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CHAMBERS'S JOURNAL OF POPULAR LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

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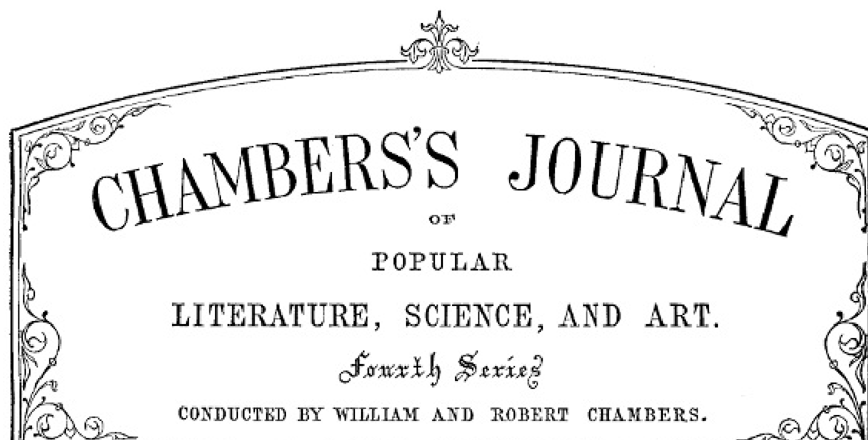

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THE HIGH-METTLED RACER.

At Cooke's well-known travelling Circus there may be seen some remarkable performances with horses and small ponies that have been trained for the purpose. In London, at Hengler's Cirque, as it is called, there is a fine stud of horses, which commands general admiration. Without depreciating modern establishments of this kind, our recollections go back to Astley's Amphitheatre, near Westminster Bridge, as it used to be thirty to forty years ago, under the management of the late Mr Ducrow. The feats there performed by some of the horses were exceedingly wonderful. The animals seemed to possess a degree of human intelligence. They were accomplished actors. Their powers of simulation with a view to entertain spectators went far beyond what any one could expect whose knowledge is confined to the ordinary class of horses. We will mention a few particulars regarding the horses at Astley's as they occur to our memory.

One evening the performance represented a house on fire. All the inhabitants of the dwelling had managed to escape except a lady in an upper story. You saw her at a window throwing about her arms wildly, and screaming for help. Her appeals to the assembled crowd beneath were heart-rending. The firemen could not reach her, for the stair was seemingly in a blaze, and there was no fire-escape. The spectators in the theatre were wrought up to an agony, it being but too evident that the poor lady was doomed to perish by a painful and violent death. In the midst of the commotion, a horse which belonged to the lady rushed upon the stage. In its stable it had heard the screams of its mistress, and hastened to do its best to save her. Without saddle or bridle, it was seen to rush into the house, and to climb the stair amidst flames and volumes of smoke. It reached the apartment where the lady was. She mounted on its back, holding by the mane, and the horse descending the stair brought her safely to the ground. Prolonged shouts of applause rewarded the hazardous exploit. The whole thing was a beautiful piece of acting, evoking throughout sentiments of pleasure and admiration. Nothing but kindness and long training could have made the horse so clever in knowing what to do and to do it well. The feat was the more surprising as horses usually have a dread of fire which is not easily conquered. It will be understood that the fire had been so adroitly managed as to effect no injury on the theatre, and that there never had been any real danger.

On another evening at Astley's a still more remarkable piece of acting by a white horse named Prince, was offered for public entertainment. It was in a play called the High-mettled Racer. The play was in several successive acts, and designed to represent different stages of degradation in the career of a horse from youth to old age. The spectacle was painful but touching, and unfortunately in too many cases true to nature. We shall endeavour to describe some of the scenes.

When the piece opens, we have a view of an English country mansion. In front there are several mounted huntsmen in scarlet coats ready to set out on a fox-chase. They are waiting till a young lady comes out of the mansion to accompany them. We see the lady, who is properly equipped for riding, descend the steps at the doorway, and by the aid of a groom mount a young and beautifully shaped white horse that is in readiness for her. She speaks to it affectionately, and calls it her dear Prince. The elegant form of the animal, its proud bearing, its glossy coat, and the spirited way it prances about, excite general admiration. After a little galloping to shew its paces, the horse with its fair rider goes off with the huntsmen and hounds in pursuit of a fox—that was also a taught actor in its way—which leads the party through a variety of difficulties, such as climbing up rocks, leaping over hedges, and so forth, till at length, when on the point of being run down, it dashes into the cottage of a poor old woman, who humanely gives it shelter. She takes up the fox lovingly in her arms, and saves it from seemingly impending destruction. That may be called the first stage in the horse's career, during which Prince was well attended to and happy. {210}

At the beginning of next act, the horse is to appearance several years older, and is no longer fit for racing or hunting. The lady, its first owner, had from some circumstances been compelled to part with it. From its swiftness in running, it had been purchased to run at celebrated horse-races, at which it had on several occasions won prizes, and its sprightliness obtained for it the name of the High-mettled Racer. After this it was transferred from one owner to another, always in a descending scale, until poor Prince is seen in the condition of a cab-horse in the streets of London. It has somewhat the look of its former state, but is terribly broken down in figure and spirit. Its plump and glossy appearance is gone. It is dirty and dejected. It hangs its head droopingly down. Its ribs shine through its skin. Its joints are stiff. It stands on three legs, with the other leg resting on the point of the foot, just as we see cab-horses trying to rest their aching limbs when standing in a row for hire. What a wretched downcome from that which Prince had enjoyed in 'life's young dream!' There awaits it, however, a still lower depth of misery.

