and broke to my mother, as cautiously as I could, the intelligence with which I was charged.

When we arrived at The Lamb, we found the doctor already writing his prescription and injunctions: the activity of the treatment announced the danger. I flew for the surgeon who had been before called in. Happy those who are strange to that indescribable silent bustle which the sick-room at times presents—that conflict which seems almost hand to hand between life and death—when all the poor, unresisting, unconscious frame is given up to the war against its terrible enemy; the dark blood flowing—flowing; the hand on the pulse, the hushed suspense, every look on the physician's bended brow; then the sinaplasms to the feet, and the ice to the head; and now and then, through the lull or the low whispers, the incoherent voice of the sufferer —babbling, perhaps, of green fields and fairyland, while your hearts are breaking! Then, at length, the sleep—in that sleep, perhaps, the crisis—the breathless watch, the slow waking, the first *sane* words—the old smile again, only fainter—your gushing tears, your low—"Thank God! thank God!"

Picture all this; it is past: Roland has spoken—his sense has returned—my mother is leaning over [674] him—his child's small hands are clasped round his neck—the surgeon, who has been there six hours, has taken up his hat, and smiles gaily as he nods farewell—and my father is leaning against the wall, with his face covered with his hands.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

All this had been so sudden that, to use the trite phrase—for no other is so expressive—it was like a dream. I felt an absolute, an imperious want of solitude, of the open air. The swell of gratitude almost stifled me—the room did not seem large enough for my big heart. In early youth, if we find it difficult to control our feelings, so we find it difficult to vent them in the presence of others. On the spring side of twenty, if any thing affects us, we rush to lock ourselves up in our room, or get away into the streets or the fields; in our earlier years we are still the savages of Nature, and we

do as the poor brute does,—the wounded stag leaves the herd, and, if there is any thing on a dog's faithful heart, he slinks away into a corner.

Accordingly, I stole out of the hotel, and wandered through the streets, which were quite deserted. It was about the first hour of dawn, the most comfortless hour there is, especially in London! But I only felt freshness in the raw air, and soothing in the desolate stillness. The love my uncle inspired was very remarkable in its nature: it was not like that quiet affection with which those advanced in life must usually content themselves, but connected with the more vivid interest that youth awakens. There was in him still so much of vivacity and fire, in his errors and crotchets so much of the self-delusion of youth, that one could scarce fancy him other than young. Those Quixotic exaggerated notions of honour, that romance of sentiment, which no hardship, care, grief, disappointment, could wear away, (singular in a period when, at two-and-twenty, young men declare themselves *blasés*!) seemed to leave him all the charm of boyhood. A season in London had made me more a man of the world, older in heart than he was. Then, the sorrow that gnawed him with such silent sternness. No—Captain Roland was one of those men who seize hold of your thoughts, who mix themselves up with your lives. The idea that Roland should die—die with the load at his heart unlightened, was one that seemed to take a spring out of the wheels of nature, an object out of the aims of life—of my life at least. For I had made it one of the ends of my existence to bring back the son to the father, and restore the smile, that must have been gay once, to the downward curve of that iron lip. But Roland was now out of danger,—and yet, like one who has escaped shipwreck, I trembled to look back on the danger past; the voice of the devouring deep still boomed in my ears. While rapt in my reveries, I stopped mechanically to hear a clock strike—four; and, looking round, I perceived that I had wandered from the heart of the city, and was in one of the streets that lead out of the Strand. Immediately before me, on the door-steps of a large shop, whose closed shutters wore as obstinate a stillness as if they had guarded the secrets of seventeen centuries in a street in Pompeii,—reclined a form fast asleep; the arm propped on the hard stone supporting the head, and the limbs uneasily strewn over the stairs. The dress of the slumberer was travel-stained, tattered, yet with the remains of a certain pretence: an air of faded, shabby, penniless gentility made poverty more painful; because it seemed to indicate unfitness to grapple with it. The face of this person was hollow and pale, but its expression, even in sleep, was fierce and hard. I drew near and nearer; I recognised the countenance, the regular features, the raven hair, even a peculiar gracefulness of posture: the young man whom I had met at the inn by the way-side, and who had left me alone with the Savoyard and his mice in the churchyard, was before me. I remained behind the shadow [675] of one of the columns of the porch, leaning against the area rails, and irresolute whether or not so slight an acquaintance justified me in waking the sleeper—when a policeman, suddenly emerging from an angle in the street, terminated my deliberations with the decision of his practical profession; for he laid hold of the young man's arm and shook it roughly,—"You must not lie here, get up and go home!" The sleeper woke with a quick start, rubbed his eyes, looked round, and fixed them upon the policeman so haughtily that that discriminating functionary probably thought that it was not from sheer necessity that so improper a couch had been selected, and with an air of greater respect he said, "You have been drinking, young man,—can you find your way home?"

"Yes," said the youth, resettling himself—"you see I have found it!"

"By the Lord Harry!" muttered the policeman, "if he ben't going to sleep again! Come, come! walk on, or I must walk you off."

My old acquaintance turned round. "Policeman," said he, with a strange sort of smile, "what do you think this lodging is worth?—I don't say for the night, for you see that is over, but for the next two hours? The lodging is primitive, but it suits me; I should think a shilling would be a fair price for it, eh?"

"You love your joke, sir," said the policeman, with a brow much relaxed, and opening his hand mechanically.

"Say a shilling, then—it is a bargain! I hire it of you upon credit. Good-night, and call me at six o'clock."

With that the young man settled himself so resolutely, and the policeman's face exhibited such bewilderment, that I burst out laughing, and came from my hiding-place.

The policeman looked at me. "Do you know this—this"—

"This gentleman?" said I, gravely. "Yes, you may leave him to me;" and I slipped the price of the lodging into the policeman's hand. He looked at the shilling—he looked at me—he looked up the street and down the street—shook his head, and walked off. I then approached the youth, touched him, and said—"Can you remember me, sir; and what have you done with Mr Peacock?"

STRANGER (*after a pause*.)—I remember you; your name is CAXTON.

PISISTRATUS.—And yours?

STRANGER.—Poor-devil, if you ask my pockets—pockets, which are the symbols of man; Dare-devil, if you ask my heart. (*Surveying me from head to foot*)—The world seems to have smiled on you, Mr Caxton! Are you not ashamed to speak to a wretch lying on the stones?—but, to be sure, no one sees you.

PISISTRATUS (*sententiously*.)—Had I lived in the last century, I might have found Samuel Johnson lying on the stones.

STRANGER (*rising*.)—You have spoilt my sleep; you had a right, since you paid for the lodging. Let me walk with you a few paces; you need not fear—I do not pick pockets—yet!

PISISTRATUS.—You say the world has smiled on me; I fear it has frowned on you. I don't say "courage," for you seem to have enough of that; but I say "*patience*," which is the rarer quality of the two.

STRANGER.—Hem! (*Again looking at me keenly*)—Why is it that you stop to speak to me—one of whom you know nothing, or worse than nothing?

PISISTRATUS.—Because I have often thought of you; because you interest me; because—pardon me—I would help you if I can—that is, if you want help.

STRANGER.—Want!—I am one want! I want sleep—I want food;—I want the patience you recommend—patience to starve and rot. I have travelled from Paris to Boulogne on foot, with twelve sous in my pocket. Out of those twelve sous in my pocket I saved four; with the four I went to a billiard-room at Boulogne; I won just enough to pay my passage and buy three rolls. You see I only require capital in order to make a fortune. If with four sous I can win ten francs in a night, what could I win with a capital of four sovereigns, and in the course of a year?—that is an application of the Rule of Three which my head aches too much to calculate just at present. Well, [676] those three rolls have lasted me three days; the last crumb went for supper last night. Therefore, take care how you offer me money, (for that is what men mean by help.) You see I have no option but to take it. But I warn you, don't expect gratitude!—I have none in me!

PISISTRATUS.—You are not so bad as you paint yourself. I would do something more for you, if I can, than lend you the little I have to offer: will you be frank with me?

STRANGER.—That depends—I have been frank enough hitherto, I think.

PISISTRATUS.—True; so I proceed without scruple. Don't tell me your name or your condition, if you object to such confidence; but tell me if you have relations to whom you can apply? You shake your head: well, then, are you willing to work for yourself? or is it only at the billiard-table—pardon me—that you can try to make four sous produce ten francs?

STRANGER (*musing*.)—I understand you; I have never worked yet—I abhor work. But I have no objection to try if it is in me.

PISISTRATUS.—It is in you: a man who can walk from Paris to Boulogne with twelve sous in his pocket, and save four for a purpose—who can stake those four on the cool confidence in his own skill, even at billiards—who can subsist for three days on three rolls—and who, on the fourth day, can wake from the stones of a capital with an eye and a spirit as proud as yours, has in him all the requisites to subdue fortune.

STRANGER.—Do you work?—you?

PISISTRATUS.—Yes—and hard.

STRANGER.—I am ready to work, then.

PISISTRATUS.—Good. Now, what can you do?

STRANGER (*with his odd smile*.)—Many things useful. I can split a bullet on a penknife: I know the secret tierce of Coulon, the fencing-master: I can speak two languages (besides English) like a native, even to their slang: I know every game in the cards: I can act comedy, tragedy, farce: I can drink down Bacchus himself: I can make any woman I please in love with me—that is, any woman good-for-nothing. Can I earn a handsome livelihood out of all this—wear kid gloves, and set up a cabriolet?—you see my wishes are modest!

PISISTRATUS.—You speak two languages, you say, like a native,—French, I suppose, is one of them?

STRANGER.—Yes.

PISISTRATUS.—Will you teach it?

STRANGER (*haughtily*.)—No. *Je suis gentilhomme*, which means more or less than a gentleman. *Gentilhomme* means well born, because free born,—teachers are slaves!

PISISTRATUS (*unconsciously imitating Mr Trevanion*.)—Stuff!

STRANGER (*looks angry, and then laughs*.)—Very true; stilts don't suit shoes like these! But I cannot teach: heaven help those I should teach!—Anything else?

PISISTRATUS.—Anything else!—you leave me a wide margin. You know French thoroughly;—to write as well as speak?—that is much. Give me some address where I can find you,—or will you call on me?

STRANGER.—No! Any evening at dusk I will meet you. I have no address to give; and I cannot show these rags at another man's door.

PISISTRATUS.—At nine in the evening, then, and here in the Strand, on Thursday next. I may then

have found something that will suit you. Meanwhile—(*slides his purse into the Stranger's hand*. N.B.—*Purse not very full*.)

Stranger, with the air of one conferring a favour, pockets the purse; and there is something so striking in the very absence of all emotion at so accidental a rescue from starvation, that Pisistratus exclaims,—

"I don't know why I should have taken this fancy to you, Mr Dare-devil, if that be the name that please you best. The wood you are made of seems cross-grained, and full of knots; and yet, in the hands of a skilful carver, I think it would be worth much."

Stranger (*startled*.)—Do you? do you? None, I believe, ever thought that before. But the same wood, I suppose, that makes the gibbet could make the mast of a man-of-war. I tell you, however, why you have taken this fancy to me,—the strong sympathise with the strong. You, too, could subdue fortune!

Pisistratus.—Stop; if so—if there is congeniality between us, then liking should be reciprocal. [677]
Come, say that; for half my chance of helping you is in my power to touch your heart.

Stranger (*evidently softened*.)—If I were as great a rogue as I ought to be, my answer would be easy enough. As it is, I delay it.—Adieu—on Thursday.

Stranger vanishes in the labyrinth of alleys round Leicester Square.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

On my return to The Lamb, I found that my uncle was in a soft sleep; and after an evening visit from the surgeon, and his assurance that the fever was fast subsiding, and all cause for alarm was gone, I thought it necessary to go back to Trevanion's house, and explain the reason for my night's absence. But the family had not returned from the country. Trevanion himself came up for a few hours in the afternoon, and seemed to feel much for my poor uncle's illness. Though, as usual, very busy, he accompanied me to The Lamb, to see my father, and cheer him up. Roland still continued to mend, as the surgeon phrased it; and as we went back to St James's Square, Trevanion had the consideration to release me from my oar in his galley, for the next few days. My mind, relieved from my anxiety for Roland, now turned to my new friend. It had not been without an object that I had questioned the young man as to his knowledge of French. Trevanion had a large correspondence in foreign countries, which was carried on in that language, and here I could be but of little help to him. He himself, though he spoke and wrote French with fluency and grammatical correctness, wanted that intimate knowledge of the most delicate and diplomatic of all languages to satisfy his classical purism. For Trevanion was a terrible *word-weigher*. His taste was the plague of my life and his own. His prepared speeches (or rather perorations) were the most finished pieces of cold diction that could be conceived under the marble portico of the Stoics,—so filed and turned, trimmed and tamed, that they never admitted a sentence that could warm the heart,—or one that could offend the ear. He had so great a horror of a vulgarism that, like Canning, he would have made a periphrasis of a couple of lines to avoid using the word 'cat.' It was only in extempore speaking that a ray of his real genius could indiscreetly betray itself. One may judge what labour such a super-refinement of taste would inflict upon a man writing in a language not his own to some distinguished statesman, or some literary institution,—knowing that language just well enough to recognise all the native elegances he failed to attain. Trevanion, at that very moment, was employed upon a statistical document, intended as a communication to a Society at Copenhagen, of which he was an honorary member. It had been for three weeks the torment of the whole house, especially of poor Fanny, (whose French was the best at our joint disposal.) But Trevanion had found her phraseology too mincing, too effeminate, too much that of the *boudoir*. Here, then, was an opportunity to introduce my new friend, and test the capacities that I fancied he possessed. I therefore, though with some hesitation, led the subject to "Remarks on the Mineral Treasures of Great Britain and Ireland," (such was the title of the work intended to enlighten the *savans* of Denmark;) and, by certain ingenious circumlocutions, known to all able applicants, I introduced my acquaintance with a young gentleman who possessed the most familiar and intimate knowledge of French, and who might be of use in revising the manuscript. I knew enough of Trevanion, to feel that I could not reveal the circumstances under which I had formed that acquaintance, for he was much too practical a man not to have been frightened out of his wits at the idea of submitting so classical a performance to so disreputable a scapegrace. As it was, however, Trevanion, whose mind at that moment was full of a thousand other things, caught at my suggestion, with very little cross- [678]
questioning on the subject, and, before he left London, consigned the manuscript to my charge.

"My friend is poor," said I timidly.

"Oh! as to that," cried Trevanion hastily, "if it is a matter of charity, I put my purse in your hands; but don't put my manuscript in his! If it is a matter of business, it is another affair, and I must judge of his work before I can say how much it is worth—perhaps nothing!"

So ungracious was this excellent man in his very virtues!

"Nay," said I, "it *is* a matter of business, and so we will consider it."

"In that case," said Trevanion, concluding the matter, and buttoning his pockets, "if I dislike his work, *nothing*; if I like it, twenty guineas. Where are the evening papers?" and in another moment the member of parliament had forgotten the statist, and was pishing and tutting over the

Globe or the *Sun*.

On Thursday, my uncle was well enough to be moved into our house; and on the same evening, I went forth to keep my appointment with the stranger. The clock struck nine as we met. The palm of punctuality might be divided between us. He had profited by the interval, since our last meeting, to repair the more obvious deficiencies of his wardrobe; and though there was something still wild, dissolute, outlandish, about his whole appearance, yet in the elastic energy of his step, and the resolute assurance of his bearing, there was that which Nature gives to her own aristocracy,—for, as far as my observation goes, what has been called the "grand air" (and which is wholly distinct from the polish of manner, or the urbane grace of high breeding,) is always accompanied, and perhaps produced, by two qualities—courage, and the desire of command. It is more common to a half-savage nature than one wholly civilised. The Arab has it, so has the American Indian; and I suspect it was more frequent among the knights and barons of the middle ages than it is among the polished gentlemen of the modern drawing-room.

We shook hands, and walked on a few moments in silence; at length thus commenced the Stranger,—

"You have found it more difficult, I fear, than you imagined, to make the empty sack stand upright. Considering that at least one third of those born to work cannot find it, why should I?"

Pisistratus.—I am hard-hearted enough to believe that work never fails to those who seek it in good earnest. It was said of some man, famous for keeping his word, that "if he had promised you an acorn, and all the oaks in England failed to produce one, he would have sent to Norway for an acorn." If I wanted work, and there was none to be had in the Old World, I would find my way to the New. But, to the point: I *have* found something for you, which I do not think your taste will oppose, and which may open to you the means of an honourable independence. But I cannot well explain it in the streets, where shall we go?

Stranger (*after some hesitation*.)—I have a lodging near here, which I need not blush to take you to—I mean, that it is not among rogues and castaways.

Pisistratus (*much pleased, and taking the stranger's arm*.) Come, then.

Pisistratus and the stranger pass over Waterloo Bridge, and pause before a small house of respectable appearance. Stranger admits them both with a latch-key—leads the way to the third story—strikes a light, and does the honours to a small chamber, clean and orderly. Pisistratus explains the task to be done, and opens the manuscript. The stranger draws his chair deliberately towards the light, and runs his eye rapidly over the pages. Pisistratus trembles to see him pause before a long array of figures and calculations. Certainly it does not look inviting; but, pshaw! it is scarcely a part of the task, which limits itself to the mere correction of words.

Stranger (*briefly*.)—There must be a mistake here. Stay!—I see,—[He turns back a few pages, and corrects with rapid precision an error in a somewhat complicated and abstruse calculation.]

Pisistratus (*surprised*.)—You seem a notable arithmetician.

Stranger.—Did I not tell you that I was skilful in all games of mingled skill and chance? It requires [679]
an arithmetical head for that: a first-rate card-player is a financier spoilt. I am certain that you could never find a man fortunate on the turf, or at the gaming-table, who had not an excellent head for figures. Well, this French is good enough apparently: there are but a few idioms, here and there, that, strictly speaking, are more English than French. But the whole is a work scarce worth paying for!

Pisistratus.—The work of the head fetches a price not proportioned to the quantity, but the quality. When shall I call for this?

Stranger.—To-morrow. [And he puts the manuscript away in a drawer.]

We then conversed on various matters for nearly an hour; and my impression of this young man's natural ability was confirmed and heightened. But it was an ability as wrong and perverse in its directions or instincts as a French novelist's. He seemed to have, to a high degree, the harder portion of the reasoning faculty, but to be almost wholly without that arch beautifier of character, that sweet purifier of mere intellect—*the imagination*. For, though we are too much taught to be on our guard against imagination, I hold it, with Captain Roland, to be the divinest kind of reason we possess, and the one that leads us the least astray. In youth, indeed, it occasions errors, but they are not of a sordid or debasing nature. Newton says that one final effect of the comets is to recruit the seas and the planets by a condensation of the vapours and exhalations therein; and so even the erratic flashes of an imagination really healthful and vigorous deepen our knowledge and brighten our lights; they recruit our seas and our stars. Of such flashes my new friend was as innocent as the sternest matter-of-fact person could desire. Fancies he had in profusion, and very bad ones; but of imagination not a *scintilla*! His mind was one of those which live in a prison of logic, and cannot, or will not, see beyond the bars: such a nature is at once positive and sceptical. This boy had thought proper to decide at once on the numberless complexities of the social world from his own harsh experience. With him the whole system was a war and a cheat. If the universe were entirely composed of knaves, he would be sure to have made his way. Now this bias of mind, alike shrewd and unamiable, might be safe enough if accompanied by a lethargic temper; but it threatened to become terrible and dangerous in one who, in default of imagination, possessed abundance of passion: and this was the case with the young outcast. Passion, in him,

comprehended many of the worst emotions which militate against human happiness. You could not contradict him, but you raised quick choler; you could not speak of wealth, but the cheek paled with gnawing envy. The astonishing natural advantages of this poor boy—his beauty, his readiness, the daring spirit that breathed around him like a fiery atmosphere—had raised his constitutional self-confidence into an arrogance that turned his very claims to admiration into prejudices against him. Irascible, envious, arrogant—bad enough, but not the worst, for these salient angles were all varnished over with a cold repellant cynicism, his passions vented themselves in sneers. There seemed in him no moral susceptibility; and, what was more remarkable in a proud nature, little or nothing of the true point of honour. He had, to a morbid excess, that desire to rise which is vulgarly called ambition, but no apparent wish for fame, or esteem, or the love of his species; only the hard wish to succeed, not shine, not serve,—succeed, that he might have the right to despise a world which galled his self-conceit, and enjoy the pleasures which the redundant nervous life in him seemed to crave. Such were the more patent attributes of a character that, ominous as it was, yet interested me, and yet appeared to me redeemable,—nay, to have in it the rude elements of a certain greatness. Ought we not to make something great out of a youth under twenty who has, in the highest degree, quickness to conceive and courage to execute? On the other hand, all faculties that can make greatness contain those that can attain goodness. In the savage Scandinavian, or the ruthless Frank, lay the [680]
germs of a Sidney or a Bayard. What would the best of us be, if he were suddenly placed at war with the whole world? And this fierce spirit *was* at war with the whole world—a war self-sought, perhaps, but it was war not the less. You must surround the savage with peace, if you want the virtues of peace.

I cannot say that it was in a single interview and conference that I came to these convictions; but I am rather summing up the impressions which I received as I saw more of this person, whose destiny I had presumed to take under my charge.

In going away, I said, "But, at all events, you have a name in your lodgings: whom am I to ask for when I call to-morrow?"

"Oh, you may know my name now," said he, smiling: "it is Vivian—Francis Vivian."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

I remember one morning, when a boy, loitering by an old wall, to watch the operations of a garden spider, whose web seemed to be in great request. When I first stopped, she was engaged very quietly with a fly of the domestic species, whom she managed with ease and dignity. But just when she was most interested in that absorbing employment, came a couple of May-flies, and then a gnat, and then a blue-bottle,—all at different angles of the web. Never was a poor spider so distracted by her good fortune! She evidently did not know which godsend to take first. The aboriginal victim being released, she slid half-way towards the May-flies; then one of her eight eyes caught sight of the blue-bottle! and she shot off in that direction;—when the hum of the gnat again diverted her; and in the middle of this perplexity, pounce came a young wasp in a violent passion! Then the spider evidently lost her presence of mind; she became clean demented; and after standing, stupid and stock-still, in the middle of her meshes, for a minute or two, she ran off to her hole as fast as she could run, and left her guests to shift for themselves. I confess that I am somewhat in the dilemma of the attractive and amiable insect I have just described. I got on well enough while I had only my domestic fly to see after. But now that there is something fluttering at every end of my net, (and especially since the advent of that passionate young wasp, who is fuming and buzzing in the nearest corner!) I am fairly at a loss which I should first grapple with—and, alas! unlike the spider, I have no hole where I can hide myself, and let the web do the weaver's work. But I will imitate the spider as far as I can; and while the rest hum and struggle away their impatient, unnoticed hour, I will retreat into the inner labyrinth of my own life.

The illness of my uncle, and my renewed acquaintance with Vivian, had naturally sufficed to draw my thoughts from the rash and unpropitious love I had conceived for Fanny Trevanion. During the absence of the family from London, (and they stayed some time longer than had been expected,) I had leisure, however, to recall my father's touching history, and the moral it had so obviously preached to me; and I formed so many good resolutions, that it was with an untrembling hand that I welcomed Miss Trevanion at last to London, and with a firm heart that I avoided, as much as possible, the fatal charm of her society. The slow convalescence of my uncle gave me a just excuse for discontinuing our rides. What time Trevanion spared me, it was natural that I should spend with my family. I went to no balls or parties. I even absented myself from Trevanion's periodical dinners. Miss Trevanion at first rallied me on my seclusion with her usual lively malice. But I continued worthily to complete my martyrdom. I took care that no reproachful look at the gaiety that wrung my soul should betray my secret. Then Fanny seemed either hurt or disdainful, and avoided altogether entering her father's study; all at once, she changed her tactics, and was seized with a strange desire for knowledge, which brought her into the room to [681]
look for a book, or ask a question, ten times a-day. I was proof to all. But, to speak truth, I was profoundly wretched. Looking back now, I am dismayed at the remembrance of my own sufferings: my health became seriously affected; I dreaded alike the trial of the day and the anguish of the night. My only distractions were in my visits to Vivian, and my escape to the dear circle of home. And that home was my safeguard and preservative in that crisis of my life. Its atmosphere of unpretending honour and serene virtue strengthened all my resolutions; it braced me for my struggles against the strongest passion which youth admits, and counteracted the evil vapours of that air in which Vivian's envenomed spirit breathed and moved. Without the influence of such a home, if I had succeeded in the conduct that probity enjoined towards those in whose

house I was a trusted guest, I do not think I could have resisted the contagion of that malign and morbid bitterness against fate and the world which love, thwarted by fortune, is too inclined of itself to conceive, and in the expression of which Vivian was not without the eloquence that belongs to earnestness, whether in truth or falsehood. But, somehow or other, I never left the little room that contained the grand suffering in the face of the veteran soldier, whose lip, often quivering with anguish, was never heard to murmur; and the tranquil wisdom which had succeeded my father's early trials, (trials like my own,) and the loving smile on my mother's tender face, and the innocent childhood of Blanche, (by which name the Elf had familiarised herself to us,) whom I already loved as a sister,—without feeling that those four walls contained enough to sweeten the world, had it been filled to its capacious brim with gall and hyssop.

Trevanion had been more than satisfied with Vivian's performance—he had been struck with it. For though the corrections in the mere phraseology had been very limited, they went beyond verbal amendments—they suggested such words as improved the thoughts; and, besides that notable correction of an arithmetical error, which Trevanion's mind was formed to over-appreciate, one or two brief annotations on the margin were boldly hazarded, prompting some stronger link in a chain of reasoning, or indicating the necessity for some further evidence in the assertion of a statement. And all this from the mere natural and naked logic of an acute mind, unaided by the smallest knowledge of the subject treated of! Trevanion threw quite enough work into Vivian's hands, and at a remuneration sufficiently liberal to realise my promise of an independence. And more than once he asked me to introduce to him my friend. But this I continued to elude—heaven knows, not from jealousy, but simply because I feared that Vivian's manner and way of talk would singularly displease one who detested presumption, and understood no eccentricities but his own.

Still Vivian, whose industry was of a strong wing, but only for short flights, had not enough to employ more than a few hours of his day, and I dreaded lest he should, from very idleness, fall back into old habits, and reseek old friendships. His cynical candour allowed that both were sufficiently disreputable to justify grave apprehensions of such a result; accordingly, I contrived to find leisure in my evenings to lessen his *ennui*, by accompanying him in rambles through the gas-lit streets, or occasionally, for an hour or so, to one of the theatres.

Vivian's first care, on finding himself rich enough, had been bestowed on his person; and those two faculties of observation and imitation which minds so ready always eminently possess, had enabled him to achieve that graceful neatness of costume peculiar to the English gentleman. For the first few days of his metamorphosis, traces indeed of a constitutional love of show, or vulgar companionship, were noticeable; but one by one they disappeared. First went a gaudy neckcloth, with collars turned down; then a pair of spurs vanished; and lastly, a diabolical instrument that he called a cane—but which, by means of a running bullet, could serve as a bludgeon at one end, and concealed a dagger in the other—subsided into the ordinary walking-stick adapted to our peaceable metropolis. A similar change, though in a less degree, gradually took place in his [682] manner and conversation. He grew less abrupt in the one, and more calm, perhaps more cheerful, in the other. It was evident that he was not insensible to the elevated pleasure of providing for himself by praiseworthy exertion—of feeling for the first time that his intellect was of use to him, *creditably*. A new world, though still dim—seen through mist and fog, began to dawn upon him.

Such is the vanity of us poor mortals, that my interest in Vivian was probably increased, and my aversion to much in him materially softened, by observing that I had gained a sort of ascendency over his savage nature. When we had first met by the roadside, and afterwards conversed in the churchyard, the ascendency was certainly not on my side. But I now came from a larger sphere of society than that in which he had yet moved. I had seen and listened to the first men in England. What had then dazzled me only, now moved my pity. On the other hand, his active mind could not but observe the change in me; and, whether from envy or a better feeling, he was willing to learn from me how to eclipse me, and resume his earlier superiority—not to be superior chafed him. Thus he listened to me with docility when I pointed out the books which connected themselves with the various subjects incidental to the miscellaneous matters on which he was employed. Though he had less of the literary turn of mind than any one equally clever I have ever met, and had read little, considering the quantity of thought he had acquired, and the show he made of the few works (chiefly plays) with which he had voluntarily made himself familiar, he yet resolutely sate himself down to study; and though it was clearly against the grain, I augured the more favourably from tokens of a determination to do what was at the present irksome for a purpose in the future. Yet, whether I should have approved the purpose—had I thoroughly understood it—is another question! There were abysses, both in his past life and in his character, which I could not penetrate. There was in him both a reckless frankness and a vigilant reserve. His frankness was apparent in his talk on all matters immediately before us; in the utter absence of all effort to make himself seem better than he was. His reserve was equally shown in the ingenious evasion of every species of confidence that could admit me into such secrets of his life as he chose to conceal: where he had been born, reared, and educated; how he came to be thrown on his own resources; how he had contrived, how he had subsisted, were all matters on which he seemed to have taken an oath to Harpocrates, the god of silence. And yet he was full of anecdotes of what he had seen, of strange companions, whom he never named, but into whose society he had been thrown. And, to do him justice, I remarked that, though his precocious experience seemed to have been gathered from the holes and corners, the sewers and drains of life, and though he seemed wholly without dislike to dishonesty, and to regard virtue or vice with as serene an indifference as some grand poet who views them both merely as ministrants to his art, yet he

never betrayed any positive breach of honesty in himself. He could laugh over the story of some ingenious fraud that he had witnessed, and seem insensible to its turpitude; but he spoke of it in the tone of an unreproving witness, not of an actual accomplice. As we grew more intimate, he felt gradually, however, that *pudor*, or instinctive shame, which the contact with minds habituated to the distinctions between wrong and right unconsciously produces,—and such stories ceased. He never but once mentioned his family, and that was in the following odd and abrupt manner,—

"Ah!" cried he one day, stopping suddenly before a print-shop, "how that reminds me of my dear, dear mother."

"Which?" said I eagerly, puzzled between an engraving of Raffaelle's "Madonna," and another of "The Brigand's Wife."

Vivian did not satisfy my curiosity, but drew me on in spite of my reluctance.

"You loved your mother, then?" said I, after a pause.

"Yes, as a whelp may a tigress."

"That's a strange comparison." [683]

"Or a bull-dog may the prizefighter, his master! Do you like that better?"

"Not much; is it a comparison your mother would like?"

"Like!—she is dead!" said he, rather falteringly.

I pressed his arm closer to mine.

"I understand you," said he, with his cynic repellant smile. "But you do wrong to feel for my loss. I feel for it; but no one who cares for me should sympathise with my grief."

"Why?"

"Because my mother was not what the world would call a good woman. I did not love her the less for that—and now let us change the subject."

"Nay; since you have said so much, Vivian, let me coax you to say on. Is not your father living?"

"Is not the Monument standing?"

"I suppose so,—what of that?"

"Why, it matters very little to either of us; and my question answers yours!"

I could not get on after this, and I never did get on a step farther. I must own that, if Vivian did not impart his confidence liberally, neither did he seek confidence inquisitively from me. He listened with interest if I spoke of Trevanion, (for I told him frankly of my connexion with that personage, though you may be sure that I said nothing of Fanny,) and of the brilliant world that my residence with one so distinguished opened to me. But if ever, in the fulness of my heart, I began to speak of my parents, of my home, he evinced either so impertinent an *ennui*, or assumed so chilling a sneer, that I usually hurried way from him, as well as the subject, in indignant disgust. Once especially, when I asked him to let me introduce him to my father—a point on which I was really anxious, for I thought it impossible but that the devil within him would be softened by that contact—he said with his low, scornful laugh—

"My dear Caxton, when I was a child, I was so bored with 'Telemachus,' that, in order to endure it, I turned it into travesty."

"Well."

"Are you not afraid that the same wicked disposition might make a caricature of your Ulysses?"

I did not see Mr Vivian for three days after that speech; and I should not have seen him then, only we met, by accident, under the Colonnade of the Opera-House. Vivian was leaning against one of the columns, and watching the long procession which swept to the only temple in vogue that Art has retained in the English Babel. Coaches and chariots, blazoned with arms and coronets—cabriolets (the brougham had not then replaced them) of sober hue, but exquisite appointment, with gigantic horses and pigmy "tigers," dashed on and rolled off before him. Fair women and gay dresses, stars and ribbons—the rank and the beauty of the patrician world—passed him by. And I could not resist the compassion with which this lonely, friendless, eager, discontented spirit inspired me—gazing on that gorgeous existence in which it fancied itself formed to shine, with the ardour of desire and the despair of exclusion. By one glimpse of that dark countenance, I read what was passing within the yet darker heart. The emotion might not be amiable, nor the thoughts wise, yet, were they unnatural? I had experienced something of them—not at the sight of gay-dressed people, of wealth and idleness, pleasure and fashion; but when, at the doors of parliament, men who have won noble names, and whose word had weight on the destinies of glorious England, brushed heedlessly by to their grand arena; or when, amidst the holiday crowd of ignoble pomp, I had heard the murmur of fame buzz and gather round some lordly labourer in art or letters. That contrast between glory so near, and yet so far, and one's own obscurity, of course I had felt it—who has not? Alas, many a youth not fated to be a Themistocles, will yet feel that the trophies of a Miltiades will not suffer him to sleep! So I went up to Vivian, and laid my

hand on his shoulder.

"Ah!" said he, more gently than usual, "I am glad to see you—and to apologise—I offended you the other day. But you would not get very gracious answers from souls in purgatory, if you talked to them of the happiness of heaven. Never speak to me about homes and fathers! Enough, I see [684] you forgive me. Why are you not going to the opera? *You* can!"

"And you too, if you so please. A ticket is shamefully dear, to be sure; still, if you are fond of music, it is a luxury you can afford."

"Oh, you flatter me if you fancy the prudence of saving withholds me! I did go the other night, but I shall not go again. Music!—when you go to the opera, is it for the music?"

"Only partially, I own: the lights, the scene, the pageant, attract me quite as much. But I do not think the opera a very profitable pleasure for either of us. For rich idle people, I dare say, it may be as innocent an amusement as any other, but I find it a sad enervator."

"And I just the reverse—a horrible, stimulant! Caxton, do you know that, ungracious as it will sound to you, I am growing impatient of this 'honourable independence!' What does it lead to?—board, clothes, and lodging,—can it ever bring me any thing more?"

"At first, Vivian, you limited your aspirations to kid gloves and a cabriolet—it has brought you the kid gloves already, by-and-by it will bring the cabriolet!"

"Our wishes grow by what they feed on. You live in the great world—you can have excitement if you please it—I want excitement, I want the world, I want room for my mind, man! Do you understand me?"

"Perfectly—and sympathise with you, my poor Vivian; but it will all come. Patience! as I preached to you while dawn rose so comfortless over the streets of London. You are not losing time—fill your mind, read, study, fit yourself for ambition. Why wish to fly till you have got your wings? Live in books now: after all, they are splendid palaces, and open to us all, rich and poor."

"Books, books!—ah, you are the son of a bookman! It is not by books that men get on in the world, and enjoy life in the meanwhile."

"I don't know that; but, my good fellow, you want to do both—get on in the world as fast as labour can, and enjoy life as pleasantly as indolence may. You want to live like the butterfly, and yet have all the honey of the bee; and, what is the very deuce of the whole, even as the butterfly, you ask every flower to grow up in a moment; and as a bee, the whole hive must be stored in a quarter of an hour! Patience, patience, patience!"

Vivian sighed a fierce sigh. "I suppose," said he, after an unquiet pause, "that the vagrant and the outlaw are strong in me; for I long to run back to my old existence, which was all action, and therefore allowed no thought."

While he thus said, we had wandered round the Colonnade, and were in that narrow passage that runs from Piccadilly into Charles Street, in which is situated the more private entrance to the opera; and close by the doors of that entrance, two or three young men were lounging. As Vivian ceased, the voice of one of these loungers came laughingly to our ears.

"Oh!" it said, apparently in answer to some question, "I have a much quicker way to fortune than that; I mean to marry an heiress!"

Vivian started, and looked at the speaker. He was a very good-looking fellow. Vivian continued to look at him, and deliberately, from head to foot; he then turned away with a satisfied and thoughtful smile.

"Certainly," said I gravely, (construing the smile,) "you are right there; you are even better-looking than that heiress-hunter!"

Vivian coloured; but before he could answer, one of the loungers, as the group recovered from the gay laugh which their companion's easy coxcombry had excited, said,—

"Then, by the way, if you want an heiress, here comes one of the greatest in England; but instead of being a younger son, with three good lives between you and an Irish peerage, one ought to be an earl at least to aspire to Fanny Trevanion!"

The name thrilled through me—I felt myself tremble—and, looking up, I saw Lady Ellinor and Miss Trevanion, as they hurried from their carriage towards the entrance of the opera. They both recognised me, and Fanny cried,—

"You here! How fortunate! You must see us into the box, even if you run away the moment after."

"But I am not dressed for the opera," said I, embarrassed. [685]

"And why not?" asked Miss Trevanion; then, dropping her voice, she added, "Why do you desert us so wilfully?"—and, leaning her hand on my arm, I was drawn irresistibly into the lobby. The young loungers at the door made way for us, and eyed me, no doubt, with envy.

"Nay!" said I, affecting to laugh, as I saw Miss Trevanion waited for my reply. "You forget how little time I have for such amusements now,—and my uncle—"

"Oh, but mamma and I have been to see your uncle to-day, and he is nearly well—is he not, mamma? I cannot tell you how I like and admire him. He is just what I fancy a Douglas of the old day. But mamma is impatient. Well, you must dine with us to-morrow—promise!—not *adieu*, but *au revoir*," and Fanny glided to her mother's arm. Lady Ellinor, always kind and courteous to me, had good-naturedly lingered till this dialogue, or rather monologue, was over.

On returning to the passage I found Vivian walking to and fro; he had lighted his cigar, and was smoking energetically.

"So this great heiress," said he smiling, "who, as far as I could see—under her hood—seems no less fair than rich, is the daughter, I presume, of the Mr Trevanion whose effusions you so kindly submit to me. He is very rich, then? You never said so, yet I ought to have known it: but you see I know nothing of your *beau monde*—not even that Miss Trevanion is one of the greatest heiresses in England."

"Yes, Mr Trevanion is rich," said I, repressing a sigh—"very rich."

"And you are his secretary! My dear friend, you may well offer me patience, for a large stock of yours will, I hope, be superfluous to you."

"I don't understand you."

"Yet you heard that young gentleman as well as myself; and you are in the same house as the heiress."

"Vivian!"

"Well, what have I said so monstrous?"

"Pooh! since you refer to that young gentleman,—you heard, too, what his companion told him,—'one ought to be an earl, at least, to aspire to Fanny Trevanion!'"

"Tut! as well say that one ought to be a *millionnaire* to aspire to a million!—yet I believe those who make millions generally begin with pence."

