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No. CCCCXXIII. **JANUARY, 1851.** **Vol. LXIX.**

THE CURRENCY EXTENSION ACT OF NATURE.

Whoever has examined with attention the past annals of mankind, must have become aware that the greatest and most important revolutions that have occurred in human affairs have originated in the variations which from time to time have taken place in the supply of the precious metals which could be obtained for the use of man. As they constitute, by the universal consent of the world, the common medium of exchange and measure of value among nations, their plenty or scarcity has an immediate and powerful influence upon the remuneration of industry and the activity of the working-classes in all countries. According as they are increasing or diminishing, abundant or awanting, is the condition of the people prosperous or calamitous—the national prospects bright or gloomy. No amount of human exertion, no efforts of human patriotism, can sustain the national fortunes for any length of time, or diffuse general and enduring prosperity among the people, if the existing medium of exchange is below what their numbers and transactions require; because, in such a case, prices are constantly declining, credit is liable to periodical and ruinous contractions, and industry, on an average of years, ceases to meet with its due reward. No calamities are insuperable, no dangers insurmountable, when a currency is provided adequate to the wants of men, and capable of extension in proportion to their necessities; because, in such a case, prices are rising or remunerative, and individual effort, stimulated by the prospect of an adequate return, becomes universal, and acts powerfully and decisively upon the general welfare of society and the issue of the national fortunes.

The two greatest revolutions which have taken place in the annals of the species, and which have for ever left their traces on the fortunes of mankind, have arisen from the successive diminution and increase in the supply of the precious metals for the use of the world. There can be no doubt that the decline and fall of the Roman empire—so long and falsely ascribed to its latter extension, plebeian slavery, and patrician corruption—was in reality mainly owing to the failure in the mines of Spain and Greece, from which the precious metals in ancient times were chiefly obtained, joined to the unrestricted importation of grain from Egypt and Libya, which ruined the profit of the harvests and destroyed the agriculture of Italy and Greece, at once paralysing industry, and rendering taxes overwhelming.[1] We know now to what the failure of these mines, attended with such portentous results, was owing. It was to the exhaustion of the auriferous veins in Spain and Greece near the surface, from long-continued working, and the extreme *hardness of the rock* in which they were imbedded farther down, which seems to be a general law of nature all over the world,[2] and which rendered working them, to any considerable depth, no longer a source of profit. On the other hand, the prodigious start which Europe took during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and which has implanted the European race for ever in the new hemisphere, is well known to have been mainly owing to the discovery of the mines of Mexico and Peru, and the continual rise of prices during nearly two centuries, which took place all over the world, from the constant and increasing influx of the precious metals drawn out of their rich strata.

The greatest and most momentous contests which have taken place among nations, have been in a great degree determined by the discovery or use, by one of the belligerents, of an expansive currency, to which the other was for a time a stranger. The most memorable strife in antiquity, that between Rome and Carthage, on which depended whether Europe or Africa was to become the mistress of the civilised world, was in reality determined by a great extension of the Italian circulating medium during the second Punic war; and that dreadful contest was less brought to a successful issue by the firmness of the senate or the arms of Scipio, than by the wisdom of a decree which virtually, at the crisis of its fate, doubled the currency of the Roman republic.[3] The Transatlantic revolution was brought to a successful issue in the same way; and the independence of the United States is less to be ascribed to the imbecility of British counsels, or the wisdom of American generalship, than to the establishment of a paper currency, which sustained the efforts of the insurgent states when they had no other resources wherewith to maintain the contest. It was the assignats, as all the world knows, that set on foot those prodigious armies which, amidst the destruction of all private fortunes, enabled France, during the Reign of Terror, to repel the assault of all the European powers; and the coalition which at last overturned the empire of Napoleon was sustained by a vast system of paper currency, issued in 1813 in Germany, which, guaranteed by the four Allied powers, passed as gold from the Atlantic Ocean to the wall of China, and arrayed all the armies of Europe in dense and disciplined battalions on the banks of the Rhine. Of what incalculable importance it was may be judged of by the dreadful straits to which Wellington, for five previous years, had been reduced by its want. Great Britain emerged victorious from the strife, chiefly from the powerful influence of the same omnipotent agent. Vain would have been the constancy of Pitt, the genius of Nelson, or the wisdom of Wellington, if the paper currency, established in 1797, had not given her people the sinews of war, and the means of illimitable industry, when the Continent was shut to her commerce, and the whole precious metals were drained away by the necessities of Continental warfare. Nor have the effects of the opposite system, pursued since the peace, been less striking and momentous; for the contraction of British currency to one half of its former dimensions, by the bills of 1819 and 1844, has brought about the dreadful panics of 1825, 1837, and 1847, induced by the decline of prices and the sufferings it occasioned. The English revolution of 1832 transferred power in the British islands exclusively to the inhabitants of towns, and spread such misery through the rural population, that *three hundred thousand* emigrants now annually leave the British islands for Transatlantic or Australian shores.

As the expansion or contraction of the circulating medium is thus an agent of such prodigious

power and irresistible weight, both upon the fortunes of particular states and the general progress of the species, so it will be found upon examination that it is by a withholding or letting loose the fertilising flood, that Providence appears often to act most directly and decisively upon human affairs. When a nation has performed its mission, and is to make room for other actors on the great stage of the world, if its power has rendered conquest by a foreign enemy impossible, a contraction of its domestic currency paralyses its internal strength, and renders dissolution, at no distant period, a matter of certainty. If a great start is prepared for human industry, if new continents are laid open to its energies, and an unusual impulse communicated to its activity by the development of social and democratic passions, a vast addition is suddenly made to its metallic resources, and the increased numbers or enhanced efforts of mankind are amply sustained by the newly opened treasures of the reserves of nature. Rome, impregnable to the assaults of undisciplined barbarians, yielded, at the appointed season, to the contraction of its domestic currency, which rendered the maintenance of armaments adequate to the public defence a matter of impossibility in the later days of the empire; and when the discovery of the compass, of the art of printing, and of the new hemisphere, had at once given a vast impulse to European activity, and provided new and boundless fields for its exertion, the mines of Potosi and Mexico were suddenly thrown open, and nature provided a suitable reward for all this enhanced effort by the continually rising price of its produce.

That a period of equal, perhaps greater activity, than that which followed the discoveries of Columbus, would succeed the outbreak of the social passions that occasioned the French Revolution, has long been familiar to the thinking part of men, and unequivocal proofs of the reality of the change may be seen in every direction around us. But sufficient attention has not hitherto been paid to the extraordinary encouragement which this increased mental energy has received, from the facilities which have been placed at its disposal by the *mechanical* discoveries of the last half century. Yet are they such as to throw all past discoveries into the shade, and give an impulse to human affairs which has scarcely been exceeded since the first separation of the dwellers in cities and the sojourners in the fields. The steam-engine has wrought these prodigies. Applied to mechanical invention, and the moving of machinery, it has multiplied tenfold the powers of urban industry, elevated the districts possessing the necessary fuel to the clouds, cast down places once the seats of commercial greatness, but destitute of that essential element in modern manufacturing energy, to the dust. Applied to the propelling of vessels, it has more than halved the breadth of the ocean, rendered navigable against the current the greatest rivers, sent the colonists of Europe in countless multitudes *up* the streams of the New World, and provided an entrance for civilised man into the greatest continents by the very magnitude of the waters which flow down from their inaccessible mountains, or are fed in their marshy plains. Applied to travelling by land, it has diminished distance to a third—brought the capital of every civilised state into close proximity to its most distant provinces; while the simultaneous discovery of the electric telegraph has rendered the communication of intelligence all but instantaneous, and made the circulation of ideas and, it is to be feared, also of passions, as rapid over a mighty empire as heretofore it was in the streets of a crowded capital.

When nature communicated this vast impulse to human activity, and placed these mighty instruments in the hands of men, she was not unmindful of the extended field for industry which their enlarged numbers and increased energies would require. The plain of the Mississippi, the garden of the world, containing a million of square miles, or six times the area of France, was thrown open to their enterprise. Steam power propelled a thousand vessels through the thick network of natural arteries which in every direction penetrate its vast and fertile plains. In 1790, five thousand Anglo-Saxons were settled in this magnificent wilderness; now their numbers exceed *eight millions*. Australia has opened its vast prairies, New Zealand its fertile vales, to European enterprise. The boundless plains of Central Russia and Southern Siberia, afforded inexhaustible resources to the rapidly increasing Muscovite population; and an empire which already possesses in Europe and Asia sixty-six million inhabitants, can without apprehension contemplate a continuance of its present rate of increase for centuries to come. The Andes even have been passed; the Rocky Mountains surmounted; and on the reverse of their gigantic piles new states, peopled by the Anglo-Saxon race, are arising, and increasing with unheard-of rapidity, in regions rivalling Italy in the variety and riches of their productions, and exceeding it tenfold in the magnitude of their extent. Proportionate to the wants and necessities of mankind, in an age of such intellectual and physical activity, has been the hitherto untrodden fields which the beneficence of nature has laid open to their industry.

These advantages, however, great and unbounded as they are, have been, till very recently, counterbalanced, and perhaps more than counterbalanced, by the *serious decrease* which, for the greater part of the period that has elapsed since the peace of 1815, has been going on, from the effect of human violence or folly, in the *circulating medium of the globe*. The South American revolution at once almost destroyed the working of the mines of Mexico and Peru: the annual produce of those mines sank from £10,000,000, to which, according to Humboldt, it had risen prior to 1810, to less than £3,000,000. The diminution in the supply of the precious metals for the use of the globe, from the effects of this most calamitous revolution, which Great Britain did so much to promote, was, during the thirty years which elapsed from 1810 to 1840, certainly not less than £150,000,000 sterling. Contemporaneous with this immense reduction, took place the great contraction of the paper currency of Great Britain, the commercial heart of the globe, which was reduced by the bill of 1819 from £60,000,000, which it had reached in 1814, to little more than £30,000,000, its average since that time. These two great causes of decrease, operating simultaneously during a period of general peace, unbroken industry, great increase in population both in Europe and America, and a vast addition to the transactions and mercantile

dealings of men in every part of the world, produced that universal and unlooked-for decline of prices which has been everywhere felt as so discouraging to industry, and nowhere so much so as in the highly taxed and deeply indebted realm of Great Britain. It was the exact converse of the general and long-continued prosperity which the progressive rise of prices consequent on the discovery of the South American mines produced during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It was apparently the commencement of a long and disastrous period of rise in the value of money, and fall in the price of every species of produce, similar to that which, in the first four centuries of the Christian era, crushed the industry and paralysed the strength of the Roman Empire, and at length prostrated the dominion of the legions before the arms of an untutored and barbarous enemy.

It is now ascertained, therefore, by the only sure guide in political science—experience—that if no addition to the circulating medium of the globe had been made at a time when so immense an increment was going forward in the numbers and transactions of the most active part of mankind, consequences the most disastrous to human industry and happiness *must* have taken place. If—when the United States, with their population of 25,000,000 doubling every twenty-five years, and Russia, with its population of 66,000,000 doubling every forty years, and Great Britain, with its population of 29,000,000 doubling in about the same time, and its exports and imports tripling in thirty years, were in a state of full and undiminished activity—there had been no addition made to the circulating medium of the globe, it is difficult to estimate the amount of embarrassment and distress which must have become all but universal. If the circulating medium of the earth had *remained stationary*, or gone on receiving only its wonted annual increment, when so prodigious an addition was going forward in the numbers and transactions of men, a universal and progressive fall of prices must have ensued. The remuneration of industry must have been halved—the weight of debts and taxes doubled. The fatal increase in the value and power of riches, so truly felt and loudly complained of in the declining days of the Roman empire, would have been everywhere experienced. A *money famine* would have been universally felt; and, paradoxical as it may appear, dear-bought experience has now taught us that such a famine is attended with more disastrous, because more widely spread and irremovable, consequences, than even a shortcoming in the supply of food for the use of man. The latter may be removed by increased rural activity and a good harvest in a single year. But the former is susceptible of no such remedy. On the contrary, the augmented activity which it brings on, from the general and pinching suffering with which it is attended, only tends to aggravate the common distress, because it multiplies the transactions in which money as a medium of exchange is indispensable, and consequently makes its scarcity in proportion to the existing demand be more severely felt.

To this must be added another and most important cause, which operated since the peace of 1815 in withdrawing the precious metals from the globe, arising from the very scarcity of these metals themselves. The addition which their enhanced value made to the riches of the affluent was so great, that it led to a rapid and most important increase in the consumption of gold and silver in articles of luxury. Gold and silver plate, jewels, and other ornaments set in gold, became general among the richer classes, and to an extent unprecedented since the fall of the Roman empire. Gilding was employed so much in furniture, the frames of pictures, the roofs of rooms, carriages, and other articles of state or show, as to withdraw a considerable part of that the most precious of the precious metals from the monetary circulation. The scarcer gold and silver became, the more was this direction of a large portion of it increased, because the richer did the fortunate few who possessed amassed capital become from the daily decline in the price of all other articles of merchandise. This effect was most conspicuous in ancient Rome in its latter days, where, while the legions dwindled into cohorts from the impossibility of finding funds to pay them in large numbers, and the fields of Italy became desolate from the impossibility of obtaining a remunerating price for their produce, the gold and silver vases, statues, and ornaments amassed in the hands of the wealthy patricians in Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, and the other great cities of the empire, so prodigiously increased, that, with the currency, which formed but a small part of its amount, their value is estimated by Gibbon at the almost incredible amount of £350,000,000 sterling of our money.

Bills of exchange and paper money, which have become known and general only in modern Europe, might have gone far to mitigate these disastrous consequences in particular states, or even, if conducted with prudence and regulated by wisdom, might in some places have altogether prevented them. But as paper currency is a new element of surpassing power and efficacy, but recently introduced into common use among men, the principles on which it should be regulated are far from being generally understood. Even if understood, it requires for its due regulation a combination of wisdom and self-denial that can rarely be looked for among the rulers of mankind. The fundamental principles on which its due regulation must be rested—that of being based on *certain and available property of some kind*, and of being capable of *extension* in proportion to the increase in the numbers and transactions of men, and the abstraction of the precious metals forming the medium of international circulation, and yet duly restrained and over-issue prevented—were successively overlooked by the greatest and most enlightened nations of the world. Issued in unbounded profusion in France during the fervour of the Revolution and the terrors of European invasion, with no real basis of available property on which to rest, the assignats produced, simultaneously with the prodigious armaments which saved the country, an unheard-of confusion among the transactions and obligations of men, and destroyed in a few years the whole capital of that great country, the accumulated savings of centuries of industry. Contracted with equal rapidity from the influence of the opposite set of interests in Great Britain after the peace, the paper circulation of the British Empire was rendered the instrument of destruction of property as great, and misery as widespread and universal, among its inhabitants, as the

assignats or confiscations of the Convention. Adopted with heedless eagerness, and without any adequate safeguards, at one time in America, and checked at another with precipitate and imprudent severity, four-fifths of the wealth of the United States were in a few years swept away by the fearful oscillation of prices consequent on these violent changes. And although wisdom and prudence could easily have devised a system of paper currency which, entirely based upon available property of some kind, and therefore perfectly secure, was yet capable of expansion in proportion to the increase of the numbers and transactions of men, and the temporary abstraction of the precious metals from a particular country by the mutations of commerce or the necessities of war, yet it was evident that no such wise and patriotic system was to be anticipated, till a vast amount of general suffering had enlightened the majority of men on the subject. Least of all could it be hoped for in Great Britain, where the increase and weight of the moneyed interests, and the consequent determination to enhance the value of money, without any regard to its effects on the remuneration of industry, had become such, that no other interest in the State, nor even all other interests allied, were able to make head against it.

The future destinies of mankind, and of this country in particular, seemed, therefore, to be involved in clouds and darkness; nor did any means appear to be within the bounds of possibility by which the difficulties which beset or awaited industry could be obviated. The greater the efforts made by industry, it was plain the greater would be the distress in which it would be involved; because an increase in the transactions of men required an augmentation in the circulating medium by which they were to be conducted; and an addition to the produce of labour, while the currency was fixed or declining, only rendered its remuneration less. The whole object of statesmen and legislators, both in Great Britain and America, had come to be to cheapen everything, and raise the value of money by contracting its amount—augmenting instead of relieving the general distress arising from the inadequacy of the existing circulating medium for the enlarged wants and numbers of men. The evil seemed to be beyond the reach of human remedy; for in the only country in which a remedy could be effectually applied, the moneyed interests had become so powerful, that Government was set chiefly on measures which, for the sake of private profit, most grievously aggravated it. But Providence is wiser than man: Nature is seldom awanting in the end to those who are suffering from the faults of others. A few bands of American squatters wandered into Texas—a war of aggression on the part of the United States succeeded to make good the settlement—a serious contest took place with Mexico—the Anglo-Saxon race asserted their wonted superiority over the Castilian—California was wrested from them—and by the ultimate effects of that conquest some of the greatest evils inflicted by human selfishness or folly were alleviated, and the destinies of the world were changed!

It is a striking proof how much the fortunes of men are in their own hands, and how vain are the choicest gifts of nature if not seconded by the vigour and industry of those for whom they are intended, that the rich auriferous veins, the discovery of which has been attended with such important effects, and is destined to avert so many evils arising from the absurd legislation or selfish desires of men in recent times, had been for three hundred years in the possession of the Spaniards, but they had never found them out! The gold was there, under their feet, in such quantities that its excavation, as will immediately appear, is adequate to double the annual supply of the precious metals for the use of man over the whole world; but they never took the trouble to turn it up! It was so near the surface, and so accessible, being mixed with the alluvial sand and gravel of the country, that it was first discovered in the cutting a common mill-course through a garden, and has since been obtained almost entirely by common labourers digging holes not deeper than ordinary graves through the level surface of the alluvial deposit of the mountains. They had never attempted agricultural operations, nor thought of an improvement which would have led to its detection. The Spaniards, as all the world knows, and as their history in every age has demonstrated, were passionately desirous of gold; and from the days of Columbus they had been familiar with a tradition or report among the native Indians, that there existed beyond the mountains in the far west a country in which gold was as plentiful as the sand on the seashore, and was to be had simply for the trouble of taking it. It was all true it was there, mixed in large quantities with the alluvial deposit of the mountains; yet during three hundred years that they held the country, they never found it out! A single ditch in any part of the flat region, which is above three hundred miles long and forty or fifty broad, would have revealed the treasure, but they never took the trouble to cut it. Before the Anglo-Saxons had been there three months, they had discovered the riches lying below their feet. Such is the difference of races! It is easy to see to which is destined the sceptre of the globe.

It is impossible as yet to say with positive certainty what is the amount of gold which may be obtained for a long period from this auriferous region; but it is already evident that it will be very great—much greater than was at first anticipated. The following extract, from the great and able Free-Trade organ, the *Times*, of Nov. 19, 1850, will show what amount has been realised and exported from San Francisco last year, and what may be anticipated in the next:—

> "Some estimates have lately been formed of the shipments of gold received in Europe from California to the present time, which, we believe, may be regarded as tolerably accurate, and according to which the amount is about £3,300,000. On the other side, up to the end of September, the receipts at the two mints of the United States had been about 31,000,000 dols., or £6,200,000. Since that time we have had advices of farther arrivals at New York and New Orleans amounting to £500,000. An aggregate is consequently formed of exactly £10,000,000. To this must be added, in order to estimate the total production, not only the amounts which have found their way to China, Manilla, Australia, Oregon, the Sandwich Islands, the States of Spanish America, &c., but also the total which has been

retained in California for the purposes of currency. The population in that country now ranges somewhere between 200,000 and 300,000, and although a considerable amount of silver dollars have been imported, the bulk of the circulation is believed still to be in the form of gold-dust or of gold tokens. If the 250,000 persons possess, on an average, £10 a-piece, we have a sum of £2,500,000; and, looking at the expense of a week's maintenance in the country, as well as the large quantities constantly in transit, as well as the reserves, which, as was shown by the last advices, the various deposit-houses are compelled to retain to meet sudden runs, it is probable that this is under the real total. Taking all points into consideration, it may, therefore, be assumed that the whole which has been raised is equal to at least £13,000,000 sterling. Of this production, according to recent official returns from the United States, nearly four-fifths have taken place during the present year. Of 25,966,817 dols. received in the United States Mint at Philadelphia, up to the end of September last, only 44,177 dols. had arrived in 1848, and 5,481,430 dols. in 1849, while the quantity in 1850 had been 20,441,210 dols. The same proportions would probably prevail with regard to the sums distributed to other places; and we are, therefore, led to the supposition that the export this year has already actually reached upwards of £10,000,000, although the results of two additional months have yet to be known. It will be observed, consequently, that the unexpected feature which has hitherto attended the progress of this new region—namely, that almost all the accounts from it, although deemed exaggerations at first, have proved ultimately to have been understatements—is still presented. At the commencement of 1850 the most sanguine expectations that were formed in any direction fixed its probable yield at £10,000,000; and not only has this been exceeded, but each quarter of the year has thus far shown an increase of nearly half upon the amount gathered in the preceding one. Thus the receipts at Philadelphia, for the first three months, were 4,370,714 dols., while they were 6,920,496 dols. for the second, and again 9,250,000 dols. for the third. This rate of augmentation coincides with the influx of population, and, as the emigration to the country is certain to be continued until the remuneration it affords for labour is brought to a level with the advantages offered elsewhere, there is no reason, so long as we are without accounts of an apparent limit to the field of operations, to anticipate anything else than a steady continuance of an improving ratio. So far from a limit having yet been found, each fresh exploration seems to develope new and more favourable localities, and an extended discovery of dry diggings lately alleged to have been made, together with the steps in progress elsewhere to crush the mountain ore by machinery, appears to hold out the prospect that, even with the approach of winter, there will scarcely be a suspension of the prevailing activity."—*Times, Nov. 19, 1850.*

By the last accounts there was no less than a million sterling exported from California in *six days*. This amount of gold, great as it is, however, is by no means the whole of the supply which has been obtained. It is the regular measured amount only—what entered the custom-house books, and was exported in the entered traders. But who can estimate the amount which in those vast and desolate regions has been amassed by individuals, and made its way out of the country in their private possession, or secretly in shipments of which no account was kept? It is incalculable: like the plunder amassed during the sack of a capital or province, it may be guessed at, but cannot be ascertained with anything approaching to accuracy. Probably the amount thus acquired, but not entering any public records, may equal all that is ascertained from the custom-house books. But call it only a half, or fifty per cent, it will follow that last year the amount raised was upwards of £15,000,000, and this year (1851) may be expected to reach £17,000,000 or £18,000,000! If so, it will nearly double the annual supply of the precious metals for the use of the globe, which at present, from all sources, is between £16,000,000 and £17,000,000. It may with confidence be anticipated, that how secretly soever great part of this treasure may be smuggled or conveyed out of California, none, or at least very little of it, will be lost. It will all be carefully preserved, and sooner or later find its way into the circulation of the world, or be manufactured into the gold ornaments and vessels which minister to its luxury or magnificence. Nothing more is required to show the prodigious influence of this great change; beyond all question it will, in its ultimate effects, alter the face of the globe.

Mr M'Culloch observes in his *Commercial Dictionary*—"Should *eight or ten millions* yearly, in addition to the present supply, be obtained from any other source, it will produce a gradual alteration of prices, similar to that which took place three centuries ago on the discovery of the mines of Mexico and Peru." No one can doubt that this observation is well founded; but if the effect of eight or ten millions annually added to the treasures of the world would be so considerable, what must the effect of the addition of sixteen or eighteen millions? Yet this addition is just *now going on*. In the month of August last, the gold shipped at San Francisco alone was 2,984,000 dollars, or about £800,000; and supposing a half more was raised, of which no account is kept, this is £1,200,000 in a single month! In five weeks from September 1, the quantity shipped was 5,000,000 dollars, or above £1,200,000; which implies at least £1,800,000 altogether obtained. This is from the labour of 40,000 or 50,000 persons only, who are at present engaged in the diggings; but it is known that from 80,000 to 90,000 will be engaged in them next year, so that the supply raised may be expected to be nearly doubled. There is great inequality in the amount obtained by individual persons employed in that laborious occupation; but taking the average, it is about four and a half dollars a day. Call it four only, and suppose they work 250 days in the year, each person at this rate will raise 1000 dollars' worth of gold, or nearly £250. At

that rate, 50,000 persons would raise £12,500,000 in a year; and 75,000, £18,750,000;—which coincides very nearly with the result derived as above from other sources of information.

The bullionists, struck with terror at so prodigious an addition annually to their darling gold, and consequent diminution in its exchangeable value, are beginning to exert themselves to decry it. They say that there is a "*Currency Restriction Act of Nature*;" that the supply of gold from the alluvial washings will soon be exhausted; and that when the excavation comes to be made from the rocks and mountains in which the veins are embedded, it will cease to be profitable, from the hardness of the strata of rock in which the veins are found.[4] The plea in abatement of the supply of gold thus likely to be obtained is very remarkable. The fact of its appearing in the highly respectable journal where it first was ushered to the world, and from the pen of the eminent geologist from whom it is said to have proceeded, are alike ominous. It shows at once how marvellously strong has been the hold which the mania for raising the value of gold and cheapening that of everything else prevailing during the last thirty years, from the influence of the holders of realised wealth, has got of the most influential classes in this country; and how deep is their alarm at the prospect of all their measures being at once blown into the air by the augmented supply *of this very gold* from the shores of California! A "Currency Restriction Act of Nature!" What a commentary on the measures of Sir R. Peel, so vehemently lauded and strenuously supported by all the capitalists whose fortunes, from the Currency Restriction Act of the right hon. baronet, were every day increasing in value! They would fain enlist Nature in the same crusade against labour and in favour of riches; but they may save themselves the trouble. There is no Currency Restriction Act of Nature: her beneficence, unlike that of man, is equally distributed over all her children. The Currency Extension Act of Nature will only stand forth in brighter relief from having been immediately preceded by the Currency *Restriction* Act of Man.

To show how chimerical are the hopes of a Currency Restriction Act of Nature, which is to limit and interrupt the blessings with which an increased supply of the precious metals for the general service of the world cannot fail to be attended, it is sufficient to observe that the auriferous region where the gold is found in alluvial deposit, is said to be a tract of country between three and four hundred miles long and from thirty to forty miles broad. It is therefore as long as from London to Berwick, and as broad as the average breadth of the plains of Yorkshire. What is the scraping or excavations of sixty or eighty thousand men on so immense a surface? Conceive every one of these persons *daily digging his own grave* in this auriferous region: how long will it take them to go over the whole surface and exhaust its treasures? Only apply to it the test of the rudest calculation. A square mile contains above 3,000,000 square yards. Supposing each digging occupies two square yards, there will be 1,500,000 diggings in a square mile; and if each person excavates a digging a-day, which is probably as much as can be calculated upon at an average, as the operation is so much impeded by water, 100,000 persons will take fifteen days to turn up and exhaust one square mile. In the gold region, however, there are at least 9000 square miles. Supposing that the 100,000 persons work 300 days in the year, which is more than can be calculated upon, they will only turn over and thoroughly search twenty square miles in a year. At this rate, it would take above four hundred years for even that large army of labourers to exhaust the *alluvial* gold region. We are aware the diggings do not go on regularly as is now supposed; that one man tries his fortune here, and another there; and that the earth is perforated at the same time in a great variety of places, many of them at a considerable distance from each other. We know, too, that the real extent of the gold region is hitherto the object of speculation and hope, rather than actual survey or knowledge. It is quite probable, too, that our calculation, which is a mere rough guess, may be above the mark in some particulars, and below it in others. Still, enough, making allowance for all such errors, remains to show that, in the alluvial gold region alone, if the accounts of its extent and riches are at all to be relied on, there is ample room for a vast annual addition to the treasures of the earth for a great many generations to come. The circumstance which makes it all but certain that the gold region must be very extensive, is its being found in the *alluvial* deposits of the mountain rivers, such as the Sacramento, along their whole course. If you find granite or mica slate particles in the beds of rivers and the level fields they overflow near the sea, you are sure of finding the same deposits up to the mountain regions from which they are brought down.

But what is the alluvial gold region to the mountain region from which the precious metals with which it abounds have been torn down by the storms and wintry torrents of thousands of years! If you find a *detritus* of a certain description in the mixed sand and gravel of a plain, you may predicate with perfect certainty the existence of mountains and rocks of the same formation in the higher regions from which it has been brought down. Granite or mica-slate *debris* in the beds of rivers or the level fields which they occasionally overflow, imply granite or mica-slate in the hilly region from which they take their rise. Whence has all the gold come which in the alluvial plains of California is producing such treasures, and changing prices over the whole world? It has come down from the mountains. And what must be the metallic riches with which they are charged, when the washed-down gravel at their feet is so prolific of mineral wealth! The bullionists, influenced by dread of a general rise of prices, and depreciation of the exchangeable value of their realised fortunes from this rise, say there is a "Currency Restriction Act of Nature;" that gold at any depth is unworkable at a profit; that Providence is niggardly of its bounty; and they in secret indulge the hope that it will continue permanently that contraction of the currency which they have contrived to force upon mankind, and which, while it lasted, has proved so eminently profitable to themselves. But a little consideration must show that their hopes in this respect are entirely fallacious. Granting that the veins of gold, when they go deep, are embedded in very hard rock, what is to be said to the cropping out of the veins over the vast extent of the auriferous Rocky Mountains? If the wasting away of wintry storms on the tops and sides of these

mountains brings down such quantities of gold with the streams which furrow their sides, must not the laborious hand of industry prove equally efficacious in removing it? If the expansive force of a rapid thaw, following severe frost, can rend the rocks in which the gold is embedded, is not the power of gunpowder or steam equally great? Already a company, composed of English capitalists, has been formed to explore the mountain treasures; and without supposing that they are to find an El Dorado in every hill, and admitting that there may be several failures before the right one is hit on, it is morally certain that in the end the mountain reserves of treasure must be discovered.

The additions to the currency of the earth, hitherto considered, have been those coming from these auriferous regions of North America, now for the first time brought into view only; but this is by no means the whole of the provision made by nature for the extended wants of mankind in this age of transition, vehement excitement, extended transactions, and rapidly-increasing numbers. The Ural and Altai Mountains have brought forth their treasures at the same time, and provided as amply for the wants of the Sclavonic race in the Old, as the Californian hills have done for the growth of the Anglo-Saxon in the New World. Gradually, for twenty years past, the Russian treasures have been brought to light; and their progressive increase has done more to alleviate the distress and sustain the industry of western Europe than all the wisdom of man in her aged monarchies has been to effect. Grievous as have been the calamities which the contraction of the currency of the world by the reduction of paper in Great Britain, simultaneously with the ruin of the South American mines by the revolutions of its vast regions, which we laboured so assiduously to promote, have produced, they would have been doubly severe if the Ural and Altai Mountains had not provided treasures at the very time when the other supplies were failing, which in part at least supplied their place. Their influence was long felt in Europe before their amount was suspected, and even now the wisdom or terrors of the Russian Government have prevented it from being accurately known; but it is generally understood to have now reached five or six millions sterling annually; and, like the Californian gold, it is susceptible of an indefinite increase, in the event of the influx of that metal from America not lowering its value so as to render it unworkable in Asia at a profit.

Assuming it, then, as certain that for a very long period, and for many successive generations, a vast addition is to be made to the annual supply of the metallic treasures of the earth, it becomes of the highest importance to the interests of industry in all its branches, agricultural, commercial, and manufacturing, to consider what *the effects of the change* thus induced must be—what benefits it will confer upon mankind—what dangers, if any, it will remove, especially in the great commercial community in which we are placed. And a little consideration must be sufficient to demonstrate to every impartial and disinterested mind what these effects will be—and to prevent, on the one hand, chimerical or unfounded hopes being formed, and, on the other, undue or unmanly depression from the effects of recent calamities being felt. Fortunately we are not driven to theory or speculation to ascertain what these effects will be—experience, the only sure guide in political science, points to them with unerring certainty: the great monetary revolution of the sixteenth century is the precursor and the monitor of that of the nineteenth.

The first effect of a great addition being made to the annual supply of a particular metal in general use and high estimation all over the world, is that the exchangeable value of *that metal*, in comparison with other metals or articles of consumption, will undergo an immediate alteration, which will prove lasting and considerable if the increased supply turns out to be great and permanent. This is no more than takes place every day with all the articles of commerce. According as the crop of wheat, or oats, or barley, or cotton proves abundant, so surely does the price of these articles rise or fall in the market. If gold is produced in much greater quantities than heretofore, its price, as compared with everything else, and in particular with the precious metal in common use, next to it in value, silver, must ere long change. If the increased supply proves very great, it may in time come to reduce the price of gold, as compared with silver, fifty, eighty, or even a hundred per cent. Gold is more valuable than silver, only because it is more scarce: if it becomes equally plentiful, its value will gradually sink; and if the quantity afloat in the earth should ever come to be as great as that of silver, it would come to be of no greater value. This effect may appear either in the fall of the value of gold as compared with silver, or notes exchangeable into gold, or in the *rise* in the value of silver as compared with that of gold, or notes exchangeable into that metal. This effect has already taken place. Silver is 3 per cent dearer as compared with gold than it was a year ago: and this change will doubtless continue. This is the first and obvious effect of a great addition to the gold treasures of the earth; and even this is a considerable benefit; because, as it has been produced by the augmentation of the amount of the circulating medium of mankind, it must facilitate the acquisition of it for the purposes of commerce, or for sustaining the undertakings of industry.

But though this is the first, it is by no means either the only or the most important effect of a great addition to the gold treasures of the earth. By far the most important and beneficial effect is to be found in *the gradual but certain rise of prices*, whether measured in gold, silver, or paper, which inevitably results from any considerable addition to the circulating medium of mankind. This effect is precisely analogous to the great rise of prices which took place during the war, in consequence of the extended issue of paper which was made after 1797 to sustain its expenses. It is well known that it more than doubled the cost of every article of consumption: it raised the price of wheat, in fifteen years, from 55s. to 110s.[5] This effect resulted from the extension of the issues of the Bank of England from twelve to twenty-eight millions a-year. A result precisely the same must take place over the whole world from a lasting and considerable addition to the metallic treasures by which its exchanges are conducted. If the gold in circulation, or which may be put into circulation, is greatly augmented, the price of everything must rise,

whether it is paid in *gold or silver*, just as the price of everything rose during the war, whether paid in specie or in paper. Gold then bore such a monopoly price, from its being so much in request for the necessities of war, that the guinea at last came to be worth twenty-eight shillings. That was the enhanced price of gold, as compared with silver; it had risen thirty per cent in consequence of the absorption of gold specie in the Peninsular, German, and Russian campaigns. But the change of prices resulting from the extended issue of paper was much more considerable; it had increased not thirty, but a hundred per cent, and that equally, whether the price was paid in gold, silver, paper, or copper.

This change will be universal. It is a mistake to suppose that it will be limited to the countries, such as England, in which gold is the established standard of value. It will affect equally, certainly, though perhaps somewhat more indirectly, the nations, such as France, where silver is the standard and great medium of exchange. The reason is, that by adding considerably to the general circulating medium of the globe, it brings a larger quantity to be balanced against every article which forms the subject of commerce, and consequently raises its price when measured by any part of that circulating medium. This effect may be seen every day in ordinary life. A plentiful crop of wheat, especially if it continues for several years in succession, lowers the price not only of wheat, *but of every other grain crop in the country*, and consequently raises the price of every article of commerce when measured by the amount given for it in any of these grain crops. And the same effect took place on a great scale, over the whole world, for centuries together, when the mines of Mexico and Peru were discovered, which, although chiefly productive of silver only, yet, by the large quantity of that metal which they yielded, raised prices to a very great degree universally, and that equally whether those prices were paid in gold, silver, or copper.

The effects hitherto considered are those on the value of the precious metals themselves from a considerable and continued increase in their supply in any part of the world. But in a commercial and opulent community such as Great Britain, where the greater part of its undertakings are carried on by means of money advanced by banks in their own notes or those of the Bank of England, on the security of bills or other obligations, the effect of a considerable increase in the supply of gold or silver is far more extensive. Such an increase diminishes the great weakness of a paper circulation, that of being dependent on the supply of the precious metals, and liable to be contracted when they are withdrawn. An inconvertible paper, issued in reasonable and not excessive quantities, and adequately guaranteed, would answer the purpose just as well in a particular country, and effectually secure it against the terrible disasters consequent on the alternate expansion and contraction of the currency; the former inducing the commencement of undertakings of which the latter disabled the performance. But the world is not wise enough yet to perceive how easy and effectual a remedy this simple expedient would provide against the greatest and most extensive calamities which now afflict humanity; and so great is the power of vested capital which such calamities benefit, that it is probable several generations must descend to their graves, or become insolvent, before it is generally adopted. But the extension of the metallic currency of the globe, though it cannot altogether remove, materially lessens this dreadful danger. *It inspires confidence among moneyed men.* It diminishes the terror of the withdrawal of the precious metals, which, when it once seizes them, is productive of such unbounded calamities; and thus renders the granting of accommodation on their part both more abundant and more regular. Paper becomes more plentiful, because gold, on which it is based, has flowed into the coffers of the banks in larger quantities, and thus at once augmented their own treasures, and diminished the risk of their being drained away by the necessities of other men. The effect of this change in a commercial and manufacturing community is incalculable. We can form a clear idea from woeful experience, of what it is. It is precisely the converse of Sir R. Peel's measure.

It is impossible to give a better picture of what this great Currency Extension Act of Nature will do for industry in all countries, and especially the commercial, than by saying that it will as nearly as possible *reverse* the effects which Mr Cobden, the great advocate for the cheapening system, said, in his evidence before the Committee on Bank Issues in 1840, he had experienced in the preceding years in his own business from the contraction of the currency consequent on the great importation of grain in 1838 and 1839:—

> "I could adduce a fact derived from my own experience that would illustrate the heavy losses to which manufacturers were exposed in their operations, by those fluctuations (in 1837) in the value of money. I am a calico printer. I purchase the cloth, which is my raw material, in the market; and have usually in warehouse three or four months' supply of material. I must necessarily proceed in my operations, whatever change there may be—whether a rise or a fall in the market. I employ six hundred hands; and those hands must be employed. I have fixed machinery and capital which *must* also be kept going; and, therefore, whatever the prospects of a rise or fall in price may be, I am constantly obliged to be purchasing the material, and contracting for the material on which I operate. In 1837 I lost by my stock in hand L.20,000, as compared with the stock-taking in 1835, 1836, and 1838; the average of those three years, when compared with 1837, shows that I lost L.20,000 by my business in 1837; and what I wish to add is, that the whole of this loss arose from the depreciation in the value of my stock.
>
> "My business was as prosperous; we stood as high as printers as we did previously; our business since that has been as good, and there was no other cause for the losses I then sustained, but the depreciation of the value of the articles in

> warehouse in my hands. What I wish particularly to show, is the defenceless condition in which we manufacturers are placed, and how completely we are at the mercy of these unnatural fluctuations. Although I was aware that the losses were coming, it was impossible I could do otherwise than proceed onward—with the certainty of suffering a loss on the stock; to stop the work of six hundred hands, and to fail to supply our customers, would have been altogether ruinous; that is a fact drawn from my own experience. I wish to point to another example of a most striking kind, showing the effect of these fluctuations on merchants. I hold in my hand a list of thirty-six articles which were imported in 1837, by the house of Butterworth and Brookes of Manchester, a house very well known; Mr Brookes is now borough-reeve of Manchester. Here is a list of thirty-six articles imported in the year 1837, in the regular way of business, and opposite to each article there is the rate of loss upon it as it arrived, and as it was sold. The average loss is 37½ per cent on those thirty-six articles, and they were imported from Canton, Trieste, Bombay, Bahia, Alexandria, Lima, and, in fact, all the intermediate places almost. This, I presume, is a fair guide to show the losses which other merchants incurred on similar articles."

It was these disastrous losses which made Mr Cobden a Free-trader. He wished to cheapen everything as his own produce had been cheapened. The contraction of the currency, and its being made dependent on the retention of gold, was the origin and root of the whole evil and all the disasters the nation has since undergone.

Such a change, however, the reverse of all this, like all those produced by nature, is so gradual as to the vast majority of men to be imperceptible. Like the gradual extension of the day in spring, or the change of temperature, the change is so slight from day to day that it eludes even the closest observation. From one month to another, however, the alteration is great and striking. The addition, first, of six or eight millions of gold, annually raised, rising by degrees to sixteen or eighteen millions—which doubles the annual supply of the precious metals for the use of the globe—being diffused over an immense surface, and finding its way more or less into the coffers of all nations, may not produce a great or even visible start of prices at any one time. But the change will be incessant; and before many years have elapsed, the result, if the increased supply continues, will be great and apparent. In the first instance, the effect will appear in arresting the fall of prices which has so long been going on, and which our legislative measures have all been calculated to increase. But after arresting the fall, it will speedily induce a rise; and this rise will for a long period be so steady and considerable as to produce a very great increase in the remuneration of the labouring classes, and immensely to benefit them. There is no speculation in this: it is only supposing that the increase of gold is to produce the same effect as the increase of silver, from the discovery of the South American mines, did three centuries ago.

The effect of the same change, by diminishing the weight of debt and taxes, will be still more signal and beneficial. Among the many and appalling evils of which a rise in the value of the circulating medium, and consequent fall in that of everything else, is productive, there is perhaps none so widespread and calamitous in its effects, as the adding to the weight of debts and taxes, and thus weighing down the energies of the productive classes, upon whose efforts the whole prosperity of society depends. It is that which has been the great cause of the long-continued depression and agony, interrupted only by fleeting gleams of prosperity, of the last thirty years, as the sudden expansion and contraction of the currency consequent on its being made dependent on the presence or absence of the precious metals, has been of its frightful oscillations. The taxes now paid by the nation, as measured by the price of wheat—the true measure—are, after, five-and-thirty years of peace, twice as heavy as they were in 1815, after twenty years of a costly war. This is what renders it so difficult for any government to maintain armaments, either at sea or land, at all commensurate to the public necessities; which has weakened our national influence, and degraded our national character, and exposed us to the deplorable state of weakness against foreign aggression, to the dangers of which, the Duke of Wellington has said he has found it impossible to awaken any Administration for thirty years. The Government see the public dangers, but they are disabled from guarding against them, because Parliament, stimulated by suffering constituencies whom the fall of prices has involved in constant difficulties, will not vote the necessary supplies. It is the same with the weight of mortgages, jointures, family provisions, bonds, bills, and debts of every description. They have all been doubled in weight since the bill of 1819 contracted the currency; and hence the inextricable embarrassments into which nearly all classes of the community have been precipitated, except the moneyed, whose fortunes have every day been increasing in real amount, from the same cause which has spread ruin so generally around them.

When it is said that the effect of Californian gold will be to reverse all this—to reduce gradually, and probably before twenty years have elapsed, *half the weight of debt and taxes* now felt as so grievous a burden by the community—it is affirmed that it will confer, perhaps, the greatest blessing which a beneficent Providence could confer on a suffering world. In England it will gradually and to a certain extent, so far as average prices are concerned, undo all that the Bullionists and Free-traders have been doing for the last thirty years. It will remove a large part of the frightful evils consequent on the monetary measures of Sir Robert Peel; and if seconded by a revision of our import duties, and a moderate tax for fiscal purposes on all foreign articles brought into the country, it would go far to repair the devastation produced by the selfish legislation of the last thirty years. In France it will arrest that dreadful fall of wages which, ever since the peace, has been felt to be increasing, from the constant reduction of prices arising from the destruction of the South American mines, and the simultaneous measures adopted for the

contraction of the currency in Great Britain. The unjust monopoly of realised capital will be arrested, at least for a long period. The unjust depression of industry, by the continued fall of prices, will be gradually terminated. But so gradual will be the change, and so unseen the operation of the vivifying element thus let into society, that even the classes most benefited by it will, for the most part, be ignorant of the cause to which their improved circumstances have been owing. They will be blessed by the hand of Nature, they know not how or by whom, as, under the former system, they were cursed by the hand of man, they knew not how or by whom.

Already the beneficial effects of Californian gold have been felt over the whole world, and nowhere more strongly than in this country. It is well known that prices of all articles of commerce, except corn and sugar, have risen twenty or thirty per cent within the last year; and the Free-traders consider that as being entirely owing to their measures. If so, it is singular how *corn and sugar*, on which the inundation of Free Trade has been chiefly let in since 1846, should be the *only exceptions* to the general rise. It is singular what contradictory effects they ascribe to their system: at one time it is lauded to the skies, because it tends to lower prices, and cheapen every article of consumption; at another, because it is said to raise prices, and encourage every branch of industry. Both effects cannot be owing to the same system: to ascribe them both to it is to say that a certain combination of gases produces alternately fire and water. At all events, if Free Trade brings about a rise of prices, what comes of all the arguments which went to recommend it on the score of reducing them? The truth is, however, Free Trade has nothing whatever to do with the recent rise of prices of manufactured articles, nor with the extension of the national exports which has taken place. These happy results, the passing gleam of sunshine, have been entirely owing to other causes, among which Californian gold bears a prominent place. Free Trade has tended only to continue and perpetuate the misery and depression which attended its first introduction.

This argument of the increase of our exports last year (1850) having been owing to Free Trade, has been so admirably disposed of by that able and intrepid man to whom the nation is under such obligations for the light he has thrown on these subjects, and the courageous way in which he has everywhere asserted them, in a late public meeting at Rugby, that we cannot do better than quote his words:—

> "The Free-traders had boasted much of their system as having increased the amount of our exports; and he (Mr Young) had been continually trying for a long period to get from them the names of the countries to which those increased imports went. At length he had the fact; and the result would be most startling as applied to the arguments and predictions of that party before the corn law was repealed. The countries he would take were Russia, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Prussia, Germany, Holland, Belgium, and France; and he found that in the year 1845 the quantity of corn imported from all these countries, comprising, as they did, the whole of northern and central Europe, amounted to 1,741,730 quarters, whilst the declared value of British and Irish manufactures exported to those countries was L.17,504,417. But last year the corn imported from those countries had increased in quantity to 6,857,530 quarters, whilst our exports to them had decreased to L.15,274,639. These figures showed that from the whole of northern and central Europe we took last year no less than 5,115,800 quarters of corn more than in 1845, and that there was a decrease in the value of our exports of L.2,229,778. Again, last year the declared value of our *gross* exports amounted to L.63,596,025, but in 1845 it reached the sum of L.60,111,082; so that in the course of these four years the increase was only L.3,484,943. He found also that our exports in 1830 were L.35,842,623, and in 1835, L.47,372,270, being an increase on the five years of L.11,529,647, or 32 2-10ths per cent. That was an increase under the operation of protection. In 1840 the exports amounted to L.51,406,430, or an increase upon 1835 of L.4,634,160, or 8 5-10ths per cent. In 1845 they were L.60,111,082—an increase on 1840 of L.8,704,652, or 16 9-10ths per cent. In 1849, L.63,596,025, an increase on 1845 of L.3,484,943; and in the present year, supposing the increase continued in the same ratio, he calculated that that increase would on the year 1845 be about L.4,350,000, or 7 2-10ths per cent. Would Free-traders boast of their exports after that? They talked upon this question as if the country had, under the system of protection, been in a perfectly dead and stagnant condition, and that the agriculturists were like the clods of the earth, and less capable of improvement. Why, it was under protection that our ships were employed to go to the island of Ichaboe, from which guano was first imported into this country; and it was under protection that that island had disappeared from the face of the ocean, and every cwt. of its guano had been brought here and spread upon the soil. He rejoiced and exulted in the march of science as much as any man; but it was an arrogant and an unfounded assumption on the part of the Free-traders to monopolise to themselves, as the result of their system, those improvements in agriculture which were going on under protection with railroad speed, and to which, in truth, their measures had only given a check, and not an impetus. But then he was asked, what have you to say to the United States? He would tell them. He found that the exports to the United States amounted to L.11,971,028 in 1849; but in 1836 they were not less than L.12,425,605; so that the exports in the former exceeded those in the latter year by L.454,577. Surely facts like these would dispose of a few of the Free-trade fallacies, and we should not hear them again repeated, at all events."—*Morning*

Herald, Nov. 28, 1850.

The restoration of peace on the Continent was the principal cause which again raised the amount of our exports to the Old World. This appears decisively in the returns: the exports of Great Britain to Germany alone, which, in 1848, had sunk to less than £4,000,000, rose, in 1850, to £6,078,355. The cessation of purchases to the Continent, during the two preceding years, in consequence of the alarm consequent on the French and German revolutions, only made the rush for English manufactures greater when the restoration of tranquillity reopened the Continent to our industry. In America the change was equally great, and equally irrespective of Free Trade: our exports to the United States, in 1850, exceeded £12,000,000. This extension arose from the general rise of prices, and extension of credit, from the opening of the treasures of California. It not only created a new market for exports on the reverse of the Rocky Mountains, but so vivified and animated every part of the Union, as rendered them capable of purchasing a much larger quantity of the manufactured articles of this country than they had done for a great number of years.[6]

But by far the most important and beneficial effect of Californian gold hitherto experienced has been in the extension of credit and increase of accommodation at home. This effect is obvious and important. The notes of the Bank of England in circulation, have risen in the last year to L.20,000,000 or L.21,000,000 from L.16,500,000, which they had fallen to during the panic. The circulation of every other bank has, as a matter of course, been proportionably augmented. What produced this great increase in the circulating medium? The influx of bullion into the country, which augmented the treasure in the Bank of England to above L.16,000,000. There is the secret of the whole thing; of the activity in the manufacturing districts, and the general extension of credit and rise of prices through the districts. It is Californian gold which has done the whole; for it has at once filled to overflowing the vaults of the Bank of England, and relieved its officers, and those of all similar establishments, from all dread of a drain of specie setting in. Gold was abundant; the banks no longer feared a collapse: therefore notes were abundant also; the terrors of the holders of them were abated. Prices rose, and credit was extended. We are far from thinking that it is a wise and judicious system to make credit of every kind entirely dependent on the amount of metallic treasure in the vaults of the Bank of England: we only say, having done this by Sir R. Peel's monetary system, we have to thank California for having put at least *a temporary stop to the evils with which it was pregnant*. It is not surprising that the addition of even so small a sum to the metallic circulation of the commercial world should produce, in a single year, so great a result. The discovery of two millions of bank-notes, in an old chest of the Bank of England, stopped the panic of December 1825; the mere issuing of Lord J. Russell's letter, announcing the temporary repeal of the Bank Charter Act, put a period to the far severer crash of 1847. The addition of five millions to the metallic treasure of this country is quite sufficient to vivify every branch of industry, for it will probably put fifty millions, in bank-notes and private bills, into circulation.

As the influx of Californian gold, however, is an element of such immense importance thus let into the social world, it is material to observe what evils it is adequate to remedy, and to what social diseases it can be regarded as a panacea. This is the more necessary, because, while it tends by its beneficent influence to conceal for a time the pernicious effects of other measures, it is by no means a remedy for them; nor has it a tendency even, in the long run, to lessen their danger. It induces immediate prosperity, by the extension of credit and rise of prices with which it is attended; but it has no tendency to diminish the dreadful evils of Free-Trade and a currency mainly dependent on the retention of the precious metals at all times in the country.