In the following act, Prince is reduced to the forlorn condition of drawing a sand-cart, when it can hardly draw its own legs after it. To appearance, it is half-starved. A child offers it a few straws, which it is glad to eat. It seems to be little better than skin and bone. The cart in which it is yoked belongs to a rude jobber whose object is to wring the utmost possible work out of the animal before selling it to be killed. A feeling of horror and compassion thrills through the spectators. They can hardly believe they are only looking at a play, for the simulation is perfect. Staggering along with its draught under the cruel urging of the whip, the moment arrives when Prince can go no further. Its unhappy span of life is terminated. It suddenly drops down under its weary load—to die, and be relieved of all its troubles. Unyoked from the cart, and relieved of its harness, there it is stretched out, with a crowd of idlers about it, seemingly at the last gasp, and offering

in its fate a dreadful instance of undeserved cruelty to animals. 'Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn.' Quite true; but, alas, inhumanity to man is nothing in comparison with the inhumanity which is recklessly exercised towards the horse.

There is a concluding scene in the life of the horse we have been describing, which must on no account be omitted. While lying in the street in its death-struggle, and when preparations were making to drag it off to the shambles, a lady who is passing recognises the dying animal as being her favourite horse Prince, which she had ridden years ago at the fox-chase. At the same time the poor beast faintly lifting its head, recognises its old mistress, and with failing eyes seems to implore her compassion. In a state of distraction, the lady kneels down, takes the horse's head in her lap, speaks to it consolingly, and once more calls it her dear Prince. Oh, what she would not do to revive the dying animal, and give Prince a new lease of existence! Just at this juncture, in the manner of the old plays, when something supernatural was required to get over a serious difficulty, a sylph-like being in the character of a benevolent fairy appears on the stage carrying a magic wand. Her mission, she says, being to redress wrong, she touches the dying horse with the wand and bids it rise. In an instant Prince starts up from its recumbent position, and to the delight and amazement of everybody, it is as fresh, plump, glossy, and beautiful as when it went out with the hounds in the fox-chase. The lady springs upon its back, and off Prince goes at a splendid gallop. The applause was, of course, immense!

Perhaps in the whole annals of horsemanship there was never demonstrated a more wonderful case of acting. The horse had all along been feigning for public amusement. It had feigned to be a cab-horse. It had feigned to be tired when it stood on three legs. It feigned to be dying when it dropped down in the sand-cart. The whole affair was a piece of simulation, and by means of some adventitious aid in discolouring the skin, the deception was complete. A hasty rub with a cloth puts it all to rights; and instead of dying, Prince gallops off in the consciousness of having performed a brilliant piece of acting.

What we have narrated from recollection will assist in illustrating the natural intelligence of the horse, and the extent to which it can be educated by patient and gentle training. Harsh treatment would be all a mistake. Words kindly spoken, some small reward in the shape of a mouthful of what is agreeable—a trifling sweetmeat, for instance—will work wonders in forming the character of the horse, and teaching it to perform any required feat. We have always thought that an impressive moral lesson was conveyed in the play of the High-mettled Racer.

W. C.

THE LAST OF THE HADDONS.

CHAPTER XVII.—MRS TIPPER TO THE RESCUE.

There was the gravest reason for anxiety respecting Lilian's future. Marian at her very best, and with the strongest motive for making herself agreeable to Lilian, had never been a companion for her; and now! Would it be possible for Lilian to remain at Fairview for even the three or four months until Philip's return? I had very grave doubts upon the point.

That Marian was better than she had appeared when she first became acquainted with her good fortune, I am bound to acknowledge. Although she had at first seen the question entirely from one point of view, it presently became evident that she was not lacking in a certain kind of good-nature, which, in my prejudice against her, I had not given her credit for being capable of. Evidently she now meant to be kind and considerate, and to act generously, according to her light. Indeed I think she flattered herself that nothing could be more amiable and generous than was her demeanour towards Lilian, the morning after the revelation had been made. If Lilian found her graciousness hard to bear, she did not blame Marian for it. She came to meet Lilian with a kiss, as the latter entered the breakfast-room, and was altogether a great deal more than usually affectionate in her morning greeting. Moreover, she made some effort to keep her delight, at the discovery which had been made, as much out of sight as possible.

As yet it was only in Marian's altered bearing towards the servants that the effect which the change in her position had upon her could be seen. She had many a time expressed her opinion that Lilian was not sufficiently dignified in her bearing towards her inferiors, and she was now shewing us what she considered to be the proper deportment of a mistress; though the effect was somewhat marred by their reception of it.

But it did me real good to see the fealty of one and all to Lilian. That Marian should at once pass to the head of the table was, I suppose, under the circumstances, to be expected; and neither Mrs Tipper nor Lilian appeared in the slightest degree annoyed by it; both, perhaps, too much absorbed to care where they sat. But I was somewhat amused to find that the arrangement of the breakfast things was swiftly altered; and so far as the replacing the urn, cups and saucers, and so forth went, where Lilian sat was made the head of the table. Marian looked very indignant and rather foolish; but she could not very well protest at that moment.