"That belief should be a comfort and encouragement to you, Vivian. And now, good-night,—I have much to do."

"Good-night, then," said Vivian, and we parted.

I made my way to Mr Trevanion's house, and to the study. There was a formidable arrear of business waiting for me, and I sate down to it at first resolutely; but, by degrees, I found my thoughts wandering from the eternal blue-books, and the pen slipped from my hand, in the midst of an extract from a Report on Sierra Leone. My pulse beat loud and quick; I was in that state of nervous fever which only emotion can occasion. The sweet voice of Fanny rang in my ears; her eyes, as I had last met them, unusually gentle—almost beseeching—gazed upon me wherever I turned; and then, as in mockery, I heard again those words,—"One ought to be an earl, at least, to aspire to"—Oh! did I aspire? Was I vain fool so frantic?—household traitor so consummate? No, no! Then what did I under the same roof?—why stay to imbibe this sweet poison, that was corroding the very springs of my life? At that self-question, which, had I been but a year or two older, I should have asked long before, a mortal terror seized me; the blood rushed from my heart, and left me cold—icy cold. To leave the house! leave Fanny!—never again to see those eyes—never to hear that voice!—better die of the sweet poison than of the desolate exile! I rose—I opened the windows—I walked to and fro the room: I could decide nothing—think of nothing; all my mind was in an uproar. With a violent effort at self-mastery, I approached the table again. I resolved to force myself to my task, if it were only to re-collect my faculties, and enable them to bear my own torture. I turned over the books impatiently, when, lo! buried amongst them, what met my eye—archly, yet reproachfully? the face of Fanny herself! Her miniature was there. It had [686] been, I knew, taken a few days before, by a young artist whom Trevanion patronised. I suppose he had carried it into his study to examine it, and so left it there carelessly. The painter had seized her peculiar expression—her ineffable smile—so charming, so malicious; even her favourite posture,—the small head turned over the rounded Hebe-like shoulder—the eye glancing up from under the hair. I know not what change in my madness came over me; but I sank on my knees, and, kissing the miniature again and again, burst into tears. Such tears! I did not hear the door open—I did not see the shadow steal over the floor; a light hand rested on my shoulder, trembling as it rested. I started—Fanny herself was bending over me!

"What is the matter?" she asked tenderly. "What has happened?—your uncle—your family—all well? Why are you weeping?"

I could not answer; but I kept my hands clasped over the miniature, that she might not see what they contained.

"Will you not answer? Am I not your friend?—almost your sister? Come, shall I call mamma?"

"Yes—yes; go—go."

"No, I will not go yet. What have you there?—what are you hiding?"

And innocently, and sister-like, those hands took mine; and so—and so—the picture became visible! There was a dead silence. I looked up through my tears. Fanny had recoiled some steps, and her cheek was very flushed, her eyes downcast. I felt as if I had committed a crime—as, if

dishonour clung to me; and yet I repressed—yes, thank Heaven! I repressed the cry that swelled from my heart, that rushed to my lips—"Pity me, for I love you!" I repressed it, and only a groan escaped me—the wail of my lost happiness! Then, rising, I laid the miniature on the table, and said, in a voice that I believe was firm—

"Miss Trevanion, you *have* been as kind as a sister to me, and therefore I was bidding a brother's farewell to your likeness; it *is* so like you—this!"

"Farewell!" echoed Fanny, still not looking up.

"Farewell—*sister*! There—I have boldly said the word; for—for"—I hurried to the door, and, there turning, added, with what I meant to be a smile—"for they say at home that I—I am not well; too much for me this; you know mothers will be foolish; and—and—I am to speak to your father to-morrow; and—good-night—God bless you, Miss Trevanion!"

REPUBLICAN FIRST-FRUITS.

[687]

[10]

When reviewing, in last month's Magazine, the accumulated French novels of the summer, we reserved two, partly on account of incompleteness and tardy arrival, but chiefly as worthy of a separate notice. They belong to a branch of literature not much cultivated in France of late years, but which revives and flourishes by favour of recent convulsions, and of the present feverish political atmosphere of the country. Political satire, even in the gay disguise of fiction, was not quite a safe venture during the reign of Louis Philippe the king. Bearing in mind certain arbitrary infractions of the liberty of the press, it might well have proved a dangerous one under the rule of Cavaignac the dictator. Nevertheless, here are two books of sharp jests, that must be caustic to the cuticle of the heroes and votaries of the republican regime. In style different, their aim is identical: it is nothing less than an exposure of the faults, follies, and deceptions of the French republic. One is comedy, the other broad farce; whilst the latter plunges into burlesque, the former rarely oversteps the limits of polished satire, and often but faithfully depicts—with altered names, but with scarcely a touch of caricature—scenes and personages in the great serio-comic drama enacting in France since February last. There can be no dispute as to the comparative merits of the books, nor, indeed, can a comparison be instituted between them. *Jérome Paturot* has, in some parts, almost the weight of history, and it would not be surprising to see it hereafter so referred to. It is the work of a man of acknowledged talent, an esteemed and experienced writer, a member of the legislative chamber both before and since the expulsion of the King of the French. If occasionally rather diffuse, M. Louis Reybaud is always witty and shrewd: he is an acute observer; and, to crown our praise, he is evidently of stanch Tory principles. There is a strong good sense, a calm contempt of cant and of pseudo-liberalism, a stripping, whipping, and pickling of humbug, in his *Jérome Paturot*, at any time agreeable to behold, but peculiarly refreshing just now, by its contrast with the folly, hypocrisy, and fanaticism of many of his countrymen. We are glad to find there still are Frenchmen capable of thinking and writing so soundly and sensibly—a fact which, with every disposition to judge the nation favourably, recent events have almost made us doubt. "*Jérome Paturot in quest of the best possible Republic*" is more than witty, spirited, and amusing. Its strong good sense and sledge-hammer truths may and must influence, in a right direction, the minds of many of its French readers. Should any of these be so obtuse as not fully to appreciate Jérome's sly wit and pungent epigrams, to them *Monsieur Bonardin* addresses himself, secure of comprehension: him every one will understand. The dramatised narrative of his misadventures, commencing on the morrow of the republic's proclamation, and comprised in thirteen decades, was doubtless suggested by the perusal of *Paturot*, and this the anonymous author tacitly acknowledges, rather than attempts to conceal. He chooses his hero in the same respectable trade to which Jérome devoted his time and industry, when the ambitious cravings of his restless youth had subsided, and before increasing wealth, the epaulets of a captain of nationals, and the glitter of a citizen-king's court, turned him from the paths of commerce, to climb an eminence whence he finally got a fall. Paturot and Bonardin are both *bonnetiers*, or hosiers—venders of unpoetical white nightcaps, pointed and tasselled, and of other wares woven of cotton. Either on account of the prosaic associations [688] suggested by these useful manufactures, or for some other reason, to us unknown, the *bonnetier* is a favourite character with French writers when they wish to portray a good, simple-hearted, steady-going, pusillanimous Parisian burgess. Bonardin is all this: a bachelor and an epicure, he leads a monotonous but happy existence in the society of Babet and Criquet, his housekeeper and clerk; loves his dinner, his bed, and his ease; and, although a corporal in the national guard, has attained the mature age of fifty-five in profound ignorance of the process of loading and firing a musket. In short, he is the last man in the world to make or meddle with the revolution, whose passive victim, from the mere fact of his lot being cast in Paris, he unfortunately becomes. Paturot is another sort of character. Originally simple enough, his wit has been sharpened by deceptions and reverses. Although to many of our readers M. Reybaud's former works[11] are already well known, we briefly sketch, for the use of those who have not met with them, the career of Jérome Paturot previously to the advent of the republic. Aspiring, as a young man, to higher occupations than the sale of cottons, he refused a partnership with his uncle, a thriving

hosier, to dabble in literature, art, journalism, and various unlucky speculations. Reclaimed at last, he settled down to stockings; married Malvina, a warm-hearted, ready-witted, high-spirited grisette, who had long shared his precarious fortunes; throve apace, went to court, was elected deputy, and at last, by extravagance and mismanagement, found himself ruined, and was fain to retire into a provincial nook, to vegetate upon the wretched salary of a petty government appointment. Here, soured by misfortune, he grumbled himself into republicanism. But when the republic came, he, the only pure and genuine "republican of the eve" in the town, was elbowed aside by mushroom "republicans of the morrow," and deprived of his place; whereupon his wife sent him to Paris, to recover it or get a better one, and followed him herself, after bringing about, by an active canvass and clever manœuvres, the election to the National Assembly of one Simon —an honest, ignorant miller, with a strong arm, a thick head, and a sonorous voice—at whose house the Paturots had occasionally paused for refreshment in their country walks, and through whom Malvina reckons on advancing her husband's interests, and on commanding a vote in the Chambers.

At Paris, Paturot meets an old friend, Oscar, an artist, remarkable for a large beard and a small talent, and for a vanity that nothing can intimidate. In his society, and in the intervals of his place-hunting—to all appearance a fruitless chase—Jérome begins a course of "Life under the Republic," his rambles and adventures serving as pegs whereon to hang cutting satire of the anomalies and absurdities of the new order of things. At first he is greatly struck by the gay aspect of the town.

"Paris was in continual festival—its busy life exchanged for complete idleness. Eager for amusement, the crowd quitted the workshop, to pick and choose amongst the pastimes offered them. These were abundant; archery, games at the ring, lotteries in the open air—a perpetual fair. It seemed a new Cocaigne, and a people exempt from all cares for the future. Happy shepherds! fortunate sheep! Theological divertisements for those; for these a free field and plenteous pasture. Thus were the parts distributed in this eclogue worthy of Gessner. Now and then, it is true, there were a few more fireworks than were ordered, and some of the illuminations were not quite spontaneous; but these were imperceptible blemishes in a glorious picture. In pursuit of an idea, I was tempted to think I had found it realised on my path without trouble or effort, and as a gift of circumstances.

"Nevertheless I had my doubts, my fears, that this apparent joy was a mask to mysterious [689] sufferings. In these joyous cries and bursts of enthusiasm, there was a something harsh and artificial, which roused my suspicions. At the bottom of this feverish activity, I sought labour, serious labour—the health of the soul and the bread of the body—and I found it not. These men, so ardent in their rejoicings, daily borrowed from the commonwealth a portion of its substance, giving nothing in return. Could this last? Did they themselves think it could? The inquiry was worth making. I addressed myself to persons of all ranks and classes. The problem was simple enough. If the republic was really the joy and pride of France, it of course insured the happiness of individuals."

The result of Jérome's inquiries was that the joy was on the surface, not in the heart. The spectacle he had before him was the pitiable one of a people getting drunk upon its own acclamations, raising a senseless clamour to drown the fiend of misery, which approached their door with swift and certain step. Already the bony foot of the monster was on many a threshhold. Paturot questioned a banker. "Alas!" was the reply,—"see you not what occurs? Twenty first-class banking-houses unable to meet their engagements; others will follow. Those who continue to pay decline business and announce their winding up. Before two months there will be no cashing a bill in all Paris. Every body is suspected—you, I, the bank, the treasury. Credit is lost, confidence extinguished." This was discouraging; but Jérome, not satisfied with one testimony, passed on to a manufacturer. "Manufactures!" said this man, a republican of the very first water—"you ask the state of manufactures, citizen! you might as well ask after a dead man's health. I employed two thousand workmen; now I employ one hundred, and only for humanity's sake do I keep them. Our country asked us to make her a present of two hours' work a-day. We sacrificed our interest to a principle, and did so. But two hours' work is a loss of ten per cent, and as my average gain was only five, you understand I am obliged to stop my looms. If the public would pay a better price for our stuffs, well and good; but there seems little chance of that. Poor customers, citizen,—a parcel of ruined men. For half-nothing I would be off to America, with my foremen and my patents." The fundholder's account of the matter was no better. "Buy my stock?" said he to his interrogator —"shall have it cheap. My fives cost me 122, and my threes 84: I had confidence, sir—the word explains every thing. Now the threes are at 34, and the fives at 50. I have railway shares of all the lines—Orleans, North, Rouen, &c. God knows the hard cash I paid for them! To-day they are worth the paper: here they are, blue, green, and red. I would as soon have shares in the Mississippi. I had treasury bonds—cash lent, payable at will; I reckoned on it. Door shut. Come another day, my good man, and we will see what we can do. If you are in a hurry, go on 'Change. You will get 500 francs for 1000." Heart-sick, Paturot descended the social scale, but the song was every where the same. "I fought in July and in February," said the shopkeeper; "I helped to take the Louvre and the Tuileries; I was seen upon the barricades, musket in hand. What is my reward? a shop full of goods, and an empty till. For two months past, not a purchaser. Debtors will not pay, and creditors will be paid." As a last forlorn hope, Jérome accosted an artisan. "You want to know my opinion, citizen? You shall have it, in two words. The thing is a failure, and must be done over again. 'Lend a hand to the Revolution,' they said to us, 'and this time you shall not be forgotten.' Very good; word passed, bargain accepted. In a turn of the hand, the thing is done. Here are your goods, where's your money? There the difficulty began. 'Let us organise labour,'

they exclaimed at the Luxembourg. Very well; organise, citizens—take your time. The workman has his savings, he will wait. Three days, four days, pass in speeches, embraces, mutual congratulations. The workman has deputed comrades who sit upon the benches of the peers; it is always an honour, if it does not fill the belly. He takes patience, and forgets himself for the general good, until a voice is heard from the Luxembourg saying, 'We are going to try to organise [690] labour.' The deuce, says the workman; the first day they organise, and now they try to organise; that is not like progress. Meanwhile, he is on the street, more pinched than ever. Little by little his money goes, and his credit too. He returns to his workshop; door shut, nothing doing. He tries another; same answer. Whilst they 'tried to organise,' work had disappeared. I am wrong—nominal work was still to be had—alms in the guise of labour. Sooner break my arm than have recourse to it."

The reader will recognise in these passages exact statements of facts. The artisan's last reference is, of course, to the national workshops, whither we shall presently accompany M. Reybaud's hero. The disease of the social body, of which Paturot's inquiries gave him warning, soon became too prevalent for concealment; and, as usual in such cases, a host of quacks started up, puffing their panaceas. This, however, was not till the self-appointed, but more regular physicians of the Republic had made desperate attempts at a cure. Attempts and quackeries were alike recorded in the journals of the day. M. Reybaud writes a chronicle, and deserves our gratitude for its lucid and pointed style. The first prescription of the lawful practitioner was a national loan, to be subscribed at par. On reflection, however, the drug was thought too expensive, the electuary did not advance beyond the state of a project, and, of course, the patient was no better. The next remedy was a wooden one, but none the worse for that. "It was resolved to apply to the diseased organs a portion of the crown-forests, millions of ash and birch trees—antiquated elms, and historical limes—all the vegetable riches of the country! What treasury would not be saved at this price? The responsible doctor could not doubt success; he hugged himself for the bright idea. Well! heaven, jealous of his genius, frustrated his combinations. Unfortunately, the forests could not be applied to the patient's relief in their natural state. The ash-trees positively refused to enter the public cash-box in the form of an essence; the birches were equally obstinate, the elms no less so. It was necessary to transmute them into metal, and there was the difficulty. With time, the thing might have been done; but what avails distant succour to a dying man?" Other plans were then suggested; decree followed decree with startling rapidity, but without avail; distress gained ground, and the crisis reached its height. Entire streets closed their shops and counting-houses. Time-honoured names found their way into the gazette; some of their owners nobly sustaining the shock, others yielding to despair and rushing to suicide. It was a frightful and unexpected scene of ruin, which surprised the financial world in the midst of the abuse of credit, and of a fever of speculation.

"How arrest the evil? What dyke oppose to this growing devastation? There was no lack of saviours—they swarmed; nor of miraculous plans—the walls were covered with them. Every day hundreds of individuals presented themselves, offering to contract with the country for a supply of felicity. In their eyes, all this misfortune was but a mistake; to remedy it they had sure balsams and magic charms. It was a new profession that suddenly started up, that of saviour of the country, with or without government guarantee."

The quacks were the leaders of the clubs, several of which were visited by Oscar and Paturot; and Jérome was surprised to find how little freedom of discussion was allowed amongst men professing universal equality. Contradiction to the great orator of the hour and place was usually a signal for the expulsion of the rash offender, unless the follower of Fourier interposed, and expressed his willingness to enter the lists of argument. Cabet and the Icarians are capitally shown up. At the end of the discussion, which more resembled a lecture, the pontiff of the community produced a packet of letters, received from the colony where his Utopian schemes were to be carried out, and read extracts to his admiring auditors, interlarding them with reflections of his own. "Father," the despatch began, "all goes well; fraternity intoxicates us. We cannot sleep at night for the mosquitoes; but, like every thing else, these insects are in common: [691] that thought consoles us."

'Poor dear children!'

"We have been visited by a great drought; it was common to us all. Grass failed for the flocks, and meat for man. But with fraternity all is light—even our diet. Yesterday morning we went to draw water from the Tair. The river was dry; we got nothing but locusts."

'Divine! pastoral! like a page of the Bible.'

"To-day a tribe of Sioux paid us a neighbourly visit. We invited them to join our brotherhood. They scalped two of our brethren. Father, this concerns us greatly. Two scalped and the others not. Where is the equality? They should have scalped us all."

'Touching scruple!'

"You are expected here with the liveliest impatience, and will be received with open arms. We run short of shirts; hasten to send us some, or we shall find ourselves in the condition of a primitive people. Father, bless your children.

"The Colony of the Tair."

There is more caricature in this than M. Reybaud generally permits himself. The reading of the despatch from the communist pioneers was followed by a collection, whose announcement nearly cleared the room, and whose result was pitifully small, the enthusiasm of the assembly having expired upon the road from the lips to the pocket. Jérome departed in disgust. He was scarcely better pleased at the next club he visited, whose orator harped perpetually upon one string, whence it was impossible to detach him. "Let us associate all men's capital, labour, and talent," said he emphatically. "It is the salvation and reconciliation of all interests." Jérome, who had always disliked "those sententious aphorisms which resemble pompous signs before empty shops," could not forbear an interruption, and requested the speaker to explain his words. But it was impossible to drag the socialist from his formula. His reply was a repetition of the same nonsense in other words. "Do what I would, I could not detach him from these common-place and pompous generalities. A controversy ensued, and I tried to bring it round to the boreal crown and the cardinal aromas. He refused to follow; and at last, finding himself hard pressed, he made me the offer of a ministry of progress. If there had been no door, I certainly should have jumped out of window." After a visit to Louis Blanc at the Luxembourg, Paturot repaired to the national workshops, whose administration occupied the park and pavilions of Monceaux.

"The following problem being given:—How to realise the least possible work with the greatest possible number of workmen;

"And supposing it is desired to discover the institution, existing or to exist, which shall most completely fulfil the end proposed;

"The solution will necessarily be—

THE NATIONAL WORKSHOP.

"Never perhaps did a fact of this nature present itself, especially with such proportions. Before us, it had occurred to no one to confound alms with work. Nobody ever thought of cloaking alms with the appearance of a useless labour. In a few individual cases of misery, this way of concealing the donor's hand may leave some illusion to him who receives; but the assistance afforded by the public treasury to an entire army, to a hundred thousand men, admits of no doubt as to its nature. It is nothing more or less than English pauperism in the rudimental state."

Jérome had heard Oscar speak of these national workshops, one of whose brigades contained, according to the artist's account, the flower of Parisian society—five sculptors, twelve painters, and a whole company of authors. One of the sculptors had fixed his own task at twenty-five pebbles a-day. Monday he carried them from right to left; on Tuesday from left to right, and so on. The twenty-five pebbles had already brought him in seventy-five francs, three francs a pebble, and in time he hoped to get them up to a napoleon a-piece. Each workman received two francs a-day when employed; one franc when idle. Eight francs a-week were guaranteed to him, at work or not. Paturot, who doubted Master Oscar's details, resolved to use his own eyes, and set out for [692] Monceaux. The gates were besieged by discontented workmen, clamorous to see the director, who was in no haste to show himself. Work was the cry, on account of the additional franc gained by a day of nominal labour. And work there was none for three-fourths of the sixty thousand men (subsequently 120,000) then upon the roll of the national workshops. And even when the director, to save the park gates from destruction, made his appearance and heard their complaints, they still were hard to please. They would find terrace-making at the Champ de Mars:—they were tired of that. They might break stones at Asnières;—many thanks; it spoiled their hands. Would they condescend to plant early potatoes in the fields of St Maur? They should have the eating of them when ripe. The offer was treated with contempt. At last they were suited. A nurseryman at Ville d'Avray was to deliver a lot of saplings to plant upon the Boulevards, in lieu of those trees planted after the revolution of 1830, which just began to afford an appearance of shade when they were swept away by that of 1848. It was a pleasant walk to Ville d'Avray, across the Bois de Boulogne and by St Cloud; and the national workmen set out, two hundred and fifty in number. The nurseryman was astounded at their arrival. He had already hired two carts, for fifteen francs, to convey the two hundred and fifty acacias, which were carefully packed in mould and matting. Torn from their envelopes, they were shouldered by the workmen. On the way back to Paris, rain came on, and at Sevres a halt was called: the trees were piled by the roadside, and the bearers crowded the wine-houses. Paturot and Oscar, who had accompanied them on their walk, entered the tavern patronised by Comtois and Percheron, in whom M. Reybaud typifies the Parisian populace. Comtois was a giant, strong as a horse, and gentle as a lamb; Percheron, weaker of arm, was stronger of head, and far more glib of tongue. "The one represented the strength and goodness of the people, the other its turbulence and causticity." One was resistance, the other restless progress. These two men, who thereafter frequently figure in the book, attracted Paturot's particular attention. A few bottles of wine won their hearts; they proposed his health, and offered to elect him deputy at the next election. Speeches followed, and bitter complaints of a government that neglected the workman. Percheron was then called upon for a song, and gave parodies of the *Marseillaise* and of the *Mourir pour la Patrie*, which he converted into *Nourris par la Patrie*. When he came to the last couplet of the *Marseillaise*, his comrades called out for the flag accompaniment.

"'As at the *Français*, Percheron! as at the *Français*!

"'Really! What epicures! Nothing but the best will serve you, it seems. Well, my boys, you shall be satisfied.'

"At the same time he arranged a couple of napkins in the fashion of a flag, draping himself with

them picturesquely; then, rolling his eyes in their orbits, he threw himself on his knees, and assumed the airs of a Pythoness who has diligently studied posture before her mirror."

The parodies, rich in thieves' slang, at an end, and the bottles empty, the grateful pensioners of the national workshops resumed their march, cutting practical jokes, and cudgel-playing with the acacias, which were considerably deteriorated by the proceeding. "Such," says Jérome Paturot, "was the end of this memorable day, during which Oscar and myself were enabled to appreciate a national workshop and the services it rendered. The account was easily made up. Two hundred and fifty men had carried two hundred and fifty saplings. Two francs for each man's day's work, and three francs for each acacia, made five hundred francs on the one hand, and seven hundred and fifty on the other. Total cost, twelve hundred and fifty francs. Not one of the plants survived the consequences of the breakfast, notwithstanding which there was the expense of planting them, and afterwards that of digging them up. Double work, double charges. Such were the national workshops; such the profits of the institution."

The allusion in the tavern-scene to Mademoiselle Rachel is not the only cut administered by M. Reybaud to the tragedy-queen of the French republican stage. [693]

Jérome and Oscar, strolling one evening down the Rue Richelieu, found a crowd at the theatre doors. The Provisional Government treated the people to the play. The whole mass of tickets was divided amongst the twelve mayors of Paris, who distributed them in their *arrondissements*. But somehow or other a considerable number had got into the hands of the ticket merchants, and for twenty francs Paturot and his companion obtained a couple of stalls. The play over, the hour of the *Marseillaise* arrived.

"The tragedian approached the foot-lamps, a tricoloured flag in her hand. Her manner of singing the republican hymn at once carried away and revolted the hearer. It was like the roar of the lioness urging her male to the combat. The tone was not of our period; its energy and ferocity had no sufficient motive. It breathed vengeance—where was the injury to revenge? conquest—and where the territory to conquer? Even as an artistical study, the effect should have been more measured, more restrained. That effect was nevertheless great, and was felt by every one in the theatre. Under the flash of that glance and the power of that voice, a sort of low shuddering ran along the benches, and was broken only by a universal acclamation. The enthusiasm sustained itself thus to the last couplet, which was of itself a scene and a *tableau*."

The song over, a workman in a blouse leaped upon the stage, bent his knee before the actress, and presented her with a bouquet of choice flowers and a paper. The manager, at the demand of the audience, read the latter aloud. It was the following acrostic in honour of Rachel:—

R eine de l'empire magique,
A vous ce don de l'ouvrier;
C harmez-nous par votre art magique,
H éroïne au royal cimier,
E t chantez d'un accent guerrier
L' hymne ardent de la république.

This apropos piece of gallantry drew down thunders of applause, to which the members of the Provisional Government there present contributed their share. But Paturot had recognised, to his great surprise, in the bouquet-bearer, the smart young scamp of whom he had purchased his admission, and whom he had noticed as being evidently a leading character amongst the not very reputable fraternity of ticket-mongers. Curious to penetrate the secret of his sudden metamorphosis, he followed him, and overheard his conversation with his colleagues. The bouquet had cost fifty francs, the acrostic five, flowers of literature being cheaper under the republic than those of the hothouse. Mitouflet's comrades are bewildered by his extravagance, until he divulges the secret that—government pays. "Happy nation!" exclaims Jérome, "whom a benevolent government finds in bread and tragedies! What more can it desire?"

No class of society escapes M. Reybaud's satire. Under the title of "The Victims of Events," he devotes a chapter to the authors, artists, and actors whom the revolution has deprived of bread. They deserve their fate, he maintains; they have abandoned the true for the worship of false gods, they have dealt in maleficent philters instead of wholesome medicines; they have used their power to mislead and corrupt, not to guide and rightly direct, those who pinned their faith on their performances. They were mischievous quacks, not conscientious physicians. The literary sufferers are the first whom he exhibits. "Some employed history as a die, and struck with it a coin of very base metal." Take that, M. Dumas. "Others fomented violent instincts in the bosom of the masses, and invited them to sacrilegious revolts, exhibiting only the impurities of civilisation, and conducting the people to anger by the road of disgust." This, we need hardly say, is levelled at the Sue school. But the names of these men, one day so loud in the ears of the multitude, the next were drowned in the tumult of revolutions. "To fill the cup of bitterness to the brim, it was not honour alone that remained on this calamitous field of battle. The bank-notes shared the same fate. Who would have predicted this, in those opulent days, when a piece of gold was found at the end of every line, like the natural product of a seemingly inexhaustible mine? Who would have foretold it in those hours of success, amidst the intoxications of luxury, and in the indulgence of a thousand caprices worthy an Eastern prince? Every road was then strewed with emeralds, every path covered with rubies. There was no style of living that Imagination, with its fairy fingers, could not sustain. She gave her favourites every thing—coaches and lackeys, open house, and a prince's retinue. How remote is that happy time! What a falling off in that Asiatic [694]

existence! Where are the emeralds? where the rubies? The bank-note is a figment; gold a chimera. Money and glory have gone down into the same tomb.... But the man of style was not easy to vanquish. He braved neglect, and, deeming himself a necessary element in the world's economy, he set to work again—only, following the example of the modern divinities, he took care to transform himself. Hitherto, politics had appeared to him of secondary importance, and he had abandoned them to colourists of an inferior grade. Events had rendered them worthy of the great pens of the age. 'Aha!' said the man of style—'Aha! they force us to it: very well, they shall see. We lived quietly in the sanctuary of art, asking but sequins and perfumes of the external world. Provided the sherbet was cool and the amber bright, what cared we for the rest? But now they besiege us in our favourite asylum. Distress is at the door, pressing and menacing. To arms, then, to institute a new system of politics.' And the man of style entered the arena of politics, ferula in hand, and spur on heel." But only to encounter a lamentable break-down. It is pretty evident whom M. Reybaud had in view when making this sketch, here greatly abridged, but which is very exact and amusing in its details, and must be particularly gratifying to Alexander Dumas. He then takes up the painters, and exposes the system of mutual puffing and hired criticism. The comedian has his turn: "But lately he reigned and laid down the law. Each note of his voice was a priceless treasure; his gestures were current coin. For him the bank had not enough notes, nor fame enough trumpets. The mob crowded round him, when he walked abroad, as round a prince of the blood. Vienna and Petersburg disputed him; the two worlds were his domain. How believe that such an idol should one day be hurled from his pedestal? Nevertheless it came to pass. He beheld vacant benches and an empty treasury. He had been improvident, and misery sat down by his hearth. Perhaps he then remembered how he had defied fate, and squandered wealth; how he had abused every thing—his health and his talent, the public and himself. Had he not given into that vein of falsehood and monstrosity, which made the theatre a school of perversity, and art an instrument of disorder? Had he not degraded the stage by creakings of snuff-boxes and misplaced hiccups? Had he not ridiculed, in a celebrated type, instincts the most sacred and worthy of respect? Such excesses escape not punishment." There is much truth in this. But is it a fact, that Frederick Lemaitre (here evidently selected as the type of his profession) has thus suddenly lost his popularity and sunk into poverty? The last time we saw his name in a French theatrical feuilleton, his successful appearance in a new piece was recorded. Has he not also, since the revolution, drawn crowds to witness his performance of Robert Macaire, the piece to which M. Reybaud more particularly alludes, and which was prohibited under the monarchy, because Lemaitre, in acting the part of the swindler Robert, used to make himself up to resemble Louis Philippe, and introduced unpleasant hits at the King of the French? There is no question, however, that Lemaitre is an instance of the prostitution of great talents. With more respect for himself and for the public, he might have aspired to a high place in the profession, with one of whose lower walks he has all his life remained contented.

Meanwhile, secret hands were at work preparing a movement, of which the national workshop was to be the chief instrument. One morning, when stone-breaking at the Porte Maillot, [695] Percheron took Comtois aside to inform him that the clubs had decided on an outbreak. Comtois does not at first relish the idea, and is anxious to return to his hammer and pebbles, but Percheron, who, by reason of his superior intelligence, is one of six workmen to whom the plan has been communicated, bewilders the simple giant by the sunny prospects he exposes. This time it is the people who will reap the profits of the revolution. No more kid gloves and varnished boots; the blouse will be the passport to the good things of this life. No more wages. All Frenchmen are to be partners. An immense association; real equality; the workman well dressed, well fed, well housed, and always with twenty-five francs in his pocket, guaranteed by the state. The *bourgeois*, the rich man, is to be entirely abolished. Under pain of death, no one is to have more than a hundred francs in his possession. Costly furniture, plate, carriages, liveries, fine houses, jewellery, statues, pictures—all are to be suppressed. Poor stupid Comtois, venturing to inquire what will become of servants, jewellers, coach-makers, &c., &c., is forthwith snubbed by his smarter comrade. "They will do something else; there is to be work for every body." The communists have found an apt scholar in Percheron. Comtois reflects, admits they can always break stones, and agrees to place himself, upon the following Monday, at the orders of the conspirators. Upon that day (the famous 15th May) the fate of the Poles is to be discussed in the National Assembly; and, under colour of a demonstration in their favour, a clean sweep is to be made of the representatives of the people.

There had been so much talk about this debate, that Madame Paturot resolved to witness it, and by great exertions she obtained a ticket. She could no longer reckon on Simon for admission, the ungrateful miller having passed over to the enemy, and yielded himself captive to the fleshpots and flatteries of the "Provisional." Jérome, who had a presentiment of danger, urged her not to go, the more so as she would have to go alone, for he could get no order. But the exgrisette, all courage and confidence, laughed at the notion of danger, despised caution, and betook herself to the Chamber. Paturot and Oscar sauntered on the Boulevards. Nothing indicated a disturbance, until they reached the Porte St Denis. There the scene changed as suddenly as at shifter's whistle. A multitude of heads covered the Boulevard, green branches forming above them an undulating canopy of verdure. The throng moved steadily in one direction: songs and cries broke from its bosom. The name of Poland was predominant. Oscar caught the infection and repeated the cry, "*Vive la Pologne!*" In vain Paturot remonstrated. The artist's beard bristled with excitement. He had passed seven years of his childhood in the same room with a portrait of Poniatowski taking his famous leap into the Elster. After that, would Jérome have him forget Poland? Forbid it, heaven! And "*Vive la Pologne!*" "The column advanced, with its leafy trophies—the clubs, the national workshops, (Comtois and Percheron in the van,) with flags and banners,

cards in their hatbands, and other rallying signs. There was a certain degree of order. Here and there, at street corners, were seen the great leaders of the manifestation, presidents of clubs, or persons to whom captivity had given celebrity, encouraging their men by word and gesture, now by a short speech, or apropos cheer, then by a shake of the hand. Oscar knew all these heroes of revolt, these princes of the prison." And knowing them, the impetuous artist was at least convinced that Poland was only the pretext. He ceased his ill-advised hurras, and resumed the part of a mere observer. As the column advanced, the shops shut. The air was full of menacing sounds. Thousands of Poles and Italians, bearing the banners of their respective countries, joined the mob. Uniforms abounded, officers' epaulets were not rare: even those corps charged with the police of the city contributed their quota to the concourse. The multitude pressed forward with the confidence of people who dispose of an empire. The chiefs of the insurrection were not men to enter the field unadvisedly, and their countenances betrayed a consciousness of strength. [696] Their passage afforded evidence of a vast complicity. They advanced, without obstacle or impediment, even to the very doors of the Assembly. A few bayonets upon the bridge leading to the palace were overthrown in an instant, and the building was forthwith surrounded by furious groups. The gates were burst by Comtois and his companions: the Assembly was invaded. "A shameful page in our history!" exclaims M. Reybaud. "A sad and fatal commencement! Time itself cannot efface the stain. Upon the roll of history will remain recorded the fact, worthy of a barbarian horde, that, during three hours, an Assembly, chosen by the voices of the whole nation, was left exposed, defenceless, to the outrages of turbulent scholars, and to the contact of impure adventurers."

Uneasy about his wife, Jérome Paturot tried to enter the house, but one of the insurgents replaced the usual guardian of the gate, and demanded the card of his club. No admission without proof of his belonging to the Droits de l'Homme, or the Conservatory, or the Palais National. So Jerome waited outside. Suddenly a cry was raised, "To the Hotel de Ville!" and there was an instant rush in that direction. Oscar, who hitherto had watched for Malvina at one entrance of the Chamber, whilst his friend stood sentry at the other, could resist no longer. He had a relapse of the revolutionary vertigo.

"To the Hotel de Ville!" shouted the mob.

"Hurra for the Hotel de Ville!" repeated Oscar. "It is not exactly the way to the land of the Jagellons; but what matter? What a curious people! Nothing will serve them but to take the Hotel de Ville every week."

And away went Oscar to share in the capture. The rescue had come, and the mob was expelled from the Chamber. Jérome, who could see nothing of Malvina, returned to his lodgings in great alarm. After a while a porter brings him a letter. It is from Madame Paturot, giving, in the well-known *grisette*-dialect, an account of her adventures, written down in the interval between the expulsion of the rioters and the resumption of the sitting. It is about ten times as long as could be written in the time, but it is necessary to narrate what passed within the Chamber, as well as what occurred without; and no one is more capable than Malvina. In her picturesque and popular style, she gives a graphic bulletin of the strange events she has witnessed. The recital acquires additional interest, when we remember that M. Reybaud is a member of the Assembly, and was doubtless present at the scene described. After a certain amount of satirical gossip touching the appearance of the Assembly, dress of the members, and the like, Malvina proceeds to *the* event of the day: "A black-coated orator occupied the tribune, recalling the memories of the Empire, and dwelling warmly on the exploits of the Polish lancers, when a formidable noise made itself heard. It seemed to come sometimes from without, sometimes from beneath the ground. I began to think coiners had established themselves in the palace vaults, or that the Allies had re-entered Paris to blow up the bridge of Jena. The noise had nothing sustained or regular,—it was in great bursts, followed by sudden silence. It is best to tell things as they are, my dear; no use flattering people. The first impression the Assembly experienced was disagreeable enough: there were some of the elect of the people, who may not have admitted it to themselves, but who would have liked to be elsewhere. A mere matter of preference! A deputy is a man, after all, and the roar at the door of the palace had nothing very soothing. However, the first emotion did not last; the sentiment of duty overcame it. They sat down and waited the event. I don't deny they listened less to Poland than to what passed outside, but their bearing was becoming, and their countenance good. You may believe me, for I am a judge."

Presently crash went the door, and there entered a legion of ruffians in blouses. The spectators' galleries and the body of the house were alike invaded. All the doors gave way, and the Chamber was thronged. The atmosphere was infected by the obscene multitude, reeking with wine and tobacco. Filthy flags were waved over the heads of the deputies. The vilest language was heard; [697] the utmost confusion prevailed; not one of the intruders seemed to know why he was there, or what he came to do. The president was under a kind of arrest, guarded on one side by an artillery-man with drawn sabre, on the other by a ruffian dressed as a workman; and every moment the banners of the clubs were waved over his head. Sometimes he was almost pushed out of his arm-chair by the popular orators, who got astride upon its back, or stood upon his table. "The representatives," Madame Paturot speaks, "kept their seats, and did the Roman senator very tolerably. The rioters did not meddle much with them, except with two or three, who had scuffles with the insurgent leaders. Simon was one of those. His seat was under the gallery, and an insurgent, risking a perilous leap from the elevation, alighted upon his shoulders. Our miller was not accustomed to such treatment. A sack of flour—well and good; but a man was too much. He took this one by the collar, and shook him nearly to death. The fellow bellowed for

assistance, but Simon's strength deterred interference, and the affair went no further. Others of the elect of the people were less fortunate, and received at the hands of their constituents a new baptism, not prescribed by the constitution. What then, Jerome? Who loves well chastises well. Thus did these sovereigns of the street testify their affection." The orator's tribune was besieged by the chiefs of the insurrection—all anxious to speak. It was continually assaulted and taken; one speaker pulled down, and another taking his place, to be, in his turn, expelled. Those who succeeded in making themselves heard, proposed absurdities. One clamoured for Poland; another would levy an impost of a thousand millions, to be paid by the rich; a third declared a traitor to his country whosoever should cause the drums to beat alarm; a fourth notified to the Assembly that it was then and there dissolved. This last announcement raised a hurricane. "The mob no longer shouted—it roared. The president still protesting, his arm-chair was carried by assault. In an instant every thing was swept away. The *bureau* of the Assembly was filled with workmen, who assumed heroic postures, stamped upon and broke every thing. The representatives could do nothing in this scene of devastation. One by one they retired. The clubs remained masters of the field of battle, and the Red banner floated in the hall. The scene attained the utmost height of confusion. The clubs had the power, or thought they had, but knew not what to do with it. Lists were made out, and again destroyed. Names were proclaimed, and forthwith hissed. It was the Tower of Babel. Who can say how it would have ended but for the interference of the *mobile*? Brave *mobile*! At the very moment they were least expected, their drums resounded close at hand." The sound was enough for the rioters, who ran in every direction, and in ten minutes the hall was clear. Malvina subjoins her indignant reflections on these extraordinary scenes, casts a considerable deal of dirt upon the beards of the Provisional Government, and is curious to know what sort of fricassee Buonaparte would have made of such a set of braggarts and incapables.