On the contrary, it may, under many circumstances, materially aggravate them.

As the effect produced by a great addition of the metallic treasures of the earth is *universal*, it must affect prices equally in every part of the world. The largest part of the bullion, indeed, will be brought to the richest country, which is best able to buy it, and has most need of it to form the basis of its transactions. But still, some part will find its way into every country; prices will be everywhere raised, and *the relative proportion between them in different countries will remain the same, or even be rendered more unfavourable to the richer state*. That is the material circumstance; for it shows that it must leave the greatest and most lasting evils of Free Trade untouched. Supposing gold to become so plentiful that the sovereign is only worth ten shillings, and the effect on general prices to be such that the average price of the quarter of wheat is raised from forty to sixty shillings—which, in a course of years, is by no means improbable—still the relative position of the British with the Polish and American cultivator will remain the same. The price of the wheat may be raised from 15s. to 25s. a-quarter, on the banks of the Vistula or the Mississippi; but still the *ability of their cultivators to undersell our farmers will remain the same*, or rather be augmented. Prices will still be so much higher in the old rich and heavily-taxed country, which absorbs the largest part of the metallic circulation of the earth, than in the young poor and untaxed one, that in the production of the fruits of the earth, to which machinery can never be made applicable, the inability to carry on the competition will only be rendered the more apparent by the increasing, or at all events, permanent difference of the prices.

In the next place, how cheap soever gold, from its augmented plenty, may become, there will be no cessation, as long as our paper circulation remains on its present footing, of those dreadful monetary crises which now, at stated periods recurring every five or six years, spread such unheard-of ruin through the industrious classes. Let gold, from its greater plenty, become of only half its value, or a sovereign be only worth ten shillings, and prices, in consequence, rise to double their present amount, the danger of a monetary crisis, as long as our currency is based on its present footing, will remain the same. Still, any considerable drain of the metallic treasure of

the country, such as it is—either from the necessities of foreign war, the adverse state of foreign exchanges, or a great importation, occasioned by a deficient home harvest—will send the specie headlong out, and, by suddenly contracting the currency, ruin half of the persons engaged in business undertakings. It is the *inconceivable folly* of making the paper circulation dependent on the retention of the metallic; the enormous error of enacting, that, for every five sovereigns that are drawn out of the country, a five-pound note shall be drawn in by the bankers; the infatuated self-immolation arising from the gratuitous negation of the greatest blessing of a paper circulation—that of supplying, during the temporary absence of the metallic currency, its want, and obviating all the evils thence arising—which is the real source of the evils under which we have suffered so severely since the disastrous epoch of 1819, when the system was introduced. The increased supply of gold, so far from tending to obviate this danger, has a directly opposite effect; for, by augmenting the metallic treasures of the country, and thus raising credit during periods of prosperity, it engages the nation in a vast variety of undertakings, the completion of which is rendered impossible when the wind of adversity blows, by the sudden contraction of its currency and credit. And to this danger *the mercantile classes are exposed beyond any other*; for as their undertakings are always far beyond their realised capital, and supported entirely by credit, every periodical contraction of the currency, recurring every five or six years, exposes one-half of them to inevitable ruin.

Let not the Free-traders, therefore, lay the flattering unction to their souls, that California is to get them out of all their difficulties, and that after having, by their ruinous measures, brought the nation to the very brink of ruin, and destroyed one-half of its wealth engaged in commerce, they are to escape the deserved execration of ages, by the effects of an accidental discovery of metallic treasures on the shores of the Pacific. Californian gold, a gift of Providence to a suffering world, will arrest the general and calamitous fall of prices which the Free-traders have laboured so assiduously to introduce, and thus diminish in a most material degree the weight of debts and taxes. So far it will undoubtedly tend to relieve the industrious classes, *especially in the rural districts*, from much of the misery induced on them by their oppressors; but it cannot work impossibilities. It will leave industry in all classes, and in none more than the manufacturing, exposed to the ruinous competition of foreigners, working, whatever the value of money may be, at a cheaper rate than we can ever do, because in poorer and comparatively untaxed countries. It will leave the commercial classes permanently exposed to the periodical recurrence of monetary storms, arising out of the very plenty of the currency when credit is high, and its sudden withdrawal from the effect of adverse exchanges, or the drain consequent on vast importations of food. It will leave the British navy, and with it the British colonial empire and our national independence, gradually sinking from the competition, in shipping, of poorer states. Nature will do much to counteract the disasters induced by human folly; but the punishment of guilty selfishness is as much a part of her system as the relief of innocent suffering; and to the end of the world those who seek to enrich themselves by the ruin of their neighbours will work out, in the very success of their measures, their own deserved and memorable punishment.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] See "Fall of Rome," Alison's *Essays*, vol. iii. p. 440.

[2] See a very able article on California, *Quarterly Review*, Oct. 1850.

[3] "Quum Censores ob inopiam ærarii, se jam locationibus abstinerent ædium sacrarum tuendarum, curuliumque equorum præbendorum, ac similium his rerum: convenere ad eos frequentes, qui hastæ hujus generis assueverant; hortatique censores, *ut omnia perinde agerent, locarent, ac si pecunia in ærario esset*. NEMINEM, NISI BELLO CONFECTO, PECUNIAM AB ÆRARIO PETITURUM ESSE."—LIVY, lib. xxiv. c. 19. "The censors," says Arnold, "found the treasury unable to supply the public services. Upon this, trust monies belonging to widows and minors, or to widows and unmarried women, were deposited in the treasury; and whatever sums the trustees had to draw for, were paid by the quarter *in bills on the banking commissioners*, or *triumvirs mensarii*. It is probable that these bills were actually a *paper currency*, and that they circulated as money on the security of the public faith. In the same way *the government contracts were also paid in paper*; for the contractors came forward in a body to the censors, and begged them to make their contracts as usual, *promising not to demand payment till the end of the war*. This must mean, I conceive, that they were to be paid in orders upon the treasury, which orders were to be converted into cash when the present difficulties of the government should be at an end."—ARNOLD'S *History of Rome*, ii. 207, 208. This was just an inconvertible paper currency; and its issue immediately after the battle of Cannæ saved the Roman empire. We have heard, from a gentleman who was present, that, in a political Whig party many years ago, when the conversation turned on the service of a paper currency in bringing a state through a pecuniary crisis, and some one said it was that which enabled the Romans to surmount the Second Punic war, Lord Melbourne, who was present, immediately repeated, from memory, the words above quoted from Livy in capitals.

[4] *Quarterly Review*, October 1850.

[5] AVERAGE PRICES OF WHEAT:—

	s.	d.
1792,	47	1
1793,	49	6
1794,	54	0
1795,	81	6
1796,	80	3
1809,	106	0
1810,	112	0
1811,	108	0
1812,	118	0
1813,	120	0

[6] Exports to the United States from Great Britain:—

1837,	£4,695,225
1838,	7,585,760
1839,	8,839,204
1840,	5,283,020
1841,	7,098,842
1842,	3,528,807
1849,	11,971,028

MY NOVEL; OR, VARIETIES IN ENGLISH LIFE.—PART V.

BY PISISTRATUS CAXTON.

BOOK III.—INITIAL CHAPTER, SHOWING HOW MY NOVEL CAME TO BE CALLED "MY NOVEL."

"I am not displeased with your novel, so far as it has gone," said my father graciously; "though as for The Sermon—"

Here I trembled; but the ladies, Heaven bless them! had taken Parson Dale under their special protection; and, observing that my father was puckering up his brows critically, they rushed boldly forward in defence of The Sermon, and Mr Caxton was forced to beat a retreat. However, like a skilful general, he renewed the assault upon outposts less gallantly guarded. But as it is not my business to betray my weak points, I leave it to the ingenuity of cavillers to discover the places at which the Author of *Human Error* directed his great guns.

"But," said the Captain, "you are a lad of too much spirit, Pisistratus, to keep us always in the obscure country quarters of Hazeldean—you will march us out into open service before you have done with us?"

Pisistratus, magisterially, for he has been somewhat nettled by Mr Caxton's remarks—and he puts on an air of dignity, in order to awe away minor assailants.—"Yes, Captain Roland—not yet awhile, but all in good time. I have not stinted myself in canvass, and behind my foreground of the Hall and the Parsonage I propose, hereafter, to open some lengthened perspective of the varieties of English life—"

Mr Caxton.—"Hum!"

Blanche, putting her hand on my father's lip.—"We shall know better the design, perhaps, when we know the title. Pray, Mr Author, what is the title?"

My Mother, with more animation than usual.—"Ay, Sisty—the title?"

Pisistratus, startled.—"The title! By the soul of Cervantes! I have never yet thought of a title!"

Captain Roland, solemnly.—"There is a great deal in a good title. As a novel reader, I know that by experience."

Mr Squills.—"Certainly; there is not a catchpenny in the world but what goes down, if the title be apt and seductive. Witness 'Old Parr's Life Pills.' Sell by the thousand, sir, when my 'Pills for Weak Stomachs,' which I believe to be just the same compound, never paid for the advertising."

Mr Caxton.—"Parr's Life Pills! a fine stroke of genius! It is not every one who has a weak stomach, or time to attend to it, if he have. But who would not swallow a pill to live to a hundred and fifty-two?"

Pisistratus, stirring the fire in great excitement.—"My title! my title!—what shall be my title!"

Mr Caxton, thrusting his hand into his waistcoat, and in his most didactic of tones.—"From a remote period, the choice of a title has perplexed the scribbling portion of mankind. We may guess how their invention has been racked by the strange contortions it has produced. To begin with the Hebrews. 'The Lips of the Sleeping,' (*Labia Dormientium*)—what book do you suppose that title to designate?—A Catalogue of Rabbinical writers! Again, imagine some young lady of old captivated by the sentimental title of 'The Pomegranate with its Flower,' and opening on a treatise on the Jewish Ceremonials! Let us turn to the Romans. Aulus Gellius commences his pleasant gossiping 'Noctes' with a list of the titles in fashion in his day. For instance, '*The Muses*' and '*The Veil*,' '*The Cornucopia*,' '*The Beehive*,' and '*The Meadow*.' Some titles, indeed, were more truculent, and promised food to those who love to sup upon horrors—such as '*The Torch*,' '*The Poniard*,' '*The Stiletto*'—"

Pisistratus, impatiently.—"Yes, sir; but to come to My Novel."

Mr Caxton, unheeding the interruption.—"You see, you have a fine choice here, and of a nature pleasing, and not unfamiliar to a classical reader; or you may borrow a hint from the early Dramatic Writers."

Pisistratus, more hopefully.—"Ay! there is something in the Drama akin to the Novel. Now, perhaps, I may catch an idea."

Mr Caxton.—"For instance, the author of the *Curiosities of Literature* (from whom, by the way, I am plagiarising much of the information I bestow upon you) tells us of a Spanish gentleman who wrote a Comedy, by which he intended to serve what he took for Moral Philosophy."

Pisistratus, eagerly.—"Well, sir?"

Mr Caxton.—"And called it 'The Pain of the Sleep of the World.'"

Pisistratus.—"Very comic indeed, sir."

Mr Caxton.—"Grave things were then called Comedies, as old things are now called Novels. Then there are all the titles of early Romance itself at your disposal—'Theagenes and Chariclea,' or 'The Ass' of Longus, or 'The Golden Ass' of Apuleius, or the titles of Gothic Romance, such as 'The most elegant, delicious, mellifluous, and delightful History of Perceforest, King of Great Britain,'"—And therewith my father ran over a list of names as long as the Directory, and about

as amusing.

"Well, to my taste," said my mother, "the novels I used to read when a girl, (for I have not read many since, I am ashamed to say,)—"

Mr Caxton.—"No, you need not be at all ashamed of it, Kitty."

My Mother, proceeding.—"Were much more inviting than any you mention, Austin."

The Captain.—"True."

Mr Squills.—"Certainly. Nothing like them now-a-days!"

My Mother.—"'*Says she to her Neighbour, What?*'"

The Captain.—"'*The Unknown, or the Northern Gallery*'—"

Mr Squills.—"'*There is a Secret; Find it Out!*'"

Pisistratus, pushed to the verge of human endurance, and upsetting tongs, poker, and fire-shovel.—"What nonsense you are talking, all of you! For heaven's sake, consider what an important matter we are called upon to decide. It is not now the titles of those very respectable works which issued from the Minerva Press that I ask you to remember—it is to invent a title for mine—My Novel!"

Mr Caxton, clapping his hands gently.—"Excellent—capital! Nothing can be better; simple, natural, pertinent, concise—"

Pisistratus.—"What is it, sir—what is it! Have you really thought of a title to My Novel?"

Mr Caxton.—"You have hit it yourself—'My Novel.' It is your Novel—people will know it is your Novel. Turn and twist the English language as you will—be as allegorical as Hebrew, Greek, Roman—Fabulist or Puritan—still, after all, it is your Novel, and nothing more nor less than your Novel."

Pisistratus, thoughtfully, and sounding the words various ways.—"'My Novel'—um—um! 'My Novel!' rather bald—and curt, eh?"

Mr Caxton.—"Add what you say you intend it to depict—Varieties in English Life."

My Mother.—"'*My Novel; or, Varieties in English Life*'—I don't think it sounds amiss. What say you, Roland? Would it attract you in a catalogue?"

My Uncle hesitates, when Mr Caxton exclaims imperiously—

"The thing is settled! Don't disturb Camarina."

Squills.—"If it be not too great a liberty, pray who or what is Camarina?"

Mr Caxton.—"Camarina, Mr Squills, was a lake, apt to be low, and then liable to be muddy; and 'Don't disturb Camarina' was a Greek proverb derived from an Oracle of Apollo; and from that Greek proverb, no doubt, comes the origin of the injunction, '*Quieta non movere*,' which became the favourite maxim of Sir Robert Walpole and Parson Dale. The Greek line, Mr Squills, (here my father's memory began to warm,) is preserved by Stephanus Byzantinus, de *Urbibus*—

'Μὴ κίνει Καμάριναν, ἀκίνητος γὰρ ἀμείνων.'

Zenobius explains it in his Proverbs; Suidas repeats Zenobius; Lucian alludes to it; so does Virgil in the Third Book of the *Æneid*; and Silius Italicus imitates Virgil—

'Et cui non licitum fatis Camarina moveri.'

Parson Dale, as a clergyman and a scholar, had, no doubt, these authorities at his fingers' end. And I wonder he did not quote them," quoth my father; "but, to be sure, he is represented as a mild man, and so might not wish to humble the Squire over much in the presence of his family. Meanwhile, My Novel is My Novel; and now that that matter is settled, perhaps the tongs, poker, and shovel may be picked up, the children may go to bed, Blanche and Kitty may speculate apart upon the future dignities of the Neogilos, taking care, nevertheless, to finish the new pinbefores he requires for the present; Roland may cast up his account-book, Mr Squills have his brandy and water, and all the world be comfortable, each in his own way. Blanche, come away from the screen, get me my slippers, and leave Pisistratus to himself. Μὴ κίνει Καμάριναν—don't disturb Camarina. You see, my dear," added my father kindly, as, after settling himself into his slippers, he detained Blanche's hand in his own—"you see, my dear, every house has its Camarina. Man, who is a lazy animal, is quite content to let it alone; but woman, being the more active, bustling, curious creature, is always for giving it a sly stir."

Blanche, with female dignity.—"I assure you, that if Pisistratus had not called me, I should not have—"

Mr Caxton, interrupting her, without lifting his eyes from the book he has already taken.—"Certainly you would not. I am now in the midst of the great Puseyite Controversy. Μὴ κίνει Καμάριναν—don't disturb Camarina."

A dead silence for half an hour, at the end of which

Pisistratus, from behind the screen.—"Blanche, my dear, I want to consult you."

Blanche does not stir.

Pisistratus.—"Blanche, I say."

Blanche glances in triumph towards Mr Caxton.

Mr Caxton, laying down his theological tract, and rubbing his spectacles mournfully.—"I hear him, child; I hear him. I retract my vindication of Man. Oracles warn in vain: so long as there is a woman on the other side of the screen,—it is all up with Camarina!"

CHAPTER II.

It is greatly to be regretted that Mr Stirn was not present at the Parson's Discourse—but that valuable functionary was far otherwise engaged—indeed, during the summer months he was rarely seen at the afternoon service. Not that he cared for being preached at—not he: Mr Stirn would have snapped his finger at the thunders of the Vatican. But the fact was, that Mr Stirn chose to do a great deal of gratuitous business upon the day of rest. The Squire allowed all persons, who chose, to walk about the park on a Sunday; and many came from a distance to stroll by the lake, or recline under the elms. These visitors were objects of great suspicion, nay, of positive annoyance, to Mr Stirn—and, indeed, not altogether without reason, for we English have a natural love of liberty, which we are even more apt to display in the grounds of other people than in those which we cultivate ourselves. Sometimes, to his inexpressible and fierce satisfaction, Mr Stirn fell upon a knot of boys pelting the swans; sometimes he missed a young sapling, and found it in felonious hands, converted into a walking-stick; sometimes he caught a hulking fellow scrambling up the ha-ha! to gather a nosegay for his sweetheart from one of poor Mrs Hazeldean's pet parterres; not unfrequently, indeed, when all the family were fairly at church, some curious impertinents forced or sneaked their way into the gardens, in order to peep in at the windows. For these, and various other offences of like magnitude, Mr Stirn had long, but vainly, sought to induce the Squire to withdraw a permission so villanously abused. But though there were times when Mr Hazeldean grunted and growled, and swore "that he would shut up the park, and fill it (illegally) with man-traps and spring-guns," his anger always evaporated in words. The park was still open to all the world on a Sunday; and that blessed day was therefore converted into a day of travail and wrath to Mr Stirn. But it was from the last chime of the afternoon service bell until dusk that the spirit of this vigilant functionary was most perturbed; for, amidst the flocks that gathered from the little hamlets round to the voice of the Pastor, there were always some stray sheep, or rather climbing desultory vagabond goats, who struck off in all perverse directions, as if for the special purpose of distracting the energetic watchfulness of Mr Stirn. As soon as church was over, if the day were fine, the whole park became a scene animated with red cloaks, or lively shawls, Sunday waistcoats, and hats stuck full of wild-flowers—which last Mr Stirn often stoutly maintained to be Mrs Hazeldean's newest geraniums. Now, on this Sunday especially, there was an imperative call upon an extra exertion of vigilance on the part of the superintendent—he had not only to detect ordinary depredators and trespassers; but, first, to discover the authors of the conspiracy against the Stocks; and secondly, to "make an example."

He had begun his rounds, therefore, from the early morning; and just as the afternoon bell was sounding its final peal, he emerged upon the village green from a hedgerow, behind which he had been at watch to observe who had the most suspiciously gathered round the stocks. At that moment the place was deserted. At a distance, the superintendent saw the fast disappearing forms of some belated groups hastening towards the church; in front, the Stocks stood staring at him mournfully from its four great eyes, which had been cleansed from the mud, but still looked bleared and stained with the marks of the recent outrage. Here Mr Stirn paused, took off his hat, and wiped his brows.

"If I had sum un, to watch here," thought he, "while I takes a turn by the water-side, praps summat might come out; praps them as did it ben't gone to church, but will come sneaking round to look on their willany! as they says murderers are always led back to the place where they ha' left the body. But in this here willage there ben't a man, woman, nor child, as has any consarn for Squire or Parish, barring myself." It was just as he arrived at that misanthropical conclusion that Mr Stirn beheld Leonard Fairfield walking very fast from his own home. The superintendent clapped on his hat, and stuck his right arm akimbo. "Hollo, you sir," said he, as Lenny now came in hearing, "where be you going at that rate?"

"Please, sir, I be going to church."

"Stop, sir—stop, Master Lenny. Going to church!—why, the bell's done; and you knows the Parson is very angry at them as comes in late, disturbing the congregation. You can't go to church now!"

"Please, sir"—

"I says you can't go to church now. You must learn to think a little of others, lad. You sees how I sweats to serve the Squire! and you must serve him too. Why, your mother's got the house and premishes almost rent free: you ought to have a grateful heart, Leonard Fairfield, and feel for his honour! Poor man! *his* heart is wellnigh bruk, I am sure, with the goings on."

Leonard opened his innocent blue eyes, while Mr Stirn dolorously wiped his own.

"Look at that ere dumb cretur," said Stirn suddenly, pointing to the Stocks—"look at it. If it could speak, what would it say, Leonard Fairfield? Answer me that!—'Damn the Stocks, indeed!'"

"It was very bad in them to write such naughty words," said Lenny gravely. "Mother was quite shocked when she heard of it, this morning."

Mr Stirn.—"I dare she was, considering what she pays for the premishes: (insinuatingly,) you does not know who did it—eh, Lenny?"

LENNY.—"No, sir; indeed I does not!"

MR STIRN.—"Well, you see, you can't go to church—prayers half over by this time. You recollex that I put them stocks under your 'sponsibility,' and see the way you's done your duty by 'em. I've half a mind to,"—

Mr Stirn cast his eyes on the eyes of the Stocks.

"Please, sir," began Lenny again, rather frightened.

"No, I won't please; it ben't pleasing at all. But I forgives you this time, only keep a sharp look-out, lad, in future. Now you just stay here—no, there,—under the hedge, and you watches if any persons come to loiter about or looks at the Stocks, or laughs to hisself, while I go my rounds. I shall be back either afore church is over or just arter; so you stay till I comes, and give me your report. Be sharp, boy, or it will be worse for you and your mother: I can let the premishes for four pounds a year more, to-morrow."

Concluding with that somewhat menacing and very significant remark, and not staying for an answer, Mr Stirn waved his hand, and walked off.

Poor Lenny remained by the Stocks, very much dejected, and greatly disliking the neighbourhood to which he was consigned. At length he slowly crept off to the hedge, and sate himself down in the place of espionage pointed out to him. Now, philosophers tell us that what is called the point of honour is a barbarous feudal prejudice. Amongst the higher classes, wherein those feudal prejudices may be supposed to prevail, Lenny Fairfield's occupation would not have been considered peculiarly honourable; neither would it have seemed so to the more turbulent spirits among the humbler orders, who have a point of honour of their own, which consists in the adherence to each other in defiance of all lawful authority. But to Lenny Fairfield, brought up much apart from other boys, and with a profound and grateful reverence for the Squire instilled into all his habits of thought, notions of honour bounded themselves to simple honesty and straightforward truth; and as he cherished an unquestioning awe of order and constitutional authority, so it did not appear to him that there was anything derogatory and debasing in being thus set to watch for an offender. On the contrary, as he began to reconcile himself to the loss of the church service, and to enjoy the cool of the summer shade, and the occasional chirp of the birds, he got to look on the bright side of the commission to which he was deputed. In youth, at least, everything has its bright side—even the appointment of Protector to the Parish Stocks. For the Stocks, themselves, Leonard had no affection, it is true; but he had no sympathy with their aggressors, and he could well conceive that the Squire would be very much hurt at the revolutionary event of the night. "So," thought poor Leonard in his simple heart—"so if I can serve his honour, by keeping off mischievous boys, or letting him know who did the thing, I'm sure it would be a proud day for mother." Then he began to consider that, however ungraciously Mr Stirn had bestowed on him the appointment, still it was a compliment to him—showed trust and confidence in him, picked him out from his contemporaries as the sober moral pattern boy; and Lenny had a great deal of pride in him, especially in matters of repute and character.

All these things considered, I say, Leonard Fairfield reclined in his lurking-place, if not with positive delight and intoxicating rapture, at least with tolerable content and some complacency.

Mr Stirn might have been gone a quarter of an hour, when a boy came through a little gate in the park, just opposite to Lenny's retreat in the hedge, and, as if fatigued with walking, or oppressed by the heat of the day, paused on the green for a moment or so, and then advanced under the shade of the great tree which overhung the Stocks.

Lenny pricked up his ears, and peeped out jealously.

He had never seen the boy before: it was a strange face to him.

Leonard Fairfield was not fond of strangers; moreover, he had a vague belief that strangers were at the bottom of that desecration of the Stocks. The boy, then, was a stranger; but what was his rank? Was he of that grade in society in which the natural offences are or are not consonant to, or harmonious with, outrages upon Stocks? On that Lenny Fairfield did not feel quite assured. According to all the experience of the villager, the boy was not dressed like a young gentleman. Leonard's notions of such aristocratic costume were naturally fashioned upon the model of Frank Hazeldean. They represented to him a dazzling vision of snow-white trousers, and beautiful blue coats, and incomparable cravats. Now the dress of this stranger, though not that of a peasant nor of a farmer, did not in any way correspond with Lenny's notions of the costume of a young gentleman: it looked to him highly disreputable; the coat was covered with mud, and the hat was all manner of shapes, with a gap between the side and crown.

Lenny was puzzled, till it suddenly occurred to him that the gate through which the boy had passed was in the direct path across the park from a small town, the inhabitants of which were in very bad odour at the Hall—they had immemorially furnished the most daring poachers to the preserves, the most troublesome trespassers on the park, the most unprincipled orchard-robbers, and the most disputatious assertors of various problematical rights of way, which, according to the Town, were public, and, according to the Hall, had been private since the Conquest. It was true that the same path led also directly from the Squire's house, but it was not probable that the wearer of attire so equivocal had been visiting there. All things considered, Lenny had no doubt in his mind but that the stranger was a shop-boy or 'prentice from the town of Thorndyke; and the notorious repute of that town, coupled with this presumption, made it probable that Lenny now saw before him one of the midnight desecrators of the Stocks. As if to confirm the suspicion, which passed through Lenny's mind with a rapidity wholly disproportionate to the number of

lines it costs me to convey it, the boy, now standing right before the Stocks, bent down and read that pithy anathema with which it was defaced. And having read it, he repeated it aloud, and Lenny actually saw him smile—such a smile!—so disagreeable and sinister! Lenny had never before seen the smile Sardonic.

But what were Lenny's pious horror and dismay when this ominous stranger fairly seated himself on the Stocks, rested his heels profanely on the lids of two of the four round eyes, and, taking out a pencil and a pocket-book, began to write. Was this audacious Unknown taking an inventory of the church and the Hall for the purposes of conflagration? He looked at one, and at the other, with a strange, fixed stare as he wrote—not keeping his eyes on the paper, as Lenny had been taught to do when he sate down to his copy-book. The fact is, that Randal Leslie was tired and faint, and he felt the shock of his fall the more, after the few paces he had walked, so that he was glad to rest himself a few moments; and he took that opportunity to write a line to Frank, to excuse himself for not calling again, intending to tear the leaf on which he wrote out of his pocket-book, and leave it at the first cottage he passed, with instructions to take it to the Hall.

While Randal was thus innocently engaged, Lenny came up to him, with the firm and measured pace of one who has resolved, cost what it may, to do his duty. And as Lenny, though brave, was not ferocious, so the anger he felt, and the suspicions he entertained, only exhibited themselves in the following solemn appeal to the offender's sense of propriety,—

"Ben't you ashamed of yourself? Sitting on the Squire's new Stocks! Do get up, and go along with you!"

Randal turned round sharply; and though, at any other moment, he would have had sense enough to extricate himself very easily from his false position, yet, *Nemo mortalium*, &c. No one is always wise. And Randal was in an exceedingly bad humour. The affability towards his inferiors, for which I lately praised him, was entirely lost in the contempt for impertinent snobs natural to an insulted Etonian.

Therefore, eyeing Lenny with great disdain, Randal answered briefly,—

"You are an insolent young blackguard."

So curt a rejoinder made Lenny's blood fly to his face. Persuaded before that the intruder was some lawless apprentice or shop-lad, he was now more confirmed in that judgment, not only by language so uncivil, but by the truculent glance which accompanied it, and which certainly did not derive any imposing dignity from the mutilated, rakish, hang-dog, ruinous hat, under which it shot its sullen and menacing fire.

Of all the various articles of which our male attire is composed, there is perhaps not one which has so much character and expression as the top-covering. A neat, well-brushed, short-napped, gentlemanlike hat, put on with a certain air, gives a distinction and respectability to the whole exterior; whereas a broken, squashed, higgledy-piggledy sort of a hat, such as Randal Leslie had on, would go far towards transforming the stateliest gentleman that ever walked down St James's Street into the ideal of a ruffianly scamp.

Now, it is well known that there is nothing more antipathetic to your peasant-boy than a shop-boy. Even on grand political occasions, the rural working-class can rarely be coaxed into sympathy with the trading town-class. Your true English peasant is always an aristocrat. Moreover, and irrespectively of this immemorial grudge of class, there is something peculiarly hostile in the relationship between boy and boy when their backs are once up, and they are alone on a quiet bit of green. Something of the game-cock feeling—something that tends to keep alive, in the population of this island, (otherwise so lamb-like and peaceful,) the martial propensity to double the thumb tightly over the four fingers, and make what is called "a fist of it." Dangerous symptoms of these mingled and aggressive sentiments were visible in Lenny Fairfield at the words and the look of the unprepossessing stranger. And the stranger seemed aware of them; for his pale face grew more pale, and his sullen eye more fixed and more vigilant.

"You get off them Stocks," said Lenny, disdaining to reply to the coarse expressions bestowed on him; and, suiting the action to the word, he gave the intruder what he meant for a shove, but which Randal took for a blow. The Etonian sprang up, and the quickness of his movement, aided but by a slight touch of his hand, made Lenny lose his balance, and sent him neck-and-crop over the Stocks. Burning with rage, the young villager rose alertly, and, flying at Randal, struck out right and left.

CHAPTER III.

Aid me, O ye Nine! whom the incomparable Persius satirised his contemporaries for invoking, and then, all of a sudden, invoked on his own behalf—aid me to describe that famous battle by the Stocks, and in defence of the Stocks, which was waged by the two representatives of Saxon and Norman England. Here, sober support of law and duty and delegated trust—*pro aris et focis*; there, haughty invasion, and bellicose spirit of knighthood, and that respect for name and person, which we call honour. Here, too, hardy physical force—there, skilful discipline. Here—The Nine are as deaf as a post, and as cold as a stone! Plague take the jades!—I can do better without them.

Randal was a year older than Lenny, but he was not so tall nor so strong, nor even so active; and after the first blind rush, when the two boys paused, and drew back to breathe, Lenny, eyeing the slight form and hueless cheek of his opponent, and seeing blood trickling from Randal's lip, was seized with an instantaneous and generous remorse. "It was not fair," he thought, "to fight one

whom he could beat so easily." So, retreating still farther, and letting his arms fall to his side, he said mildly—"There, let's have no more of it; but go home and be good."

Randal Leslie had no remarkable degree of that constitutional quality called physical courage; but he had all those moral qualities which supply its place. He was proud—he was vindictive—he had high self-esteem—he had the destructive organ more than the combative;—what had once provoked his wrath it became his instinct to sweep away. Therefore, though all his nerves were quivering, and hot tears were in his eyes, he approached Lenny with the sternness of a gladiator, and said between his teeth, which he set hard, choking back the sob of rage and pain—

"You have struck me—and you shall not stir from this ground—till I have made you repent it. Put up your hands—I will not strike you so—defend yourself."

Lenny mechanically obeyed; and he had good need of the admonition: for if before he had had the advantage, now that Randal had recovered the surprise to his nerves, the battle was not to the strong.

Though Leslie had not been a fighting boy at Eton, still his temper had involved him in some conflicts when he was in the lower forms, and he had learned something of the art as well as the practice in pugilism—an excellent thing, too, I am barbarous enough to believe, and which I hope will never quite die out of our public schools. Ah, many a young duke has been a better fellow for life from a fair set-to with a trader's son; and many a trader's son has learned to look a lord more manfully in the face on the hustings, from the recollection of the sound thrashing he once gave to some little Lord Leopold Dawdle.

So Randal now brought his experience and art to bear; put aside those heavy roundabout blows, and darted in his own, quick and sharp—supplying the due momentum of pugilistic mechanics to the natural feebleness of his arm. Ay, and the arm, too, was no longer so feeble: so strange is the strength that comes from passion and pluck!

Poor Lenny, who had never fought before, was bewildered; his sensations grew so entangled that he could never recall them distinctly: he had a dim reminiscence of some breathless impotent rush—of a sudden blindness followed by quick flashes of intolerable light—of a deadly faintness, from which he was roused by sharp pangs—here—there—everywhere; and then all he could remember was, that he was lying on the ground, huddled up and panting hard, while his adversary bent over him with a countenance as dark and livid as Lara himself might have bent over the fallen Otho. For Randal Leslie was not one who, by impulse and nature, subscribed to the noble English maxim—"Never hit a foe when he is down;" and it cost him a strong if brief self-struggle, not to set his heel on that prostrate form. It was the mind, not the heart, that subdued the savage within him, as, muttering something inwardly—certainly not Christian forgiveness—the victor turned gloomily away.

CHAPTER IV.

Just at that precise moment, who should appear but Mr Stirn! For, in fact, being extremely anxious to get Lenny into disgrace, he had hoped that he should have found the young villager had shirked the commission intrusted to him; and the Right-hand Man had slily come back, to see if that amiable expectation were realised. He now beheld Lenny rising with some difficulty—still panting hard—and with hysterical sounds akin to what is vulgarly called blubbering—his fine new waistcoat sprinkled with his own blood, which flowed from his nose—nose that seemed to Lenny Fairfield's feelings to be a nose no more, but a swollen, gigantic, mountainous Slawkenbergian excrescence,—in fact, he felt all nose! Turning aghast from this spectacle, Mr Stirn surveyed, with no more respect than Lenny had manifested, the stranger boy, who had again seated himself on the Stocks (whether to recover his breath, or whether to show that his victory was consummated, and that he was in his rights of possession.) "Hollo," said Mr Stirn, "what is all this?—what's the matter, Lenny, you blockhead?"

"He *will* sit there," answered Lenny, in broken gasps, "and he has beat me because I would not let him; but I doesn't mind that," added the villager, trying hard to suppress his tears, "and I'm ready again for him—that I am."

"And what do you do, lolloping, there on them blessed Stocks?"

"Looking at the landscape: out of my light, man!"

This tone instantly inspired Mr Stirn with misgivings: it was a tone so disrespectful to him that he was seized with involuntary respect: who but a gentleman could speak so to Mr Stirn?

"And may I ask who you be?" said Stirn, falteringly, and half inclined to touch his hat. "What's your name, pray, and what's your bizness?"

"My name is Randal Leslie, and my business was to visit your master's family—that is, if you are, as I guess from your manner, Mr Hazeldean's ploughman!"

So saying, Randal rose; and, moving on a few paces, turned, and throwing half-a-crown on the road, said to Lenny,—"Let that pay you for your bruises, and remember another time how you speak to a gentleman. As for you, fellow,"—and he pointed his scornful hand towards Mr Stirn, who, with his mouth open, and his hat now fairly off, stood bowing to the earth—"as for you, give my compliments to Mr Hazeldean, and say that, when he does us the honour to visit us at Rood Hall, I trust that the manners of our villagers will make him ashamed of Hazeldean."

O my poor Squire! Rood Hall ashamed of Hazeldean! If that message had ever been delivered to

you, you would never have looked up again!

With those bitter words, Randal swung himself over the stile that led into the parson's glebe, and left Lenny Fairfield still feeling his nose, and Mr Stirn still bowing to the earth.

CHAPTER V.

Randal Leslie had a very long walk home: he was bruised and sore from head to foot, and his mind was still more sore and more bruised than his body. But if Randal Leslie had rested himself in the Squire's gardens, without walking backwards, and indulging in speculations suggested by Marat, and warranted by my Lord Bacon, he would have passed a most agreeable evening, and really availed himself of the Squire's wealth by going home in the Squire's carriage. But because he chose to take so intellectual a view of property, he tumbled into a ditch; because he tumbled into a ditch, he spoiled his clothes; because he spoiled his clothes, he gave up his visit; because he gave up his visit, he got into the village green, and sate on the Stocks with a hat that gave him the air of a fugitive from the treadmill; because he sate on the Stocks—with that hat, and a cross face under it—he had been forced into the most discreditable squabble with a clodhopper, and was now limping home, at war with gods and men;—*ergo*, (this is a moral that will bear repetition)—*ergo*, when you walk in a rich man's grounds, be contented to enjoy what is yours, namely, the prospect;—I dare say you will enjoy it more than he does.

CHAPTER VI.

If, in the simplicity of his heart, and the crudeness of his experience, Lenny Fairfield had conceived it probable that Mr Stirn would address to him some words in approbation of his gallantry, and in sympathy for his bruises, he soon found himself wofully mistaken. That truly great man, worthy prime-minister of Hazeldean, might, perhaps, pardon a dereliction from his orders, if such dereliction proved advantageous to the interests of the service, or redounded to the credit of the chief; but he was inexorable to that worst of diplomatic offences—an ill-timed, stupid, overzealous obedience to orders, which, if it established the devotion of the *employé*, got the employer into what is popularly called a scrape! And though, by those unversed in the intricacies of the human heart, and unacquainted with the especial hearts of prime-ministers and Right-hand men, it might have seemed natural that Mr Stirn, as he stood still, hat in hand, in the middle of the road, stung, humbled, and exasperated by the mortification he had received from the lips of Randal Leslie, would have felt that that young gentleman was the proper object of his resentment; yet such a breach of all the etiquette of diplomatic life as resentment towards a superior power was the last idea that would have suggested itself to the profound intellect of the Premier of Hazeldean. Still, as rage like steam must escape somewhere, Mr Stirn, on feeling—as he afterwards expressed it to his wife—that his "buzzom was a burstin," turned with the natural instinct of self-preservation to the safety-valve provided for the explosion; and the vapours within him rushed into vent upon Lenny Fairfield. He clapped his hat on his head fiercely, and thus relieved his "buzzom."

"You young willain! you howdacious wiper! and so all this blessed Sabbath afternoon, when you ought to have been in church on your marrow bones, a-praying for your betters, you has been a-fitting with a young gentleman, and a wisiter to your master, on the werry place of the parridge hinstitution that you was to guard and pertect; and a-bloodying it all over, I declares, with your blaggard little nose!" Thus saying, and as if to mend the matter, Mr Stirn aimed an additional stroke at the offending member; but, Lenny mechanically putting up both his arms to defend his face, Mr Stirn struck his knuckles against the large brass buttons that adorned the cuff of the boy's coat-sleeve—an incident which considerably aggravated his indignation. And Lenny, whose spirit was fairly roused at what the narrowness of his education conceived to be a signal injustice, placing the trunk of the tree between Mr Stirn and himself, began that task of self-justification which it was equally impolitic to conceive and imprudent to execute, since, in such a case, to justify was to recriminate.

"I wonder at you, Master Stirn,—if mother could hear you! You know it was you who would not let me go to church; it was you who told me to—"

"Fit a young gentleman, and break the Sabbath," said Mr Stirn, interrupting him with a withering sneer. "O yes! I told you to disgrace his honour the Squire, and me, and the parridge, and bring us all into trouble. But the Squire told me to make an example, and I will!" With those words, quick as lightning flashed upon Mr Stirn's mind the luminous idea of setting Lenny in the very Stocks which he had too faithfully guarded. Eureka! the "example" was before him! Here, he could gratify his long grudge against the pattern boy; here, by such a selection of the very best lad in the parish, he could strike terror into the worst; here he could appease the offended dignity of Randal Leslie; here was a practical apology to the Squire for the affront put upon his young visitor; here, too, there was prompt obedience to the Squire's own wish that the Stocks should be provided as soon as possible with a tenant. Suiting the action to the thought, Mr Stirn made a rapid plunge at his victim, caught him by the skirt of his jacket, and, in a few seconds more, the jaws of the Stocks had opened, and Lenny Fairfield was thrust therein—a sad spectacle of the reverses of fortune. This done, and while the boy was too astounded, too stupefied by the suddenness of the calamity for the resistance he might otherwise have made—nay, for more than a few inaudible words—Mr Stirn hurried from the spot, but not without first picking up and pocketing the half-crown designed for Lenny, and which, so great had been his first emotions, he had hitherto even almost forgotten. He then made his way towards the church, with the intention

to place himself close by the door, catch the Squire as he came out, whisper to him what had passed, and lead him, with the whole congregation at his heels, to gaze upon the sacrifice offered up to the joint Powers of Nemesis and Themis.

CHAPTER VII.

Unaffectedly I say it—upon the honour of a gentleman, and the reputation of an author, unaffectedly I say it—no words of mine can do justice to the sensations experienced by Lenny Fairfield, as he sate alone in that place of penance. He felt no more the physical pain of his bruises; the anguish of his mind stifled and overbore all corporeal suffering—an anguish as great as the childish breast is capable of holding. For first and deepest of all, and earliest felt, was the burning sense of injustice. He had, it might be with erring judgment, but with all honesty, earnestness, and zeal, executed the commission intrusted to him; he had stood forth manfully in discharge of his duty; he had fought for it, suffered for it, bled for it. This was his reward! Now, in Lenny's mind there was pre-eminently that quality which distinguishes the Anglo-Saxon race—the sense of justice. It was perhaps the strongest principle in his moral constitution; and the principle had never lost its virgin bloom and freshness by any of the minor acts of oppression and iniquity which boys of higher birth often suffer from harsh parents, or in tyrannical schools. So that it was for the first time that that iron entered into his soul, and with it came its attendant feeling—the wrathful galling sense of impotence. He had been wronged, and he had no means to right himself. Then came another sensation, if not so deep, yet more smarting and envenomed for the time—shame! He, the good boy of all good boys—he, the pattern of the school, and the pride of the parson—he, whom the Squire, in sight of all his contemporaries, had often singled out to slap on the back, and the grand Squire's lady to pat on the head, with a smiling gratulation on his young and fair repute—he, who had already learned so dearly to prize the sweets of an honourable name—he, to be made, as it were, in the twinkling of an eye, a mark for opprobrium, a butt of scorn, a jeer, and a byword! The streams of his life were poisoned at the fountain. And then came a tenderer thought of his mother! of the shock this would be to her—she who had already begun to look up to him as her stay and support: he bowed his head, and the tears, long suppressed, rolled down.

Then he wrestled and struggled, and strove to wrench his limbs from that hateful bondage;—for he heard steps approaching. And he began to picture to himself the arrival of all the villagers from church, the sad gaze of the Parson, the bent brow of the Squire, the idle ill-suppressed titter of all the boys, jealous of his unblotted character—character of which the original whiteness could never, never be restored! He would always be the boy who had sate in the Stocks! And the words uttered by the Squire came back on his soul, like the voice of conscience in the ears of some doomed Macbeth. "A sad disgrace, Lenny—you'll never be in such a quandary." "Quandary," the word was unfamiliar to him; it must mean something awfully discreditable. The poor boy could have prayed for the earth to swallow him.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Kettles and frying-pans! what has us here?" cried the tinker.

This time Mr Sprott was without his donkey; for, it being Sunday, it is to be presumed that the donkey was enjoying his Sabbath on the Common. The tinker was in his Sunday's best, clean and smart, about to take his lounge in the park.

Lenny Fairfield made no answer to the appeal.

"You in the wood, my baby! Well, that's the last sight I should ha' thought to see. But we all lives to larn," added the tinker sententiously. "Who gave you them leggins? Can't you speak, lad?"

"Nick Stirn."

"Nick Stirn! Ay, I'd ha' ta'en my davy on that: and cos vy?"

"'Cause I did as he told me, and fought a boy as was trespassing on these very Stocks; and he beat me—but I don't care for that; and that boy was a young gentleman, and going to visit the Squire; and so Nick Stirn—" Lenny stopped short, choked by rage and humiliation.

"Augh," said the tinker, staring, "you fit with a young gentleman, did you? Sorry to hear you confess that, my lad! Sit there, and be thankful you ha' got off so cheap. 'Tis salt and battery to fit with your betters, and a Lunnon justice o' peace would have given you two months o' the treadmill. But vy should you fit cos he trespassed on the Stocks? It ben't your natural side for fitting, I takes it."

Lenny murmured something not very distinguishable about serving the Squire, and doing as he was bid.

"Oh, I sees, Lenny," interrupted the tinker, in a tone of great contempt, "you be one o' those who would rayther 'unt with the 'ounds than run with the 'are! You be's the good pattern boy, and would peach agin your own border to curry favour with the grand folks. Fie, lad! you be sarved right: stick by your horder, then you'll be 'spected when you gets into trouble, and not be 'varsally 'espised—as you'll be arter church-time! Vell, I can't be seen 'sorting with you, now you are in this here drogotary fix; it might hurt my cracter, both with them as built the Stocks, and them as wants to pull 'em down. Old kettles to mend! Vy, you makes me forgit the Sabbath. Sarvent, my lad, and wish you well out of it; 'specks to your mother, and say we can deal for the pan and shovel all the same for your misfortin."

The tinker went his way. Lenny's eye followed him with the sullenness of despair. The tinker, like all the tribe of human comforters, had only watered the brambles to invigorate the prick of the thorns. Yes, if Lenny had been caught breaking the Stocks, some at least would have pitied him; but to be incarcerated for defending them, you might as well have expected that the widows and orphans of the Reign of Terror would have pitied Dr Guillotin when he slid through the grooves of his own deadly machine. And even the tinker, itinerant, ragamuffin vagabond as he was, felt ashamed to be found with the pattern boy! Lenny's head sank again on his breast, heavily as if it had been of lead. Some few minutes thus passed, when the unhappy prisoner became aware of the presence of another spectator to his shame: he heard no step, but he saw a shadow thrown over the sward. He held his breath, and would not look up, with some vague idea that if he refused to see he might escape being seen.

CHAPTER IX.

"*Per Bacco!*" said Dr Riccabocca, putting his hand on Lenny's shoulder, and bending down to look into his face—"*Per Bacco!* my young friend, do you sit here from choice or necessity?"

Lenny slightly shuddered, and winced under the touch of one whom he had hitherto regarded with a sort of superstitious abhorrence.

"I fear," resumed Riccabocca, after waiting in vain for an answer to his question, "that, though the situation is charming, you did not select it yourself. What is this?"—and the irony of the tone vanished—"what is this, my poor boy? You have been bleeding, and I see that those tears which you try to cheek come from a deep well. Tell me, *povero fanciullo mio*, (the sweet Italian vowels, though Lenny did not understand them, sounded softly and soothingly,)—tell me, my child, how all this happened. Perhaps I can help you—we have all erred; we should all help each other."

Lenny's heart, that just before had seemed bound in brass, found itself a way as the Italian spoke thus kindly, and the tears rushed down; but he again stopped them, and gulped out sturdily,—

"I have not done no wrong; it ben't my fault—and 'tis that which kills me!" concluded Lenny, with a burst of energy.

"You have not done wrong? Then," said the philosopher, drawing out his pocket-handkerchief with great composure, and spreading it on the ground—"then I may sit beside you. I could only stoop pityingly over sin, but I can lie down on equal terms with misfortune."

Lenny Fairfield did not quite comprehend the words, but enough of their general meaning was apparent to make him cast a grateful glance on the Italian. Riccabocca resumed, as he adjusted the pocket-handkerchief, "I have a right to your confidence, my child, for I have been afflicted in my day: yet I too say with thee, 'I have not done wrong.' *Cospetto!*" (and here the Dr seated himself deliberately, resting one arm on the side column of the Stocks, in familiar contact with the captive's shoulder, while his eye wandered over the lovely scene around)—"*Cospetto!* my prison, if they had caught me, would not have had so fair a look-out as this. But, to be sure, it is all one: there are no ugly loves, and no handsome prisons!"

With that sententious maxim, which, indeed, he uttered in his native Italian, Riccabocca turned round and renewed his soothing invitations to confidence. A friend in need is a friend indeed, even if he come in the guise of a Papist and wizard. All Lenny's ancient dislike to the foreigner had gone, and he told him his little tale.

Dr Riccabocca was much too shrewd a man not to see exactly the motives which had induced Mr Stirn to incarcerate his agent, (barring only that of personal grudge, to which Lenny's account gave him no clue.) That a man high in office should make a scape-goat of his own watch-dog for an unlucky snap, or even an indiscreet bark, was nothing strange to the wisdom of the student of Machiavelli. However, he set himself to the task of consolation with equal philosophy and tenderness. He began by reminding, or rather informing, Leonard Fairfield of all the instances of illustrious men afflicted by the injustice of others that occurred to his own excellent memory. He told him how the great Epictetus, when in slavery, had a master whose favourite amusement was pinching his leg, which, as the amusement ended in breaking that limb, was worse than the Stocks. He also told him the anecdote of Lenny's own gallant countryman, Admiral Byng, whose execution gave rise to Voltaire's celebrated witticism, "*En Angleterre on tue un amiral pour encourager les autres*." ("In England they execute one admiral in order to encourage the others.") Many more illustrations, still more pertinent to the case in point, his erudition supplied from the stores of history. But on seeing that Lenny did not seem in the slightest degree consoled by these memorable examples, he shifted his ground, and, reducing his logic to the strict *argumentum ad rem*, began to prove, 1st, that there was no disgrace at all in Lenny's present position, that every equitable person would recognise the tyranny of Stirn and the innocence of its victim; 2dly, that if even here he were mistaken, for public opinion was not always righteous, what was public opinion after all?—"A breath—a puff," cried Dr Riccabocca—"a thing without matter—without length, breadth, or substance—a shadow—a goblin of our own creating. A man's own conscience is his sole tribunal, and he should care no more for that phantom 'opinion' than he should fear meeting a ghost if he cross the churchyard at dark."

Now, as Lenny did very much fear meeting a ghost if he crossed the churchyard at dark, the simile spoiled the argument, and he shook his head very mournfully. Dr Riccabocca was about to enter into a third course of reasoning, which, had it come to an end, would doubtless have settled the matter, and reconciled Lenny to sitting in the Stocks till doomsday, when the captive, with the quick ear and eye of terror and calamity, became conscious that church was over, that the congregation in a few seconds more would be flocking thitherwards. He saw visionary hats and

bonnets through the trees, which Riccabocca saw not, despite all the excellence of his spectacles—heard phantasmal rustlings and murmurings which Riccabocca heard not, despite all that theoretical experience in plots, stratagems, and treasons, which should have made the Italian's ear as fine as a conspirator's or a mole's. And, with another violent but vain effort at escape, the prisoner exclaimed,—

"Oh, if I could but get out before they come! Let me out—let me out. O, kind sir, have pity—let me out!"

"*Diavolo!*" said the philosopher, startled, "I wonder that never occurred to me before. After all, I believe he has hit the right nail on the head;" and, looking close, he perceived that though the partition wood had hitched firmly into a sort of spring-clasp, which defied Lenny's unaided struggles, still it was not locked, (for, indeed, the padlock and key were snug in the justice-room of the Squire, who never dreamt that his orders would be executed so literally and summarily as to dispense with all formal appeal to himself.) As soon as Dr Riccabocca made that discovery, it occurred to him that all the wisdom of all the schools that ever existed can't reconcile man or boy to a bad position, the moment there is a fair opportunity of letting him out of it. Accordingly, without more ado, he lifted up the creaking board, and Lenny Fairfield darted forth like a bird from a cage—halted a moment as if for breath, or in joy; and then, taking at once to his heels, fled, fast as a hare to its form—fast to his mother's home.

Dr Riccabocca dropped the yawning wood into its place, picked up his handkerchief and restored it to his pocket; and then, with some curiosity, began to examine the nature of that place of duress which had caused so much painful emotion to its rescued victim.