I am afraid I did a little enjoy witnessing her mortification, when Marian found that Lilian was treated with as much deference as though she were a queen, and invariably served before herself. Saunders, indeed, made quite a demonstration of obeying Lilian's slightest glance; whilst the new power was very indifferently waited upon by his subordinate. It was no use giving

orders; Saunders was deaf and dumb and blind, so far as Marian was concerned. He could not, and would not, look over her indecent haste in stepping into his beloved young mistress's place; and as I afterwards found, he had made up his mind to leave Fairview immediately the change that had taken place was made known; and having Lilian to refer to for a character, was independent of Marian's patronage, and took delight in shewing that he was.

Lilian's past kindness to them was beginning to bear fruit amongst the servants. Every one in the house seemed desirous to prove their love and sympathy with her now. She had informed me that she meant to lose no time in putting Marian in possession, and very quickly proved that she was in earnest. As soon as we four were alone together in the morning-room, she quietly began, looking a great deal more self-possessed than the Lilian of yesterday:

'I do not know precisely what has to be done; but I suppose some legal form has to be gone through to put you in possession of—your—rights, Marian; I have therefore telegraphed for the solicitor. He will tell you what has to be done; and I hope it may be got through as quickly as possible, for all our sakes.'

'Well, dear, I leave all that to you. I don't want to hurry you; no one could behave more kindly about it than you have, for I'm sure it must be dreadful to have to give up all—— But there; of course you will live here with me,' added Marian, in an outburst of good-nature. 'I'll give you as much as you meant to give me, and'——

'Pray'——

'But I must say it, dear. I am not going to forget all your kindness to me. No one shall be able to say that I have not behaved generously.'

'I am sure you mean well,' returned Lilian, shrinking nervously under the generosity. 'But I do not as yet quite know what I shall do. Of course Auntie and Mary and I must be together, and we none of us mind being poor. Perhaps Mary and I could try opening a little school?'—with a glance towards me.

'We shall contrive to get on very well, dearie,' was my cheerful little rejoinder.

Marian was about to protest; but Lilian gravely went on: 'If I can in any way do without accepting your—kindness, you must excuse my saying that I prefer independence.'

No mention, I believe no thought of Arthur Trafford in connection with her future life. She seemed to realise that if he had not already deserted her he would do so very shortly: it was only a question of time.

'Oh, you mustn't talk like that, you know!' said Marian; 'you mustn't, really. It sounds like pride; and why should you be too proud to take an allowance, when I was not? At anyrate you must, and shall, take as much as Pa used to allow me—two hundred a year, you know;' with the air of feeling that she was acting very largely.

'Please excuse me now; I have something to attend to up-stairs,' said Lilian, moving towards the door. 'Come, Mary.'

I promptly rose to accompany her. Marian looked as though her good-nature was becoming exhausted.

'Oh, by-the-bye, stop a moment, Miss Haddon. I shall not be in need of a companion; at least, if I have one, I should like to choose for myself; so perhaps, under the circumstances, you will not require a long notice. You couldn't expect it; and'——

'I shall not require any notice whatever from you,' was my cheerful rejoinder. 'My engagement was with Miss Farrar.'

'You forget *I* am Miss Farrar.'

'You will very often have to put up with my forgetfulness upon that point while I remain at Fairview,' was my mental comment. But I gravely informed her that she need have no fears about my being troublesome in any way.

Mrs Tipper had been silent during our conversation, apparently thinking over some little plan of her own; but she rose at once to accompany Lilian and me, no way deterred by Marian's protests. For the first time I noticed a quiet dignity in her bearing, which sat extremely well upon her, as she said: 'My place is by the side of my dear Lilian.'

As I had expected, an early train brought Arthur Trafford, eager to recommence his efforts to persuade Lilian to fall in with his wishes; and perhaps not without hope that, now she had had time to realise what the giving up would really be, he would find her more plastic in his hands. As I have said, such as it was, his love was sincere—only one thing seemed worse than losing her; and he would not lose her without a desperate struggle. He came, prepared to exert all his powers of persuasion. Her firmness, or obstinacy as he chose to call it, had quite taken him by surprise, and he could not as yet believe in it, being more inclined to ascribe it to temper than to conviction. He met with a little rebuff in the outset, in her unwillingness to see him alone. He had been shewn into the library, where she was sitting with Mrs Tipper and me; and in reply to his invitation to go elsewhere, she had murmured something about preferring to remain there. As he could not very well request Mrs Tipper and me to leave them, and we ourselves made no attempt to do so, having, in fact, exchanged a glance which meant not leaving Lilian without orders, he was obliged to put up with our presence. {212}

He found her quite as unmanageable upon the one point as she had been the evening before; and

in his disappointment and mortification, laid bare his own motives more than he was conscious of doing. And terrible as it was for her at the moment, I was even glad she should see him as he really was. Better that her love should be killed at one blow, since it had to be killed, than by the slow torture which a more gradual unveiling would have entailed.

As she shrank back, gazing at him with dilated eyes and white face, I knew that she had at last awakened to the truth. *This* was not the hero she had worshipped—a man whose capacity for doing great deeds only lacked opportunity for its development. He could not help shewing us what it was which he most felt the loss of.

Then he was impolitic enough to attack me before her; something more than insinuating that I was the marplot who had come between him and his happiness. In his heat, he could not perceive that if I were really what he accused me of being, he was paying Lilian a very bad compliment in declaring that she was completely under my influence.