Madame Paturot had borne herself with her accustomed valour in the midst of the scuffle, and was then under Simon's protection. Jerome, no longer anxious on her account, is about to retire to rest, when a tremendous noise is heard on the staircase, and Oscar rushes in, imploring shelter and concealment, and declaring himself a state criminal. He had been to the Hotel de Ville with the insurgents; Percheron and Comtois had recognised him, and, in memory of his having stood treat at Ville d'Avray, had elected him general on the spot. The Hotel de Ville taken, it was necessary to appoint a government. A party of workmen established themselves in a sumptuous saloon, on velvet cushions and rich carpets, to deliberate on this important point. Percheron had his list cut and dried in his head. It was heard with acclamation, at once adopted, and inscribed upon a slate hung against the wall. The three first names ran thus:—

> Oscar, President of the Council. [698]
> Percheron, Minister of Finance.
> Comtois, Minister at War.

Surprised by the national guards just after the issue of a decree providing for its personal comforts, the new government was suddenly broken up. Assisted by Comtois, who forced two or three doors with his shoulder, Oscar escaped, pursued by horrible visions of an army of police on his track, of capture, a dungeon, or perhaps the scaffold. With the greatest difficulty Paturot persuades him that his retreat is not an object of diligent inquiry on the part of the executive, and that, during the day's brief anarchy, too many lists of new governments have been drawn up for particular attention to be paid to that, at whose head figures the name of the crack-brained artist. As a good precaution, however, he advises Oscar to shave his beard and his head, and take a course of cold douches, measures calculated to mislead as to his identity, and to calm the effervescence of his ideas.

But Oscar is incorrigible. A mob is for him an irresistible magnet. He must join it, and, having joined it, he must swell the cry for the crotchet of the hour. For a time (a *long* time Paturot calls it, in consideration of the popular fickleness) the republic had been the ruling mania, and held undisputed sway with the multitude. Alone she waved her banners to the breeze, and filled the air with clamour, defying opposition. Suddenly a new sound was borne upon the gale, an echo of military glories not yet forgotten; a new standard was unfurled, inscribed with the names of Austerlitz and Jena. "The Empire raised its head; it had its emblems and its rallying-cries; it had also its candidates. The manifestation was sudden as it was unexpected. It had been thought that the Old Guard and the Emperor were done with: the latter slept under the granite of the Invalids; the former, sculptured on the Vendôme column, mounted spirally towards heaven. Dear and sacred memories! why disturb you by absurd pretensions? Why load you with the responsibility of ridiculous enterprises? Your greatest honour, your highest title, is your isolation in history, detached from past and future, like a terrible and luminous meteor." The people did not reason thus. They wanted change, a new toy, no matter what. Every night, from eight to ten, crowds assembled on the boulevard near the gates of St Denis and St Martin, (the old resort of the disaffected,) and animated discussions went on. Groups were formed, orators stood forth, the throng increased, the circulation was impeded, until at last the armed force appeared and the mob dispersed. For some time this was the order of every night. "Revolutionary emotions yielded the ground to imperial emotions. Vincennes was eclipsed by the fort of Ham. Was it calculation or impulse? Perhaps both: calculation on the part of the chiefs, impulse and enthusiasm on that of the people. Strange people, lovers of noise and gunpowder, who rush into the street without a motive, and fight to the death ignorant why or wherefore!"

Oscar was easily seized by the imperial mania. His dreams were of dinners at the sovereign's table, of the run of the palace, princely estates, and diamond snuff-boxes. According to him, art had never received such patronage as from Napoleon: and he greatly distressed and alarmed his

friend Jérome, by spouting under gas-lamps highly-coloured harangues concerning the marvels of the imperial palace, and of the King of Rome's baptism. As Paturot drags him away one evening from his *al-fresco* audience, they are followed and accosted by Comtois, who carries them off to a wine-house, to make an important communication to the general, as he persists in calling Oscar since the memorable day at the Hotel de Ville. The Emperor, he solemnly and mysteriously informs the friends, has arrived in Paris. His exact whereabout in the capital is not known. Some say he is in the *lanterne* at the Pantheon, examining the city with his telescope; others are positive he has gone down into the Catacombs at the head of 42,000 Indians: but the general opinion, according to Comtois, is, that he has a plan for reducing Paris in three minutes by the clock. Comtois is of such evident good faith, that Paturot tries to undeceive him, telling him the [699]
Emperor is dead. Thereupon the giant smiles contemptuously, and, when Jérome persists, he looks upon him with suspicion. Then he condescends to give the reason of his credulity. His father had served in the dragoons of the Empress, and had stood sentry a hundred times at Napoleon's door, had followed him to the wars, had never left him, in short. "Comtois,"—these had been his last words to his son—"when they tell you the Emperor is dead, answer at once 'It is a lie of the enemy. The English spread the report; it is their interest to do so.' Yes, my son, though you be alone and unsupported, always maintain he is *not* dead, and add that he will come back. In the court-yard of Fontainebleau he promised us he would, and he has never broken his promise."—"You understand, general," concluded Comtois to Oscar; "after that, there is not a word to be said. What can you have stronger than that?—a dragoon of the Empress, a mustache that grew gray in the service of the Emperor. It is authentic, at any rate." In the midst of this curious conversation, a private cab drives up to the door, and a gentleman sends in for Comtois, who presently returns, his face beaming with joy. The Emperor has inquired after him—after him, Comtois, native of Baume-les-Dames, son of a dragoon of the Empress! Who would not fight for such a man? Comtois is ready to empty his veins in his service. In a few days the coronation will take place—the Pope will come to Rheims on purpose—the Emperor has one thousand five hundred millions in his pocket to distribute to the needy, and has decided there shall be no more poor. All opposition will be in vain. Comtois is well assured England will scatter gold in Paris to raise opponents to Napoleon; but what then?—the imperialists are not without means of stimulating the people. And thereupon Comtois, after assuring himself there are no eavesdroppers, draws from under his blouse—a magnificent stuffed eagle. With this on the top of a flagstaff, and his father's uniform on his back, Comtois feels himself invincible. Paturot is unfeeling enough to inquire if he proposes exhibiting it for money. Comtois indignantly repudiates the idea. "It is our banner, sir," he says; "our banner for the great day. By it the sons of the Empire will be recognised. See the noble bird, the glorious fowl! I have already cut a pole to stick it upon. As to the tricolor flag, every body has got that. One government hands it over to another. But the eagle! the eagle is not so easily tamed; it has but one master, and that is the Emperor. The Emperor is come back, it is the eagle's turn!"

And Comtois departed, ready to brave any odds on behalf of his Emperor, and under shadow of the eagle's wing. "We have seen," says M. Reybaud, "how he understood the plot in which he was associated. This illusion was common at the time. More than one Parisian artisan, more than one villager of western France, believed he deposited in the electoral urn a vote in favour of the Emperor. The name preserved all its *prestige*, but did not delegate it. The inheritance was too heavy to support. It resembled the iron crown; none might touch it with impunity. There was much obscurity and misconception in what then occurred; more than one appeal was made to ignorance and credulity. The stuffed eagle had found a victim, the living eagle made others. Ambition played its part, and more than one personage beheld, in the perspective of the plot, visions of grand-crosses and senatorships."

We find M. Reybaud too veracious, in other parts of the book, to cast a doubt on his assertion that, in the year 1848, and in Paris, after Napoleon's coffin has been opened at Courbevoie, and his corpse deposited in the church of the Invalids, there still are to be found men sufficiently stupid and credulous to believe the Emperor alive, and to await his return. In the provinces, and especially in those most remote from the capital, we know, from actual observation, that within a very few years the Emperor's existence was an article of faith with thousands, who, like Comtois, looked upon the report of his death as a mere invention of the enemy. Although the imperial veterans are now scarcely more plentiful in France than the Peninsular heroes in this country, [700]
there still remain a sprinkling, who infect their children and grandchildren with their own superstitious fancies regarding Napoleon. The lower classes of provincial Frenchmen are not remarkable for intelligence, and they receive the traditions of the *vieux de l'Empire*, collected under the summer-porch, and in the winter-night's gossip, with a sort of semi-credence which a trifling corroborative circumstance ripens into implicit belief. The mutilated, red-ribboned relic of the Grande Armée, who tells, from beneath the shadow of the domestic vine, or from the bench at the *auberge* door, such thrilling tales of past campaigns, of Austerlitz' glory and Moscow's snows, shakes his gray head doubtingly when he hears it said that Napoleon has perished, a captive and in solitude, on a rock of the distant ocean. The gesture is not lost on the gaping bumpkins, who greedily devour the old man's reminiscences. They muse on the matter whilst tracing the next morning's furrow, or perhaps, taken next day by the greedy conscription, they meet, at the regiment, some ancient corporal who confirms the impression they have received. The traditions of the barrack-room are all imperial; how should they be otherwise? Were not those the days when every recruit went to battle with a marshal's baton in his havre-sack,—when no rank, honours, or riches were beyond the grasp of the daring and fortunate soldier? The six years' service expires; the soldier returns to his plough—an election arrives, the name of Napoleon is every where placarded—interested persons tell the newly-fledged voter, as the gentleman in the

cab told Comtois, that the *Petit Tondu* has returned to France. The *soldat-laboureur*, whose prejudices are much strengthened, and his intelligence but little brightened, by his term of military service, doubts, hopes, is bewildered, and finally, in the uncertainty, votes for a stuffed bird instead of a genuine eagle.

We have dwelt so long upon Jérome Paturot that we can afford but a few lines to his brother in hosiery. Poor Monsieur Bonardin! Never, since humanity first took to stocking-wearing, was a vender of that useful article more scurvily treated than he was by the French republic of 1848. The 25th of February beheld him a prosperous man and an ardent republican,—"a republican of the morrow," certainly, but no worse for that; four months of liberty and fraternity brought him to ruin and suicide. At first, all his anticipations are rose-coloured. Increase of trade, an unlimited demand for hosiery, must be the consequences of the new order of things. He is fully persuaded great days are coming for the renowned establishment at the sign of the Spinning Monkey. The day after the revolution he opens his shop as usual, but only to be bullied by an *ouvrier* who steps in to buy a red cap, finds none but white, curses Bonardin for a Carlist, and carries off his national guardsman's musket. Uproar recommences in the street; the shop is shut, and continues so for some days. The end of the month arrives; there are payments to be made, and M. Bonardin sends Criquet to the bank with bills for discount—first-rate paper at short date. Criquet brings them back; the best signatures no longer find cash. M. Bonardin is in all the agonies of a punctual paymaster who sees a chance of his signature's dishonour, when suddenly he is summoned to his duty as national guard. On his return, after a sleepless night and a fagging day, he has scarcely got amongst the blankets, when he is roused by voices in the street calling out, in a measured chant, for lamps at his windows.

M. Bonardin, awaking in alarm, and jumping out of bed—

What is that? (*Cries in the street, 'Des lampions! des lampions!'*) Good! here they are again with their infernal lamps! Impossible to sleep under this republic!

Voices of boys in the street.—Hallo! first floor! Spinning Monkey! Lamps! lamps!

M. Bonardin.—What a nuisance! (*calling out*)—Babet! Babet!

The boys shouting,—Lamps or candles!... break the ugly monkey's windows, if he does not light up directly!

M. Bonardin.—Lord bless me!... Babet! Babet!...

Babet, (*running in,*)—What is it, sir? [701]

M. Bonardin.—Don't you hear them? Cut a candle in eight pieces directly. Not a minute to lose!

The boys.—It's a *Carlisse*, (*Carlist.*) Hallo, there! lamps or candles!

M. Bonardin, (*in his nightgown, opening the window.*)—Directly, citizens, directly! A minute's patience!

The boys.—Ah! there's the old monkey himself! Bravo! bravo!

'D'un sang impur engraissons nos sillons!'

M. Bonardin, (*flourishing his nightcap.*)—Yes, yes, my friends, *d'un sang impur!...* Certainly, by all means; *Vive la République!*

The boys.—Vive la République! Down with the *Carlisses*! (*Babet enters with candle-ends; M. Bonardin retreats behind his bed-curtains.*) Ah! there's the monkey's wife lighting up at last. Bravo! bravo! *Vive la République!* The monkey's wife not bad-looking in her night-dress!

Babet, (*shutting the window.*)—Do you hear, sir, those ragamuffins call me your wife?

M. Bonardin.—Well! are you not flattered?

Babet.—Yes, indeed, the monkey's wife! It's flattering! They take me for an ape, then?

M. Bonardin.—If they will only let me sleep at last. Midnight already.

Babet.—Pray, sir, is this to last long? This is our sixth illumination. A whole packet of fives gone already!

M. Bonardin.—No, no, Babet—it is only the first moment. Recollect, the republic is but ten days old.... A single decade, no more.

Babet.—A proper business it has been, your decade! Alarms at every hour of the day and night; the shop shut three-quarters of the time, and no buyers when it is open! A nice decade! And then the bank, that refuses your paper; and then your bills, which you can't pay; and then ...

M. Bonardin.—Let me sleep, my poor Babet.... All that is very true; but what matter? We have got the republic; and you know as well as I do—THERE ARE NO ROSES WITHOUT THORNS."

With this trite saying, the epigraph of the book, Bonardin, a bit of a philosopher in his way, consoles himself, at the close of each disastrous decade, for the annoyances and calamities he has experienced in its course. These are countless, and of every kind. Now it is a polite note from the tax-gatherer, requesting him to pay down, in advance, the whole of the year's taxes, including

an extraordinary contribution just decreed by government. Then Criquet, who has imbibed communist principles, insists on sharing his master's profits, and M. Bonardin is afraid to refuse. Criquet, however, is glad to fall back upon his wages, on finding that, instead of profit, the shop leaves a heavy loss. Next comes a scamp of a nephew, emancipated from Clichy by the abolition of imprisonment for debt, who gets his uncle into various scrapes; and a drunken godson, one Pacot, a soldier, who knocks his sponsor under the table, on pretence of his being reactionary. Bonardin goes to Rouen to assist at a wedding, and the railway takes him into a cross-fire, the town being in full revolution. Rent-day arrives, and he sets out as usual with receipts and a canvass-bag to collect the quarter's rent from the occupants of the five upper stories of his house; but nobody pays. The workman in the attics takes the receipt and refuses the money, threatening to hang out the black flag if his landlord insists. One tenant feigns madness—another declares himself ruined—a third denies himself. Poor Bonardin returns home with a heavy heart and an empty bag. In short, his misfortunes are innumerable. He is mixed up in revolts against his will, and without his knowledge; is sent to prison, thumped with musket-buts, hidden in a cask, robbed in the national workshop. Finally, at the end of the thirteenth decade, he stands upon the bridge leading to the National Assembly, his face partly concealed by a handkerchief, singing republican songs and asking alms. None give them. "I am a proprietor, my poor man," says one; "I can give you nothing." "Impossible, my good fellow," says the next; "I am a manufacturer." "No change," says a third; "I am a shopkeeper, and I sell nothing." "Sorry for you, my friend," replies another, [702] "but I am an artist. In these times, that is as much as to tell you I have not a sou in the world." "Alas!" exclaims a fifth, "I would relieve you with pleasure, but I am a poor *employé*, and the revolution has struck off a quarter of my salary." "What ill luck!" cries Bonardin; "the revolution has ruined every body, it seems. But this is about the time when the representatives of the people repair to the National Assembly. They are generous, the worthy representatives. The millions they daily vote away sufficiently prove it. Courage! people who spend so many millions will perhaps give me a few coppers." He is mistaken; the deputies pass, but none give him any thing; whereupon he concludes they have not yet received their five-and-twenty francs. And as the republic will not give him bread, he resolves to seek water in the river, climbs the parapet, and throws himself into the Seine—thus tragically terminating the volume, which, up to that point, is a farce, both broad and long, crammed with jokes and double-entendres of various merit, but all exhibiting, in a light as unfavourable as it is true, the disastrous effects of the revolution upon the trade and prosperity of Paris.

We hoped to have included in this review the fourth volume of *Jérome Paturot*, but it has not yet reached us, only a portion of it being published. The work comes out in parts, and it is said the fourth volume will be the last of the series. In that case, it will probably close with the June revolt. If M. Reybaud likes, and dares, he may find in subsequent events abundant food for his satirical chronicle. Perhaps he will think fit to wait Cavaignac's exit before criticising his performance. There are numerous points in the brief history of the republic upon which he has not yet touched. We hope yet to accompany Jérome to the cell of an imprisoned journalist, to the court-martials upon the June insurgents, to debates in the Assembly, and to consultations in the cabinet. A retrospective flight to the days of the Convention, and an incidental inquiry into the antecedents of M. Cavaignac the father, of whose exploits the son has expressed himself so proud, were not without interest. But the subject we are especially curious to see M. Reybaud take up, is that of French journalism in 1848. He might fill a most amusing volume with an elucidation of its mysteries and rivalries; and we cannot believe, after reading the bold judgments and revelations contained in the three published volumes of *Jérome*, that he would be deterred from the task by apprehension of editorial wrath, whether expressed in the field or in the feuilleton, by a challenge or a criticism.

PROPHECIES FOR THE PRESENT. [703]

Prophecies and miracles, we are told, have long since ceased upon the earth, as permitted only, by Divine goodness, to those ages when faith was not firmly established, and revelation needed the active and visible interference of Divine influence to make its way into the heart of obstinate and denying man. This is a doctrine which, in these present times of reason, we are naturally inclined to accept. But yet there are circumstances, occurring even in our day, which sometimes surprise the imagination, and even startle that reason which is so ready to assert its supremacy. It is thus that we have regarded with much curiosity, more wonder, and an impression which it is difficult to drive away from our minds, certain strange documents relative to the most important events of modern history, which, if their authenticity be accepted, are among the most striking revelations emanating from a prophetic spirit. They appear before us avowed prophecies, coming from seemingly well-authenticated sources, and backed by such assurances in the genuineness of their antiquity, from credible mouths, as takes off from them that paulo-post-future sort of suspicion, that inevitably attaches itself to predictions, which make their appearance to the world after fulfilment. In laying them before our readers, we are able to offer some little proof, as far as it goes, in support of their authenticity; and we still call to them the attention of those who may nevertheless refuse their credence, as highly interesting documents of a strange character, relating to past, present, and even future political events. As they do, in truth, refer also to a future still to be accomplished, as well as to the present, our readers, it is to be hoped, may be

able to judge for themselves how far the predictions as to the future will bear out those which now already relate to the past, and to what, if such an expression may be pardoned, might be called the present just gone by.

Two of these revelations bear the character of direct and avowed prophecies, given *as such* by holy men, and are imbued throughout with that mystic spirit, which, however incomprehensible as regards the future, becomes clear to an extraordinary degree of distinctness when applied to the test of the past: they wear, in fact, the strange air of predictions never intended to be comprehended until after their fulfilment; as if, even although the inspired soul of certain individual men had been permitted to raise itself, in its ecstasy, from the earth into those unknown realms where past and future are confounded in eternity, and shake off for the time the mortal trammels of our limited understanding, but retain still afterwards the consciousness and the power to reveal what there it saw; yet, by some mysterious dispensation, the revelations should not be allowed to be expounded in the clearness of their truth, so as to be comprehensible to the intellects of the uninspired and undeserving herd. Why, then, should the future be revealed, it might be asked, if the revelation should serve nothing to mankind? With such deep and awful mysteries we have not to deal: we cannot answer: we are of the blind who cannot lead the blind. At all events, if these documents be forgeries—mere devices fabricated after facts—and that they cannot be so *entirely*, will be seen hereafter—certainly a degree of genius that is almost incomprehensible presided over their fabrication, with this strange stamp of vague oracular language, which is only comprehensible in its after-application.

Such are two of these prophetic writings. As they are supposed to proceed from the mouths of religious men, renowned for the sanctity of their lives, they naturally refer more to the condition of the Christian church, and to the fate of the "faithful," than immediately to political events; but yet so closely is the destiny of the faithful of the Christian world mixed up inevitably with the destiny of men and countries in general, that the political events of our day are there set down in prediction, with all the minuteness which the vague and mystic language of prophetic revelation, [704] dimly depicting what even the inspired eye can only dimly trace in cloudy vision, "through a glass darkly," is able to bestow upon detail. The third revelation assumes to be no more than an interpretation of the prophetical book of the New Testament, and repudiates all supposition of aiming at any spirit of prophecy in itself; a portion, however, of this interpretation of a part of Scripture so obscure as the book of the Revelation, is so remarkable in its application to present events, as to wear the very air of prophecy that its interpreter repudiates.

The longer and more important of the two prophecies, which have both appeared in France, and refer chiefly to events immediately connected with French history, is one popularly designated as the "Prophecy of Orval:" it has been already translated into English, and published,[12] with a preface, an introduction, and explanatory notes, chiefly referring to the authenticity of the document, and to its possession in the hands of a variety of credible and respectable persons during the whole of the present century, and some of the later years of the last. The little pamphlet has been got up with much intelligence, and apparently with a strictly conscientious spirit. We cannot here follow the editor through all the details he lays before us, to prove that the prophecy has been copied from a book printed at Luxembourg in the year 1544, and recopied, by gentlemen of standing and respectability, from copies already made, as early as the year 1792—or through all the evidence adduced, some years ago, in such respectable religious French papers as the *Invariable*, and the *Propagateur de la Foi*, accompanied by notes from the editor himself, with regard to his own personal experience, and the testimony he has received from personages worthy of the highest credit, known to himself. It may be said, however, that he communicates extracts of letters and other authorities, which, could they be forgeries, would assuredly be some of the most ingenious of the kind, even if they had any great end or aim in their fabrication; and it ought to be added, that a great part of this testimony is compiled from a *brochure* called *The Oracle for 1840*, and published by a certain Henry Dujardin in Paris, in the month of March 1840, consequently anterior, at all events, to the remarkable circumstances of the present day. On these matters we must refer our readers to the interesting little pamphlet itself. The authority upon which rests the fact that the prophecy, generally known under the title of "*Les Prévisions d'Orval*," and entitled "Certain Previsions revealed by God to a Solitary, for the Consolation of the Children of God," was actually printed at Luxembourg in the year 1544, seems every way as conclusive as possible in such matters of ancient lore; and the writer of this present paper has only to add that he himself has seen in Paris the whole prophecy, as far as it is still in existence, printed in a newspaper of the year 1839, (he *believes*, as far as his memory reaches, in the *Journal des Villes et des Campagnes*), and consequently, to his own knowledge, published to the world previously, at least, to the events of the present year; that an old English lady, upon whose faith he can implicitly rely, positively declared to him that she had it in her hands as early as the year 1802, and thus even before the crowning of Napoleon as Emperor; and that its reappearance, since the breaking out of the revolution of this year, excited so much sensation in the French capital, that measures were taken by the republican government of the day to establish a sort of *surveillance* over persons known to possess and propagate the prediction—a fact also mentioned by the editor of the English pamphlet—as conspirators against the stability of the republic. With these premises, we proceed to do no more than lay before our readers the prophecy in question, claiming for the notice that follows such credence as every man's conviction or scepticism, imagination or cooler reason, may choose to bestow.

The Abbey of Orval, from which the prediction has taken its title, was, it appears, a religious institution, situated in the diocese of Treves, on the frontiers of Luxembourg; and it is said that [705] the abbot and the monks, when they fled from their convent, during the siege of Luxembourg by

the French revolutionary army, to the "refuge" in the town, conveying a part of their archives as well as their sacred vessels with them, first communicated the *printed* copy of the *Previsions of a Solitary* of 1544 to Marshal Bender, who commanded the army, and other French gentlemen, by whom copies were then taken as a matter of curiosity, and put in circulation. Tradition at that time attributed the prediction to a monk of the name of Philip Olivarius, although the exact period of the existence of the "Solitary" does not appear to have been well known. What at present remains, or is supposed to remain, commences only with the history of Napoleon Buonaparte, although the "Oracle" of Henri Dujardin speaks of the prediction relative to the death of Louis XVI. as having excited considerable sensation among the emigrant circles of that time; and the circumstance of the absence of any events anterior to the prophecy, as it stands at present, is accounted for by a remark made in the *Propagateur de la Foi*, that, when it was discovered, at the conclusion of the last century, the copyists generally neglected to transcribe what related to the past, and contented themselves only with that portion, the accomplishment of which was still to come.

The prophecy, as will be seen, astoundingly and suspiciously minute in its details; but yet, when the predictions as to the future are considered—to our eyes at present so vague and mysterious, and still perhaps in their fulfilment, if so it should prove, as exact in detail,—it may well be imagined that the portions which now refer to the past, may in their day have appeared equally mysterious and vague. It runs as follows, as it now stands:—

"At that time a young man, come from beyond the sea into the country of Celtic Gaul, shows himself strong in counsel. But the mighty to whom he gives umbrage will send him to combat in the land of Captivity. Victory will bring him back. The sons of Brutus will be confounded at his approach, for he will overpower them, and take the name of emperor. Many high and mighty kings will be sorely afraid, for the eagle will carry off many sceptres and crowns. Men on foot and horse, carrying blood-stained eagles, and as numerous as gnats in the air, will run with him throughout Europe, which will be filled with consternation and carnage; for he will be so powerful, that God shall be thought to combat on his side. The church of God, in great desolation, will be somewhat comforted, for she shall see her temples opened again to her lost sheep, and God praised. But all is over, the moons are passed."

It must be remarked here, that the moons, continually alluded to in the prophecy, may be found, by the calculation of thirteen lunar mouths to a year, to arrive at an extraordinary accuracy of prediction as to the date of the events prophesied: those which have been mentioned above must be considered to refer probably to a period of time alluded to in the portion of the "Previsions" supposed to be lost.

"But all is over; the moons are passed. The old man of Sion cries to God from his afflicted heart; and behold! the mighty one is blinded for his crimes. He leaves the great city with an army so mighty, that none ever was seen to be compared to it. But no warrior will be able to withstand the power of the heavens; and behold! the third part, and again the third part, of his army has perished by the cold of the Almighty. Two lustres have passed since the age of desolation; the widows and the orphans have cried aloud to the Lord, and behold! God is no longer deaf. The mighty, that have been humbled, take courage, and combine to overthrow the man of power. Behold, the ancient blood of centuries is with them, and resumes its place and its abode in the great city; the great man returns humbled to the country beyond the sea from which he came. God alone is great! The eleventh moon has not yet shone, and the bloody scourge of the Lord returns to the great city; the ancient blood quits it. God alone is great! He loves his people, and has blood in abhorrence; the fifth moon has shone upon many warriors from the east. Gaul is [706] covered with men, and with machines of war; all is finished with the man of the sea. Behold again returned the ancient blood of the Cap! God ordains peace, that His holy name be blessed. Therefore shall great peace reign throughout Celtic Gaul. The white flower is greatly in honour, and the temples of the Lord resound with many holy canticles. But the sons of Brutus view with anger the white flower, and obtain a powerful edict, and God in consequence is angry on account of the elect, and because the holy day is much profaned; nevertheless God will await a return to Him during eighteen times twelve moons. God alone is great! He purifies His people by many tribulations; but an end will also come upon the wicked. At this time a great conspiracy against the white flower moves in the dark, by the designs of an accursed band; and the poor old blood of the Cap leaves the great city, and the sons of Brutus increase mightily. Hark! how the servants of the Lord cry aloud to him! The arrows of the Lord are steeped in His wrath for the hearts of the wicked. Woe to Celtic Gaul! The cock will efface the white flower; and a powerful one will call himself king of the people. There will be a great commotion among men, for the crown will be placed by the hands of workmen who have combated in the great city. God alone is great! The reign of the wicked will wax more powerful; but let them hasten, for behold! the opinions of the men of Celtic Gaul are in collision, and confusion is in all minds."

It must here be again remarked that, as regards the accomplishment of the events which follow immediately in the prophecy, the writer has himself seen this record in a printed form—since the fulfilment, it is true, but in a newspaper published in the year 1839.

"The king of the people will be seen very weak: many of the wicked will be against him; but he was *ill-seated*; and, behold! God hurls him down." How striking is the expression, "*mal assis!*" To proceed: "Howl, ye sons of Brutus! Call unto you the beasts that are about to devour you. Great God! what a noise of arms! a full number of moons is not yet completed, and, behold, many warriors are coming!"

This advance of many warriors upon the capital is an event which, according to the prophecy, must be accomplished before a full number of moons is completed, or, it would seem, within the year from the date of the outbreak of the Revolution. These warriors are not said to come from any foreign lands. May they be supposed—in accepting the truth of the prediction—to refer to the march of the national guards of the departments upon Paris, from all parts of France, at the time of the outbreak of June? or do the words remain still to be verified in a more striking manner? The period of the "ten times six moons, and yet again six times ten moons," of which mention is about to be made, is peculiarly vague and uncertain, as are the predictions, as far as time is concerned, of all the events to come. According to the calculation adopted, this period of time would be that of about nine years and a quarter. Is the accomplishment of the awful prediction that follows, to be delayed for such a space of time? An enlightened churchman has conceived that this calculation of moons refers to the past period, during which the church was oppressed, and the anger of the Lord excited in the first French Revolution, when the "measure of wrath was filled." But, then, is the desolation to come to be accomplished also, like "the advance of the many warriors," before "a full number of moons is completed"—*i. e.*, within a year? This is one of the mysterious obscurities already alluded to, which are the attributes of all prophecy, and of which time alone can give a solution—if a solution is to be given. The details relative to the more immediately ensuing events are precise enough: it is only the date of their accomplishment that seems involved in the dimness of insolvable obscurity. Thus runs the denunciation—the prediction of desolation to be poured out like another "vial of wrath" over the doomed city of Paris.

"It is done! The mountain of the Lord hath cried in its affliction unto God. The sons of Judah have cried unto God from the land of the foreigner; and, behold! God is no longer deaf. What fire [707] accompanies His arrows! Ten times six moons, and yet again six times ten moons, have fed His wrath. Woe to the great city! Behold the kings armed by the Lord! But already hath fire levelled thee with the earth. Yet the faithful shall not perish. God hath heard their prayer. The place of crime is purified by fire. The waters of the great stream have rolled on towards the sea all crimsoned with blood. Gaul, as it were dismembered, is about to reunite. God loves peace. Come, young prince, quit the isle of captivity. Listen! from the lion to the white flower! come!"

It may be well understood now why the republican government of France attaches so much importance to the fact of the propagation of this prophecy, which formally predicts the return of the last bud of the white flower, or lily of the Bourbons. Its publication was looked upon as a manœuvre of the Legitimist faction, to prepare the minds of men for the advent of Henri V., and, by exciting men's imaginations, to tend towards the accomplishment of the prediction—with the foreknowledge that hazarded predictions will often help to accomplish themselves by the very natural course of events which they, in themselves, produce. At all events, the promulgators of such a prophecy, which definitively predicted the overthrow of the republic, were to be considered as being among its enemies, and were carefully watched in their movements as such. The writer of the present paper, however, who was in Paris during the period when the "Previsions of Orval" first began to create a sensation, can confidently assert that copies were handed about, even among the silenced Legitimists, as curious and interesting documents only, and without the least pretence of that *arrière pensée*, which the government of the republic chose to ascribe to its circulation. The allusion to the "lion," is peculiarly obscure. Belgium and England are the only countries that bear a lion on their arms. A union with a daughter of the dynasty reigning in the former, can scarcely be contemplated, since the young prince alluded to is already married. A strict alliance with one or the other country—or perhaps more especially with England, as more generally typically represented by the lion—might be supposed to bear out the fulfilment of the prediction. The Orval prophecy then goes on to predict the firm establishment of the child of the "white flower" on his throne.

"What is foreseen, that God wills. The ancient blood of centuries will again terminate long struggles. A sole pastor will be seen in Celtic Gaul. The man made powerful by God will be firmly seated. Peace will be established by many wise laws. So sage and prudent will be the offspring of the Cap, that God will be thought to be with him. Thanks to the Father of Mercies, the Holy Sion chants again in her temples to the glory of one Lord Almighty."

The future previsions of the prophecy become necessarily more and more obscure; although those, which more immediately follow, are sufficiently distinct, much as their accomplishment may be a matter of very necessary doubt.

"Many lost sheep come to drink at the living spring. Three kings and princes throw off the mantle of heresy, and open their eyes to the faith of the Lord. At that time two third parts of a great people of the sea will return to the true faith. God is yet blessed during fourteen times six moons, and six times thirteen moons. But God is wearied of bestowing his mercies; and yet, for the faithful's sake, he will prolong peace during ten times twelve moons. God alone is great! The good is passed away. The saints shall suffer. The Man of Sin shall be born of two races. The white flower becomes obscured during ten times six moons, and six times twenty moons. Then it shall disappear to be seen no more. Much evil, and little good, will there be in those days. Many cities shall perish by fire. Israel then returns entirely to Christ the Lord. The accursed and the faithful shall be separated into two distinct portions. But all is over. The third part of Gaul, and again the third part and a half, will be without faith. The same will be among other nations. And behold! six times three moons, and four times five moons, and there is a general falling off, and the end of [708] time has begun. After a number, not complete, of moons, God will combat in the persons of His two just ones. The Man of Sin shall carry off the victory. But all is over! The mighty God has

placed before my comprehension a wall of fire. I can see no more. May He be blessed evermore. Amen."

Thus terminates the reputed prophecy of the Solitary of Orval. The conclusion has been supposed to imply a prediction of the end of the world; and, by the calculation of the number of as many moons as are mentioned, that event would thus take place within a period of fifty years from the present time. But it does not appear absolutely to follow that the "wall of fire" placed before the comprehension of the inspired Solitary, that he should see no more, should be referred to the "end of all things," because he has exclaimed just previously—"But all is over!" This expression he has already used before in a different sense. Any disquisition, however, upon the uncertain fulfilment of a very uncertain prophecy, would be again a discursive ramble, that would lead us much too far out of our beat.

The other French prophecy, to which allusion has been made, professes to be only of a much later date. It is said to have emanated from a Jesuit priest, who died towards the end of the last century at Bordeaux, in the "odour of sanctity," and to have been communicated by him to a novice residing with him in an establishment of the Jesuits at Poitiers, some time previous to the outbreak of the first French Revolution. It is supposed to have been transcribed and preserved by the novice, who afterwards became himself a Jesuit priest, and by him to have been given into the hands of several persons, who still possess it, or who may have in turn given circulation to it. Not much importance was attached to it until the events of the Revolution, which confirmed so many of its predictions, were accomplished; and again, since the events of the present year, it has been called to men's minds. Like the Orval prophecy, its predictions, as regards what is now past, have been wonderfully distinct, and, relative to the events of this present year, no less so. With respect to its existence previously to these latter events, the writer can also give testimony, as in the case of the Orval prophecy, that it was transcribed as far back as the year 1836, from the mouth of the *supérieure* of a convent in Lyons, who testified that she had heard it from the novice to whom it was first delivered. The authenticity of its prophetic revelations can thus be proved as far as regards the present day. It bears, in many respects, a great analogy to the Previsions of the Solitary of Orval, and the predictions it delivers coincide in most respects with the latter: but it contains distinct references to other events, of which the Orval prophecy makes no mention. As the revelation also of a holy churchman, prophetically inspired, its contents naturally refer, in a great measure, to the state of the church, or perhaps even to the condition of the order of the Jesuits alone. The whole is necessarily couched in mysterious language in this respect: and it ought, perhaps, to be premised that the "counter-revolution" alluded to refers to the triumph of the priesthood in general, or, as was before said, of the Jesuit order. The portions of this prophecy which have fallen into the writer's hands refer only to the events immediately following the fall of Napoleon; although he has been assured that, in other copies, it goes back to circumstances antecedent to the first Revolution.

"There will then be a reaction," says the portion now before us, "which shall be thought to be the counter-revolution—it will last during some years, so that people shall suppose that peace is really restored: but it will be only a patchwork—an ill-sewn garment. There will be no schism; but still the Church shall not triumph. Then shall come disturbances in France: a name hateful to the country shall be placed upon the throne. It will not be until after that event that the counter-revolution shall take place. It will be done by strangers. But two parties will first be formed in France, who will carry on a war of extermination. One party will be much more numerous than [709] the other, but the weaker shall prevail. Blood will flow in the great towns, and the convulsion shall be such that men might think the last day to be at hand. But the wicked will not prevail, and in this dire catastrophe shall perish of them a great multitude. They will have hoped to have utterly destroyed the Church; but for this they will not have had time, for the fearful crisis shall be of short duration. There will be a movement when it will be supposed that all is lost; but still all shall be saved. The faithful shall not perish; such signs will be given them as shall induce them to fly the city. During this convulsion, which will extend to other lands, and not be for France alone, Paris shall be so utterly destroyed, that when, twenty years afterwards, fathers shall walk with their children, and the children shall ask, 'Why is that desolate spot?' they shall answer, 'My children, here once stood a great city, which God destroyed for its crimes.' After this fearful convulsion, all will return to order, and the counter-revolution shall be made. Then shall the triumph of the Church be such that nothing like it shall be ever seen again, for it will be the last triumph of the Church on earth."

In one respect, at least, this prophesy has already taken a step towards fulfilment. "Two parties shall be formed in France." Does not the struggle between the Moderates and the Red-Republicans still harass the land? "They will carry on a war of extermination." Have they not already commenced it in June in the streets of Paris? "One party will be much more numerous than the other." The Moderate party is well known to have an immense majority throughout the country. "But the weaker shall prevail"—for a time, that is—goes on to say the fearful prediction. That result lies yet in the womb of fate. The probabilities of its fulfilment we shrink from investigating—the more so, as it is a conviction which has always instinctively forced itself upon our minds. In all their previsions on this subject, the two prophesies, as far as they go, perfectly agree. We do not even leave the sceptical the pleasure of finding out that "doctors differ." The collision of parties—the devouring beasts—and the eventual destruction of the "great city" in the struggle—are circumstances foretold in both, with a graphic force which gives them almost the minuteness of details relative to a history of the past. The triumph of the Church, after this great convulsion, is likewise prophesied by both. The Orval previsions, more diffuse as to general history, alone connect this event with the restoration of a Prince of the Lily. On the contrary,

however, the prediction of the Jesuit—as yet only occupied with the interests of his Church—now goes on to foretell historical events, of which the Orval prophecy makes no mention. The two do not contradict each other, but each mentions circumstances of which the other does not speak.

"These events shall be known to be at hand," continues the Poitiers prophecy, "by the sign that England shall begin to suffer throes of pain, even as it is known that the summer is nigh when the fig-tree puts forth its leaves. England shall experience a revolution, which will be of sufficient duration to give unhappy France time to breathe. Then it shall be by the assistance of France that England shall be fully restored to peace."