"Man is a very irrational animal at best," quoth the sage, soliloquising, "and is frightened by strange bugaboos! 'Tis but a piece of wood! how little it really injures; and, after all, the holes are but rests to the legs, and keep the feet out of the dirt. And this green bank to sit upon—under the shade of the elm-tree—verily the position must be more pleasant than otherwise! I've a great mind—" Here the Doctor looked around, and, seeing the coast still clear, the oddest notion imaginable took possession of him; yet not indeed a notion so odd, considered philosophically—for all philosophy is based on practical experiment—and Dr Riccabocca felt an irresistible desire practically to experience what manner of thing that punishment of the Stocks really was. "I can but try!—only for a moment," said he apologetically to his own expostulating sense of dignity. "I have time to do it, before any one comes." He lifted up the partition again: but Stocks are built on the true principle of English law, and don't easily allow a man to criminate himself—it was hard to get into them without the help of a friend. However, as we before noticed, obstacles only whetted Dr Riccabocca's invention. He looked round and saw a withered bit of stick under the tree—this he inserted in the division of the Stocks, somewhat in the manner in which boys place a stick under a sieve for the purpose of ensnaring sparrows: the fatal wood thus propped, Dr Riccabocca sate gravely down on the bank, and thrust his feet through the apertures.

"Nothing in it!" cried he triumphantly, after a moment's deliberation. "The evil is only in idea. Such is the boasted reason of mortals!" With that reflection, nevertheless, he was about to withdraw his feet from their voluntary dilemma, when the crazy stick suddenly gave way, and the partition fell back into its clasp. Doctor Riccabocca was fairly caught—"*Facilis descensus—sed revocare gradum!*" True, his hands were at liberty, but his legs were so long that, being thus fixed, they kept the hands from the rescue; and as Dr Riccabocca's form was by no means supple, and the twin parts of the wood stuck together with that firmness of adhesion which things newly painted possess, so, after some vain twists and contortions, in which he succeeded at length (not without a stretch of the sinews that made them crack again) in finding the clasp and breaking his nails thereon, the victim of his own rash experiment resigned himself to his fate. Dr Riccabocca was one of those men who never do things by halves. When I say he resigned himself, I mean not only Christian but philosophical resignation. The position was not quite so pleasant as, theoretically, he had deemed it; but he resolved to make himself as comfortable as he could. And first, as is natural in all troubles to men who have grown familiar with that odoriferous comforter which Sir Walter Raleigh is said first to have bestowed upon the Caucasian races, the Doctor made use of his hands to extract from his pocket his pipe, match-box, and tobacco-pouch. After a few whiffs he would have been quite reconciled to his situation, but for the discovery that the sun had shifted its place in the heavens, and was no longer shaded from his face by the elm-tree. The Doctor again looked round, and perceived that his red silk umbrella, which he had laid aside when he had seated himself by Lenny, was within arm's reach. Possessing himself of this treasure, he soon expanded its friendly folds. And thus doubly fortified within and without, under shade of the umbrella, and his pipe composedly between his lips, Dr Riccabocca gazed on his own incarcerated legs, even with complacency.

"'He who can despise all things,'" said he, in one of his native proverbs, "'possesses all things!'—if one despises freedom, one is free! This seat is as soft as a sofa! I am not sure," he resumed, soliloquising, after a pause—"I am not sure that there is not something more witty than manly and philosophical in that national proverb of mine which I quoted to the *fanciullo*, that there are no handsome prisons! Did not the son of that celebrated Frenchman, surnamed *Bras de Fer*, write a book not only to prove that adversities are more necessary than prosperities, but that among all adversities a prison is the most pleasant and profitable?[7] But is not this condition of mine, voluntarily and experimentally incurred, a type of my life? Is it the first time that I have thrust myself into a hobble?—and if in a hobble of mine own choosing, why should I blame the gods?"

Upon this Dr Riccabocca fell into a train of musing so remote from time and place, that in a few

minutes he no more remembered that he was in the Parish Stocks, than a lover remembers that flesh is grass, a miser that mammon is perishable, a philosopher that wisdom is vanity.—Dr Riccabocca was in the clouds.

CHAPTER X.

The dullest dog that ever wrote a novel (and, *entre nous*, reader—but let it go no farther—we have a good many dogs among the fraternity that are not Munitos,[8]) might have seen with half an eye that the Parson's discourse had produced a very genial and humanising effect upon his audience. When all was over, and the congregation stood up to let Mr Hazeldean and his family walk first down the aisle, (for that was the custom at Hazeldean,) moistened eyes glanced at the Squire's sun-burned, manly face with a kindness that bespoke revived memory of many a generous benefit and ready service. The head might be wrong now and then—the heart was in the right place after all. And the lady, leaning on his arm, came in for a large share of that gracious good feeling. True, she now and then gave a little offence when the cottages were not so clean as she fancied they ought to be—and poor folks don't like a liberty taken with their houses any more than the rich do; true, that she was not quite so popular with the women as the Squire was, for, if the husband went too often to the alehouse, she always laid the fault on the wife, and said, "No man would go out of doors for his comforts, if he had a smiling face and a clean hearth at his home;" whereas the Squire maintained the more gallant opinion, that "if Gill was a shrew, it was because Jack did not, as in duty bound, stop her mouth with a kiss!" Still, notwithstanding these more obnoxious notions on her part, and a certain awe inspired by the stiff silk gown and the handsome aquiline nose, it was impossible, especially in the softened tempers of that Sunday afternoon, not to associate the honest, comely, beaming countenance of Mrs Hazeldean with comfortable recollections of soups, jellies, and wine in sickness, loaves and blankets in winter, cheering words and ready visits in every little distress, and pretexts afforded by improvement in the grounds and gardens (improvements which, as the Squire, who preferred productive labour, justly complained, "would never finish") for little timely jobs of work to some veteran grandsire, who still liked to earn a penny, or some ruddy urchin in a family that "came too fast." Nor was Frank, as he walked a little behind, in the whitest of trousers and the stiffest of neckcloths—with a look of suppressed roguery in his bright hazel eye, that contrasted his assumed stateliness of mien—without his portion of the silent blessing. Not that he had done anything yet to deserve it; but we all give youth so large a credit in the future. As for Miss Jemima, her trifling foibles only rose from too soft and feminine a susceptibility, too ivy-like a yearning for some masculine oak, whereon to entwine her tendrils; and so little confined to self was the natural lovingness of her disposition, that she had helped many a village lass to find a husband, by the bribe of a marriage gift from her own privy purse; notwithstanding the assurances with which she accompanied the marriage gift,—viz., that "the bridegroom would turn out like the rest of his ungrateful sex; but that it was a comfort to think that it would be all one in the approaching crash." So that she had her warm partisans, especially amongst the young; while the slim Captain, on whose arm she rested her forefinger, was at least a civil-spoken gentleman, who had never done any harm, and who would doubtless do a deal of good if he belonged to the parish. Nay, even the fat footman, who came last with the family Prayerbook, had his due share in the general association of neighbourly kindness between hall and hamlet. Few were there present to whom he had not extended the right-hand of fellowship, with a full horn of October in the clasp of it: and he was a Hazeldean man, too, born and bred, as two-thirds of the Squire's household (now letting themselves out from their large pew under the gallery) were.

On his part, too, you could see that the Squire was 'moved withal,' and a little humbled moreover. Instead of walking erect, and taking bow and curtsey as matter of course, and of no meaning, he hung his head somewhat, and there was a slight blush on his cheek; and as he glanced upward and round him—shyly, as it were—and his eye met those friendly looks, it returned them with an earnestness that had in it something touching as well as cordial—an eye that said, as well as eye could say, "I don't quite deserve it, I fear, neighbours; but I thank you for your goodwill with my whole heart." And so readily was that glance of the eye understood, that I think, if that scene had taken place out of doors instead of in the church, there would have been an hurrah as the Squire passed out of sight.

Scarcely had Mr Hazeldean got well out of the churchyard, ere Mr Stirn was whispering in his ear. As Stirn whispered, the Squire's face grew long, and his colour changed. The congregation, now flocking out of the church, exchanged looks with each other; that ominous conjunction between Squire and man chilled back all the effects of the Parson's sermon. The Squire struck his cane violently into the ground. "I would rather you had told me Black Bess had got the glanders. A young gentleman, coming to visit my son, struck and insulted in Hazeldean; a young gentleman —'sdeath, sir, a relation—his grandmother was a Hazeldean. I do believe Jemima's right, and the world's coming to an end! But Leonard Fairfield in the Stocks! What will the Parson say? and after such a sermon! 'Rich man, respect the poor!' And the good widow too; and poor Mark, who almost died in my arms. Stirn, you have a heart of stone! You confounded, lawless, merciless miscreant, who the deuce gave you the right to imprison man or boy in my parish of Hazeldean without trial, sentence, or warrant? Run and let the boy out before any one sees him: run, or I shall."—The Squire elevated the cane, and his eyes shot fire. Mr Stirn did not run, but he walked off very fast. The Squire drew back a few paces, and again took his wife's arm. "Just wait a bit for the Parson, while I talk to the congregation. I want to stop 'em all, if I can, from going into the village; but how?"

Frank heard, and replied readily—

"Give 'em some beer, sir."

"Beer! on a Sunday! For shame, Frank!" cried Mrs Hazeldean.

"Hold your tongue, Harry. Thank you, Frank," said the Squire, and his brow grew as clear as the blue sky above him. I doubt if Riccabocca could have got him out of his dilemma with the same ease as Frank had done.

"Halt there, my men—lads and lasses too—there, halt a bit. Mrs Fairfield, do you hear?—halt! I think his reverence has given us a capital sermon. Go tip to the Great House all of you, and drink a glass to his health. Frank, go with them; and tell Spruce to tap one of the casks kept for the haymakers. Harry, [this in a whisper,] catch the Parson, and tell him to come to me instantly."

"My dear Hazeldean, what has happened? you are mad."

"Don't bother—do what I tell you."

"But where is the Parson to find you?"

"Where, gad zooks, Mrs H.,—at the Stocks to be sure!"

CHAPTER XI.

Dr Riccabocca, awakened out of his reverie by the sound of footsteps—was still so little sensible of the indignity of his position, that he enjoyed exceedingly, and with all the malice of his natural humour, the astonishment and stupor manifested by Stirn, when that functionary beheld the extraordinary substitute which fate and philosophy had found for Lenny Fairfield. Instead of the weeping, crushed, broken-hearted captive whom he had reluctantly come to deliver, he stared, speechless and aghast, upon the grotesque but tranquil figure of the Doctor, enjoying his pipe and cooling himself under his umbrella, with a *sang-froid* that was truly appalling and diabolical. Indeed, considering that Stirn always suspected the Papisher of having had a hand in the whole of that black and midnight business, in which the Stocks had been broken, bunged up, and consigned to perdition, and that the Papisher had the evil reputation of dabbling in the Black Art, the hocus-pocus way in which the Lenny he had incarcerated was transformed into the Doctor he found, conjoined with the peculiarly strange, eldritch, and Mephistophelean physiognomy and person of Riccabocca, could not but strike a thrill of superstitious dismay into the breast of the parochial tyrant. While to his first confused and stammered exclamations and interrogatories, Riccabocca replied with so tragic an air, such ominous shakes of the head, such mysterious, equivocating, long-worded sentences, that Stirn every moment felt more and more convinced that the boy had sold himself to the Powers of Darkness; and that he himself, prematurely, and in the flesh, stood face to face with the Arch-Enemy.

Mr Stirn had not yet recovered his wonted intelligence, which, to do him justice, was usually prompt enough—when the Squire, followed hard by the Parson, arrived at the spot. Indeed, Mrs Hazeldean's report of the Squire's urgent message, disturbed manner, and most unparalleled invitation to the parishioners, had given wings to Parson Dale's ordinarily slow and sedate movements. And while the Squire, sharing Stirn's amazement, beheld indeed a great pair of feet projecting from the stocks, and saw behind them the grave face of Doctor Riccabocca, under the majestic shade of the umbrella, but not a vestige of the only being his mind could identify with the tenancy of the Stocks, Mr Dale, catching him by the arm, and panting hard, exclaimed with a petulance he had never before been known to display—except at the whist-table,—

"Mr Hazeldean, Mr Hazeldean, I am scandalised—I am shocked at you. I can bear a great deal from you, sir, as I ought to do; but to ask my whole congregation, the moment after divine service, to go up and guzzle ale at the Hall, and drink my health, as if a clergyman's sermon had been a speech at a cattle-fair! I am ashamed of you, and of the parish! What on earth has come to you all?"

"That's the very question I wish to heaven I could answer," groaned the Squire, quite mildly and pathetically—"What on earth has come to us all! Ask Stirn:" (then bursting out) "Stirn, you infernal rascal, don't you hear?—what on earth has come to us all?"

"The Papisher is at the bottom of it, sir," said Stirn, provoked out of all temper. "I does my duty, but I is but a mortal man, arter all."

"A mortal fiddlestick—where's Leonard Fairfield, I say?"

"*Him* knows best," answered Stirn, retreating mechanically, for safety's sake, behind the Parson, and pointing to Dr Riccabocca. Hitherto, though both the Squire and Parson had indeed recognised the Italian, they had merely supposed him to be seated on the bank. It never entered into their heads that so respectable and dignified a man could by any possibility be an inmate, compelled or voluntary, of the Parish Stocks. No, not even though, as I before said, the Squire had seen, just under his nose, a very long pair of soles inserted in the apertures—that sight had only confused and bewildered him, unaccompanied as it ought to have been with the trunk and face of Lenny Fairfield. Those soles seemed to him optical delusions, phantoms of the overheated brain; but now, catching hold of Stirn, while the Parson in equal astonishment caught hold of him —the Squire faltered out, "Well, this beats cock-fighting! The man's as mad as a March hare, and has taken Dr Rickey-bockey for little Lenny!"

"Perhaps," said the Doctor, breaking silence, with a bland smile, and attempting an inclination of the head as courteous as his position would permit—"perhaps, if it be quite the same to you, before you proceed to explanations,—you will just help me out of the Stocks."

The Parson, despite his perplexity and anger, could not repress a smile, as he approached his learned friend, and bent down for the purpose of extricating him.

"Lord love your reverence, you'd better not!" cried Mr Stirn. "Don't be tempted—he only wants to get you into his claws. I would not go a-near him for all the—"

The speech was interrupted by Dr Riccabocca himself, who now, thanks to the Parson, had risen into his full height, and half a head taller than all present—even than the tall Squire—approached Mr Stirn, with a gracious wave of the hand. Mr Stirn retreated rapidly towards the hedge, amidst the brambles of which he plunged himself incontinently.

"I guess whom you take me for, Mr Stirn," said the Italian, lifting his hat with his characteristic politeness. "It is certainly a great honour; but you will know better one of these days, when the gentleman in question admits you to a personal interview in another and—a hotter world."

CHAPTER XII.

"But how on earth did you get into my new Stocks?" asked the Squire, scratching his head.

"My dear sir, Pliny the elder got into the crater of Mount Etna."

"Did he, and what for?"

"To try what it was like, I suppose," answered Riccabocca.

The Squire burst out a-laughing.

"And so you got into the Stocks to try what it was like. Well, I can't wonder—it is a very handsome pair of Stocks," continued the Squire, with a loving look at the object of his praise. "Nobody need be ashamed of being seen in those Stocks—I should not mind it myself."

"We had better move on," said the Parson drily, "or we shall be having the whole village here presently, gazing on the lord of the manor in the same predicament as that from which we have just extricated the Doctor. Now pray, what is the matter with Lenny Fairfield? I can't understand a word of what has passed. You don't mean to say that good Lenny Fairfield (who was absent from church by the bye) can have done anything to get into disgrace?"

"Yes, he has though," cried the Squire. "Stirn, I say—Stirn." But Stirn had forced his way through the hedge and vanished. Thus left to his own powers of narrative at secondhand, Mr Hazeldean now told all he had to communicate: the assault upon Randal Leslie, and the prompt punishment inflicted by Stirn; his own indignation at the affront to his young kinsman, and his good-natured merciful desire to save the culprit from the addition of public humiliation.

The Parson, mollified towards the rude and hasty invention of the beer-drinking, took the Squire by the hand. "Ah, Mr Hazeldean, forgive me," he said repentantly; "I ought to have known at once that it was only some ebullition of your heart that could stifle your sense of decorum. But this is a sad story about Lenny, brawling and fighting on the Sabbath-day. So unlike him, too—I don't know what to make of it."

"Like or unlike," said the Squire, "it has been a gross insult to young Leslie; and looks all the worse because I and Audley are not just the best friends in the world. I can't think what it is," continued Mr Hazeldean, musingly, "but it seems that there must be always some association of fighting connected with that prim half-brother of mine. There was I, son of his own mother—who might have been shot through the lungs, only the ball lodged in the shoulder—and now his wife's kinsman—my kinsman, too—grandmother a Hazeldean—a hard-reading sober lad, as I am given to understand, can't set his foot into the quietest parish in the three kingdoms, but what the mildest boy that ever was seen—makes a rush at him like a mad bull. It is FATALITY!" cried the Squire solemnly.

"Ancient legend records similar instances of fatality in certain houses," observed Riccabocca. "There was the House of Pelops—and Polynices and Eteocles—the sons of [OE]dipus!"

"Pshaw," said the Parson; "but what's to be done?"

"Done?" said the Squire; "why, reparation must be made to young Leslie. And though I wished to spare Lenny, the young ruffian, a public disgrace—for your sake, Parson Dale, and Mrs Fairfield's;—yet a good caning in private—"

"Stop, sir!" said Riccabocca mildly, "and hear me." The Italian then, with much feeling and considerable tact, pleaded the cause of his poor protégé, and explained how Lenny's error arose only from mistaken zeal for the Squire's service, and in the execution of the orders received from Mr Stirn.

"That alters the matter," said the Squire, softened; "and all that is necessary now will be for him to make a proper apology to my kinsman."

"Yes, that is just," rejoined the Parson; "but I still don't learn how he got out of the Stocks."

Riccabocca then resumed his tale; and, after confessing his own principal share in Lenny's escape, drew a moving picture of the boy's shame and honest mortification. "Let us march against Philip!" cried the Athenians, when they heard Demosthenes—

"Let us go at once and comfort the child!" cried the Parson, before Riccabocca could finish.

With that benevolent intention, all three quickened their pace, and soon arrived at the widow's cottage. But Lenny had caught sight of their approach through the window; and not doubting

that, in spite of Riccabocca's intercession, the Parson was come to upbraid, and the Squire to re-imprison, he darted out by the back way, got amongst the woods, and lay there *perdu* all the evening. Nay, it was not till after dark that his mother—who sate wringing her hands in the little kitchen, and trying in vain to listen to the Parson and Mrs Dale, who (after sending in search of the fugitive) had kindly come to console the mother—heard a timid knock at the door and a nervous fumble at the latch. She started up, opened the door, and Lenny sprang to her bosom, and there buried his face, sobbing loud.

"No harm, my boy," said the Parson tenderly; "you have nothing to fear—all is explained and forgiven."

Lenny looked up, and the veins on his forehead were much swollen. "Sir," said he sturdily, "I don't want to be forgiven—I ain't done no wrong. And—I've been disgraced—and I won't go to school, never no more."

"Hush, Carry!" said the Parson to his wife, who, with the usual liveliness of her little temper, was about to expostulate. "Good night, Mrs Fairfield. I shall come and talk to you to-morrow, Lenny; by that time you will think better of it."

The Parson then conducted his wife home, and went up to the Hall to report Lenny's safe return; for the Squire was very uneasy about him, and had even in person shared the search. As soon as he heard Lenny was safe—"Well," said the Squire, "let him go the first thing in the morning to Rood Hall, to ask Master Leslie's pardon, and all will be right and smooth again."

"A young villain!" cried Frank, with his cheeks the colour of scarlet; "to strike a gentleman and an Etonian, who had just been to call on *me*! But I wonder Randal let him off so well—any other boy in the sixth form would have killed him!"

"Frank," said the Parson sternly, "if we all had our deserts, what should be done to him who not only lets the sun go down on his own wrath, but strives with uncharitable breath to fan the dying embers of another's?"

The clergyman here turned away from Frank, who bit his lip, and seemed abashed—while even his mother said not a word in his exculpation; for when the Parson did reprove in that stern tone, the majesty of the Hall stood awed before the rebuke of the Church. Catching Riccabocca's inquisitive eye, Mr Dale drew aside the philosopher, and whispered to him his fears that it would be a very hard matter to induce Lenny to beg Randal Leslie's pardon, and that the proud stomach of the pattern-boy would not digest the Stocks with as much ease as a long regimen of philosophy had enabled the sage to do. This conference Miss Jemima soon interrupted by a direct appeal to the Doctor respecting the number of years (even without any previous and more violent incident) that the world could possibly withstand its own wear and tear.

"Ma'am," said the Doctor, reluctantly summoned away, to look at a passage in some prophetic periodical upon that interesting subject—"ma'am, it is very hard that you should make one remember the end of the world, since, in conversing with you, one's natural temptation is to forget its existence."

Miss Jemima blushed scarlet. Certainly that deceitful heartless compliment justified all her contempt for the male sex; and yet—such is human blindness—it went far to redeem all mankind in her credulous and too confiding soul.

"He is about to propose," sighed Miss Jemima.

"Giacomo," said Riccabocca, as he drew on his nightcap, and stepped majestically into the four-posted bed, "I think we shall get that boy for the garden now!"

Thus each spurred his hobby, or drove her car, round the Hazeldean whirligig.

FOOTNOTES:

[7] "*Entre tout, l'état d'une prison est le plus doux, et le plus profitable!*"

[8] Munito was the name of a dog famous for his learning (a Porson of a dog) at the date of my childhood. There are no such dogs now-a-days.

BIOGRAPHY.[9]

Although history and biography both relate to the affairs of men, and are employed in the narrative of human events, they are governed by opposite principles, and require, for their successful prosecution, different powers and habits of thought. The main object of history is the tracing out the growth of nations, the great events which lead to their rise or fall, the causes operating on the social body, which at one period conduct to power and greatness, at another induce weakness and decay. Biography is concerned with individual life. Its aim is to trace the annals, not of nations, but of persons; to portray, not the working of general causes on the progress of empires, but the influence of particular characters on their most interesting episodes. The former requires habits of general thought, and the power of tracing one common principle through a great variety of complicated details; the latter, close attention to individual incidents, and a minute examination of the secret springs of human conduct. The first is closely allied to the generalisations of the philosopher; the latter requires the powers of the dramatist. The two branches of composition, however, are nearly allied, and frequently run into each other. History generally finds its most interesting episodes, often its most important subjects, in the narrative of individual greatness; biography is imperfect unless, in addition to tracing the achievements of the individuals it records, it explains their influence upon the society among whom they arose.

What we call the histories of antiquity were, for the most part, only biographies, and they owe their principal interest to that circumstance. The *Cyropædia* of Xenophon is a philosophical romance, clothed with the eloquence of an orator; the fragments which remain of Sallust, the rhetorical narrative of Quintus Curtius, are the avowed biographies of individual men. Even the regular histories of classical times owe their chief charm to the simplicity of the subject, in which one state or contest stands prominently forward, and the others are thrown into a shade which only renders the more striking the light thrown on one particular subject, or the efforts of individual greatness. Herodotus has earned his deathless fame by the narrative he has given of the great war between Persia and Greece, on which the destinies of mankind depended; Thucydides by his profound exposition of the strife of aristocracy and democracy in the contest between Lacedæmon and Athens. The long narrative of Livy has survived the floods of Time almost entirely from the charming episodes descriptive of character or manners which he has introduced, and the dramatic power with which he has narrated the exploits of individual men; and what has given Tacitus immortality, is neither any luminous views on the progress of mankind, nor any just appreciation of the causes of greatness in particular states, but the depth to which he has fathomed the real springs of action in particular men, and the terrible truth with which he has unveiled that most appalling of all spectacles—a naked human heart.

The great difficulty of history, as it must be written in modern times, arises from the multitude and complication of the events which have to be recorded. So intimately connected have the States of Europe been since the rise of modern civilisation, that he who writes the annals of one must write the history of all. The progress, internal and external, of all its powers must be brought forward abreast; and such is their number and importance, that not only is the historian oppressed with the variety and complication of his materials, but he finds it next to impossible to produce interest in the reader amidst such a sea of details; and often fails, from the impossibility of attaining that essential requisite in the rousing of human sympathy—unity of emotion. Add to this the infinity of subjects a historian even of an individual state must now embrace, and which almost overwhelm the exploits of particular men by their multitude and complication. Strategy, statistics, trade, navigation, commerce, agriculture, taxation, finance, currency, paper credit, poor laws, agriculture, socialism, chartism, form a few of the topics, any one of which would require volumes for its elucidation, yet none of which can be omitted without exposing the historian to the imputation, from some one or other, of having overlooked the most important part of his subject. So great is this difficulty, so extensive the embarrassment it produces, that it may safely be pronounced to be insurmountable by any effort, how great soever, unless the endeavours of the historian are aided by unity of interest in the subject, or overpowering greatness of influence in the characters with whom he has to deal. But it is, perhaps, only in the wars of the Crusades, of the Succession in Spain, and of the French Revolution, that such unity of interest is to be looked for, or such surpassing grandeur of character is to be found, from the achievements of a Richard Cœur-de-Lion, a Marlborough, or a Napoleon.

From this great difficulty, biography is entirely free, and thence the superior interest with which, when properly treated, works of that description are attended. We are so constituted that we must concentrate our interest; dispersion is fatal to its existence. Every novelist and romance-writer knows this; there must always be a hero and a heroine; but two or three heroes and heroines would prove fatal to the interest. Ariosto tried to divide the interest of the reader among the adventures of a dozen knights-errant; but even his genius proved unequal to the task, and he was obliged to concentrate the whole around the fabulous siege of Paris to restore the broken unity of his power. The great and signal advantage of biography is, that, from its very nature, it possesses that personal interest and individual character which the epic poet and novelist feel to be essential to the moving of the human heart, but which the historian so often finds himself unable to attain, without omitting some important parts of his subject, or giving undue prominence to the characters of individual men.

For this reason it is, that the most popular works which ever have been written have been biographies of illustrious men. No one would think of comparing the intellect of Plutarch to that of Tacitus, his eloquence to that of Cicero's, yet he has made perhaps a greater impression on the imagination of subsequent ages than either of these illustrious men. If we examine the images of

the mighty of former days which are engraven on our minds, we shall find that it is not so much the pictured pages of Livy or Quintus Curtius, as the "Lives of Plutarch," which have given them immortality. We complain of his gossip, we lament his superstition, we smile at his credulity, but we devour his pages; and, after the lapse of seventeen hundred years, they remain one of the most generally popular works in existence. It is the same in modern times. No one would think of comparing Boswell, in point of intellect, to Johnson; in point of eloquence to Burke; in point of genius to Gibbon; yet he has produced a work superior in general interest to any of these illustrious men, and which is daily read by thousands, to whom the "Reflections on the French Revolution," the moral essays of the "Rambler," and the "History of the Decline and Fall," will for ever remain unknown.

To render biography, however, thus generally attractive, it is indispensable that its basis should be that first element in the narration of human action—TRUTH. Without this, it wants the great superiority of the narrative of real event over fictitious creations, how interesting soever they may be—that of recording what has actually occurred in real life. How important an element this is in awakening the sympathies of the human heart, may be seen even in children who, when particularly fascinated by any story they are told, invariably end by asking, "But is it all true?" The value of truth, or rather of what is "*vraisemblable*," is felt even in imaginary conceptions, which it is well known are never so attractive, or interest so powerfully, as when they most closely resemble the events and characters of actual existence. The real is, and ever must be, the only sure foundation of the ideal. Novels are most delightful when they approach nearest to what we behold around us in real life, while yet containing a sufficient blending of romance and sentiment, of heroism and magnanimity, to satisfy the higher aspirations of our being. Biography is most charming when it depicts with fidelity those characters, and records with truth those events, which approach nearest to that imaginary perfection to which every generous mind aspires, but to which none ever has attained, or ever will.

It has been said with truth, that the events which are suitable for epic poetry are such as are "probable but yet elevating." We are so constituted by our bonds to earth, that our chief interest must ever be derived from the virtues or the vices, the joys or sorrows, of beings like ourselves; but we are so filled with more ennobling thoughts and aspirations, by our destiny in Heaven, that we can be satisfied only by what points to a higher state of existence, and feel the greatest enjoyment by being elevated, either by the conceptions of fancy or the records of reality, to a nearer view of its perfection. If novels depict merely imaginary existences, they may charm for a season, like the knights of Ariosto, or the heroes of Metastasio; but they are too much in the clouds permanently to interest sublunary mortals. If they record merely the adventures of low, or the vulgarity of middle life, they may amuse for a season, like the characters of Smollett; but they will sink ere long, from the want of that indispensable lifeboat in the sea of time, an elevating tendency. It is characters like those of the *Iliad*, of Shakspeare, of Scott, and Schiller, which combine the well-known and oft-observed characteristics of human nature with the oft-imagined but seldom seen traits of heroism and magnanimity which border on the realms of the ideal that for ever fascinate the imagination, and dwell in the heart of man. The reason is, they contain enough of reality to tell us it is of humanity that the story is told, and enough of the ideal to make us proud of our connection with it.

The great and chief charm of biography is to be found in this, that it unites, from its very nature and object, those two indispensable requisites to durable popularity in works of fiction, and combines them with the value and the solid information of truthful narrative. It possesses the value of history, without its tedium—the interest of romance, without its unsubstantiality. It culls the flowers from the records of time, and casts into the shade all the accompanying weeds and briars. If a judicious and discriminating selection of characters were made—if those persons were selected for the narrative who have been most illustrious by their virtues, their genius, or their magnanimity, or, as a contrast, by their vices, and who have made the greatest and most durable impression on human affairs, a work might be produced exceeding any one of history in its utility, any of romance in its popularity. David Hume strongly advised Robertson, eighty years ago, instead of writing the *Life of Charles the Fifth*, to write a series of biographies, on the plan of Plutarch, for modern times; and it is, perhaps, to be regretted that the advice was not followed. Yet were the abilities of the Scotch Principal, great as they were, not such as peculiarly fitted him for the task. His mind was too philosophical and discursive to give it its chief interest. He wanted the dramatic turn, the ardent soul, the graphic power, the magnanimous disposition, which was essential to its successful accomplishment. A work in three thousand pages, or six volumes, recording the lives of fifty of the greatest and most illustrious men in Europe, from the days of Alfred to those of Napoleon, executed in the right spirit, and by a man of adequate genius, would be the most popular and elevating book that ever appeared in Modern Europe. Many such have been attempted, but never with any success, because they were not set about by the proper minds. To do justice to such an undertaking would require a combination of opposite qualities rarely to be met with in real life.

As biography deals with individual characters, and is relieved from the extended and perplexing subjects which overwhelm the general historian, it admits, in return, of an expansion into many topics which, although often in the highest degree amusing, and sometimes not a little interesting, would yet be felt to be misplaced in the annals of the great changes of nations or of the world. As the delineation of character is its avowed object, and the events of individual life its principal subject, it not only admits of but requires a thousand incidents and descriptions, which are essential to a right understanding of those characters, and form, as it were, the still life of the picture in which their features are to be portrayed. Such descriptions are not unsuitable to general history. Mr Macaulay has shown in his History that his observations on that head in the

Edinburgh Review were founded on a just appreciation of the object and limits of his art. But they must be sparingly introduced, or they will become tedious and unprofitable: if any one doubts this, let him *try* to read Von Hammer's *History of the Ottoman Empire*, one-half of which is taken up with descriptions of dresses, receptions, and processions. But in biography we readily give admission to—nay, we positively require—such details. If they are not the jewels of history, they are the setting which adds to their lustre. They fill up our conception of past events; they enable us to clothe the characters in which we are interested in the actual habiliments in which they were arrayed; they bring before our eyes the dwellings, the habits, the mode of life, the travelling, the occupations of distant ages, and often give more life and reality to the creatures of our imaginations than could have been attained by the most laboured general descriptions, or the most emphatic assertions of the author.

For this reason, as well as on account of the known influence of individual character, rather than abstract principle, on the fair sex, there is no branch of historical composition so suitable for woman as biography; and Miss Strickland has shown us that there is none which female genius can cultivate with greater success. The general bent of the female mind, impressed upon it for the wisest purposes by its Creator, is to be influenced in its opinions, and swayed in its conduct, by individual men, rather than general ideas. When Milton said of our first parents—

> "Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed:
> For valour he and contemplation formed;
> For beauty she, and sweet attractive grace;
> *He for God only, she for God in him*;"

He foreshadowed man as the appropriate historian of the general march of human events—woman, as the best delineator of individual character, the most fascinating writer of biography. The most gifted of her sex is a proof of this; for if a few men have exceeded Madame de Stael in the broad view she takes of human affairs, none have equalled her in the delineation of the deepest feelings and most lasting passions of the human heart. As it is the nature of woman's disposition to form an idol, (and it is for that very reason that she proves so attractive to that of man,) so, when she comes to composition, we rejoice to see her form idols of her heroes, provided only that the limits of truth are observed in their delineation, and that her enthusiasm is evinced in depicting the real, not in colouring the imaginary.

As graphic and scenic details are so valuable in biography, and give such life and animation to the picture which it exhibits, so we willingly accept from a female biographer, whether of her own or others' life, details which we could not tolerate in the other sex. When the Duchess of Abrantes, writing after the fall of Charles X., recounts in her charming memoirs the enchanting *Schall de Cachemire*, which excited her envy on the shoulders of Josephine—or tells us that at a certain ball in Paris, in 1797, she wore her blue satin dress and pearl ornaments, and at another, her pink silk, and diamonds, we perhaps smile at the simplicity which made her recount such things of herself; but still we gratefully accept them as characteristic of the costume or manners of the time. But we would never tolerate a male biographer of Murat, who should tell us that at a certain ball at Naples he wore his scarlet trowsers and black furred jacket, and on his coronation looked irresistible in his blue and silver uniform and splendid spare jacket;—not even though we know that in Russia he often returned to his lines with his sabre dripping wet with the blood of the Cossacks whom he had challenged and slain in single combat, and although the experience of all ages has confirmed the truth of Philopœmen's observation, that "to soldiers and women, dress is a matter of no small consequence."

Though details of this description, however, are valuable and admissible in biography, and come with peculiar propriety and grace from a female hand, it must be observed, on the other hand, that there is a limit, and a very obvious one, to the introduction of them, and that, if not inserted with caution, they may essentially injure the popularity or utility of a work. In particular, it is seldom safe to carry to any considerable length in the text the introduction of quotations from old histories or chronicles of the period, which often are filled with them to the exclusion of all other subjects. We know that such original documents have a great charm in the eyes of antiquarians or antiquarian biographers, the more especially if they have brought them to light themselves; but such persons learned in ancient lore constitute but a small fraction of the human race. The great body of readers, at least nineteen out of twenty, care nothing at all for such original authorities, but wish to see their import condensed into a flowing easy narrative in the author's own words. For this reason it is generally safest to give such original documents or quotations in notes or an appendix, and to confine quotations in the text to characteristic expressions, or original words spoken on very important occasions. Barante and Sismondi in France, Tytler in Scotland, and Lingard in England, have essentially injured the general popularity of their great and learned works, by not attending to this rule. The two Thierrys have chiefly won theirs by attending to it.

The great popularity and widely extended sale of Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*, almost equalling, we believe, that of any living author in this country, and much exceeding that of any prior writer, whether of her own or the other sex, in the same period in biography, is a proof both of the intrinsic excellence of that work, and the thirst which exists in the public mind for works of that description. We have long been of opinion that the narrative of human events might be rendered as popular in the outset, and far more and durably interesting in the end, than any works of fiction; and that the only reason why this has so seldom taken place, was because historical works were in general constructed on wrong principles. The great success which has recently attended historical composition in this country, especially in the case of Mr Macaulay's

History and Miss Strickland's Lives, is a proof that this view of the subject is well founded. And of the two, biography, when supported by learning, and handled by genius such as both these learned writers possess, is much more likely to be generally popular than extended history, because it partakes more of the character of Romance, and possesses in a higher degree that *unity* of interest which is the most essential element in all arts which aim at pleasing or fascinating mankind.

Scotland is a country peculiarly fortunate in the characters it presents for biographical genius. This arises from its physical weakness when compared to the strength of its formidable neighbour, and the resources which it has ever found in the persevering and indomitable character of its inhabitants. The former in every age of the wars with England has made its plains the seat of conflict; while the latter has always secured their success in the end, though often after fearful reverses, and always against tremendous odds. The proof of this is decisive. Scotland, after three centuries of almost incessant conflict, first with the arms, and then, more formidable still, with the gold of England, was still unsubdued when her monarchs ascended the English throne, and the rivalry of two noble nations was turned into the blissful emulation of peace. It is this combination of circumstances which has caused her history to be so prolific of incident, and has rendered, as strangers so often have remarked, every step in her surface historical. Her physical weakness filled it with incident—her moral strength with heroic incident. Go where you will, you meet with some traces of the great or the beautiful, the gifted or the fascinating, of former days. The ancient walls and castellated rocks of Edinburgh teem with historical recollections of the highest interest, which the kindred spirit of modern chivalry has done so much to illustrate.[10] In the short space of twenty miles—between Falkirk and Stirling—are four battlefields,[11] on each of which the fate of Britain was determined, or armies as numerous as those which met at Waterloo encountered each other. Lochleven exhibits the mournful prison of beauty: Niddry Castle, of her evanescent joys; the field of Langside, of her final overthrow. Cartlan Crags still show the cave of Wallace; Turnberry Castle the scene of Bruce's first victory; Culloden, the last battle-field of generous fidelity. Every step in Scotland is historical: the shades of the dead arise on every side: the very rocks breathe—

> "Yet, Albyn, yet the praise be thine,
> Thy scenes and story to combine!
> Thou bid'st him who by Roslin strays,
> List to the tale of other days;
> Midst Cartlan Crags thou show'st the cave,
> The refuge of the champion brave;
> Giving each rock its storied tale,
> Pouring a lay for every dale,
> Knitting, as with a moral band,
> Thy native legends with thy land,
> To give each scene the interest high,
> Which Genius lends to Beauty's eye."

Miss Strickland's talents as a writer, and turn of mind as an individual, in a peculiar manner fit her for painting a historical gallery of the most illustrious or dignified female characters in that land of chivalry and of song. Her disposition is at once heroic and pictorial. She has the spirit of chivalry in her soul, and the colours of painting in her eye. She sympathises with all the daring spirit, the bold adventure, the chivalrous devotion, of the cavaliers of former days; and she depicts with not less animation and force the stately scenes of departed times—the dignified processions, the splendid ceremonials, the imposing pageants. She has vast powers of application, and her research is unbounded; but these qualities, so necessary as the foundation of a historian's fame, are in her united with the powers of painting and the soul of poetry, and dignified by the elevated objects to which they are directed. The incidents of individual life are of peculiar importance in Scottish annals, because, with the exception of two periods—the war of independence under Wallace and Bruce, and the national struggle for emancipation from Popish tyranny at the Reformation—there have seldom been what we now call *popular* movements in Scotland. Everything, or next to everything, depended on individual character; the great game of the world was played by kings and queens, nobles and knights. On this great theatre the queens played, as they do everywhere, a most important part. The instruction of man in childhood, the object of his adoration in youth, of lasting influence in manhood, woman has, in modern Europe where her destiny was first fully developed, exercised an important sway, and more so than is generally supposed on national affairs. But nowhere has this influence been more strongly felt than in Scotland, where queens have appeared, whose beauty and misfortunes have become immortal in story, and been for ever engraven on the human heart by the hand of genius, and where the chivalrous and daring disposition of the country, the *perfervidum Scotorum ingenium*, at once penetrated some with the most devout adoration of their charms, and inspired others with the most vehement jealousy of their ascendency.

In her delineation of individual character, Miss Strickland evidently takes the greatest pains to be impartial; and the multitude of new documents and facts which she has brought on both sides of the question in regard to her heroines, is a sufficient proof that this most laudable principle is a ruling one in her mind. But she would be something more or something less than mortal, if no trace of predilection was to be found in her pages. It is rather, however, in regard to families than individuals that this leaning is apparent. She is evidently inimical to the Tudor and friendly to the Stuart race. In this she only shares the feelings of the chivalrous and the enthusiastic of every age and country; for the leading qualities of the one were as calculated, on a retrospect, to

inspire aversion as those of the other were to awaken sympathy. The first was selfish, overbearing, cruel, but often exceedingly able: the latter generous, unsuspecting, heroic, but sometimes sadly imprudent. Success at the time crowned the worldly wisdom of the one, and disaster, long-continued and crushing, at length punished the unhappy want of foresight of the other. But the results of the time are not always indicative of the opinion of futurity: and already the verdict of mankind has been secured in regard to the rival Queens who brought their fortunes into collision, by two pleaders of surpassing power in swaying the human heart. Scotland may be proud that one of these was found in the most gifted of her sons, whose genius has, in one of his most perfect historical novels, immortalised the prison of Lochleven and the field of Langside; and Germany may well exult in the reflection that the other appeared in that matchless genius who three centuries after her death imbibed, on the banks of the Saale, the very soul and spirit of the age of Mary in England, and has for ever engraven her heroic death, and the imperishable scenes of Fotheringay, on the hearts of men.[12]

Miss Strickland's partiality for the Stuart and aversion to the Tudor race, may be explained by another and still more honourable circumstance. It is the inevitable effect of a long course of injustice, whether in the rulers of men, or the judges of those rulers, the annalists of their lives, to produce in the end a reaction in the general mind. This is more particularly the case in persons like Miss Strickland, actuated by generous and elevated feelings, and who feel conscious of power to redress much of the injustice which the long-continued ascendency of a particular party, whether in religion or politics, has inflicted on the characters of History. Nowhere has this injustice been more strongly experienced than in Great Britain during the last two centuries. The popular party in politics, and the reformed in religion, having in both these countries, after a sanguinary struggle, been successful, and a family seated on the throne which embodied, and in a manner personified, both these triumphs, nearly the whole historians who treated of the period for a century and a half were entirely one-sided. When Hume wrote his immortal history, he complained, with justice, that for seventy years power, reward, and emolument had been confined to one party in the state, and that the sources of History had in consequence been irremediably corrupted. His rhetorical powers and impartial spirit did much to remedy the evil, but he had not industry and research sufficient to do the whole. Much was left to the just feelings, and generous because disinterested effort, of the high-minded who succeeded him in the path of historical inquiry. Mr Tytler's great and authentic *History of Scotland*, and Lingard's able and valuable, though one-sided, *History of England*, have gone far to give the opposite side of the picture which Malcolm Laing and Burnet had painted in so vehement a party spirit, and Macaulay has since continued with such remarkable historical power. But much remained yet to be done. Antiquarian industry, chivalrous zeal, have of late brought many of the concealed or suppressed treasures of History to light; and it is those which Miss Strickland proposes to embody in her *Queens of Scotland*.

Of the general plan which she proposes to adopt in this work, our author gives the following admirable account:—

> "As long as Scotland, in consequence of bad roads and tedious travelling, remained a sort of *terra incognita*, vulgar prejudice prevailed among the ignorant and narrow-minded portion of society in England; but Scotland only required to be seen to be appreciated. Strong in native talent, rich in native worth, valiant, persevering, and wise, her sons have been ever foremost in the field of honourable enterprise, whether in deeds of arms, science, jurisprudence, or the industrial arts of peaceful life. In poetry, music, and song, she has certainly never been surpassed. It was, however, reserved for the genius of Sir Walter Scott to draw English hearts and English gold to Scotland, and to knit those bonds of brotherly regard which no act of legislature could do. His graphic pictures of Scotland and the Scotch acted like a spell of enchantment on the imaginations of the English. Those who were able to indulge the enthusiastic feelings which his writings had excited, crossed the Border, rushed into Highland glens, scaled Highland hills, congregated at Scotch hostelries, peeped into Scotch cottages, were invited to partake of Scotch hospitality—and found themselves in a land flowing with milk and honey, not merely in its festive character, but in its kindliness to strangers, which is the glory of all lands.
>
> "Yet among the numerous visitors whom the sight-seeing instincts of this age of locomotion have rendered familiar with the ancient seats of Scottish regality, how few know anything about the Queens who once held their courts within the now deserted walls of Dunfermline, Falkland, Linlithgow, and Stirling!—gems which, even in their desolation, are surviving monuments of the graceful tastes of their founders, and incline the musing antiquary, who realises in fancy for a moment their pristine glory, to smite his breast and exclaim 'Ichabod!' With the exception of Windsor Castle, England has certainly no vestige of palatial architecture which may compare with the royal homes of Scotland, of whose former tenants a few particulars may be no less acceptable to the sons and daughters of the land, than to the southern stranger who visits them.
>
> "The Maiden Castle, sitting enthroned on her dun rock, the Acropolis of Edinburgh, at once a relic and a witness of the immutable Past, is full of memories of eventful scenes connected with Queens whose hearts would have leaped with exultation could their eyes have looked on such a vision of national prosperity as the bright New Town, with its gay streets, and shops full of costly merchandise; its

spacious squares, crescents, and noble public buildings, rising on the outer *ballium* of that grim fortress whose base is now surrounded by green flowery gardens, for the joyance of a peace-loving generation. Mons Meg and her brethren have lost their vocation through the amended temper of the times, and hold sinecure posts in silence—their destructive thunders being superseded by the din of the railway trains bringing hourly freights of wealth and wisdom to the good town of Edinburgh and its inhabitants.

"Many original royal letters will be embodied in these volumes, with facts and anecdotes carefully verified. Local traditions, not unworthy of attention, have been gathered in the desolate palaces and historic sites where every peasant is an oral chronicler, full of spirit-stirring recollections of the past. These are occasionally connected with themes which were the fountains whence Sir Walter Scott drew his inspiration for the chivalric poetry and romance which has rendered Scotland classic ground. The tastes of those who were the rising generation, when the Waverley romances were the absorbing theme of interest in the literary world, have become matured. They require to have history rendered as agreeable without the mixture of fiction as with it; they desire to have it so written, without sacrificing truth to fastidiousness, that they may read it with their children, and that the whole family party shall be eager to resume the book when they gather round the work-table during the long winter evenings.

"Authors who feel as they ought to feel, should rejoice in seeing their productions capable of imparting pleasure to the simple as well as the refined; for a book which pleases only one grade of society may be fashionable, but cannot be called popular. That which interests peasants as well as peers, and is read with equal zest by children and parents, and is often seen in the hands of the operative classes, speaks to the heart in a language intelligible to a widely-extended circle of humanity, has written its own review, and needs no other."

In the last lines of these admirable observations, we doubt not Miss Strickland has, without intending it, foreshadowed the destiny of her own undertaking.

The work begins with the Life of Margaret Tudor, daughter of Henry VII. of England, and married at the early age of fourteen to James IV., the heroic and brilliant King of Scotland. This choice, in many respects, was fortunate, as it commences with the period when the fortunes of the two kingdoms became closely interlaced, and with the princess whose marriage with James was the immediate cause of the union of the two crowns on the same head, and the placing of the Stuart, and through it of the Hanoverian family, on the British throne.

The first chapter is occupied with the details of the journey of the royal bride from London to Edinburgh, which was somewhat a more tedious and fatiguing undertaking than it is now when performed by her descendant Queen Victoria, for it took above *three weeks* to perform. The reception of the youthful princess at York, Newcastle, and Durham, where she was met and attended by the whole nobility and gentry of the northern counties, who accompanied her on her progress northward on horseback, gives occasion for several faithful and animated pictures. Her first day's journey in Scotland, however, brought her into ruder scenery, characteristic of the stormy life which lay before her; and she rested the first night at *Fastcastle*, then a stronghold of the Home family, now belonging to Sir John Hall of Dunglass, which modern genius, under a feigned name, has done so much to celebrate.

"Fastcastle is no other than the veritable Wolf-Crag Tower, celebrated in Scott's *Bride of Lammermoor* as the abode of the Master of Ravenswood. It is seated on a lofty promontory, which commands the lonely indented bay of which St Abb's Head forms the extreme point to the right, with a wild array of rifted rocks terminating in the Wolf-Crag, which soars high in mid air above the fortress—black, gloomy, and inaccessible. The way by which the southern bride and her company reached this rugged resting-place lay across the Lammermuir, several miles of wild heath and treacherous bog, which no stranger might traverse in safety without guides well acquainted with the track. Before they entered on this pass, they had to descend a hill which was so steep and precipitous that, even within the last century, it was customary for the passengers by the mail-coach between Berwick and Edinburgh to alight and cross it on foot, while the carriage was taken off the wheels and carried over by a relay of men, stationed on the spot for that purpose. Of course the roads were not better in the beginning of the sixteenth century. Fastcastle is approached by one or two descents and ascents of this kind, and is separated from the mainland by a cleft between the rocks, which has to be crossed by a natural bridge formed of a ledge of rock, without rail or guard, with the vexed billows boiling and thundering sixty feet below.

"When the young Tudor Queen made her passage across this Al Arat of the Caledonian coast, she had the German Ocean before her, which beats against the rocky battlements and defences with which the basement of the castle is surrounded. One of these masses resembles the upturned keel of a huge man-of-war stranded among other fragments, which, like the relics of a former world, lay scattered at the foot of the precipice, with the wild breakers rushing through their

clefts, forming a grand *jet-d'eau*, and tossing the light feathery foam on high. The larger rocks are the haunt of innumerable sea-birds. Fastcastle had formerly been the stronghold of some of those ferocious feudal pirates who may be regarded as the buccaneers of the Caledonian coast. Many a bloody deed had been perpetrated within its isolated and inaccessible circuit; but the festive solemnities and ceremonials that surrounded the royal bride allowed no leisure or opportunity for whispers of the dark tales and romantic traditions connected with its history."

Hitherto the Tudor princess had not seen her royal lover. Their first interview, and his personal appearance, are described in these characteristic lines:—

"James entered the presence of Margaret Tudor with his hawking-lure flung over his shoulder, dressed simply in a velvet jacket; his hair and beard, curling naturally, were rather long, his complexion glowing from the manly exercise he had just been engaged in. He was the handsomest sovereign in Europe, the black eyes and hair of his elegant father, James III., being softened in his resemblance to the blonde beauty of his Danish mother. Sir Walter Scott has drawn James IV.'s portrait *con amore*, and has not exaggerated the likeness—

'For hazel was his eagle eye,
And auburn of the darkest dye
  His short curled beard and hair.
Light was his footstep in the dance,
  And firm his stirrup in the lists,
And oh, he had that merry glance
  Which seldom lady's heart resists.'"

The young Queen met her royal lord at the doorway of her great chamber. The King of Scotland uncovered his head and made a deep obeisance to her, while she made a lowly reverence to him. He then took her hand and kissed her, and saluted all her ladies by kissing them. It was noticed that he welcomed the chivalric Earl of Surrey with especial cordiality.

"Then the King of Scotland took the Queen on one side, and they communed together for a long space. She *held good manner*, [was unembarrassed;] and the King remained bare-headed during the time they conversed, and many courtesies passed between them. *Incontinent* [immediately] the board was set and served. The King and Queen washed their hands with humble reverence, and after that set them down at table together."