'You cannot deny that you have encouraged her in this!' he angrily exclaimed, turning upon me. 'You dare not say that you have not!'

'I dare to say that I honestly think she has done what is right, and would do it though the whole world turned its back upon her; and I am proud to be considered her friend, Mr Trafford.'

'My only one!' sobbed Lilian, clinging to me.

'No, indeed. Every one who respects truth and unselfishness, must be your friend, dear Lilian.'

'I am sure Mrs Tipper will be more open to reason!' he hotly ejaculated, turning towards her, as she sat regarding him very attentively. 'You, madam, will not, I am sure, desire to see your brother's wishes so disregarded.'

But he had revealed himself to her as well as to us, and found Mrs Tipper also was on Lilian's side. Indeed she came out quite grandly. If, as I suspected, he had hitherto attributed her amiability to want of character, he could do so no longer. She was worthy of being Lilian's aunt; and not at all unlike her niece, allowing for the difference in early training. There was a grave quiet dignity in her tone and bearing as she expressed her entire approval of the step Lilian had taken, which appeared to quite take him by surprise.

'I thought you loved Lilian, Mrs Tipper.'

'I do love her, Mr Trafford; more than ever, since she has shewn me that not even her love for you can turn her aside from doing what she believes to be right.'

But its being right was just what he would not for a moment allow, and he again and again went over the same arguments, now pleading, now reviling, still unwilling to believe in the utter uselessness of it all. 'It was all very well now, in the first flush, of thinking she was doing a generous action; but how would it be by-and-by, when she found herself penniless and dependent upon the bounty of another, and that other Marian Reed? A nice thing to be patronised and walked over by a girl like that!' and so forth, in the one-sided, unreasoning way with which people who have a special end in view are apt to talk, basing his arguments upon the consequences which might ensue from the act, instead of upon the right or wrong of committing it.

'My dear Lilian will not be dependent upon Miss—Marian's bounty, nor will she be penniless or homeless, Mr Trafford,' said Mrs Tipper. 'I did not like to mention it until I was quite sure; but I have made inquiries, and Mr Markham tells me that the two hundred a year which was placed to my account was settled upon me by my brother after my husband's death. I recollect Jacob telling me, when I first came to live at Fairview, that he had made me independent; but I did not understand it as I do now. Of course my dear Lilian and Mary will share it with me.'

What a relief it was to hear this, for Lilian's sake. It had been so painful to think of her being obliged to be dependent upon Marian, even for a time. And how hearty, though at the moment only expressed by a look, was my gratitude to the dear little woman for her kindness and consideration for me. She did not know that I only needed her love. I had received fifty pounds for my salary, and that would more than suffice to keep me until Philip's return; but it did me real good to know that she was not aware of my prospects, when she so generously included me with Lilian in the offer of a home.

Lilian got through the pitiful scene with her quondam lover better, on the whole, than she had done the night before. His threat, once more used in the heat of the moment (I did not give him credit for seriously entertaining the idea, as yet), to the effect that her act would part them, was acquiesced in; not angrily, nor defiantly—with no attempt to conceal the pain it cost her, but acquiesced in. He might come again and again and threaten as he pleased; it would be no use now. Moreover, I had the comfort of believing that, bitter as the suffering was to her, it would not be of long duration. Though she as yet knew it not, he had not the power to shadow her future life. In truth he was likely to suffer a great deal more than she was. Say what he might, he estimated her more highly than he had ever done before. The very decision which he so complained of raised her in his estimation; whilst all the glamour was gone from him in her eyes now.

He left no stone unturned whilst it was still not too late, and brought his sister to assist him. Both, I saw, attributed a great deal of blame to me in the matter; and both were now candid enough to give more expression to their antagonism than they had previously done. But their antagonism I had no right whatever to complain of, since my estimation of them was not higher than theirs of me.

Mrs Chichester was in a somewhat awkward position. She had the gravest reasons for doing her best to further her brother's wishes, and was at the same time very desirous of keeping in Robert Wentworth's good graces. All her diplomatic powers were brought into play; and she had the mortification of perceiving that it was all to no purpose. It was almost amusing to see her {213} assuring Mr Wentworth, with tearful eyes and clasped hands, that whatever others might think, she meant to uphold her dearest Lilian; in contrast with certain little speeches addressed to Marian, which occasionally met my ears. One thing was evident, she did not wish to get out of favour with the new power.

There was no fencing between the two men. A sharp hand-to-hand encounter for a few moments, and then friendship lay dead. Robert Wentworth had spoken his mind; and the other had declared that from thenceforth all friendship was over between them.

Arthur Trafford was in some measure perhaps to be pitied, at this crisis of his life. Enervated by a life of luxury and indolence, he probably lacked the power to put his shoulder to the wheel, and try to earn a living for himself and Lilian. Supposing the idea to have crossed his mind, and he was not so utterly worthless that it may not have done so, he must have realised what terribly uphill work it would be to commence the struggle for a livelihood at eight-and-twenty, and with no special aptitude or preparation for any profession. He had lost all: the girl he loved? her fortune, and his friend; and I will do him the justice to say that the loss of Robert Wentworth's friendship was no light trouble to him, though he himself had cast it off. He was a poorer man than I had imagined him to be; having, in fact, lived upon the principal of the small sum left him by his father, and depending upon his marriage with Lilian for future supply.