Certainly there appears at present no probability of any accomplishment of this part of the prediction. And, whatever vague faith we may place in our innermost hearts upon the authenticity of these prophecies, we should be very glad to find ourselves, and avow ourselves, and even proclaim ourselves, utter dupes, rather than witness the slightest approach to a fulfilment of the last paragraph of the Jesuit priest's oracular revolutions. He has given us, however, a fair chance of learning the truth of his prediction, or of giving him the lie in his coffin, by an answer, which the tradition preserved by the excellent *supérieure* of the convent of the Sacré Cœur at Lyons reports that he made, when asked as to the period of the fulfilment of his prophecies—for he had not, like the Solitary of Orval, been at all precise in his arithmetical calculations of moons, or other methods of bestowing dates, as we have seen. His answer is said [710]
to have been, that those who saw the first French Revolution, and who lived through this crisis, would bless God for having preserved them to be witnesses of the great triumph of His Church. Consequently, the events foretold ought to receive their fulfilment in a period of time within the probable life of a man born before the epoch of 1789; and thus, reckoning the "threescore years and ten" as the utmost limit of man's natural life, before the year 1859. We ourselves, and all our readers, it is to be hoped, have thus the probabilities before us of testing the powers of prophecy of the good old gentleman of Poitiers. And yet, if they are to be verified to the letter as concerns "Old England," we cannot add "May we be there to see."

Beyond these two prophecies, there are others which at the present time abound in France; but as we are unable to offer any evidence whatever as to their authenticity of antiquity, we shall not enter into their details, much less into any disquisition as to their credibility. Most of them predict the utter destruction of Paris by fire, during a convulsion occasioned by insurrection and civil war. The best known are those of Bug de Thilas, a prophet of the Pyrenees in the sixteenth century—a Breton traditionary prediction, which enters into very minute and graphic details relative to the great fire of Paris, and fixes the epoch for this disaster in the nineteenth century; and the far better known and somewhat famous *Prophétie Lorraine*, in verse, in which the same event is foretold. This latter prophecy enters into very minute poetical descriptions of the great catastrophe, and warns the Parisian that he will perish entirely by his own fault. It is more especially curious, inasmuch as a calculation has been made by a good, hearty, and sound believer in such predictions, in which it is shown that, by taking the most striking and important words of the prediction, and reckoning each letter as a number, according to its standing in the alphabet—"a" as 1, "b" as 2, "c" as 3, &c.—the sum total of all the letters, thus reckoned, will amount to eighteen hundred and forty-nine. Of course, also, the prediction made by Lady Hester Stanhope to Lamartine, as recorded by that author in his *Voyage en Orient*, and founded by herself on cabalistic and astronomical calculations, found enthusiastic commentators in France, when the poet at last reached the object of his ambition, and became a statesman, by being placed at the summit of power in the revolutionary government.

The other prediction, or rather prophetic deduction from analytical interpretations of the Book of Revelations, to which allusion has been made, is too singular not to take its place also among these supposed "foreshadowings of coming events." At the same time, we do not attempt to rank it in any way in the same category with those strange and doubtful revelations already given. It is based upon a system of reasoning and calculation: a key is given as the real and true one, for the opening of the door of mysteries of acknowledged divine origin. How far this key may be the right one or the wrong, or how far it may be permitted to use it, are, once more, subjects for disquisition into which it is not for us to enter. The contrast between the nature of the revelations of the Roman Catholic ascetics, and of those of the Protestant clergyman, is striking enough to preclude any analogy between them. On the one hand, we have confident predictions; on the other, the cool, calm, searching, calculations of a system of minute reasoning;—on the one, the supposed bestowal of the flash of light; on the other, the careful groping in the mystical darkness of sacred writings, in order with true conscience to find the right way;—on the one, the pictorial, graphic, highly-coloured language of the presumed "*divine afflatus*;" on the other, the deductions of speculative reasoning;—on the one, the supposed flame coming from above; on the other, the cautious steps planted on the earth;—in short, on the one, supposed inspiration; on the other, evident and acknowledged reason. We do not pretend to class them together; but as they all refer to the same periods of history, they find mention together in this notice.

The Rev. Robert Fleming was the Protestant minister of the Scotch churches at Rotterdam and [711]
Leyden, and afterwards of the Presbyterian church of Lothbury, during the reign of William III.; he was renowned for his piety as well as his learning, and was even much favoured by the reigning monarch. His *Discourse concerning the Rise and Fall of Papacy*, in which the prophetic deductions have been formed, was published in the year 1701. The species of mystical history of the Romish church, which forms the main subject of his work, is sought for entirely, by the author, in the prophetic enunciations of the Book of Revelations; and in order to attach a great interest to his interpretations, and the deductions thence drawn, it is necessary to accept *à priori*,

as a matter of faith, those *postulata*, which the author considers certain at his very outset, and which he sets down as incontrovertible,—namely, that "the Revelations contain the series of all the remarkable events and changes of the state of the Christian church to the end of the world;" that "The mystical Babylon *doth* typify Rome in an anti-Christian church state;" that "The seven heads of the beast *are* indubitably the seven forms of government that obtained successively among the Romans;" and that, consequently, "The grand apocalyptical question answers the great antichrist," which is thus assumed to be Papal Rome. Once more, it is not our present purpose to enter into any theological discussions: we do no more than place before our readers the curious and interesting deduction of a divine, celebrated for his piety, his learning, and his sacred research. The key with which Fleming proceeds to open the mysteries of what he calls "the dark apocalyptical times and periods," is certainly of singularly ingenious construction. He commences by entering into a proof that the different periods mentioned, of 1260 days, of forty-two months, and of "a time, times, and a half," are absolutely synchronical, and refer exactly to the same period of time, being meant to describe the duration of the anti-Christian kingdom; and that each day must be taken to mean prophetically a year, or Julian year of that age. By a similarly ingenious calculation, relative to the dates and times of days, he ascribes the period, as regards the church, to the so-called rotations of the all-enlightening sun; and as refers to the Beast, to the rotations of the unstable moon. Upon these calculations he goes on, with singularly marvellous ability, and an infinite patience of minute reckoning, to comment upon the apocalyptic prophecies. He traces thus the regular series of the prophecy, in the opening of the seven seals, which, in his application of historical events, he refers to the condition of the Christian church during the Roman empire;—of the seven trumpets, as bearing relation to the gradual growth and increase of the anti-Christian enemies of the church;—and, lastly, of the seven vials, as plagues and judgments poured out upon that Babylon, which he assumes to be "Rome Papal;" and the vials, more especially, he argues upon as types of the struggles between the Roman and the Reformed parties, each vial typifying an event, or conclusion of some new periodical attack of the former upon the latter. It is not necessary to follow the ingenious and indefatigable commentator through all his explanations of the other vials; we only refer to his deductions as bearing upon "Prophecies for the Present." Our business lies chiefly with his interpretation of the fifth vial, inasmuch as, by his system of calculation, he predicts the fulfilment of this vial for a period, which, by a singular coincidence at least, he fixes between the two dates of 1794 and 1848. It is the express mention of this latter year which naturally attracts the attention as an extraordinary coincidence, at a moment when, in that year, so many convulsions, and so many events important in the history of the world, have taken place. There is no precise prophetic deductions, however, attached by the interpreter to this latter *datum*, except that he fixes it as the period of the fall, or at least of the tottering and probable decline, of the Papal power; and, in the present wavering condition of the temporal power of the sovereign pontiff, the deduction has, at least, a singular bearing upon the events of the latter year specified. It was at the period of the former year, however, that the interpretations of Fleming, made at a time when France was in the zenith of [712] her power, and there seemed no probability whatever of their justice, excited at first a great sensation; probably at the time of their delivery they were looked upon merely as matters of interesting and patient analysis. In commenting upon the fourth vial of the Revelations, which he mentions as likely to expire about the year 1794, he says—"the pouring out of this vial on the sun must denote the humiliation of some eminent potentates, whose influence and countenance cherish and support the Papal cause. And these, therefore, may be principally understood of the houses of Austria and Bourbon." In continuing to give his opinion concerning the events connected with this vial, and much posterior to the time in which he lived, we have the following striking expressions also, which, even in their serious importance, are not without their quaint humour:—"Perhaps the French monarchy may begin to be considerably humbled about that time; for whereas the French king takes the sun for his emblem, and this for his motto—'*Nec plurìbus impar*,' he may at length, or rather his successors, and the monarchy itself, (at least before the year 1794,) be forced to acknowledge that (in respect to neighbouring potentates) he is even *singulis impar*." The extraordinary coincidence between these intimations and the date fixed by the interpreter, when the first French Revolution took place, could not fail to strike the minds of those who were acquainted with his work. Accordingly, the *Discourse* was republished in 1792, and was read and commented upon with avidity; and now that, in the year he named as 1848, another of his prophetic intimations came to be more or less exemplified, and another coincidence was destined to strike the minds of men, after the sagacious and learned interpreter had been dead nearly a century and a half, the whole discourse has been again republished in a variety of forms, and very widely circulated.

It has been "in fear and trembling" that we have ventured to approach any subject of so sacred a character, inasmuch as it refers to undeniable divine revelations, and bears upon one of the books of the Holy Scriptures: the matter, however, was so intimately connected with our present subject, that it could not be well avoided. Upon the absolute acceptance of Fleming's interpretations, and upon his assumption, *à priori*, that the "scarlet woman of Babylon" and the anti-Christ do verily typify the Papal power, we must needs be still more cautious of entering into any argument: it is not for us to reason upon the "how, when, and where" of the anti-Christian "denying spirit."

As connected with "Prophecies for the Present," the writer may yet add one other, which was known to him in Germany many years ago. The latter part of it runs as follows:—"I would not be a king in 1848. I would not be a soldier in 1849. I would not be a gravedigger in 1850." There was an awful solemnity in these last words, that always struck fearfully upon the imagination. "I would be any thing you will in 1851." Again, also, there is a vague ambiguous sense in this latter

expression, that gives a shudder to the whole frame. "What you will!" Does the term refer to future hope in better days, or is it the recklessness of despair? There were, attached to this prophecy, other remarks respecting the preceding years: they referred to the corn-blade and the vine-plant; but they have now passed too much out of the writer's memory to be exactly recorded.

Before we quit the subject of the "Prophecies for the Present," it may be as well to allude to a comparison of the coincidences between the events of the revolution of July and that of the present year, which has been ingeniously compiled by a certain M. Langlois. The analogy between the circumstances of these different epochs forms a curious page in modern history, and is not without its peculiar interest; and also, as far as the events of the earlier epoch were singularly prophetic of those of the latter, these striking coincidences may almost be said to belong to the predictions of the day.

In the elder branch of the Bourbons, the Duke de Berri, the son of Charles X., espoused a foreign princess, and had by her a son, who was regarded as the heir to the throne: in the younger, the [713] Duke of Orleans, the son of Louis Philippe I., likewise espoused a foreign princess, and had by her a son, likewise regarded as the eventual heir of the dynasty. The father of the Duke de Bordeaux was assassinated on the *13th* of February 1820; the father of the Count of Paris died by an accident on the *13th* of July 1842. In both the years preceding the fall of either monarch, the price of provisions was at an excessive height, the want was great, and the cold such that the Seine was frozen over—a circumstance which did not occur between the winters of 1829 and 1847. In both instances, the anti-liberal tendencies of the heads of the state, after most inviting promises, called forth from their best friends remonstrances upon the course they were pursuing, and warnings of an approaching crisis, which in both instances were rejected. In both instances, the last speech of the crown to the parliament assembled, contained words concerning the "culpable manœuvres," or "blind inimical passions," of the Opposition which created the discontent, and called forth the protest of several deputies, and the resolution to hold the famous banquet. The capture of the Dey of Algiers, and that of Abd-el-Kader, which immediately preceded each catastrophe, were both in vain considered as triumphs by the ministry of the day. The ordinances of July suspended the liberty of the press; an ordinance in February prohibited the banquet. In both cases these ordinances caused a commotion in the capital, and a species of presentiment of revolution on the Monday evening; on the following day the revolt broke out, and lasted during three days, commencing on the Tuesday, and terminating on the Thursday; and the power fell into the hands of the insurgents. The gendarmerie in the one case, the municipal guard —another name for the same corps—in the other, offered the chief defence of royalty, were overcome, and finally disbanded. Charles X. fell from his throne at the age of seventy-four, Louis Philippe at the same age; the one in July, the month in which the Duke of Orleans died—the other in February, the month in which the Duke de Berri was assassinated. Each monarch abdicated in favour of his grandson; each was met by the fatal cry, "*Il est trop tard*." In each case a provisional government was established, and the royal family was obliged to quit the French territory; both the monarchs sought a refuge in England. Here, however, the "coincidences" offer a striking dissimilitude. The one monarch was accompanied, in his departure, by his guards and numbers of faithful servitors—the other fled poor, wretched, and in disguise, abandoned by those who had called themselves his friends: the one shed tears on landing in the country of exile—the other hailed it with joy. In both cases, the ministers of the fallen king were impeached. In even smaller circumstances, other coincidences have been recorded. During the combats of both revolutions, the temperature was excessively warm for the season of the year—a circumstance not wholly without its weight, if the well-known barometric nature of the Parisian temperament be considered; and a few days after, in both years, an extraordinarily terrific tempest burst over the capital, obscured it for many hours in darkness, and swept down the new flag placed aloft upon the column of the Place Vendôme.

Coincidences, predictions, revelations—all may, perhaps, be looked upon, by the sceptically reasoning mind of plain matter-of-fact, with scorn. To such, then, they are here only given as curious matters of historical interest. At the same time, in the uncertainty as to the issue of the convulsions under the throes of which Europe is at present writhing, the troubled mind may surely attach itself to the obscure revelations of such strange announcements, and endeavour clearly to see its way through their dimness, without too much deserving the stigma usually attached to superstitious credulity.

SIGISMUND FATELLO. [714]

CHAP. I.—THE OPERA.

It was a November night of the year 184-. For a week past, the play-bills upon the convenient but unsightly posts that disfigure the boulevards, had announced for that evening, in conspicuous capitals, the first performance of a new opera by a popular composer. Although the season of winter gaieties had scarcely begun, and country-houses and bathing-places retained a portion of the fashionable population of Paris, yet a string of elegant carriages, more or less coroneted, extended down the Rue Lepelletier, and deposited a distinguished audience at the door of the Académie de Musique. The curtain fell upon the first act; and a triple round of applause, of which

a little was attributable to the merits of the opera, and a good deal to the parchment palms of a well-drilled *claque*, proclaimed the composer's triumph and the opera's success, when two men, entering the house at opposite sides, met near its centre, exchanged a familiar greeting, and seated themselves in contiguous stalls. Both belonged to the class which the lower orders of Parisians figuratively designate as *gants jaunes*; the said lower orders conscientiously believing primrose gloves to be a covering as inseparable from a dandy's fingers as the natural epidermis. The younger of these two men, the Viscount Arthur de Mellay, was a most unexceptionable specimen of those *lions dorés* who, in modern French society, have replaced the *merveilleux*, the *roués*, and *raffinés* of former days. Sleek of face and red of lip, with confident eye and trim mustache, his "getting up" was evidently the result of deep reflection on the part of the most tasteful of tailors and scrupulous of valets. From his varnished boot-heel to the topmost wave of his glossy and luxuriant *chevelure*, the severest critic of the mode would in vain have sought an imperfection. Born, bred, and polished in the genial atmosphere of the noble faubourg, he was a credit to his club, the admiration of the vulgar, the pet of a circle of exclusive and aristocratic dames, whose approving verdict is fashionable fame. His neighbour in the stalls, some years older than himself, was scarcely less correct in externals, although bearing his leonine honours much more carelessly. Like Arthur, he was a very handsome man, but his pale face and fair mustache contrasted with the florid cheek and dark hair of his companion. The Austrian baron Ernest von Steinfeld had acquired, by long and frequent residences in Paris, rights to Parisian naturalisation. He had first visited the French capital in a diplomatic capacity, and, after abandoning that career, had spent a part of every year there as regularly as any native *habitué* of the club Grammont, the Chantilly race-course, and the Bois de Boulogne. Although a German and a baron, he was neither coarse, nor stupid, nor smoky. He did not carry a tobacco-pipe in his pocket, or get muddled at dinner, or spit upon the floor, or participate in any other of the nastinesses common to the majority of his tribe. A nobleman in Austria, he would have been accounted a gentleman, and a highly bred one, in any country in the world. He was of old family, had been much about courts, held a military rank, possessed a castle and fine estate in the Tyrol, mortgaged to the very last *zwanziger* of their value, was somewhat *blasé* and troubled with the spleen, and considerably in debt, both in Vienna and Paris. He had arrived in the latter capital but a fortnight previously, after nearly a year's absence, had established himself in a small but elegant house in a fashionable quarter, and as he still rode fine horses, dressed and dined well, played high and paid punctually, nobody suspected how near he was to the end of his cash and credit; and that he had sacrificed the last remnant of his disposable property to provide ammunition for another campaign in Paris—a campaign likely to be final, unless a wealthy heiress, a prize in the lottery, or an unexpected legacy, came in the nick of time to repair his [715] shattered fortunes.

The second act of the opera was over. The applause, again renewed, had again subsided, and the hum of conversation replaced the crash of the noisy orchestra, the warbling of Duprez, and the passionate declamation of Madame Stolz. The house was very full; the boxes were crowded with elegantly dressed women, a few of them really pretty, a good many appearing so by the grace of gas, rouge, and costume. The curtain was no sooner down than de Mellay, compelled by the despotism of the pit to silence during the performance, dashed off at a colloquial canter, scattering, for his companion's benefit, a shower of criticisms, witticisms, and scandal, for which he found abundant subjects amongst his acquaintances in the theatre, and to which the baron listened with the curled lip and faint smile of one for whose palled palate caviar no longer has flavour, scarcely vouchsafing an occasional monosyllable or brief sentence when Arthur's gossip seemed to require reply. His eyes wandered round the house, their vision aided by the double glasses of one of those tremendous opera-telescopes by whose magnifying powers, it is said, the incipient wrinkle and the borrowed tint are infallibly detected, and the very *tricot* of Taglioni is converted into a cobweb. Presently he touched the arm of Arthur, who had just commenced an animated ocular flirtation with a blue-eyed belle in a stage-box. The baron called his attention to a box on the opposite side of the theatre.

"There is a curious group," he said.

"Oh, yes," replied de Mellay carelessly, levelling his glass for a moment in the direction pointed out. "The Fatellos." And he resumed his mute correspondence with the dame of the azure eyes.

Steinfeld remained for a short space silent, with the thoughtful puzzled air of a man who suspects he has forgotten something he ought to remember; but his efforts of memory were all in vain, and he again interrupted Arthur's agreeable occupation.

"Whom did you say?" he inquired; indicating, by a glance rather than by a movement, the group that had riveted his attention.

"The Fatellos," replied de Mellay, with a sort of surprise. "But, pshaw! I forget. You were at Venice last carnival, and they have not been twelve months at Paris. You have still to learn the affecting romance of Sigismund and Catalina: how the red knight from Franconie did carry off the Paynim's daughter,—his weapons adapted to the century—bank-notes and bright doubloons, in lieu of couched lance and trenchant blade. Why, when they arrived, all Paris talked of them for three days, and might have talked longer, had not Admiral Joinville brought over from Barbary two uncommonly large baboons, which diverted the public attention. They call them beauty and the beast—the Fatellos, I mean, not the baboons."

The persons who had attracted Steinfeld's notice, and elicited this uncomplimentary tirade from the volatile viscount, occupied one of the best boxes in the theatre. In front were two ladies,

likely to be the more remarked from the contrast their appearance offered with the Parisian style of beauty. Their jet-black hair, large almond-shaped eyes, and complexion of a rich glowing olive, betrayed their southern origin. Behind them sat a man of five-and-thirty or forty; a tall, high-shouldered, ungainly figure, with a profusion of reddish hair, and a set of Calmuck features of repulsive ugliness. His face was of an unhealthy paleness, excepting about the nose and cheekbones, which were blotched and heated; and the harsh and obstinate expression of his physiognomy was ill redeemed by the remarkably quick and penetrating glance of his small keen gray eyes.

"Do you mean to say yonder ungainly boor is the husband of one of those two beautiful women, who look as if they had stepped out of a legend of the Alhambra, or of a vintage-piece by Leopold Robert?"

"Certainly—husband of one, brother-in-law of the other. But I will tell you the whole story. Sigismund Fatello is one of those men born with a peculiar genius for money-getting, who, if deposited at the antipodes without a shoe to their foot, or a sou in their pocket, would end by [716] becoming *millionnaires*. Although little heard of in good society till a year ago, he has long been well known on the Bourse, and in foreign capitals, as a bold financier and successful speculator. Two years ago he had occasion to go to the south of Spain, to visit mines offered by the Spanish government as security for the loan of two or three of his millions. Amongst other places he visited Seville, and was there introduced to Don Geronimo Gomez Garcia Gonfalon, (and a dozen other names besides,) a queer old hidalgo, descended from Boabdil of the Bloody Crescent, or some such Moorish potentate. The don dwelt in the shadow of the Giralda, and possessed two daughters reputed fair;—you see them there—judge for yourself. With one of these Fatello fell desperately in love, and asked her in marriage. The lady, who had no wish to abandon her native land for the society of so ugly and unpleasant a helpmate, demurred. But the suitor was urgent and the papa peremptory. Old Boabdil had an immense opinion of Fatello, was dazzled by his wealth and financial reputation, and insisted on his daughter's marrying him, vowing that he himself was poor as a poet, and that if she refused she should go to a nunnery. After the usual amount of tears, threats, and promises, the marriage took place. The descendant of the Saracen made an excellent bargain for his child. Fatello, infatuated by his passion, would have agreed to any conditions, and made immense settlements on the beautiful Catalina. His father-in-law, like an old semi-African hunks as he was, pleaded poverty, hard times, forced contributions, and so forth, as excuses for giving his daughter no other portion than a few rather remarkable diamonds, and some antiquated plate dating from the kings of Granada, and better suited for a Moorish museum than a Christian sideboard. Fatello, whose dealings with the Spanish government had given him no very exalted idea of the opulence of Spanish subjects, cared not for the old boy's maravedis, and credited his plea of poverty. A few weeks afterwards, Fatello and his wife being still in Seville, Boabdil retired for his usual siesta, but not reappearing at the usual hour, a servant went to awaken him, and found him purple with apoplexy. The unfortunate Saracen never spoke again. The next day he was buried, (they lose no time in those warm latitudes); and behold, when the will was opened, he had left upwards of three millions of reals to his disconsolate daughters—about four hundred thousand francs to each of them. When the decencies had been observed in the way of mourning, and Fatello had finished his affairs, he brought his wife and her sister to Paris, took a magnificent hotel in the Faubourg St Honoré, and gave Lucullian dinners, and entertainments such as are read of in the Arabian Nights, but rarely seen in the nineteenth century."

"And were his fêtes well attended?"

"Not quite immediately. At first everybody asked who this Mr Fatello was, and nobody could tell. All sorts of queer stories were got up about him. Some said he was a Polish Jew, formerly well known in Prague, and who had commenced his fortune by attending horse-fairs. Others,—misled by his name, which has an odd Italian sound—swore he was a Lombard, continuing the financial and speculative traditions of his race. He himself claims to be of a good Alsatian family; and I believe the truth is, that his father was a small proprietor in a northern department, who sent his son to Paris, as a boy, to seek his fortune, which, by virtue of industry and arithmetic, he has been lucky enough to find. But people got tired of asking *who*, and changed the interrogation to *what*. This was much more easily answered—'The signature of Sigismund Fatello is worth millions upon every Exchange in Europe,' was the prompt reply. You know our good Parisians, or rather, you know the world in general. If John Law, or Dr Faustus, returned upon earth, with wealth proceeding from the devil or a swindle, and gave banquets and balls, their rooms would not long be empty. No more were those of Fatello, against whom, however, nothing improper was ever substantiated, except a want of ancestors,—a venial offence, in these days, to be charged [717] against a millionnaire! With a citizen king, and Jews in the chamber, *or* upon *argent* is the truest blazonry, my word for it."

"By their assistance, then, he has got into good society?" said Steinfeld.

"Into almost the best. He has not made much progress beyond the Seine; but on this side the water, he is every where in good odour. They make much of him at the Tuileries and in diplomatic circles; and in the Chaussée d'Antin, amongst the aristocracy of finance, his money gives him right to a high place. And if he plays the Amphitryon this winter in the style he did the last, there is no saying whether some of our stiff-necked countesses of the *vieille roche* may not relent, and honour his halls with their transcendental presence. His entertainments of all kinds are quite superlative; and if he be a plebeian and a brute, his wife and sister, on the other hand, are graceful as gazelles, and date from the deluge. He is an ugly-looking monster, certainly," added

the handsome viscount; "but fortune has atoned for nature's stinginess. A man may forget his resemblance to a chimpanzee, when he has millions in his strong box, one of the finest houses, and best filled stables, and prettiest wives in Paris,—when he possesses strength and health, and has every prospect of living long to enjoy the goods the gods have showered upon him."

"Wrong in the last particular,—quite wrong, my dear viscount," said a bland and unctuous voice behind de Mellay. The young men turned and found themselves face to face with a comely middle-aged personage, whose smug costume of professional black was relieved by a red ribbon in the button-hole, and who, gliding into the stall in their rear, whilst they were engrossed with their conversation, had overheard its latter sentences.

"Ha! doctor," exclaimed the viscount, "you here, and eaves-dropping! How am I wrong, most sapient and debonair of Galens?"

Dr Pilori was a physician in high practice, and of a class not uncommon in Paris,—at once a man of pleasure and a votary of science. With a fair share of talent and an inordinate one of self-conceit, he had pushed himself forward in his profession, applying himself, in conformity with the Parisian rage for rage for *spécialités*, particularly to one class of complaint. The lungs were the organ he had taken under his special protection: his word was law in all cases of pulmonary disease. He was physician to an hospital, member of the Legion of Honour, and of innumerable learned societies; his portrait graced the shop-windows of medical booksellers, whilst his works, on maladies of the lungs, occupied a prominent place on their shelves. His patients were numerous and his fees large. So far the man of science. The man of pleasure occupied a gorgeous apartment in the vicinity of the Madeleine; gave smart and frequent soirées, (as one means of increasing his connexion,) where singers of the first water gave their notes in payment of his advice. He was frequently at the opera,—occasionally at the Café de Paris,—lived on bad terms with his wife, and on good ones with a ballet-dancer, and was in request as an attendant at duels amongst the young dandies of the clubs, with most of whom he was on a footing of familiarity amounting almost to intimacy.

"How am I wrong, doctor?" repeated de Mellay.

"In your prediction of Fatello's longevity. Of course it is of him you speak?"

"Of no other. What ails him?"

"He is dying of consumption," gravely replied Pilori.

The viscount laughed incredulously, and even Steinfeld could not restrain a smile, so little appearance was there of a consumptive habit in the robust frame, and coarse, rough physiognomy of the financier.

"Laugh if you please, young gentlemen," said the doctor. "It is no laughing matter for Monsieur Fatello, I can tell you. His life is not worth a year's purchase."

"You have been prescribing for him then, doctor," said Arthur maliciously.

"I have," said the physician, suffering the hit to pass unnoticed. "No longer ago than yesterday he consulted me for a trifling indisposition, and, in studying his idiosyncrasy, I detected the graver [718] disease. What do you think he called me in for? I ought not to tell these things, but the joke is too good to keep. He was annoyed about the blotches on his face—anxious for a clear complexion. In what strange places vanity finds a corner! Poor fellow! he little thinks how soon the worms will be at work upon his cuticle."

"You did not tell him, then?" said de Mellay, still doubtful of the doctor's sincerity, and with a sort of shudder at his dissecting-room style.

"What was the use? The seeds of decay are too deeply set to be eradicated by the resources of art. Although to a non-medical eye he presents little appearance of pulmonary derangement, the malady has already taken firm hold. Probably it is hereditary. It advances slowly but surely, and will not be turned aside. The forms of that terrible disease are many and various, from the *pulmonia fulminante* of Spain, and the *galloping consumption* of our island neighbours, to those more tedious varieties whose ravages extend over years, to kill as surely at last. But I do not tell you that I *shall* not inform M. Fatello of his condition. It is our duty to strive to the last, even when we have no hope but in a miracle. I shall see him to-morrow and break the matter to him."

"And send him to Italy or Madeira, I suppose," said Steinfeld, with an appearance of greater interest than he had previously taken in the conversation.

"What for? As well let him die in Paris, where he will at least have all the alleviations the resources of art and high civilisation can afford. But enough of the subject. And you, young gentlemen, say nothing of what I have told you, or you will damage my reputation for discretion."

The rise of the curtain put a period to the conversation, and, before the act was over, a box-keeper delivered a letter to Dr Pilori, who, after reading it, rose with a certain air of importance and solicitude, and hurried out of the theatre,—his sortie provoking a smile amongst some of the habitual frequenters of the stalls, who were accustomed to see this manœuvre repeated with a frequency that gave it the air of an advertisement. The opera over, Steinfeld and de Mellay left the house together, and, whilst driving along the boulevard, the sentence of death pronounced so positively by Pilori upon Fatello, was the subject of their conversation. The viscount was

incredulous, took it for a hoax, and would have amused the club by its repetition, and by a burlesque of Pilori's dogmatical and pompous tone, had not Steinfeld urged him to be silent on the subject, lest he should injure the indiscreet physician. Arthur promised to say nothing about it, and soon forgot the whole affair in the excitement of a *bouillotte*-table. Steinfeld, equally reserved, neither forgot the doctor's prophecy, nor doubted the conviction that dictated it. De Mellay's gossip about the Fatellos had doubtless excited his curiosity, and given him a wish to know them,—for, two days afterwards, his elegant *coupé* drove into the court of their hotel, and a dandified secretary of legation presented, in due form, the Baron Ernest von Steinfeld to the wealthy financier and his handsome wife and sister.

CHAP. II.—THE MASQUERADE.

Three months had elapsed, and Paris was in full carnival. Since the beginning of the year, the town had been kept in a state of unusual excitement by the anticipation of a ball, for which the rich and fashionable Countess de M—— had issued invitations to her immense circle of friends and acquaintances. The position of the countess—who, herself the daughter of an illustrious house, and reckoning amongst her ancestors and their alliances more than one sovereign prince and constable of France, had married a man enriched and ennobled by Napoleon—gave her peculiar facilities for collecting around her all that was distinguished and fashionable in Paris, and for blending the various coteries into which political differences, as much as pride of descent [719] on the one hand, and pride of purse on the other, split the higher circles of Parisian society. Her invitations included stiff-necked legitimists from the dull but dignified streets of St Germain's faubourg, noble as a La Tremouille or a Montmorency, and still sulking against the monarchy of the 7th August; wealthy *parvenus* from the Chaussée d'Antin, military nobles of imperial fabrication, Russian princes, English lords, Spanish grandees, diplomatists by the dozen, and a prince or two of the reigning family. Under ordinary circumstances, Madame de M—— might have hesitated to bring together so heterogeneous an assemblage—to have mingled in the same saloons all these conflicting vanities, opinions, and prejudices; but the character of her entertainment removed the inconveniences of such confrontation. It was no ordinary ball or common-place rout of which the palatial mansion of the countess was upon this occasion to be the scene. She had conceived the bold idea of resuscitating, upon a large scale, an amusement which in Paris has long since degenerated into vulgar license and drunken saturnalia. Her entertainment was to be a masquerade, to which no one was to come with uncovered face or in ordinary costume. A mask and a disguise were as essential to obtain entrance, as was the ticket of admission sent to each individual invited, and which was to be delivered up at the door, accompanied by the holder's engraved visiting card. This precaution was to guard against the recurrence of an unpleasant incident that had occurred two years previously at a minor entertainment of similar character, when two ingenious professors of legerdemain, better known to the police than to the master of the house, found their way into the ball-room under the convenient covering of dominos, and departed, before their presence was discovered, carrying with them a varied assortment of watches, purses, and jewellery.

The night of the much talked-of fête had arrived; the tailors, milliners, and embroiderers, who, for a month past, had slaved in the service of the invited, had brought home the results of their labours: the fashionable hairdressers had had a hard day's work—some hundreds of wreaths and nosegays, which in June would have been beautiful, and in January seemed miraculous, and whose aggregate cost was a comfortable year's income, had been composed by the tasteful fingers of the Parisian flower-girls. The hour was at hand, and many a fair bosom palpitated with pleasurable anticipations. The hotel of the rich Fatello, as the successful speculator was usually called, had its share of the bustle of preparation; but at last, knotty questions of costume were satisfactorily settled, and the ladies committed themselves to the hands of their tire-women. In his library sat Sigismund Fatello, opening a pile of notes and letters that had accumulated there since afternoon. Some he read and put carefully aside; to others he scarcely vouchsafed a glance; whilst a third class were placed apart for perusal at greater leisure. At last, he opened one by whose contents he was strangely moved, for, on reading them, he started and turned pale, as if stung by an adder. Passing his hand over his eyes, as though to clear his vision, he stood up and placed the paper in the very strongest glare of the powerful Carcel lamp illuminating the room. A second time he read, and his agitation visibly increased. Its cause was a small note, containing but four lines, written in a feigned hand. It was an anonymous letter, striking him in his most vulnerable point. Again and again he perused it, striving to recognise the handwriting, or conjecture the author. All his efforts were in vain. Once, inspired by his good genius, he crushed the treacherous paper in his hand, and approached the fire-place to destroy it in the flames. But, as he drew near the logs that glowed and crackled on the hearth, his pace became slower and slower, until he finally stood still, smoothed the crumpled paper, and once more devoured its contents. Then he walked several times up and down the apartment, with a hurried step. The three months that had elapsed since Arthur de Mellay and Baron Steinfeld had met in the stalls at the opera, had not passed over the head of Fatello without producing a certain change in his appearance. He was thinner and paler, his eyes were more sunken, and a dark line was pencilled [720] beneath them. The change, however, was not such as an indifferent person would notice; it might proceed from many causes—from mental labour, uneasiness, or grief, as well as from bodily disease—the idea of which latter was unlikely to enter the head of a careless observer of his massive frame and features, and of the general appearance of great muscular strength, still remarkable in the ill-favoured financier. Now, however, he was unusually pale and haggard. The letter he still held in his hand had worked upon him like a malevolent charm, hollowing his cheek and wrinkling his brow. For nearly half an hour he continued his monotonous walk, alternately slackening and accelerating his pace. At times he would come to a momentary halt, with the

absent air of one absorbed in working out a puzzling problem. At last he opened a secretaire, touched a spring which made a secret drawer fly open, placed in this drawer the letter that had so greatly disturbed him, closed the desk, and, lighting a taper, took the direction of his wife's sitting-room, in the opposite wing of the hotel.

Madame Fatello and Mademoiselle Sebastiana Gonfalon were equipped for the ball and in readiness to depart. Between the two sisters, in whose ages there was a difference of two years, so strong a resemblance existed that they frequently were taken for twins. Exactly of the same stature, they had the same large dark eyes, abundant hair, and brown tint of skin, and the same mouth, not very small, but beautiful in form, and adorned with teeth of dazzling whiteness. Both had the grace and fascination for which their countrywomen are renowned. The chief difference between them was in expression. Catalina was the more serious of the two: her gravity sometimes verged upon sullenness, and this was especially observable since she had been compelled to a marriage repugnant to her feelings, but which she had lacked energy and courage to resist. Her father would have found it a far less easy task to force Sebastiana to a union opposed to her inclinations. As high-spirited as her sister was irresolute, Mademoiselle Gonfalon was one of those persons whose obstinacy is increased by every attempt at coercion. Laughing and lively, amidst all her gay coquetries there still was a decision in her classically moulded chin and slightly compressed lip, and a something clandestine but resolute in her eye, which a physiognomist would have interpreted as denoting a degree of intelligence and a passionate strength of character denied by nature to her feebler sister. Upon this evening, however, it might have been thought the two young women had exchanged characters. Sebastiana, in general all smiles and sprightliness, was thoughtful and preoccupied, almost anxious; whilst the listless and melancholy Catalina had an unusual appearance of gaiety and animation. Her cheek was flushed, her eyes were brilliant, and she looked repeatedly at a jewelled bijou-watch, as though she would fain have advanced the hour at which she could with propriety make her entrance into Madame de M——'s saloons.

The door opened and Fatello came in. By a powerful exertion of that self-command which he possessed in no ordinary degree, he had banished from his countenance nearly every trace of recent agitation. He was perhaps a shade paler than usual, but his brow was unclouded, and his uncouth countenance was lighted up by the most agreeable smile it could assume.

"So, ladies," he said, with a liveliness that sat but clumsily upon him; "you are armed for conquest. Accept my compliments on the excellent taste of your costumes. They are really charming. If you are detected, it will hardly be by your dress. Those loose robes and that convenient cowl are the best possible disguises."

"All the better!" cried Sebastiana. "Nothing like the dear black domino, under which you can be impertinent as you like, with scarce a possibility of discovery. There will be fifty such dresses as ours in the room."

"No doubt of it," replied her brother-in-law, thoughtfully. And his piercing green-gray eye scanned the dominos that shrouded the graceful figures of his wife and her sister. They were of [721] plain black satin; but the art of the maker had contrived to impart elegance to the costume which, of all others, generally possesses it the least. The two dresses were exactly alike, except that Catalina's was tied at the wrists with lilac ribbons, whilst nothing broke the uniform blackness of her sister's garb. Black gloves and masks, and two bouquets of choice exotics, the masterpieces of the celebrated bouquetière of the Madeleine boulevard, completed the ladies' equipment.

"I am sorry," said Fatello, "to deny myself the pleasure of accompanying you to the Countess's fête; but I am behindhand with my correspondence, and have received important letters, which I must answer by the morning's post. My night, a part of it at least, will be passed at the desk instead of in the ball-room."

There was nothing in this announcement to excite surprise; the tone and manner in which it was made were perfectly natural; but, nevertheless, Sebastiana Gonfalon darted a keen quick glance at her brother-in-law, as though seeking in his words a double meaning or disguised purpose. Madame Fatello showed neither surprise nor disappointment, but, approaching a table, she took from a costly basket of gold filagree, overflowing with cards and invitations, an envelope containing three tickets for the masquerade. Selecting two of them, she threw the third into the basket, and again looked at her watch. At that moment the door opened, and her carriage was announced.

"Come, Sebastiana," said Madame Fatello, impatiently. "Good-night, M. Fatello." And, with a slight bow to her husband, she passed into the ante-room.

"Good-night, Sigismund," said Sebastiana. "Change your mind and follow us."

"Impossible," said Fatello, with the same smiling countenance as before.

Sebastiana followed her sister. Fatello lingered a few moments in the drawing-room, and then returned to his study. As he entered it, he heard the roll of the carriage-wheels driving out of the court.

The masquerade given by the Countess de M—— was that kind of magnificent and extraordinary entertainment which forms *the* event of the year in which it occurs; which is long held up as a pattern to gala-givers, and as marking a red-letter epoch in the annals of fashion and pleasure.