The entry of the royal pair into Edinburgh is thus described; and it seems to have been attended with one remarkable and characteristic circumstance, for she *rode behind her destined husband on the same horse*:—

"Half way to Edinburgh, James IV. was seen advancing with his company. He was this time attired in grand costume. 'His steed was trapped with gold, and round its neck was a deep gold fringe; the saddle and harness were of gold, but the bridle and head-gear of burnished silver. The King wore a jacket of cloth of gold, lined and bordered with violet velvet and fine black *bouge* or *budge* fur; his waistcoat was of violet satin, his *hoses* of scarlet, his shirt confined with bands of pearl and rich stones; his spurs were long and gilt. He rode towards the Queen in full course, at the pace at which the hare is hunted. On seeing her, he made very humble obeisance, and, leaping down from his horse, he came and kissed her in her litter. Then mounting in his usual gallant fashion, without touching stirrup, a gentleman-usher unsheathed the sword of state, and bore it before his King in regal fashion. The Scottish sword was enclosed in a scabbard of purple velvet, whereon was written, in letters of pearl, *God my defende*. The like words are on the pommel, the cross, and the *chap* also. The Earl of Bothwell bore this sword when the royal party reached Edinburgh town.'

"The King placed himself by the Queen's litter, and passed all the time conversing with her and entertaining her, as he rode by her side.

"'Before they entered Edinburgh, one of the King's gentlemen brought out a fair courser, trapped in cloth of gold, with crimson velvet, interlaced with white and red: the King went to the horse, mounted him without touching the stirrup in the presence of the whole company, then tried his paces—choosing to judge himself whether it were safe for his bride to ride on a pillion behind him, which was the mode in which he intended to enter the city.' Likewise he caused one of his gentlemen to mount behind him, as a lady would ride, to see whether the proud courser would submit to bear double or not.

"When he had concluded all his experiments, he decided that it was not proper to trust the safety of his bride to his favourite charger; 'so King James dismounted from him, and condescended to ride on the Queen's gentle palfrey. He mounted, and the Queen was placed on a pillion behind him.'"

The real tragedy and most interesting period of Margaret Tudor's life, is that which preceded and followed the fatal expedition to Flodden, to which the genius of Mr Aytoun has lately added such additional interest in his exquisite ballads. Miss Strickland has also been strongly moved by the

same catastrophe.—

> "There are traditions still current in the neighbourhood of the beautiful palatial ruin of Linlithgow relative to her parting with James IV.
>
> "Near the King's bed-chamber, and a beautiful little apartment overlooking the lake, supposed to be his dressing-room, is a turnpike stair, at the corner of the east side of the quadrangle erected by James IV. This leads to a lofty turret or mirador, called by popular tradition 'Queen Margaret's Bower.' It is surrounded by a stone bench or divan, and had once a small stone table in the centre. Here the Queen spent in tears the live-long summer's day on which her husband left her to march against England. Here, too, she is said to have passed 'the weary night of Flodden fight,' expecting news of the engagement, which came at last, but too soon.
>
> "The fatal field of Flodden not only made Queen Margaret a widow, but rendered Scotland desolate and almost desperate. All the hope that remained to the people of averting the fury of Henry VIII., and the cruelty of his successful general, centred solely in the Queen—being founded on the near relationship of herself and their infant King to the southern sovereign."

> "The Queen convened such of the nobility as survived the red field of Flodden to meet the clergy at Perth immediately. So prompt were all their proceedings, that the young King was crowned at Scone, near that city, within twenty days of his father's death. It was called the Mourning Coronation; for the ancient crown of Scotland being held over on the baby-brow of the royal infant, most of the witnesses and assistants of the ceremony burst into an 'infectious passion' of sobs and tears. They wept not only their own recent losses on the battle-field, but their late monarch, 'who was,' as Buchanan says, albeit no commender of kings, 'dear to all men while living, and mightily lamented by his people at his death.'
>
> "When the first agony of grief was abated at the loss of the King and the terrible slaughter of the best of the nobility and gentry who fought in the serried phalanx of spears about his person, the discovery was made by the Scottish people that no other injury was like to accrue from Flodden fight. It was, to all intents and purposes, one of those bad expenditures of human life called a drawn battle. Had it taken place on Scottish ground, it would have been reckoned another Bannockburn: the English must have retreated, (for they did so on their own ground,) and the Scots would have retained possession of the field. As it was, the English had the moral advantages of being an invaded people; and, as such, their success in making a great slaughter of those who were arrayed in battle on their soil, redounded more to their true glory than is the case in most great victories. But they did not purchase it easily. Stark and stiff as James IV. lay under heaps of slain, he kept possession of that well-stricken field. The despatch of Lord Dacre clearly proves that when the English left the field at nightfall, they were ignorant to whom the victory belonged. Then the Homes and other Border chieftains plundered the dead at their leisure; their countrymen strongly suspected that they slew their King, and turned the scale of victory against their countrymen. There is the more probability in this supposition when it is remembered how inflexibly James IV. had maintained justice on his Borders—therefore he had honestly won the enmity of those rapacious septs.
>
> "Lord Dacre made an excursion of observation, with a party of cavalry, in the morning after the battle of Flodden, to ascertain who possessed the field; he saw the King of Scotland's formidable train of brass cannon dominant over the scene, but mute and motionless; the artillerymen gone; the Scottish cannon and the silent dead were solely in possession of the battle-ground. The thickest heaps cumbered it on the spot where the royal James and his phalanx had fought; the breathless warriors lay just as death had left them, for the marauding Borderers had not dared to pursue their occupation of stripping and plundering in the full light of day."

Queen Margaret, however, did not remain long inconsolable; she had too much of the disposition of her brother Henry VIII. in her to remain long without a husband; and she fixed her eyes on a handsome youth, the Earl of Angus, whom she soon afterwards married, to the no small annoyance of her brother and his subjects. Her marriage with him gave occasion to the following pleasing verses by Gawin Douglas, the uncle of the nobleman thus honoured by the smiles of royalty:—

> "Amidst them, borne within a golden chair,
> O'er-fret with pearls and colours most preclair,
> That drawen was by hackneys all milk-white,
> Was set a queen as lily sweetly fair,
> In purple robe hemmed with gold ilk-where;
> With gemmed clasps closed in all perfite,
> A diadem most pleasantly polite,
> Sate on the tresses of her golden hair,

And in her hand a sceptre of delight.

So next her rode in granate-violet,
Twelve damsels, ilka ane on their estate,
Which seemed of her counsel most secrete;
And next them was a lusty rout, God wot!
Lords, ladies, and full mony a fair prelate,
Both born of low estate and high degree,
Forth with their queen they all by-passed me,
At easy pace—they riding forth the gate,
And I abode alone within the tree."

Margaret's life, after her second marriage, was a series of adventures and disasters partly occasioned by the turbulent spirit and endless disorders of the times, partly by her own passions. She was a true Tudor in her disposition. Like her brother, "she spared no man in her lust, and no woman in her hate." When she died, at the age of forty-eight, she had already married four husbands, of whom *three were still alive*. She divorced, not beheaded, when she was tired of her lovers: in that respect she was better than Henry. By the second of these husbands she had a daughter, named Margaret, whose birth took place in the following circumstances, characteristic alike of the age and country:—

> "The welcome message of Dacre arrived at Coldstream almost in the last minute that Queen Margaret could be moved. So desperately ill was she taken on the road, that her convoy were forced to stop by the way, and hurry her into Harbottle or Hardbattle Castle, one of the grimmest and gauntest stone-donjons that frowned on the English frontier. It was just then garrisoned by Lord Dacre in person, who had commenced the fierce war on the Borders to which the arrival of the Duke of Albany in Scotland had given rise. The portcullis of Harbottle was raised to admit the fainting Queen of Scotland; but not one Scot, man or woman, Lord Dacre vowed, should enter with her. Here was a terrible situation for Margaret. She was received into the rugged Border-fortress, October 5, and, after remaining in mortal agony for more than forty-eight hours, gave birth to a daughter, the Lady Margaret Douglas, whose name is familiar to every one on the pages of general history, as the immediate ancestress of our present royal family."

The death of Margaret Tudor suggests the following reflections to our author, the justice and beauty of which makes us regret that she does not more frequently speak in her own person, instead of the quaint style of ancient annalists.

> "Some of Margaret Tudor's mistakes in government, it is possible, may be attributed to the fact that she is the first instance that occurs, since Christianity was established in the island, of regnant power being confided to the hands of a woman who was expected to reign as *femme seule*. She had no education, scarcely any religion, and was guided entirely by her instincts, which were not of an elevated character. Her misdeeds, and the misfortunes attributable to her personal conduct, gave rise to most of the terrible calamities which befell her descendants. Some persons among the aristocracy of Scotland followed her evil example of divorce, which caused long and angry litigation concerning the birthrights of their descendants. The fearful feud between the houses of Arran and Darnley-Stuart was of this kind, which deeply involved the prosperity of her granddaughter, Mary Queen of Scots. And that hapless Princess was likewise marked as a victim by the cold and crafty Ruthven, on account of his family interests being affected by Queen Margaret's marriages and divorces.
>
> "A succession of tragedies, for three generations, was the consequence of Margaret Tudor's indulgence of her selfish passions. Nor are the woes attendant on contempt of the divine institution of marriage limited to the great ones of the earth. Many a domestic tragedy, though shrouded in the obscurity of every-day life, may be traced to the same cause. Sorrow enters with sin; it desolates the peace of home; and unoffending children suffer for the evil of their parents, whenever persons are found to break, either by wilful passions or litigious contest, the earliest law given by the Almighty."

The second Life in the volume is that of Magdalene of Valois, the beautiful first Queen of James V., the brevity of whose reign of *forty* days in Scotland was the subject of such lamentation to the country. James went to Paris, in the true spirit of chivalry, to choose and win a Queen in person; and after a rapid and somewhat discreditable homage to Mary of Vendôme, on the banks of the Loire, his inconstant affections were at length fixed by Magdalene daughter of Francis I., whom he soon after married, and who became his much loved but short-lived Queen. Their entrance into Scotland is thus described:—

> "The royal voyagers made the port of Leith, Saturday, May 19, being the fifth day from their embarkation, and Whitsuneve. They landed at the pier amidst the acclamations of a mixed multitude of loving lieges of all degrees, who came to welcome their sovereign home, and to see their new Queen. Magdalene endeared herself for ever to the affections of the people by the sensibility she manifested on that occasion; for when 'she first stepped on Scottish ground, she knelt, and, bowing herself down, kissed the moulds thereof for the love she bore the King,

returned thanks to God for having brought the King and her safely through the seas, and prayed for the happiness of the country.' This was indeed entering upon her high vocation, not like the cold state puppet of a public pageant, but in the spirit of a queen who felt and understood the relation in which she stood both to the King and people of that realm. A touching sight it must have been to those who saw that young royal bride thus obey the warm impulse of a heart overflowing with gratitude to God, and love to all she then looked upon. The venerable Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, and other contemporary poets, who were so soon to hang elegiac wreaths of mournful verse on the early bier of her who then stood among them in her fragile and almost unearthly loveliness, radiant with hope, and joy, and happy love, called her 'the pleasant Magdalene,' and 'the sweet Flower of France.'

"King James blithely conducted his Queen to his palace of Holyrood; and, to increase the universal satisfaction which her appearance and manners had given, the auspicious news quickly spread through Edinburgh, that she was likely to bring an heir to Scotland. Great were the rejoicings in consequence. The ancient prediction 'that the French wife should bring a child the ninth in degree from the left side of the stem of Bruce, that should rule England and Scotland from sea to sea,' was revived in anticipation of the offspring of James V. of Scotland by Magdalene of France, although it would only have been the eighth in descent from that illustrious stock."

Her premature and lamented death is recorded in these feeling paragraphs:—

"The early death of Magdalene was not only a misfortune to her royal husband, but a serious loss to Scotland, and even to Christendom, on account of the enlightened views she had received on the all-important subject of religion. Brantôme tells us that 'she was very deeply regretted not only by James V. but by all his people, for she was very good, and knew how to make herself truly beloved. She had a great mind, and was most wise and virtuous.' The first general mourning ever known in Scotland was worn for her, and her obsequies were solemnised with the greatest manifestation of sorrow of which that nation had ever been participant. The lamentations for the premature death of this youthful Queen, and the hopes that perished with her of an heir of Scotland, appear to have been of a similar character to the passionate and universal burst of national sorrow which, in the present century, pervaded all hearts in the Britannic empire, for the loss of the noble-minded Princess Charlotte of Wales and her infant.

'How many hopes were borne upon thy bier,
O stricken bride of love!'

"The epitaph of this lamented Queen was written by Buchanan in elegant Latin verse, of which the following is a translation:—

'Magdalene of Valois, Queen of Scotland, died in the xvi year of her age.

'I was a royal wife, from monarchs sprung,
A sovereign's daughter, and in hope to be
The royal mother of a regal line;
But lest my glory should exceed the height
Of mortal honour, Death's invidious dart
Hath laid me in my morning freshness here.
Nature and virtue, glory, life, and death,
Strove to express in me their utmost power.
Nature gave beauty; virtue made me good;
Relentless death o'er life too soon prevail'd.
But my fair fame shall flourish evermore,
To compensate for that brief mortal span
By lasting meed of universal praise.'"

Mary of Lorraine, daughter of the great Duke of Guise, and a lineal descendant of Charlemagne, was the second Queen of James V.: she is peculiarly interesting, as her daughter was Queen Mary; and she was the ancestress of our present illustrious sovereign. We have room only, however, for one extract:—

"'Let us,' says an eloquent French writer of the present day, 'enter the grand gallery of the Chateau d'Eu, and contemplate the noble portraits of the line of Guise. There we shall view that old Claud of Lorraine, clad in his heavy cuirass, bearing his long sword, first dyed in blood at Marignan, having for his cortege and companions his six glorious sons; then we shall see Francis of Lorraine, rival of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and conqueror of Calais; near him that Cardinal of Lorraine, eloquent as an orator, gallant and magnificent as a prince, yet an ambitious and cruel priest. And there is the grandchild of Duke Claud, Mary Stuart, angel of grief and poesy, whose charming head bore a crown-regnant, and yet fell beneath the axe of the executioner.'

> "The Duke and Duchess of Longueville were both present at the bridal of James V. and Magdalene of France. Little did the Duchess imagine, when she, as the wife of the representative of the brave Dunois, and the eldest daughter of the house of Guise-Lorraine, proudly took high place among the great ladies of France, near the person of the royal bride, that the crown-matrimonial of Scotland—never to be worn by her on whose finger she saw the enamoured bridegroom place the nuptial ring—was destined to encircle her own brow. Far less could she have believed, even if it had been predicted to her, that from her union with that Prince should proceed a line of sovereigns who would reign not only over the Britannic isles from sea to sea, but whose empire, far exceeding that of her mighty ancestor Charlemagne, should extend over India, a considerable section of America, and include vast portions of the habitable globe whose existence was then unknown. Before the anniversary returned of the day that witnessed the nuptials of James and Magdalene, all these apparently impossible events were in an active state of progression."

Miss Strickland has announced in her Preface that two volumes are to be devoted by her to the life of Queen Mary; and that great light has been thrown upon that interesting subject by the important original letters which Prince Labanoff's recent researches and publication have brought to light. We look with impatience for the fulfilment of the promise; for, although nothing can exceed in pathos and interest Mr Tytler's entrancing account of the captivity and death of that celebrated and heroic princess, yet we are well aware that much light has since his time been thrown on the subject, by the zealous labours of chivalrous antiquaries. That she may succeed in vindicating her memory from much of the obloquy which, despite her many great and noble qualities, and matchless charms of person and manner, still oppresses it, is, we need hardly say, our most anxious wish; and if any one can do it, it is herself. But we confess we have little expectation that it is possible even for her chivalrous mind and untiring industry to effect the object. Our *present* view of this interesting question is as follows:—The strength of the case against Queen Mary, during her reign in Scotland, is such that it remains much the same upon the admitted and incontestible facts of history, though all the disputed points were decided in her favour. No original letters of hers, or others which can be produced—no complete disproval of those which were charged, we believe falsely and treacherously, against her—can do away with her *acts*, whatever light they may throw upon her motives, or the unparalleled network of treachery, selfishness, and duplicity, with which she was surrounded. Can it be reasonably hoped that any subsequent effort of industry or ability will be able to do more for Queen Mary's memory than has been done by her gifted dramatic biographer Schiller, who, in the awful scene of her last confession to the priest in prison, immediately before being conducted to the block, makes her admit her failings in the indulgence of undue hatred against some, and impassioned love to others; and recount, with sincerity, her stings of conscience for having permitted the King, her husband, to be put to death, and thereafter loaded with favours and bestowed her hand on the party charged with his murder? It is hopeless to deny the magnitude of these delinquencies, though men, at least, should view them with an indulgent eye; for they arose, as Schiller makes her say, on that dread occasion, from the self-forgetfulness and generous feelings which led her to trust in a sex by whom she was forsaken and betrayed.[13] Such is our present view of the case; but we have every confidence in Miss Strickland's powers and research, and shall impatiently await the new light she will doubtless throw on that most fascinating and tragic of all biographies.

The truth appears to be, that Mary was a mixed character: no uncommon thing in every age, and especially so in that disastrous and profligate one in which Mary's lot was cast. She was as charming and heroic as her most impassioned advocates would represent, and as impassioned, and in one matter guilty, as her worst enemies allege. Her virtues, however, were her own; her delinquencies, of the religion in which she had been bred, and the age in which she lived. It was the age, and she had been bred in the court, which witnessed the successive murders of the Duke of Guise and the Admiral Coligni at the court of France; the Massacre of St Bartholomew by a French king, and the fires of Smithfield lighted by an English queen. To one period, and that the most interesting of her life, unmixed praise may be given. From the day of her landing in England, her conduct was one of dignity, innocence, and heroism; and if her previous life was stained by the imputation of having *permitted* one murder, suggested to herself by despair, and recommended by others from profligacy, she expiated it by being the victim of another, suggested by jealousy, executed by rancour, and directly ordered by a cruel relative and a vindictive rival.

If there is any blemish in the very interesting volume, of which our limits will only permit a more cursory notice than its high merits deserve, it is to be found in the too frequent use of quotations from old authorities or original letters *in the text*, and the mosaic-like appearance which is often given to her pages, by the introduction of quaint and antiquated expressions drawn from contemporary writers in the body of the narrative. We are well aware of the motive which has led to this, and we respect it as it deserves: it arises from the wish to be accurate and trustworthy, the anxious desire to make her Lives a faithful transcript of the times—to exhibit their very "form and pressure." The object was good, the desire was laudable; but it is quite possible to be carried too far, even in working out the most praiseworthy principle. Long accounts of dresses, decorations, and processions; entries of expenses in Treasurers' accounts; even original letters, unless on very particular occasions, are the materials of biography, but they are not biography itself. It is *living* character, not still life, which we desire to see delineated: the latter is the frame of the picture, but it is not the picture itself. Such curious details are characteristic, generally

amusing, often interesting; but they, in general, do better in foot-notes than in the body of the narrative. We must admit, however, that Miss Strickland has exhibited equal judgment and skill in the manner in which she has *fitted in* those contemporary extracts into the body of the narrative, and the selection she has made of such as are most curious and characteristic of the times. By many, we are well aware, they will be considered as not the least interesting part of her very interesting volumes. It is the principle of introducing them in the *text* that we wish her to reconsider. Unity of composition is not less essential to the higher productions of art, in history or biography, than in painting or the drama; and Miss Strickland writes so powerfully, and paints so beautifully, that we cannot but often regret when we lose the thread of her flowing narrative, to make way for extracts from a quaint annalist, or entries from the accounts of a long-forgotten exchequer.

FOOTNOTES:

[9] *Lives of the Queens of Scotland.* By AGNES STRICKLAND. Vol. I. William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London.

[10] Mr Aytoun's noble *Lyrical Ballads*, and Mr Grant's admirable *History of the Castle of Edinburgh*.

[11] Falkirk, Torwood, Bannockburn, Stirling Bridge.

[12] Schiller, in his noble drama of *Maria Stuart*.

[13] "Ach! nicht durch hass allein, durch sund' ge Liebe
Noch mehr hab' Ich hochste Gott beleidigt.
Das Eitle herz ward zudern Mann gezogen,
Der treulos mich verlassen und betrogen."

"Ah! not through hatred only, but still more through sinful love, have I offended Almighty God! My tender heart was too strongly drawn to man, by whose faithlessness I have been forsaken and betrayed."—*Maria Stuart*, Act v. scene 7.

THE LAY OF THE NIEBELUNGEN.[14]

Wolf, the learned German, was certainly very far wrong—as Germans in their endless speculations are apt to be—when he set himself to explain the *Iliad* without Homer; an attempt which, to our British ears, generally sounded pretty much as profane as to explain the world without God, or, according to Cicero's simile against the Epicureans, to explain the existence of a book by the mere accidental out-tumbling of alphabetic counters on the ground. The *Iliad* could not have existed without Homer—so the rude instinct of the most unlearned and most unmetaphysical English Bull declared against the cloud-woven theories and the deep-sunk lexicographical excavations of the famous Berlin professor; and the rude instinct, after much philological sapping and mining, stands ground. But Wolf did not labour in vain. Though he did not take the citadel, he made breaches into many parts of our classical circumvallation, formerly deemed most strong, and made us change, in great measure, the fashion of our fortifications. In the same manner Niebuhr, with his knotty club, made sad havoc among the waxen images of the old Romans, which the piety of Livy—taking them for genuine granite statues—had set forth with such a wealth of fine patriotic elocution; but after all this work of destruction, Rome still remains with its Tiber, and, in the minds of most sane persons, Romulus also, we imagine; while the great Julius shines a kingly star every inch, as much after Niebuhr's strong brush as before. What, then, was the great truth by virtue of which—as stupid sermons are redeemed by a good text—Wolf, with his startling anti-Homeric gospel, made so many proselytes, and such fervid apostles, among the learned and the poetic of his countrymen? Plainly this, that he seized with a keen glance, and a grand comprehensiveness, the minstrel character of the Popular Epos of early ages, as distinguished from the more artificial and curiously-piled compositions of more polished times, bearing the same name. Wolf was wrong—say mad, if you please—in asserting that Pisistratus, with a whole army of such refurbishers of old wares as Onomacritus, could have put together such a glowing vital whole as the *Iliad*; but he was right, and altogether sound, when he looked upon the great Epic song of the wrath of Achilles as a thing essentially different, not only in degree, but in kind, from the *Æneid* of Virgil, or the *Paradise Lost* of our Milton. Many men of learning and taste, from Scaliger downwards, have instituted large and curious comparisons between the great national Epos of the Greeks, and that of the Romans; but the comparison of things that have a radically different character can seldom produce any result beyond the mere expression of liking and disliking; as if, among critics of trees, one should say, *I prefer a bristling pine*, while another says, *Give me the smooth beech*. Or, a result even more unsatisfactory might be produced. Starting from the beech as a sort of model tree, a forest critic, predetermined to admire the pine also, might spin out of his brain a number of subtle analogies to prove that a pine, though bearing a different name, is, in fact, the same tree as a beech, and possesses, when *more* philosophically considered, all the essential characteristics of this tree. You laugh?—but so, and not otherwise, did it fare with old Homer, at the hands of many professional philologists and literary dilettantes, who, with a perfect appreciation of such works of polished skill as the *Æneid* and the *Jerusalem Delivered*—as being akin to their own modern taste—must needs apply the same test to take cognisance of such strange and far-removed objects as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Such transference of the mould that measures one thing to another, and an altogether different thing, is indeed a common enough trick of our every-day judgments; but it is, nevertheless, a sort of criticism altogether barren of any positive results, and which ends where it begins—in talk. To the character and certainty of a science, it can assuredly have no claim. If you wish to descant with any beneficial result upon roses, pray compare one English rose with another, and not with a Scotch thistle. Bring not the fine city dame into contact with the brown country girl; but let Lady B's complexion be more delicate than Lady C's, and the brown of Bessie be more healthy than that of Jessie. Jessie, if you will consider the matter, has nothing in common with Lady B, except this, that she is a woman. As little has Homer in common with Virgil, or Tasso, or Milton. With whom, then, is Homer to be compared? A hundred years ago, Voltaire, with all his wit, could not have answered that question—the whole age of European criticism of which Voltaire was the oracle and the god could not have answered it; but thanks—after the Percy Ballads, and Cowper, and Wordsworth, and Southey, and Burns—to Frederick Augustus Wolf, that question we can answer now in the simplest and most certain way in the world, by pointing to the famous Spanish Cid, and the old Teutonic Lay of the Niebelungen.

To the Cid, we may presume that those of our readers who love popular poetry, and are not happy enough to know the sonorous old Castilian, have been happily introduced by the great work of Southey. But, with respect to the other great popular Epos of Western Europe, we suspect Mr Lettsom is only too much in the right when he says, that this venerable monument of the old German genius is "so little known amongst us, that most ordinary readers have not so much as heard of it. Even amongst the numerous and increasing class of those who are acquainted with German, few pay attention to the ancient literature of Germany: they are generally conversant only with the productions of the day, or, at farthest, with those of the most celebrated authors." So, indeed, it must be; the necessary business and amusements of life leave but few of us at liberty to follow the example of the learned Germans, and refuse to look at Helen before we have critically investigated the history of Jove's amours, and of Leda's egg. So much the more are we beholden to gentlemen like the present translator, who, by the patient exercise of those pious pains which are the pleasure of poets, put us into the condition of being able to hear the notes of that strange old Teutonic lyre prolonged through the aisles of an English echo-chamber. Mr Lettsom has done a work, much wanted for the English lover of poetry, honestly and well: this we can say from having compared it in various places with a prose translation of the old German poem, published at Berlin in 1814;[15] also from the distinct recollection which we have

of the character and tone of the modern German version of Marbach, which we read for the first time several years ago. But Mr Lettsom's translation bears also internal evidence of its excellence: there is a quiet simplicity and easy talkative breadth about it, characteristic no less of the general genius of the Germans than of the particular mediæval epoch to which it belongs. With a perfect confidence, therefore, in the trustworthiness of the present English version, we proceed to lay before our readers a rapid sketch of the Epic story of the Niebelungen, accompanied with such extracts as may serve to convey an idea of the general tone and character of the composition.

At Worms, upon the Rhine, (so the poem opens,) there dwelt three puissant kings—Gunther and Gernot and Gieselher—three brothers, of whom Gunther was the eldest, and, in right of primogeniture, swayed the sceptre of Burgundy.[16] These kings had a sister named Kriemhild, the real heroine and fell female Achilles of the Epos; for though she is as gentle and mild as a Madonna till her love is wounded, after that she nourishes a desire of vengeance on the murderers of her husband, as insatiate and inexorable as that which the son of Peleus, in the *Iliad*, nurses against the son of Atreus for the rape of the lovely Briseis. In fact, as the great work of Homer might be more fully designated *the wrath of Achilles*, so the most significant designation for this mediæval Iliad of the Germans would be *the revenge of Kriemhild*. After naming these, and other notable personages of the Burgundian court at Worms, the poet makes use of a dream, as Æschylus in the *Agamemnon* uses an omen, to open up, in a fitful glimpse of prophecy, the general burden and fateful issue of his tale.

> "A dream was dreamed by Kriemhild, the virtuous and the gay,
> How a wild young falcon she trained for many a day,
> Till two fierce eagles tore it; to her there could not be
> In all the world such sorrow as this perforce to see.
>
> To her mother Uta at once the dream she told;
> But she the threatening future could only thus unfold—
> 'The falcon that thou trainedst is sure a noble mate;
> God shield him in his mercy, or thou must lose him straight.'
>
> 'A mate for me! What say'st thou, dearest mother mine?
> Ne'er to love, assure thee, my heart will I resign.
> I'll live and die a maiden, and end as I began,
> Nor (let what else befall me) will suffer woe for man.'
>
> 'Nay!' said the anxious mother, 'renounce not marriage so;
> Wouldst thou true heartfelt pleasure taste ever here below,
> Man's love alone can give it. Thou'rt fair as eye can see:
> A fitting mate God send thee, and naught will wanting be.'
>
> 'No more,' the maiden answered, 'no more, dear mother, say;
> From many a woman's fortune, this truth is clear as day,
> That falsely smiling pleasure with pain requites us ever.
> I from both will keep me, and thus will sorrow never.'
>
> So in her lofty virtue, fancy-free and gay,
> Lived the noble maiden many a happy day;
> Nor one more than another found favour in her sight;
> Still, at the last, she wedded a far-renowned knight.
>
> He was the self-same falcon she in her dream had seen,
> Foretold by her wise mother. What vengeance took the queen
> On her nearest kinsmen, who him to death had done!
> That single death atoning died many a mother's son."

With these words ends the very short first canto, or, in the phraseology of the bard, "adventure" of the poem. The second introduces us to the most prominent male character in the first part of the poem—for it is divided into two distinct parts or acts—the famous SIEGFRIED, "with the horny hide," as the old German chap-book has it, which any of our readers may have for a groschen or two in Leipzig, and not more, we suppose, than a sixpence here.

> "In Netherland there flourished a prince of lofty kind,
> (Whose father hight Siegmund, his mother Siegelind)
> In a sumptuous castle, down by the Rhine's fair side;
> Men did call it Xanten; 'twas famous far and wide."

This princely youth, who, like the Spanish Cid, is perfect even to the smallest hair on his beard, after having employed his early days, like ancient Hercules and Theseus, in attacking and overcoming every sort of terrible monster, in bestial or human guise, that came in his way, is dubbed knight with the stroke of the chivalrous sword, in due form, and a festival is held in honour of the event, the description of which occupies the "second adventure." Like a dutiful son, as well as a fearless knight, he will accept no royal honours, or share in the official dignities of government, so as long as his father and mother live.

> "While Siegelind and Siegmund yet lived and flourished there,

Full little recked their offspring the royal crown to wear.
He only would be master, and exercise command,
'Gainst those whose pride o'erweening disturbed the peaceful land.

None ventur'd to defy him; since weapons first he took,
The bed of sloth but seldom the noble knight could brook!
He only sought for battles: his prowess-gifted hand
Won him renown eternal in every foreign strand."

But even the sturdy mail-clad heroes of mediæval knighthood sometimes tired of "battles;" and when they were thus aweary, they had one other serious occupation, and that, of course, was love. With the entrance on this new career, the third adventure is occupied.

"'Twas seldom tear or sorrow the warrior's breast assayed;
At length he heard a rumour how a lovely maid
In Burgundy was dwelling, the fairest of the fair;
For her he won much pleasure, but dash'd with toil and care."

Siegfried opens his determination to his parents to follow the fortune of this rumour, and take to wife none other than—

"The bright Burgundian maiden, best gem of Gunther's throne,
Whose far-renowned beauty stands unapproached alone."

This resolution, of course, as is the fortune of true love, meets with opposition, at first, from the parents of the youth; but with a calm and decided answer, such as true love knows how to give, the difficulty is overcome.

"Dearest father mine,
The love of high-born women for ever I'll resign
Rather than play the wooer but where my heart is set."

Forthwith, therefore, he sets out on an expedition to Worms, predetermined, after the common fashion of mediæval love-romances, to marry the woman whom he had never seen; for in these matters, rumour, it was thought—that plays so falsely elsewhere—could not err. To make the necessary impression on so mighty a king as Gunther, the Prince of the Netherland is pranked out most gorgeously with all that woman's needle can produce of chivalrous embroidery; and, thus accoutred,—

"On the seventh fair morning, by Worms along the strand,
In knightly guise were pricking the death-defying band;
The ruddy gold fair glittered on every riding vest;
Their steeds they meetly governed, all pacing soft abreast.

Their shields were new and massy, and like flame they glowed;
As bright, too, shone their helmets; while bold Siegfried rode
Straight to the court of Gunther to woo the stately maid.
Eye never looked on champions so gorgeously arrayed.

Down to their spurs, loud clanging, reached the swords they wore;
Sharp and well-tempered lances the chosen champions bore;
One, two spans broad or better, did Siegfried sternly shake,
With keen and cutting edges grim and ghastly wounds to make.

Their golden-coloured bridles firm they held in hand:
Silken were their poitrals: so rode they through the land.
On all sides the people to gaze on them began;
Then many of Gunther's liegemen swift to meet them ran."

Then follows the formal reception at the court of Worms, and, as on all great festival occasions in those days, a tournament is held, where the stranger knight, of course, acquits himself like a god rather than a man, to the admiration of all beholders, but specially of the gentle ladies, who, on occasions when propriety did not allow them publicly to appear, enjoy the dear delight of gazing on bearded swordsmen even more exquisitely from behind a window.

"At court the lovely ladies were asking evermore,
Who was the stately stranger that so rich vesture wore,
At once so strong of presence and so strong of hand?
When many a one gave answer, 'Tis the King of Netherland.'

He ever was the foremost, whate'er the game they played.
Still in his inmost bosom he bore one lovely maid,
Whom he beheld had never, and yet to all preferred;
She too of him, in secret, spoke many a kindly word.

When in the court contending, fierce squire and hardy knight,
As fits the young and noble, waged the mimic fight,

Oft Kriemhild through her windows would look, herself unseen—
Then no other pleasure needed the gentle Queen."

But though Kriemhild saw Siegfried through the window, Siegfried remained with Gunther a whole year,

"Nor all that weary season a single glimpse could gain
Of her who after brought him such pleasure and such pain."

Like the disciples of Pythagoras, the amorous knights of those days had first to serve a long apprenticeship of the severe discipline of abstinence, before they were permitted to kiss the hand of beauty, or to meet even its distant glance. The fourth adventure, therefore, goes on to tell how Siegfried showed his prowess by fighting with the Saxons, who had come under the guidance of their king, Ludeger the Bold, and leagued with him King Ludegast of Denmark, to attack the realm of the Burgundians. Coming home, like a Mars-subduing Diomede, from this fierce encounter, the knight of the Netherland is at length deemed worthy to be introduced to his destined fair. Another tourney is held, at which Kriemhild publicly appears.

"Now went she forth the loveliest, as forth the morning goes,
From misty clouds out-beaming: then all his weary woes
Left him in heart who bore her, and so long time had done.
He saw there stately standing the fair, the peerless one.

Many a stone full precious flashed from her vesture bright;
Her rosy blushes darted a softer, ruddier light.
Whate'er might be his wishes, each could not but confess
He ne'er on earth had witnessed such perfect loveliness.

As the moon arising out glitters every star,
That through the clouds so purely glimmers from afar,
E'en so love-breathing Kriemhild dimmed every beauty nigh.
Well might, at such a vision, many a bold heart beat high."

With not less of serene beauty, and a quiet naturalness that is peculiar to him, the old bard describes the feelings of Siegfried on first coming within the sweet atmosphere of woman's love.

"There stood he, the high-minded, beneath her star-bright eye,
His cheek as fire all glowing; then said she modestly,
'Sir Siegfried, you are welcome, noble knight and good!'
Yet loftier at that greeting rose his lofty mood.

He bowed with soft emotion, and thanked the blushing fair;
Love's strong constraint together impelled the enamoured pair;
Their longing eyes encountered, their glances, every one,
Bound knight and maid for ever; yet all by stealth was done.

That in the warmth of passion he pressed her lily hand,
I do not know for certain, but well can understand.
'Twere surely past believing they ventured not on this;
Two loving hearts, so meeting, else had done amiss.

No more in pride of summer, nor in bloom of May,
Knew he such heart-felt pleasure as on this happy day,
When she, than May more blooming, more bright than summer's pride,
His own, a dream no longer, was standing by his side.

Then thought full many a champion, 'Would this had happ'd to me,
To be with lovely Kriemhild, as Siegfried bold I see,
Or closer e'en than Siegfried; well were I then, I swear,'
None yet was champion who so deserved a queen."

Thus far well. But his probation was not yet finished. Before finally joining hand and heart with the peerless sister of King Gunther, Siegfried must assist her brother in a yet more difficult work than anything that he had hitherto achieved—in gaining the love of Brunhild, a doughty princess of Iceland, "far beyond the sea," who, being of a masculine temper and strength, had determined to submit herself to no male lord who had not proved himself worthy to wield the marital sceptre, by actually mastering his spouse in strong physical conflict.

"There was a queen high-seated afar beyond the sea,
None wielded sceptre a mightier than she;
For beauty she was matchless, for strength without a peer;
Her love to him she offered who could pass her at the spear.

She threw the stone, and bounded behind it to the mark;
At three games each suitor, with sinews stiff and stark,
Must conquer the fierce maiden whom he sought to wed,
Or, if in one successless, straight must lose his head.

E'en thus for the stern virgin had many a suitor died.
This heard a noble warrior, who dwelt the Rhine beside,
And forthwith resolved he to win her for his wife;
Thereby full many a hero thereafter lost his life."

Doubtful of his single strength to subdue so mettlesome a maid, Gunther enters into a compact with Siegfried to assist him in his enterprise—*by fair means or foul*, as it appears; and in this evil compact, and the underhand work to which it gives rise, lies already visible before the unveiled eye of the reader, the little black spot on the fair blue of the epic sky, which is destined (and the bard is ever forward to hint this catastrophe,) at a day though distant yet sure, to dilate into a wide-spreading cloud, and to burst in a fearful deluge that shall sweep hundreds and thousands of the guilty and the guiltless into destruction. This is neither more nor less than the dark old doctrine of retribution, which in the Greek tragedians, and especially Æschylus, plays so awful a part; only with this difference, that in the Niebelungen, as in the Odyssey, the punishment overtakes the offending parties, and not, as in the tragedians, their sons and grandsons. But to proceed: Siegfried, like Jack the Giant-killer, though commencing his career as a single mortal with no miraculous power, had in the course of his chivalrous exploits, and as the reward of his extraordinary prowess, got possession of certain wonder-working instruments, that rendered him, when he chose to use them, sure of victory against mere mortal strength. With the aid of these, Siegfried, for the sake of the love of Kriemhild, had determined (secretly and unfairly) to assist Gunther in subduing the stout Brunhild.

"I have heard strange stories of wild dwarfs, how they fare:
They dwell in hollow mountains; and for protection wear
A vesture, that hight cloud-cloak, marvellous to tell;
Whoever has it on him, may keep him safe and well

From cuts and stabs of foemen; him none can bear or see
As soon as he is in it, but see and hear can he
Whate'er he will around him, and thus must needs prevail;
He grows besides far stronger: so goes the wondrous tale.

And now with him the cloud-cloak took fair Siegelind's son,
The same the unconquered warrior, with labour hard, had won
From the stout dwarf Albrecht, in successful fray.
The bold and ready champions made ready for the way.

So, as I said, bold Siegfried the cloud-cloak bore along;
When he but put it on him, he felt him wondrous strong:
Twelve men's strength then had he in his single body laid.
By trains and close devices he wooed the haughty maid.

Besides, in that strange cloud-cloak was such deep virtue found,
That whosoever wore it, though thousands stood around,
Might do whatever pleased him, unseen of friend and foe:
Thus Siegfried won fair Brunhild, which brought him bitterest woe."

In order the more surely to afford his necessary aid, Siegfried appeared among the attendants of Gunther, in the character of a subordinate vassal. Having thus arranged matters, they set out for the far island of the sea. And here, as in many other passages, it is noticeable with what a childlike, almost girlish delight, the old bard expatiates on the gay dress of his mighty men. He evidently did not live in an age when a Napoleon would have sought to make an impression on the vulgar by "wearing the plain dress of the Institute;" nor has he the slightest conception of the soul of poetry beating in a breast of which the exterior vesture is the "hodden grey," or the plain plaid of our Scotch Muse. We shall quote this one passage to serve for many similar, with which the poem is studded:—

"So with kind dismissal away the warriors strode;
Then quick the fair queen summon'd, from bow'rs where they abode,
Thirty maids, her brother's purpose to fulfil,
Who in works of the needle were the chief for craft and skill.

Silks from far Arabia, white as driven snow,
And others from Zazamanc, green as grass doth grow,
They deck'd with stones full precious; Kriemhild the garments plann'd
And cut them to just measure, with her own lily hand.

Of the hides of foreign fishes were linings finely wrought,
Such then were seen but rarely, and choice and precious thought,
Fine silk was sewn above them, to suit the wearers well,
Now of the rich apparel hear we fresh marvels tell.

From the land of Morocco and from the Libyan coast,
The best silk and the finest is worn and valued most
By kin of mightiest princes; of such had they good store:
Well Kriemhild show'd the favour that she the wearers bore.

E'er since the chiefs were purposed the martial queen to win,
In their sight was precious the goodly ermelin.
With coal-black spots besprinkled on whiter ground than snow,
E'en now the pride of warriors at every festal show.

Many a stone full precious gleam'd from Arabian gold;
That the women were not idle, scarcely need be told.
Within seven weeks, now ready was the vesture bright,
Ready too the weapons of each death-daring knight."

With the arrival of the kingly travellers, and their reception at Iceland, we cannot afford to detain ourselves. Suffice it to say, that, by the aid of the secret invisible cloak (*Tarnkappe*) of Siegfried, and his good sword Balmung, Gunther is greeted by the vanquished Brunhild as her legitimate lord and master; and sails back with him to Worms, where she is most hospitably and magnificently received by her mother-in-law, dame Uta, and her now sister, the lovely Kriemhild. A double marriage then takes place; that of King Gunther with Brunhild, and that of Siegfried with Kriemhild; and the festivities which then took place furnish the poet with another opportunity for exercising his descriptive powers, and displaying the sunny joyousness of his social nature. Herein, as in many other points, he is quite Homeric; a certain magnificence and amplitude in the common acts of eating and drinking being as essential to his idea of poetry as the luxuriant energy of more lofty functions. But in the midst of this connubial hilarity, the black spot of destiny begins perceptibly to enlarge into a threatening cloud; and the stately Brunhild begins to show herself as possessed by that pride which the wise man tells us was not made for man, and which, wherever it is harboured, is not long of banishing love, confidence, peace, and happiness from palace as from cabin. The haughty spouse of Gunther looks with an evil eye at Siegfried, whom she had known only in his assumed character as vassal of her husband, judging it an affront that her sister-in-law should be given away to a mere vassal. The respect with which the hero of Netherland is treated by her husband, and the whole court, she cannot and will not understand. Either he is a vassal, and then her pride is justly offended at the unequal match; or he is not, and then Gunther had deceived her with regard to the true character of his companion —and there must be some mystery beneath this, which, as a true daughter of Eve, she can have no rest till she unveils. Possessed by these feelings, she takes a course worthy of the masculine character for which she had early been so notable. On the marriage-night she resumes her old virgin obstinacy, and will not be tamed:—

"'Sir knight,' said she, 'it suits not—you'd better leave me free
From all your present purpose—it must and shall not be.
A maid still will I keep me—(think well the matter o'er)
Till I am told that story.' This fretted Gunther sore."

Alas, poor Gunther! So has it ever fared with men who marry women with beards. The embrace-less bride took a cord, which she wove strong and tough about her wrist, and with that

"The feet and hands of Gunther she tied together all,
Then to a rail she bore him, and hung him 'gainst the wall,
And bade him not disturb her, nor breathe of love a breath;
Sure from the doughty damsel he all but met his death."

In this dilemma Siegfried with his invisible cloak was again called in, and did strange service a second time in helping Gunther to subjugate his refractory yoke-fellow. Brunhild then became tame, and, like Samson, lost her wondrous strength; while Siegfried, as a sort of memorial of this notable service, secretly abstracted and brought with him a golden ring which the stately lady used to wear on her fine finger, and likewise the girdle with which she had tied her lord; and both these, in an evil hour, he gave to his wife—"a gift that mischief wrought," as we shall presently see.

After these achievements, the horny hero retired home to the land of his father Siegmund and his mother Siegelind; and after remaining ten years with him, "the fair queen, his consort, bore him at last an heir." All this time the haughty spirit of Brunhild was brooding over the deep wrong.

"Why should the lady Kriemhild herself so proudly bear?
And yet her husband Siegfried, what but our man is he?
And late but little service has yielded for his fee."

And to clear up this matter, as well as for the sake of old kindness, an invitation is sent by King Gunther to the heroine in Netherland, which is accepted. Siegfried and Kriemhild, and the hoary-headed old Siegmund, come with a great company to Worms, and are entertained in the sumptuous fashion that, as before remarked, the material old minstrel describes with so much zest.

"Sore toiled the chief cook, Rumolt; Oh! how his orders ran
Among his understrappers! how many a pot and pan,
How many a mighty caldron retched and rang again!
They dressed a world of dishes for all the expected train."

The high festal was kept for eleven days; but the loud merriment, which so luxuriantly was bellowed forth to Siegfried's honour, failed to deafen the evil whisper of pride and jealousy in the

dark heart of Brunhild.

> "Then thought Queen Brunhild, 'Silent I'll no longer remain;
> However to pass I bring it, Kriemhild shall explain
> Wherefore so long her husband, who holds of us in fee,
> Has left undone his service: this sure shall answered be.'
>
> So still she brooded mischief, and conned her devil's lore,
> Till she broke off in sorrow the feast so blythe before.
> Ever at her heart lay closely what came perforce to light;
> Many a land she startled with horror and affright."

The cloud thickens; and the first thunder-plump, prophetic of the destined deluge, will immediately burst. Jealousy is a spider that never wants flies. In the midst of the tilting and junketing, the two queens—as queens, like other idle women, will sometimes do—began to discourse on the merits of their respective husbands; in the course of which conversation, the most natural thing in the world was that Brunhild should proclaim her old cherished belief that Siegfried, as a mere dependent vassal, could never be put into comparison with Gunther, who was his king and superior. On this, Kriemhild, whose gentleness, where the honour of her lord was concerned, fired into lionhood, gave the retort with a spirit more worthy of Brunhild than herself. She said that, to prove her equality with the wife of Gunther, she would walk into the cathedral publicly before her; and she did so. This was bad enough; but, following the inspiration of her womanly wrath once roused, she divulged the fatal fact of her possession of Brunhild's ring and girdle—expressing, at the same time, plainly her belief that her husband Siegfried could not have come by these tokens in any way consistent with the honour of the original possessor. Here now was a breach between the two queens, that no human art could heal. In vain was Siegfried appealed to by Gunther, to testify to the chastity of Brunhild.

> "'Women must be instructed,' said Siegfried the good knight,
> 'To leave off idle talking, and rule their tongues aright.
> Keep thy fair wife in order, I'll do by mine the same;
> Such overweening folly puts me indeed to shame.'"
>
> "Hasty words have often sundered fair dames before."

The haughty princess of Iceland now perceives that she had from the beginning been practised upon by Gunther, and that Siegfried had performed the principal part in the plot. Against him, therefore, she vows revenge; and, in order to accomplish his purpose, takes into her counsels HAGAN chief of Trony, one of the most prominent characters in the poem, and who in fact may be looked on as the hero of the second part, after Siegfried has disappeared from the scene. This Hagan is a person of gigantic energy and great experience, but utterly destitute of gentleness and tenderness; all his aims are selfish, and a cold calculating policy is his highest wisdom. Conscience he seems to have none; and, except for a purpose, will scarcely trouble himself to conceal his perpetration of the foulest crimes. He has the aspect of Napoleon—as he is painted by the graphic pencil of Emerson. Like Napoleon, he never hesitates to use falsehood to effect his ends. Pretending extraordinary friendship for Kriemhild, he worms from her the secret of her husband's invulnerability, or rather of his vulnerability—like Achilles—on only one part of the body.

> "Said she 'My husband's daring, and thereto stout of limb;
> Of old, when on the mountain he slew the dragon grim,
> In its blood he bathed him, and thence no more can feel
> In his charmed person the deadly dint of steel.
>
> Still am I ever anxious, whene'er in fight he stands,
> And keen-edged darts are hailing from strong heroic bands,
> Lest I by one should lose him, my own beloved mate—
> Ah! how my heart is beating still for my Siegfried's fate.
>
> So now I'll tell the secret, dear friend, alone to thee—
> For thou, I doubt not, cousin, will keep thy faith with me—
> Where sword may pierce my darling, and death sit on the thrust:
> See, in thy truth and honour, how full, how firm my trust.
>
> As from the dragon's death-wounds gushed out the crimson gore,
> With the smoking torrent the warrior washed him o'er;
> A leaf then 'twixt his shoulders fell from the linden bough—
> There only steel can harm him; for that I tremble now.'"

Possessed of this secret, Hagan finds it easy to watch an opportunity for despatching him. A hunting party is proposed; and when the hunters are dispersed in the tangled wilds of the Wask (Vosges) forest, Hagan, with Gunther, who was accessory, secretly draws Siegfried aside to refresh himself, after hard sport, from the clear waters of a sylvan well; and, while he is kneeling down, transfixes him between the shoulders on the fatal spot with a spear. Then—

> "His lively colour faded; a cloud came o'er his sight;

He could stand no longer; melted all his might;
In his paling visage the mark of death he bore:
Soon many a lovely lady sorrowed for him sore.

So the lord of Kriemhild among the flowerets fell;
From the wound fresh gushing his life's blood fast did well.
Then thus, amidst his tortures, even with his failing breath,
The false friends he upbraided who had contrived his death.

Thus spake the deadly wounded, 'Ay! cowards false as hell,
To you I still was faithful; I served you long and well;
But what boots all! for guerdon, treason and death I've won:
By your friends, vile traitors! foully have you done.

Whatever shall hereafter from your loins be born,
Shall take from such vile fathers a heritage of scorn.
On me you have wreaked malice where gratitude was due;
With shame shall you be banished by all good knights and true.'

With blood were all bedabbled the flowerets of the field,
Some time with death he struggled, as though he scorned to yield,
Even to the foe, whose weapon strikes down the loftiest head
At last, firm in the meadow, lay mighty Siegfried dead."

The death of Siegfried is the catastrophe of the first part of the poem. Kriemhild laments the death of her peerless knight with a love more than the love of common women, and which feeds itself on the intense hatred of the murderer, and the inly-cherished expectation of revenge. The hoary old Siegmund returns home in silent sorrow, for he is too weak to offer resistance; and, to complete the matchless wrong, the thorough-working, never-hesitating Hagan takes unjust possession of "the Niebelungen treasure"—a famous hoard bestowed by Siegfried on his wife—thus depriving the fair widow of the means of external munificence, as he had formerly stopt her source of inward consolation. Not avarice, but policy, was Hagan's motive for this, as for all his crimes. He was never a villain without a reason.

"'A prudent man,' said Hagan, 'not for a single hour,
Would such a mass of treasure leave in a woman's power.
She'll hatch, with all this largess, to her outlandish crew,
Something that hereafter all Burgundy may rue.'"

A deep desire of revenge now takes possession of the once gentle mind of Kriemhild; and all the milk of her affections is metamorphosed into gall. The best things, it is proverbially said, when abused, become the worst; and so the revenge of Kriemhild, revealed in the second part of an essentially Christian poem, works out a catastrophe far more bloody than the warlike wrath of the heathen Pelidan, or the well-calculated retribution worked by the bow of the cunning Ulysses, —

"For Earth begets no monster dire
  Than man's own heart more dreaded,
All-venturing woman's dreadful ire
  When love to woe is wedded."

We have now finished a rapid outline of nineteen adventures of the Niebelungen Lay; and there are thirty such divisions in the whole poem. Our space forbids us to detail what follows with equal fullness; but the extracts already given will have been sufficient to give the reader a fair idea of the general character of the composition. A brief summary of the progress of the story, till it ends in the sanguinary retribution, may therefore content us.