I was heartily glad when the matter was in Mr Markham's hand, and so far placed beyond dispute; after which we were for a short time left undisturbed by Arthur Trafford and his sister. But one visitor made her appearance at Fairview, who occasioned Marian not a little mortification, of which I was an unwilling witness. It was the third morning after the discovery had been made known. Lilian, who spent most of her time in her own room with Mrs Tipper, had asked me to bring her a book from the drawing-room. I entered the room, and had just reached the table where I was to find the book, when the sound of half-suppressed sobbing warned me that I was intruding upon some one; and glancing round, I was astonished to see Marian seated on one of the couches, and the figure of a homely-looking woman kneeling at her feet, with her hands raised as if in supplication, and tears streaming from her eyes. In another moment I recognised Mrs Pratt; and hastily catching up the book I wanted, turned to quit the room, quite as much averse to intrude as they could desire me to be. But Mrs Pratt had recognised me, and entreated me to stay and try to help her.

'You are the lady who came with Miss Farrar that day. Do, pray ma'am, try what you can to persuade Miss Reed not to injure the dear young lady, who has been so good to her.'

'I am afraid I have no power to do so, Mrs Pratt,' I returned.

'Really, aunt, I little thought *this* would be the consequence of my telling you about my good fortune. It doesn't seem natural to take it in that way, it really doesn't! I made sure you had come to see the place and congratulate me, and I had you shewn in here on purpose that you might see for yourself. But instead of being glad, you behave like this, wanting me to give it all up, and before Miss Haddon too!'

'You know what I have told you; pray, think better of it, Miss Reed, dear.'

I had reached the door again, when Mrs Pratt's words caused me to pause, my pulses throbbing a little more rapidly than usual. What if there were in truth some bar to Marian's right, and Mrs Pratt knew it? I waited.

'What you have told me is no reason for giving up what belongs to me,' angrily returned Marian. 'And I must once more remind you that I am Miss Farrar now.'

'It *is* a reason, and a good one. I have told you why your mother would never have made use of that paper; and if you turn against that sweet young lady, who was so good to you, nothing but sorrow will come of it.'

'It's all nonsense saying Ma would not have made use of it. How could she, when Pa had the paper in his own possession?'

'I believe he only had it amongst the letters and papers she wished to be sent him after her death. She would never have used it if she had known it was legal, because—you force me to say so—she knew that she was not worthy to be called his wife!'

'You are very cruel and wicked to say such things; and you shall not go on!' ejaculated Marian, with flaming cheeks. 'A pretty sister you must be to talk in that way!'

Mrs Pratt wrung her hands, crying bitterly: 'I loved her through it all; she knew I did; and I've done my duty by you; but I cannot see that dear young lady turned out of house and home, without'——

'Good gracious, aunt, how you talk! As though I were going to turn her out of house and home, when Miss Haddon knows how generously I have behaved, if she would acknowledge it!'

I took Mrs Pratt's hand in mine, and looking into her eyes, solemnly asked: 'Will you tell me the truth, Mrs Pratt? Was there anything in your sister's life which prevented her marriage with Mr Farrar being a legal one?'

'I can't say so much as that, Miss—she wasn't married to anybody else; but he knew, and she

knew, that she was not worthy to claim a wife's'——

'That's quite enough, aunt,' interrupted Marian. 'They are my rights; and I've told you over and over again that I don't mean to give my rights up. It looks as if you were envious of my good fortune—it really does. Not that it will make any difference to me in what I mean to do by-and-by,' she added largely. 'I intend to make you and Mr Pratt a handsome allowance; and some of these days Susy shall come down and see Fairview.'

'Not a penny; your uncle and me wouldn't take a penny of the money, if we were starving!'

'Ah, you will think better of it by-and-by,' complacently returned Marian. 'And you won't find that I shall draw back from my word. Your behaviour to-day won't make any difference to me, though some people wouldn't notice you again after it.'

Mrs Pratt drew her shawl about her with trembling hands, and turned towards the door.

'Don't go away like that, aunt. You haven't seen anything. Let me shew you the conservatory, and the'——

But Mrs Pratt hurried out of the room, and was gone before Marian could prevent her. The latter stood for a moment looking doubtfully at me, then said a little consciously: 'I suppose it's no use asking you not to mention what aunt said, Miss Haddon?'

'It would be no use, if my mentioning it would be of any service to Lilian,' I replied. 'But as I do not wish to give her unnecessary pain, I will not tell her—at anyrate for the present.'

'Nor Mrs Tipper?'

'No; unless I at any time see more necessity for telling her than I do now,' I said, as I quitted the room.

I was not a little disturbed by what Mrs Pratt had revealed. It seemed doubly hard that Lilian's mother should be displaced by a woman whom her own sister acknowledged to be unworthy of the name of wife. In my anxiety, I put a few cautious words to Mr Markham in a few minutes' *tête-à-tête* I contrived during one of his visits; but I only got a few cautious words in return, and the information that the Scotch marriage was undoubtedly a legal one.

Meantime I was more than once obliged to remind Marian that she was not mistress of Fairview until the legal formalities were gone through which should put her in possession. She had at once commenced to assume the dignity of the position, and did not hesitate to call the servants to order when they became too openly oblivious of it. Nor, indeed, did she hesitate to point it out to Lilian, when the latter for a moment forgot the change in her position, and gave some little order to the servants. But with Lilian it was only a momentary and quite natural forgetfulness. Her reign had hitherto been so supreme and undisputed at Fairview, that she could not all at once get accustomed to the altered aspect of affairs. But her apologies were very graciously accepted.