Nothing was spared to make it in all respects perfect. An entire floor of the Countess's vast mansion had been cleared, for the occasion, of all superfluous furniture; three splendid saloons were appropriated to dancing; two others, equally spacious, to refreshments. In these, the appetites of the guests had been richly catered for. One was the coffee-house, the other the *restaurant*. In the former, on a multitude of small marble tables, a regiment of attentive waiters served ices and sherbets, wine and chocolate, coffee and liqueurs. In the latter, tables were laid for supper, and upon each of them lay a printed bill of fare, where the hungry made their selection from a list of the most delicate dishes, whose appearance followed the order with a celerity that would have done honour to the best-appointed hotel in Paris. A long, wide gallery, and some smaller rooms, were used as a promenade, where the company freely circulated. In a music-hall, a strong party of professional singers kept up an unceasing concert for the entertainment of all comers; and in a chamber fitted up as a tent, an Italian juggler, with peaked beard, and in antique costume of black velvet, performed tricks of extraordinary novelty and ingenuity. Every part and corner of this magnificent suite of apartments was lighted *a giorno*, draped with coloured silks and muslins, and enlivened by a profusion of tall mirrors, multiplying tenfold the fantastical figures of the maskers and the flame of the countless *bougies*. Many hundreds of porcelain vases, containing the choicest plants, forced prematurely into flower, and all remarkable for brilliancy of colour or fragrance of perfume, lined the broad corridors and the recesses of the windows, which latter were further filled by admirably executed transparencies, forming a series of views from the Italian lakes. The whole resembled a scene from fairyland, or [722] an enchanted palace, raised by the wand of some benevolent gnome for the delectation of the sons and daughters of mortality. If the entertainment was of unparalleled magnificence, the appearance of the guests did it no discredit. Tasteful and ingeniously devised costumes crowded the apartments; history and romance had been ransacked for characters; the most costly materials had been lavishly employed in the composition of dresses for that one night's diversion. All was glitter of jewels, wave of plumes, and rustle of rich brocades. In diamonds alone, an emperor's ransom was displayed; and more than one fair masker bore upon her neck and arms, and graceful head, the annual revenue of half-a-dozen German princes.

As Sebastiana had predicted, there was a considerable sprinkling of dominos amongst the motley throng; and as usual, of those who had selected that dress, more favourable to concealment and intrigue than to display of personal graces or costly ornaments, at least one half had preferred black to any other colour. These latter seemed the subject of the particular attention of one of their number, who, soon after twelve o'clock, made his appearance in the ball-room. Impatience to share in the much-talked-of fête, had rendered the invited punctual; by that hour nearly all had arrived, and in such numbers that the rooms, though so large and numerous, were crowded at least as much as was convenient and consistent with circulation. Hence the black domino was frequently impeded in the rapid movements he commenced whenever one of his own species—that is to say, a domino of the same colour—caught his eye, movements which had for their object to meet or overtake the person of garb similar to his own. On such occasions, so great was his impatience, that in a public ball-room he would surely have incurred a quarrel by the somewhat too vigorous use he made of his elbows. But Madame de M——'s well-bred guests merely shrugged their shoulders, and wondered who the *man-ant* could be who thus imported into their élite society the unceremonious usages of an opera-house masquerade. The black domino heeded not their mute wonderment, nor cared for the unfavourable impression he might leave upon the ribs and the minds of those he jostled. He was evidently looking for somebody, and however discouraging the task of seeking one particular black domino in a crowded masquerade, where there were two or three score of them, he persevered, in spite of repeated disappointments. At last it seemed as if success had rewarded his constancy. With the suddenness and certainty of a well-broken pointer, he came to a dead stop at sight of a black satin domino leaning on the arm of an elegant Hungarian hussar. To the steps of this couple he thenceforward attached himself. Whithersoever they went, he followed, keeping at sufficient distance to prevent their noticing his pursuit; regulating his pace by theirs, but occasionally accelerating it so as to pass them, and lingering for a second when close at their side, as if trying to distinguish the tones of their voices, or to catch a few words of their discourse. Whilst thus engaged, he did not observe that he had himself become an object of attention to a third black domino, who, previously to him, had been dogging, but at greater distance, and with still more precaution than he observed, the steps of the hussar and his companion. The curiosity and caution of domino No. 3, appeared to receive fresh stimulus from the apparition of a rival observer, over whose movements he kept careful watch, but from afar, and concealed as much as possible amongst the crowd, somewhat after the fashion in which the Red Indian observes, from his shelter amidst the trees of the forest, the movements of the hunter, who himself watches from an ambush the course of a herd of deer.

The only portion of the apartments thrown open to the maskers that was not rendered light as day by a profusion of wax candles, was a vast conservatory, the entrance to which was through two large French windows, opening out of one of the dancing rooms. Paved with a mosaic of divers-coloured marbles and fanciful device, it contained a choice collection of exotics and evergreens, of such remarkable size and beauty, that the topmost leaves of many of them rustled against the elevated glass roof. These trees and shrubs were so arranged as to form a sort of [723] miniature labyrinth, upon whose paths a mild light was thrown by lamps of coloured glass suspended to the branches. This illumination, although ample to guide the steps of the promenaders between the verdant and flowering hedges, seemed but a twilight, from its contrast with the broad glare of the adjoining apartments. The change from a strong to a subdued light had been purposely contrived by the judicious arrangers of the fête, as a relief for eyes wearied by the brilliancy of the ball-room. As yet, however, few persons seemed eager for the transition,

and the conservatory was little resorted to except at the close of a dance, when its comparatively fresh atmosphere was gladly sought.

Quadrilles had just commenced in all the dancing-rooms, when the Hungarian hussar and his domino, making their way slowly and with some difficulty in rear of the dancers, took refuge in the conservatory from the din of music and pressure of the crowd. They were evidently so absorbed in their conversation, so much alone in the midst of the multitude, that their eternal pursuer ventured unusually near to them, and was close at their heels when they passed through the glass door. Then, instead of continuing to follow them, he struck into another path, which ran nearly parallel to the one they took. On reaching a circle of beautiful arbutus, whose white bells and bright strawberries gleamed like pearls and blood-drops in the light of the purple lamps that hung amongst them, the hussar and his companion paused beside a porphyry basin, supported by a sculptured pedestal of the same material. For a few moments they stood silent, gazing at the goldfish that swam their monotonous circle in the basin; and at the little fountain that spouted up in its centre. Then, leaning upon the edge of the vase, they resumed their conversation in tones less guarded than before, for here they might almost consider themselves alone—the few groups and couples sauntering in the conservatory being too much engrossed in their own discourse to heed that of others. The Hungarian removed his mask, still, however, holding it ready to apply to his face in case of intrusion; whilst the domino contented herself with raising the silken beard of hers, to allow the musical tones proceeding from a pair of rosy and youthful lips to fall more clearly upon her companion's ear. Thus they continued a conversation apparently of deep interest to both, and which they suspended only when some passing party of masks lingered for an instant beside the fountain, until the end of the quadrille brought a throng of dancers into the conservatory. Then they left the place, and sauntered back into the ball-room.

Meanwhile the third domino watched the conservatory doors with a lynx-eyed vigilance worthy a pupil of the celebrated Vidocq. Although the loose black dress might have covered either a short man or a woman of the middle stature, the delicacy of the gloved fingers, and of the tiny foot that peeped from below its border, left little doubt as to the sex of its wearer. From a convenient position on the steps leading up to an orchestra, the fringe of her mask confined by her hand, so as to prohibit even a glimpse of her ivory chin, she subjected to a rigid scrutiny all who issued from the conservatory. Suddenly, from the door nearest to her, the hussar and his companion made their appearance, and, as they passed, she shrouded herself behind the portly figure and sumptuous embroideries of a Venetian doge. Then she resumed her watch, and a minute had not elapsed when she saw the tall black domino, whom she had observed during the evening, re-enter the dancing-room and make his way as fast as the crowd would allow him to the nearest door of exit, with a hurried and irregular step, hardly to be explained otherwise than by sudden illness or violent emotion. She followed him to the head of the staircase, down which he rushed, disappearing at its foot through the crowd of lackeys in the hall. Having seen this, she re-entered the ball-room, sought out the hussar and his companion, and soon afterwards was whirling with the former in the giddy circles of a waltz.

Some hours later, as the Hungarian retired from the ball, almost borne along in the dense stream [724]
of masks that now flowed through the rooms, he felt a momentary pressure of his hand. A paper remained in its palm, upon which his fingers mechanically closed. Amidst the ever-moving throng it was impossible to detect the person from whom he had received it. By this time a large portion of the company, oppressed by the heat, had unmasked, but he knew none of the faces he saw around him, whilst of those who had preserved their vizards he could fix on none as object of suspicion. So soon as he could extricate himself from the crowd, he unfolded the paper. It contained the following mysterious words, hastily scrawled with a pencil:—

"One whom you think asleep wakes and watches. He is here; has followed and overheard you, and will seek revenge. Be prepared. Proof is difficult: denial may be safety. Adopt it at all risks. Masked, the sisters are undistinguishable. Credit this warning from a sincere friend."

Thrice the Hungarian perused this mysterious billet; and then, thrusting it into the breast of his richly braided jacket, slowly left the house.

CHAP. III.—THE ACCUSATION.

The house selected by Baron Ernest von Steinfeld, wherein to pass what might possibly be his last season in Paris, was situated in the Rue St Lazare. It was one of those buildings, of frequent occurrence in modern Parisian architecture, which seem intended to gratify the taste of such persons as prefer the English fashion of occupying an entire house, to the French one of dwelling upon a floor. At the bottom of a paved court-yard, around three sides of which was built a large mansion containing many tenants, stood one of those edifices known in French parlance as pavilions—not that they possess a dome, resemble a tent, or, for the most part, have any of the qualities of a summer-house, but because, in Paris, the term "house" is grudgingly bestowed upon a building of less than five stories and thirty or forty rooms. This pavilion had but three stories and a dozen rooms; it was a particularly complete and independent habitation, standing well back from the body of the house, under whose number it was included, and of which, although detached, it was considered to form part; and having two entrances, one through the court, the other from a lane running at right angles with the street. The ground-floor contained, besides a

light and commodious vestibule and servant's offices, only one apartment, a handsome dining-room, in which, however, it was impossible, for three quarters of the year, to dine without lamps—the daylight admitted by its one broad window being greatly limited by the walls of a nook of garden, and by the impending branches of a laburnum and acacia, which mingled their boughs in affectionate union, twin lords of a square yard of grass, and of a fathom's length of flower-bed, and in the spring-time rejoiced the inmates of the pavilion with the odorous rustle of their yellow clusters and rose-coloured blossoms. The first floor contained two pleasant drawing-rooms and a boudoir; the second, bath, bed, and dressing rooms. The roof, flat and surrounded by a parapet, commanded a view over the adjacent gardens of an extensive bathing establishment and *maison de santé*, and was no unpleasant resort, on a fine day, for persons desirous to inhale the fresh air, or to scent it with the fumes of Havana's weed. This pavilion, described by the *Petites Affiches* as *fraîchement décoré*—the said decoration consisting in fresh paint and paper, and in a profusion of that cheerful French luxury, large and excellent mirrors—was rented for six months by Baron Steinfeld, who had hired, for the same period, from a fashionable upholsterer—for a sum which would almost have furnished the house permanently in a plainer manner—a complete set of furniture, against whose perfect elegance and good taste not a syllable could be breathed. His [725]
establishment was as correct as his residence. It consisted, in the first place, of a French cook, with whose sauces Arthur de Mellay had repeatedly expressed his willingness to eat a fragment of his father; which offer—considering the worthy count had been a guardsman in the time of Louis XVI., and, consequently, was neither young nor tender—was certainly a high testimonial to the merits of sauce and cook. Then came an Italian valet, quite as skilful a personage in his way as the professor of gastronomic science—speaking three or four languages, accumulating in his own individuality the knowledge and acquirements of a legion of hairdressers, tailors, perfumers, and the like—thoroughly versed in the arcana of the toilet, a secretary in case of need, and a perfect Mercury in matters of intrigue. The third person of Steinfeld's household, the last, and also by much the least—physically speaking, that is to say, but by no means in his own estimation—was one of those miniature tigers, (copied from the English, and essential appendages to the establishment of a Paris lion,) who look as if they had been subjected to that curious Chinese process by which lofty shrubs and forest trees are stunted to dimensions that permit the plantation of a grove in a flower-pot—wizen-faced, top-booted abortions, uniting the mischief and the proportions of a monkey, and frightfully precocious in every species of villany. The house also contained, during the day, an old Frenchwoman, of a species indigenous and confined to Paris—the patient butt of the cook's ill-humours and of the groom's pranks, with bearded chin and slipshod feet, and willing for any sort of dirty work, from the scouring of a kettle to the administration of the remedy renowned in French pharmacy.

It was an hour past noon on the day succeeding the Countess of M——'s masquerade, and Steinfeld sat alone at breakfast. It were more correct to say that he sat at the breakfast table; for the savoury meal before him was still untasted, and he seemed in no haste to attack it. In vain the green oysters from Ostend lay invitingly open, and one of Chevet's pies displayed, through a triangular aperture in its crust, the tender tints of an exquisite *foie-gras*—the result of the martyrdom of some unhappy Strasburg duck; in vain a fragrant steam of truffles oozed from beneath the covers of two silver dishes, fresh from the laboratory of Macedoine the cook, and mingled its odours with the flowery aroma of a bottle of Sauterne, from which Rufini the valet had just extracted the long yellow-sealed cork. Apparently, none of these creature-comforts dwelt in the desires of the baron, who sat sideways to the table, his chin resting on his hand, gazing upon vacancy with an intenseness bespeaking deep preoccupation. One acquainted with Steinfeld's circumstances would have hesitated little in conjecturing the nature of the unpleasant reflections in which he seemed absorbed. They might very well have for motive the unprosperous state of his exchequer, the heavy incumbrances weighing upon the hereditary acres, the approaching decease of that convenient but fickle ally, on whose succour half the world exist, and whose name is Credit. The baron had been any thing but a prudent man. Too careless of the future, he had neglected fortune when she offered herself to his embrace; and now she revenged herself by averting her countenance. Of high descent and fair estate, handsome person and fascinating manners, for some years Steinfeld might have aspired to the hand of almost any heiress in Vienna or Paris. Numerous were the matrimonial overtures that had been more or less directly made to him, at a time when, in love with his bachelorhood, and celebrated for his *bonnes fortunes*, he looked upon the bonds of Hymen as the most oppressive of fetters, intolerable even when sheathed in gold. The matchmakers, repulsed without exception, at last renounced all further attempts upon the hand of the handsome Austrian—as Steinfeld was generally called in Paris—and declared him an incorrigible partisan of celibacy. To the unmolested enjoyment of his bachelor bliss the baron was for some years left, until one morning he awoke to the disagreeable consciousness that profuse expenditure had done its work, and that [726]
ruin or a rich marriage were the only alternatives left him. He was fully alive to the difficulties placed in the way of the latter by the change in his circumstances. His ancient name and personal advantages remained, but his fair estate was in the hands of the harpies; and however disposed romantic young ladies might be to overlook this misfortune, prudent papas would deem it a serious stumbling-block. Then it was that, roused by horrid visions of approaching poverty from his usual state of happy *insouciance*, the baron gathered together the relics of his past opulence, squeezed and exhausted every remaining resource, and, assuming a bold front against bad fortune, returned to Paris, with much the feelings of the soldier who screws up all his energies to conquer or to die. It was no apprehension, however, as to the result of this final struggle—no nervous trepidation arising from the imminence of his situation, that now clouded Steinfeld's brow and spoiled his appetite. On the contrary, he deemed victory secure, and beheld himself, in no remote perspective, emerging triumphantly from his difficulties, even as a snake, casting its

shabby skin, reappears in glittering scales of gold. He had not wasted the three months he had passed in Paris, and was well satisfied with the result of his exertions. His present uneasiness had a different origin—one similar to the cause by which, some fifteen hours previously, we saw Sigismund Fatello so deeply moved. The baron turned and twisted in his hand a letter, to whose contents he again and again recurred, pondering them intently. Like that received by the banker, the billet was anonymous; like his, it contained but three or four lines; but, despite its brevity and want of authenticity, it proved, on the part of the writer, whoever that might be, an acquaintance with the baron's most important secret, that did not fail greatly to disquiet him. Who had thus detected what he deemed so surely concealed? He strained his eyes and memory, in vain endeavouring to recognise the handwriting; and, more than once, fancying he had done so, he fetched notes and letters from a desk in the adjoining boudoir, to compare them with the anonymous epistle. But the comparison always dissipated his suspicion. Then, taking a pen, and a diminutive sheet of amber-scented paper, he began a note, but tore the paper after writing only three words, and threw the fragments impatiently into the fire. Just then the pavilion bell rang loudly; the next minute there was a knock at the room door, and Celestin the tiger made his appearance, bearing a card inscribed with the name of M. Sigismund Fatello, and an inquiry whether Monsieur le Baron was at home and visible.

On reading the banker's name, Steinfeld made a slight and sudden movement, almost amounting to a start, but, instantly recovering himself, he bade his groom show the visitor up stairs. At the same time he hastily seated himself, ordered Rufini to take off the covers, poured some wine into a glass, and helped himself from the first dish that came to hand; so that when Fatello, ushered in by the groom, entered the apartment, he had all the appearance of one whose whole faculties were concentrated, for the time being, in the enjoyment of an excellent meal. Rising from his chair, with an air of jovial cordiality, he hastened to welcome the banker.

"An unexpected pleasure, my dear Fatello," said he. "What favourable chance procures me so early a visit? You are come to breakfast, I hope. Rufini, a knife and fork for M. Fatello."

"I have breakfasted, M. le Baron," replied Fatello, with a dryness amounting almost to incivility. "If my call is untimely, my business is pressing——and private," he added, with a glance at the Italian, who stood in respectful immobility behind his master's chair.

"Leave the room, Rufini," said Steinfeld.

The well-drilled valet bowed in silence, and glided noiselessly from the apartment.

"Now then, my good friend," said the Austrian, in the same gay offhand tone as before, "I am all ear and attention. What is up? Nothing bad, I hope; nothing so serious as to spoil my appetite. I [727] have heard a proverb condemning discourse between a full man and a hungry one."

Fatello made no immediate reply. There was something very peculiar in his aspect. His lips were pale and compressed, and his brows slightly knit. He seemed constraining himself to silence until he felt he could speak calmly on a subject which roused anger and indignation in his breast. Whilst seemingly engrossed by his breakfast, Steinfeld lost not a look or motion of his visitor's, not a line of his physiognomy, or a glance of his small piercing eye. And the baron, notwithstanding his assumed careless levity of manner, did not feel altogether at his ease.

"You have not turned conspirator, I hope," said he, when Fatello, after a short but awkward pause, still remained silent. "No Henri-quinquist plot, or plan to restore the glorious days of the guillotine and the Goddess of Liberty? No, no; a Crœus of your calibre, my dear Fatello, would not mix in such matters. Your plotters are hungry dogs, with more debts than ducats. Talking of hunger—I am grieved you have breakfasted. This mushroom omelet does honour to Macedoine."

The baron would have talked on,—for at that moment any sort of babble seemed to him preferable to silence. But Fatello, who had not heard a word he had said, suddenly rose from his seat, rested his hands upon the table, and leaning forward, with eyes sternly fixed upon Steinfeld, uttered these remarkable words, in tones rendered harsh and grating by the effort that made them calm:

"Monsieur le Baron de Steinfeld, you are courting my wife!"

The most expert physiognomist would have failed to detect upon the countenance of the ex-diplomatist any other expression than one of profound astonishment, tinged by that glow of indignation an innocent man would be likely to feel at an unfounded accusation, abruptly and brutally brought. After sustaining for a few seconds Fatello's fixed and angry gaze, his features relaxed into a slightly contemptuous smile.

"The jest is surely in questionable taste, my dear M. Fatello. And the severity of your countenance might alarm a man with a conscience less clear than mine."

"I jest not, sir, with my honour and happiness," retorted Fatello, with a rude fierceness that brought a flush to the baron's cheek—a flame of anger which the next moment, however, dispelled.

"Then, my dear M. Fatello," said Steinfeld, "since, instead of a bad jest, you mean sober earnest, I can only say you are grossly misinformed, and that your suspicions are as injurious to Madame Fatello, as your manner of expressing them is insulting to myself."

"I have no suspicions," replied Fatello, "but a certainty."

"Impossible!" said the baron. "Name my accuser. He shall account for the base calumny."

"He desires no better," replied Fatello, sternly. "I myself accuse you. No slanderous tongues, but my own ears, are evidence against you. And yourself, sir, shall confess what you now so stubbornly deny. You were at last night's masquerade."

"I was so."

"In hussar uniform—crimson vest and white pelisse."

Steinfeld bowed assent. "The uniform of the regiment to which I formerly belonged."

"A black domino was on your arm."

"*Ma foi!*" cried the baron, with a laugh that sounded rather forced, "if you demand an account of all the masks I walked and danced with, I shall hardly be able to satisfy you. Dominos there were, doubtless; and, of all colours, black amongst the rest."

"You equivocate, sir," said Fatello, angrily. "I will aid your memory. The domino I mean was your companion early in the night. The domino I mean danced once with you, (a waltz,) and afterwards walked with you through the rooms, in deep conversation. The domino I mean stood with you for more than ten minutes beside the fountain in the conservatory. The domino I mean was my wife; and you, Baron Steinfeld, are a villain!"

During this singular conversation Steinfeld had sat, leaning back in his large elbow-chair, in an attitude of easy indifference—one slippered foot thrown carelessly over the other, and his hands thrust into the pockets of his damask dressing-gown. On receiving this last outrageous insult, his lip blanched with passion, his whole person quivered as with an electric shock, and he half rose from his semi-recumbent position. But the baron was a man of vast self-command; one of those cool-headed cool-hearted egotists who rarely act upon impulse, or compromise their interests by ill-timed impetuosity. The first choleric movement, prompting him to throw Fatello down stairs, was checked with wonderful promptitude, and with little appearance of effort. In reality, however, the effort was a violent one. As a soldier at the triangles bites a bullet with the rage of pain, so Steinfeld clenched his hands till the strong sharp nails almost cut into the palm. As he did so, a paper in his pocket rustled against his knuckles. It was the note so mysteriously conveyed to him at the masquerade, and which he had been pondering when Fatello was announced. To one so quick-witted, the mere touch of the paper was as suggestive as a volume of sage counsels. In an instant every sign of annoyance disappeared from his features; he rose quietly from his seat, and with easy dignity and an urbane countenance, confronted Fatello, who stood gloomy and lowering before the fire. [728]

"I see, M. Fatello," he said, "that you are bent upon our cutting each other's throats; but, strange as it may seem, after the terms you have employed, I still hope to avert the unpleasant necessity. For one moment moderate your language, and give me time for brief explanation. If I rightly understand you, it is from your own observations you thus accuse me; and I presume you did me the honour of a personal surveillance at last night's ball?"

Fatello, his violence checked for the moment from further outbreak by the baron's courtesy and coolness, made a gesture of sullen assent.

"And that you overheard a part, but not the whole, of my conversation with the black domino in question?"

"I heard enough, and too much," replied Fatello, with a savage scowl at his interlocutor. "This is idle talk, mere gain of time. Baron Steinfeld!" cried the banker, in a voice that again rose high above its usual pitch, "you are——"

"Stop!" interrupted Steinfeld, speaking very quickly, but with an extraordinary and commanding calmness, which again had its effect. "Descend not to invective, M. Fatello. There is always time for violence. Hear reason. You are in error, an error easily explained. I certainly saw Madame Fatello at the ball, saw and spoke with her—patience, sir, and hear me! But the domino, of my conversation with whom you heard a part, was *not* Madame Fatello, but Mademoiselle Gonfalon. You take little interest in the frivolities of a masquerade, and are possibly unaware that the two ladies' dresses were exactly similar. You can have heard our conversation but imperfectly, or you would not have wronged me by this suspicion."

Whilst uttering these last sentences, Steinfeld redoubled the keenness of the scrutiny with which he regarded the banker's uncomely and agitated physiognomy. But although piquing himself, as a former diplomatist, on skill in reading men's thoughts through their faces, he was unable to decipher the expression of Fatello's countenance on receiving this plausible explanation of the error into which he had been led by the sisters' identity of costume. As he proceeded with it, the banker's lips, slightly parting, gave his face an air of stupefied wonderment, in addition to its previously inflamed and angry aspect. When Steinfeld concluded an explanation uttered with every appearance of sincerity and candour, and in that flexible and affable tone which, when he chose to employ it, imparted to his words a peculiarly seductive and persuasive charm, Fatello's lips were again firmly closed, and curled with a curious and inexplicable smile. This faded away; he struck his left hand against his forehead, and remained for some moments plunged in thought, as if he hastily retraced in his memory what he had heard the night before, to see how it tallied with the explanation just given him. Thus, at least, Steinfeld interpreted his manner; and [729] although the Austrian's countenance preserved its serenity, his heart throbbed violently against

his ribs during the banker's brief cogitation. The result of this was evidently satisfactory to Fatello, from whose brow, when his hand again dropped by his side, the lowering cloud had disappeared, replaced by affability and regret.

"I see," he said, with better grace than might have been expected from him, and taking a step towards Steinfeld, "that nothing remains for me but to implore your pardon, baron, for my unwarrantable suspicions, and for the harsh and unbecoming expressions into which they betrayed me. Jealousy is an evil counsellor, and blinds to the simplest truths. I scarce dare hope you will forgive my intemperate conduct, without exacting the hostile meeting for which I was just now as eager as I at present am to avoid it. If you insist, I must not refuse, but I give you my word that if I have a duel with you to-day, nothing shall induce me to depart from the defensive."

"I should be unreasonable," replied Steinfeld graciously, "if I exacted ampler satisfaction than this handsome apology, for what, after all, was no unnatural misconception. Ten years ago, I might have been more punctilious, but after three or four encounters of the kind, a duel avoided, when its real motive is removed, is a credit to a man's good sense, and no slur upon his courage."

"No one will ever attack yours, my dear baron," said Fatello. "I only hope you will always keep what has passed between us this morning as profound a secret as I, for my own sake, certainly shall do. I am by no means disposed to boast of my part in the affair."

Steinfeld bowed politely, and the two men exchanged, with smiles upon their faces, a cordial grasp of the hand.

"Out of evil cometh good," said the banker sententiously, subsiding upon the silken cushions of a *causeuse* that extended its arms invitingly at the chimney-corner. "I am delighted to find that the leaden bullet I anticipated exchanging with you is likely to be converted into a golden ring, establishing so near a connexion between us as to render our fighting a duel one of the least probable things in the world. My dear baron, I shall rejoice to call you brother-in-law."

"It would be a great honour for me," replied Steinfeld, "but you over-rate the probability of my enjoying it. Nothing has passed between Mademoiselle Gonfalon and myself to warrant my reckoning on her preference."

"Tush, tush! baron," said Fatello, apparently not heeding, or not noticing the somewhat supercilious turn of Steinfeld's phrases, "you forget the new and not very creditable occupation to which the demons of jealousy and suspicion last night condemned me. You forget that I tracked you in the promenade, and lay in ambush by the fountain, or you would hardly put me off with such tales as these."

The baron winced imperceptibly on being thus reminded how closely his movements had been watched.

"You are evidently new at the profession of a scout," said he jestingly, "or you would have caught more correctly my conversation with your amiable sister-in-law. Mademoiselle Gonfalon is a charming person; the mask gives a certain license to flirtation, and a partial hearing of what passed between us has evidently misled you as to its precise import."

"Not a bit of it!" cried Fatello, with an odd laugh—"I heard better than you think, I assure you; and what I did hear quite satisfied me that you are a smitten man, and that Sebastiana is well disposed to favour your suit."

"I must again protest," said Steinfeld, expressing himself with some embarrassment, "that the thought of becoming Mademoiselle Gonfalon's husband, great as the honour would be, has never yet been seriously entertained by me; and that, however you may have been misled by the snatches of our conversation you overheard, nothing ever passed between us exceeding the limits of allowable flirtation—the not unnatural consequence of Mademoiselle Sebastiana's fascinating vivacity, and of the agreeable footing of intimacy on which, for the last three months, I have found admittance at your hospitable house."

Sigismund Fatello preserved, whilst the baron waded through the intricacies of his artificial and [730]
complicated denial, a half-smile of polite but total incredulity.

"My dear baron," said he, gravely, when Steinfeld at last paused, "I am sure you are too honourable a man to trifle with the affections of any woman. I know you as the very opposite character to those heartless and despicable male coquets, who ensnare susceptible hearts for the cruel pleasure of bruising or breaking them, and sacrifice, in their vile egotism, the happiness of others to the indulgence of paltry vanity. I detect the motives of your present reserve, and, believe me, I appreciate their delicacy. Rumour, that eternal and impertinent gossip, has asserted that Baron Ernest von Steinfeld has impaired, by his open hand and pursuit of pleasure, the heritage of his forefathers. I do not mean that this has become matter of common report; but we bankers have opportunities of knowing many things, and can often read in our bill-books and ledgers the histories of families and individuals. In short, it is little matter how I know that your affairs, my dear baron, are less flourishing than they might be, or than you could wish. But this, after all, is an unimportant matter. The dirty acres are still there—the Schloss Steinfeld still stands firm upon its foundation, and though there be a bit of a mortgage on the domain, and some trouble with refractory Jews, it is nothing, I am sure, but what a clear head, and a little ready cash, will easily dispose of."

It was natural to suppose that a lover, whose position on the brink of ruin made him scruple to

ask the hand of his mistress of her nearest male relative and protector, and who found his embarrassments suddenly smoothed over and made light of by the very person who might be expected to exaggerate them, would be the last man to place fresh stumbling-blocks on the path to happiness thus unexpectedly cleared before him. Steinfeld, however, appeared little disposed to chime in with the banker's emollient view of his disastrous financial position. With an eagerness that bespoke either the most honourable punctiliousness, or very little anxiety to become the husband of Mademoiselle Gonfalon, he set Fatello right.

"I heartily wish," said he, "matters were no worse than you suppose. You quite underrate my real embarrassments. My estate is mine only nominally; not a farthing it produces comes into my pocket; the very castle and its furniture are pledged; some houses in Vienna, and a few thousand florins of Austrian *rentes*, derived from my mother, melted away years ago; I am deeply in debt, and harassed on all sides by duns and extortioners. I calculated my liabilities the other day—why, I know not, for I have no chance of clearing them—and I found it would require three hundred thousand florins to release my lands and pay my debts. You see, my dear M. Fatello, I am not a very likely match for an heiress."

Fatello had listened with profound attention to the insolvent balance-sheet exhibited by the baron.

"Three hundred thousand florins—six hundred thousand francs," said he, musingly—"allowing for usury and overcharges, might doubtless be got rid of for a hundred thousand less. Well, baron, when Sebastiana marries, she will have more than that tacked to her apron. Her father left her something like half a million, and I have not let the money lie idle. She is a richer woman, by some thousand louis d'ors, than she was at his death. I don't carry her account in my head, but I daresay her fortune would clear your lands, and leave a nice nest-egg besides. And although she certainly might find a husband in better plight as regards money matters, yet, as you are so much attached to each other, and happiness, after all, is before gold, I shall make no difficulties. I noticed the girl was absent and sentimental of late, but never guessed the real cause. Ah, baron! you fascinating dogs have much to answer for!"

Whilst Fatello thus ran on, with, as usual, more bluntness than good breeding, Steinfeld was evidently on thorns; and at the first appearance of a pause in the banker's discourse, he impatiently struck in.

"I must beg your attention, M. Fatello," said he, "whilst I repeat what you evidently have [731]
imperfectly understood—that it has never entered my head to gain Mademoiselle Gonfalon's affections, and that I have no reason to believe I should succeed in the attempt. I again repeat that nothing but the most innocent and unimportant flirtation has passed between us. I am deeply sensible of your kind intentions—grateful for your generous willingness to overlook my unfortunate circumstances, and to promote my marriage with your sister-in-law; but, flattering and advantageous as such a union would be to me, I am not certain it would lead to that happiness which you justly deem preferable to wealth. I doubt whether my disposition and that of Mademoiselle Sebastiana would exactly harmonise. Moreover, necessitous though I am, it goes against my pride to owe every thing to my wife. It would pain me to see her dowry swallowed up by my debts. Let us drop the subject, I entreat you. To-morrow you will appreciate and rejoice at my hesitation. I fully comprehend the generous impulse that prompts you. Having done me an injustice, you would compensate me beyond my merits. Thanks, my good friend; but, believe me, if happiness resides not in wealth, neither is it found in hasty or ill-assorted unions. And, to tell you the truth, however politic a rich marriage might be in the present critical state of my affairs, I long ago made a vow against matrimony, which I still hesitate to break."

"You are the best judge of your own motives," said Fatello, stiffly, "but you quite misconstrue mine. It never entered my head to view you as a victim, or to think myself called upon to atone, by providing you with a rich and handsome wife, for the jealousy you so successfully proved groundless. Such compensation would be excessive for so slight an injury. No, no, baron—you have quite mistaken me. As the nearest connexion and natural guardian of Mademoiselle Gonfalon, it is my duty to watch over her, and not to allow her feelings to be trifled with. For some time past, I have suspected her affections were engaged, but it never occurred to me they were fixed upon you. Well—last night I go to a ball, and, actuated by suspicions to which it is unnecessary to recur, I listen to your conversation with my sister-in-law. To a plain man like myself, it bore but one interpretation—that you have sought and won her heart. You deny this, and assert your language to have been that of common gallantry and compliment, such as may be addressed to any woman without her inferring serious intentions. Here, then, we are gravely at issue. You maintain my ears deceived me; I persist in crediting their evidence. Fortunately, an arbiter is easily found. I shall now return home, see my sister-in-law, and confess to her my eaves-dropping, keeping its real motive and my visit to you profoundly secret. From her I shall learn how matters really stand. If her account agree with Baron Steinfeld's, I shall evermore mistrust my hearing; if the contrary, and that the baron, himself a sworn foe to marriage, has compromised the happiness of a young and confiding woman, why, then, he will not be surprised if I seek of him, for so grave an offence, the reparation which a short time ago I was ready to afford him for one comparatively insignificant." And Fatello bowed formally, and with severe countenance moved towards the door. But before he could leave the room, Steinfeld, who had stood for a moment thoughtful and perplexed, hurried to intercept him, and laid his hand upon the lock.

"You are really too hasty, Fatello," said he, "and not altogether reasonable. What ill weed have

you trodden upon, that makes you so captious this morning? Own that our conversation has taken an odd turn! Would any one believe that you, Fatello the *millionnaire*, press a marriage between your sister, the wealthy Mademoiselle Gonfalon, and myself, the needy Baron Steinfeld—and that it is I, the ruined spendthrift, from whom the obstacles to the match proceed? Neither in romance nor in real life has the case a precedent. And you may be assured the world will not applaud your wisdom, nor Mademoiselle Sebastiana feel grateful for your zeal."

"For the world's applause I care not that," replied Fatello, snapping his fingers. "As to my sister, I have neither will nor power to constrain her. I do but afford her the protection she is entitled to [732] at my hands. I press her upon no man, but neither do I suffer her to be trifled with. Sebastiana Gonfalon does not lack suitors, I can assure you."

"Unquestionably," said Steinfeld, with an absent air; "Mademoiselle Gonfalon is indeed a most charming person, and, were she penniless, would still be a prize to any man. I only wish I enjoyed the place in her good opinion you so erroneously imagine me to occupy."

"Well, well," said Fatello, striving to get at the door, before which the baron had planted himself, "since error there is, it will soon be cleared up. You cannot blame me, baron, for preferring, in so delicate an affair, the testimony of my own ears to that of any one person. But if two unite against me, I shall think myself crazed or bewitched, and shall at least be silenced and confounded, if not entirely convinced."

"Answer me one question," said Steinfeld. "If yesterday, before you overheard a part of my conversation with your sister, I had asked of you her hand, exposing to you at the same time the state of my fortunes, or rather of my misfortunes, would you then have sanctioned my suit and pleaded my cause with Mademoiselle Gonfalon? Would you, and will you now—for, believe me, I need it more than you think—add the weight of your arguments and advocacy to the prepossession you persist in thinking your sister has in my favour, a prepossession of whose existence I hardly dare flatter myself?"

"Why not?" said Fatello, with an air of straightforward cordiality. "Why not? You are not rich, certainly but Sebastiana is rich enough for both. You have high birth, talents, interest with the Emperor, and, once married, with your debts paid, and your wild oats sown, you may take ambition instead of pleasure for a mistress, and aspire to high employment. Why not return to diplomacy, for which you are so admirably qualified, and come back to us as Austrian ambassador? Believe me, baron, there is a fine career before you, if you will but pursue it."

"Perhaps," said Steinfeld, smiling to himself, like a man to whom a bright perspective is suddenly thrown open; "and, as you say, the first step would be a suitable marriage, which, by ridding me of all encumbrance, might enable me to climb lightly and steadily the hill of wealth and honours."

"And a *millionnaire* brother-in-law to give you an occasional push by the way," added Fatello, with one of his heavy, purse-proud smiles; "pushes you may repay in kind, for diplomatist and financier should ever hunt in couples."

"My dear Fatello," said Steinfeld, "the prospect is too charming to be lightly relinquished. You must think strangely of my first reluctance to avail myself of your friendly disposition in my favour; but I so little suspected it, I was so bewildered by its sudden revelation, so embarrassed by my own difficulties—and then pride, you know—a morbid fear of being thought mercenary; in short, you will make allowance for my strange way of meeting your kind encouragement. I can only say, that since you deem me worthy of her, and if you can obtain her consent, (a more difficult task, I fear, than you imagine,) I shall be the happiest of men as the husband of the adorable Sebastiana."

"That is speaking to the purpose," said Fatello; "and, for my part, I repeat that I shall be happy to call you brother-in-law. I will do my best for you with Sebastiana, to whom I will at once communicate your formal demand in marriage. But, pshaw! you rogue," added he, with a clumsy attempt at archness, "you have made pretty sure of her consent, and need no brotherly advocate."

"Indeed you are mistaken," replied Steinfeld earnestly. "I only wish I were as confident, and with good reason, as you think me."

"Well, well, no matter," said the banker. "You shall shortly hear your fate."

"I shall be on thorns till I learn it," said the baron. "And, my dear Fatello," said he, detaining the banker, who, after shaking hands with him, was about to leave the room, "it is perhaps not necessary to refer—at least not weigh upon—our conversation at last night's masquerade. It [733] might vex Mademoiselle Gonfalon—to learn that she had been overheard—or—she might doubt your having heard, and think I had been confiding to you a presumptuous and unfounded belief of her partiality for myself. Women, you know, are susceptible on these points; it might indispose her towards me, and lessen my chance. In short," he added, with a smile, "if you will be guided by an *ex-roué*, now reformed, but who has some little experience of the female heart, you will confine yourself to the communication of my proposals, without reference to any thing past, and apply all your eloquence to induce Mademoiselle Sebastiana to receive them as favourably as yourself."