For thirteen years after the death of Siegfried, Kriemhild remained a widow. At the end of that period a knightly messenger, Sir Rudeger of Bechelaren, came from Etzel, King of the Huns, requesting the fair sister of King Gunther to supply the place of his queen, "Dame Helca," lately deceased. Nursing silently the religion of sorrow, the widow at first refused steadfastly to give ear to any message of this description; Hagan also, with his dark far-seeing wisdom, gave his decided negative to the proposal, knowing well that, beneath the calm exterior of time-hallowed grief, the high-hearted queen, never forgetting by whose hand her dear lord had fallen, still nursed the sleepless appetite for revenge. The brothers of the king, however, his other counsellors, and Dame Uta, urged the acceptance of the proposal, with the hope thereby, no doubt, of compensating in some degree to the royal widow for the injury at whose infliction they had connived. But all this moved not Kriemhild; only the distinct pledge given by Rudeger that he would help her, when once the sharer of King Etzel's throne, to avenge herself of all her enemies, at length prevailed. She married a second husband mainly to acquire the means of avenging the death of the first. Under the protection of Margrave Rudeger therefore, and with bad omens only from the lowering brows of Sir Hagan, the widow of Siegfried takes her departure from Worms, and proceeding through Bavaria, and down the Danube—after being hospitably entertained by the good bishop Pilgrin of Passau—arrives at Vienna, where she receives a magnificent welcome from "the wide-ruling Etzel," and his host of motley courtiers, pranked with barbaric pomp and gold, that far outshone the brightest splendour of the Rhine. Polacks and Wallachians, Greeks and Russians, Thuringians and Danes, attend daily, and do knightly service in the court of the

mighty King of the Huns. The marriage feast was held for seventeen days with all pomp and revelry; and after that the happy monarch set out with Kriemhild for his castle at Buda. There he dwelt "in proudest honour, feeling nor woe nor sorrow," for seven years, during which time Kriemhild bore him a son, but only one, whom the pious wife prevailed with her lord to have baptised after the Christian custom. Meanwhile, in her mind she secretly harboured the same deep-rooted determination of most unchristian revenge; and towards the dark Hagan delay only intensified her hatred. Accordingly, that she might find means of dealing back to him the blow which he had inflicted on her first husband, she prevailed on Etzel to invite her brothers, with their attendants, and especially Hagan, to come from the far Rhine, and partake the hospitality of the Huns in the East. This request, from motives partly of kindness, partly of curiosity, was at once responded to by all: only, as usual, the dark Hagan stands alone, and prophesies harm. He knew he had done a deed that could not be pardoned; and he foresaw clearly that, in going to Vienna, he was marching into a lion's den, whence, for him, certainly there was no return. But, with a hardihood that never deserts him, if for no other reason than that no one may dare to call him a coward, he goes along with the doomed band, the only conscious among so many unconscious, who were destined to turn the halls of Hunnish merriment into mourning, and to change the wine of the banqueters into blood. So far, however, his dark anticipations prevailed with his unsuspecting comrades, that they marched in great force and well armed; so that when, after encountering some bloody omens on the long road, they did at length encounter the false fair welcome of the injured queen, they were prepared to sell their lives dearly, and to die standing. No sooner arrived than they were well advertised by the redoubted Dietrich of Bern, (Verona,) then attached to Etzel's court, of the temper of their hostess, and of the deathful dangers that awaited them behind the fair show of regal hospitality. This information only steeled the high heart of Hagan the more to meet danger in the only way that suited his temper, by an open and disdainful defiance. He and his friend Volker, the "valiant gleeman," who plays a distinguished part in the catastrophe of the poem, doggedly seated themselves before the palace gate, and refused to do homage to the Queen of the Huns in her own kingdom; and, as if to sharpen the point of her revenge, displayed across his knees his good broadsword, that very invincible *Balmung* which had once owned no hand but that of Siegfried. This display of defiance was a fitting prelude to the terrible combat that followed. Though the knight of Trony was the only object of Lady Kriemhild's hatred, connected as he was with the rest of the Burgundians, it was impossible that the sword should reach his heart without having first mowed down hundreds and thousands of the less important subordinates. Accordingly, the sanguinary catastrophe of the tragedy consists in this, that in order to expiate the single sin of Hagan—proceeding as that did originally out of the false dealing of Siegfried, and the wounded pride of Brunhild—the whole royal family of the Burgundians or Niebelungers are prostrated in heaps of promiscuous slaughter with their heathen foemen, the Huns. The slaughter of the suitors, in the twenty-second book of the Odyssey, is ferocious enough to our modern feelings; but the gigantic butchery with which the Niebelungen Lay concludes out-purples that as far as the red hue of Sylla's murders did the pale castigation of common politicians. Eight books are occupied in describing the details of this red ruin, which a woman's revenge worked; and the different scenes are painted out with a terrific grandeur, that resembles more the impression produced by some horrid opium dream than a human reality. Victim after victim falls before the Titanic vastness of the Burgundian heroes—Gunther, and Gernot, and Gieselher, the valiant gleeman Volker, who flourishes his broadsword with a humorous ferocity, as if it were his fiddlestick, and, above all, the dark Hagan himself:

> "Well grown and well compacted was that redoubted guest;
> Long were his legs and sinewy, and deep and broad his chest.
> His hair, that once was sable, with grey was dashed of late,
> And terrible his visage, and lordly was his gait."

Finding her first attempt at midnight assassination fail, the Queen first commits her cause to Bloedel, the brother of Etzel; but in an instant his head was severed from his body by the might of Sir Dankwart. A terrible massacre ensues, during which the banqueting hall of King Etzel is turned into a charnel-house. Then Iring, the Danish Margrave, falls in single combat with Hagan. An infuriate rush is now made by the Huns against the Burgundians, who had fortified themselves in the hall; but against such men as Dankwart, Hagan, and Volker, they avail no more than hail against the granite rock.

> "Thereafter reigned deep silence, the din of war was hushed;
> Through every crack and cranny the blood on all sides gushed
> From that large hall of slaughter; red did the gutters run.
> So much was through their prowess by those of Rhineland done."

Kriemhild then, finding all her efforts with the sword baffled, sets fire to the hall; but, the roof being vaulted, even this application of the terror that scared Napoleon from Moscow, did not subdue the Promethean endurance of the Burgundians. The noble Margrave Rudeger is at last appealed to, as bound by his promise made to Kriemhild at Worms to prosecute the bloody work of her revenge to the last; but he also, with five hundred of his men, falls in the bloody wrestling, and with him his adversary Gernot, the brother of Gunther. Last of all, the haughty defiant spirit of the unsubdued Hagan draws, though unwilling, the redoubted Dietrich of Bern into the fight; and before his might Hagan himself is not slain, but taken captive, that he may be reserved to glut the private appetite of the sanguinary queen. "*Bring me here John the Baptist's head in a charger!*" Nothing less than this will satisfy the terrible revenge of Kriemhild. With her own hand

she lifts up the terrible sword Balmung, and, meeting Hagan face to face in the dark prison, and charging him hot to the heart with his deadly wrongs, severs the head from his body. Kriemhild's revenge is now complete. But the revenge of Him who rules above required one other blow. This was immediately executed by the aged master Hildebrand, one of Dietrich's company. And the poem concludes, like a battle-field, many to weep for, and only a few to weep.

> "There now the dreary corpses stretched all around were seen;
> There lay, hewn in pieces, the fair and noble queen.
> Sir Dietrich and King Etzel, their tears began to start;
> For kinsmen, and for vassals, each sorrowed in his heart.
>
> The mighty and the noble there lay together dead;
> For this had all the people dole and drearihead.
> The feast of royal Etzel was thus shut up in woe.
> Pain in the steps of pleasure treads ever here below."

On the singular poem, of which a brief but complete outline now stands before us, many remarks of a critical and historical nature might be made; but we confine ourselves to three short observations, and with these leave the matter to the private meditations of the reader. *First*, that the poem is not "snapt out of the air," as the Germans say, but has a historical foundation, seems sufficiently manifest—Etzel being plainly the famous Attila, Dietrich, Theodoric the Goth, and counterparts to Siegfried and Gunther being producible from the early history of the Franks.[17] Besides this, it is perfectly plain, from the analogy of the Cid, and other popular poetry of the narrative character, that not religious allegory—as some Germans would have it—but actual, though confused and exaggerated history, is the real staple of such composition. The nucleus of the story of the Burgundian Kings, and the revenge of Kriemhild, belongs, probably, to the century following that in which Attila was so prominent a character. But the complete poem, in its present shape, is not later than the thirteenth century. Its author is not known.

Secondly, the lay of the Niebelungen is extremely interesting, as disproving, so far as analogy may avail to do so, the Wolfian theory above alluded to, of the composition of the *Iliad* out of a number of separate ballads. Lachmann has tried the same process of disintegration with the unknown Homer of his own country; but a sound-minded Englishman needs but to read the poem as it has been given us, for the first time, complete by Mr Lettsom,[18] in order to stand aghast at the extreme trouble which learned men in Germany often give themselves, in order to prove nonsense. "*Nihil est tam absurdum quod non scripserit aliquis Germanorum.*"

Thirdly, as a poetical composition, the Lay of the Niebelungen will not bear comparison for a moment with the two great Greek works of the same class; it is even, in our opinion, inferior to its nearest modern counterpart, the *Cid*. The author of the *Iliad* possessed a soul as sunny and as fiery as those lovely island-fringed coasts that gave him birth; and in describing battles he rushes on himself to the charge, like some old French-eating Marshal Blucher, the incarnation of the whirlwind of battle which he guides. Our German minstrel takes matters more easily, and, while his pen revels in blood, sits all the while in his easy chair, rocking himself delectably, and, like a true German, smoking his pipe. His quiet serene breadth is very apt to degenerate into Westphalian flats and sheer prosiness. When, again, he would be sublime and stirring, as in the bloody catastrophe, he is apt to overshoot the mark, and becomes horrible. His heroes are too gigantic, and do things with a touch of their finger which no Homeric hero would have dreamt of without the help of a god. The fancy, also, of the old German is very barren and monotonous, as compared with the wealthy Greek. His similes are few; he has no richness of analogy. Nevertheless, the Niebelungen Lay remains for all Europe a very notable poem—for all lovers of popular poetry an indispensable study. Whatever else it wants, it has nature and health, simplicity and character about it; and these things are always pleasurable—sometimes, where a taint of vicious taste has crept in, your only curatives.

FOOTNOTES:

[14] *The Fall of the Niebelungers*; otherwise the Book of Kriemhild: a translation of the *Niebelunge Nôt*, or *Niebelungen Lied*. By William Nanson Lettsom. London: Williams and Norgate, 1850.

Ueber die Iliade und das Niebelungen Lied. Von Karl Zell. Karlsruhe: 1843.

[15] *Das Niebelungen Lied*; in's hoch Deutsche übertragen. Von August Zeune. Berlin: 1814.

[16] These Burgundians are, in the second part of the poem, also called the *Niebelungen*, which epithet, however, in the first part, is applied to certain distant Scandinavian vassals of Siegfried. The origin of this name has caused much dispute amongst the learned.

[17] In the year 436, Gundicarius, king of the Burgundians, was destroyed with his followers by the Huns; and this event is supposed to be represented by the catastrophe of the Niebelungen.—Lettsom, Preface, p. 4, and Zelle, p. 370.

[18] The translation by *Birch*, published at Berlin in 1848, follows Lachmann's

mangled text, and is otherwise very inferior to Mr Lettsom's.

ADDITIONAL CHAPTERS FROM THE HISTORY OF JOHN BULL.

CHAPTER I.
HOW DICK DEVILSDUST WENT UPON HIS TRAVELS; HOW THE JUGGLER MADE A PACTION WITH MOSES; AND HOW HE KEPT IT.

You are, I suppose, perfectly aware of what took place before Juggling Johnny was appointed steward of Squire Bull's household. The story is not a pretty one; and, for the sake of those who are dead and gone, I shall not enter into particulars. Suffice it that Johnny was installed in the superintendence of the under-servants' room through the influence of Dick Devilsdust, Old Hum, the superannuated Quack, Bendigo the fighting Quaker, and a lot more of the same set, who lived in the villages upon the Squire's property, and bore anything but goodwill to the steady and peaceable tenants. Dick Devilsdust, in particular, was a walking pestilence to himself. For some reason or other, which I could never fathom, he had imbibed a most intense hatred to the military, and never could set his eyes upon a Redcoat without being thrown into a horrible convulsion, and bellowing like a bull at the sight of a Kilmarnock nightcap. As he grew up, he took to writing tracts between the intervals of weaving; and one of his first productions was an elaborate defence of Esquire North, who was then accused of having used harsh measures towards one of his tenantry. It is reported that Dick sent a copy of this pamphlet to the Esquire, with his humble compliments and so forth; but whether that be true or no, certain it is that he never received any thanks, or so much as a stiver's acknowledgment for having taken up cudgels against poles—an omission which, to the present day, he remembers with peculiar bitterness. So Dick thought it his best policy, as it really was, to turn his attention to the state of matters at home in Bullockshatch. Dick, you must know, dealt in a kind of cloth so utterly bad that no tenant on the estate would allow it to approach his skin. It was stamped all over with great flaring patterns of flamingos, parroquets, and popinjays, such as no Christian could abide the sight of; and if you took one of his handkerchiefs to blow your nose with, the odds are that its texture was so flimsy that both your fingers came through. He was therefore obliged to sell it to people living beyond the estate—Jews, Turks, heretics or infidels, he did not care whom, so that he could turn a penny; and some of those benighted creatures, having no other way of covering their nakedness, were content to take his rags, and to pay him handsomely for them. For all that, Dick was a discontented man. Did he meet a respectable tenant of Squire Bull going soberly with his family to church, when he, Dick, was pretending to jog to the meeting-house with his associates, (though Obadiah refused to certify that he was by any means a regular attender,) he would make mouths at the worthy man, and accost him thus:—

"So, sir! going to the tithe-eating parson's, I see—much good may it do ye. And if ye don't happen to have any particular sins this fine morning to repent of, I may as well remind ye that the quartern loaf is a farthing dearer than it ought to be just at the present time. Do you know what a locust is, you clod? You're a cankerworm, you base chawbacon!" And so on he would go reviling the honest man, who had all the mind in the world to lay him on the broad of his back in the mud—and would have done it too, had it been a working week-day. Another while, Dick would send the bellman round the village, and having called a special meeting of weavers like himself, he would harangue them, in some fashion like the following:—

"Look'ye, my lads, I'm an independent man and a weaver, and I don't care a brass for Squire Bull. I've got a seat in the under-servants' room, and if I am not entitled to make a row at meal-times I don't know who is. I'll tell you a bit of my mind—you're the worst-used set of fellows on the face of the earth, and if you have the least atom of pluck you won't stand it. Here are you obliged to take your flour from the Squire's tenantry, when you might get it cheaper if you went to the next town and bought it from Nick Frog, or Philip Baboon, or even Esquire North; though I consider his name an abomination, and would not give sixpence to save him from perdition. And then you have to find meal for Dragon the house-dog, and to victual some of the under servants; and it's no joke, I can tell you, what they eat. If you stand this any longer, you are a set of jolterheads, and nincompoops, and asses, and slaves, and base cowardly coistrels. Why don't you get up a stir, rouse the villages, and alarm the tenantry a little? Rely upon it, they will come to reason soon enough if you give them a hint or two about the duck-pond or the pump; and for my own part, I don't mind telling them so in the servants' hall."

And so he would go on, raving and spouting, telling everybody that Squire Bull was a superannuated idiot, with not half the sense of his natural bye-blow Jonathan—a chap whom Dick quoted on all occasions—till he got a kind of reputation as an itinerant orator; and the tag-rag-and-bobtail would come from any distance, if they were certified that Devilsdust was to give tongue.

Now, as to the grievance that Dick complained of, there was none. The tenantry, as you know, were obliged to pay a pretty high rent to Squire Bull for their farms, and to keep up all sorts of watchmen and gamekeepers, and rural police—besides a night-patrol on the canal—not only for the general security of the estate, but for the order of the villages, which hatched the most turbulent, mischievous, and discontented crew that ever an estate was cursed with. When one of these fellows in the villages fell ill, the tenantry were compelled to pay for his nursing and cure. When any of them were out of employment, and lounging about the market-place with their hands in their breeches' pocket, not knowing where to turn for a job, the tenantry, out of sheer goodness of heart, gave them a turn at ditching or draining; and though they worked very ill they

got fair wages. More than two-thirds of all the webs they wove—for some of them were really skilful artisans, and not mere botchers like Devilsdust—were taken by John Bull's tenantry: they paid almost no rent to the squire—in fact, they were a great deal too well treated, and this indulgence had turned their heads. They wanted now to have nothing to do with the tenantry—beyond forcing them to take the same amount of cloth as before—and to get all their meat and bread from Frog, Baboon, North, Jonathan, and others, who lived off the estate, and who, they thought, would be uncommonly glad to take webs in exchange for provisions. None of these squires wanted webs, because their own villagers would have made a precious hullabaloo if they had introduced into their estates anything which was manufactured on the grounds of Mr Bull; but they made believe as if they would have no objections, at some future period, to meet the views of Devilsdust; and in the mean time, having a good deal of land which they wished to see properly tilled, they intimated to the villagers of Squire Bull, that they would have no objection whatever to sell them cattle and corn at a rate somewhat smaller than Bull's tenantry could afford.

This scheme never could have been carried into effect but for a difference, in the servants' hall. It is of no use now raking up old matters. Carried it was, to the great disgust of the tenantry, and Juggling Johnny was appointed steward. To do the Juggler justice, he was not altogether in favour of the plan. But he could hardly help himself, as, without the assistance of Dick and his backers, he never would have got the keys; so, being an adroit little creature, and as clever at spinning a pirouette as an opera-dancer, he turned his back upon himself, declared that the tenantry were labouring under an antiquated fallacy, and that he would put all to rights in the twinkling of a bed-post. So, much against the convictions of the Squire, who knew him of old for as incapable a squirrel as ever cracked a rotten nut, he sat himself down at the head of the table, and began to talk to the servants as though he were a second edition of Mahomet or the prophet Nixon.

And where do you think was Dick Devilsdust all this time? If you suppose that he was not looking after his own interest, you are consumedly mistaken. No sooner was the measure which swindled Squire Bull's tenantry carried in the servants' hall, than he went down to the country, called the villagers together, mounted upon an old sugar-barrel—which was now perfectly useless—and, brandishing a billy-roller in his hand, addressed them in the following terms:—

"Friends, Billy-roller men, and brothers! lend me your ears! The victory is won—we have done the trick! Cottonchester and the Mississippi are henceforward laid side by side. (Enormous cheering.) The devil take Bull's tenantry. (Applause.) They are dolts, asses, fools, idiots, chawbacons, and Helots. Bull himself is a blockhead, and we must look after his affairs. We alone, and not the tenantry, are fit to do it. (Cheering.) And I am not going to stand any nonsense about police or house-dogs. (Vociferous applause.) We know very well why they are kept; and I, for one, have no notion of being interfered with. You understand me? (Cries of "We do!") Well, then, I'll tell you what it is—the Juggler hasn't behaved to me at all handsome in this matter. Not that I care about it one toss of a Brummagem farden; but I think they might have paid a little more respect to the voice of the villages. Howsom'dever, d'ye see, I don't mind the thing; only, as my health's a little shaken as it were with doing jobs of yours, I think a slight jaunt would do me good; and as I have been obliged to neglect my business, at an enormous sacrifice, on your account, perhaps you wouldn't consider it an unwarrantable liberty if I were just to send round the hat."

So Devilsdust sent round the hat, and pocketed a lot of browns with some stray sixpences to boot—quite enough in fact to clear him in his projected jaunt, and something more. This subscription—being the first—turned out so well that Bendigo the Quaker, who had been a strong backer of Devilsdust, and, as some thought, was the cleverer fellow of the two, tried to get up a collection on his own account; but, I am sorry to say, made nothing of it. So Devilsdust, having pocketed the blunt, went out to take his holiday.

How do you think he used it? He made what he called a "Practical Tour" through the estates of Don Pedro, Don Ferdinando, Signor Macaroni, and Sultan Koran, advertising his wares everywhere, and entreating them to give him custom. Moreover, he lost no opportunity of abusing his landlord, John Bull, whom he held up everywhere to contempt as the most idiotical, prejudiced, pig-headed individual living. He said that there was but one way of promoting universal brotherhood among all the estates, and that was by admitting his, Dick Devilsdust's, wares free of duty. He pledged himself that, if this were done, there would be no more squabbles or lawsuits; and as he invariably spoke in a dialect which no one who heard him could understand, whilst he did not understand one word which was made in reply to his speeches, the effect, of course, was electric. He came back, swearing that there could be no more lawsuits, on account of his (Devilsdust's) enormous expected consignments; and that all Bullockshatch should unite as one man, to compel Squire Bull to dismiss every policeman, watchman, and bumbailiff in his service. As for poor Dragon, who had long been the terror of tramps and poachers, Dick proposed that he should be poisoned forthwith, or at all events starved to death; but he had not the smallest objection that his skin should be stuffed, and preserved as a specimen of an extinct animal.

Meanwhile Juggling Johnny, the new steward, set about regulating the affairs of the household as quietly as possible. The Juggler was not now quite so young as he once was, and, moreover, he had taken unto himself a wife; so that his wages became a matter of considerable importance to him, and he had no wish to do anything which might induce Squire Bull to give him warning. But he had difficult cards to play. You must know that the lower servants' room was fitted with an entirely new set, and a number of these were fellows bred in the villages, who were ready to say ditto to every word which was uttered by Devilsdust or Bendigo. They had no abstract affection,

but, on the contrary, an intense contempt for the Juggler, who they said—and perhaps they had reason for it—was not worth his wages; and they seemed to make it the pet business of their lives to keep him in hot water. One while Hum, the quack doctor, would insist on overhauling his accounts, and made a tremendous outcry if every remnant of candle was not accounted for. The Juggler tried to stop his mouth by giving his son an appointment in the scullery, but old Hum, who was a regular Greek, would not submit to be put off in that way. Another while a fellow would rise in the common's hall, and quietly propose that the villagers should, thenceforward, pay no rent to the Squire. Some wanted to have beer gratis; others complained that they were not allowed to have their stationery for nothing. In short, there was no end to their clamour, so that the Juggler very soon found that he had by no means an easy seat. Then there was another section of the servants, friends of the regular tenantry, who liked the Juggler just one degree better than they liked Devilsdust or Bendigo. They took every opportunity of telling him that he was playing the mischief with the whole estate; that the rents were being paid simply out of capital or borrowed money, instead of profits; and that, if he did not alter his whole system, and clap on a decent embargo on the corn-carts and meat-vans of Nick Frog, North, Jonathan, and the rest, he might wake some fine quarter-day without finding money enough in the till to pay himself his wages. That, however, must have been an exaggeration, for the Juggler was too old a raven not to look ahead whenever his own interest was concerned. The only men who really stuck to him on all occasions were such of the servants as he could provide with places in the household, or furnish with stray pickings on the sly; and, to do them justice, they adhered to him like leeches. The upper servants, though they bore no great love to Johnny, thought it best, in the mean time, to interfere as little as possible, and to let things run their course; only this they were determined upon, that no improper or suspected person should get into the house without their leave.

You may possibly think that the Juggler could have no interest to break this fundamental rule of the household, but if so, you are confoundedly mistaken. It was an old custom in Bullockshatch, that nobody could be admitted as a servant to the lower room unless he should produce a certificate from the village or farm from which he came, to the effect that he was a person of reasonably good character, and unless he swore on the New Testament that he would serve Squire Bull faithfully. Now it so happened that, when the Juggler went down to the largest village on the estate to get his certificate of character, he found, very much to his petrifaction, that Moses the old-clothesman, with three hats upon his head, and a baize bag for cast habiliments under his arm, had put up a candidate of his own persuasion, and was haranguing the villagers in the market-place. Moses was, to say the least of it, a doubtful kind of character. Besides his ostensible calling, and a minor though undisguised traffic in oranges and sponges, he did a little bit of underhand bill-broking and discounting at most enormous percentages. He was suspected, moreover, of being the real owner of the sponging-house, which was actually kept by his nephew, to which all the unhappy lads who were not prepared to cash up when the bills became due were carried, and fleeced out of their watches, rings, and studs, or anything else which they had about them. It was said, moreover, that Moses was a sweater and a slop-seller, and that he was in the habit of kidnapping Christian tailors who had gone astray, and shutting them up under lock and key in stifling garrets, where they were compelled to work for him on the smallest possible allowance of cabbage, without a slice of cucumber to flavour it. One thing there was no doubt of, that, by some means or other, Moses had become enormously rich, so that he was able to lend money to any of the neighbouring squires who might require it, and it was strongly surmised that he even held bonds with the signature of John Bull appended.

You may fancy, from this description of him, that Moses was by no means popular; nor was he. But money will go a great way, and the truth is, that he had so many of the villagers under his power that they durst not say a word against him. Then, again, he had made friends with Obadiah, to whom he talked about liberty of conscience, and so forth; dropping, at the same time, a five-pound note on the floor, and pretending not to notice that Obadiah's splay foot covered it by an instantaneous instinct. So they parted on the best of terms, Moses calling Obadiah "ma tear" as they shook hands, and Obadiah snuffling something about "a chosen vessel." After that they thoroughly understood one another, though Obadiah did not altogether give up his old trick of soliciting the ladies for a subscription to convert Moses—the proceeds whereof never reached the latter, at least under the persuasive form of hard cash.

Great, therefore, was the astonishment of the Juggler when he found Moses speaking in the market-place, and Obadiah cheering him with all his might and main. He would gladly have slunk off, if he had been allowed the opportunity of doing so; but Obadiah was too quick for him.

"Here's a dispensation!" cried our lank-haired acquaintance, the moment he caught a glimpse of the Juggler's wrinkled mug passing round the corner of the lane. "Here's a special vouchsafing, and a jubilation, and a testimony—ha, hum! Make way there, you brother in the fustian jacket! and you fellow-sinner in the moleskins, take your pipe out of your cheek, and let pass that Saul among the people!"—and before he knew where he was, the Juggler was hoisted on the shoulders of the rabble, and passed on to the hustings, where he found himself placed cheek-by-jowl with Moses and Obadiah, and every kind of money-lender and usurer, and hypocritical frequenter of the Stocks, clustering around him, and wringing his hand, as though they had loved him from infancy.

"Three cheers for Juggling Johnny, the friend of liberty of conscience!" cried one—"Huzza for the Juggler and anythingarianism!" vociferated a second—"Down with Christendom!" roared a third —"Make him free of the Synagogue!" suggested a fourth—"Three groans for Martin!" shouted a fifth—"Schent per schent!" screamed a sixth; and, finally, they all agreed upon one chorus, and

rent the welkin with acclamations for Moses and the Juggler.

You may easily conceive that the latter was anything but delighted at this demonstration. He had a proud stomach of his own, and was woundily disgusted to find that he was only considered as playing the second fiddle to the old-clothesman. But nevertheless he durst not, for the life of him, show any symptoms of vexation; so he stepped to the front of the hustings with a grin on his face, as though he had been fortifying himself for the task with a dram of verjuice, and began to speechify as follows:—

"Friends, and enlightened villagers! your reception of me this day is the proudest criterion of my life. Unaccustomed as I am to public speaking, yet, on this occasion, when liberty of conscience is the grand climacteric menstruum which depends upon the scale, I would be unworthy the name of a thorough indigenous renovator if I did not express, by all the judicious idiosyncrasy in my power, the deep aspirations which vibrate in my unfathomed sensorial region. Yes, my friends, it is true! liberty of conscience is liberty of conscience; and the man who denies that proud and exalted position is, to my mind, no better than a mere residuary instigator. As the progress of opinion moves forward, so move its chariot wheels; sometimes unseen amidst the roar of popular ebullition, but never the less distinctly, that the clear calm voice of conscience illustrates the oscillations of the heart, and marks, beyond the possibility of doubt, those unequivocal demonstrations which control the destiny of empires. Holding such opinions, as I have ever held them—relying upon the quantification of the predicate which dictates irrevocably to the sublime and recondite motion of the spheres—and appealing, moreover, to my own past experience, and your knowledge of my consistorial qualifications, I have little hesitation or dubiety, at the present juncture, of claiming your senatorial suffrages to the proud position which I trust I am redintegrated to occupy!"

At this, some few fellows at the outskirts of the crowd began to cheer; and Johnny, taking advantage of the circumstance, made them a polite bow, and was about to skip off without further question. But a big bumbailiff, who was an intimate friend of Moses, stopped him at once.

"Lookye, master Juggler!" said he, "all this may be very well, and, for my part, I've no manner of objection to make to your principles. They might be a thought clearer, perhaps, but that's neither here nor there. But what we want to hear from you is this—will you stand by Moses at this pinch, and lend his friend a helping hand to get into the servants' hall?"

It was pitiable to see how the Juggler twisted and turned. He had a mouth's mind to say no to the whole concern; but he knew very well that, if he did so, the villagers would have nothing to say to him. For there were two public-houses in the market-place decorated with flags, inscribed with such mottos as "Moses for ever!" and "Vote for the Talmud and liberty of conscience!" and through the open windows you could see scores of fellows within, guzzling beer and gin, and smoking tobacco—all, as you may suppose, at the expense of the old-clothesman. So the Juggler, seeing that he had no chance of getting a character there, unless he made common interest with Moses, stepped up to the latter, called him his excellent friend and beloved pitcher, and said he hoped very soon to welcome his nominee to servants' hall.

"Only," quoth he, "you must be prepared for some of the fellows yonder kicking up a bobbery about that idle matter of the oath. However, I think we shall be quite able to manage that: one book is just as good as another, and I do suppose your friend will have no objection to be sworn on the Song of Solomon?"

So they shook hands again, and the mob shouted, and then both the Juggler and the friend of Moses got their characters certified by the village schoolmaster. There was talk at the time of a private arrangement made between them, whereby Moses undertook to stand the whole expense of the beer; but as I never saw a copy of the document, I won't be positive as to that.

But what, think you, took place after this? One fine afternoon, when the servants were sitting at their commons, up gets the Juggler, and proposes that they should agree to let in his excellent friend and colleague of the tribe of Moses, without taking the usual oath. Whereupon a great row commenced—one English, an old servant of the Squire, and an especial friend of Martin's, protesting that he would not sit at the same table with an arch-heathen and unbeliever; and many others did the same. However, Bendigo, Devilsdust, Hum and Company, this time backed up the Juggler, and a majority of the under-servants were for letting him in. This, however, they could not do without the consent of the upper-servants, who very coolly told them that they would do nothing of the sort; and that Moses and his friends, if they refused to take the oath, might even wait at the outside of the door. When this was communicated to Moses and his tribe, they were in a sad taking. However, they sent word to the Juggler that they relied upon his making another attempt; and in the mean time they got Obadiah to go out to the lanes and bye-ways, and preach sermons in favour of Moses. But nobody cared, in reality, one single stiver for Moses. The very villagers, who had drunk his beer, refused to do anything further in the matter; and the Juggler, seeing this, thought it best to hold his tongue and imitate their example. At last Moses and his friends began to wax furious, and to abuse the Juggler as a traitor, time-server, slippery rogue, and so forth; and some of the more pestilent of the under-servants went down to the village, and persuaded Moses for once to pluck up heart, and boldly to knock at the gate in his own person, demanding admittance. "Time enough," said they, "to boggle about the oath when they put it to you."

So Moses, having figged himself out in a sky-blue satin vest, with peach-coloured trousers, and a velveteen cut-away coat, and no end of Mosaic jewellery, went up to the door, and, when the porter came to see who was there, attempted, with the utmost effrontery, to walk in and help himself to the table-beer. But English was too quick for him.

"Halloa, there!" he cried; "what right has that fellow to come here? Has he taken the oath?" Whereupon Moses admitted that he had not, but that he was perfectly ready, if the gentleman pleased, to qualify himself upon the Apocrypha! At this up starts the Juggler, and, to the infinite consternation of Moses, desires that he shall be shown to the outside of the door, until this matter was discussed. This being done, the row began afresh. Some of the servants said that Moses should be admitted at once upon his simple affirmation; but the Juggler, who had by this time taken a second thought on the subject, would not hear of it. So he proposed that they should adopt a string of resolutions, to the effect that Moses was an excellent character, and well qualified to be a servant of the Squire's, but that neither he nor any of his persuasion could be admitted without complying with the rules of the household, and that the matter must just lie over. "And this, I think," said the Juggler, "will be a noble testimony of our respect for the liberty of the conscience, and also in entire conformity with the customs of the household." At this Hum and others got up in a rage, and said—what was true enough—that it was no testimony at all, but a wretched piece of shuffling; and that the Juggler ought to be ashamed to show his face in decent society, considering the nature of his previous encouragements and promises to Moses. But, nevertheless, there the matter ended for the time; and Moses, when he was informed of the resolution, uttered a melancholy howl of "Old clo'!" shouldered his bag, and from that day to this has never been allowed to put his nose within the door.

CHAPTER II.
HOW PHILIP BABOON WAS EJECTED FROM HIS ESTATE—HOW COLONEL MARTINET BAMBOOZLED HIS TENANTRY—AND HOW THE ROW BECAME GENERAL.

But I must go back a little, and tell you what was doing in other estates which are adjacent to the Squire's. Philip Baboon, who, as you may remember, had succeeded in ousting his cousin Charles, who was the natural proprietor of the estate, was as deep an old fox as ever established himself in a badger's burrow. He contrived to marry his sons and daughters—and a precious lot he had of them—into the best families in the neighbourhood; and whenever a new match of this kind was concluded, what, think you, did he, but call upon his tenantry to come down with a handsome sum, just by way of gratuity, to set up the young couple in the world! Nor could he plead personal poverty as an excuse for this; for it was notorious to everybody that he was the richest old fellow in Christendom, and regularly spent several hours each day in his closet counting over his coin by sackfuls. In a short while, his own people began to detest him cordially, so that at last he could hardly go out to take an airing, without being startled by the whiz of a bullet past his ear; and he durst not even open a letter without precaution, lest it should be filled with fulminating powder. When he first came into the estate, he was considered rather a hearty old buck than otherwise; for he used to drive about in a pony phaeton, popping into cottages about meal-time, tasting the soup-maigre, and patting the children on the head, though he never was known to give them as much coin as might purchase a penny trumpet. But now all that was changed. He had grown morose and gloomy, never stirred abroad, and maintained a large body of police for the purpose of guarding the premises. It is quite possible that he might have kept possession to his dying day, but for one of the most stupid acts of interference that was ever committed by a master. It so happened that some of the servants had agreed to dine together on a holiday, and as each man was to pay his own shot, there could be no reasonable objection. But what think ye did Philip Baboon? No sooner did he hear the clatter of the dishes, than he peremptorily forbade the servants to sit down to their meal, telling them that, if they ventured to do so, he would have them all taken into custody. This was rather too much; so, next morning, when Philip came out of his dressing-room, what should he find but a huge barricade of tables, chairs, washing-tubs, and what not, erected at the head of the principal staircase, and fifty or sixty of the very worst fellows from the village—poachers, ragmen, and coal-heavers—armed with pikes and cudgels, cursing, swearing, and hurrahing like mad. And, what was worse than that, some of the regular servants were backing them up. No sooner did they catch a glimpse of Philip than they set up a yell which might have done credit to a colony of Choctaws, and let drive a perfect storm of chamberpots and other crockery at his head. Philip jumped back into his dressing-room in an ecstasy of terror, bolted the door, threw up the window, and screamed lustily for the police. But the police were not one whit more to be relied upon than their neighbours, for they only nodded and laughed, but did not budge a foot; and instead of collaring the scoundrels, who were by this time swarming round the doors, they accosted them as excellent friends and beloved brethren, and drank their very good healths, and success to them, out of pots of beer which some of the servants had supplied. When Philip Baboon saw that, he knew it was all up with him; so, having caught up as many valuables as he could well carry, he even stole down the back staircase, and made off, leaving his family to shift for themselves as they best could. In fact, the fright which he got had altogether upset his reason. He skulked about the woods for several days, assuming all sorts of disguises, and sleeping at night in barns; and at length crossed the ferry and landed on Squire Bull's estate, as cold and tattered as a scarecrow.

As for Philip's house, after he left it, it became a regular bedlam. The doors were thrown wide open, and every tatterdemalion on the estate rushed in, whooping, hallooing, and yelling, as though they had been at Donnybrook fair. First, they broke open Philip's cellar, and helped themselves to his best wines and spirits; next, they went up to the bedrooms, smoked in the beds, and committed divers other abominations which it is not needful to detail; then, they took his best furniture, heaved it out of the windows, and made a bonfire of it in the court. In short, they acted for some time like regular madmen—the servants standing by and looking on, but not

daring to interfere. Indeed, it was questionable what right they had to interfere, if they were never so willing to do it; for the estate was now without an owner, and the mob had sworn a most horrible oath, that no one of the blood of Charles or Philip Baboon should again set foot within the property. However, some of the wiser and steadier of the old servants saw plainly enough that these disorders must be put a stop to in some way or other, and that the house at all events must be cleared of the rabble; "otherwise," thought they, "it will be burned to the ground, or thoroughly gutted, and in that case there is little chance that our boxes can escape." So they issued an order that everybody should leave the house, thanking, at the same time, in the most polite terms, the exceedingly respectable gentlemen who had taken the trouble to assist them in getting rid of old Philip. Then it was that they got a sufficient taste of the quality of the fellows with whom they had to deal. No sooner was the order posted up in the different rooms than it was torn down, amidst the hooting of the mob, who swore that they were the sole proprietors of the estate and the house, and everything in it, and that they would not submit to be dictated to by a parcel of superannuated lackeys and footmen. Nay, it was enough to make the hair of any respectable tradesman turn grey on the spot to hear the language which they used. They said that no man had a right to keep any property to himself, but that every one was entitled by the laws of nature to help himself to whatever he fancied. They averred that the boy of all work, who swept out the shop of a morning and ran the errands, was entitled to demand a half share of all his master's profits; and these damnable heresies, they said, they were determined to enforce in future. So you may easily conceive the taking in which all people were on the estate who had a Sunday's suit of clothes, a stick of furniture, or, mayhap, a bag of money.

In short, matters proceeded from bad to worse, and at last became so intolerable that three or four of the old servants, who had contrived to keep a garret to themselves, sent for one Budge, who had been chief constable in Philip Baboon's time, and told him plainly that, unless he could assist them in turning out this villanous crew, everything must necessarily go to wreck and ruin. Budge was an old soldier, who had seen service—a devilish determined kind of fellow when he took any job in hand, and not at all in the habit of sticking at trifles. It was more than whispered that, if Philip Baboon had not lost head altogether at the first brush, but been capable of giving orders, Budge would have stood by him; and such was his influence over the police that there is no saying what might have been the result.

As it was, he heard them to the end without uttering a word, and then, taking the pipe from his mouth, and knocking out the ashes on the hob, he delivered himself in the following oracular fashion:—

"Harkye, mounseers! If so be as how you want the job done, and them raff utterly scomfished, I'm the man that can do it. The force will stick to me, because I sticks to the force. Moreover, they knows by this time that there ain't no chance of their getting their pay so long as this shindy is allowed. They're ready, and I'm ready. Only this—I is to be allowed to do as I likes. I takes my orders from you, and them orders is to be, that I may shoot, hang, or blow up every scoundrel who stands in my way. Them's my terms; and the sooner you puts it down on black and white the better!"

As there was no help for it, the servants gave Budge the order; whereupon he stepped down to the courtyard, called the police together, and told them that if they did not obey his directions, not one mother's son of them would see a halfpenny of their arrears. He then reminded them, that, if the blackguards who held possession of the house got the upper hand, the force would inevitably be discharged, and most of them thrown upon the parish, the poor-rates being no longer collected. They were all ready enough to join him; but they became readier still, when, just as he was speaking, a quantity of filth was thrown upon them from a window above, followed by the hootings and laughter of the drunken gang who were sotting away as usual. Budge did not lose his opportunity; but, beckoning to his men to follow, he took them to an adjoining cellar, where there were plenty blunderbusses and small-arms collected, and having given each watchman twelve rounds of ammunition and a dram, he bade them fear nothing, but proceed to clear the premises.

It was not so easy a task as you might imagine. Many of the desperadoes within had weapons, and were determined to use them, so that a bloody fight took place at the staircase, where the barricades were again thrown up. But the police, being in grim earnest, fought this time like devils, and at last succeeded in clearing the house, and in capturing several of the ringleaders, who were incontinently shaved in the head, and sent off to hard labour in the hulks. In this way some sort of order was restored; and at last, by the general voice of the tenantry, young Nap, a nephew of the old Corsican who had once given Squire Bull so much trouble, was made provisional head-steward of the estate, and remains so to the present day. Budge died shortly afterwards—whether or not from exertion in the above affair I cannot say—and the number of the police was doubled, much, as you may suppose, to the disgust of the malcontents, who have not yet abandoned the idea of a second attack upon the house.

One squib suffices to set off a whole bundle; and you can have no idea what effect these proceedings on Baboon's territory had upon some neighbouring estates. Nick Frog's people, to be sure, both tenantry and villagers, expressed themselves perfectly contented with their landlord; but a very different scene occurred on the domain of Colonel Martinet. The Colonel—who was usually considered as rather out at elbows—had an immense notion of his own importance, and wanted, at county meetings and elsewhere, to take the precedence of Don Ferdinando, whose lands were twice the extent of his, besides being incomparably in finer order. This sort of rivalry had led to many bickerings in former years, though the two were cousins-german; and these were heightened by the fact that, at the Quarter-Sessions, which they both attended, some thirty small

proprietors and yeomen were entitled to vote. Ferdinando had hitherto been invariably elected chairman, a dignity which Martinet would have given his little finger to achieve; indeed, so much store did he set on gaining it that he kept up an establishment far too costly for his means, and, in consequence, took every opportunity of driving a hard bargain with his tenantry. Not that he was illiberal—at least so he said. He was exceedingly desirous that his tenantry should have an opportunity of inspecting the manner in which his accounts were kept; but, somehow or other, he never would give them that opportunity, and great were the complaints in consequence. Privately—there is no use mincing the matter—the Colonel was a weak creature. He had got into an unfortunate habit of issuing orders and then recalling them, solely for the purpose of exhibiting the extent of his puissance and power. The consequence was that you never could depend upon him. At eleven o'clock he would summon his servants, and deliver to them a document regularly signed and sealed, desiring a meeting of the tenantry to be held next day, at which he would announce to them a material remission of rent. Right or wrong, that must be posted instantly. At one, he had changed his mind; the meeting was to be put off, and he intended to charge them twenty per cent additional. At three, there was a new notice, desiring them, under penalties, to attend a Protestant place of worship. At five, out came a placard warning them to conform to the Roman Catholic religion. And if no more notices were given that day, the reason was that the Colonel had gone to dinner. You may therefore comprehend the reason why his people, when they learned what had befallen Philip Baboon, thought it a good opportunity to do likewise, and, at all events, to demand a sight of the books.

It so happened that, when they assembled, the Colonel was in one of his exalted moods; and, on being informed that a large body of men were gathering on the lawn, he immediately gave orders to the gamekeepers to fire upon them. This they accordingly did; and you may conceive the consternation and rage of the poor fellows, who had their faces tattooed with snipe-shot! They retreated, but returned in an hour or two afterwards in augmented numbers, seriously determined on mischief, when, what think you took place? Why, the Colonel, having in the mean time finished another bottle, came out to meet them in a full suit of black, with crape round his hat, and weepers on his wrists, protesting that the whole thing was a mistake—that he loved them as his life—that they were his children, (which might have been the case with some half-dozen of them)—and that, if any of them were going to die from the unfortunate accident of the discharge, he, Colonel Martinet, would be proud and happy to officiate as principal mourner! While they stood staring like stuck pigs at this unexpected announcement, the Colonel began an oration lauding them mightily as the best and foremost tenantry in the universe, protesting that it was a shame and disgrace that they were not allowed to take the wall of Ferdinando's tenants, and hinting that it merely depended upon themselves whether they might not get new lands for nothing.

"At all events, my lads," said he, "one thing is clear—we must have the precedence at Quarter-Sessions. Your honour is concerned in that, as well as mine; and I don't see why we should not have a tidy little court of our own, chosen generally by all the tenantry, to put matters right, and settle any trifling matters of dispute. Don't say one word of apology for what has occurred to-night. I understand the whole matter. Don Ferdinando is at the bottom of the whole mischief, but we'll make him pay for it before long. Is there anything more? I think not. Well then, gentlemen, I insist upon your having a glass of wine all round; and, if you please, we shall drink bad luck to Ferdinando and his tenants!"

You would hardly believe it; but the mob did actually drink the toast, and gave a cheer for the Colonel moreover, and then went peaceably home. But the question about the Quarter-Sessions was by no means settled. Some men held the opinion that neither Ferdinando nor Colonel Martinet had any right to dictate in person, but the whole bench should be composed of persons elected by the tenantry and villagers, independent of the landlords; and, for that purpose, they convened a meeting at the Frankfort Arms—a sort of joint-stock public-house, to which everybody who lived on the estates represented at Quarter-Sessions might come and welcome—to consider what rents should be paid, and what police maintained, and a variety of questions which were utterly beyond their province to decide. Nor had they the sense even to take this step without causing a new outcry, for they summoned to their meeting men from a farm belonging to the estate of Squire Copenhagen, and which had belonged to it since the days of Noah, on the pretext that the flood had unrighteously separated it from their jurisdiction at Quarter-Sessions!

No sooner were they assembled at the Frankfort Arms than they declared the meeting to be perpetual, and voted themselves each a handsome allowance of five shillings per diem at the expense of the landlords; some of whom, like Martinet, paid their share of the subsidy because they could not well help themselves, whilst others, like Ferdinando, told the rascals who called with the subscription-book to go to the devil. Then they set about drawing up new regulations for the management of all the neighbouring estates, of which they now considered themselves the actual proprietors, calling the landlords mere trustees, and declaring that they would make them account strictly for past intromissions. Next, they ordered out a posse of watchmen and gamekeepers, and sent them down the river to occupy that farm of Squire Copenhagen's of which we have spoken, with the full consent of Martinet, who had long had an eye upon it for his own advantage. But they reckoned for once without their host, for Copenhagen was as brave as a lion, and determined to fight to the last drop of his blood before an acre of his estate should be confiscated; and Esquire North, who was a near relation of his, intimated that he should be ready at all times to back him in his reasonable quarrel.

If I were to tell you all that took place in consequence of the proceedings of this villanous gang at the Frankfort Arms, it would occupy volumes. There were no bounds to the disturbances which

they created. They were drunk from morning till night, and might be seen staggering about in dresses which made them facsimiles of the ruffians who murdered the Babes in the Wood. They shouted, and wrangled, and fought, and blasphemed, until no peaceable gentleman durst go near the Frankfort Arms, lest he should be assaulted, attacked, or robbed; and at last they grew so bad that they were indicted as a common nuisance. Martinet, and those who had hitherto supported them, gave notice that the supplies were stopped; and so, after a scene of rioting which baffles all description, they were turned neck and crop out of doors, and the Frankfort Arms was shut up. Some of the vagabonds, not knowing what better to do, marched in a body and broke into Ferdinando's mansion—a feat which they accomplished with the aid of the charity boys on his foundation, for those diabolical miscreants had poisoned the minds and perverted the principles of old and young. There they remained for some days, plundering and ravishing; but were at last driven out again by Ferdinando and his watchmen, who, as you may well suppose, felt no manner of scruple whatever in knocking the ringleaders on the head.

These, however, were only part of the disturbances which took place, for there was more or less rioting in almost every estate in the country; even Bullockshatch did not altogether escape, as you shall presently hear. Indeed, many excellent people began to think that the end of the world must be drawing nigh, for such was the beating of drums, blowing of trumpets, springing of rattles, yelling of mobs, and alarms of fire every night, that no amount of laudanum could insure a quiet slumber.

CHAPTER III.
OF THE ATTEMPTED DISTURBANCES AT BULLOCKSHATCH; OF THE OUTBREAK ON THE FARM AT THE OTHER SIDE OF THE POND; AND OF THE GRADUAL ADVANCES OF PETER.

The news of the ejection of Philip Baboon by the tenantry and villagers spread, as you may suppose, like wildfire all over Bullockshatch, and was also soon conveyed to John's detached farm on the other side of the pond. Now, although the greater part of the tenantry had little confidence in the Juggler, and others who occupied situations in the household, they were deeply and sincerely attached to John, and were ready to stand by him to the last drop of their blood. And so, to do them justice, were the vast majority of the villagers who had money in the Savings' Bank: for, besides the fact that the Squire was a kind, upright, and honourable master as ever breathed the breath of life, they knew that, if anything should happen to him, they might whistle for their principal, let alone the yearly dividends. But there was a set of rascals, the same who for years past had been attempting to batter down the Ten-bar Gate which was put up by old Gray and the Juggler in the Squire's avenue, who thought this a capital opportunity to create a fresh disturbance; so they met at a pothouse hard by, constituted themselves into a kind of sham servants' hall, passed resolutions to the effect that they were entitled to occupy the house, and to have the run of the buttery; and in secret set about the purchase of crowbars, picklocks, and other implements of burglary. This, however, was not done so secretly but that a rumour of it reached the ears of the Juggler, who grew as pale as death at the intelligence, and could hardly be brought round by dint of sal-volatile and burned feathers. When he came to himself, and had thought over the subject, he began to see that he was in an ugly fix. None of his own friends were fit to manage an affair of this kind, so he resolved to take what was precisely the wisest course he could have adopted, namely, to step across the way, and take counsel with old Arthur, who still retained a sort of superintendence of the police. He found the gallant veteran with spectacles on nose, reading Cæsar's *Commentaries*; and being accommodated with a camp-stool, the Juggler even made a clean breast of it, and laid his difficulties before him. Arthur pricked up his ears like a horse at the sound of the hunting-horn.

"Leave this matter entirely to me, Master Juggler!" quoth he. "It concerns the safety of the whole household; and it shan't be said that old Arthur hung back at the last, after having served Squire Bull so long. In the mean time, go you and enrol as many tight lads as you can for special constables; I'll look after the police, and take care to have Dragon the house-dog ready."

So the Juggler hopped down stairs with a heart as light as a linnet's, for he knew that if Arthur took a job in hand it was as good as done. And before evening a whole regiment of tight lads were sworn as special constables. Arthur was at work all night, and, by daybreak, everything was ready. Pattereroes were mounted on the roofs of the outhouses, so as to command the avenue; the regular police was mustered in the Riding-School, and Dragon's collar ready to be slipped at a moment's notice.