'Don't say a word, dear; it's a wonder you don't forget oftener. And I'm sure no one could be nicer than you are about it, no one!' And she was candid enough to add: 'I'm not sure that I should have taken it so well as you do myself, though I know how to behave as well as most people; and no one shall say I can't be generous now.'

I believe that she did honestly try to be what she considered generous. But her conception of generosity! Poor Lilian found Marian's generosity and good-nature a great deal harder to bear than her reverses just now.

A WALK ACROSS AFRICA.

After the first Livingstone Search Expedition in Africa had come to an untimely end, a second was fitted out with the surplus funds remaining from the original subscriptions, which was 'intended to be placed entirely under the orders of Dr Livingstone, for the purpose of supplementing his great discoveries.' The command of this expedition was conferred upon Lieutenant Cameron, R.N., who had more than once volunteered to the Council of the Royal Geographical Society for employment in Africa, had already spent three years on the east coast, and had studied the Suahili language. He left England *en route* for Zanzibar on the 30th November 1872, accompanied by an old messmate in the person of Dr Dillon; and the public have already been made aware of the salient points of his journey; of the alteration in his plans necessitated by the death of Livingstone; of the death of two of his companions, and the return of the third from Unyanyembé; of his solitary advance to Ujiji for the purpose of recovering some papers of Livingstone's, left there by him before his last fatal journey; and of his return in April 1876, after an absence of three years and four months, after having performed the hitherto unprecedented feat of traversing tropical Africa from east to west. Thus the way has been paved for the appearance of the two volumes now before us,[1] which contain a full account of the whole expedition, of the peculiarities of the country, and of the manners and customs of the inhabitants.

If the reader will open an ordinary map of Africa, he will find to the westward of the great lakes a blank extending from the equator to about twelve degrees south, indicative of an almost entirely unexplored country. This, roughly speaking, may be called the basin of the river Congo, which probably drains all or nearly all of that enormous area. If he will then consult the map which accompanies these volumes, and will trace the route of their intrepid author, he will find that

after leaving Nyangwé it traverses a most important and hitherto completely unknown portion of this district—namely, the water-shed separating the two great river systems of the Congo and Zambesi. In this as well as in his careful circumnavigation of Lake Tanganyika to the south of Ujiji, and in the evidence he brings confirmative of the river Lualaba being the Congo, the principal geographical value of his discoveries may be said to rest. Even those who have not made the physical features of Africa an especial study cannot fail to follow the author in the few but lucid remarks he makes on this subject, especially if they will consult his map, which not only clearly marks the different water-sheds, but contains a horizontal section of his route, shewing at a glance the configuration of the country. It is not, however, our desire to enlarge upon the scientific results of his expedition, though they must not be altogether lost sight of, but to follow him through the experiences he recounts in these pages.

Zanzibar was reached without incident, except the addition of another European to the party in the person of Lieutenant C. Murphy, R.A., who volunteered at Aden, and on obtaining permission from the military authorities, followed them by next mail. The difficulties of getting together men and necessaries were enormous—although they were fortunate, as they thought at the time, in securing the services of Bombey, 'the chief of Speke's faithfuls,' though he did not ultimately prove of as much service as had been expected—and were enhanced by their having arrived simultaneously with Sir Bartle Frere, to whose mission they were supposed to be attached, a belief which occasioned 'numerous vexatious troubles and enormous expense.' At last, however, they left Zanzibar on February 2, 1873, in two hired dhows for Bagamoyo, 'the principal point of departure for caravans bound to Unyanyembé and the countries beyond.' Here pagazi or porters, and askari or soldiers, had to be hired; but they proved very slow in engaging themselves; and it was not till after considerable delay had been experienced that a start was effected. Before they finally left, another volunteer joined the expedition—Robert Moffat, a grandson of Dr Moffat and a nephew of Dr Livingstone, who on hearing of it, had sold a sugar plantation in Natal 'which formed his sole inheritance,' and had hastened to offer his services.

On his arrival, Cameron determined to push on at once with Dillon and such men as were already on the spot, leaving Murphy and Moffat to follow with the rear division of the caravan. The country through which they marched consisted of 'rolling grass-land interspersed with belts of timber, and every now and then small knolls crowned with clumps of trees and shrubs;' and as they got farther from the coast small lagoons made their appearance, 'in which beautiful large blue-and-white water-lilies grew.' Before they reached the Usagara Mountains, which form the first elevation after leaving the coast, the country became 'well cultivated, and dotted with numerous hamlets peeping out of woods and bosquets.' While close to Kisémo they met with baobab-trees for the first time; gigantic representatives of the vegetable kingdom, whose smallest twigs are 'two or three inches in circumference, and their forms of the most grotesque ugliness.' Indeed the scenery of this part of Africa is as highly spoken of by Lieutenant Cameron as by former travellers; he says: 'It was so delightful that we scarcely thought of fatigue.'