Fatello nodded knowingly.

"Ay, ay," said he, "I see I need not despair of my ears. They do not serve me so badly. But never

fear, baron—I will know nothing, except that you are desperately in love, and that your life depends on your suit's success. That is the established formula, is it not?"

When the baron—after escorting Fatello, in spite of his resistance, to the door of the pavilion, where the banker's carriage awaited him—re-entered the breakfast-room, the joyous and hopeful expression his countenance had worn during the latter part of his conversation with his visitor was exchanged for one of anxiety and doubt. Instead of returning to the breakfast, of which he had scarcely eaten a mouthful, he drew his arm-chair to the fire, threw himself into it, and fell into a brown study. The attentive valet, who came in full of concern for his master's interrupted meal, was sharply dismissed, with an order to admit no callers. After a short time, however, Steinfeld's cogitations apparently assumed a rosier hue. The wrinkles on his brow relaxed their rigidity, he ceased to gnaw his mustache, and at length a smile dawned upon his features, and grew till it burst into a laugh. Something or other inordinately tickled the baron's fancy; for he lay back in his chair and laughed heartily, but silently, with the eyes rather than the mouth, for nearly a minute. Then getting up, and lounging pensively through the room, he indulged in a soliloquy of muttered and broken sentences, which, like the secret cipher of a band of conspirators, were unintelligible without a key. Their obscurity was increased by a style of metaphor borrowed from the card-table, and which a man of such correct taste as Steinfeld would doubtless have scrupled to employ in conversation with any one but himself.

"What an odd caprice of fate!" he said. "A strange turn in the game, indeed! The card I most feared turns up trumps! It rather deranges my calculations; but perhaps it is as good a card as the other. Decidedly as sure a one. What certainty that yonder pedantic booby is right in his prognostics? And then there was no avoiding it. Provided, only, Fatello is silent about last night. If not, all is spoilt. And if she makes a scene! Your Spanish dames are reputed fiery as Arabs; but I take her for one of the milder sort—rather a pining than a storming beauty. What if I were to miss both, by some infernal *quiproquo* or other. Query, too, whether Sebastiana accepts; but I think, with Fatello to back me, I need not fear much on that score. I detect his motives. To your rich upstart, money is dirt compared with descent, connexion, title. He would like to be an ambassador's brother-in-law, the near connexion of a family dating from Charlemagne—he, the man of nothing, with plebeian written on his front. Upwards of half a million. Seven hundred thousand, I daresay. I had reckoned on nearly double, and now I may lose both. Well, *à la grâce du diable*. I will go take a gallop."

And in another half hour the aspirant to the hand and fortune of Sebastiana Gonfalon was cantering round the Bois de Boulogne, followed at the prescribed distance by Celestin, who, mounted on a fine English horse, near sixteen hands high, bore no slight resemblance to an ape exalted on an elephant.

CHAP. IV.—THE CAPTAIN'S ROOM.

[734]

The hotel of the Northern Eagle, situated in one of the most respectable of the numerous small streets between the Rue St Honoré and the Rue Neuve des Petits Champs, is one of several hundred establishments of the class, scattered over Paris, and which, although bearing the ambitious title of "*hotel*," differ in no essential respect from what in London are styled third or fourth-rate lodging-houses. It is a tall, narrow, melancholy-looking edifice, entered through an archway, which devours a great part of the ground-floor, and is closed at night by a heavy coach-door, and in the daytime by a four-foot palisade, painted a bright green, with a gate in the middle, and a noisy bell that rings whenever the gate is opened. Under the archway, and in the little paved court that terminates it, there is always a strong smell of blacking in the morning, and an equally strong smell of soup in the afternoon; the former arising from the labours of Jean, a strapping, broad-shouldered native of Picardy, who makes beds, cleans boots, and carries water for the entire hotel; the latter emanating from a small, smoky den, not unlike a ship's caboose, where a dingy cookmaid prepares the diurnal *pot-au-feu* for the mistress of the hotel, her son and husband, and for a couple of pensioners, who, in consideration of the moderate monthly payment of fifty francs each, are admitted to share the frugal ragouts of Madame Duchambre's dinner-table. By an architectural arrangement, common enough in old Paris houses, and which seems designed to secure a comfortable gush of cold air through the crevices of every door in the building, the foot of the staircase is in the court, open to all weathers—a circumstance most painful to Jean, who takes pride in the polish of his stairs, and is to be seen, whenever his other avocations leave him a moment's leisure, busily repairing, with a brush buckled on his foot, and a bit of wax in a cleft stick, the damage done to their lustre by the muddy boots of the lodgers. The hotel contains about five-and-twenty rooms, all let singly, with the exception of the first floor, divided into two "*appartemens*" of two rooms and a cupboard each, for which Madame Duchambre obtains the extravagant rent of ninety and one hundred francs per month. Above the first floor the rooms are of various quality—from the commodious chamber which, by the French system of an alcove for the bed, is converted in the daytime into a very tolerable imitation of a parlour—to the comfortless attic, an oven in summer, an ice-house in winter, dearly paid at five francs a-week by some struggling artisan who works hard enough in the day to sleep anywhere at night.

At the period referred to by this narrative, a room upon the third floor of the hotel of the Northern Eagle was occupied, as might be ascertained by inspection of a lithographed visiting card, stuck upon the door with a wafer, by Godibert Carcassonne, captain in the 1st African Chasseurs, known emphatically amongst the permanent tenants of the hotel as "The Captain." Not that military occupants were a rarity under the wings of the Northern Eagle; captains were common enough there—majors not very scarce—and it was upon record that more than one

colonel had occupied the yellow *salon* upon the first floor. But none of these warriors bore comparison with Captain Carcassonne in the estimation of Madame Duchambre, an elderly lady with a game leg, and a singularly plain countenance, who had seen better days, and had a strong sense of the proprieties of life. In general she professed no great affection for men of the sword, whom she considered too much addicted to strong drink and profane oaths, and who did not always, she said, respect *la pudeur de la maison*. The captain, however, had completely won her heart—not by any particular meekness or abstinence, for he consumed far more cognac than spring water, had a voice like a deep-mouthed mastiff, and swore, when incensed, till the very rafters trembled. Nevertheless he had somehow or other gained her affections; partly, perhaps, [735] by the regularity with which, upon all his visits to Paris during the previous fifteen years, he had lodged in her house and paid his bills; partly, doubtless, by the engaging familiarity with which he helped himself from her snuff-box, and addressed her as Maman Duchambre.

It was eight o'clock at night, and, contrary to his wont, Captain Carcassonne, instead of contesting a pool at billiards in his accustomed café, or occupying a stall at his favourite Palais Royal theatre, was seated in his room, alone, a coffee-cup and a bottle on the table beside him, the amber mouthpiece of a huge meerschaum pipe disappearing under his heavy dark mustache, smoking steadily, and reading the *Sentinelle de l'Armée*. He was a powerful active man, about forty years of age, with a red-brown complexion, martial features, and a cavalier air, in whom Algerine climate and fatigues had mitigated, if it had not wholly checked, that tendency to corpulence early observable in many French cavalry officers, for the most part a sedentary and full-feeding race. Of a most gregarious disposition, no slight cause would have induced the captain to pass in slow solitude those evening hours, which, according to his creed, ought invariably, in Paris, to dance merrily by in the broad light of gas, and in the excitement of a theatre or coffee-house. Neither was it, in his eyes, a trifle that had placed him, as he expressed it, under close arrest for the evening. He was paying a small instalment of a debt of gratitude, which many would have held expunged by lapse of time, but which Carcassonne still remembered and willingly acknowledged. Many years previously—within a twelvemonth after his promotion from a sergeantcy in a crack hussar regiment to a cornetcy in a corps of chasseurs, newly formed for African service, and in which he had since sabred his way to the command of a troop—Godibert Carcassonne, when on leave of absence at Paris, had been led, by thoughtlessness and by evil associates, rather than by innate vice, into a scrape which threatened to blast his prospects in the army, and consequently in life, and of his extrication from which there was no possibility, unless he could immediately procure five thousand francs. The sum was trifling, but to him it seemed immense, for he estimated it by the difficulty of obtaining it. Driven to desperation, thoughts of suicide beset him, when at that critical moment a friend came to the rescue. By the merest chance, he stumbled upon a former school-fellow, a native of the same department as himself, and his accomplice in many a boyish frolic. They had not seen each other for years. When Carcassonne was taken by the conscription, his schoolmate had already departed to seek fortune at Paris, the Eldorado of provincials, and there, whilst the smart but penniless young soldier was slowly working his way to a commission, he had taken root and prospered. He was not yet a wealthy man, but neither was he a needy or niggardly one, for, on hearing the tale of his friend's difficulties, he offered him, after a few moments' internal calculation, the loan of the sum on which his fate depended, and gruffly cut short the impetuous expression of gratitude with which the generous offer was joyfully accepted. The loan was in fact a gift, for when, some time afterwards, Carcassonne remitted to his friend a small instalment of his debt, scraped together by a pinching economy that did him honour, out of his slender pay, the little draft was returned to him, with the words, "You shall pay me when you are colonel." And as all subsequent attempts were met by the same answer, the money was still unpaid. But never did loan bear better interest of gratitude. Carcassonne had never forgotten the obligation, was never weary of seeking opportunities of requiting it. These were hard to find, for his friend was now a rich man, and there was little the dragoon could do for him beyond choosing his horses, and giving his grooms valuable veterinary hints, derived from his long experience of the chevaline race in the stables of the 1st Chasseurs. Once only was he fortunate enough to hear his benefactor slightingly spoken of at a public table in Paris. That was a happy day for Carcassonne, and a sad one for the offender, who was taken home a few hours afterwards with pistol bullet in his shoulder.

The object of this devoted attachment on the part of the rough but honest-hearted soldier, was [736] not insensible to the sincerity and value of such friendship, and returned it after his own fashion, —that is to say, somewhat as the owner of a noble dog permits its demonstrations of affection, and requites them by an occasional caress. When Carcassonne came to Paris, which he did as often as he could get leave of absence from his duties in Africa, his first visit was always for his benefactor, who invariably got up a dinner for him—not at his own house, which the dragoon would have considered a tame proceeding, but at some renowned restaurant—a regular *bamboche*, as the African styled it, where champagne corks flew and punch flamed from six in the evening till any hour after midnight. Then, the civilian's occupations being numerous, and his sphere of life quite different from that of the soldier, the two saw but little of each other, except through a casual meeting in the rich man's stables, or on the boulevard, or when—but this was very rare—Carcassonne was surprised in his room, at the Northern Eagle, by an unexpected but most welcome visit from his friend, come to smoke a passing cigar, and have ten minutes' chat over boyish days and reminiscences.

These visits were a great treat to the captain; and it was the anticipation of one of them that now kept him in his room. To his astonishment, he had received that morning a note from his friend, requesting him to remain at home in the evening, as he would call upon and crave a service of him. Carcassonne was delighted at the intimation, and not feeling quite certain when evening

might be said to begin, he shut himself up in his room at four o'clock, ordered in dinner from a neighbouring *traiteur*, sipped his coffee in contented solitude, and now awaited, with the dutiful patience of a soldier on sentry, the promised coming of his friend. At last a cough and a heavy footstep were heard upon the stairs; the captain took up a candle, opened the door, and, stepping out into the gloomy corridor, the light fell upon the tall ungainly figure, and sullen features, of Sigismund Fatello.

"Come in, my dear fellow," cried Carcassonne in his stentorian tones, and with a soldier's oath. "I've expected you these three hours. What—wet? Snow? Come to the fire, and take a sup of cognac till the punch is made."

It snowed heavily outside, and the banker's upper coat had caught a few large flakes in crossing the court. He heeded them not, but putting down, untasted, the glass of brandy handed to him by the captain, he took a chair, and motioned Carcassonne to another.

"What the deuce is the matter with you, Sigismund?" said the captain, looking hard at his friend. "Are you ill?"

"Better than I have for a long time been. Fresh from a wedding."

"Oho!" said Carcassonne. "I thought you had not put on full dress to visit your old comrade in his den at the Northern Eagle. And whose wedding was it?"

"A singular one," replied the banker, parrying the question. "Strangely brought about, certainly. Would you like to hear its history, Carcassonne?"

"By all means," said the captain, who always liked whatever Fatello proposed. "But the business you came about?—you said I could do something for you. What is it?"

"Plenty of time for that. It will keep. Let me tell you of this marriage."

"Delighted to listen," said Carcassonne, settling himself in his chair, and filling his pipe from a huge embroidered bag, once the property of an Arabian Emir's lady, but which a razzia had degraded into a receptacle for tobacco.

"You must know, then, Carcassonne," said Fatello, "that a friend of mine, named Oliver, a man of middle age, more calculated to shine in a counting-house than in a boudoir, was fool enough, not very long ago, to fall in love with a beautiful girl, twenty years younger than himself; and as he was rich, and her father avaricious, the marriage was brought about, although not altogether with her good will."

"Bad," quoth the captain, between two puffs of his pipe. "An unwilling bride is apt to prove a sour wife."

"Once married," continued Fatello, without heeding his friend's interruption, "Oliver, who knew [737]
he had not his wife's love, spared no pains to obtain her friendship. He was not such a man, either by person, manners, or temper, as women are apt to fancy; but, to atone for his deficiencies, he covered her with gold, was the slave of her caprices, forestalled her slightest wish. Her amusement and happiness were the whole study of his life; and after a while his efforts seemed crowned with success. She treated him as a friend, and appeared contented with her lot. This was all he had dared to hope, and, having attained this, he was happy. His existence, from boyhood upwards, had been agitated and laborious, but riches had rewarded his toils, and he could now look forward to a long period of happiness and repose. At the very moment he indulged these visions of a bright future, a single word, whispered in his ear by a physician of high repute, crumbled the entire fabric. That word was Consumption, and when he heard it he knew his doom was sealed. His father, his elder brother, his sisters, all had been carried off, in the prime of their strength, by the insidious disease, whose germ, implanted in their system before they saw the light, was ineradicable by the resources of art. The shock was severe—it could not be otherwise—for most of the things were his for which men prize life. But he was no poltroon, to pine at the approach of death; and he nerved himself to meet like a man his inevitable fate. Although with scarce a shadow of hope, he neglected no means of combating the deadly malady; and, enjoining secrecy to his physician, he concealed from every one his belief that his days were numbered and his race wellnigh run. He was calm and resigned, if not hopeful, when he one day received a letter that chilled his very soul. His wife, it told him, loved another, whom she would meet that night at a masquerade. Although anonymous, its indications were so precise, that Oliver, spurred by fiercest jealousy, disguised himself and went secretly to the ball. There he discovered his wife, in the company of a foreign fopling, who, for some time previously, had been a frequent visitor at his house. He kept near them, occasionally catching a sentence confirmatory of his suspicions, until they withdrew from the crowd, and sought a retired nook, where to converse uninterrupted. He found means to secrete himself in their vicinity, and overheard—no evidence of his dishonour, for then he had stabbed them where they stood—but words whence he gathered the existence of the most heartless, perfidious, and cold-blooded calculation.

"The wife of his bosom, to gain whose affection he had squandered millions, and changed his very nature, impatiently awaited his death to bestow her hand, and the fortune he should bequeath her, on the smooth-tongued seducer whose arts had beguiled her. The secret of his fatal malady had been divulged by the physician, to whom alone it was known, in the hearing of this foreign adventurer, who, ever upon the watch to redeem his broken fortunes by a wealthy marriage,

profited by the disclosure. He obtained an introduction to Oliver's house, and applied every art and energy to gain his wife's affections. He was but too successful. She listened to his protestations, and on learning her husband's impending death, pledged herself to become his, when she should be released by it from ties she abhorred. All this, and more, Oliver gathered from their conversation, to which he had the courage to listen to the end, although each sentence went to his heart like a stab, leaving in the wound the venom of hate and jealousy, to rankle there until the latest moment of his life. What had you done, Carcassonne, had you been in his place?"

"*Pardieu!*" said the captain, who had listened with profound attention, and great expenditure of smoke, to his friend's narrative; "I can hardly say, Sigismund. If I had kept my hands off the butterfly scoundrel when I heard him courting my wife, I should have followed him when he had had his chat out, and requested the pleasure of crossing swords with him at his earliest convenience; and had I got one good cut at him, he should not have needed another. What did your friend?"

"Very nearly what you have said. He went home and destroyed his will, and made another. Then [738] he sought his enemy, to challenge him to an instant encounter. The mean villain denied his treachery, and swore that her to whom his vows of love were addressed was not Oliver's wife, but his sister-in-law. Oliver well knew this to be a lie, but he affected to believe he had been deceived by similarity of dress and imperfect hearing, for the subterfuge had suddenly suggested to him a sure means of punishing his faithless wife, and defeating her seducer's aim. He declared himself willing to aid the views of the foreigner—one Baron Steinfeld, an Austrian of high family, but ruined fortunes—and to urge his sister-in-law to accept his hand. Disagreeably surprised at such willingness, where he had wished and expected opposition, Steinfeld strove to recede, but found extrication impossible from the trap he had rushed into. Finally he was compelled to yield; the less unwillingly because the bride thus given him was not without fortune, which Oliver exaggerated, the better to allure him. So that, when Oliver left him, it was to convey his formal proposals to the lady, who was nothing loath, and to-day they were married."

"To-day!" exclaimed Carcassonne. "This, then, is the wedding you come from. And what said Madame Oliver?"

"What could she say? Made all the secret opposition she could, no doubt; and then, finding it in vain, for her sister seemed as much fascinated by the Austrian Lothario as she was herself, she took ill and kept her bed. It needed all her woman's pride, and her fear of malicious comment, to carry her calmly through to-day's ceremonies and festivities."

"A very strange tale!" cried the captain. "And all true, eh?"

"To the letter. But that is not all. To-day, after the marriage, Oliver sought five minutes' conversation with his newly-made brother-in-law; and his first act, when they were alone, was to hand him the anonymous letter he had received on the day of the masquerade, in which was mentioned the colour of the ribbons worn by Madame Oliver at the ball, as a sign by which Steinfeld was to distinguish her amongst the crowd of dominos."

"Good!" said Carcassonne emphatically. "And what said the Kaiserlic?"

"Denied every thing, until Oliver recapitulated, word for word, certain phrases of the conversation he had overheard. This struck him dumb; but soon he recovered his effrontery, and expressed surprise at Oliver's reviving the subject, especially at that moment."

"'Since you deemed it advisable to overlook the offence at the time, and to promote my marriage with your sister-in-law,' he said, 'I cannot understand your motive for now raking up the grievance.'

"'I will explain,' replied Oliver. 'I married you to my sister-in-law that you might never be my widow's husband, whether I die a few months hence, by the hand of God, or to-morrow by yours, in the duel which shall no longer be delayed.'"

"The devil!" shouted the captain, at this announcement. "Your friend Oliver is the wrong man to jest with, I see that. But will he really fight his sister's husband?"

"He really will," replied Fatello, calmly. "Should you scruple, in his place?"

"By my soul, it's hard to say, till one is tried. We are used in Africa to hear fellows reckoning on our boots before we think of leaving them off. But that hurts neither us nor the boots, whilst a man's wife——It is aggravating, certainly, particularly to a man of your Oliver's temper. A saint or a priest might not approve, but, as a soldier and sinner, I must say revenge, in such a case, seems sweet and natural."

"Then," said Fatello, "I may reckon on your assistance to-morrow?"

"On my assistance!—I—you! What the devil do you mean?" cried Carcassonne, dropping his pipe, and starting from his seat in extraordinary perturbation.

"Merely that my friend Oliver and your friend Fatello are one and the same person, whose business here to-night is to ask you to second him in his duel to-morrow with Baron Ernest von Steinfeld, married this morning to Mademoiselle Sebastiana Gonfalon."

CHAP. V.—THE DAY AFTER THE WEDDING. [739]

It may easily be imagined that Steinfeld, brave as he unquestionably was, did not feel particularly pleased at finding himself called upon to risk his life in a profitless duel, at the very moment when that life had acquired fresh value in his eyes, through his acquisition of a pretty wife and a handsome fortune. The former, it is true, the baron, whose utter selfishness made him incapable of love in the higher sense of the word, prized only as a child does a new plaything, or an epicure a fresh dish presented to his sated palate. Pretty and attractive as his bride was, her personal charms weighed far less with him than her golden ones. Even in these he had been somewhat disappointed. Although considerable, they were less than Fatello's round-numbered generalities had led him to expect; and, moreover, when the time came to discuss the settlements, the banker fought hard to secure his sister-in-law's fortune upon her own head and that of her children. This, however, Steinfeld vigorously resisted, urging the necessity of extricating his estates from pawn; and Sebastiana, enamoured of her handsome bridegroom, and whose ardent and jealous imagination drew a romantic picture of a tête-à-tête existence in a secluded chateau, far from the rivalries of a capital, expressed so strongly her will to apply her fortune in the manner Steinfeld desired, that Fatello, after much opposition, and with no good grace, was compelled to yield the point. The sum thus placed in the Austrian's power, although less than he had anticipated, was yet so large to a man in his position, that its possession threw a pleasant rose-coloured tint over his existence, of which the prospect of poverty, and the annoyances of duns, had for some time past deprived it. So that when, upon his wedding-day, Fatello fiercely taxed him with his perfidy, repeated the words of insult he had addressed to him on the morrow of the masquerade, and insisted upon a duel, the baron did all in his power to pacify him, urging their new but near connexion as an insuperable obstacle to a quarrel, and even humbling himself to express contrition for his offence, which he persisted, however, would have been viewed as but a venial one by any but so morbid, jealous, and vindictive a person as Fatello, and which, in no case, considering the relation they now stood in to each other, could be held to justify them in seeking each other's life. But to his expostulations, apologies, and arguments, Fatello replied with such savage invective and ungovernable violence, taunting the baron with cowardice, and threatening him, if he refused the reparation demanded, with public exposure and manual chastisement—threats, of whose execution Fatello's intemperate character and colossal frame (the latter still muscular and powerful in spite of the disease mining it) allowed very little doubt—that Steinfeld saw there was no alternative but to accept the meeting; and, assuming the cold and haughty tone of an injured man, he briefly arranged with Fatello its principal conditions. To avoid scandal, and to insure, as far as possible, the safety of the survivor, the duel was to take place in the grounds of a country house belonging to the banker, at about a league from Paris, and the seconds and surgeon were to be pledged to the strictest secrecy. Fatello named Captain Carcassonne, and Steinfeld the Viscount Arthur de Mellay, between whom the details of the affair were to be settled.

Both the principals, however, in this singular duel, were destined to experience difficulties from the friends they had fixed upon to second them. Captain Carcassonne, who himself cared no more for a duel than an English prizefighter does for a round with the gloves, and who never slept a wink the fewer, or ate a mouthful less breakfast before going out to fight one, was seized with a sudden trepidation when he learned that his friend, whom he well knew to be unskilled in fence and fire, was to enter the field with a man reputed expert in both. At first he would not hear of [740]
the meeting taking place, swearing, in direct opposition to what he had just before said, that he should not think of fighting for such a trifle. When this plea was overruled, a bright idea struck him. He would pick a quarrel with Steinfeld, and wing him with a pistol-shot, or spoil his beauty with a sabre-cut, just as Fatello chose; ay, would kill him outright, if nothing less would satisfy his vindictive friend. But Fatello, whose morbid desire of revenge had assumed the character of a monomania, rejected all the captain's plans; and Carcassonne, whose affection and deference for his old companion and benefactor were unbounded, ceased to make objections, and fixed his thoughts solely upon the necessary preliminaries. As to Fatello's announcement of the danger his life was in from lurking disease, (a danger more remote, but also more certain than that he would incur upon the morrow,) it would deeply have grieved the worthy captain had he attached the least credit to it; but his contempt for doctors and their prognostications prevented his dwelling on it longer than to give a smile to the credulity of his friend. Meanwhile Steinfeld had some trouble with de Mellay. It not being the fashion in France for newly-married couples to escape from the place of their wedding as fast as four posters can carry them, the baron had taken his bride to his house in the Rue St Lazare, which a little arrangement had adapted for their residence during the few days that were to elapse before their departure for Germany. There, upon the evening of his wedding-day, he had a conference with the viscount, who, startled, like Carcassonne, at the news of the projected duel, insisted on full explanations before consenting to render Steinfeld the service required of him. These explanations Steinfeld was compelled to give; and although he spread over them a varnish favourable to himself, de Mellay plainly saw that the part the Austrian had played in the whole affair did him no credit, and that Fatello's extraordinary vindictiveness, if not justified, was in some degree extenuated, by his adversary's perfidious manœuvres and gross breach of hospitality. He at first insisted on attempting a reconciliation, but Steinfeld having convinced him of its impossibility, he would not refuse to stand by an intimate friend and companion, who had more than once gone upon the ground with him. He suggested, however—almost, indeed, made it a condition—that the baron should fire wide, or not at all the first time, in doing which he ran little risk, for Fatello was known to be unskilled with the pistol. De Mellay resolved to place the duellists as far apart as possible, and to make them fire together. He made sure Fatello would miss the first shot, and that then, if Steinfeld had not fired, the affair could easily be made up.

It was three in the afternoon, and the snow lay thick upon the ground, when Steinfeld and his second entered a small door in the paling of the banker's park, at a short distance from which they had dismissed their hackney coach. Fatello, Carcassonne, and Dr Pilori, had preceded them in the banker's carriage. The five men met upon a bowling-green surrounded by trees, which, although leafless, were so thickly planted as to form an impervious screen. More for form's sake and the satisfaction of conscience, than with hope of success, the seconds essayed a reconciliation. The attempt was rendered fruitless by Fatello's firm determination; and after a brief conference between the viscount and Carcassonne, the combatants were placed at twenty paces. It was agreed they were to fire together, when six had been counted. The seconds stepped aside. Carcassonne counted. When he came to "*six*" a single report followed. Steinfeld staggered. De Mellay ran to him.

"Nothing," said the baron. "My dear brother-in-law shoots better than I thought, that is all." And he showed a rent made by Fatello's bullet in the front of his tightly-buttoned surtout, near the waist. A button had been cut away, and the ball had grazed the skin, but without drawing blood.

"This shall not avail you, sir," cried Fatello, in a tone of indescribable exasperation. "We came to fight, not to play. Fire, sir!" And he stood sideways, expecting his adversary's bullet.

Steinfeld smiled bitterly. Then raising his pistol, he took aim at a red-breast, which, scared from [741]
the bough by Fatello's fire, had again settled, tamed by cold and hunger, upon a sapling five-and-twenty paces off. Bark and feathers flew at the same time, and the unlucky little bird lay disembowelled upon the snow. Carcassonne and de Mellay exchanged a word or two, and advanced towards Fatello.

"Enough done, my dear Sigismund," said the captain. "After the baron's forbearance, this can go no farther."

Fatello's reply was a torrent of imprecations. His eyes were bloodshot, his cheeks pale as death: he was insane with passion. The captain in vain endeavoured to soothe and calm him. He raged and stormed like a madman.

"Monsieur Fatello," said de Mellay, with surprise—almost with disgust—"for heaven's sake compose yourself. This persistence is unworthy of you. What injury have you received to justify such malignity? Neither your second nor myself can let this affair proceed, otherwise than to a reconciliation."

There was a decision in the young man's tone and manner that seemed to strike Fatello and check his fury. For a moment or two he gazed silently at the viscount, as if recalled to reason by his remonstrance. It was the trick of the maniac, to put the keeper off his guard. Suddenly pushing Carcassonne aside, he reached, in two bounds, a pistol-case that lay open at a short distance, and, seizing one of the weapons, levelled it at Steinfeld. With a cry of horror, de Mellay and Carcassonne threw themselves before the baron.

"This is murder!" exclaimed the viscount.

"Stop!" said Steinfeld, pale, but quite calm. "Wait a moment, sir, and you shall be satisfied. There is no alternative, my dear de Mellay. Monsieur Fatello insists. Give me the other pistol."

De Mellay hesitated, and looked at the captain.

"*Ma foi!*" said Carcassonne, shrugging his shoulders, as if he thought a bullet more or less hardly worth so much discussion—"if they *will* have it!" The principals resumed their ground, and the word was again given. This time both pistols were discharged. Steinfeld stirred not, but Fatello fell to the ground and lay there without motion. Dr Pilori ran forward, and, kneeling beside him, unbuttoned his coat. There was a small blue spot on the breast, from which oozed a drop or two of blood. The doctor seized the wrist of the fallen man. Steinfeld and the seconds gazed anxiously in his face, awaiting his verdict.

"I aimed at his arm," said Steinfeld gloomily, "but the cold made my hand shake."

Carcassonne seemed not to hear the remark. De Mellay glanced at the baron, and then at the bird that lay upon the blood-sprinkled snow more than twenty yards off.

"Quite dead," said Pilori, letting the arm fall. "It is a painful thing to kill a man," added the materialist doctor to Steinfeld, who stood regarding his victim with a moody and regretful gaze. "It may be satisfactory to you to know that he could not have lived six months longer."

In France, a few years ago, duels, even when fatal in result, did not necessarily entail strict judicial investigation, unless such investigation was provoked by the friends of the fallen man. In the instance here recorded, no one thought proper to take vindictive steps. Fatello's coachman was instructed, and largely bribed, to say that his master had been struck with apoplexy in his carriage, and that, on discovering his condition, he had at once driven him to Dr Pilori. The physician's arrival at the house, in company with the corpse, and the absence of hemorrhage from the wound, rendered it easy to conceal the latter, and gave plausibility to the story, which found general credit. It was not till several days afterwards that a report spread of the real cause of the banker's death. Even then it attained little publicity, and by many was looked upon as a malicious fabrication. Before it got wind, however, the survivors of the domestic drama we have narrated, were far from its scene. By a will made a month before his death, Fatello had left the [742]
whole of his great riches, with the exception of some munificent donations to public charities,

and of an ample legacy to Captain Carcassonne, to a cousin of his own name in Alsace. But he could not alienate his wife's fortune, or deprive her of the splendid jointure secured to her by her father's cautious greediness; and these constituted very large wealth, with which his widow, shortly after his death, left Paris for her native country. Her Parisian friends and acquaintances were edified, in the highest degree, by the grief she displayed at Fatello's decease. She was disconsolate; and, for at least a day and a half, "*cette pauvre Madame Fatello*" was the prevailing topic of conversation, and the object of universal sympathy. Hen-pecked husbands held her up as a model of conjugal affection; and wicked wives secretly wondered at the poignant regret shown by such a young, rich, and handsome widow, for so ugly, unprepossessing, and morose a man. But it occurred to no one to seek the cause of her excessive grief in a bridal wreath instead of in a funeral shroud; to trace the source of her sorrow to the loss of an expected husband whom she passionately loved, not to that of a departed one, whom she never regretted.

Although little apprehensive of persecution, many motives concurred to render Paris an undesirable residence for the survivor of the duel in which Fatello met his death. The day after the fatal meeting, a travelling carriage left Paris by the road to Brussels. It contained Ernest von Steinfeld and his bride. In spite of some practice in duelling, and of the triple armour of selfishness in which he was habitually cased, there was a cloud upon the baron's brow which change of scene and the caresses of his young wife did not always suffice to dissipate. And, although sensible to his bride's beauty and fascination, and grateful, as far as it was in his nature to be so, for the passionate affection she showed him, it may be doubted whether he would not have repulsed her endearments, and spurned her from him, had he detected a secret that lay buried in the innermost recesses of her heart—had he recognised, in Sebastiana Gonfalon, the writer of the two anonymous letters that tended so materially to bring about her marriage, and the violent death of Sigismund Fatello.

As it was, the Baroness von Steinfeld had not long to congratulate herself on the success of her culpable manœuvres, whose sole extenuation was to be found in the fiery passions of her race, and in a moral education totally neglected. Doubtless, when planning and carrying out her guilty scheme, the possibility of so terrible a result never occurred to her; and it were attributing improbable depravity to one so young to doubt that she felt remorse at the catastrophe. She did not long await her punishment. Bright as were her hopes of happiness when led to the altar by the man she adored, she soon was bitterly convinced, that no true or permanent felicity could be the consequence of a union achieved by guilty artifice, and sealed with a brother's blood. A few months were sufficient to darken her destiny and blight her joys. Her fortune swallowed up by Steinfeld's debts and extravagance, her person speedily became indifferent to the sated and cold-hearted voluptuary; and whilst her reckless husband, faithful to nothing but to his hatred of matrimonial ties, again galloped upon the road to ruin, in the most dissipated circles of the Austrian capital, she saw herself condemned to solitude and unavailing regrets, in the very castle where she had anticipated an existence of unalloyed bliss.

THE "GREEN HAND." [743]

A "SHORT" YARN.

[13]

"Come, old ship, give us a yarn!" said the younger forecastle-men to an old one, on board of an Indiaman then swiftly cleaving the waves of the western Atlantic before the trade-wind, and outward-bound, with a hearty crew and a number of passengers. It was the second of the two dog-watches; and, the ship being still in the region of evening twilights, her men, in a good humour, and with leisure, were then usually disposed, as on this occasion, to make fast their roaming thoughts by help of a good yarn, when it could be got. There were plenty of individuals, amongst a crew of forty, calculated by their experience, or else by their flow of spirits and fancy, to spin it. Each watch into which they were divided had its especial story-teller, with whose merits it twitted the other, and on opportunity of a general *reunion*, they were pitted against one another like two fighting-cocks, or a couple of rival novelists in more polished literary society at home. The one was a grave, solemn, old North-Sea whaler with one eye, who professed to look down with contempt upon all raw head-work, on navigation compared with seamanship, and fiction against fact. As for himself, he rested all his fame upon actual experience, and told long dry narratives of old shipmates, of his voyages and adventures, and sometimes of the most incredible incidents, with a genuine briny gusto which pleased the veteran stagers beyond expression. They were full of points of seamanship—expedients for nice emergencies, tacks, knots, and splices; he gave the very conversation of his characters, with all the "says he" and "says I;" and one long recital of the old fellow's turned upon the question between himself and a newfangled second-mate about the right way to set up back-stays, in which he, the sailor, was proved correct by the loss of the ship. The other story-teller, again, was a Wapping man; a lively, impudent young Cockney, who had the most miraculous faculty of telling lies—not only palpable lies, but lies absolutely impossible: yet they were so sublimely told often, and he contrived to lug into them such a quantity of gorgeous tinsel ornament, as, in his happier efforts, decidedly to carry the day against his opponent. The London hand had seen *life* too, of which, with respect to

what is called the world, his competitor was as ignorant as a child. He had his sentimental vein, accordingly, in which he took the last love-tale out of some "Penny Story-Teller" or fashionable novel he had spelled over below, and turned it over into a parody that would have thrown its unfortunate author into convulsions of horror, and his critics into shrieks of laughter. The fine language of lords and ladies, of romantic heroines, or of foreign counts and bandits, was gravely retailed and gravely listened to by a throng of admiring jack-tars; while the old whaler smoked his pipe sulkily apart, gave now and then a scornful glance out of his weather-eye, and called it "all *high-dic*' and soger's gammon."

On this occasion, however, the group forward did not solicit the services of either candidate, as they happened to have present among them a shipmate who, by general confession, "took the shine" out of both, although it was rarely they could get hold of him. "Old Jack," the captain's private steward, was the oldest seaman on board, and having known the captain when the latter went to sea, had sailed with him almost ever since he commanded a ship, as well as lived in his house on shore. He did not now keep his watch, nor take his "trick at the helm," except when he chose, and was altogether a privileged sort of person, or one of "the idlers." His name was Jacobs, which afforded a pretext for calling him "Old Jack," with the sailor's fondness for that Christian cognomen, which it is difficult to account for, unless because Jonah and St John were [744] seafaring characters, and the Roman Catholic holy clerk St Nicholas was baptised "Davy Jones," with sundry other reasons good at sea. But Old Jack was, at any rate, the best hand for a yarn in the Gloucester Indiaman, and had been once or twice called upon to spin one to the ladies and gentlemen in the cuddy. It was partly because of his inexhaustible fund of good-humour, and partly from that love of the sea which looked out through all that the old tar had seen and undergone, and which made him still follow the bowsprit, although able to live comfortably ashore. In his blue jacket, white canvass trousers edged with blue, and glazed hat, coming forward to the galley to light his pipe, after serving the captain's tea of an evening, Old Jack looked out over the bulwarks, sniffed the sharp sea-air, and stood with his shirt-sleeve fluttering as he put his finger in his pipe, the very embodiment of the scene—the model of a prime old salt who had ceased to "rough it," but could do so yet if needful.

"Come, old ship!" said the men near the windlass as soon as Old Jack came forward, "give us a yarn, will ye?" "Yarn!" said Jack, smiling—"what yarn, mates? 'Tis a fine night, though, for that same—the clouds flies high, and she's balling off a good ten knots sin' eight bells." "That she is, bo'—so give us a yarn now, like a reg'lar old A. 1. as you are!" said one. "'Vast there, mate," said a man-o'-war's-man, winking to the rest,—"you're always a-cargo-puddling, Bill! D'ye think Old Jack answers to any other hail nor the Queen's? I say, old three-decker in or'nary, we all wants one o' your close-laid yarns this good night. Whaling Jim here rubs his down with a thought overmuch o' the tar, an' young Joe dips 'em in yallow varnish,—so if you says Nay, why, we'll all save our grog, and get drunk as soon as may-be." "Well, well, mates," said Jack, endeavouring to conceal his flattered feelings, "what's it to be, though?" "Let's see," said the man-o'-war's-man —"ay, give us the Green Hand!" "Ay, ay, the Green Hand!" exclaimed one and all. This "Green Hand" was a story Old Jack had already related several times, but always with such amusing variations, that it seemed on each repetition a new one—the listeners testifying their satisfaction by growls of rough laughter, and by the emphatic way in which, during a pause, they squirted their tobacco-juice on the deck. What gave additional zest to this particular yarn, too, was the fact of its hero being no less than the captain himself, who was at this moment on the poop quarter-deck of the ship, pointing out something to a group of ladies by the round-house—a tall handsome-looking man of about forty, with all the mingled gravity and frank good-humour of a sailor in his firm weather-tinted countenance. To have the power of secretly contrasting his present position and manners with those delineated by Old Jack's episode from the "skipper's" previous biography, was the *acme* of comic delight to these rude sons of Neptune, and the narrator just hit this point.