The mob, however, did not venture to appear. They had summoned a great meeting to be held on a common, from which they were to march upon John's house; but the hearts of many failed them when they heard tell of the preparations which were made for their reception, and they did not appear at the place of muster. In fact, the whole thing ended in smoke. The meeting on the common broke up. Nobody appeared at the gate save one red-headed fellow, who came trundling a wheelbarrow before him, which he said contained the humble petition of many well-affected villagers; and he requested, quite meekly, that he might be allowed to convey it to the house. No objection whatever was made to this—so the barrow, escorted by special constables, was wheeled up the avenue, and the petition carried into the house, and laid upon the servant's table. When they came to examine it, however, they found what a set of rascals the framers were. "John Bull, his mark," was subscribed at least fifty times to the petition addressed to himself! Mrs Bull appeared to have done little else for a fortnight than go about from booth to pothouse for the purpose of signing her name! If there was faith in pen, ink, and paper, Arthur had committed

himself twenty times over, and so had the Juggler, and almost every one of the servants. Then there were names like Bloody-bones, Dirk Hatteraick, Blue-beard, and Swill-gore, which were never borne by any Christian man, in hundreds; so that it became apparent that it was no petition at all, but an infamous forgery; and it was accordingly chucked under the table. And so ended this new conspiracy at Bullockshatch.

Matters, however, looked more serious on the farm on the other side of the pond, which had always harboured the most turbulent set of people on the whole estate. That hoary old sinner, Peter, of whom you shall hear more anon, had been allowed, through the stupidity, carelessness, or good-nature of some of the former stewards, to take such liberties there, that at last he had the consummate impudence to assert that he, and not Squire Bull, was the Lord Paramount. He even appointed deputies, who claimed a sort of jurisdiction; and if he did not venture actually to uplift the rents, he hinted broadly enough that nobody was bound in conscience to pay them to the Squire, or to render stipend to Patrick, who acted as the Squire's chaplain in those parts. Dan, the old Rabiator, as he was called, had been long his chief agent in the farm; but Dan was now dead, and the man who assumed his place was little better than a nincompoop. Nobody, in fact, could have done Peter's business half so well as Dan. He always kept—at least almost always—on the windy side of the law; talked wildly enough, in all conscience, but abstained from overt acts; and knew precisely how to avail himself of the necessities of the steward for the time being, who was often forced to apply to him for a helping hand in cases of strong emergency. In this way Dan was able to provide handsomely for his family, most of whom were located in different situations of indifferent trust in the service of Squire Bull; and he managed, moreover, to secure a snug little income for himself, by levying a kind of black-mail, called Daniel's pence, at all the fairs and gatherings on the farm. But when Dan died, he left no Elisha behind him. One Byrne tried to put on his mantle—a sorry one it was by this time—and he insisted that all the disciples of Peter, and all others on the farm who bore no goodwill to the Squire, were bound to follow him, on the ground that, before the Christian era, an ancestor of his was supposed to have possessed a corner of the farm rent-free. He had a seat in the under servants' hall, but he refused to attend at commons, alleging that he did not get as much as he was entitled to; and, after several acts of foolery, he fairly crossed over to the farm, and called upon Donnybrook and Shilelah, and the other merry lads who used to roar in the wake of Dan, to follow him, and knock the constables of the Squire on the head. A bigger fool than Byrne you never met with on a summer's day. His game evidently was to have played Peter's cards, to keep temporising whenever he could, and to have done all in his power to advance the interests of that stealthy Jesuit. Peter would have backed him to any extent, so long as he stood up solely for the interests and the rights of Peter; but the moment he deserted that principle, and advanced his own preposterous claims, he found the back of Peter's hand turned to him with a vengeance. A sad sight it was to see the poor fellow take to the hill-side, with a handful of misbegotten idiots behind him, dressed in a new uniform ordered for the occasion, and carrying pikes and rusty swords, and pokers, and such other weapons as they could conveniently command. They had not even victuals enough to sustain them for the first twelve hours of their march; and whenever they knocked at the door of any of Peter's emissaries, imploring that, for the love of the saints, he would hand them out a bowlful of potatoes, they were greeted with a formal commination, and told that they were accursed heretics. They tried to storm a tollhouse or two, for the purpose of abstracting money; but they invariably found the shutters made fast, and divers fowling-pieces levelled at them from the windows of the upper story. At last, after being out for four or five nights in the cold mist and rain, they came down to a house kept by a lone widow woman, in which several of the police were stationed, and swore that, if they were not admitted, they would burn down the premises, and massacre every man, woman, and child within. Possibly they never intended to do anything of the kind; for Byrne, though a blockhead, had nothing savage about him; indeed, he was rather soft-hearted than otherwise. He ran round the house, entreating the police to surrender, in order to save the effusion of blood; but they merely answered by a laugh of contempt, and a discharge of musketry, which was supposed to have settled Byrne's business. However, his followers, on looking about, found him squatted in the widow's cabbage-garden, marvellously distressed in heart, and apparently labouring under a painful visitation of the bowels. He escaped for the moment, but a few days afterwards was seized, tried, and sentenced to transportation. And this is the last actual outbreak which has occurred in any portion of Squire Bull's estates.

But you must not, from this, conclude that everything was going smooth. That infernal miscreant, Peter, had acted politicly throughout the latter affair; not from any regard to Squire Bull, but because he knew he could make more of him by seeming to give into his authority, than by backing up a stupid egotistical creature like Byrne, who never had the ghost of a chance. Now, however, when the danger was over, he, through his emissaries, thought fit to claim prodigious credit for the disinterested part which he had acted. One Claretson was at this time ground-steward for the Squire on that farm, and to him the whole retainers of Peter repaired.

"You see," they said, "what immense respect we have for the authority of Squire Bull. Nothing would have been easier for us than to have set up Byrne; but our consciences would not allow it; and so we have settled what might have been an ugly business without any difficulty at all. We don't wish to claim the slightest merit for having done so. It was our duty, and nothing more. Merely, if you think that we deserve well of Squire Bull, we would just mention that certain of Patrick's people are apt to give themselves airs, and to insist upon walking before us out of a shebeen-shop, which is neither here nor there, only it is unpleasant, considering that many of us and our predecessors maintain that we were in the parishes before Patrick was born. That, we allow, may possibly be matter of dispute; but there can be no doubt of this, that Peter is senior to Martin; and, as Patrick has always acted as a junior brother to Martin, we venture to think that it

is a reasonable request, that Squire Bull shall hereafter acknowledge Peter's nominees as equal in dignity to Patrick's."

It is difficult to say whether Claretson was really humbugged by this jesuitical oration, or whether he was so far misled in judgment as to consider their views reasonable. Certain it is that he gave them a most civil answer; and reported the matter to the Juggler, who was then in particularly good humour, as his character, and perhaps his place, depended on the suppression of the riot. So he called together several of the servants, showed them Claretson's letter, and begged them to speak their minds freely.

"My own view is," quoth he, "that nothing can be more reasonable. Patrick may perhaps fume and get into a huff about it, but who cares for Patrick? He may be very glad that he is allowed to draw his stipend, and what matters it to him whether he walks first or last?"

"And I think," said Gray—not the old Gaffer, who, as you know, brought in Madam Reform, but his son and successor—"I think we can't do less for Peter, considering his very handsome conduct in this business. I am for going still further. Why not make the rule universal in all Squire Bull's properties and estates beyond Bullockshatch? It may not be altogether convenient to bring in Peter here, just at the present moment; but we can think about that afterwards. Meanwhile let us give him what he wants; and let him walk first everywhere except in Bullockshatch."

"I, for one, am perfectly agreeable," said Timber, who, being a man of exceedingly limited ideas, always made a point of coinciding with the opinions of the rest.

"So be it!" quoth Protocol. "But don't you think we might even go a step further? I find it a main inconvenience that I am not allowed to write direct to Peter whenever I have occasion to know the last quotations of indulgences, holy water, or pardons. Could we not arrange among ourselves to send over some respectable gentleman, who might look after any business of the Squire's in those parts, and occasionally pop in in a friendly way, and take pot-luck with Peter? I own that it would be a great accommodation to me, and I don't see how any one could object to it."

The Juggler, however, who had recently been thinking a good deal on that very subject, shook his head, remarking that Squire Bull had long ago expressed his determination that none of his servants should hold direct intercourse with Peter. "And," said he, "that is precisely one of the points upon which he is most obstinate and fractious. If we were openly to broach this matter to him, it might go far to lose us our places. But I'll tell you what;—there may be a way to get round the bush, and establish a communication with Peter, without incurring the scandal. There's my near connection, Mat-o'-the-Mint, who, between ourselves, is of no earthly use here beyond keeping the keys of a certain place which shall be nameless. Suppose we send him out nominally on a visit to Signor Macaroni, or any other squires in the south, and give him a general roving commission? He'll like the job vastly, I can tell you; for, of course, we shall charge his whole expenses to the Squire; and he can take that opportunity of seeing Peter, and arranging as to future proceedings."

No objection being made to this very convenient arrangement, Mat-o'-the-Mint received his credentials. This individual was one of the most lucky men alive, and seemed born specially to refute the proverb, that service is no inheritance. It was difficult at any time to say what he was fit for, for he rarely uttered words of more value than—"Ay, ay! my masters! this is a fine day, as the ancient philosopher remarked." Or, "In respect to that, my opinion is whatever Providence may please." Notwithstanding this oracular turn of mind, he generally contrived to have himself appointed to some snug place in the household, where there was plenty to get and little to do; and it is fair to add, that he never forgot any of his own relations, when he could contrive to provide for them at the Squire's expense.

Peter, who was always alert and vigilant in doing mischief, had, at this moment, more irons in the fire than usual. In the first place, he was getting up a private demonstration in his own village, for the purpose, if possible, of making himself popular with his people, who used most cordially to detest him. Secondly, he wished to stir up the whole tenantry of Signor Macaroni against Don Ferdinando, who had for a long time held a considerable farm in mortgage. Thirdly, he wanted to make all the world believe that he was an altered character since the days when he presided at hangings, burnings, torturings, and other devilish acts of cruelty. And, fourthly, he was most especially anxious, in one way or another, to get speech of Squire Bull. You must know that there was a quarrel of long standing between the two; John, in his younger days, having been insulted and domineered over by Peter and his emissaries, until his patience could bear it no longer; so, one fine day, he armed himself with a horsewhip, lashed the whole gang of them out of Bullockshatch, and swore the most solemn of possible oaths that they should never again set foot within his property if he could prevent it; nor would he even acknowledge that such a being as Peter existed on the face of the earth. Peter, on the other hand, was resolved that he should get some of his people located on John's estate, in spite of all his opposition; and, by dint of perseverance, he ultimately carried his point. For example, Squire Bull would observe from his window an olive-faced fellow in black clothes and purple stockings, with a surtout down to his heels, no shirt-collar, and a shovel hat, pacing down the avenue, and pretending to be reading from a small book with illuminated characters. At this apparition the Squire would start, and sing out to the nearest of the servants—"Lookye there now! what fellow is that? A spy of Peter's, I dare be sworn! Have I not told you, over and over again, that not one of them shall be quartered here?" Then the servant whom he accosted would put on his spectacles, take a long look at the walking spider before him, and reply quite calmly, "Bless your heart, Squire! you are clean mistaken altogether. I know that person perfectly well. He is a highly respectable foreigner, who

has taken lodgings for a few months in the village for the benefit of country air. He is the Bishop of Timbuctoo, I think—or, now that I look again, I see it is the Vicar-Apostolic of New Guinea—a most agreeable, accomplished, gentlemanly man, I assure you." And if this did not satisfy the Squire—which it rarely did, for he used to growl like a mastiff whenever he caught sight of one of those gentry—the servant would put it to him whether it was the part of a Christian and an esquire to harbour ill-will against a gentleman who was merely residing for temporary purposes upon his estate, and who occupied a great portion of his time in visiting the sick and in relieving the poor? On these occasions, John had invariably the worst of the argument; and the upshot was, that one of these temporary residenters was presently located in every village of the estate, and showed no symptom of moving. Very little regard had they for the spiritual concerns of their flocks in Timbuctoo or New Guinea! But to make up for that omission, they took immense pains with the tenantry of Bullockshatch, building chapels in which they burned a mild kind of consecrated incense, erecting schools wherein they taught the children gratis, and wheedling everybody in the most amiable and conciliatory manner possible. They even contrived to make mischief in Martin's family, as I shall presently have occasion to tell you. As for Peter's friends on the farm across the pond, they pretended to no disguise at all, but broadly maintained their intention to support him at all hazards, and to do his bidding. There were no Bishops of Timbuctoo, or Terra-del-fuego there. So many of the tenantry were of their opinion, that they did not care one pinch of snuff for your *præmunires*, or other legal bugbears.

Now, what Peter wanted was to bring Bullockshatch to precisely the same condition as the detached farm. He had got himself, as one may say, firmly established in the lesser spot; and he was determined to move heaven and earth, and mayhap another place, to acquire an equal footing in the bigger one. This he could hardly hope to do, without coming to some sort of terms with Squire Bull, through his servants, and he had been long privately expecting to find an opportunity by means of Protocol, who was a reckless creature, and hardly ever condescended to give a single thought to Martin. Protocol, in fact, was a kind of secular Peter. He was never so happy as when swimming in troubled waters; and the main difference between them was, that Protocol cared for nothing but excitement, whereas Peter never for a moment lost sight of the main chance. You may conceive, therefore, with what joy the latter received the intimation that he might expect, in a short while, to receive a private and confidential visit from no less a person than Mat-o'-the-Mint. Not that Mat was any great acquisition in himself; but being a near relative of the Juggler, and also an upper servant in Squire Bull's household, nothing could be more consonant with the secret wishes of Peter. So he ordered three chapels to be illuminated, and a special prayer to be chanted for the conversion of Bullockshatch; at the mention of which name, it is recorded that some images winked their eyes!

CHAPTER IV.
HOW MAT-O'-THE-MINT UNDERTOOK AN EXPEDITION TO THE ESTATES OF SIGNOR MACARONI; AND WHAT FOLLOWED THEREUPON.

Mat-o'-the-Mint, then, having got his roving commission signed in due form, and his pocket-book well stuffed with bank-notes, set out upon his tour like an actual walking mystery. It is my opinion, up to the present hour, that the excellent gentleman had no precise idea of what he was expected to do; but that his general notion was that he was bound to give advice—at least such advice as he could give—to any one who asked him for it. No man can be expected to accomplish impossibilities: he can merely do his best; and that Mat-o'-the-Mint was prepared to perform quite conscientiously. It was not his fault, if those who sent him did not make him comprehend their design; indeed Protocol, who was a sly fox, and always left a door of escape open for himself in case of emergency, was not likely to be too specific in his instructions, or to commit himself irretrievably on paper.

No sooner was it noised abroad that Mat-o'-the-Mint was on his travels, than there was a considerable stir both among the southern squirearchy and their tenantry, who were then unfortunately at loggerheads. Everybody who had a dispute with anybody else wanted to know what Squire Bull thought of the matter, hoping probably that he would not be disinclined to lend him a helping hand, and mayhap a few pounds; for the fellows in those parts laboured under the delusion that the Squire was made of money. So they were all anxious to get a confidential hearing from Mat-o'-the-Mint, whom they imagined to be a very great man indeed, and a very wise one; arguing, naturally enough, that the Squire would not have entrusted such a mission except to a person of consummate prudence and discretion. Little they knew of the Juggler or Protocol, or of the way in which Squire Bull's business was conducted! But to resume. One fine day Mat-o'-the-Mint arrived on the estate of a gentleman, Don Vesuvius, who was an old friend of Bull's, and was received at the boundary by the ground-steward, who, in the very civilest possible manner, presented his master's compliments, and requested that Master Matthew would drive straight up to the Hall, where a handsome suite of apartments was ready for his accommodation. Privately, and in his heart, Mat would have liked nothing better; but he was not quite sure whether Protocol would approve of his doing so, especially as Don Vesuvius was notoriously on bad terms with some of his own people. So he thought it best to decline for the present.

"My compliments," quoth he, "to your master, and say to him that I am quite sensible that he has done the proper thing in asking me to the Hall. But you see that I am so situated that I can't very well come. My master, the squire, has heard a good deal of what is going on in these parts; and though, as a matter of course, he has no wish to interfere between the Don and his tenantry, yet the fact is that, under present circumstances, I had better put up at the inn. Say to your master that I shall be glad to see him there, any time he may be passing; at all events, I shall certainly

make a point of writing him my opinion on the general question, in the course of a day or so."

Now, it so happened that there were a number of lazy-looking fellows, with knives in their belts, loitering around the drosky while Mat-o'-the-Mint delivered this answer to the ground steward; and these were precisely the worst of the whole crew with whom Don Vesuvius was at feud. Who so rejoiced as they to find that Squire Bull's confidential servant was likely to be on their side! They threw up their hats, and brayed, and danced, and cut fandangos, to all which Mat-o'-the-Mint replied by taking off his hat and bowing like a Chinese mandarin. At last, in the exuberance of their joy, the crowd took the horses out of the vehicle, and fairly dragged him to the village inn, leaving the unhappy ground steward as disconsolate as Ariadne on Naxos.

No sooner were they arrived at the inn, than Mat asked a number of the men to step up to his sitting-room; and having questioned them regarding their grievances, which you may be sure they took care to magnify to the utmost, he called for pen, ink, and paper, and sate himself down to write a long epistle to Don Vesuvius. I can't give you the particulars of this document, further than that it contained an intimation that in his, Mat-o'-the-Mint's opinion, the gentleman had been very much misled in the management of his own affairs. That for the sake of restoring peace and tranquillity, it appeared to the aforesaid Matthew that Don Vesuvius would do well to surrender one half of his estate to the tenantry, without receiving any consideration for it; and that if this arrangement, which he merely ventured to suggest, should meet with approbation, there could be no difficulty whatever in reducing the rents on the remaining half. As also that the undersigned was with the highest consideration, &c. &c. Having finished this doughty epistle, which he despatched by the boots of the inn, Mat ordered his equipage, and drove away to another estate, as proud as Punch, amidst the shouts of the whole idlers of the village.

You may fancy the astonishment of the honest gentleman when he read Mat's letter. It was some time before he could believe the evidence of his spectacles. "Good heavens!" he said, "is it possible that Squire Bull can treat an old friend and fellow-sportsman thus? Haven't I dozens upon dozens of letters under his own hand, guaranteeing me possession of my whole estate, and am I now to be fobbed off in this way, and insulted to boot by an old trencherman of whom nobody ever heard? But I won't believe it! It must be some trick of that rascal, Protocol, who is perpetually writing letters without authority in the name of his master—at all events, I won't submit to be dictated to, in the disposal of my own, by the best Squire living!"

By this time, however, the riotous portion of the tenantry were fully possessed with the notion that Squire Bull was ready to back them up to any extent; so they began a regular insurrection, fired at the gamekeepers, beat the watchmen, and barricaded one of the villages, after they had thoroughly plundered it. But they reckoned without their host; for the tenantry on the home farm were to a man true to their master, and having armed themselves, they crossed the canal, (in which, by the way, some of John's barges were lying, it was thought with the connivance of Protocol,) and gave the rascally rabble such a drubbing, that nothing more was heard afterwards about the partition of the property. The rioters, however, believe to this hour that they were deceived by Squire Bull, who, they aver, had promised to support them, and they accordingly hate him like ratsbane; neither, as you may well conceive, is Don Vesuvius, whose property was proposed to be divided, over and above grateful for this impudent interference with his private affairs.

This, however, was a mere segment of the mischief which was effected by Mat-o'-the-Mint. Wherever he went he tendered advice; and whenever that advice was given, rioting ensued. In short, he proved such a nuisance, that well-affected people would much rather have submitted to a visit from the cholera. At last he arrived at Peter's patrimony, a place which was by no means tranquil at the time. Notwithstanding Peter's boasting, and his perpetual attempt to get his emissaries quartered on every estate in the country, he was the reverse of popular at home. He had a very handsome house, which he kept full of friars, monks, Jesuits, Dominicans, Carthusians, and Grand Inquisitors, fellows who did little else than eat, drink, sleep, and conspire at the expense of the working population. This had become so intolerable, that Peter, though the most tyrannical despot upon earth, found it necessary to come down a peg or two, and announced his intention of revising the laws of his household, which, to say the truth, needed mending sorely. But he did not stop there. He began to intrigue for a restoration of the whole estates which were formerly in the family of Signor Macaroni, but which latterly had passed into the hands of other proprietors—for example, Don Ferdinando; and, at the time I speak of, his village was filled with every description of cut-throat, robber, and murderer that could be gathered from the country round, all of them shouting "Long life to Peter!" and "Hurrah for the independence of Macaroni!" They were in the very midst of this jubilation, which sounded more like an echo of Pandemonium than anything else, when Mat-o'-the-Mint drove into the town; and the moment they heard of his arrival, the very worst of them—Massaniello, Massaroni, Corpo di Caio Mario, and Vampyrio degli Assassinacione—congregated under the windows, and whooped and howled, till Mat, in an access of terror, came out upon the balcony, pressed a flag, with a death's-head and cross-bones upon it, to his bosom, and proposed three cheers for the independence of Macaroni! You may conceive what a taking the poor fellow must have been in before he ventured to do anything of the sort.

Mat, being thus committed to Macaroni, was a mere baby in the hands of Peter. They had an interview to discuss the affairs of the neighbouring Squirearchy, and any other little matters which might occur to either; which Mat felt as an honour, whilst Peter was feeling his pulse. Peter, like an aged villain as he was, affected to be extremely straightforward and open in his remarks, and quite confidential in his communications; so that, in the course of half an hour, poor Mat was entirely at his mercy. After they had chatted for a short time, and cracked a bottle or so

of Lachrymæ together, Peter claps me down a map of the whole country, whereon Squire Bull's farm was marked out with some twelve or thirteen crosses, before Mat, and asked him whether he thought it was all correct?

"Undubitably," quoth Mat-o'-the-Mint, who regarded the crosses as simply indicative of the villages.

"Then there can be no objections to the publication of a map of this kind upon hierarchical principles?" continued Peter, ogling his victim at the same time, as a fox makes love to a gander.

"Hier—I beg your pardon"—said Mat-o'-the-Mint, who was not overburdened with lore at any time, and just then was rather confuscated. "Hieroglyphical principles, did you say?"

"No—hierarchical principles," insinuated Peter, with a smile intended to convey the utmost amount of indulgence. "Hiero, you know, was one of our earliest geographers."

"To be sure he was"—replied Mat-o'-the-Mint—"and an intimate friend of Leander's—I've read of him in the *Imaginary Conversations*—There can be no objections, of course. The map's a capital map!"

"I'm very glad to hear you say so," said Peter, sounding a little silver whistle which dangled from his button-hole, "it is always matter of satisfaction to me to meet with a plain, intellectual, honourable, enlightened gentleman, who knows what's what, and is above all manner of prejudice.—You may take away that map, Hippopotamus"—he continued, as an individual in purple stockings entered the room. "Mr Matthew is perfectly satisfied as to its correctness, and you may mention that when you write to your friends at home."

Hippopotamus swept up the plan and retired; but long after he closed the door, you might have heard a sniggering in the lobby.

"And now, my very dear friend," quoth Peter, "let's have a fresh bottle of Lachrymæ, and a little conversation about those affairs of Patrick's."

It matters very little what passed upon that score, for the job was already settled; but Peter probably thought it safest to make this appear the principal topic of their conversation. They sate up a long time together; and Mat-o'-the-Mint found it no easy matter to get home to his hotel, or to ring up the porter when he arrived there.

So far Peter thought that he was carrying everything his own way; but he was labouring all the while under a confounded mistake. Massaniello, Massaroni, and the rest, were glad enough to get into the village, and to throw up their caps for Peter and Macaroni, so long as they received free quarters, but not a moment longer. They had now time given them to peer into the churches and shops, and to reckon what might be turned to account; and they had made up their minds that if they could only get rid of Peter, there was plunder enough to be had out of his patrimony to maintain themselves in comfort for the remaining portion of their lives. Once having ascertained this, they lost no time in carrying their plans into execution. They broke out into actual revolt, stabbed one of Peter's servants on the stairs, shut up the old firebrand himself in his drawing-room, and discharged pistols into the windows, until they succeeded in frightening him out of his seven senses, and drove him out of the village in the disguise of an ordinary cabman. Then they began, as a matter of course, to help themselves to every man's property, and to share upon principles of equality. You have no idea what a row all this made. Even Ferdinando was furious, for though he had no great cause to regard Peter, he liked still less the rascally ruffians who had turned him out of house and home, and he proposed straightway to march a *posse comitatus* against them. But young Nap, now styled Administrator of the Baboonery, was before him. He had more idle fellows on hand than he knew what to do with, so he sent a whole gang of them off to clear Peter's patrimony of the rioters, and mayhap, if convenient, to bring back the old Jesuit in person. Terrible were the execrations of Massaniello and his friends when they were summoned to surrender by young Nap's people! They said—what was true enough—that if the others were entitled to eject Philip Baboon, they were entitled to turn Peter about his business; and they protested that the people of each estate should be allowed to manage their own matters without interference. But interference was the order of the day. Everybody was interfering; so Nap's men gave them to understand that they did not intend to be exceptions to the general rule. In short, Massaniello and his friends must evacuate or—take the consequences. And, accordingly, evacuate they did, though not without a good deal of burning of gunpowder, levying of subsidies, abduction of church-plate, &c.; and, in due course of time, old Peter was brought back, amidst a discharge of Roman candles, squibs, crackers, and Catherine wheels; and with him returned the whole host of Jesuits, monks, and inquisitors, singing *Quare fremuerunt gentes?* and ten times more ready for any kind of mischief than before.

And where all this while, you may ask, was Mat-o'-the-Mint? Snug at home. Some of the upper servants in the household of Squire Bull had got an inkling of the business he was after, and put questions, which were neither easy to answer nor agreeable to evade. The Squire himself began to grumble. Protocol could not help perceiving that he had got into a scrape by sending out such an envoy; and even the Juggler did not care to have the matter publicly mentioned, but was willing that it should fall into oblivion. It is, however, easier to open a negotiation with Peter, than to get out of one. The difficulty is not to catch the lobster, but to force him to leave go after he has fastened on you with his claws; and you shall presently hear what took place in Bullockshatch, not long after the time when Peter was reinstated in his patrimony.

HUNGARIAN MILITARY SKETCHES.[19]

The brief but brilliant struggle which was terminated, on the 13th August 1849, by the surrender of Vilagos, is unquestionably one of the most remarkable episodes in contemporary history; and numerous as are the writers, both in Germany and England, who have applied themselves to exhibit and comment on its circumstances, it yet is not wonderful that the interest of the subject is far from exhausted. A Schlesinger, a Pulsky, and a Klapka, graphic and striking as are their delineations of the singular contest in which they all more or less participated, have still left much for their successors to tell. The volume before us—a German collective translation of tales and sketches by several Hungarian authors—is of a different class from the works of the above-named writers. It does not aspire to the dignity of historical memoirs, nor is the form it affects—namely, the romantic—one that we usually much admire when applied to such recent and important events as those of which Hungary has been the theatre; events, too, of themselves so striking and fascinating as to render fictitious colouring superfluous. Nevertheless, these sketches must be admitted to have considerable merit. They are vivid and characteristic illustrations of a remarkable country, a heroic people, and an extraordinary period; and the amount of fiction interwoven is, in most instances, little more than is necessary to string together historical facts. Some few of them have little to do with the late war, but all throw more or less light upon the state and character of Hungary and its inhabitants. Their success in that country, the German preface assures us, and we can readily believe, has been very great. Some of them read like prose translations of poems; and with the exception of three or four, which are terse and matter-of-fact enough, their style has often a wild and metaphorical vagueness, recalling the semi-oriental character of the country whence they proceed. Those which take for their foundation the cruelties perpetrated by the Serbs upon the Magyars, and the fearful retaliation thereby provoked, are too horrible—not for truth, but to be pleasant reading; others border on the humorous, whilst some combine the tragic with the gay. Of this last class is the opening sketch by Sajó, entitled *A Ball*. It is a letter from a young lady to a friend, describing her and her mother's terror at the anticipated arrival of a Hungarian division, after English Guyon's glorious victory at Branisko; and relating how the old woman hid herself in cupboards and clock-cases, and urged her daughter to stain her face black, in order to diminish her personal attractions—advice which the daughter, not exactly comprehending its motive, most indignantly rejects. Presently she is astonished by the arrival of a couple of handsome hussar officers, instead of the leather-clad Calmuck-visaged barbarians, seven feet high, and with beards to their waists, which her mamma has predicted; and still more is she surprised when, instead of breaking open doors and ill-treating women, the newcomers organise a ball for that very night—a ball which she attends, and where she is greatly smitten with an elegant captain of Honveds. He has just led her out to dance, when the ball-room windows rattle to the sound of cannon, and a splashed hussar announces an attack upon the outposts. The officers buckle on their sabres and hurry to the fight, begging the ladies to await their return. In little more than an hour they reappear in the ball-room. They have repulsed the enemy, and return flushed and laughing to the dance. But the handsome Honved is not amongst them. The interrupted quadrille is reformed, but Laura still awaits her partner. A tall dry-mannered major, of valiant reputation, approaches her. "Fair lady," he says, "your partner begs a thousand pardons for his absence. With the best will in the world, he cannot have the pleasure of dancing with you, for his leg has been shot away and amputated above the knee." This is the whole of the story—little enough, and owing everything to the manner of telling. The second tale, *Claudia*, by Szilagyi, is striking and powerful rather than agreeable. We pass on to *The Chapel at Tarczal*. All who have read Max Schlesinger's admirable narrative of the *War in Hungary*, will assuredly remember his account of the Hungarian hussar, "the embodiment of Magyarism, born and reared upon the heath," loving his country before all things, and, next to his country, his horse. "There are no soldiers in the Austrian army," says Schlesinger, "who can compare with him in chivalrous daring, dexterity, precision in manœuvres, strict subordination, cleanliness, and fidelity."[20] Mr Sajó loves to exalt the virtues, and exemplify the eccentricities, of this fine race of cavalry soldiers. In several of his tales he introduces the heroic hussar, cheerfully suffering and sacrificing himself for Hungary's good and the honour of his corps. The opening scene of *The Chapel at Tarczal* is an amusing sketch of one of these veterans, thoroughly persuaded of the immeasurable superiority of the Magyar over all other men, and of the hussar over every other soldier.

"The Austrians had won the battle; the Hungarians had lost it. The Austrian general was taking his ease in his quarters, with his staff around him; an officer entered, and reported the capture of a hussar.

"Bring him in," said the General, who was in excellent humour. He himself wore the uniform of the hussar regiment he had formerly commanded, and had unbuckled his sabre and made himself comfortable; whilst his officers stood around buttoned to the chin, and strictly according to regulation.

The hussar entered—a bare-headed veteran with gray mustaches. His face was still black with the smoke of Schwechat's battle; his stiffly-waxed mustaches stuck out fiercely right and left. He glanced gloomily around him, evidently ill-pleased with his company, until his eye fell upon the General. Then a gleam came over his features, like the sun breaking through a cloud, and he was near shouting for joy. The general laughed, and clapped his hands together. He recognised old Miska, his former orderly, who had served him for five years in Szobossló.

"Do you know me again, old man?" said he good-humouredly.

"At your service, Colonel," replied the hussar, raising his hand to his brow, as though his schako were still on his head.

"General, not Colonel," interposed one of the officers.

Silently and contemptuously the hussar measured the speaker with his eyes, wondering that an infantry-man, captain though he might be, dared intrude upon the conversation of hussars.

"So you have let yourself be taken prisoner, Miska?" said the General, willing to tease his old servant.

"What could I do, Colonel? There were so many against me. I got into a crowd of them."

"You knocked over a few, I dare say."

"I did not count them, but *something* remained upon the ground."

"Right, Miska. Let them give you a dram, and then go to my grooms; if anybody meddles with you, give him as good as he brings."

The hussar thanked his former colonel, but seemed in small haste to leave the room. The General noticed him no farther, but turned again to his officers and resumed the discussion of his plan of campaign. Suddenly he felt a pull at his pelisse, and turning, beheld Miska, who had stolen quietly behind him. With an unintelligible gesture, and a countenance of extraordinary mystery, the hussar pointed to something.

"Colonel! Colonel!" he whispered, redoubling the eagerness of his gesticulations. The General had no notion of his meaning. "Colonel, reach me yonder sabre from the corner."

"What the devil do you want with it?"

"Only give it here! In two minutes there shall not be a German in the room."

Miska thought his colonel was a prisoner.

The General burst into a hearty laugh, and told his officers of the hussar's kind intentions towards them. The laughter became general. The officers crowded round the old soldier, clapped him on the shoulder, and made much of him.

"Well, Miska, you will take service with us, eh?" said the General, curious to hear his answer.

"There are no hussar regiments here!" replied the old soldier, twisting his mustaches.

"What matter? You shall be a cuirassier. We'll make a serjeant of you."

"Many thanks. Can't stand it. Should have been serjeant long ago, if I could write."

"What do you think of doing then? Eat your ration in idleness?"

"Not so—by your honour's favour—but make a run for it."

The honest answer pleased the General. The hussar saw that it did.

"A whole regiment of those gaiter-legged fellows could not keep me," he added.

One of the officers asked him angrily why he wished to go back. Those were mistaken, if any, who expected a rude answer from the hussar.

"Yonder is my regiment," he replied, again twirling his mustache. "A true soldier bides by his colours."

To this nothing could be objected.

"Well, Miska, that you may not desert from us, I let you go free."

"Thanks, Colonel." Once more the hand was raised to the schako's place.

"You can go."

The hussar lingered, rubbed his nose, and frowned.

"Colonel—you surely do not intend me to pass through the whole camp in hussar uniform, and on foot. I should die of shame. Let them give me back my horse."

"Your horse? That is the Emperor's property, my son."

"I crave your pardon, Colonel! I reared the horse myself from a colt. I have ridden it for ten years, and it comes at my whistle. By every right it belongs to me. I would rather a bullet hit me than lose the good brute."

"Well, take it."

Even now the hussar did not seem satisfied.

"Colonel! can I go back to my regiment in this scandalous manner?—without my sabre? I shall have to run the gauntlet; they will think I have sold it for drink."

"It shall be restored to you." The General made sign to his orderly; the hussar saluted, and turned to depart. But at the door he once more paused, and gazed pathetically at his former chief.

"Colonel!" he said, in the most insinuating tone he could command.

"Well?"

"Colonel—come over to us!"

And with a bound he was out of the room, feeling well enough that he had said something

extraordinarily stupid, but which he could not help saying though it had cost him his head.

When horse and sabre were restored to him, one of the General's grooms, a mischievous fellow, trod on the hussar's spur, breaking the rowel, and then sprang aside laughing.

The old hussar shook his clenched fist menacingly.

"Wait a little, Italian!" he cried, "I will find you yet." Then saluting the General's window with his sabre, he galloped away.

It was thought that a tear glistened in the General's eye, as he turned to his staff, and said—

"Such soldiers should *we* have!"

Such were the soldiers with whom Görgey drove before him the best generals of Austria; with whom he triumphed in that brilliant conflict, of fourteen days' duration, which terminated in the capture of Pesth, the relief of Komorn, and the complete retreat of the Imperialists.[21] These were the men who rode up to the very mouths of the Austrian cannon at Isazeg,[22] and who followed, in twenty conflicts, the well-known war-cry of the gigantic Serb, Dámjánics. Of this last-named general (of whom Schlesinger has given many interesting details,) we find an interesting and authentic anecdote in Sajó's vigorous military sketch, entitled *The Two Brides*.

Dámjánics and his troops encamped in the night at two leagues from Szolnok. In order of battle, and without watch-fires, they there awaited the signal to advance. The signal was the sound of cannon, fired beyond the Theiss.

The Hungarian General had already fought many battles, won many victories, taken many standards. When he began a battle, he stationed himself in front of his army, looked where the foe was strongest, shouted "Mir nach!"[23] and rushed forward, overthrowing and crushing all before him. It was his way.

There were persons who did not like this way, and who wearied him with assurances that, to be a renowned general, it is not enough to win battles; one must also leave permanent evidence of merit, to be handed down to future generations; one must make speeches, issue proclamations, and so forth.

So it came to pass, when he marched away from the Banat, that he addressed to the hostile party in the province a proclamation which has become celebrated. It was word for word as follows:—

"Ye dogs!

"I depart. But I shall come back again.

"If in the interval you dare to stir, I will extirpate you from the face of the earth; and then, that the seed of the Serbs may be extinct, I, the last of them, will shoot myself."

The success of this first attempt so encouraged the General, that, after much persuasion, he gave a solemn promise to make a speech to his army when next they went into action.

On the eve of the battle, Dámjánics felt his spirits extraordinarily low.

"Strange," thought he to himself, "never yet have I trembled at the approach of a fight, but now I feel as if I had no stomach for it." And he sought within himself the cause of this unaccustomed mood, but all in vain.

Presently, however, one of his staff-officers came to remind him that, before the next day's battle, they expected to hear the speech he had promised them.

"Devil take it!" cried the General. "*That* was what made me shake in my boots. But never fear, it shall be done—I will venture it—the speech you shall have."

He had drawn out his plan of battle in a quarter of an hour. But morning dawned whilst he was still hammering at his speech.

The troops stood in order of battle. Dámjánics rode along the front of the line. Everybody knew he was to make a speech, and what a cruel task it was to him.

Before the colours of the ninth battalion he halted, raised his hat and spoke:

"Comrades!"

At that instant the artillery beyond the Theiss boomed out its first discharge. The General's face glowed, he forgot phrases and oration, tore his sabre from the scabbard, pressed his schako down upon his brow, and—

"Yonder is the foe: follow me!" he shouted in a voice of thunder. A tremendous hurrah was his army's reply, as they followed their leader, with the speed and impetuosity of a torrent, to the familiar encounter of the Austrian cannon.

"Why is it," said Dámjánics, as he limped up to the gallows, after seeing seven of his brave comrades executed before his eyes, on the morning of the fatal sixth of October 1849—"why is it that I, who have ever been foremost in the fight, must here be the last?" That was no empty boast in the dying man's mouth. "To Dámjánics," says Schlesinger, "after Görgey, belongs the glory of all the battles from Hatvan to Komorn. From the commencement of the movement, he was the boldest champion of the national cause." And whatever his staff and his Austrian executioners may have argued from his oratorical incapacity and his ignominious death, neither, assuredly, will prevent his name's preservation on posterity's list of patriot-heroes, even though he should never obtain the monument which it has been predicted that Hungary will one day erect to him,

upon the spot where he mounted the scaffold.

Before proceeding to the longest and most remarkable sketch in the volume, we will extract the beginning and end of a humorous paper, written in true soldier's style, entitled *From the Memoirs of a Quartermaster*.

"I never saw such a man as my lieutenant. It is not because he was *my* lieutenant that I say so, but a merrier fellow was not to be found in the army. Were I a poet or a scholar, I would make a fine romance out of his adventures; but as I unfortunately lack the learning, I must be content to set down a few odd incidents of our joyous camp-life, just as they occur to my memory. It gives me pleasure to recall these anecdotes of my late master, who was lieutenant in the volunteers. Those who knew him will not have forgotten how gay a wooer he was with women, and how brave a soldier in war.

"They transferred us to a battalion that lay in Siebenburgen, and which was not yet completely equipped. Our principal wants were muskets and cartouch-boxes. Nobody had a greatcoat; and, in another respect, the battalion was quite uniform, for every one went barefoot. My lieutenant often complained to the captain, who had been a Bohemian forester, and afterwards a coffee-roaster in Pesth, but who, when his daughter's husband was promoted to be major of our battalion, was by him appointed captain—to him, I say, the lieutenant repeatedly complained that the poor soldiers were frozen, and should at least be supplied with greatcoats. But all in vain; the superior officers gambled the money sent them by Government for the equipment of the troops; and all my lieutenant could obtain from the ex-coffee-roaster was a *bon-mot* which Napoleon, he said, had addressed to his soldiers when they complained in Egypt of bad clothing: 'Avec du pain et du fer on peut aller à Chine.'

"The lieutenant made me write these words on one hundred and fifty small slips of paper, pinned these upon his men's shoulders, and said—'There, my lads, are your greatcoats.' Boots were all that was now wanting. One fine morning we received a hundred and fifty bran-new—blacking-boxes!

"'*Engem ucse*,' said the lieutenant: ''tis good; instead of boots they send us blacking.' And next day, when the little gray general passed a review, our company marched past with their bare feet blacked and polished, and with spurs drawn in chalk upon their heels. The general laughed at first, and then reprimanded the major. The major laughed too, and scolded the captain. Finally, the captain abused my lieutenant, who abused him in return; but, as the one understood no Hungarian, and the other no German, the dispute led to nothing.

"At last we got ourselves shod, by gloriously ransacking a Wallachian village, and thrusting our feet into the red boots the women had left behind them. Thenceforward our company was known everywhere as 'the regiment of Red Boots.'

"In our first engagement we had not much to do. The enemy fired at us from a distance, whilst we stood still and looked at them. Some of the recruits bobbed their heads aside when they saw the shot coming through the air. 'Don't shake your head, my man,' the lieutenant would say; 'you might chance to knock it against a cannon-ball.' In the second action we took a gun from the enemy. It came up very near us and unlimbered; but, before it had time to fire a shot, my lieutenant made the soldiers believe it was one of our own guns; that the enemy were about to capture it; and could we suffer this? We could not suffer it, and rushed on: a few shots met us; but before we well knew what we did, the gun was in our power. The whole was over in less time than I take to tell it.

"From that day forward nobody made fun of the Red Boots, and soon we were supplied with muskets. Many of these were hardly fit to fire with; but bayonet and butt were always there, wherewith to thrust and strike.

"It was in the dog-days. For three months we had received no pay. At last, to silence my lieutenant's terrible expostulations, they sent us money—fifteen notes of a hundred florins each.

"The salaries of Government officials were paid in fifteen-kreuzer pieces; the money we soldiers wanted, for our daily bread, was sent in hundred-florin notes. Of course, nothing could be easier, in the Wallach hamlets in which we were cantoned, than to get small change for fifteen hundred-florin notes.

"Whilst my lieutenant was grumbling over this, and puzzling his head how to divide these few large notes into many small ones, a courier arrived and brought him a letter.

"The lieutenant read the letter, and laughed out loud. Then he ordered a parade. He was the only officer present. Two captains and a major were constantly rambling about, and seldom saw their battalion, but left everything to my lieutenant. So he ordered the drums to beat for muster; and when the men were assembled, he informed them that their pay had come just in the nick of time. Then he produced the fifteen hundred florins[24] and a pair of scissors, made the soldiers file past, and cut off a slip of the notes for each one of them. It was the only way to divide them.

"This done, he came singing and whistling into his quarters, laughed and cut jokes, played a thousand pranks, and at last called to me, and asked if I had a dry cloth at hand, to wipe up something.

"I answered that I had.

"'Go and fetch it, then.' And he continued to laugh and jest, and seemed in most wonderful good humour. 'Make haste,' he shouted after me, as I hurried to fetch the cloth. I felt quite sure he was going to play me some famous trick, he looked so sly and comical when he gave me the order.

"Whilst I sought for a towel, I heard the report of a firearm in the next room. Towel in hand, I threw open the door. The room was full of smoke.

"'What am I to wipe up?' I asked.

"'This blood!' said the lieutenant, who lay upon the ground. The warm heart's-blood flowed from a wound in his breast; in his hand he held a pistol and the letter he had that morning received.

"The letter announced the catastrophe of Vilagos. In two minutes he was dead.

"Thus did my lieutenant make a fool of me, at last.

"Such a merry fellow was my lieutenant."

The various memoirs of the Hungarian war record more than one instance of self-destruction and insanity, amongst the enthusiastic defenders of the Magyar cause, consequent upon Görgey's shameful surrender, and the final downfall of their cherished hopes. As far as the suicide goes, therefore, there is nothing improbable in the conduct of the eccentric lieutenant. Passing over several shorter papers, for the most part clever and spirited, we come to the striking tale, or rather series of scenes, entitled *George of St Thomas*, which, besides being the most carefully finished of these sketches, includes several of the most terrible and romantic historical incidents of that war. Its construction is favourable to extract, and we propose to translate such portions of it as our limits will allow, and therewith close our notice of the *Schlachtfelderblüthen aus Ungarn*. The first chapter is headed—

THE FIEND'S FESTIVAL.

It was dark night in the town of St Thomas. Not a star was visible. Well was it that the heavens saw not what then occurred upon earth.

Men who had grown gray together in love and friendship, dwelling in the same street, under the very same roof, who were bound to each other by ties of blood and kindred, of gratitude and duty, who were wont to share each other's joys and griefs, began, upon a sudden, as if frantic with infernal inspirations, to plot each other's extermination, and to fill their souls with bloody hatred against those who had never wronged them.

It was St Eustace' day. The Raitzen[25] assembled in their church, to worship God, as they said. But no words of God were there, nor solemn organ-notes; wild voices announced approaching horrors, and the sainted roof resounded with strains ominous of strife.

The town's-people were tranquil. Those amongst them who noticed that their neighbours' windows were lighted up, and who saw gloomy faces hurrying to the church, said to themselves, "To-day the Raitzen hold high festival;" and thought no more of it, but went their ways to bed. Towards midnight the alarm-bell sounded, the doors of the temple opened, and the nocturnal revel began.

With wild howl the excited mob burst into the houses of their sleeping neighbours. It was as though they had some ancient and inveterate grudge to avenge, so fierce and bitter was the fury with which they murdered all whose windows showed no lights—the token the Raitzen had adopted, lest by error they should assail each other's dwellings.

In two hours the Magyar population of the town was exterminated, with the exception of a scanty few who escaped in carts and carriages. These, however, were pursued; and when the uproar in the town, the sounds of strife and lamentation, and the clang of bells, were hushed, cries of agony and despair were still heard issuing at intervals from the adjacent country, as vehicles, stuck fast in the treacherous swamps, were overtaken, and the luckless fugitives ruthlessly butchered. At last these heart-rending sounds also ceased. Voices of complaint were no longer audible, but in their stead, in more than one quarter of the illuminated town, were heard music, and dancing, and merriment.

It was long past midnight when a cart drove through the streets of St Thomas. In it sat a man wrapped in his cloak, marvelling greatly at the lights in the houses, and the sounds of festivity and joy. At his own house-door he stopped his horse. To his great surprise, his dwelling also was lighted up, and within were sounds of music, a hum of voices, and noise of dancing feet. Astounded and anxious, he stepped silently to a window, and through it he beheld a crowd of well-known faces. The company, flushed with wine and excitement, sang and shouted, and drank out of his glasses, and danced madly round the room. They were all old acquaintances, and inhabitants of the town.

Ignorant of the events of the night, the man thought he was dreaming.

Presently his attention was attracted by the licentious garb and demeanour of a woman, who circulated amongst the guests with loud laugh and libertine gestures, sharing in and stimulating the orgies. At first, he could not discern who this woman was. Then he recognised her. It was his own wife.

"Hold!" he shouted, and strode into the room where these saturnalia were in progress. He knew not what to do or say; it were hard to find a word which should express the rage that possessed him.

"Hold!" he thundered out, every fibre quivering with fury, "what do ye here?"

The guests stood aghast at that apparition of wrath. The boldest started at sight of the man, as he stood amongst them, terrible and deadly pale. For a while none dared approach him. He went up to his wife, a dark-haired, black-eyed, red-cheeked wanton, who stood as if turned to stone. He fixed his eyes upon hers with a deadly gaze.

"On your knees!"

The woman stirred not.

"On your knees, wretch!" vociferated the husband, and struck her in the face, so that she fell to the ground.

"Hold, dog!" was shouted on all sides. The Raitzen rushed forward, and the man was seized by twenty hands. He struggled against them, grasped the throat of one, and relaxed not his clutch, even when thrown down and trampled under foot, until he had choked his adversary to death. They bound his hands and thrust him into a corner. The Raitzen formed a circle about him.

"What would ye of me?" he asked, the blood flowing from his mouth.

"What would we? Look around you. See you not that all here are Raitzen?" replied a tall dark-browed Serb, scowling scornfully and cruelly at the sufferer.

"And I a Magyar. What then?"

"Ask thy neighbours. Hast thou not heard that to-day is our festival? The festival of the extermination of the Magyars. You are one: the last in the town. All the others are dead. As the last, you shall choose the manner of your death."

"So you are the executioner, Basil?"

"I? I am the chosen of my people."

With indescribable loathing, the Magyar spat in his face.

"Scoundrel!" yelled the insulted man, "for this you shall weep tears of blood."

"Weep! I?—who ever saw me weep? You may slay me, you may torture me, or tear me limb from limb. There are enough of you to do it. But weep you shall not see me, though you burst for impotent rage."

"Weep thou shalt, and 'tis I will make thee. Know that it is I who seduced your wife, and for whom she betrayed you."

"That is thy shame, not mine."

"All thy kinsmen are slain."

"Better they should lie dead in the street than breathe the same air with thee."

"Thy property is annihilated."

"May God destroy those who did it."

"Truly, thou art a cool fellow. But—you had a daughter,—a fair and innocent child."

George looked at his tormentor, and shuddered.

"Lina, I think, was her name," continued the Serb, drawling out his words with a refinement of cruelty.

"What—what mean you?" asked the trembling father.

"A comely maiden, by my word. Fair to look upon, is she not?"

"The devil seize thee! What next?"

"So young and delicate, and yet—six husbands. Hard to choose. Your wife could not decide to which she should belong. I stepped in, and settled the matter. I married her—to all six——" He burst into fiendish laughter.

Mute and giddy with horror, the father raised himself from the ground.

"I am sorry," continued the Serb, "that you were not here for the wedding."

"May God's justice fall upon you!" shrieked the wretched father, stifling his tears. But the parent's heart overpowered the pride of the man. He fell with his face upon the ground, and wept —tears of blood.

"Lift him up," said Basil, "that we may see him weep for the first time in his life. Weep a little, George; and you, sot, tune up your pipes, that he may have accompaniment to his tears."

And thereupon the drunken band began to dance round their victim with shouts of laughter and scoffing gestures, striking and kicking him as they passed. Now, however, he wept no longer. He closed his eyes and kept silence, enduring their ill-treatment without sign or sound of complaint.

"Away with him!" cried Basil. "Throw him into the garret, and put a sentry over him. To-day we have celebrated his daughter's wedding; to-morrow we will drink at his funeral. Good-night, friend George."

He was dragged up to the garret, and locked in. Where they threw him, there he lay, motionless upon the floor, as though all sensation had departed from both body and soul, awaiting the hour of death, and rejoicing that it was near at hand. For a while the dancing and singing continued;

then the Serbs departed to sleep, and all was still. His eyes were unvisited by slumber. Yet a little while, he thought to himself, and eternal repose will be mine.

He lay with his senses thus benumbed, thinking neither of the past nor the future, when he heard a rustle at the garret window. Through the darkness he saw a white figure pass through the small opening, and grope its way towards him. Was it a dream? or a reality? The figure's steps were noiseless. But presently it spoke—in a scarcely audible whisper.

"Father! father!" it said.

"Lina!"

He looked up, seeking to discern the features of his visitor. She hurried to him, kissed him, and cut the ropes that bound his hands.

"My child!" murmured George, and clasped his daughter's tottering knees. "My dear, my only child!"

"Let us fly!" said the maiden, in faint and suffering tones. "The ladder is at the window. Quick, father—quick!"

George clasped his panting child in his arms, and bore her through the opening in the garret roof, and down the ladder, resting her head upon his shoulder and covering her cold cheek with his kisses. Near the ladder-foot, he stumbled over something. "What is that? A spade. We will take it with us."