After passing the Usagara range, the travellers came to 'a vast expanse of mud with two or three troublesome morasses on the western side,' known as the Makata Swamp, in crossing which an untoward incident occurred, which resulted in Dr Dillon having a severe attack of fever and dysentery, which confined him to his bed for three weeks. While Cameron was thus detained, bad news reached him from those in the rear. Both Murphy and Moffat had suffered from several attacks of fever, and the latter was very ill. This was on the 16th May; and on the 26th the party under their command arrived, but with only one of the Europeans—Moffat was dead: the first victim claimed by the insatiable African climate, and another name added to the long and noble list of those who have sacrificed their lives in the cause of exploration and the suppression of the slave-trade.

A few days after the receipt of this sad intelligence, the expedition moved forward, though Murphy was only partially recovered and the author was very lame. Their road lay through a mountainous country, in the dips and valleys among which the mparamusi tree was observed. This is one of 'the noblest specimens of arboreal beauty in the world, having a towering shaft sometimes fifteen feet in diameter and one hundred and forty feet high, with bark of a tender yellowish green, crowned by a spreading head of dark foliage.' Shortly afterwards they entered the kingdom of Ugogo, 'a dried-up country with occasional huge masses of granite, and the stiff Euphorbia clinging to their sides.' The inhabitants of this district were reputed to be a brave and warlike race; but Lieutenant Cameron found them 'the veriest cowards and poltroons it is possible to conceive.' They are easily distinguished from other tribes by the custom of piercing their ears and enlarging the lobes to an enormous size; 'in fact the ear of a Mgogo answers much the same purpose as a pocket to people indulging in wearing apparel.' At this time, as during the whole journey, much trouble was experienced from the idleness of the men, who were also 'constantly grumbling and growling;' and there is no doubt, as Cameron afterwards discovered for himself, that they were treated with too much consideration, and as is almost invariably the case, took advantage of their master's kindness.

In the centre of Ugogo is a broad depression known as Kanyenyé, ruled over by a chief named Magomba, who is mentioned by Burton in 1857, and is said by the natives to be over three hundred years of age and to be cutting his fourth set of teeth. Lieutenant Cameron believes this ancient chieftain to be in truth 'considerably over a century,' as his grandchildren were gray and grizzled; and it is an undoubted fact that the natives of Africa under favourable conditions attain to an extremely old age. The price of provisions in this district was enormous; 'eggs, milk, and butter were more expensive than in England;' the natural result of the continual passage of caravans and the few wants of the natives, who having no use for money, decline to part with

their food except at exorbitant rates, as soon as their modest requirements in the shape of cloth and beads are temporarily satisfied.

Unyanyembé, the first stage of the journey, was at length reached; and the expedition was very kindly received by the principal Arabs, though their stay there was destined to be a far from pleasant one. Within two days of their arrival the author was attacked by fever, quickly followed by Dillon and Murphy, which never left them again for many hours during their stay there. About this time Dillon wrote home in the following terms: 'On or about (none of us know the date correctly) August 13, Cameron felt seedy. I never felt better; ditto Murphy. In the evening we felt seedy. I felt determined not to be sick. "I *will* eat dinner; I'll *not* go to bed." Murphy was between the blankets already. I did manage some dinner; but shakes enough to bring an ordinary house down came on, and I had to turn in. For the next four or five days our diet was water or milk. Not a soul to look after us. The servants knew not what to do. We got up when we liked and walked out. We knew that we felt giddy; that our legs would scarcely support us. I used to pay a visit to Cameron, and he used to come in to me to make complaints. One day he said: "The fellows have regularly blocked me in—I have no room to stir. The worst of it is one of the legs of the grand piano is always on my head, and people are strumming away all day. It's all drawing-room furniture that they have blocked me in with."' It seems marvellous that expeditions can be successfully carried through such a country as this, where all the Europeans composing them are liable to be simultaneously delirious from fever, and have to trust to Providence and their constitutions to get well again, there not being a soul to look after them. It is indeed most painful to read the narration of the continual sufferings of these brave men; fever, dysentery, and blindness in continuous succession, and through it all the work had to be and was carried on. At last the news of the sad death of Africa's greatest traveller reached them, and altered all their plans. The author and Dillon determined to press on for the west coast *viâ* Ujiji; while Murphy, considering the work of the expedition at an end, decided to return coastwards. Dillon, however, was unable to carry out his determination, owing to being attacked a few days later by inflammation of the bowels, which rendered his return to the coast the only course which gave any hope of recovery; and consequently he accompanied Murphy, while Lieutenant Cameron pursued his journey alone. {216}

At this time the author says of himself: 'I was nearly blind from ophthalmia, and almost unable to walk from the pain in my back; while fever, which was still hanging about me, had reduced me to a skeleton, my weight being only seven stone four.' Yet he determined to persevere. A few days after his start a messenger arrived with the dreadful news that Dr Dillon had shot himself on November 18, while delirious from fever; and how severely this intelligence was felt by the survivor may be imagined from his describing the day on which he received it as the saddest in his life. The exigences of his own position, however, at that moment were so great as to demand his whole attention; porters could hardly be obtained, and it was only by leaving twelve loads behind, and reducing his personal kit to a minimum, that further progress was rendered possible. The country travelled through 'was perfectly charming, the trees delicately green and fresh, the open grassy glades enamelled with various wild-flowers.' Indeed he says that it would have required no great stretch of imagination to fancy one's self 'in the wooded part of an English park,' had it not been for an occasional lion or elephant's skull which bestrewed the ground. The Sindi was crossed on February 2, on a mass of floating vegetation, similar to that which our readers may remember offered so many obstructions to Sir Samuel Baker's advance up the Nile; and about a fortnight later the expedition came in sight of the great Lake Tanganyika.