"Ye see," began he, "'tis about six-an'-twenty year gone since I was an able seaman before the mast, in a small Indyman they called the Chester Castle, lying at that time behind the Isle of Dogs in sight of Grenidge Hospital. She was full laden, but there was a strong breeze blowing up that wouldn't let us get underweigh; and, besides, we waited for the most part of our hands. I had sailed with the same ship two voyages before; so, says the captain to me one day, "Jacobs, there's a lady over at Greenwich yonder wants to send her boy to sea in the ship—for a sickening I s'pose. I'm a going up to town myself," says he, "so take the quarter-boat, and two of the boys, and go ashore with this letter, and see the young fool. From what I've heard," says the skipper, "he's a jackanapes as will give us more trouble than thanks. However, if you find the lady's bent on it, why, she may send him aboard to-morrow if she likes. Only we don't carry no young gentlemen, and if he slings his hammock here, you must lick him into shape. I'll make a sailor of him, or a cabin-boy." "Ay, ay, sir," says I, shoving the letter into my hat; so in half an hour's time I knocks at the door of the lady's house, rigged out in my best, and hands over the screed to a fat [745] fellow with red breeches and yallow swabs on his shoulders, like a captain of marines, that looked frightened at my hail, for I thou't he'd been deaf by the long spell he took before he opened the door. In five minutes I heard a woman's v'ice ask at the footman if there was a sailor awaiting below. "Yes, marm," says he; and "show him up," says she. Well, I gives a scrape with my larboard foot, and a tug to my hair, when I gets to the door of *such* a fine room above decks, all full o' tables, an' chairs, an' sofers, an' piangers, an' them sort o' highflying consarns. There was a lady all in silks and satins on one of the sofers, dressed out like a widow, with a pretty little girl as was playing music out of a large book—and a picter of a man upon the wall, which I at once logged it down for him she'd parted company from. "Sarvint, ma'am," says I. "Come in, my good man," says the lady. "You're a sailor?" says she—asking, like, to be sure if I warn't the cook's

mate in dish-guise, I fancy. "Well, marm," I raps out, "I make bould to say as I hopes I am!"—an' I catches a sight o' myself in a big looking-glass behind the lady, as large as our sky-sail,—and, being a young fellow in them days, thinks I, "Blow me, if Betsy Brown asked me that now, I'd ask her if *she* was a *woman*!" "Well," says she, "Captain Steel tells me, in this here letter, he's agoing to take my son. Now," says she, "I'm sore against it—couldn't you say some'at to turn his mind?" "The best way for that, yer ladyship," says I, "is to let him go, if was only the length of the Nore. The sea'll turn his stomach for him, marm," I says, "an' then we can send him home by a pilot." "He wanted for to go into the navy," says the lady again, "but I couldn't think on that for a moment, on account of this fearful war; an', after all, he'll be safer in sailing at sea nor in the army or navy—don't you think so, my good man?" "It's all you knows about it," thinks I; hows'ever, I said there wasn't a doubt on it. "Is Captain Steel a rash man?" says she. "How so, marm?" says I, some'at taken aback. "I hope he does not sail at night, or in storms, like too many of his profession, I'm afeard," says she; "I hope he always weighs the anchor in such cases, very careful." "Oh, in course," says I, not knowin', for the life of me, what she meant. I didn't like to come the rig over the poor lady, seein' her so anxious like; but it was no use, we was on such different tacks, ye see. "Oh yes, marm," I says, "Captain Steel al'ays reefs taups'ls at sight of a squall brewing to wind'rd; and we're as safe as a church, then, ye know, with a man at the wheel as knows his duty." "This relieves my mind," the lady says, "very much;" but I couldn't think why she kept sniffing all the time at her smelling bottle, as she wor agoin' to faint. "Don't take it to heart so, yer ladyship," I says at last; "I'll look after the young gentleman till he finds his sea-legs." "Thank you," says she; "but, I beg your pardon, would ye be kind enough for to open the winder, and look out if you see Edward? I think he's in the garding.—I feel sich a smell of pitch and tar!" I hears her say to the girl; and says she to me again, "Do you see Edward there?—call to him, please." Accordingly, I couldn't miss sight of three or four young slips alongside, for they made plenty of noise—one of 'em on top of a water-barrel smoking a segar; another singing out inside of it for mercy; and the rest roaring round about it, like so many Bedlamites. "No wonder the young scamp wants to sea," thinks I, "he's got nothin' arthly to do but mischief." "Which is the young gentleman, marm?" says I, lookin' back into the room—"Is it him with the segar and the red skull-cap?" "Yes," says the lady—"call him up, please." "Hallo!" I sings out, and all runs off but him on the barrel, and "Hallo!" says he. "You're wanted on deck, sir," I says; and in five minutes in comes my young gemman, as grave as you please. "Edward," says the mother, "this is one of Captain Steel's men." "Is he going to take me?" says the young fellow, with his hands in his pockets. "Well, sir," I says, "'tis a very bad look-out, is the sea, for them as don't like it. You'll be sorry ten times over you've left sich a berth as this here, afore you're down Channel." The young [746]
chap looks me all over from clue to earing, and says he, "My mother told you to say that!" "No, sir," says I, "I says it on my own hook." "Why did you go yourself, then?" says he. "I couldn't help it," answers I. "Oh," says the impertinent little devil, "but you're only one of the common sailors, ain't you?" "Split me, you little beggar!" thinks I, "if I doesn't show you the odds betwixt a common sailor, as ye call it, and a lubber of a boy, before long!" But I wasn't goin' to let him take the jaw out o' me, so I only laughed, an' says I, "Why, I'm captain of the foretop at sea, any how." "Where's your huniform, then?" says the boy, lowering his tone a bit. "Oh," I says, "we doesn't al'ays wear huniform, ye know, sir. This here's what we call ondress." "I'm sorry, sir," says the lady, "I didn't ax you to sit down." "No offence at all, marm," I says, but I took a couple o' glasses of brandy as was brought in. I saw 'twas no use goin' against the young chap; so, when he asked what he'd have to do aboard, I told him nothing to speak of, except count the sails now and then, look over the bows to see how the ship went, and go aloft with a spy-glass. "Oh," says his mother at this, "I hope Captain Steel won't never allow Edward to go up those dangerous ladders! It is my pertic'lar request he should be punished if he does." "Sartainly, marm, I'll mention it to the captain," I says, "an' no doubt he'll give them orders as you speak on." "The captain desired me to say the young gentleman could come aboard as soon as he likes," says I, before goin' out of the door. "Very well, sir," says the lady, "I shall see the tailor this same arternoon, and get his clothes, if so be it must." The last word I said was, putting my head half in again to tell 'em, "There was no use gettin' any huniforms at present, seein' the ship's sailmaker could do all as was wanted arterwards, when we got to sea."

Well, two or three days after, the captain sent word to say the ship would drop down with the morning tide, and Master Collins had better be aboard by six o'clock. I went ashore with the boat, but the young gemman's clothes warn't ready yet; so it was made up he was to come on board from Gravesend the day after. But his mother and an old lady, a friend of theirs, would have it they'd go and see his bed-room, and take a look at the ship. There was a bit of a breeze with the tide, and the old Indiaman bobbed up and down on it in the cold morning; you could hear the wash of water poppling on to her rudder, with her running gear blown out in a bend; and Missus Collins thought they'd never get up the dirty black sides of the vessel, as she called 'em. The other said her husband had been a captain, an' she laid claim to a snatch of knowledge. "Sailor," says she to me, as we got under the quarter, "that there tall mast is the main-bowsprit, ain't it? and that other is the gallant bowling you call it, don't you?" says she. "No doubt, marm," says I, winking to the boys not to laugh. "It's all right," I says. Howsoever, as to the bed-room, the captain showed 'em over the cabin, and put 'em off by saying the ship was so out of order he couldn't say which rooms was to be which yet, though they needn't fear Master Ned would get all comfortable; so ashore the poor woman went, pretty well pleased, considerin' her heart was against the whole consarn.

Well, the next afternoon, lying off Gravesend, out comes a wherry with young master. One of the men said there was a midshipman in it. "Midshipman, be blowed!" says I; "did ye ever see a reefer in a wherry, or sitting out o' the starn-sheets? It's neither more nor less nor the greenhorn

we've got." "Why don't the bo'sun pipe to man side-ropes for him!" says th' other; "but, my eye, Bob," says he to me, "what a sight of traps the chap's got in the boat!—'twill be enough to heel the Chester Castle to the side he berths upon, on an even keel. Do he mean to have the captain's cabin, I wonder!" Up the side he scrambles, with the help of a side-ladder, all togged out to the nines in a span-new blue jacket and anchor buttons, a cap with a gould band, and white ducks made to fit—as jemmy-jessamy a looking fellow as you'd see of a cruise along London parks, with the watermen singing out alongside to send down a tackle for the dunnage, which it took a pair of [747] purchase-blocks to hoist them out on board. "What's all this?" says the mate, coming for'ard from the quarter-deck. "'Tis the young gemman's traps, sir," I says. "What the devil!" says the mate, "d'ye think we've room to stow all this lumber? Strike it down into the forehold, Jacobs—but get out a blue shirt or two, and a Scotch cap, for the young whelp first, if he wants to save that smooth toggery of his for his mammy. You're as green as cabbage, I'm feared, my lad!" says he. By this time the boy was struck all of a heap, an' didn't know what to say when he saw the boat pulling for shore, except he wanted to have a sight of his bed-room. "Jacobs," says the mate, laughing like an old bear, "take him below, and show him his bed-room, as he calls it!" So down we went to the half-deck, where the carpenter, bo'sun, and three or four of the 'prentices, had their hammocks slung. There I left him to overhaul his big donkey of a chest, which his mother had stowed it with clothes enough for a lord ambassador, but not a blessed thing fit to use—I wouldn't 'a given my bit of a black box for the whole on it, ten times over. There was another choke-full of gingerbread, pots o' presarves, pickles, and bottles; and, thinks I, "The old lady didn't know what *shares* is at sea, I reckon. 'Twill all be gone for footing, my boy, before you've seen blue water, or I'm a Dutchman."

In a short time we was up anchor, going down with a fast breeze for the Nore; and we stood out to sea that night, havin' to join a convoy off Spithead. My gentleman was turned in all standing, on top o' some sails below; and next day he was as sick as a greenhorn could be, cleaning out his land-ballast where he lay, nor I didn't see him till he'd got better. 'Twas blowing a strong breeze, with light canvass all in aloft, and a single reef in the tops'ls; but fine enough for the Channel, except the rain—when what does I see but the "Green Hand" on the weather quarter-deck, holding on by the belaying-pins, with a yumberella over his head. The men for'ard was all in a roar, but none of the officers was on deck save the third mate. The mate goes up to him, and looks in his face. "Why," says he, "you confounded long-shore, picked-up son of a green-grocer, what *are* you after?" an' he takes the article a slap with his larboard-flipper, as sent it flying to leeward like a puff of smoke. "Keep off the quarter-deck, you lubber," says he, giving him a wheel down into the lea-scuppers,—"it's well the captain didn't catch ye!" "Come aft here, some of ye," sings out third mate again, "to brace up the mainyard; and you, ye lazy beggar, clap on this moment and pull!" At this the greenhorn takes out a pair o' gloves, shoves his fingers into 'em, and tails on to the rope; behind. "Well, dammit!" says the mate, "if I ever see the likes o' that! Jacobs, get a tar-bucket and dip his fists in it; larn him what his hands was made for! I never could bear to see a fellow ashore with his flippers shoed like his feet; but at sea, confound me, it would make a man green-sick over again!" If you'd only seen how Master Collins looked when I shoved his missy fingers into the tar, and chucked the gloves o'board! The next moment he ups fist and made a slap at me, when in goes the brush in his mouth; the mate gives him a kick astarn; and the young chap went sprawling down' into the half-deck ladder, where the carpenter had his shavin'-glass rigged to crop his chin—and there he gets another clip across the jaws from Chips. "Now," says the mate, "the chap'll be liker a sailor to-morrow. He's got some spunk in him, though, by the way he let drive at you, my lad," says he: "that fellow'll either catch the cat or spoil the monkey. Look after him, Jacobs, my lad," says the third mate; "he's in my watch, and the captain wants him to rough it out; so show him the ropes, and let him taste an end now an' then. Ha! ha! ha!" says he again, laughing, "'tis the first time I ever see a embreller loosed out at sea, and but the second I've seen brought aboard even! He's the greenest hand, sure enough, it's been my luck to come across! But green they say's nigh to blue, so look out if I don't try to make a sailor of the young spark!"

Well, for the next three or four days the poor fellow was knocked about on all hands: he'd got to [748] go aloft to the 'gallant cross-trees, and out on the yard foot-ropes the next morning, before breakfast; and, coming down, the men made him fast till he sent down the key of his bottle-chest to pay his footing. If he closed his eyes moment in the watch, slash comes bucketful o' Channel water over him; the third mate would keep him two hours on end, larnin' to rig out a sternsail boom, or grease a royal mast. He led a dog's life of it, too, in the half-deck: last come, in course, has al'ays to go and fill the bread barge, scrub the planks, an' do all the dirty jobs. Them *owners' prentices*, sich as he had for messmates, is always worse to their own kind by far nor the "*common sailors*," as the long-shore folks calls a foremast-man. I couldn't help takin' pity on the poor lad, bein' the only one as had seen the way of his upbringing, and I feelt a sort of a charge of him like; so one night I had a quiet spell with him in the watch, an' as soon's I fell to speak kind-ways, there I seed the water stand i' the boy's eyes. "It's a good thing," says he, tryin' to gulp it down—"it's a good thing mother don't see all this!" "Ho, ho!" says I, "my lad, 'tis all but another way of bein' sea-sick! You doesn't get the land cleared out, and snuff the blue breeze nat'ral like, all at once! Hows'ever, my lad," says I, "take my advice—bring your hammock an' chest into the fok'sle; swap half your fine clothes for blue shirts and canvass trowsers; turn-to ready and willing, an' do all that's asked you—you'll soon find the differ 'twixt the men and a few petty officers an' 'prentices half out their time. The men'll soon make a sailor of you: you'll see what a seaman is; you'll larn ten times the knowledge; an', add to that, you'll not be browbeat and looked jealous on!"

Well, next night, what does he do but follows what I said, and afore long most of his troubles was

over; nor there wasn't a willin'er nor a readier hand aboard, and every man was glad to put Ned through any thing he'd got to do. The mates began to take note on him; and though the 'prentices never left off callin' him the Green Hand, before we rounded the Cape he could take his wheel with the best of them, and clear away a sternsail out of the top in handsome style. We were out ten months, and Ned Collins stuck to the fork'sle throughout. When we got up the Thames, he went ashore to see his mother in a check shirt, and canvass trowsers made out of an old royal, with a tarpaulin hat I built for him myself. He would have me to come the next day over to the house for a supper; so, havin' took a kindness to the young chap, why, I couldn't say nay. There I finds him in the midst of a lot o' soft-faced slips and young ladies, a spinning the wonderfullest yarns about the sea and the East Indgees, makin' 'em swallow all sorts of horse-marines' nonsense, about marmaids, sea-sarpents, and sichlike. "Hallo, my hearty!" says he, as soon as he saw me, "heave a-head here, and bring to an anchor in this here blessed chair. Young ladies," says he, "this is Bob Jacobs, as I told you kissed a marmaid his-self. He's a wonderful hand, is Bob, for the fair!" You may fancy how flabbergasted I was at this, though the young scamp was as cool as you please, and wouldn't ha' needed much to make him kiss 'em all round; but I was al'ays milk-an'-water alongside of women, if they topped at all above my rating. "Well," thinks I, "my lad, I wouldn't ha' said five minutes agone there was any thing of the green about ye yet, but I see 'twill take another voy'ge to wash it all out." For to my thinkin', mates, 'tis more of a land-lubber to come the rig over a few poor creatures that never saw blue water, than not to know the ropes you warn't told. "O Mister Jacobs!" says Missus Collins to me that night, before I went off, "d'ye think Edward is tired of that 'ere horridsome sea yet?" "Well, marm," I says, "I'm afeared not. But I'll tell ye, marm," says I, "if you want's to make him cut the consarn, the only thing ye can do is to get him bound apprentice to it. From what I've seen of him, he's a lad that wont bear aught again his liberty; an' I do believe, if he thought he couldn't get free, he'd run the next day!" Well, after that, ye see, I didn't know what more turned up of it; for I went myself round to Hull, and ships in a timber-craft for the Baltic, just to see some'at new.

One day, the third voy'ge from that time, on getting the length of Blackwall, we heard of a strong [749]
press from the men-o'-war; and as I'd got a dreadful mislike to the sarvice, there was a lot of us marchant-men kept stowed away close in holes an' corners till we could suit ourselves. At last we got well tired, and a shipmate o' mine and I wanted to go and see our sweethearts over in the town. So we hired the slops from a Jew, and makes ourselves out to be a couple o' watermen, with badges to suit, a carrying of a large parcel and a ticket on it. In the arternoon we came back again within sight of the Tower, where we saw the coast was clear, and made a fair wind along Rosemary Lane and Cable Street. Just then we saw a tall young fellow, in a brown coat, an' a broad-brim hat, standing in the door of a shop, with a paper under his arm, on the look-out for some one. "Twig the Quaker, Bob!" my shipmate says to me. As soon as he saw us, out the Quaker steps, and says he to Bill, in a sleepy sort of a v'ice, "Friend, thou'rt a waterman, I b'lieve?" "D—— it, yes," says Bill, pretty short like, "that's what we hails for! D'ye want a boat, master?" "Swear not, friend," says the broad-brim; "but what I want is this, you see. We have a large vessel, belonging to our house, to send to Havannah, and willin' to give double wages, but we can't find any mariners at this present for to navigate. Now," says he, "I s'pose this onfortunate state o' things is on account of the sinful war as is agoin' on—they're afraid of the risk. Hows'ever, my friends," says he, "perhaps, as you knows the river, ye could put us upon a way of engagin' twenty or more bold mariners, as is not afeared of ventering for good pay?" and with this he looks into his papers; and says Bill, "Well, sir, I don't know any myself—do you Bob?" and he gives me a shove, and says under the rose, "No fear, mate," says Bill, "he's all over green —don't slip the chance for all hands of us at Jobson's." "Why, master," I says, "what 'ud ye give them mariners you speaks on, now?" "Six pound a-month, friend," says he, looking up; "but we gives tea in place of spirits, and we must have steady men. We can't wait, neither," says he, "more nor three days, or the vessel won't sail at all." "My eye!" says Bill, "'t won't do to lose, Bob! —stick to him, that's all." "Well, sir," I says, "I thinks I does have a notion of some'at of the sort. If you sends your papers to Jobson's Tavern to-night, in the second lane 'twixt Barnaby Street and the Blue Anchor Road, over the water, why, I'll get ye as many hands to sign as you wants!" "Thanks, friend," says the young broad-brim, "I will attend to thine advice,"—so he bids us good-day, and stepped into his door again. "Bill," says I, as we went off, "now I think on it, I can't help a notion I've seen that chap's face afore!" "Very like," says Bill, "for the matter o' that 'tis the same with me—them broad-brims is so much of a piece! But that 'ere fellow don't know nothin' of ships, sure enough, or he wouldn't offer what he did, and the crimps' houses all of a swarm with hands!"

"Take my word, mate," says I, "it's a paying trip, or he wouldn't do it—leave a Quaker alone for that! Why, the chap's a parfit youngster, but I am blessed if he don't look as starched as if he'd sat over a dask for twenty year!"

Well, strike me lucky, mates all, if the whole affair warn't a complete trap! Down comes a clerk with the papers, sure enough—but in ten minutes more the whole blessed lot of us was puckalowed, and hard an' fast, by a strong press-gang. They put us into a cutter off Redriff Stairs, an' the next noon all hands was aboard of the Pandora frigate at Sheerness. The first time of being mustered on deck, says Bill to me, "Cuss my eyes, Bob, if there isn't the 'farnal Quaker!" I looked, and sees a midshipman in uniform like the rest, and so it was. "The sly soft-sauderin' beggar!" says I. "All fair in war, and a press-mate!" says one o' the frigate's men. All the while I kept looking and looking at the midshipman; and at last I says to Bill when we got below, giving a slap to my thigh, "Blessed if it ain't! it's the *Green Hand* himself!" "Green Hand!" says Bill, sulky enough, "who's the Green Hand? Blow me, Bob, if I don't think we're the green hands ourselves, [750]
if that's what you're upon!" So I told him the story about Ned Collins. "Well," says he, "if a fellow

was green as China rice, cuss me if the reefers' mess wouldn't take it all out on him in a dozen watches. The softest thing I know, as you say, Bob, just now, it's to come the smart hand when you're a lubber; but to sham green after that style, ye know, why 'tis a mark or two above either you or I, messmate. So for my part, I forgives the young scamp, cause I ought to ha' known better!"

By the time the frigate got to sea the story was blown over the whole main-deck; many a good laugh it gave the different messes; and Bill, the midshipman, and I, got the name of the "Three Green Hands."

One middle-watch, Mister Ned comes for'ard by the booms to me, and says he, "Well, Bob Jacobs, you don't bear a grudge, I hope?" "Why," says I, "Mister Collins, 'twould be mutiny now, I fancy, you bein' my officer!" so I gave a laugh; but I couldn't help feelin' hurt a little, 'twas so like a son turnin' against his father, as 'twere. "Why, Bob," says he, "did ye think me so green as not to know a seaman when I saw him? I was afeared you'd known me that time." "Not I, sir," I answers: "why, if we hadn't sailed so long in company, I wouldn't known ye now!" So Master Ned gave me to understand it was all for old times he wanted to ship me in the same craft; but he knew my misliking to the sarvice, though he said he'd rather ha' lost the whole haul of 'em nor myself. So many a yarn we had together of a dark night, and for a couple of years we saw no small sarvice in the Pandora. But if ye'd seen Ned the smartest reefer aboard, and the best liked by the men, in the fore-taups'l bunt in a gale, or over the main-deck hatch, with an enemy's frigate to leeward, or on a spree ashore at Lisbon or Naples, you wouldn't ha' said there was any thing green in his eye, I warrant ye! He was made acting lieutenant of a prize he cut out near Chairboorg, before he passed examination; so he got me for prize bo'sun, and took her into Plymouth. Soon after that the war was ended, and all hands of the Pandora paid off. Master Ned got passed with flying colours, and confirmed lieutenant besides, but he had to wait for a ship. He made me say where I'd be found, and we parted company for about a year.

Well, I was come home from a short trip, and one day Leftenant Collins hunts me up at Wapping Docks, where I'd had myself spliced, six year before, to Betsy Brown, an' was laid up for a spell, havin' seen a good deal of the sea. Ye must know the young leftenant was fell deep in love with a rich Indy Naboob's daughter, which had come over to take her back to the East Ingees. The old fellow was hard close-hauled again the match, notwithstanding of the young folks makin' it all up; so, he'd taken out berths aboard of a large Company's ship, and bought over the captain on no account to let any king's navy man within the gang-ways, nor not a shoulder with a swab upon it, red or blue, beyond the ship's company. But, above all, the old tyrant wouldn't have a blue-jacket, from stem to starn, if so be he'd got nothing ado but talk sweet; I s'pose he fancied his girl was mad after the whole blessed cloth. The leftenant turns over this here log to me, and, says he, "I'll follow her to the world's end, if need be, Bob, and cheat the old villain!" "Quite right too, sir," says I. "Bob," says he, "I'll tell ye what I wants you to do. Go you and enter for the Seringpatam at Blackwall, if you're for sea just now; I'm goin' for to s'cure my passage myself, an' no doubt doorin' the voy'ge something'll turn up to set all square; at any rate, I'll stand by for a rope to pull!" "Why here's a go!" thinks I to myself; "is Ned Collins got so green again, spite of all that's come an' gone, for to think the waves is a-goin' to work wonders, or ould Neptune under the line's to play the parson and splice all!" "Well, sir," I says, "but don't you think the skipper will smoke your weather-roll, sir, at sea, as you did Bill Pikes an' me, you know, sir?" says I. "Oh, Bob, my lad," says the leftenant, "leave you that to me. The fellow most onlikest to a sailor on the Indyman's poop will be me, and that's the way you'll know me!"

Well, I did ship with the Seringpatam for Bombay: plenty of passengers she had; but only clerks, [751]
naboobs, old half-pay fellows, and ladies, not to speak o' children and nurses, black and white. She sailed without my sein' Leftenant Collins, so I thought I was to hear no more on it. When the passengers began to muster on the poop, by the time we got out o' Channel, I takes a look over the ladies, in coilin' up the ropes aft, or at the wheel; I knowed the said girl at once by her good looks, and the old fellow by his grumpy, yallow frontispiece. All on a sudden I takes note of a figger coming up from the cuddy, which I made out at once for my Master Ned, spite of his wig and a pair o' high-heeled boots, as gave him the walk of a chap treading amongst eggs. When I hears him lisp out to the skipper at the round-house if there was any fear of wind, 'twas all I could do to keep the juice in my cheek. Away he goes up to windward, holding on by every thing, to look over the bulwarks behind his sweetheart, givin' me a glance over his shoulder. At night I see the two hold a sort of a collogue abaft the wheel, when I was on my trick at the helm. After a while there was a row got up amongst the passengers, with the old nabob and the skipper, to find out who it was that kept a singing every still night in the first watch, alongside of the ladies' cabin, under the poop. It couldn't be cleared up, hows'ever, who it was. All sorts o' places they said it comed from—mizen-chains, quarter-galleries, lower-deck ports, and davit-boats. But what put the old hunks most in a rage was, the songs was every one on 'em such as "Rule Britannia," "Bay of Biscay," "Britannia's Bulwarks," and "All in the Downs." The captain was all at sea about it, and none of the men would say any thing, for by all accounts 'twas the best pipe at a sea-song as was to be heard. For my part, I knowed pretty well what was afloat. One night a man comed for'ard from the wheel, after steering his dog-watch out, and "Well I'm blessed, mates," says he on the fok'sle, "but that chap aft yonder with the lady—he's about the greenest hand I've chanced to come across! What d'ye think I hears him say to old Yallow-chops an hour agone?" "What was it, mate?" I says. "Says he, "Do ye know, Sar Chawls, is the hoshun reelly green at the line—*green* ye know, Sar Chawls, *reely* green?' 'No sir,' says the old naboob, ''tis blue.' 'Whoy, ye don't sa—ay so!' says the young chap, pullin' a long face.'" "Why, Jim," another hand drops in, "that's the very chap as sings them first-rate sea-songs of a night! I seed him myself come out o' the mizen-

chains!" "Hallo!" says another at this, "then there's some'at queer i' the wind! I *thought* he gave rather a weather-look aloft, comin' on deck i' the morning! I'll bet a week's grog that chap's desarted from the king's flag, mates!" Well, ye know, hereupon I couldn't do no less nor shove in my oar, so I takes word from all hands not to blow the gaff,[14] an' then gives 'em the whole yarn to the very day, about the Green Hand—for somehow or another I was al'ays a yarning sort of a customer. As soon as they heard it was a love consarn, not a man but swore to keep a stopper on his jaw; only, at findin' out he was a leftenant in the Royal Navy, all hands was for touching hats when they went past.

Hows'ever, things went on till we'd crossed the line a good while; the leftenant was making his way with the girl at every chance. But as for the old fellow, I didn't see he was a fathom the nearer with *him*; though, as the Naboob had never clapped eyes on him to know him like, 'twa'n't much matter before heaving in sight o' port. The captain of the Indyman was a rum old-fashioned codger, all for plain sailing and old ways—I shouldn't say overmuch of a smart seaman. He read the sarvice every Sunday, rigged the church an' all that, if it was anything short of a reef-taups'l breeze. 'Twas queer enough, ye may think, to hear the old boy drawling out, "As 'twas in the beginning,"——then, in the one key, "Haul aft the mainsheet,"——"Is now, and ever shall be,"——"Small pull with the weather-brace,"——"Amen,"——"Well the mainyard,"——"The Lord be [752] with you,"——"Taups'l yard well! "As for the first orficer, he was a dandy know-nothing young blade, as wanted to show off before the ladies; and the second was afraid to call the nose on his face his own, except in his watch; the third was a good seaman, but ye may fancy the craft stood often a poor chance of being well handled.

'Twas one arternoon watch, off the west coast of Africay, as hot a day as I mind on, we lost the breeze with a swell, and just as it got down smooth, land was made out, low upon the starboard bow, to the south-east. The captain was turned in sick below, and the first orficer on deck. I was at the wheel, and I hears him say to the second how the land breeze would come off at night. A little after, up comes Leftenant Collins, in his black wig and his 'long-shore hat, an' begins to squint over the starn to nor'west'ard. "Jacobs, my lad," whispers he to me, "how do ye like the looks o' things?" "Not overmuch, sir," says I; "small enough sea-room for the sky there!" Up goes he to the first officer, after a bit. "Sir," says he, "do ye notice how we've risen the land within the last hour and a-half?" "No, sir," says the first mate; "what d'ye mean?" "Why, there's a current here, takin' us inside the point," says he. "Sir," says the Company's man, "if I didn't know what's what, d'ye think I'd larn it off a gentleman as is so confounded green? There's nothing of the sort," he says. "Look on the starboard quarter then," says the leftenant, "at the man-o'-war bird afloat yonder with its wings spread. Take three minutes' look!" says he. Well, the mate did take a minute or two's look through the mizen-shroud, and pretty blue he got, for the bird came abreast of the ship by that time. "Now," says the leftenant, "d'ye think ye'd weather that there point two hours after this, if a gale come on from the nor'west, sir?" "Well," says the first mate, "I daresay we shouldn't—but what o' that?" "Why, if you'd cruised for six months off the coast of Africa, as I've done," says the leftenant, "you'd think there was something ticklish about that white spot in the sky, to nor'west! But on top o' that, the weather-glass is fell a good bit since four bells." "Weather-glass!" the mate says, "why, that don't matter much in respect of a gale, I fancy." Ye must understand, weather-glasses wan't come so much in fashion at that time, except in the royal navy. "Sir," says the mate again, "mind *your* business, if you've got any, and I'll mind mine!" "If I was you," the leftenant says, "I'd call the captain." "Thank ye," says the mate,—"call the captain for nothing!" "Well," in an hour more the land was quite plain on the starboard bow, and the mate comes aft again to Leftenant Collins. The clouds was beginning to grow out of the clear sky astarn too. "Why, sir," says the mate, "I'd no notion you was a *seaman* at all! What would you do yourself now, supposin' the case you put a little ago?" "Well, sir," says Mr Collins, "if you'll do it, I'll tell ye, at once——"

At this point of Old Jack's story, however, a cabin-boy came from aft, to say that the captain wanted him. The old seaman knocked the ashes out of his pipe, which he had smoked at intervals in short puffs, put it in his jacket pocket, and got up off the windlass end. "Why, old ship!" said the man-o'-war's-man, "are ye goin' to leave us in the lurch with a *short yarn*?" "Can't help it, bo'", said Old Jack; "orders must be obeyed, ye know," and away he went. "Well, mates," said one, "what was the upshot of it, if the yarn's been overhauled already? I did'nt hear it myself." "Blessed if I know" said several—"Old Jack didn't get the length last time he's got now." "More luck!" said the man-o'-war's-man; "'tis to be hoped he'll finish it next time!"

EASTLAKE'S LITERATURE OF THE FINE ARTS. [753]

We are surrounded by an external world, which it has pleased the great Maker of the universe to clothe with infinite beauty, cognisable to us through the senses, yet scarcely ours, until, by a more intimate appropriation through the mind, we have added ourselves to it, made it a part of, and in some no inconsiderable degree subject to, the will of our own nature. The inventive faculties of the mind gather all within their reach, which it is their province to combine, and remodel, and revivify with human feeling; and thus, by becoming to a limited extent creative ourselves, we are the more enabled to look up, and in admiration adore the divine power that has made all things out of nothing, and the divine goodness which has given us a perception of a

portion of His works. Through the senses we know indeed but imperfectly—more imperfectly than those who have not considered the subject will allow. They minister first to our actual wants, presenting few charms and enticements but such as barely suffice to refresh the mind under the weariness of its daily experience. The bulk of mankind are under a hard necessity, which limits their senses to the work of life: were they enlarged to a greater capacity, that work would be the more irksome. The senses are then, like the air we breathe, reduced from an extreme fineness and purity, for the temporary use of yet unpolished humanity. But they are not intended to continue ever in this state of imperfection.

The great business—the providing for the first wants of life—done, industry is rewarded not by absolute rest and idleness, but by the succession of new and higher wants, which the growing mind demands; and it accordingly taxes the senses, and gives them command to be purveyors, and cultivates them for the purpose of enlarged gratification. They are thus capable of great extension, and, as it were, of an influx of living power to awaken and spiritualise their dormant or inert matter. All life is in progression: sciences must be discovered; arts must be created; and could we conceive an entirely sluggish and uncultivated social state, how few would see what may be seen, or hear what may be heard! The earth, teeming with sights of wonder, and breathed over with a divine music, would be to its inhabitants, in such a condition, but a waste and thankless wilderness. And which is nature—the bare, the imperceptible, for any beauty it contains, or the riches of the mind's discovery, the imaginative creation? We are inventive, that we may discover what nature is; nor is that the less, but rather the more, nature which is art. Art is but nature discovered—the hidden brought to light, and home to us, and acknowledged and felt —more or less felt as we cultivate reciprocally the mind through the senses, and the senses through the mind. With this view, all the artificial enchantments of life are nature—all arts, all sciences: for how could they be to embellish society,—indeed without which there would be no *society*—had they not an independent existence somewhere in the great storehouse of infinity, and were they not bountifully thrown out to us as truths to gather, as fruits to nourish and to gratify? We would wish to vindicate all nature, and unfetter it from that petty distinction which many are fond of drawing between nature and art. These make but one whole. For why should we separate ourselves, with all our faculties, perceptive and inventive, from our intimate and purposed connexion with the great universe? It is nature, because it is every where man's doing, to write and act plays, to compose music, and to paint pictures, raise noble edifices, and make marble seem to live in statues. And besides, as man himself is the chief work of nature, so is that which he does, even out of a partial imitation of other nature, the more natural, as it to a certain degree recedes from its model, and participates in and adopts the feeling of him that makes it. It is this nature which makes beauty perfect—which renders the music of Handel better than the sounds of winds and waters, and of a higher nature than they, as it is of a more extensive power, [754] in all variety of movement, to touch our feelings, and stir us at will. And such is poetry, which influences us where fact fails. And all this not by mere imitation, which some are so fond of thrusting forward as the means; for there is nothing quite like to itself. With such means of exquisite enjoyment within our reach—by this enlargement of the boundary of our senses, of entering upon the improved faculties of our minds—it does seem strange that any gifted with leisure and understanding should neglect the cultivation of arts and sciences, which offer in the pursuit and in the attainment such unlimited riches. It is as if an heir to a large and beautiful estate, a mansion opulent in treasures, should willingly turn his back upon his inheritance, and be content to live in a hovel, and habitate with swine that feed him. And so it is when life, that might be thus embellished and enjoyed, is worse than wasted in low pursuits, and in those meaner gratifications which the untutored senses supply.

We hold that a real taste for the Fine Arts is the *acme* of a nation's civilisation, and a greater, a more general happiness, the certain result. We hold, too, that it is a creature of growth—that it may spring up where once sown and tended with care, in apparently the most unpromising soils. The revival of arts and of letters took place in "Agresti Latio." And how is the whole world benefited by that era of cultivation! There is no country under the sun that so much stands in need of an education in the Arts as our own. With energy to produce, and wealth at command, where shall we look for more favouring national circumstances? This country has been the mart where the finest productions of the genius of other times have found the most liberal purchasers, neglected sadly by our governments; individual collectors have enriched the nation. If we have suffered too many of the finest works—the purchase of which would have been as nothing out of the public purse—to leave our shores, and now to be the ornament of foreign galleries; yet our private collectors are so numerous, that at least a love for the arts has been more generally disseminated. But we have had no previous education to qualify us for the taste which we would possess. There have been no great works, to which the public eye could be directed, growing up amongst us. Hitherto we have had no Vaticans to embellish, and our temples have been closed against the hand of genius; yet are we now, as it were, upon the turning-point of the character of our cultivation: there is a general stir, a common talk about art, an expressed interest, an almost universal appetence in that direction. We are perfectly surprised at the very large sums which have been recently given for works of even moderate pretensions. There is much to observe that indicates the general desire, but less that indicates a general knowledge. There is an incipient taste, but there is a great want,—education—education for art and in art. How is this to be promoted? The lectures of academies are thought to be exclusively for the professors or rather students, and are too often neglected by them. The lectures of Sir Joshua, of Fuseli, and others, contain much valuable matter, but they scarcely reach the public. The most interesting foreign publications remain untranslated. Vasari is as yet unknown in our language. Transcripts, in outline or in more full engraving, of the finest works, exist not among us: these are the things

that should be before the eyes of all, together with a systematic reading education upon the principles. Whatever has been done that is great, that is ennobling, should be, as far as is possible, seen and known. As yet, in all this, there is a great deficiency. The public is left to, at best, an incipient taste; which, to judge from the kind of productions that find the readiest market, is not good—at all events is not high, and scarcely improving. The love is at present for picture imitation, that lowest condition in which art may be said to flourish. We want an education in its principles, that its just aim and proper influence may be understood. The Fine Arts should be a part of our literature, and thus become a branch of general education. We hail with pleasure every work of the kind we see announced; we rejoice in the publication of our "hand-books," and the many volumes on the arts, as they flourished in other countries, which now [755] begin in some measure to interest the reading public. But is nothing done towards a foundation for education in the principles of the arts? We are happy to say there is much done. If the commission on the Fine Arts had done nothing more than the drawing up their "reports" by their secretary, in that they have done much. Valuable, however, as these "reports" are, they were nearly a dead letter: the title was not enticing; few looked to reports as other than statistical accounts; whereas, in reality, they contained deep research, accurate knowledge, and clearly set forth the principles upon which, as a foundation, true taste must rest. We are happy that these most able essays have been rescued from the common fate of "reports," by their being now preserved in a collected form, together with other most valuable treatises from the pen of the secretary to the commission, under the title of *Contributions to the Literature of the Fine Arts*. Mr Eastlake has conscientiously imposed upon himself an arduous undertaking, beyond the implied condition of his secretaryship. In so doing, he deserves the greatest commendation, for he has greatly increased the utility of the commission. Not content with promoting the arts by these excellent theoretical treatises, he has addressed the artists themselves, and led them to the best practical views. He has, with great industry, labour, and patient investigation, cleared away the common errors respecting the "Old Masters." We have already noticed his *History of Painting in Oil*—that is, the first volume, which treats of the practice of the Flemish school. It is now no matter of conjecture what colours or what vehicles were in use—we have sure documentary evidence before us. It remains to make known the alterations and additions to that practice by the Italian schools, and this will be the subject of his forthcoming volume. In the first work, indeed, we have glimpses of the Italian method, and recipes of the varnish supposed to be used by Correggio; but we look to certain information, which is the fair promise of the second volume.

In the *Contributions to the Literature of the Fine Arts*, in addition to the essays on painting, sculpture, and architecture, taken from the "reports," we have Mr Eastlake's review of Passavant's *Life of Raphael*, extracted from the *Quarterly Review*; notes from Kugler's *Hand-Book*, on the subject of the paintings in the Capella Sistina; extracts from the translation of Goethe's *Theory of Colours*, on the Decoration of a Villa; and, perhaps the most interesting of all, if we may not say the most important, a fragment on "The Philosophy of the Fine Arts," not noticed in the chapter of contents. To this last, being so entirely speculative upon the very cause of beauty, and so new in matter, we should feel disposed to invite discussion on the side of doubt —partly because, it being professedly a fragment, by suggesting the difficulties attending his theory, a clearer exposition in the further prosecution of it may be the result.