"For a weapon!" said the father.

"To dig a grave!" said the daughter.

On the other side of the house was heard a heavy monotonous step. It was a Serb on sentry.

"Stay here! Keep close to the wall," said George to his daughter. He grasped the spade, and crept noiselessly to the corner of the house. The steps came nearer and nearer. George raised the spade. The Serb turned the corner, and—lay the next moment upon the ground, with his skull split. He had not time for a single cry.

George took the dead man's clothes and weapons, took his daughter in his arms, and left the town. The morning star glittered in the brightening sky. Towards daybreak, and without having exchanged a word, father and daughter reached the nearest village. George had many acquaintances there, and with one of them, he thought, he could leave his daughter. He found but a poor reception. Nowhere was he suffered to cross the threshold. None offered him so much as a crust of bread. All closed their doors, and implored him to depart, lest he should bring destruction on their heads. The villagers were neither hard-hearted nor cowardly; but they feared that if the Serbs of St Thomas heard of their sheltering a fugitive, they also would be murdered or plundered. With anguish in his soul, the wretched man again took his child in his arms, and resumed his journey.

For six days he walked on, over stubble and fallow, through storm and cold by night and parching heat by day—his child, his beloved child, on his arm. He asked not what ailed her; and she uttered no complaint.

On the sixth day the maiden died, of hunger, misery, and grief.

The father felt his burthen heavier; the arms that clasped his neck slackened their hold, and the pale cheek that nestled on his shoulder was chill and cold!

But the spires of Szegedin now glittered in the distance. George hurried on, and at last, exhausted by his speed, he reached at noonday the large and populous city. In front of it, on the vast plain, a great multitude was assembled: more than twenty thousand souls were gathered together, listening to the words of a popular orator, exalted upon a scaffolding in their midst. George made his way into the throng; the speaker was relating the incredible atrocities of the Raitzen. Several of his hearers noticed the weary, wild-looking, travel-stained man, carrying in his arms a pale girl with closed eyes, who stood amongst them like a fugitive from a mad-house.

"Whence come you?" they asked him.

"From St Thomas."

"Ha! Up! up with him on the scaffold!" cried those who heard his reply.

"A man is here from St Thomas. Up with him, and let him speak to the people!"

The crowd opened a passage, and George was hurried to the scaffold. When, from this elevation, his emaciated and ghastly countenance, furrowed by suffering and despair, his failing limbs, and the faded and ashy pale features of the child upon his shoulder, became visible to the assembled multitude, a deep shuddering murmur ran through its masses, like that the Platten Lake gives forth when tempest nears its shores. At sight and sound of the heaving throng, a hectic flush flamed upon George's cheek, an unwonted fire burned in his bosom; he felt the spirit of revenge descend upon his head like a forked and fiery tongue.

"Magyars!" he exclaimed in loud and manly tones, "I come from St Thomas, the sole survivor of all who there prayed to God in the Magyar tongue. My goods are plundered, my kinsmen slain. Have any of you friends there?—prepare your mourning, for of a surety they are dead. Of all I possessed I have saved but one treasure—my unhappy child. Approach! ye that are fathers, think of your virgin daughters, and behold what they have made of mine!"

As he spoke, he lifted his child from his shoulder; and then only did he perceive that she was

dead. Until that moment, he had thought she was only faint and silent, as she had constantly been for six days past.

"Dead!" shrieked the despairing man, and clasped the corpse to his heart. "She is dead!" he repeated. The words died away upon his lips, and he fell, like one thunderstruck, headlong to the ground.

This tragical incident raised to a climax the excitement of the multitude.

"Revenge!—a bloody revenge!" thundered a voice; and the tumult that now arose was like the howling of the storm.

"To arms! To arms! all who are men!" was shouted on every side, and the people thronged through the streets and lanes of the city. "To arms!—to arms!" was re-echoed from house to house, and in an hour's time ten thousand furious men stood armed and equipped, and ready to set out for St Thomas.

Then there got abroad a sullen apprehension, speedily succeeded by a fierce resolve. Some one chanced to say:—

"But what if, when we march away, the Raitzen rise up and murder our children?"

The words passed from mouth to mouth.

"They shall die!" exclaimed many voices. "Let them perish, as our brothers perished at St Thomas! They must die!"

And with terrible ferocity the people turned against their own city, and like a mountain torrent, overpowering all restraint, poured into their neighbours' dwellings, and slew the Raitzen to the very last man.

This occurred on the sixth day after the extermination of the Magyars at St Thomas.

THE ROBBER-CAPTAIN.

George took his dead child in his arms, carried her into the forest, dug a grave at the foot of a poplar tree, and laid her in it. He lacked the courage to throw clods upon her pale and beautiful countenance, but he plucked leaves and twigs from the bushes, laid them thickly over her, and then covered all with the black earth. When the grave was filled in, and whilst he was smoothing the green moss over the mound, anguish tore his heart; but, instead of soothing tears, the fire of hell gleamed in his eyes.

Then he took out his knife, to cut his child's name on the bark of the tree which was to be her living monument. But when the letters were complete, there stood, graven by his own hand, the name of Basil. For he thought no longer of his daughter, but of her murderer. And more terribly significant than a thousand curses and vows of vengeance, was that name, graven in that hour and that place.

George rose from the ground, and wandered forth into the forest. He had walked some distance, when a longing desire came over him once more to gaze upon his daughter's grave. He turned to seek it, but the trees were all alike: in vain he sought the one beneath which his child lay buried, and at last night overtook him in the very heart of the forest. Still he walked on, whither and wherefore he knew not. The wood grew thicker, and the night darker; the birds, startled at his footsteps, flew screaming from their perch. At last he stumbled over a tree-root, and fell. Why should he get up again? As well there as anywhere. He let his weary head sink upon the ground, whispered a "good night" to his child, and fell asleep, and dreamed of burning towns and scenes of slaughter.

Towards midnight the neighing of a horse roused him from his restless slumbers. Near at hand he saw a saddle-horse, snorting and pawing the ground. Behind some bushes he heard a woman's plaintive tone, and the harsher voice of a man, mingled at intervals with the prattle of a child.

The man was a short spare figure, with flashing black eyes, long mustaches hanging down over his mouth, and black hair streaming on his shoulders. Energy was the characteristic of his features, and the sinews of his frame were like cords of steel.

In his arms he held a child, three or four years old. The child called him father, and clasped him affectionately with its little hands. A woman was also there, sobbing passionately, and wiping the tears from her eyes.

"Canst thou pray, my son?" said the man, seating the child upon his knee.

"Surely he can," the woman answered; "morning and evening he repeats his prayer."

"Grow up a good man, my son—not such a one as thy father. In another year put him to school, that he may learn something good."

"That will I, though it were to cost me my last florin!"

"And take him far hence! When he is older, never tell him what his father was. Conceal my name from him; never let him know that he is the son of Rosa Sandor the robber."[26]

"Ask thy father, child, when he will again visit us."

"I know not, my son. For me the morning never dawns of which I can say, this day is mine. Here to-day, to-morrow fifty miles off; after to-morrow, perhaps under the turf."

"Talk not thus! See, tears are in the child's eyes."

"So is it, my son, and not otherwise. The robber has none to whom to pray, early and late, for protection to his life."

"But you are no murderer, Sandor! You have no man's blood upon your hands!"

"Seek not to palliate my offence, dear wench! Sooner or later, the gallows and the ravens will claim me."

Again the woman began to sob; the child cried when it saw its mother weep; with deep feeling the robber caressed and comforted them.

"Go home, dear ones!" he said, "and be not uneasy. Tell no one that you have seen me. And His blessing be upon you, whose blessing I dare not ask!"

The woman and child departed. The robber sprang into the saddle, and, standing up in the stirrups, listened, as long as they were audible, to the infantine tones of his child. Suddenly an icy-cold hand was laid upon his. Startled, but without uttering a sound, he turned his head. A man stood beside his horse. It was the fugitive from St Thomas.

"Fear nothing from me, Rosa! Handle not your pistols. Mine shall not be the first blood you shed. Not to that end has your life been preserved through sixteen years of peril. Your destiny is not that of a common malefactor."

"You know me, then?"

"By report, as an outlaw, with a price upon your head. I know, too that you have a beloved wife and a darling child, to see whom once in every year you risk your life—here, where all know you, and any might betray you."

"Not a word of that! You are ragged and needy. Doubtless you would enlist in my band. Here, take this"—he offered him a pistol; "rather than do that, send a bullet through your head."

The fugitive from St Thomas looked earnestly in Sandor's face. Then he said quietly, almost carelessly, "Do my bidding, and the name of the Robber shall no longer be coupled with that of Rosa Sandor."

"Are you mad? Have I not done my utmost? and in every quarter? Let them pardon my past offences, and they would hear of no new ones. The traveller need no longer fear me. Have I not offered to compensate to the utmost of my power all those I have injured, and to build, out of my ill-gotten gains, a place of worship for that God whose commandments I have wilfully broken? All I ask is to be suffered to live amongst my fellowmen, and to earn my daily bread by the labour of my hands. They would never listen to my offers. There is no atonement I am not willing to make to the offended laws of God and my country. But they ever rejected and drove me forth. And thou —what wouldst thou with me?—betray me? Fly, wretch! Hitherto I have shed no blood."

"Henceforward thou shalt shed it, and thereby redeem thy crimes. Your country accepts what the law refused. Your country has foes; go, wash with their blood the stain from your name!"

"Tempt me not!" said the robber mournfully. "Ah, were it indeed granted me to die a happy and honourable death upon the battle-field!—"

"And if fame, instead of death, awaited you there? And if, on your return thence, the very men who now chase you from forest to forest, came forth to meet you with laurel crowns and joyous acclamations; and if, instead of "robber," hero and patriot were coupled with your name?—"

"Stop! befool me not! Oh, I could do much! A strong squadron could I bring into the field, composed of men who a hundred times have looked death fearlessly in the face; men inured to heat and cold, and to back a horse for three days and nights without dismounting."

"I will go and intercede for you."

"But what am I to thee? Who art thou? And why wouldst thou serve me?"

"Oh, I have my motives. I am one whom the Raitzen have driven from house and home, whose wife they have seduced, whose kindred they have slain. By flight alone did I escape with my life; and here, in this very forest, have I buried my only child, polluted and murdered. All these things have the Raitzen done to me. Now, tell me, if you war against them, you will give no quarter?"

"None."

"Then trust me that I will never rest until I bring your pardon, on the condition that you take the field against the Raitzen with your whole band. And may your happiness on earth be measured by the destruction you bring upon their accursed race."

"Clear me the path to the battle-field, and you shall have a mountain of your enemies' skulls."

"I *will* do so. By all that is sacred, I swear. In a fortnight I bring your pardon. Where shall we meet?"

"We? nowhere. I trust no man. If you be sincere, come to Félegyház. There, in the tavern, sits each morning a wrinkled old beggar, his grey hair tied up in two knots. He has but one hand—thereby will you know him. Show him this pistol, and he will conduct you to me. Seek not to compel from him the secret of my hiding-place, for no tortures could wring it from his lips. Be not angry. I must be cautious. For sixteen years have I been hunted like a beast of prey. And now away, and keep to your right to find the path. An opposite road is mine."

He set spurs to his horse, and galloped off through the forest.

The fortnight had not expired when George entered the tavern at Félegyház.

In a dark corner, over a measure of wine, sat the grey-haired, one-handed beggar.

George showed the pistol. The beggar rose from his seat, drank off his wine, paid the tavern-keeper, and left the house. Not a syllable escaped him.

The two men stopped before a wretched hut, at the extremity of the village. The beggar went in, and brought out two powerful black saddle-horses. He signed to George to mount one, whilst he himself sprang upon the other, as actively as though he were a young man and had both hands.

Once fairly off, the old beggar became talkative. These horses, he said, were hacks of Rosa Sandor's, good beasts enough; but the Captain's favourite steed was far finer and better, and would let none but its master mount it, and would gallop for whole days together without rest, or food, or drink. It swam the Theiss thrice running, and watched its master's sleep like the most faithful dog, neighing when danger approached.

Till late in the evening, they rode on across the endless heath. No path was there, nor visible landmark; only at intervals a patch of stunted aspens, and now and then a hut, whence proceeded the hoarse bark of dogs, or a sheep-pen vacant until nightfall. There were fens overgrown with reeds and rushes, and swarming with white herons; and vast tracts of moor, grazed and trampled by every sort of cattle. Now and then, on the far horizon, the travellers caught sight of a steeple; or of a dark mass of wood, coaxed by toil and care from the ungrateful sandy soil.

At last night fell. All around grew grey, and then black; but still the old horse-herd kept steadily on his way. In the remote distance a red glimmer was seen: right and left flamed the fires of the shepherds.

"Yonder is Rosa Sandor," said the Betyár, pointing to the distant light: "there we shall find him."

Another hour brought them to the place. As they drew near, the horses that stood round the fire neighed aloud, and the figures of three men were visible. Their attitude was one of watchfulness and determination.

A peculiar whistle from the lips of the old Betyár warned them of the approach of friends.

One of the three men at the fire was the robber chief, Rosa Sandor.

"What bring you?" asked Rosa.

"Your pardon!" cried George; and, springing from his steaming horse, he handed a sealed packet to his interrogator. "Read and rejoice!"[27]

The robber turned to the firelight, and unfolded the document, which quivered in his hand as he read it. One tear and then another fell upon the paper; slowly he bent his knees, and turned his glistening eyes to heaven. "My Lord and my God!" he exclaimed, his utterance choked by sobs, "for sixteen years I have been hunted like a wild beast, but Thou vouchsafest to me to be once more a man!"

He turned to his companions. "To horse!" he cried; "let the troop assemble."

They sprang to their horses, and soon upon all sides the signal-whistle was heard. In ten minutes, a hundred and eighty men, well mounted and armed, mustered round the fire.

"Friends and comrades," cried Sandor, "that which we have so long desired has come to pass. We are no longer robbers—our country pardons us. It is granted us to atone our crimes by an honourable death. Is there one amongst you who does not repent his past life, and rejoice to be allowed to end it in honour?"

"Not one!" was the unanimous shout.

"Will you follow me to the battle?"

"Everywhere! To death!"

"Swear it."

The vow was brief. "We joyfully swear to shed our blood for our fatherland!"

"Add," said George to Rosa, "*and to give no quarter*!"

NOSTALGIA.

The soldier is dying of home-sickness.

On a sudden an epidemic broke out amongst the Hungarian troops stationed in foreign lands.

A mysterious man wandered from place to place, visiting the wine-houses frequented by the hussars, and joining in their conversation. The words he spoke, repeated from mouth to mouth, spread far and wide amongst the light-hearted soldiers, whose light-heartedness then suddenly left them. The stranger told them of things which had happened in their native land; and, when he departed, he left behind him printed verses and proclamations. These the privates took to their serjeants to have read to them. When they heard them read they wept and cursed, and learned by heart both verse and prose, from the first word to the last, and repeated them from morning till night.

Then many took to their beds, and neither ate nor drank; and when the doctors asked what ailed

them, they pointed to their hearts, and said, "Home! home!—let us go home!"

Many died, and no one could say what had killed them. The rough uneducated soldiers were pining away in home-sickness, like flowers transplanted to a foreign and ungenial soil.

An experiment was tried. Some of the sick men received leave to go home. The next day—they were well and hearty.

It became known that some one was at work secretly inoculating the soldier with this strange malady; but it was impossible to detect the person.

The soldiers!—oh, not one of *them* would betray him; and all snares were laid in vain. With the officers he never meddled. The private soldiers were his men. With them he felt himself secure from treachery. And the seed he scattered abroad produced an abundant harvest.

The dejection of the troops became daily more striking. The soldiers grew wild and intractable. No longer, when riding their horses to water, did they sing, as had been their wont, joyous ditties in praise of wine and women. Their songs were now sad and strange-sounding; mournful words to yet more dismal tunes. They sang of their country, of their dear native land, and of strife and bloodshed, in dirge-like strains; and the burden of every couplet was "*Eljen Magyar!*" Like the last accents of a dying man were the tones they uttered, sinking deeper and deeper, and ending in piteous long-protracted cadences.

Still are such songs to be heard in Hungary's forests, and around her villages, in the silent night-time. Now, more than ever, do they sound like funeral dirges, and their long sad notes like wailings from the grave.

In a small Gallician town was quartered a division of hussars—splendid fellows, for whom the heart of many a Polish maiden beat quicker than its wont. The most beautiful woman in all the neighbourhood loved the best blade amongst the hussars—the Captain.

Countess Anna K—nsky, the lovely Polish widow, had been for six months betrothed to the bold hussar officer, and the wedding-day was near at hand. A single night intervened. On the eve of the happy day, the bridegroom went to visit his bride. He was a tall slender man, with the bloom of youth still upon his face; but his high forehead was already bald;—"Sun and moon together," as the Hungarian proverb says.

The bride was a fair and delicate lady, with abundant black locks, a pale nervous countenance, and blue eyes of that unusual lustre which one finds only in Polish blue eyes. At sight of her lover, her alabaster cheek was overspread with the roses of love's spring-time, and her eyes beamed like the rising sun.

The bridegroom would fain have appeared cheerful; but it is hard to deceive the gaze of love, which reads the beloved one's trouble in each fold of the brow, in each absent glance of the eye. Tenderly she approached him, smoothed his forehead's wrinkles with her hand, and imprinted a kiss in their place. But again they returned.

"What ails thee, dearest? How is this? Sad on the eve of our wedding-day?"

"I? Nothing ails me. But I am annoyed at an incident—a casualty—which I cannot postpone. The court-martial has condemned a man to death. I have just now signed the sentence. The man is to be shot to-morrow: just on our bridal-day! I would it were otherwise!"

"The man is doubtless a criminal?"

"According to military law. He has been debauching soldiers from their duty—exciting them to desert and return home to fight the Serbs. Death is the penalty of his crime."

"And you have signed the sentence? Are you not a Magyar? Love you not your native land?"

"I am a soldier before everything. I respect the laws."

"Impossible! You, who love so well, cannot be devoid of that most ennobling kind of love—patriotism."

"I can love, but I cannot dream. Of the maxims and principles of revolutionists, I understand not a word; but thus much I know, revolutions never end well. Much blood, little honour, eternal remorse."

"Say not eternal remorse, but eternal hope. Hope that a time *must* come, which will compensate all sufferings and sacrifices."

The fair enthusiast quitted her bridegroom's side, seated herself at the piano, and played with feverish energy the well-known song,

> "Noch ist Polen nicht verloren!"

her eyes flashing through tears. Her lover approached her, removed her hand, which trembled with emotion, from the keys of the instrument, and kissed it.

"Poor Poland! Well may thy daughters weep over thy fate; but alas! in vain. I was lately in Pesth. Passing along a street where a large house was building, I noticed amongst the labourers a woman, carrying stones to and fro upon her head, for the use of the masons. Twice—thrice—I passed before her. The sweat streamed from her face; her limbs could scarcely support her. She

was no longer young, and the toil was severe. This woman once possessed a palace in Warsaw—far, far more magnificent than the house she was then helping to build. Its portals were surmounted by a prince's coronet; and many are the joyous hours I have spent beneath its hospitable roof.... When, at the sound of the noonday bell, she seated herself at her wretched meal, I accosted her. For a long time she would not recognise me; then she turned away her head and wept. The other women only laughed at her. I offered her money; she thanked me, and took very little. She, once the mistress of millions, besought me to send the remainder to her little daughter, whom she had left a dependant on a rich family in a distant town. I promised to seek out her daughter. When I had last seen her she was a lovely child, six years of age. Eight years had elapsed, bringing her to the verge of womanhood. I reached the house. In answer to my inquiries, a girl appeared—not that fair and delicate being whose sweet countenance still dwelt in my memory, but a rude creature, with hard coarse features and wild eyes. She did not recognise me, often though she had seen me. I spoke to her in Polish; she understood not a word. I asked after her mother; she stared vacantly in my face.... Truly, the fate of Poland is a terrible example of what a nation may expect from its neighbours when it engages in a struggle with one more powerful than itself; and woe to the Magyar if he does not profit by the warning!"

"Ah! it is no Magyar who can talk thus!"

"Anna! thy first husband fell in battle on the morrow of thy wedding day. Wouldst thou lose thy second bridegroom on its eve?"

"I? With contrition I avow my culpable weakness; I love you more than my country, more than liberty. Until to-day, no man ever heard these words from a Polish woman. *I* wish you to sacrifice yourself? Did you seek to do so, I should surely hold you back—which no Polish wife ever yet did to her husband. All I crave of you is to leave that man his life, whose patriotism was stronger than your own. On our bridal eve, I ask you for a man's life as a wedding-gift."

"And a soldier's honour!"

"Punish him otherwise."

"There is but one alternative. The man has instigated mutiny and desertion; the law has doomed him to death. I must execute the sentence, or fly with him to Hungary. And thence, I well know, I should never return. In a case like this, the judge punishes, or is an accomplice of the criminal. In one hand I have the sword of justice, in the other the banner of insurrection. Choose! which shall I raise?"

The sky was scarcely reddened by the dawn when the prisoner was led forth to execution. Silently, without other sound than that of their horses' hoofs, marched the square of hussars. In the centre, on an open cart, was the chaplain, a crucifix in his hand; and beside him, in a white shirt, bare-headed and with fettered hands, the culprit, George of St Thomas.

The sun rose as they reached the appointed place. The plumes of the hussars and the grey locks of the condemned man fluttered in the morning breeze. They took him from the cart: six hussars dismounted and unslung their carbines; the remainder formed up. The adjutant unfolded a paper and read, in a stern and merciless voice, the sentence of death passed upon George of St Thomas. According to customary form, a soldier stepped up to the adjutant, presented him with a wand, and thrice implored mercy for the condemned man. The third time the officer broke the wand in two, threw it at the criminal's feet, and said in solemn tones, "God is merciful!"

At these words the doomed man raised his head; his attitude grew more erect, his features glowed. He gazed around him in the faces of the assembled soldiers, then upwards at the purple clouds, and spoke in enthusiastic tones.

"Thank thee, O God!" he said; "and thanks also to you, comrades, for my death. Life has long been a burthen to me; death is welcome. I have lost everything—wife and child, house and home; my country alone remained to me, and her I could not free. I rejoice to die. You, comrades, bless God, that yonder, beyond the mountains, you have a mother, a beloved bride, a faithful wife, an infant child, waiting your return. Yonder beyond the mountains you have your homes, your cottages, your families. Pray to God that at your last hour you may welcome death as joyfully as I, who have nothing left upon earth." He paused, and sank upon his knees, as if power had departed from his limbs.

The soldiers stood motionless as statues. The adjutant waved the paper in his hand. Gloomily the six hussars raised their carbines.

Once more the adjutant raised the folded paper, when behold! a young non-commissioned officer dashed out of the ranks, snatched the fatal document from his hand, tore it, and threw the fragments at the feet of the firing-party.

Two hundred sabres flashed from their scabbards, and, amidst a cloud of dust, two hundred chargers scoured across the plain.

The wedding guests were waiting. The bridegroom was there in full uniform, glittering with gold, and the beauteous bride in her graceful robe of white lace. Yet a moment, and she would be his

wedded wife.

The moment was very long.

The bridegroom awaited his adjutant's return from the execution. Until then, he would not approach the altar.

What if, at the very instant the solemn Yes! passed his lips, there reached his ears the rattle of the life-destroying volley, which he, the thrice happy lover, had commanded?

What if, whilst God's servant implored Heaven's blessing on their union, the angry spirit of the criminal, invoking vengeance on his judge's head, appeared at the footstool of the Almighty?

Still no adjutant came.

The bridegroom was uneasy. Yet uneasier grew the bride.

"Perhaps," she whispered, "it were better to postpone the ceremony."

"Or," he replied, "to hasten it."

A foreboding of evil oppressed them both.

And still the adjutant came not. Two, three hours elapsed beyond the appointed time. Noon approached; each minute seemed an eternity.

At last hoofs clattered in the court. Hasty steps and jingling spurs were heard upon the stairs. All eyes were fixed upon the door.... It opened, the adjutant appeared, pale, dusty, exhausted, the sweat streaming over his face.

"Remain without!" cried the bridegroom. "You bring a message of death—enter not here!"

"No message of death do I bring," replied the officer hoarsely, "but a hundred times worse. The condemned man has taken the hussars away with him, all, towards the Hungarian frontier. A couple of leagues off they released me to make my report!"

"My horse!" shouted the bridegroom, hurrying madly to the door. But he paused at sight of his bride, paler than ever and with terror in her glance.

"Wait but a moment, dearest love!" he said, clasped her to his breast, kissed her, and threw himself on his horse.

The animal reared beneath him and would not leave the court. The rider struck the spurs sharply into its flanks. Once more he looked back. There she stood, the beloved one, in her bridal dress upon the balcony, and waved her kerchief. "You will soon be back," she said.

She never saw him again.

Forward raced the hussars upon their rapid coursers, forward towards the blue mountains—ever forward.

Through forest wildernesses, over pathless heaths, up hill and down—ever forwards to the distant mountains.

Right and left steepled cities appeared and vanished; the vesper bells greeted them as they passed; loudly neighing, their horses swept along, swift and ever swifter.

Amongst them rode the gray-headed man, guiding them by untrodden paths, over swamp and moor, through silent groves of pine, forwards to the mountains.

In the evening twilight they reach the banks of a stream. Here and there on the distant hills glimmer the shepherds' fires; beyond those hills lies the Magyar's home, and in their valleys this stream takes its rise. Here, for the first time, they dismount, to water their horses in the wave whose source is in their native land.

Whilst the horses sup the cool stream, their riders strike up that gay and genial song, whose every note brings memories of home,—

> "Hei! auch ich bin dort geboren,
> Wo der Stern dort strahlt."[28]

Who ever rode so merrily to death?

But the vedettes make sudden sign that some one comes.

In the distance a horseman is seen; his steed vies in swiftness with the wind, his long plume and laced pelisse stream behind, the gold upon his schako glitters in the red sun-rays.

"The Captain!" is murmured around.

The hussars mount, draw their sabres, form line, and when their captain appears in their front, they offer him the customary salute.

Breathless with fury and speed, at first he cannot speak. Motionless in front of the line, his sabre quivering in his hand, he is at a loss for words to express his indignation. Before he can find them, four hussars quit the ranks; the youngest—the same who tore up the sentence—raises his hand to his schako, and addresses his chief.

"Welcome, Captain! You come at the right moment to accompany us to Hungary. Short time is there for deliberation. Decide quickly. We will seize your horse's bridle, and take you with us by force. Well do we know that you come willingly; but so will you avoid disgrace, should defeat be our lot. You must with us—by force. If we succeed, yours the glory; if we fall, the guilt is ours, since we compel you. Play your part! Defend yourself! Cut one or two of us from our saddles, the first who lays hand on your rein—see, I grasp it! Strike, Captain, and with a will."

He did as he said, and seized the horse's bridle; whilst, on the other side, an old serjeant laid hand on its mane. The horse stirred not.

The Captain gazed hard at them, each in turn; but he raised not his sabre to strike. Behind him his forsaken bride, before him the mountain frontier of his native land. On the one hand, a heaven of love and happiness; on the other, glory and his country's cause. Two mighty passions striving against each other with a giant's force. The fierce conflict went nigh to overpower him; his head sank upon his breast. Suddenly blared the trumpets in rear of the squadron; at the martial sound his eager war-horse bounded beneath him. With awakening enthusiasm the rider raised his head and waved his sabre.

"Forward, then," he cried, "in God's name!"

And forward he sprang into the river, the two hussars by his side; the cloven waters plashing in pearls around their heads.

Forward, forward to the blue mountains!

In lengthening column, the hussars followed across the stream—the horses bravely breasting the flood, the bold riders singing their wild Magyar ditty. But dark and gloomy was their leader's brow, for each step led him farther from happiness and his bride.

In the midst of the troop rode George of St Thomas, in his hand the banner of Hungary. His cheek glowed, his eye flashed: each step brought him nearer to revenge.

The troubled stream is once more stilled, the fir-wood receives the fugitives, their horses' tramp dies away in the darkness. Here and there, from the distant mountains, the herdsman's horn resounds; on their flanks the shepherd's fire gleams like a blood-red star.

Forward, forward!

Back to thy lair, bloodthirsty monster, back and sleep!

Let the forest-grass grow over the ensanguined plain.

How much is destroyed, how much has passed away.

How many good men, who were here, are here no longer; and how many who remain would grieve but little if they, too, were numbered with the dead.

The hero of battles is once more a robber and a fugitive. The iron hand of the law drives him from land's end to land's end.

In the mad-house mopes a captain of hussars, and ever repeats,—"WAIT BUT A MOMENT!" None there can guess the meaning of his words.

Only George of St Thomas is happy. He sleeps in a welcome grave, dreaming of sweet renown and deep revenge.

We have suppressed two chapters of this tale, both for want of space, and because they are unpleasantly full of horrors. They are chiefly occupied with the vengeance wreaked by George, who is frightfully mutilated in the course of the war, upon the Serbs, and especially upon his deadly foe Basil; and include an account of the capture by assault, and subsequent conflagration, of the town of St Thomas. They are in no way essential to heighten or complete the interest of those we have given; and *L'Envoy* is as appropriately placed at the end of the third chapter as at the close of the fifth. The plot of the whole tale, if such it may be called, is quite unimportant; but there is an originality and a wild vigour in many of the scenes, which justify, in combination with other German translations from the Magyar that have lately reached us, an anticipation of yet better things from the present generation of Hungarian poets and novelists.

FOOTNOTES:

[19] *Schlachtfelderblüthen aus Ungarn. Novellen nach wahren Kriegs-Scenen.* Leipzig und Pesth, 1850. London: Williams and Norgate.

[20] See Schlesinger's *War in Hungary*, (English version,) vol. ii. p. 18-30, for a most interesting anecdotical account of this *beau ideal* of light horsemen.

[21] *War in Hungary*, i. 206-7.

[22] Ibid. ii. 20.

[23] "Follow me!"

[24] The notes issued from Kossuth's bank-note press were, of course, worthless when the revolution was suppressed.

[25] The name of Raitzen is synonymous with Serbs. "Arsenius Czernojewic, under Leopold I., transplanted a large colony of Serbs from the ancient Rascia to Hungary. Hence the name Razen, Raczen, Raitzen.

"The Serbs first aimed the poniard at their German and Magyar neighbours.... Isolated scenes of murder, perpetrated by the Serbs against the Magyars and Germans, who inhabit that district, (the Bacska, or country of Bacs, between the Danube and the Theiss,) led the way to a series of sanguinary atrocities, such as our age had hoped never to see repeated. The commencement of hostilities is due to the Sclavo-Wallachian race; old, long-restrained hate, combined with an innate thirst for blood, marked the rising of the South Sclavonian races from the first as one of the bloodiest character, in which murder was both means and end. No revolution of modern times—the great French Revolution not excepted—is blackened with such horrible atrocities as this: the details may be found in the Serbian and Magyar journals; and one would fain have hoped that the accounts on both sides were exaggerated. Unhappily, such a hope is illusory; nor can the historian indulge it without falsifying the truth. Deeds have been perpetrated which call to mind the Hurons and Makis of the American forests. Like them, the Serbs were masters in the art of torture and murder; like them, they made their unhappy victims previously undergo all the dreadful steps of torment, prolonging the transition from life to death with a refinement of cruelty; like them, they vaunted the deeds of horror, and honoured their executioners as heroes.... Such unheard-of atrocities inevitably called forth retaliation. Magyars and Germans became savages among savages."—SCHLESINGER, Pulsky's edition, i. 22-24.

[26] Schlesinger describes Rosa Sandor as "a man about thirty-five years of age not very tall or stout, with fair hair, small mustaches and whiskers, and with nothing of the bandit in his appearance or demeanour," but mentions that he had a lieutenant of the popular bandit type, a broad-shouldered truculent personage with a formidable black beard, and long hair streaming on his shoulders. "A strange relation," he adds, "exists between the two men. The master was anxious, for reasons easy to conceive, that his person should not be generally known in the country; whilst the servant, on the contrary, had vanity enough to take pleasure in passing for the famous Rosa Sander. All the portraits of the latter which are circulated throughout the country are faithful likenesses of the lieutenant, and hence the common erroneous notion of the Captain."

[27] Rosa Sandor was less a highwayman than a cattle-lifter, and pursued his vocation in the neighbourhood of Szegedin. "He was never in prison," says Schlesinger, "but repented his misdemeanours of his own free will, and wrote to the magistrates stating that he would leave their cattle alone, if they would pardon him for the past and allow him to pursue the Austrians." The Hungarian Government granted his request, and he did good service, especially against Jellachich and the Serbs; and also repeatedly entered Pesth and Komorn with despatches, when those places were closely invested by the Austrians.—See Schlesinger, i. 226-8, for other particulars of this Hungarian Robin Hood, who was at the head of a band of three hundred men, and was further remarkable by his abstinence from bloodshed.

[28] "Ha! I too was yonder born, where brightly beams the star."

THE MESSAGE OF SETH.
AN ORIENTAL TRADITION.

BY DELTA.

I.

Prostrate upon his couch of yellow leaves,
Slow-breathing lay the Father of Mankind;
And as the rising sun through cloudland weaves
Its gold, the glowing past returned to mind,
Days of delight for ever left behind,
In purity's own robes when garmented,
Under perennial branches intertwined—
Where fruits and flowers hung temptingly o'erhead,
Eden's blue streams he traced, by bliss ecstatic led.

II.

Before him still, in the far distance seen,
Arose its rampart groves impassable;
Stem behind giant stem, a barrier screen,
Whence even at noonday midnight shadows fell;
Vainly his steps had sought to bid farewell
To scenes so tenderly beloved, although
Living in sight of Heaven made Earth a Hell;
For fitful lightnings, on the turf below,
Spake of the guardian sword aye flickering to and fro—

III.

The fiery sword that, high above the trees,
Flashed awful threatenings from the angel's hand,
Who kept the gates and guarded:—nigh to these,
A hopeless exile, Adam loved to stand
Wistful, or roamed, to catch a breeze that fanned
The ambrosial blooms, and wafted perfume thence,
As 'twere sweet tidings from a distant land
No more to be beheld; for Penitence,
However deep it be, brings back not Innocence.

IV.

Thus had it been through weary years, wherein
The primal curse, working its deadly way,
Had reft his vigour, bade his cheek grow thin,
Furrowed his brow, and bleached his locks to grey:
A stricken man, now Adam prostrate lay
With sunken eye, and palpitating breath,
Waning like sunlight from the west away;
While tearfully, beside that bed of death,
Propping his father's head, in tenderness hung Seth.

V.

"Seth, dearest Seth," 'twas thus the father said,
"Thou know'st—ah! better none, for thou hast been
A pillow to this else forsaken head,
And made, if love could make, life's desert green—
The dangers I have braved, the ills unseen,
The weariness and woe, that, round my feet,
Lay even as fowlers' nets; and how the wrath
Of an offended God, for blossoms sweet
Strewed briars and thorns along each rugged path:—
Yet deem not that this Night no hope of Morning hath.

VI.

"On darkness Dawn will break; and, as the gloom
Of something all unfelt before, downweighs
My spirit, and forth-shadows coming doom,
Telling me this may be my last of days—
I call to mind the promise sweet (let praise
Be ever His, who from Him hath not thrust
The erring utterly!) again to raise
The penitential prostrate from the dust,

And be the help of all who put in Him their trust.

VII.

"Know then, that day, as sad from Eden's home
Of primal blessedness my steps were bent
Reluctant, through the weary world to roam,
And tears were with the morning's dewdrops blent,
That 'twas even then the Almighty did relent—
Saying, 'Though labour, pain, and peril be
Thy portion, yet a balsam sweet of scent
For man hath been provided, which shall free
From death his doom—yea, gain lost Eden back to thee.'

VIII.

"Although thy disobedience hath brought down
The wrath of justice; and the penalty
Are pangs by sickness brought, and misery's frown,
And toil—and, finally, that thou shalt die;
Yet will I help in thine extremity.
In the mid garden, as thou know'st, there grows
The Tree of Life, and thence shall preciously,
One day, an oil distil, of power to close
Sin's bleeding wounds, and soothe man's sorrows to repose.

IX.

"That promise hath been since a star of light,
When stumbled on the mountains dark my feet;
Hath cheered me in the visions of the night,
And made awaking even to labour sweet;
But now I feel the cycle is complete,
And horror weighs my spirit to the ground.
Haste to the guarded portals, now 'tis meet,
And learn if, even for me, may yet be found
That balsam for this else immedicable wound.

X.

"Thine errand to the Angel tell, and He
(Fear not, he knows that edict from the Throne)
Will guide thy footsteps to the Sacred Tree,
Which crowns the Garden's midmost space alone:
Thy father's utmost need to him make known;
And ere life's pulsing lamp be wasted quite,
Bring back this Oil of Mercy;—haste, be gone;
Haste thee, oh haste! for my uncertain sight,
Fitful, now deems it day, and now is quenched in night."

XI.

Seth heard; and like a swift, fond bird he flew,
By filial love impelled; yea, lessened dread
Even of the guardian Fiery Angel knew—
And through the flowery plains untiring sped—
And upwards, onwards to the river-head—
Where, high to heaven, the verdant barriers towered
Of Eden; when he sank—o'ercanopied
With sudden lightning, which around him showered,
And in its vivid womb the midday sun devoured.

XII.

And in his ear and on his heart was poured,
While there entranced he lay, an answer meet;
And, gradually, as Thought came back restored,
Uprising, forth he hied with homeward feet.
Sweet to the world's grey Father, oh how sweet
His coming on the nearest hill-top shone!
For now all feebly of his heart the beat
Returned; and of his voice the faltering tone,
Meeting the listener's ear, scarce made its purpose known.

XIII.

"Beloved father!" thus 'twas through his grief

Impassioned spake the son, "it may not be,
Alas! that, for thy misery's relief
Wells now the promised balsam from Life's Tree.
And must I say farewell—yea, part with thee?—
Droop not thus all despairing: breath may fail,
And days and years and ages onward flee
Ere that day dawn; but Thou its beams shalt hail,
And earth give up its dead, and Life o'er Death prevail.

XIV.

"Astounding are the visions I have seen:
The clouds took shapes, and turned them into trees
And men and mountains; and the lands between
Seemed cities, dun with crowds; and on the seas
Dwelt men, in arks careering with the breeze;
And shepherds drave their flocks along the plain;
And generations, smitten with disease,
Passed to the dust, on which tears fell like rain;
Yet fathers, in their sons, seemed age grown youth again!

XV.

"And the wide waters rose above the tops
Of the high hills, and all looked desolate—
Sea without shore! Anon appeared the slopes,
Glowing with blossoms, and a group elate
Eying an arch, bright with earth's future fate,
In heaven; and there were wanderings to and fro;
And, while beneath the multitudes await,
Tables, by God's own finger written, show
The Law by which He wills the world should walk below:

XVI.

"And ever passed before me clouds of change,
Whose figures rose, and brightened, and declined;
And what was now familiar straight grew strange,
And, melting into vapours, left behind
No trace; and, as to silence sank the wind,
Appeared in heaven a beautiful bright star,
Under whose beams an Infant lay reclined;
And all the wheels of nature ceased their jar,
And choiring angels hymned that Presence from afar.

XVII.

"And then, methought, upon a mountain stood
The Tree, from which, as shown to thee, should flow
That Oil of Mercy—but it looked like blood!
And, to all quarters of the earth below,
It streamed, until the desert ceased to know
Its curse of barrenness; the clouds away
Passed in their darkness from the noon; and lo!
Even backwards flowed that brightness to this day,
And, Father, showed me thee, encircled by its ray:—

XVIII.

"It showed me thee, from whom mankind had birth,
And myriads—countless as the sere leaves blown
From wintry woods—whose places on the earth,
Even from the burning to the icy zone,
Were to their sons' sons utterly unknown,
Awakening to a fresh, eternal morn:
Methinks I list that glad Hosannah's tone,
From shore to shore on all the breezes borne!
Then, Father, droop not thus, as utterly forlorn;

XIX.

"A long, long future, freaked with sin and strife,
The generations of the world must know;
But surely from that Tree—the Tree of Life—
A healing for the nations yet will flow,
As God foretold thee."

"Freely then I go,
For steadfast is the Lord his word to keep,"
Said Adam, as his breathing, faint and slow,
Ceased; and like zephyr dying on the deep,
In hope matured to faith, the First Man fell asleep!

THE VOICE OF NATURE.

'Twas in a lone sequestered dell,
And on a summer's eve;
The sun's last glances ling'ring fell,
As loath the spot to leave:

For never sun more blithely rose
To light a scene more fair—
Day never had so sweet a close,
Or night a charm so rare.

And I have climbed the rocky steep
That cuts the vale in twain,
And gaze adown the lonely sweep
That seeks the vale again.

I gaze on many a stately dome
Of high imperious name,
On many a low and humble home
Unglorified by fame:

But all are wrapt in deep repose,
And not a sound is there
To tell how swift the River flows
Between the banks of Care.

Unmarked, the stream of life glides on
To that Eternal Sea,
Where earthly sun hath never shone,
Nor aught of earth can be.

And this, to me, is as a spell
That binds me to the night—
That bathes each wild untrodden dell
In waves of mystic light.

There are who say this wondrous world
Is but the work of chance;
That earth, like some huge scroll, unfurled,
And wrought its own advance;

That senseless atoms blindly grew
Into a world of light;
That creatures no Creator knew—
That death's eternal night!

O Man, with aspirations high,
Is this the end you crave?
Oh Man, with soul that cannot die,
And perish in the grave—

Are all the wonders prophets told
But wild delusive dreams?
And can it be that human mould
Is but the clay it seems?

Shall love and virtue live on earth,
And with the earth decay?
Shall faith, and hope, and stainless worth,
Pass like a dream away?

Come forth, thou false and subtle sage!
Creation read aright!
Cast off the gathering mists of age,
And clear thy clouded sight!

Throw down, throw down the guilty pen—
Break off the stubborn mask:
The creed thou dar'st assert to *men*,
Its truth of *Nature* ask!

At morn, at noon, or sacred eve,
On land or on the sea,
The lightest sound thy step may leave
Shall breathe "Eternity!"

Come tread with me this dizzy height,
And, through this waste of air,
Gaze out upon the forms of night—
What is thine answer there?

The moonlit fields of waving corn,
That ripening harvests fill—
The bubbling springs where lakes are born,
To man subservient still—

All speak of His unbounded love
Who caused those streams to flow,
Who fed those fields from founts above,
And made the harvest grow.

And wheresoe'er the broad moon's rays
In matchless beauty fall,
They mirror forth to thoughtful gaze
The Hand that fashioned all.

There's not a plant upon the earth,
There's not a tree nor flower,
But bears the stamp of heavenly birth,
The proof of heavenly power.

The very leaf on which you tread
Was wrought with wondrous hand,—
A fragment of a volume dread
That speaks to every land:

A book unchanged from age to age—
The same since time began:
For Nature is a living page
That preaches God to man!

Charles Wilton.

BRITISH LABOUR AND FOREIGN RECIPROCITY.[29]

We hear a great deal at the present day, not only from pretended philanthropists, but from well-meaning and conscientious people, about the "Rights of Labour." In fact, the term has become so hackneyed that very rarely is any popular speech delivered from a hustings, or elsewhere, without its occurrence as a marked and leading principle, which the speaker is determined to uphold.

But general terms are almost always susceptible of wide and contradictory construction; and when we come to analyse this phrase, "the rights of labour," and to consider the different interpretations which have been passed upon it, we are forced to arrive at the conclusion, that very few of those who use the words have any distinct idea of the meaning which they ought to convey. One man considers "the rights of labour" as identical with the operation of the maxim which exhorts us "to buy in the cheapest, and to sell in the dearest market." Another defines those rights to mean, "a fair day's wage for a fair day's labour." And so the term is bandied about among us, repeated and reiterated, until it has fairly lost the semblance of anything like clear significance.

Meanwhile labour, in this country at least, is loudly calling for the recognition of its rights, whatever those rights may be—not for the shadow, but the substance; not for the name, but for the reality. Labour in Ireland is struck down and paralysed—paralysed in its first natural function and duty, the production of food, although millions of acres, capable of yielding large returns of cereal produce, are either unbroken or withdrawn from the tillage of the plough. Labour in Scotland is becoming daily less remunerative; the northern population is driven to emigrate by thousands, or to take refuge in the cities and towns already redundantly supplied. Wages are decreasing in the Lowlands; the poor-rate is multiplying fast; and the greatest source of our wealth, the iron trade, is in a state of lamentable prostration. Labour in England, by far the richest country of the three, is scarcely better remunerated. In the rural districts, we hear of lowered agricultural wages and growing discontent; in the towns, we are told of mills closed or put upon short time; and, from the metropolis and the larger cities, we have accounts of misery and destitution which, did they reach us from missionaries in a heathen land, would fill our souls with horror, and our hearts with righteous indignation.

To that call, proceeding from the labourers themselves, we cannot and we dare not turn a deaf ear. We must listen to it, appalling as it is; and examine into the cause of it, if we wish society to remain as it has been. We must allow no preconceived ideas or impressions, generated, perhaps, by the delusions of the last few years, or of many years, to stand in our way when so frightful a calamity approaches as the destitution and demoralisation of the working and producing classes of this mighty empire; for we may as well expect a fabric to stand after its foundations have been worn away, as suppose that a state can exist without the support of those who are, in reality, the artificers of its whole wealth and produce.

Would to heaven we could persuade men to throw aside, not for a time, but for ever, their party notions, and, what is still more difficult, their selfish interests; and induce them to look this great question broadly and fairly in the face! They will not find it treated of in their politico-economical treatises—those wretched collections of sophisms compiled by the dullest and most blear-eyed of mankind, which have been accepted in our day as monuments of transcendent wisdom. They will not find the question mooted at all in the tomes of their conceited statists: but if they step beyond that dreary range, and go forth into the scenes of busy life, they will hear it discussed, always eagerly, sometimes ably, sometimes incompetently, in the workshop, the forge, the factory, the cottage, and the mine; and they may then form some idea of the importance which the working-classes attach to that much-abused term—"the Rights of Labour."

The mere general discussion of such a point implies that there is something amiss, either in our social or in our commercial and national system. With regard to the first, we think there can be no argument. Unless some totally new evangel has been reserved for these latter days, Socialism, as it is understood on the Continent, and even partially among ourselves, is a wild and miserable delusion. It has been tried, over and over again, under circumstances far more favourable for its development than any which are likely to occur again, and has invariably failed. Nay, the tendency of Liberalism has been to sweep what modified Socialism might exist in a civilised community away. Guilds, corporations, the chartered privileges of burghs, have all vanished, or been reduced to shadows, and nothing is now permitted to stand between the employer and the employed. Socialism, through the law, can have no existence. It may, indeed, lawfully rear and extend itself, if it can, on its own simple merits; but, tried by that test, it simply resolves itself into a new form of labour, liable to competition as before, and powerless to affect prices, by which labour must ever be estimated.

Our firm and fixed belief is, that what are termed social grievances are simply the consequence of a faulty or erroneous commercial and national system. Vapid and superficial writers have talked a great deal about what they are pleased to call the "*Laissez-faire*" tendencies of modern statesmen—intending thereby to convey the impression that Government is not active enough in its regulating and modifying functions. According to our view, this is a most unfounded charge, as against either the Government or the Legislature. We can discern no lack of activity—no want of interference: on the contrary, we are inclined to complain that changes are too common and rapid. This is an evil to which governments, based on the popular representative principle, are peculiarly liable; and the skill and prescience of the modern statesman will be more conspicuously shown in restraining than in encouraging the spirit of change. Why complain of

want of activity, or of culpable negligence, when the fact is before us that, during the last few years, the whole of our commercial system has undergone a radical change, which has affected, more or less, every source of labour, every branch of industry, every application of capital throughout the British empire? We have been the reverse of idle, both at home and abroad. At home, not one single interest has escaped the ordeal of experiment; abroad, we have subjected the colonies to forced operations, from the effects of which it is exceedingly doubtful if they can ever rally, at least under our tutelary care.

These alterations and changes were no doubt intended by their devisers to be productive of good, but they may in reality have been productive of evil. It is impossible to foretell with certainty the effect of any sweeping change, even when the elements of calculation appear to be within our own control. When they are beyond it—as must be the case whenever we assume the co-operation of foreign independent powers, without securing it by treaty—the uncertainty is still greater. It cannot be denied that the late commercial changes proceeded upon the assumption of reciprocity, and that this assumption has been proved by experience to be utterly wrong. So far, then, they have not answered the expectations of their framers. Free imports may be advantageous or the reverse; but they have at all events failed in producing reciprocity, and in converting foreign nations to our insular commercial doctrines. It would be, to say the least of it, becoming in those who advocate the maintenance of the present system to remember this, and to mitigate the arrogance of their tone; for, undeniably, the most important half of their prophecy has fallen to the ground.

Still it remains to be seen whether, in spite of the absence of the promised reciprocity, we have derived any material advantage from the change; and here men will differ according to their methods of estimation. Those who are determined, at all hazards, to cry up the advantages of Free Trade, will point to a balance-sheet of extended exports as a sure index of the prosperity of the nation. Is it, after all, a sure index? The whole amount of our national exports is but an infinitesimal portion of the annual creation of wealth in the country; it consists of the products of only a few branches of industry, and represents the employment, not of the masses of the population, but merely of a small section. Some of these branches, indeed the most important of them, do not possess the first guarantee for stability and endurance. *They depend for their existence entirely upon the supply of foreign material.* But for the cotton-wool of America, the factories of Lancashire would be shut up; and we shall presently have occasion to inquire what likelihood there is of an extended, or even a continued supply. Increased exports give us no account whatever of internal and home consumption. During the last year, with a limited supply of raw material, owing to a deficient crop, we have sent away more cotton goods than before. What is the natural inference from that, as to the capabilities of the home consumer?

Neither is it fair to select any two or three branches of industry which may be flourishing, and to parade these as an index of the prosperity of the whole country. If Free-Trade had not been productive of advantage to *some* classes, it would not have been tolerated so long. We know perfectly well, and are prepared to admit, that at this moment some trades are doing well; *but then they are thriving at the expense of the great body of the community*. Such, for example, is the linen-trade of Dundee, supported at the present time by a large demand from abroad for coarse textures, the origin of which demand may be traced to the Free-Trade measures. That cheap provisions, owing to the imports from abroad, should be a great advantage to the operatives engaged in this kind of manufacture, will admit of no doubt; but how does that affect the general prosperity of the nation? Those operatives work for the foreigner, and are fed by the foreigner. Their contributions to the national revenue, through the customs' duties and excise, cannot be taken as an equivalent for their decreased consumption of British agricultural produce; yet how often is such an instance as this paraded as a proof of general prosperity! After all, it is, perhaps, the only branch of importance which is prospering at the present time. The woollen trade has been steady, but not more profitable than before. The cotton trade we know to be depressed; and the iron trade, one of our most valuable staples, because the raw materials of the coal and ore, as well as the manufactured article, are of British production, is at present worse than unprofitable.