If it were not, so to speak, for the genius of materials—or if genius be not allowed, we may say the characteristics of materials—poetry, painting, and sculpture would be subject but to one order of criticism, under one set of rules. But though each has its agreement with the others in the same leading principles—the foundation of general taste, and mostly arising from moral considerations—yet have they, individually, their own diverging points, from which they seem freed from the "commune vinculum." It requires a nice discrimination to ascertain for each art these points of deviation from the general rules. These rules are, from observation and from books, more easily comprehended, and the common scope of all the arts understood; but, to an inquiring mind, difficulties will often present themselves, when seeming differences and contradictions occur; for undoubtedly all these arts must be reconciled with each other, and made akin. It becomes, therefore, an important step in the education of taste, to learn the necessarily different modes by which they each approach their ends—the same as far as the general principles are concerned, but with a variance according to the characteristics of each. Mr Eastlake has been very successful in pointing to these distinctions, in showing the rules which [756] guide all, and those which necessitate the differences. We were particularly struck with this discrimination in his *Treatise on Sculpture*, than which we have never read any thing more clear and convincing. We quote a passage with this bearing:—

> "The first question, then, in examining the style of a given art, is, in what does this difference of means, as compared with nature, consist? The answer may for the present be confined to sculpture. It is agreed, then, or it is a *convention*, that a colourless hard substance shall be the material with which the sculptor shall imitate the perfection of life. His means are, by the primary condition, effectually distinguished from those of nature; and it remains for him to cheat the imagination (not the senses) into the pleasing impression that an equivalent to nature can be so produced. He may, therefore, imitate the characteristics of life closely. His select representation, however faithful, is in no danger of being literally confounded with reality, because of the original conventions, viz., the absence of colour, and the nature of his material. But it is not the same with the imitation, in this art, of many other surfaces. As already observed, a rock in sculpture and a rock in nature can be identical; it may, therefore, be sometimes necessary to imitate the reality less closely, or even, in extreme cases, like

that now adduced, to depart from nature. The reason is obvious: the degree of resemblance to reality which is attainable in the principal object of imitation—the surface of the living figure—is, from the established convention, limited; and it is desirable that the spectator should forget this restriction. He is, therefore, by no means to be reminded of it by greater reality in other, and necessarily inferior, parts of the work. In painting, it is sometimes objected that inferior objects are more real than the flesh. The defect is great; but there is this difference between the two cases—in painting, the inferiority in the imitation of the flesh may be only from want of power in the artist; in sculpture, the perfect resemblance of the flesh to nature is impossible, in consequence of the absence of colour. The literal imitation of subordinate objects is, for this reason, more offensive in sculpture than in painting. A manifest defect in the art seems more hopeless than a defect in the artist."

"In pursuing the analogies here I considered, it is necessary to compare mere art with art—the form, as such, of the one, with the form of the other. Thus, in comparing sculpture and poetry together, the parallel conditions are to be sought in the strictly corresponding departments. As sculpture, in reference to nature, (to repeat an observation before made,) gives substance for substance, so poetry gives words for words. Accordingly, the form of poetry is by agreement or convention (similar in principle to that which dictates the conditions of sculpture) effectually distinguished from the form of ordinary language. And it will now be seen that the limitations of poetry, in such outward characteristics, are more definite and more comprehensive than those of sculpture; for whereas the material of marble may sometimes coincide literally with that of substances in nature, the form of poetry never can entirely coincide with that of ordinary language. This greater liability of sculpture to be confounded with reality certainly adds to its difficulty, since the doubtful cases, which may be left to the taste of the sculptor, are often settled by an immutable rule for the poet."

Whoever would desire a knowledge of the original causes of the differences of alto, basso, and mezzo relievo, should read the admirable treatise on the subject. They are not to be confounded as arising from the same conditions, and subject to the same rules. The differences of position and light, by their distinct requirements, separate the three styles of relievo, the alto, basso, and mezzo. It is not, as many suppose, that the basso, the lower relief, is less finished than the alto, or high relief; the finish of each is differently placed. "In the highest relief, however decided the shadows may, and must of necessity be, on the plane to which the figure is attached, the light on the figure itself is kept as unbroken as possible; and this can only be effected by a selection of open attitudes; that is, such an arrangement of the limbs as shall not cast shadows on the figure itself. In basso-relievo, the same general effect of the figure is given, but by very different means: the attitude is not selected to avoid shadows on the figure, because, while the extreme outline is strongly marked, the shadows within it may be in a great measure suppressed; so that the choice of attitudes is greater. Mezzo-relievo differs from both; it has neither the limited attitudes of the first, nor the distinct outline and suppressed internal markings of the second: on the contrary, [757] the outline is often less distinct than the forms within it, and hence it requires, and is fitted for, near inspection. Its imitation may thus be more absolute, and its execution more finished, than those of the other styles."

In all relievo, as the shadows fall upon the background, the peculiar adaptation to architecture is manifest. As they are intended for minute inspection, gems are generally in mezzo-relievo. The workers in bronze and the goldsmiths—the former from the facility in casting, the latter for the minuteness and less distinctness of their works—adopting the flattest kind of mezzo-relievo, fancifully deviated from the original purity of the style, by introducing landscape and building backgrounds. An artist of the greatest genius fell into this error—Lorenzo Ghiberti, in the beautiful bronze doors of the baptistery of San Giovanni at Florence. In these celebrated compositions he attempted the union of basso-relievo with the principles of painting. His excellent workmanship and skill in composition was such as led the sculptors of the fifteenth century to consider this innovation upon the old simplicity an improvement. In inferior hands the failure would have been manifest, for the practice is in violation of the principle which the character of the material should determine. That Ghiberti was led into the error is not surprising, as he learned his art from a goldsmith. In his case it was a singular instance of ill-constituted judges choosing well. The judges who selected Ghiberti from his many competitors, were goldsmiths, painters, and sculptors—the majority were likely to favour that which approached nearest to their own practice. It is to the credit of our Flaxman that he revived the purer taste. This whole essay on relievo should be read attentively: it is so connected in all its parts that it is impossible to give its true character by either a few quotations or an at tempt at analysis.

In the essay entitled "Painting," Mr Eastlake keeps in view throughout the main object of the commission—the decoration of public buildings. He has to show how certain principles of art adjust themselves to the conditions imposed by the dimensions, light, and general character of the buildings for which works are required. At first view it might appear that, whether a picture be large or small, there should be no difference in the manner of painting it—that the small magnified, or the large reduced, could answer every purpose. But not so: a moment's consideration will show that the spectator's eye must be consulted, which sees not minutiæ of form or colour at the distance from which large works are to be seen, and that it seeks for those as the objects are brought nearer. It becomes necessary, then, in large works, lest they be indistinct, that masses be strongly preserved, and, accordingly, that neither forms nor colours be

much broken. Hence, the larger the work, in general, the lighter, for the sake of distinctness, it should be: and such is the character of the great fresco works, which are, besides, in this respect, mainly aided by the materials of fresco, which is non-absorbent of light. We believe this also to be true to nature; for if we reduce any scene of nature by a diminishing glass to very small dimensions, the quantity of colour, which is never lost, becomes concentrated, and therefore more intense. The Flemish masters were great observers of nature; and we find in their smallest pictures the greatest depth and intensity of colour. Colour, in this view, even contends powerfully with perspective itself, and is often in distance, by being to the eye reduced, of an intensity that would seem to contradict aërial influence. The phenomenon of the strength of bright colour in distance is extremely curious: every one must have noticed that a lighted candle may be seen miles off, where, according to perspective rules, it would not be possible to draw its dimensions; nay, it shall appear larger than when at a moderate distance, and that not from its being a magnified light reflected from the walls of a room, for the same effect will be observed if we see the single light in the midst of a dark wood, where it is reflected not at all, and even seen in a space which, without the candle, would be too small to be discernible. But the contrary effect takes place with regard to form, which becomes indistinct at a very small distance. A bright colour is frequently very distinct, where the form to which it belongs is lost. But to return to the [758]
essay. Mr Eastlake clearly shows the principles, with regard to colour, upon which the great Venetian masters worked—how, by what artificial means, they preserved colour without losing light. To their practice and modelling in fresco were the Venetians indebted for the largeness of their system of colouring, and probably to the rich specimens of painted glass, for which Venice was celebrated, for their brilliancy and illumination. This little treatise is peculiarly useful to those who would aspire to undertake public works of large dimensions, and could not have been offered to their notice by a more fit person than the Secretary to the Commission of the Fine Arts. The following is excellent:—"To conclude: the resources, whether abundant or limited, of the imitative arts, are, in relation to nature, necessarily incomplete; but it appears that, in the best examples, the very means employed to compensate for their incompleteness are, in each case, the source of a characteristic perfection, and the foundation of a specific style. As it is with the arts, compared with each other, so it is with the various applications of a given art: the methods employed to correct the incompleteness or indistinctness, which may be the result of particular conditions, are, in the works of the great masters, the cause of excellencies not attainable to the same extent by any other means. In the instance last mentioned—the school of the Netherlands—it is apparent that no indirect contrivances or conventions are necessary to counteract the effects of indistinctness; on the contrary, all that would be indistinct in other modes of representation is here admissible, with scarcely any restriction. The incompleteness to be overcome, which is here the cause of peculiar attractions, therefore resides solely in conditions and imperfections of the art itself, which, on near inspection, are in greater danger of being remembered. These are—a flat surface, and material pigments; and these are precisely the circumstances which, by the skill of the artists in the works referred to, are forgotten by the spectator. The consequences of the difficulty overcome are, as usual, among the characteristic perfections of the style."

Passavant's Life of Raphael[15] is by far the most satisfactory account of that great and too short-lived painter. It deservedly engaged the attention of Mr Eastlake, who, in his review, has, in an able summary, connected the genius of this extraordinary man with the influence of his times and the place of his birth. Hitherto the school of Umbria has been too much overlooked. Yet Urbino, at the time of Raphael's birth, more than rivalled in art Rome and Florence. The palace built there by Duke Federigo was not only magnificent in itself, but was adorned with treasures of art. Federigo was to this "Athens of Umbria" what Cosmo and Lorenzo de Medici were to Florence. It is not the least interesting fact, that Raphael's father, Giovanni Santi, was the historian of its greatness, which he celebrates in a poem, in which the painters of fame are not omitted. It is probable that the early mind of Raphael grew there under the influence of classic art, for many were the treasures of Grecian sculpture there collected. The idea is ably combated by Mr Eastlake, that Italian art was independent of this classic influence, as attempted to be proved by the German school, who wrote to establish the entire independence of early Christian art. The classic influence was felt by Raphael, and by him promoted. It was indeed Giotto who, a century before, had set the example of emancipating art from the previous formal types—animating, as it were, the "*dead bones*" of art.

The young Raphael, an orphan at twelve years of age, had probably been an early scholar with his father, Giovanni Santi, and was, soon after his father's death, placed with Perugino. He must have seen at Urbino a work of Van Eyck's, which Duke Federigo had procured. Giovanni Santi calls the inventor of oil-painting "Il gran Johannes." Among the painters celebrated by Santi is Gentile, of whom Michael-Angelo said, when he had seen a Madonna and Child painted by him, [759]
that "he had a hand like his name." The young Raphael was then favourably circumstanced in his earliest years. He remained at Urbino and in Perugia till twenty-one years of age, 1504; was then at Florence till 1508; and from that time to his death, 1520, with the exception of a visit to Florence, he was at Rome.[16] A very interesting account of many of the works of this great man is added. The "Raphael ware," so commonly believed to be designed by Raphael, was nevertheless not his work. These designs were executed twenty years after his death. Raffaello del Colla was one employed in these designs. The name probably gave rise to the surmise that they were from the hand of Raphael.

Of the nature of the intercourse between Raphael and the Fornarina, whatever may be the conjectures, not only is no additional information brought forward, but there is every reason to believe the previous statements to be fable, manufactured according to the love for romance so

common both to readers and authors. Whether the name La Fornarina implies that she was a potter's or a baker's daughter, there is still a doubt. Nor does it much concern the history of art, nor the real character of the biography, as it should be, of such a man, to sift the gossip of the idle or curious of any age. Passavant clearly vindicates the life of Raphael from the general impurities which such gossip has ever been as busy as desirous to attach to the names of men of genius. The jealousy said to have existed between M. Angelo and Raphael, probably had some origin in the impetuous temper of M. Angelo, who confounded the gentle Raphael with his architectural rival, Bramante. That Raphael owed something to M. Angelo cannot be doubted, but no unfair imitation has been proved—nay, we would venture to assert, that unfair imitation is almost impossible to genius, for it will make its own, whatever, to an indiscriminating eye, it seems only to borrow. It was not possible that Raphael should not be influenced even in his style by that of M. Angelo. No painter can come to any perfection in his art utterly ignorant or uninfluenced by the works of others, whether predecessors or contemporaries. Nor was Raphael slow to express himself as happy in being born in the age of M. Angelo. "Whatever Raphael knew in the art, he knew from me," said M. Angelo. We do not view this as a censure, but a praise; for it shows an admission on the part of that giant of art, that the genius of Raphael was worthy the affiliation. We have sufficient evidence, we think, of the originality, of the greatness, and of the more tender virtue—gentleness—of Raphael in his works. To those who would seek more, we would refer to the letter of Raphael himself, and more especially to the touching pictures of his genius and character as we find them in Vasari, and in the heartfelt regretting, at his death, of his friend Castiglione.

The doubts raised a few years since respecting the place of Raphael's burial have been removed. The tomb has been found, as described by Vasari, behind the altar of the church of Sta Maria Bella Rotonda, (the Pantheon,) "in a chapel which he himself had built and endowed, and near the spot where his betrothed bride had been laid." The tomb was opened in the presence of the members of the academy of St Luke, who were not a little interested in the investigation, having been long in possession of a supposed skull of Raphael, which the character-casting phrenologists had, in their zeal for their theory, held up to admiration, and as a test of the accuracy of their science. It must have been to their no small mortification that their relic was discovered to have "belonged to an individual of no celebrity." We reluctantly pass over the interesting notes from Kugler's *Hand-Book* "on the subjects of the paintings in the Capella Sistina."

To the artist, the "Extracts from the translation of Goethe's *Theory of Colours* will be most valuable. The usual diagrams of the chromatic circle are shown to have one great defect. "The [760] opposite colours—red and green, yellow and purple, olive and orange—are made equal in intensity; whereas the complemental colour, pictured on the retina, is always less vivid, and always darker or lighter than the original colour. This variety undoubtedly accords more with harmonious effects in painting." To indirect opposition of colours—the opposition should not only be of the colours, the hues, but in their intensity—"the opposition of two pure hues of equal intensity, differing only in the abstract quality of colour, would immediately be pronounced crude and inharmonious. It would not, however, be strictly correct to say that such a contrast is too violent; on the contrary, it appears that the contrast is not carried far enough, for, though differing in colour, the two hues may be exactly similar in purity and intensity. Complete contrast, on the other hand, supposes dissimilarity in all respects. In addition to the mere difference of hue, the eye, it seems, requires difference in the lightness or darkness of the hue." Artists who are so partial to extreme light—a white light—and, at the same time, of exhibiting vivid, strong, and crude colours, are far more unnatural in their effects than those who prefer altogether the lower scale. In fact, it is the lower scale which can alone truly show colours,—very vivid light and colour cannot co-exist. Colour is called by Kircher "*lumen opacatum*." That increase of colour supposes increase of darkness, so often stated by Goethe, may be granted without difficulty. To what extent, on the other hand, increase of darkness—or rather diminution of light—is accompanied by increase of colour, is a question which has been variously answered by various schools. The reconcilement of Goethe's theory with the practice of the best of the great Venetian colourists, is shown with much critical discrimination.

Leonardo da Vinci, the obscurity and want of arrangement of whose treatises are so much to be regretted, had, as is shown by the juxtaposition of passages, borrowed largely from Aristotle. It is agreed by both, that when light is overspread with obscurity, a red colour appears; the why remains for the more accurate investigation of philosophers. The blue of the sky arises from the interposition of white against the black. The following from Leonardo is curious,—"This (effect of transparent colours on various grounds) is evident in smoke, which is blue when seen against black, but when it is opposed to the light, (blue sky), it appears brownish and reddening."

The letter "On the decoration of a villa" comes very opportunely. Architecture, with all its accompanying decoration of furniture and ornament, has been with us for nearly two centuries in abeyance. The taste is reviving, and with it knowledge. The science is studied, and with the extension of the science, convenience, which had long been the sole aim, and inadequately pursued, is in advance. There is much to be done, not only in villas and mansions, the houses of the rich, but in those of the moderate citizens. It too often happens that families are weary of their homes, they know not why—fly off to watering-places for a little novelty—establish themselves in inconvenient lodging-houses—all, in reality, because they lack a little variety at home. We have seen houses, where most of the rooms are not only of the same dimensions, but are, as near as possible, coloured, papered, painted and furnished alike: the eye is wearied with the perpetually obtruding sameness, and the eye faithfully conveys this disgust to the mind. We

may be thought to have whimsical notions in this respect, yet we venture to the confession of a somewhat singular taste. Had we wealth at command, we would borrow something from every country and climate under the sun. We would enter subterranean palaces with the ancient Egyptians, all artificially lighted. Arabians, Greeks, and Romans should contribute architectural designs. Our house should represent, in this sense, a map of the world: we would inhabit Europe, Asia, Africa, America—(no, scarcely the latter)—yet without being shocked by too sudden transitions; though we would retain somewhat of this electrifying source of revivifying the too [761] slumbering spirits. We would be able to walk "the great circle, and be still at home." We would create every gradation of light, and every gradation of darkness, to suit or to make every humour of the mind. We would have gardens such as few but Aladdin saw; and who less than a genie, or most consummate of geniuses, should complete our last unfinished window?—unfinished; for, with all this, it would still be a blessing to have something to do. And a pleasant thing to be the lord, master, emperor, in an architectural world of acres. Who does not love the lordly spirit of Wolsey? but we would go beyond him—would, as well as the imperial palace, have the poet's house, the painter's house; and in their works, all their works, (we are becoming as ambitious as Alnaschar,) be in daily familiarity with the great and wise of every age. Our libraries—we speak plurally, in the magnificence of the great idea—our picture-galleries, statue-galleries, should tax the skill of purveyors and architectural competitors without end. None that have ever yet been built or supplied with treasures would suffice, for they are for cramped positions. We would have no lack of space, and would not mind building a room for a single work. The idea of magic to construct, only shows the real want of man. Magic is but a prenomen to genius. Did we learn all this extravagance from our early story-books of princes and princesses, and their fairy palaces—from Arabian tales, and, in later time, from the enchantments of Boyardo and Ariosto? Whatever were the sources—though it should turn out to have been but an old nurse—we are heartily thankful for these variable, fanciful treasures; and, had we the riches, in reality would add a further extravagance of cost and fancy—a mausoleum to her bewitching bones. We remember thinking Menelaus, as pictured in the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus, happy even in his grief for the loss of Helen, in that he paced his galleries gazing upon her statues.

"Ma ritorniamo al nostro usato canto."

For more practical views and uses, we refer those who would build and decorate houses of pretensions and taste to the good sense contained in Mr Eastlake's *Reply*.

It seems to be scarcely a fable that beauty (as often personified in romantic poetry) is hid in an enchanted castle that few can reach; and those fortunate few either see but the skirts of her robe, as she majestically passes from corridor to corridor, or are so bewildered with the sight, that, having worshipped with downward eyes, they can give but a poor account of that "vultus nimium lubricus aspici;" while many of the adventurers are at once overcome by the monsters of error that in every shape sentinel the bridge and turret; while others, scarcely on the verge of the precincts, gather a few flowers, and come away under the delusion that they have entered the true garden of all enchantment. Some are fascinated with the "false Duennas" that assume a shape of beauty, and lead them far away, to their utter bewilderment; and these never return to the real pursuit.—There are who meet with fellow adventurers, accompany each other but a short way, dispute about the route they should take, breathe a combative atmosphere in the byepaths of error, and had rather slaughter each other than continue the adventure. Such seems to have been the thought of Mr Eastlake, in the commencement of his fragment "On the Philosophy of the Fine Arts," which he has clothed in more sober prose becoming the combatant for Truth—for Truth and Beauty are one. He has been out upon the adventure—yet scarcely thinks himself safe from the weapons of combatants, old or new, the discomfited or the aspirant, and expects little credit will be given to the discoveries he professes to have made. "To hint at theories of taste," he asserts, "is to invite opposition. The reader who gives his attention to them at all is eager to be an objector; he sets out by fancying that his liberty is in danger, and instinctively prepares to resist the supposed aggression." We would by no means break a lance with one so skilful, and of such proof-armour, as that which this accomplished combatant wears; but we may venture to gather up the fragments of the broken lances that strew the field, and patch them up for other hands— [762] nay, offer them, with the humility of a runner in the field, to Mr Eastlake himself, who will, on good occasion, show of what wood and metal they are made. To carry on this idea of enchantment, it is possible that Mr Eastlake may resemble the happy prince in search of the ninth statue. Eight had been set up (we are not quite sure of the number): there they stood on their pedestals of finest marble, but they were cold to the touch. The prince in the tale found the ninth he was commanded to discover to be a living beauty. If we mistake not, Mr Eastlake considers beauty but the type of life. "Life is pre-eminently an element of beauty: the word itself presents at once to the imagination the ideas of movement, of energy, and of bloom: the fact itself constitutes the greatest and most admirable attribute of nature." Again, establishing the curve, though not the precise curve of Hogarth, as the line of beauty, "a variously undulating curve may therefore be proposed as the visible type of life: such a form is constantly found in nature, as the indication and concomitant of life itself. It was this which Hogarth detected in various examples, without tracing it to its source. His illustrations are often excellent, but the type itself he adopted was singularly unfortunate. His "line of beauty" constantly repeats itself, and is therefore devoid of variety or elasticity—the never-failing accompaniments of perfect vitality." Variation, whether of line or of other elements, has on all hands been admitted as an ingredient of beauty. Mr Burke's illustration of the dove is good: "Here we see the head increasing insensibly to the middle, from whence it lessens gradually until it mixes with the neck; the neck loses itself in a larger swell, which continues to the middle of the body, when the whole decreases again to the tail. The tail takes a new direction, but it soon varies its new course; it

blends again with the other parts, and the line is perpetually changing above, below, upon every side." Burke adds to this the other element—softness—which, we suspect, Mr Eastlake will admit only in a minor degree; for Mr Burke considers not only softness, but a certain degree of weakness—a delicacy almost amounting to it, at least—as necessary to the idea of beauty; and they would ill agree with the perfect "vitality" of our author.

But simply as to lines, we are inclined to believe with Burke, that though the varied line is that in which beauty is found most complete, there is no particular line which constitutes it. Mr Eastlake, in referring that line to its resemblance to life, or to the antagonistic principles that make and destroy life, if we mistake not, cautiously abstracts this line of beauty from ideas of association; whereas his whole argument, in form and matter, appears to be one of association only. But such an association of life may be, if it existed, often destructive of that impression which a beautiful object is intended to make. Lassitude, death itself, may be beautiful in form. When Virgil compares Euryalus dying to the flower cut down—to the poppies drooping, weighed down with rain—he has in his eye objects beautiful in themselves; rather than life, they express Burke's idea of a certain weakness and faintness.

> Inque humeros cervix collapsa recumbit.
> Purpureus veluti cum flos succisus aratro,
> Languescit moriens; lassove papavera collo,
> Demisere caput, pluviâ cùm fortè gravantur.

Perhaps Mr Eastlake may reply, that the simile expresses *privation* of life, and therefore shows the matter capable of receiving it; but this appears further to involve the necessity of association, which denies the beauty of the line *per se*. The idea of privation is a sentiment; but the question is, if there be *a* line of beauty independent of sentiment or association. Let us attempt to answer it by another—the opposite. Is there *a* line of ugliness? We think there is not: if there be, what line? certainly not a straight line, (we must not here refer any to an object.) Perhaps we may not be very wrong in saying that *a* line *per se* is one of "indifference"—similar to that state of the mind before, as Burke says, we receive either pain or pleasure. May we not further say that, very strictly speaking, there is no one line but the straight—that every figure is made up of its inclinations, which are other or equivalent to other lines? If there be any truth in this, the "line of [763] beauty" (here adopting for a moment the word) is not a single but a complicated thing: the straight line has no parts, until we make them by divisions: the curved line has parts by its deviations, which constitute a kind of division, without the abruptness which the divided straight line would have. The organ of sight requires a moving instinct: that instinct is curiosity; but that is of an inquiring, progressive nature. Without some variety, therefore, in the object, it would die ere it could give birth to pleasurable sensation. It is too suddenly set to rest by a straight line *per se*; but when that line is combined with others, the sense is kept awake, is exercised; and it is from the exercise of a sense that pleasure arises. Too sudden divisions, by multiplying one object, distract; but in the curve, in the very variety, the unity of the object is preserved. A real cause may possibly here exist for what we will still call a "line of beauty," without referring it at all to so complicated a machinery of thought as that of life, with its antagonistic principle, with which it continually contends. This is, doubtless, physically and philosophically true; but it is altogether a thought which gives beauty to the idea of the line after we have contemplated it—not before. The line may rather give rise to and illustrate the philosophical thought, than be made what it is by that thought, which it altogether precedes.

Mr Eastlake objects to Hogarth's line that it repeats itself. We are not quite satisfied of the validity of this objection: for we find a certain repetition the constant rule of nature—a repetition not of identity, but similarity—an imitation rather, which constitutes symmetry—which, again, is a kind of correspondence, or, to clothe it with a moral term, a sympathy. To this symmetry, when a freedom of action is given, it but makes a greater variety; for we never lose sight of the symmetry, the balancing quantity always remaining. Thus, though a man move one arm up, the other down, the balance of the symmetry is not destroyed by the motion. We know that the alternation may take place,—that the arms may shift positions: we never lose sight of the correspondence, of the similarity. Every exterior swell in the limb has its corresponding interior swell. The enlargement by a joint is not one-sided. Every curve has its opposite. The face exemplifies it, which, as it is the most beautiful part, has the least flexible power of shifting its symmetry. Mark how the oval is completed by the height of the forehead and the declination of the chin. In nature it will be mostly found that, when one line rises, there is an opposite that falls, —that where a line contracts to a point, its opposite contracts to meet it. And this is the pervading principle of the curve carried out, and is most complete when the circle or oval is formed, for then the symmetrical or sympathetic line is perfected. Let us see how nature paints herself. Let us suppose the lake a mirror, as her material answering to our canvass. We see this repetition varied only by a faintness or law of perspective, which, to the eye, in some degree changes the line from its perfect exactness. As we see, we admire. There is no one insensible to this beauty. Nay, we would go further, and say that the artist cannot at random draw any continuous set of lines that, as forms, shall be ugly, if he but apply to them this imitation principle of nature, which, as it is descriptive of the thing, may be termed the principle of Reflexion, and which we rather choose, because it seems to include two natural propensities not very unlike each other—imitation and sympathy. We say "not very unlike each other," because they strictly resemble each other only in humanity. The brute may have the one—imitation, as in the monkey; but he imitates without sympathy, therefore we love him not: and it is this lack which makes his imitation mostly mischievous, for evil acts are the more visible,—the good discernible by feeling, by sympathy. The sympathy of the symmetry of nature is its sentiment, and may therefore be at

least an ingredient in beauty, and thus exhibited in lines. Lines similar, that approach or recede from each other, do so by means of their similarity in a kind of relation to each other; and by this they acquire a purpose, a meaning, as it were, a sentient feeling, or, as we may say, a sympathy. [764] A line of itself is nothing—it has no vital being, no form, until it bear relation to some other, or, by its combination with another, becomes a figure; and because it is a figure, it pleases, and we in some degree sympathise with it, as a part, with ourselves, of things created. Thus the curve, or Hogarth's line of beauty, which we assume to be made up of straight lines, whose joining is imperceptible, is the first designated figure of such lines, and in it we first recognise form, the first essential of organic being and beauty. It is like order dawning through chaos,—life not out of death, but out of that unimaginable nothing, before death was or could be. It is the Aphrodite discarding the unmeaning froth and foam, and rising altogether admirable. Now again as to Hogarth's line—carried but a little further, it would be strictly according to this principle of Reflexion. Divide it by an imaginary line, and you see it as in a mirror. If the serpentine line, then, as Hogarth called it, be a line of beauty, let us see in what that line is rendered most beautiful. Let us take the caduceus of Hermes as the mystic symbol of beauty. Here we see strictly the principle of reflexion, (for it matters not whether lateral or perpendicular,) and here, as a separation, how beautiful is the straight line! Take away either serpent, where is the beauty? We have a natural love of order as well as of variety,—of balancing one thing with another. If we remember, Hogarth falls into the error of making it a principle of art to shun regularity, and recommends a practice, which painters of architectural subjects have, as we think, erroneously adopted, of taking their views away from a central point. The principle of reflexion of nature would imply that they lose thereby more than they gain, for they lose that complete order which was in the design of the architect, and which, by not disturbing, so aids the sense of repose—a source of greatness as well as beauty. But to return to this Reflexion. It has its resemblance to Memory, which gives pleasure simply by reflecting the past,—by imitating through sympathy. We are pleased with similitudes, when placed in opposition. They are, like the two sides of Apollo's lyre, divided only by lines that, through them, discourse music,—harmony or agreement making one out of many things. The painter knows well that he requires his balancing lines to bring all intermediate parts into the idea of an embracing whole. If any of Hogarth's lines, as given examples in his plate, (though he gives the preference to one,) had its corresponding, as in the caduceus, it would at once become a beautiful line.

We took occasion some years ago, in a paper in Maga, to notice the practice, according to this principle of nature, followed by perhaps as great a master of composition (of lines) as any that art has produced—Gaspar Poussin; and we exemplified the rule by reference to some of his pictures; and we remarked that, by this his practice, he made more available for variety and uniformity the space of his canvass. We have since, with much attention, noticed the lines of nature, when most beautiful,—have watched the clouds, how they have arched valleys, and promoted a correspondence of sentiment,—and how, in woods, the receding and approaching lines of circles have made the meetings and the hollows, which both make space, and are agreeable. We are not setting forth *our* line of beauty. We would rather suggest that it is possible the idea of the wave or curve, right in itself, may be carried to a still greater completeness. It may, in fact, only be a part of beauty, which must scarcely be limited to a single line, or rather figure. We should have hesitated, lest we should seem to have hazarded a crude theory, if it had appeared to be entirely in opposition to Mr Eastlake. We think, upon the whole view, it rather advances his, and reconciles it as a part only with that of Burke and Hogarth. The thing stated may be true, when the reason given for it may be untrue, or at least insufficient. The notion of life and its antagonism is true; but its application may be more ingenious, and in the nature of a similitude, than an absolute foundation; for many similar referable correspondences of ideas may be given, as the range of similitude is large. But the objection to them is that they are mental, and will not, [765] therefore, apply unconditionally in a theory from which we set out by abstracting association.

Nor can we go so far as to carry this idea of "life" into the theory of colour.

> "Colour," says Mr Eastlake, "viewed under the ordinary effects of light and atmosphere, may be considered according to the same general principles. It is first to be observed that, like forms, they may or may not be characteristic, and that no object would be improved by means, however intrinsically agreeable, which are never its own. Next, as to the idea of life: creatures exhibit the hues with which nature has clothed them in greatest brilliancy during the period of consummate life and health. Bright red, which, by universal consent, represents the idea of life, (perhaps from its identity with the hue of the blood,) is the colour which most stimulates the organs of sight."

We doubt if any one colour, as we doubted of any one line, is *the* colour of beauty; and as to red representing life, possibly by resemblance to blood, speaking to the eye of Art, we should not say that redness is the best exponent of the beautiful flesh of human life. If so, it is most seen in earliest infancy, when it positively displeases. The young bird and young mouse create even disgust from this too visible blood-redness.

What is beauty? is quite another question from that of whether there is *a* line of beauty. Lines may be pleasing or displeasing, in a degree independent of the objects in which they happen to be. Lines that correspond in symmetry, as well as colours which agree in harmony, may exist in disagreeable objects, leaving yet the question of beauty to be answered; though beauty, whatever it is, may require this correspondence of parts, this order, this sympathy in symmetry.

Burke has separated the sublime from the beautiful. Mr Eastlake has, we suppose intentionally,

with a view to his ulterior object, in this fragment omitted any such distinction. He may be the more judicious in this, as Burke admits ugliness into his Sublime.

It has been supposed that the ancient artists studied the forms of inferior animals for the purpose of embellishing the human. The bull and lion have been recognised in the heads of Jupiter and Hercules. Mr Eastlake lays stress upon the necessity in avoiding, in representing the human, every characteristic of the brute; and quotes Sir Charles Bell, who says, "I hold it to be an inevitable consequence of such a comparison, that they should discover that the perfection of the human form was to be attained by avoiding what was characteristic of the inferior animals, and increasing the proportions of those features which belong to man."

This is doubtless well put; but there is an extraordinary fact that seems to remove this characteristic peculiarity from the idea of beauty, however it may add it to the idea of perfection. Man is the only risible animal: risibility may be said, therefore, to be his distinguishing mark. If so, far from attributing any beauty to it, even when we admit its agreeability, we deny its beauty, —we even see in it distortion. Painters universally avoid representing it. They prefer the

"Santo, onesto, e grave ciglio."

Some have thought the smile, so successfully rendered by Correggio, the letting down of beauty into an inferior grace.

Perhaps the sum of the view taken by Mr Eastlake may be best shown by a quotation:—

> "We have now briefly considered the principal æsthetic attributes of the organic and inorganic world. We have traced the influence of two leading principles of beauty—the visible evidence of character in form, and the visible evidence of the higher character of life. We have endeavoured to separate these from other auxiliary sources of agreeable impressions—such as the effect of colours, and the influences derived from the memory of the other senses. Lastly, all these elements have been kept independent of accidental and remote associations, since a reference to such sources of interest could only serve to complicate the question; and render the interpretation of nature less possible.
>
> A third criterion remains; it is applicable to human beings, and to them only. Human beauty is then most complete, when it not only conforms to the archetypal standard of its species, when it not only exhibits in the greatest perfection the attributes of life, but when it most bears the impress of mind, controlling and spiritualising both." "The conclusion which the foregoing considerations appear to warrant, may be now briefly stated as follows:—*Character is relative beauty—Life is the highest character—Mind is the highest life.*"

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We confess, in conclusion, that we are not yet disposed to admit, from any thing we have read, that Burke's "Sublime and Beautiful" is superseded. We can as readily believe that the sublime and beautiful may be reunited in one view, as that it is optional to separate them. The sublime and the beautiful both belong to us as human beings, making their sensible impressions all sources of pleasure, greatly differing in kind. It is inseparable from our condition to have a sense of a being vastly superior to ourselves: sublimity has a reference to that superior power over us, and to ourselves, as subject to it: while it renders us inferior, it lifts our minds to the knowledge of the greater. Beauty, on the contrary, seems to look up to us for aid, support, or sympathy. It thus flatters while it pleases, and, in contradiction to the subduing influence of the sublime, it makes ourselves in some respects the superior, and puts us in good humour both with the object and ourselves.

We are loath to quit this most interesting subject. We thank Mr Eastlake for bringing it so charmingly before us. We feel that our remarks have been very inadequate, both with regard to the nature of the subject, and as "The Philosophy of the Fine Arts" may seem to demand. But we are aware that to do both justice would require larger space than can be here allowed, and an abler pen than we can command. We almost fear a complete elucidation of beauty is not within the scope of the human mind. It may be to us not from earth, but from above; and we are not prepared to receive its whole truth. Burke somewhere observes that—"The waters must be troubled ere they will give out their virtues." The allusion is admirable, and justifies disturbing discussions. On such a subject, where the root of the matter grows not on earth, it may be added, in further allusion, that the stirring hand should be that of an angel.

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FOOTNOTES:

[1] Vittoria has told Constance that Raimond is to die; she then leaves her with the priest Anselmo—

> *Con.* (*Endeavouring to rouse herself.*) Did she not say
> That some one was to die? Have I not heard
> Some fearful tale? Who said that there should rest
> Blood on my soul? What blood? I never bore
> Hatred, kind father! unto aught that breathes;
> Raimond doth know it well. *Raimond! High Heaven!*
> *It bursts upon me now!* and he must die!
> For my sake—e'en for mine!

Is it very probable that a person in the situation of Constance should have to go this round of associations to recall what had just been told her, that her lover was to be tried for his life?

Constance, in order to save him by surrendering herself, rushes to the tribunal, where this mock trial is taking place. Their judges sentence both. Constance swoons in the arms of Raimond, and then ensues this piece of *unaffecting* bewilderment.

> *Con.* (*slowly recovering.*)
> There was a voice which call'd me. Am I not
> A spirit freed from earth?—Have I not pass'd
> The bitterness of death?
>
> *Ans.* Oh, haste, away!
>
> *Con.* Yes, Raimond calls me—(*There he stands beside her!*)
> He, too, is released
> From his cold bandage. We are free at last,
> And all is well—away!
>
> [*She is led out by Anselmo.*

[2] The numbers of Irish in the fever wards of the Royal Infirmary Edinburgh, in 1847, were, to the number of native Scotch, as 100 to 38; and in the fever hospitals of Glasgow, as 100 to 62; and the number of Irish were to the number of English in those wards, in both towns, as 100 to less than 2.

[3] *Ireland before and after the Union.* By R. M. Martin, Esq., 3d edit., p. 88.

[4] *Ireland before and after the Union.* By R. M. MARTIN, Esq., 3d edit., p. 90.

[5] MR SCROPE'S *Letter* in the *Morning Chronicle*, April 26, 1848.

[6] *Mill's Principles of Political Economy*, vol. i. p. 387.

[7] Ibid. 398.

[8] *See the Large and Small Farm Question, considered in regard to the Present Circumstances of Ireland.*

[9] Mill's *Principles of Political Economy*, vol. i. p. 393.

[10] *Jérome Paturot à la Recherche de la Meilleure des Républiques.* Par LOUIS REYBAUD. Volumes 1 to 3. Paris: 1848.

Monsieur Bonardin, ou les Agrémens de la République—Proverbe en plusieurs Décades. Paris: 1848.

[11] Mill's *Principles of Political Economy*, vol. i. p. 393.

[12] *Prophecy of Orval.* James Burns: 1848.

[13] "*Short*"—nauticè, *unfinished*.

[14] Let out the secret.

[15] We here adopt the spelling of the name as we find it in Mr Eastlake's review of that Life.

[16] In page 215, it is said Raphael repaired to his native city at the age of twenty-one. This seems not to agree with the account of his not having left it till twenty-one years of age. It has been said also, at page 210, that he revisited Urbino in 1499, having been said not to have left it till 1504.

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