We state these things, not as proofs of the inefficacy of Free Trade, but simply as tending to show that no sound inferences as to the general prosperity of the country can be drawn from the fact that exports have increased. The only criterion is, and must be, the condition of the working classes. We have already pointed out the vast depreciation of labour, and the want of employment which is visible over the three kingdoms; and we have alluded to the two most formidable symptoms—pauperism and extended emigration. How these unchallenged and admitted facts are reconcilable with the idea of general prosperity, it remains for our philosophers to show.

To what, then, is this owing? We can only attribute it to one cause—the total disregard of the interests of the British producer. Politicians may attempt, as they have heretofore done, to explain away evident and startling facts on trivial and insufficient grounds; journalists may affect to sneer at the representations of the sufferers, and to turn their complaints into derision; economists may offer to prove the fitness of existing circumstances, upon certain immutable laws of which they were the sole discoverers; demagogues may strive to divert attention from the lamentable consequences of their misdeeds by attacking other institutions; but the fact of general depression and distress remains uncontroverted and incapable of denial; and so it will remain until the national policy is altered.

It is now precisely twelve months ago since we drew the attention of the public to the actual state of British agriculture under the operation of Free-Trade prices. We then, and in subsequent

articles, quoted the deliberate opinion of those who favoured and carried the repeal of the Corn Laws, as to what remunerative prices in reality were; we called as witnesses the late Sir Robert Peel, Mr Wilson, M.P. for Westbury, and others—and showed that, according to their judgment, not that of Protectionists, wheat could not be grown with a profit in this country unless it commanded in the market from 12s. to 16s. more per quarter than was at that time the average of England. We were told in reply, by our antagonists, that the depression was merely accidental. Hardly one of them ventured to say that they had anticipated such a result, or that such a result was desirable: on the contrary, the farmers of this country were told to believe that the low prices current were simply the consequences of an exuberant harvest, combined with the first impulse of new importation, and that, from sheer want of material, the latter would speedily subside. At the close of another year, and after another harvest materially differing in quality, we find prices actually lower than they were at this time twelvemonths. Nor is this the case with grain alone, but with cattle: thus demonstrating how hopeless is the condition of the British farmer under the operation of the present law.

That the impending ruin of the agriculturists, who constitute by far the most important body of British producers, and therefore of consumers in the home market, would speedily react upon every branch of industry, we foresaw and foretold; and the result is now before us, evident in each day's reiterated tale of distress.

Notwithstanding all this, we are assured in certain quarters, that at every hazard the experiment must go on; that, having once embarked in a career, however dangerous, we must persevere to the last; and that protection to native industry is inconsistent with the genius of a free and enlightened people.

Let us see whether it be so. And, as to judge of this question we must look elsewhere than to Britain, let us try to discover the extent to which the principles of Free Trade are acknowledged in other lands, where freedom, both of sentiment and action, is claimed quite as enthusiastically as in our own. It is worth while knowing how far our opinions on this commercial subject have been responded to, not by despotic states, wherein the popular voice might be suppressed, but by the most liberal and enterprising countries, which, we were told, waited only for our example to engage in the work of reciprocity.

Among these we are surely entitled to reckon Switzerland and Germany—including in the latter denomination that powerful confederacy, the Zollverein, which embraces the Hanseatic towns. These are Protectionist—determined at all hazards to maintain their doctrine of fostering native industry, and meeting us, not with reciprocity, but with augmented customs' duties. The following extracts from the last modifications of the general tariff of the Zollverein may be instructive:—

MODIFICATIONS OF THE GENERAL TARIFF OF THE ZOLLVEREIN.

Import Duties on,		Old Duty.			New Duty.		
Cotton twist, unbleached,	per cwt.,	£0	6	0	0	9	0
Iron, raw,	do.	(Free.)			0	1	0
... pig, rails and raw, cast and refined steel,		0	3	0	0	4	6
Linen, viz.—							
Yarn, raw,	per do.	0	0	6	0	6	0
... bleached or dyed,		0	3	0	0	15	0
... boiled with ashes,		0	1	6	0	9	0
Thread,		0	6	0	0	12	0
Manufactures, raw,		0	6	0	0	12	0
... bleached, &c.,		1	13	0	3	0	0
Woollen manufactures,		4	10	0	7	10	0

The law which gave a tariff to Switzerland on the 30th of June 1849, commences by enacting "that all the articles which are imported into Switzerland, are, with certain exceptions, specified by the present law, submitted to an import duty," and proceeds to impose duties of various kinds on all conceivable articles of importation. So far from being in favour of Free Trade, the Swiss nation is distinctly opposed to it; because, as in France, the people engaged in those important branches of industry are fully alive to their interest, and exercise the power they possess to render the revenue laws subservient to it.

Next comes France, upon the example of which country, and its reciprocal sentiments, Mr Cobden almost perilled his case, when he undertook his crusade to stir up that enthusiasm for free imports which, according to his view, lay burning at the heart of every people throughout the civilised globe. We have reason to know that the accounts of his reception in France, which appeared in many of the London journals, were absurdly exaggerated; and that, beyond the circle of that small and despised clique of whom M. Bastiat is or was the head, it was the reverse of flattering, until he arrived at Bordeaux. There, indeed, the winegrowers of the Gironde prepared an ovation for the statesman who had opened—or rather who, it was hoped, would open—the ports of England to the produce of their generous vintage. But when, in answer to one of his entertainers, more practical or suspicious than the rest, the hero of the League was compelled to avow his opinion that wine was a fair subject for taxation, the disheartening announcement was made that, if the wine duties were not repealed, Bordeaux did not interest itself at all in the question of Free Trade. Nor can we at this moment discover a country visited by Mr Cobden, whatever may be its form of government, that has fulfilled those "confident expectations" which he announced with such singular energy. It cannot be said that democracy has made no progress in Europe since 1846. The gallant and mighty people of France are now in full enjoyment of all the rights of man, and have only to indicate their will to their representative governors, and it is

obeyed. Have, then, free imports followed in the train of liberty? Englishmen are not likely soon to forget how the enfranchised people of France first made use of their newly acquired power; and, though with steadier and more regular action, the great French Republic has held on its protective course up to the recent opening of its Chamber, heedless alike of the lectures of M. Bastiat, or the example of England. Indeed, there appears to be a tacit agreement on this one subject among all statesmen and all parties. Once, it is true, the eloquent though unsuccessful voice of M. de Lamartine was heard prophesying, in mystical phrase, the speedy triumph of brotherhood and interchange; but, by some association of ideas which we do not pretend to understand, the Free-trader of Meudon shortly became chief of that government which established the communist National Workshops. We have waited in vain to hear from any statesman of note a criticism on the President's most Protectionist Message, or any decided expression of dissent; and why is this? Because the French people, the small proprietors, the peasantry, the workmen of Lyons and Mulhausen, the manufacturers "of woollen[30] cloths and tissues, of cotton cloths, leather, earthenware, glass, and objects of luxury, have found ready and advantageous markets" under the existing system, and are prepared to defend Protection to the last drop of their blood. The rulers of such a people know, that to deprive their labour of Protection is but to inaugurate the reign of Communism, to establish anarchy, and to insure their own immediate downfall.

So much for the Liberal states of Europe. Let us next turn to America, wherein no corrupt aristocracy sheds its baneful influence upon society; where an unsectarian and generous instruction is given by the State to all; where no standing army is at hand, first to inflame, and then to gratify the unwise lust of conquest; where the people are really the source of power, and a free press enlightens them as to its proper exercise. There surely, if anywhere, we shall find political economic truth enshrined in the heart and tariff of the nation, and the pestilent heresies of Protection given up to the ridicule of a wise and discerning community. A glance at the present tariff, and an examination into the relations between "the plough, the loom, and the anvil," on the other side of the Atlantic, may consequently afford some useful information to us who are now subjected to a policy which is sacrificing the first to the two other members of that great industrial triad. Mr Carey, the well-known statistical writer of America, has, in *The Harmony of Interests*, supplied us with ample materials for conducting such an inquiry; and we can safely recommend his remarkable work to all who wish to investigate the causes of the progress and decline of industrial communities.

Governor Pownell in 1769, arguing in the House of Commons against taxing our North American provinces, had the prophetic wisdom to foresee—what some few American politicians of the present day, and the leaders of our own Manchester school do not yet seem rightly to comprehend—that the time must inevitably come when America would cease to depend upon English industry for manufactured goods. "They will abominate," said he, addressing himself to the people of England, "as sincerely as now they love you; and if they do, they have within themselves everything requisite to the food, raiment, or dwelling of mankind; they have no need of your commerce." A dim perception of this truth has at last impelled the Manchester Chamber of Commerce—the oligarchy by whom the destinies of this empire are swayed at the present time—to despatch a Commissioner to India in search of cotton-growing districts, whence they may obtain certain supplies of the raw material, and, we hope, of markets for the manufactured products thereof; for to us it is evident, that the "model republic" is henceforth to be relied on for neither the one nor the other.

Is this a bold or unauthorised assertion? Let us see. Who has forgotten the prophecies, or rather the confident assumption, of that entire and unlimited reciprocity which was to prevail between Great Britain and America, the moment after the former power announced her intention of admitting free of import duties the produce of the latter? Certainly we have not, though the memories of many people in Manchester and the adjacent parts may be more fallacious. In common fairness we must allow that, so far as argument could be drawn from mere hypothesis, the advocates of Free Trade were entitled to make the most of America. No other country could afford them so plausible a plea for reciprocity. Through absolute necessity, the cotton manufacturers of Great Britain depended upon America for their yearly supply of raw material. America hitherto had taken a large proportion of our manufactured goods—being content that the cotton, before it reached her in a textile fabric, should twice cross the waters of the Atlantic; and she also was a large customer for our coal, our iron, and other commodities. The terms were still unequal, at least for endurance. Britain could not do—at least Manchester and its dependencies could not—without the supply of cotton wool; but how if America, by rearing factories and furnaces, could contrive to do without either our calicoes, or our coal, or our iron? For a long time it was supposed that this was impossible—that the Americans had not sufficient capital to embark in manufacturing pursuits—and that nature had denied them those plentiful stores of coal and iron which are to be found in the British islands. The following tables, brought down to the latest accessible dates, will demonstrate the fallacy of that idea:—

BALES OF COTTON WORKED UP IN THE UNITED STATES.

	Northern Manufactures.	**Southern Manufactures.**
1843-44	347,000	None.
1844-45	389,000	None.
1845-46	423,000	30,000
1846-47	428,000	40,000
1847-48	531,000	75,000
1848-49	518,000	100,000

The annual production of American coal and iron is as follows:—

	Coal.	Iron.
1821 to 1829, average tons,	37,000	90,000
1830	142,000	165,000
1832	318,000	210,000
1834	451,000	210,000
1835 to 1841, average,		250,000
1837	881,000	
1842	1,108,000	
1844	1,621,000	380,000
1846	2,343,000	765,000
1848	3,089,000	800,000

In the increase here exhibited lies the reason why the League made such a desperate, and unfortunately successful, effort to overthrow the whole protective system of Great Britain; and also the reason why America refuses reciprocity. The Manchester men began to see—there being no want of shrewdness among them when their own individual interests were concerned—that their game had not only become hazardous, but must ere long prove desperate. They had already many rivals on the continent of Europe, who were, equally with themselves, customers to the Americans for cotton wool, and who fenced themselves against the introduction of the Manchester fabric by hostile tariffs. That, however, was nothing in comparison to the appalling fact, that the very people who found the raw material were actually in possession of the means of spinning it themselves, and seemed bent on doing so by their progress from year to year! In vain did our manufacturers and chambers of commerce try to demonstrate to the Yankees that they were not only committing a foolish but a most unnatural action—in vain did they assert, as a fundamental doctrine of ethics, that Britain ought to have the manufacturing monopoly of the world; and as a fundamental principle of economy, that it was far more for the advantage of a nation which produced the raw material to forego its manufacture, than to rear up within itself a new and lucrative branch of industry. Their ethics and their economy were alike scouted; and no wonder, for both propositions were repugnant to common sense, to ascertained results, and to reason. If it is indeed a law of economy that a nation which produces the raw article ought to confine itself to that production, and not to undertake the finishing and manufacturing process—then, by the same reasoning which was attempted to be palmed off upon the Americans, our wool, instead of being made up at Leeds or Bradford, should be straightway shipped off to Saxony; and the product of our iron mines transported to Sweden, there to undergo the necessary process of smelting. It is perhaps the strangest feature of the age in which we live, that such absolute and self-evident nonsense as this should not only have been uttered on platforms, and received with applause by crowds of congregated merchants, but have been gravely set forth in our public journals as a doctrine of the highest value.

There is, however, no such thing as a universal code of political economy. The Americans listened and laughed, and ran up their factories faster than ever, and ransacked the bowels of the earth for their inestimable strata of minerals, believing with a proper faith that they would not have been placed there unless it was intended that man should convert them to his use. Our cotton manufacturers, being thus situated, had some reason to despond. The nation that gave them their raw material, and that was also their best customer for fabrics, seemed on the very point of deserting them in both ways. True, a much greater quantity of cotton than was ever yet grown might be raised in America, but then the demand, though great in itself, has limits; and an unusually large crop has the effect of extinguishing profit to the grower. This will be better understood by the American estimate of the value of crops:—

Crop.	Amount of Product, lbs.	Estimated Value, dols.
1844	812,000,000	65,772,000
1845	958,000,000	56,000,000
1847	711,000,000	72,000,000
1848	1,100,000,000	60,000,000

The estimate for the latter year, says Mr Carey, was that made at New Orleans before the occurrence of the frosts and freshets, which, we presume, raised the price of cotton wool. We see, however, from this, that the small yield of 1847 was infinitely more profitable to the grower than the large yield of 1845, and this will explain the reason why the culture of cotton cannot be indefinitely extended. It therefore became necessary, at all hazards, if cotton-spinning in Britain was to be maintained in its former palmy state, that some further concession should be made to America, to bribe her, since she could not be forced to abstain from the encouragement of her own manufactures.

That bribe was the removal of the import duties on grain and provisions to Great Britain. Let the secret instigators of the movement—the men who organised the machinery of the League—disguise the fact as they may, that, and that alone, was the actual cause of our lowered tariffs and the ultimate repeal of the corn-laws. The Manchester Chamber hoped—most vainly, as it now appears—that, by giving a new stimulus to agriculture in America, at the expense of the vast body of British producers, they could at least ward off the evil day when the American manufacturer should be able to annihilate their trade, by depriving them of the enormous profits which they realised on the conversion of the raw material into yarn. What these profits were will appear from the fact that the price of cotton wool at Liverpool, in 1843-4, was 6d., whilst twist was selling at 10¼d.; and that in 1844-5, the price of wool having fallen to 4d., the market value

of twist was 11¾d. Hitherto the prices, as fixed in England, have regulated those of the world.

That the late Sir Robert Peel, himself a scion of the cotton interest, should have been swayed by such considerations, is not, perhaps, remarkable; but that any portion of the landed gentry, of the producers for the home market, the labourers and the mechanics of Great Britain, should have allowed themselves to be deceived by the idea, that diminished or depreciated production could possibly tend either to their individual or to the national advantage, will hereafter be matter of marvel. We who know the amount of artifice and misrepresentation which was used, and who never can forget the guilty haste with which the disastrous measure was hurried through both Houses of Parliament, without giving to the nation an opportunity of expressing its deliberate opinion, feel, and have felt, less surprise than sorrow at the event. With British feeling, however, we have at present nothing to do; our object is to trace the effect which our relaxation has exercised upon American policy.

The American tariff of 1846, denounced by the Protectionists of the States as injurious to home interests, and supported by the Free-Trade party, imposes, among others, the following duties:—

	Duty per Centum.
Bottles,	30
Bread,	20
Candles,	20
Cheese,	30
Coal,	30
Cotton goods, (cord, gimps, galloons, &c.,)	30
... thread, twist, yarn, &c.,	25
... caps, leggins, stockings, &c.,	20
Duck,	20
Flax,	15
Flour and meal,	20
Grain,	20
Iron,	30
Lead,	20
Leather,	20
Provisions,	20
Soap,	30
Spirits,	100
Sugar,	30
Tobacco, unmanufactured,	30
... manufactured,	40
Wool,	30

These duties are somewhat lower, though not materially so, than the former tariff of 1842; but they certainly offer no inconsiderable amount of protection to home industry and produce. We have already seen the progress which has been made by the American cotton manufacturers, iron-masters, and miners; and it is now quite evident that, unless that progress is checked—which it only can be by the will of the Americans—our exports to that quarter must naturally decline. This is not our anticipation merely; it has been expressed openly and anxiously in the columns of the Free-Trade journals. In the iron districts of Scotland and Staffordshire, the apprehension that henceforward the American market will be generally closed against them, is, we know, very prevalent; and the following extract from the report of the *Morning Chronicle*, (April 11, 1850,) on the condition and prospects of the iron trade in the spring of 1850, applies exactly to the opening of 1851:—

> "The present state of our commercial negotiations with the United States, particularly in relation to the exportation of iron from this country, promises greatly to aggravate existing evils. It is feared by many largely interested in the iron manufacture of this neighbourhood, that the efforts of Sir Henry Bulwer at Washington to obtain a modification of the American tariff, with respect more especially to the importation of iron, will prove abortive for some time to come. Our exports of iron from South Staffordshire are said to be already considerably reduced; and should our Transatlantic friends continue, as they threaten, their restrictive commercial policy, business in these important manufacturing districts must of necessity be still more limited than it is at the present moment."

What the prospects are of future relaxation may be gathered from the following extract from the message of President Fillmore to Congress, which has reached us whilst writing this article. We observe that the *Times* is bitterly chagrined to find that the President "has stated and commended the false doctrine of Protection." Was it to be expected that he would have done otherwise, seeing that the vast majority of the American public are thoroughly imbued with the same doctrines, however false and heretical they may appear in the eyes of Manchester?

> "All experience has demonstrated the wisdom and policy of raising a large portion of revenue for the support of Government from duties on goods imported. The power to lay these duties is unquestionable, and its chief object, of course, is to replenish the Treasury. But if, in doing this, an incidental advantage may be gained by encouraging the industry of our own citizens, it is our duty to avail ourselves of that advantage.
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> "A duty laid upon an article which cannot be produced in this country, such as tea or coffee—adds to the cost of the article, and is chiefly or wholly paid by the

consumers. But a duty laid upon an article which may be produced here stimulates the skill and industry of our own country to produce the same article, which is brought into the market in competition with the foreign article, and the importer is thus compelled to reduce his price to that at which the domestic article can be sold, thereby throwing a part of the duty upon the producer of the foreign article. The continuance of this process creates the skill, and invites the capital, which finally enable us to produce the article much cheaper than it could have been procured from abroad, thereby benefiting both the producer and the consumer at home. The consequence of this is, that the artisan and the agriculturist are brought together; each affords a ready market for the produce of the other, the whole country becomes prosperous, and the ability to produce every necessary of life renders us independent in war as well as in peace.

"A high tariff can never be permanent. It will cause dissatisfaction and will be changed. It excludes competition, and thereby invites the investment of capital in manufactures to such excess, that when changed it brings distress, bankruptcy, and ruin upon all who have been misled by its faithless protection. What the manufacturer wants is uniformity and permanency, that he may feel a confidence that he is not to be ruined by sudden changes. But, to make a tariff uniform and permanent, it is not only necessary that the law should not be altered, but that the duty should not fluctuate. To effect this, all duties should be specific, wherever the nature of the article is such as to admit of it. *Ad valorem* duties fluctuate with the price, and offer strong temptations to fraud and perjury.

"Specific duties, on the contrary, are equal and uniform in all ports and at all times, and offer a strong inducement to the importer to bring the best article, as he pays no more duty upon that than upon one of inferior quality. I therefore strongly recommend a modification of the present tariff, which has prostrated some of our most important and necessary manufactures, and that specific duties be imposed sufficient to raise the requisite revenue, making such discrimination in favour of the industrial pursuits of our country as to encourage home production without excluding foreign competition. It is also important that an unfortunate provision in the present tariff, which imposes a much higher duty upon the raw material that enters into our manufactures than upon the manufactured article, should be remedied."

So that America, the great democratic state on which we relied for reciprocity, is going ahead, not, as our Free-Traders foretold, in their direction, but precisely on the opposite tack.

What is there wonderful in this? Was it likely that a country, possessing within itself the raw material in abundance, and, so far as cotton was concerned, having a virtual monopoly of its growth, should for ever refuse to avail itself of its natural advantages, and to stimulate agriculture by giving it that enormous increment of consumption which must arise from the establishment of domestic manufactures? Does not common sense show us that, the nearer the point of exchange can be brought to the exchanging parties, the more advantageous and profitable to both parties must that interchange necessarily become? Unquestionably it is for the interest of the American planter to have the manufactory brought as close as possible to his plantation, seeing that thereby he would avoid the enormous charges which he bears at present, both in land carriage and freightage—charges which, of themselves, go a great way towards the annihilation of his profit. Add to this that those charges on the raw material necessarily enhance the price of the fabric when converted by British machinery, and again transported to America, and it must become evident to every one how largely the American planter is interested in the foundation and success of American manufactures. The interest of the agriculturist is equally great. For him a steady market at his own door, such as extended manufactures alone can give, is the readiest and most certain source of wealth and prosperity. What he wants is regular consumption, and the nearer the customers can be found, the greater will be the demand, and the more profitable the supply.

We need not, however, argue a matter which has been already settled on the other side of the Atlantic. It suffices us to know that, in all human probability, America will persevere as she has begun, taking every advantage which we are foolish enough to give her, and yet adhering to her system of protecting domestic labour, and of riveting more closely than before all branches of industry by the bonds of mutual interest. Such clear, distinct, and philosophic principles as are enunciated by a late American writer make us blush for the confused, absurd, and contradictory jargon which of late years has been proffered to the world, with so much parade, as the infallible dicta of British political economy.

"A great error exists in the impression now very commonly entertained in regard to national division of labour, and which owes its origin to the English school of political economists, whose system is throughout based upon the idea of making England 'the workshop of the world,' than which nothing could be less natural. By that school it is taught that some nations are fitted for manufactures and others for the labours of agriculture; and that the latter are largely benefited by being compelled to employ themselves in the one pursuit, making all their exchanges at a distance, thus contributing their share to the maintenance of the system of 'ships, colonies, and commerce.' The whole basis of their system is *conversion* and *exchange*, and not production, yet neither makes any addition to the amount of things to be exchanged. It is the great boast of their system that the exchangers

> are so numerous and the producers so few; and the more rapid the increase in the proportion which the former bear to the latter, the more rapid is supposed to be the advance towards perfect prosperity. Converters and exchangers, however, must live, and they must live out of the labour of others; and if three, five, or ten persons are to live on the product of one, it must follow that all will obtain but a small allowance of the necessaries and comforts of life, as is seen to be the case. The agricultural labourer of England often receives but eight shillings a-week, being the price of a bushel and a half of wheat.
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> "Were it asserted that some nations were fitted to be growers of wheat and others grinders of it, or that some were fitted for cutting down trees, and others for sawing them into lumber, it would be regarded as the height of absurdity, yet it would not be more absurd than that which is daily asserted in regard to the conversion of cotton into cloth, and implicitly believed by tens of thousands even of our countrymen. The loom is as appropriate and necessary an aid to the labours of the planter as is the grist-mill to those of the farmer. The furnace is as necessary and as appropriate an aid to the labours of both planter and farmer as is the saw-mill; and those who are compelled to dispense with the proximity of the producer of iron labour are subjected to as much disadvantage as are those who are unable to obtain the aid of the saw-mill and the miller. The loom and the anvil are, like the plough and the harrow, but small machines, naturally attracted by the great machine, the earth; and when so attracted all work together in harmony, and men become rich, and prosperous, and happy. When, on the contrary, from any disturbing cause, the attraction is in the opposite direction, and the small machines are enabled to compel the products of the great machine to follow them, the land invariably becomes poor, and men become poor and miserable, as is the case with Ireland."

In short, the American system is, to stimulate production by creating a ready market at home, and, as the best means of creating that market, to encourage the conversion of the raw material within the United States, by laying on a protective duty on articles of foreign manufacture. The British system now is, to discourage home production, and to sacrifice everything for the desperate chance of maintaining an unnatural and fortuitous monopoly of conversion, not of our own raw material only, but of that of other countries. In the attempt to secure this exceedingly precarious advantage—which, be it remembered, does not conduce to the prosperity of the great majority of the nation—our rulers and politicians have deliberately resolved that agriculture shall be rendered unprofitable; and that the bulk of our artisans, who can look to the home market only, shall henceforward be left unprotected from the competition of the whole world. It needs little sagacity to predict which system is based upon sound principles; or which, being so based, must ultimately prevail. Our economists never seem to regard the body of British producers (who, as a class, are very slightly interested in the matter of exports) in the light of important consumers. If they did so, they could not, unless smitten by judicial blindness, fail to perceive that, by crippling their means, and displacing their labour, they are in effect ruining the home market, upon which, notoriously, two-thirds even of the converters depend. The stability of every state must depend upon its production, not upon its powers of conversion. The one is real and permanent, the other liable to be disturbed and annihilated by many external causes. A country which produces largely, even though it may not have within it the means of adequate conversion, is always in a healthy state. Not only the power, but the actual source of wealth is there; and, as years roll on, and capital accumulates, the subsidiary process of conversion becomes more and more developed, not to the injury of the producer—but to his great and even incalculable advantage.

The natural power of the production of Great Britain, as compared with other states, is not very high. Its insular position, and the variableness of its climate, renders the quality of our harvests uncertain; but that uncertainty is perhaps compensated, on the average, by our superior agriculture, and the vast pains, labour, and capital which have been expended on the tillage of our land. Our meadows, downs, and hill pastures have, however, been most valuable to us in furnishing a better quality of wool than can elsewhere be obtained in Europe—an advantage which our forefathers perceived and wisely availed themselves of—for, as early as the reign of Edward III., manufacturers from Hainault were brought into this country by the advice of Queen Philippa, and laid the foundation of the most prosperous, healthy, and legitimate trade which we possess. Ever since, the woollen manufacture has been inseparably connected with the interests of the British soil. Few luxuries, or even such articles of luxury as are now considered necessaries, can be grown in Great Britain. For wine our climate is unsuited; but there is nothing whatever to prevent us—except a system which calls itself, though it is not, Free Trade—from growing the coarser kinds of tobacco, and from establishing manufactories of sugar from beet-root. Our stock of minerals is great—almost inexhaustible—and to this fact we must look for our singular pre-eminence during so many years in Europe. Our unlimited supply of coal and iron gave us an advantage which no other European nation possessed—it was, in fact, virtually a monopoly—and upon that we built our claim to become the workshop of the world. Nor was the claim in any degree a preposterous one. That singular monopoly of minerals—for such it seemed—gave us the actual power, if judiciously used, of controlling the process of conversion, not only here, but elsewhere throughout the globe. Manual labour, it mattered not what was the distance, had no chance at all against the triumphs of machinery; and hence our commerce extended itself far and wide, to savage as well as civilised nations, and our arms were used to force a market where it could not otherwise be obtained. This, if not our strength, was undoubtedly the cause of

our supremacy, and even of our extended colonisation; and as we obtained command of a raw material of foreign growth, so did we adapt our machinery to convert it into fabrics for the world.

It is by no means a pleasant matter to recur to certain particulars in our commercial and manufacturing history. We found the East Indies in the possession of a considerable manufacture of cotton, the producer and the converter being there reciprocally dependant. *That* we have stopped, the object being to compel the Hindustani to receive his clothing direct from Manchester. And we have succeeded so far that, last year, our exports to Hindostan were so great, that, by lumping them in the general account, our statists were able to furnish what appeared to many a convincing argument in favour of Free Trade, though in reality it had nothing to do with that question. *But at what cost* have these operations been made on India? Simply at this, that, whilst destroying the native manufacture, we have also curtailed the production of the raw material. Of the rapid diminution in its amount let the following figures tell:—

IMPORT OF COTTON FROM INDIA TO ENGLAND.

1844	88,000,000	lbs.
1845	58,000,000	"
1846	34,000,000	"

But raw material we must have, else our machinery is of no use. We have had so long a monopoly of cotton-spinning that we have accustomed ourselves, spite of nature, and spite of fact, to believe that our whole destiny was that of cotton-spinning. We ignore all history in favour of that particular shrub; and, pinning our faith to export tables—concocted by the weakest and most contemptible of charlatans—we make no hesitation in avowing that the prosperity and destiny of Great Britain is indissolubly entwined with our monopoly of cotton twist! That would be simply laughable, if we had not absolutely legislated on, and committed ourselves to that theory. We stand just now, in the face both of Europe and America—we know not whether we ought to exclude the other quarters of the globe—in the most ridiculous possible position. Our economists are permitted to say to them—"Send us your raw material, and we shall be proud and happy to work it up for you. Don't be at the pains or the cost of rearing manufactories for yourselves. That would entail upon you, not only a great deal of trouble, but a vast expenditure of capital, which you had much better lay out in improving your extra soil, and in bringing it to good cultivation. We can promise you a ready market here. Our proprietors and farmers are unquestionably heavily burdened by taxation, but they must submit to the popular will; or, if they choose to dissent, they may sell off their stock and emigrate to your country, where doubtless they will prove valuable acquisitions. You, we are well aware, are able to provide us with food cheaper than they can do it; and cheapness is all we look to. We shall even do more for you. We agree to admit to our market, at merely nominal duties, all your small articles of manufacture. You may undersell and annihilate, if you can, our glovers, hatters, shoemakers, glass-blowers, and fifty others—only do not interfere with the larger branches, and, above all, do not touch our monopoly of cotton."

It is now obvious, and we believe generally acknowledged by those who have most practical knowledge of the subject, that the monopoly is broken up. America is seriously addressing herself to the task of applying her lately discovered stores of coal and iron to practical use; and, as we shall presently have occasion to show, she has no need to train workmen for that purpose, since the great emigration from this country supplies her with practised hands. That her rivalry will be of the most formidable description there can be no matter of doubt, for she will still be able to retain command of the raw material, and, retaining that, to regulate the price of cotton and cotton goods at New Orleans, instead of permitting Liverpool or Manchester to dictate authoritatively to the world. Whether the Manchester Chamber, finding their last move utterly abortive in securing monopoly, may succeed in rearing up plantations of cotton elsewhere than in America, is a point upon which we cannot speak with any degree of certainty. That they are alarmed, and deeply alarmed, at the prospect before them is evident, not only from the representations made in Parliament, and the desponding tone of their organs, but from the experiments which they have instituted for the purpose of ascertaining whether some other vegetable product may not be used as a substitute for cotton. Even if they were successful in one or other, or in both of their inquiries, it seems clear to us that they never can hope to regain their former ascendency. They must be exposed to the competition not only of America, but of the Confederation of the Zollverein, which now receives from the United States a large and increasing supply of raw material. The following table will show the extreme rapidity in the growth of that consumption:—

	1836.	**Average from 1837 to 1841.**	**1843.**	**1845.**
Raw cotton, quintals, exported from America to the Zollverein,	152,364.	200,093.	306,731.	443,887.

Although it never can be agreeable to know that any important branch of trade in this country is retrograding or falling into decay, we cannot affect to feel much sympathy with the cotton manufacturers, and that for several reasons. In the first place, their trade was a factitious one, not founded upon or tending in any degree to promote the real production of Great Britain, but avowedly rendering us dependant to a dangerous degree upon foreign supplies. Secondly, there can be no doubt that our demand for the raw material has had the effect of perpetuating slavery in the southern states of America. And, lastly, we cannot forget that we owe all our present difficulties to the machinations of men connected with the cotton manufacture. The doctrine that the strength of Britain lay in its powers of conversion, not in its powers of production, originated

with them; and in their selfish eagerness to maintain a monopoly, even then in a precarious position, they made no scruple of sacrificing every interest which stood in their way. Our readers cannot fall to recollect the arguments which were employed by the champions and leaders of the League. America, whether as an example or an ally, was never out of their mouths. We were to spin for America, weave for America, do everything in short for her which the power of machinery could achieve. America, on the other hand, was to forego all idea of interfering with our industrial pursuits, in the way of encouraging her own children to become manufacturing rivals, and was to apply herself solely to the production of raw material, cotton, corn and provisions, wherewith the whole of us were to be fed. Our statesmen acted on this faith, assured us that we had but to show the example, and reciprocity must immediately be established, and opened the British ports without any condition whatever. The consequence was an influx of corn and provisions far greater than they expected, which at once annihilated agricultural profits in Great Britain, and is rapidly annihilating agriculture itself in Ireland. We were told to take comfort, because the very amount of the importations showed that it could not be continued; and yet it is continued up to the present day, and prices remain at a point which, even according to the estimate of the Free-traders, is not only unremunerative, but so injurious to the grower that he must lose by the process of cultivation. The actual labourer was the last sufferer, but he is suffering now, and his future prospects are most miserable and revolting. The smaller branches of manufacture, and the multitudes of artisans employed in these, have felt grievously the effect of lowered tariffs, and, even still more, the competition which has been engendered by the amount of displaced labour. Our large towns are the natural receptacles for those who have been driven from the villages, on account of sheer lack of employment; and ever and anon philanthropists are made to shudder by the tales of woe, and want, and fearful deprivation, which are forced upon the public ear. And yet few of them appear to have traced the evil to its source, which lies simply in the legislative discouragement of production, for the sake of a system of conversion which can offer no means adequate to the wants and numbers of the competing population.

Our exports, when we deduct the value of the raw material, constitute in reality an insignificant item in the account of our annual creation of wealth. The greatness and prosperity of Britain never did, and never will, depend upon the amount of her foreign trade, though that is now regarded by our statistical quack-doctors as the sole criterion. What we must depend upon is the home trade, and that can only be prosperous by maintaining the value of production. For how else, save from production, are the labouring population, or indeed any of us, high or low, rich or poor, as we may call ourselves, to be maintained? All of us derive our subsistence from the earth, and beyond what is reaped or redeemed from its bosom we have nothing. If, for example, there is no market for iron, the furnaces will be blown out, and the ores left unworked; if there is no market for agricultural produce—that is, a remunerative market—the fields will be left untilled. What, then, becomes of the converters?—for whom do they work?—or how do they acquire the wherewithal to purchase the food which the foreigner may chance to send them? Let Ireland answer. That unhappy island is at this moment paying the last penalties of Free Trade. It stands before us as a beacon and warning of what we must expect, and cannot avoid, if we continue to discourage production, in the insane hope of thereby stimulating conversion; and perhaps we cannot do better than quote an American opinion as to the cause of its wretchedness and ruin:—

> "With this vast increase in the importation from abroad has come the ruin of the people of Ireland. Deprived of manufactures and commerce, her people were driven to live by agriculture alone, and she was enabled to drag on a miserable existence, so long as her neighbour was content to make some compensation for the loss of labour, by paying her for her products higher prices than those at which they might have been elsewhere purchased. With the repeal of the Corn Laws that resource has failed; and the result is a state of poverty, wretchedness, and famine, that has compelled the establishment of a system which obliges the landowner to maintain the people, whether they work or not; and thus is one of the conditions of slavery re-established in that unhappy country. From being a great exporter of food, she has now become a large importer. The great market for Indian corn is Ireland—a country in which the production of food is almost the sole occupation of the people. The value of labour in food throughout a population of eight millions, is thus rapidly decreasing."

To every word of this we subscribe, and we beg to say, further, that this is not the only instance. A large portion of Scotland has been absolutely pauperised by Free Trade. The condition of the western Highlands and Islands is most appalling; and unless Ministers and members of Parliament are prepared to do their duty to the children of the soil, they are utterly and execrably unworthy of the trust which has been committed to their charge. It is with a feeling nearly akin to loathing that we peruse accounts of Brobdignag glass-houses, and sham exhibitions of the industry of nations, reared at an enormous cost, when we know that the men who ought to be the producers of our national wealth—and who might be so, were they not made the victims of a heartless and senseless system—are being driven in hundreds from their hearths and homes, and cast upon the wide world, without a roof to shelter them, or a rag to give them covering!

All this, and more—for every day brings its fresh tale of woe and wretchedness—is the consequence of free imports. And how stands the account the other way? Where is the counterbalancing advantage? It may be that the ruin and prostration of Ireland and the Highlands is no great loss to the indwellers of the towns, the men of the factories and counting-houses. It may be that they are not at all affected by such misery, or that they care to listen to it, notwithstanding that the victims are in the sight of God as valuable beings as themselves. It may

be that, in consequence of such suffering, or rather by creating it, they have derived some advantage large enough to compensate for the havoc, by enabling them to give a livelihood to thousands who would otherwise have been unemployed and destitute. If so, where is it? Has America reciprocated?

NO! AND AMERICA WILL NOT.

America laughs at the whole crew of Manchester conspirators with sovereign and undisguised contempt. She wants nothing from them—she will take nothing from them. Secure in her own position, and possessing within herself every requisite for greatness, and—what is more—for the happiness and welfare of her children, she regards with scorn the attempted compromise of the crippled converters, and, while she rejects their offer, gives them a burning rebuke for their treachery to their native land.

So far from discouraging her manufactures, she intends to protect them; so far from concealing her mineral wealth, she has resolved to develop that to the utmost—judging, and rightly judging, that it is alone through the "harmony of interests" that a nation can be truly prosperous.

Her rebuke, as contained in the documents before us, which we firmly believe convey the sentiments of the wisest men of the Union, is perhaps the most poignant that ever was cast in the teeth of a civilised and Christian community. It resolves itself into this:—

"You, producers, mechanics, and artisans of Great Britain, who are deprived of your labour, which is your only heritage, for the sake of a few men, who will neither take your produce nor avail themselves of your skill, come to us. We require hands to till our savannahs, to excavate our ores, to work at the furnaces, to weave, and to spin. Labour with us is not as in your country. The producer shall not be sacrificed for the sake of the converter, or the converter subjected to the precarious mercy of the producer of another land. Here, at least, you will find an entire harmony of interests. Foreign customers you need seek none, for every requisite of life is secured to you in return for your labour."

And, lest it should be thought that we are putting words into the mouth of the Americans without authority, we shall presently have occasion to quote from the remarkable work before us.

The repeal of the Corn Laws, and of the duties levied on provisions, have enormously, as we all know, increased the exports of America. The following tables will show their amount, and, in the case of provisions, the increase since the lowered tariffs came into operation.

AMOUNT OF AMERICAN EXPORTS OF GRAIN AND PROVISIONS.

GRAIN AND FLOUR.

Year ending	Flour. barrels.	Wheat. bushels.	Corn. bushels.	Cornmeal. bushels.
June 30, 1848,	958,744	1,531,000	5,062,000	226,000
Aug. 31, 1849,	1,114,016	4,684,000	12,721,000	88,000

PROVISIONS.

	Beef. barrels.	Butter. lb.	Cheese. lb.	Pork. barrels.	Hams. lb.	Lard. barrels.
1840,	19,631	1,177,639	723,217	66,281	1,643,897	7,418,847
1841,	56,537	3,785,983	1,748,471	133,290	2,796,517	10,597,854
1844,	106,174	3,251,952	7,342,145	161,629	3,886,976	25,746,385
1849,	133,286	3,406,242	17,433,632	253,486	56,060,822	37,446,761

Now, if the doctrine of the Free-traders is a true one, it will follow that the imports of America must be on a scale corresponding to the magnitude of the exports. If that be so, the fact will be evident on the face of their revenue accounts. We turn to these, and find the following results:—

CUSTOMS REVENUE FROM THE IMPORTS TO THE UNITED STATES.

	Dollars.
1844-5,	27,528,000
1845-6,	26,712,000
1846-7,	23,747,000
1847-8,	31,757,000
1848-9,	28,346,000

How, then, and in what shape, were these enormous exportations of grain and provisions paid for? Not certainly in goods, for if that were so, a corresponding increase would be apparent in the revenue accounts. The answer is quite short—in gold, and in that commodity which ought to be regarded as far more valuable than gold—MAN.

It is a fact of no small interest, that the ship-owning corn-merchants have willingly sold grain in Liverpool for less than they could have got for it in the States, in order to insure the return cargo—that which they find so profitable—emigrants. Mr Blain, who was engaged for many years by the Jews of London and Germany in valuing the growing crops of America, gives the following account of this apparently unreasonable process:—"The shipowners of America are making much money by carrying emigrants to the States: they are now extensive corn-merchants, and are buying largely at very low prices, it being better to carry wheat across the Atlantic, and sell it at 2s. per quarter less than it cost, than buy ballast, which is very dear in the American seaports." [31] Steam, too, is now about to be applied in furtherance of this traffic, and we read of

magnificent steamers built expressly for the corn and emigrant trade between New York and Liverpool. By the way, with freights at 6d. a barrel of flour, (the rate in September 1849,) equivalent to 1s. per quarter of wheat, what becomes of the once favourite sophism, that the Atlantic afforded a natural protection of at least 10s. to the English farmer? Nor should it be forgotten that the American farmer finds it his plain interest thus to part with his surplus production, procuring in return that of which he stands so much in need—labour; and the vast emigration from the western states to California has rendered European labour more valuable and welcome to him than ever.

> "We imported last year," says Mr Carey, "about three hundred thousand persons. Estimating their consumption of food at twenty cents per day for each, there was thus made a market on the land for the products of the land to the extent of *twenty millions of dollars*. This transportation required the constant employment of two hundred and fifty thousand tons of shipping, and ships carried freight to Europe at very low rates, because certain of obtaining valuable return cargoes. The farmer thus obtained a large home market, and the power of exporting cheaply to the foreign one; and to the conjoined operation of these two causes is due the fact, that wheat and flour have continued so high in price.
>
> "We may now, I think, understand many curious facts now passing before our eyes. Food is so abundant in Russia, that it is wasted, and yet among the large exporters of food to Great Britain is this country, in which it sells at a price almost as high as in Liverpool, and now even higher. The produce of Russia has to bear all the charges out and home, and the consequence is that the producer remains poor, and makes no roads; and thus the cost of transportation, internal and external, continues, and must continue great. The farmer of the United States sends his produce to market cheap, because the return cargo, being chiefly man, is valuable, and the space it occupies is great. He therefore grows rich, and makes roads and canals, and builds steamboats; and thus is the cost of transportation, internal and external, so far diminished, that the difference in the price of a barrel of flour in Pittsburgh and in Liverpool is, when we look at the distance, almost inconceivably small.
>
> "The bulk of the trade of Canada is outwards; and the consequence is that outward freights are high, while our imports of men and other valuable commodities keep them low with us; and therefore it is that the cost of transporting wheat and flour from our side of the line is so much lower than from the other, that both now pass through New York on their way to Liverpool. Hence it is that there has arisen so vehement a desire for commercial reciprocity, and even for annexation. The protective system has thus not only the effect of bringing consumers to take their places by the side of the producer, facilitating the consumption on the land of the products of the land, and facilitating also the exportation of the surplus to foreign markets by diminishing outward freights, but the further one of producing among our neighbours a strong desire for the establishment of the same perfect freedom of trade that now exists among the several states, by becoming themselves a part of the Union. Protection, therefore, tends to the increase of commerce, and the establishment of Free Trade; while the British system tends everywhere to the destruction of commerce, and to the production of a necessity for restriction.
>
> "We see, thus, that if we desire to secure the command of that which is falsely termed 'the great grain-market of the world,' it is to be effected by the adoption of such measures as will secure valuable return freights. The most costly and the most valuable of all are men; the least so are pig-iron and coal. The more of the latter we import, the larger will be our surplus of food, the higher will be the outward freight, internal and external, the greater will be the waste, and the poorer will be the farmer. The more of the former we import, the smaller will be our surplus of food, the lower will be the outward freights, and the more numerous will be the commodities that can go to Europe, to be given in exchange for luxuries that now we cannot purchase."

So much for the American views of reciprocity. Secured by her system of tariffs, which she is now about to heighten, against the effects of foreign competition, America is resolutely bent on availing herself to the utmost of all the vast natural resources which she possesses, and to render herself wholly independent of the conversion of foreign countries. By following such a course she must, as her population increases, grow in greatness and in might, as must every nation wherein labour is estimated and cherished according to its proper value, and the rights of the domestic producer and workman guarded with untiring vigilance.

One word as to the prospects of the British farmer. We know from undoubted authority that in many parts of the United States, for example Ottawa, excellent land may be purchased for £1 an acre, broken up for 7s., burdened by no poor nor county rates, and unconscious of the presence of the tax-gatherer. Land such as this can, indeed, afford to produce corn at an almost nominal price—ballast for the ships that shall bring back the overweighted and ruined yeomen and peasants of England to New York and New Orleans! But, vast as the immigration has been, the production of food has greatly outstripped it; and as fresh tracts of virgin land are, year by year, brought into cultivation, and internal communications opened or improved, we see no reason whatever to believe that the export of grain to England will diminish, or the price of that grain be enhanced. Let our readers bear in mind the wonderful development of the mining and

manufacturing resources of America, to which we have just directed their attention, and then see how, in spite of, or far rather concurrently with that, the production of food also increased. We again quote from *The Harmony of Interests*. How great was the increase may be seen by the following comparison of the returns under the census of 1840, and the Patent Office Estimates for 1847:—

	Wheat	Barley	Oats	Rye	Buckwheat	Indian Corn	TOTALS
1840	84,823,000	4,161,000	123,071,000	18,645,000	7,291,000	377,531,000	615,522,000
1847	114,245,000	5,649,000	167,867,000	29,222,000	11,673,000	539,350,000	867,826,000
Increase	29,422,000	1,488,000	44,797,000	10,577,000	4,382,000	161,819,000	252,304,000

Showing an increase of not less than 40 per cent in 7 years, during which the population only advanced 23 per cent.

How much of this surplus produce may be expected to find its way into the English market, we do not pretend accurately to foretell; but when we find that, without the inducement of an unrestricted access to it, in 1846 America was able to raise her exports of grain to thirteen millions of bushels, from six millions in 1845; and in 1847, with only the preparation of a year, to twenty-six millions, we think Lord Fitzwilliam is quite justified in taking it for granted that the price of corn in England will not rise above its present ruinous average. Attempts, no doubt, will be made to show that the emigration to California has deprived the Western States of the labour that is required to raise these enormous crops. Our answer is, that 300,000 souls were added by immigration to the population of the United States in 1849; and that our own emigration returns for 1850 show that the tide from England is flowing in that direction with unabated force. So last year, when the great and unexpected import of French flour was adding to the depression, and stimulating the complaints of the English agriculturists, the Free Import authorities explained it away as a forced unnatural importation which must speedily cease, as France was an importing, and not an exporting, county, and the price of corn there was naturally higher than in England; and yet we learn from the same organ of public opinion which favoured us in the summer with this satisfactory explanation of the French importations, that in the month of November last, the prices of wheat, flour, and bread were all much higher in London than in Paris. In its City article of November 14th, appeared the following comparison of the present prices of wheat, flour, and bread, in London and Paris:—

> "The highest price of wheat of the first quality in Paris is 24 francs per 1½ hectolitres, which is equal to 36s. 8d. per quarter; and the highest price of white wheat of the first quality, in London, being 48s. per quarter, it follows that wheat is 30⅞ per cent dearer in London than in Paris. The highest quotation of flour of the first quality in Paris is 29 francs 95 cents the 100 kilogrammes, which is equal to 29s. 11d. per sack of 280 lb. English; and the highest quotation of flour in the London market being 40s. per sack, it follows that flour is about 33⅝ per cent dearer in London than in Paris. The price of bread of the first quality in Paris is 27 cents per kilogramme, which is equal to 4⅝ per 4 lb. loaf English weight; and the price of bread in London, at the full-priced shops, being 6½d. per 4 lb., it follows that bread is 40½ per cent dearer in London than in Paris."

We apprehend that a difference of thirty or forty per cent is sufficient to tempt the French corn-grower, or miller, into the higher-priced market which lies so conveniently open to him; and thus from the model republic of the Old, no less than from the model republic of the New World, must the English farmer expect to see for the future those supplies of grain and flour pouring in, which shall prevent his produce procuring a remunerating price. To complete the picture, it should not be forgotten that both these exporting countries impose considerable duties on the importation of grain and flour, and thus afford us a perfect specimen of that reciprocity which all Liberal governments and free nations were so anxious to establish, according to our sapient rulers, in 1846.

We do not think that we need add any further argument to what has been already said. Our antagonists, the Free-traders, have been allowed—what they required and what was fair—time for the working of their experiment. Ample time has been granted, and we now see that it has failed in every particular. They said that it would induce reciprocity; it has induced higher opposing tariffs. They said it would secure for Great Britain the manufacturing custom of the world; on the contrary, foreign manufactories are springing up with unexampled rapidity. They said it would increase the demand for iron; it has prostrated it. They said it would give full employment to all our labouring population; it has displaced labour, and driven our working men by hundreds of thousands to emigrate. They said it could not attract such an importation of foreign grain and provisions, as permanently to beat down prices in this country below the remunerating level; it has already brought such an influx of these articles, that the grower of grain is impoverished, and the breeder of cattle ruined. They said it would be the commencement of a new era of prosperity to Ireland; it has laid it utterly desolate!

Are we, then, obstinately to persevere in a course of policy so evidently obnoxious and detrimental? Are we still to crush down labour for an end which is now proved to be impossible of attainment; and to tell the working classes, that because our rulers have made a false step, they and theirs must submit to descend into the hideous gulf of pauperism? These are questions for the nation to consider—questions of unparalleled magnitude, both for the present and the coming time. If we are not so to persevere in our folly, there is no alternative left but to build up our

commercial system anew upon wiser and sounder principles. It cannot be expected that we shall ever again possess a monopoly of the manufactures of the world. We must be contented with that share which our skill, and energy, and undeniable resources can command; and if we wish still to retain possession of the vast Colonial Empire which has long been our pride and boast, we must foster, stimulate, and protect the industry of the colonists as sedulously and anxiously as our own.

After all, we may possibly, at no very distant period of time, have reason to be thankful that the experiment has been made, notwithstanding all the misery and loss which have accompanied the trial. For, if anything could have broken down the free independent spirit of Great Britain, and rendered it callous and listless to external aggression or insult, no better method could be found than the complete adoption of a system which must have made us perpetually subservient to the wants of other nations, doing their work to order, and receiving wages in return. In order to emancipate ourselves from this state of threatened Helotism—the state which the disciples of the Manchester school regard as the most enviable upon earth—we must attempt to re-establish perfect harmony and mutual co-operation amongst all the interests of Britain, to give productive labour its proper place and pre-eminence, and, since we cannot secure for convertive labour the command of foreign markets, to take care that, in the home market, it is not exposed to any undue or unfair competition. We hold by this proposition, well understood and energetically supported in America, that "when a nation makes a market at home for nearly all its products, other nations have to come and seek what they require, and pay the highest price; and that, when it does not make a market at home, markets must be sought abroad, and then sales must be made at the lowest prices." If this be true, it will follow that the way to sell at the highest prices, and to buy at the lowest, is to buy and sell at home.

FOOTNOTES:

[29] *The Harmony of Interests, Agricultural, Manufacturing, and Commercial.* Skinner, Philadelphia.

[30] President's Message, November 1850.

[31] *Liverpool Mail*, Nov. 2, 1850.

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Transcriber's Notes:

Simple spelling, grammar, and typographical errors in the prose were corrected.

Punctuation normalized.

Archaic, colloquial, and non-standard spellings retained as printed.

Egregious errors were corrected in the poetry.

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