The author was hospitably received by the Arabs at Kawélé, where he remained a few days, while procuring boats in which to cruise round the southern coast of the lake. This occupied about two months; and the reader will find much interesting information in the portion of the book devoted to it. By the end of May, the journey was again resumed, Nyangwé being now the immediate goal, from where Cameron hoped to reach the mouth of the Congo by descending the Lualaba in boats. Here the Mpafu tree was observed for the first time, from the fruit of which scented oil is obtained. It is a magnificent tree, often thirty feet or more in circumference, and rising to eighty or a hundred feet before spreading and forming a head, the branches of which are immense. India-rubber vines were also very common, their stems being the thickness of a man's thigh. Indeed 'sufficient india-rubber to supply the wants of the whole world' could easily be collected there. On this march, as indeed throughout the whole journey, we hear much about the slave-trade and its fearful results. The inhabitants constantly came into camp with slaves for sale, who were gagged by having 'a piece of wood like a snaffle tied into their mouths.' Heavy slave-forks were placed round their necks, and their hands were fastened behind their backs. 'They were then attached by a cord to the vendor's waist.'

On arrival at Nyangwé, a station of the Zanzibar traders on the banks of the Lualaba, and situated at the lowest point in the great depression which exists across Central Africa, he found the natives so unwilling to part with their canoes that he was forced to forego his plan of descending that river by water; and having met with a half-caste Arab named Tipo-tipo, who had a settlement towards the south-west, he decided to accompany him and attempt to reach Lake San korra, a large sheet of water into which he was told the Lualaba ran overland. His hopes in this direction were, however, also dashed to the ground by the answer of the chief whose territory it would be necessary to traverse, that 'no strangers with guns had ever passed through his country, and none should without fighting their way.' He therefore decided to go to the capital of Urua, a kingdom about a month's journey to the S.S.W., where some Portuguese were reported to be, and if possible work his way from there towards the mysterious lake.

For some days they journeyed through a 'fairly populated country, with large villages of well-built

and clean huts, disposed in long streets, with bark-cloth trees planted on each side;' and a friendly intercourse was kept up with the natives, until one day Cameron was 'unpleasantly surprised' by having some arrows fired at his party while they were passing through a narrow strip of jungle. This culminated a day or two afterwards in a regular attack from a large body of natives, who were, however, easily beaten off. In this affair Cameron acted with the very greatest forbearance; a forbearance which was probably interpreted by the natives to mean fear, as they continued to harass him for some days. The reason given for the attack was that a Portuguese caravan had been destroying villages in the neighbourhood, murdering the men, and carrying off the women and children as slaves. It may be here noted that Lieutenant Cameron speaks in the very strongest terms of the conduct of the Portuguese, and says that 'the cruelties perpetrated in the heart of Africa by men calling themselves Christians, and carrying the Portuguese flag, can scarcely be credited by those living in a civilised land;' indeed it is not going too far to assert that the fearful state of anarchy and misery into which Central Africa is plunged is chiefly if not entirely owing to the behaviour and example of the Portuguese—the late protest to the contrary of the Chamber of Deputies at Lisbon notwithstanding—as well in their settlements on either coast as in the interior.

The capital of Kasongo, king of Urua, was reached without further accident; and here we are introduced to two personages, representing the extreme type of their respective classes. Jumah Merikani, an Arab with a dash of the negro, was a very estimable specimen of his race, being 'the kindest and most hospitable' of the many Arab traders met with, of whom, as a body, Cameron speaks in favourable terms; the other, José Antonio Alvez, a half-caste Portuguese, though spoken of by the natives as a white man, proved himself, by his treatment of the English traveller, to be a hypocritical liar, thief, and ruffian, even beyond the ordinary measure of his class; and it is disheartening, after all that has been done, to think the name of European must necessarily become synonymous in the native mind with that of unmitigated blackguard and slave-dealer, so long as it is represented by such as Alvez. Kasongo, the Urua king, himself as debauched a ruffian as could well be imagined, willingly assisted Alvez and his crew in their murdering and plundering expeditions, while he placed every obstacle in the way of Cameron's explorations, and detained him to all intents and purposes a prisoner at his capital. He was, however, permitted to visit a lake in the neighbourhood, which contained three detached villages, built on piles, and only approachable by canoes; but as Kasongo would give him no help in trying to reach the Congo, nothing remained but to make the best of his way to the west coast, as already his stores and goods had so greatly diminished, chiefly through theft and robbery on the part of his own servants, many of whom were the off-scourings of Zanzibar, that it was doubtful whether they would prove sufficient even for that distance.

A start was, however, at last happily effected; and after innumerable delays and difficulties Bihé was reached. On this march Cameron and his followers suffered much from want of food, and he even had to sell his shirts and greatcoat to keep them from actual starvation. From here to the coast was somewhat over two hundred and fifty miles; and as the path lay through an extremely mountainous country, it presented formidable difficulties to men in such an enfeebled condition as those who composed the expedition were from long travel and weeks of semi-starvation. It was, however, absolutely necessary to press forward, and the march through Bailunda was at once commenced. The scenery of this district is spoken of by Lieutenant Cameron in the most glowing terms; 'neither poet with all the wealth of word-imagery, nor painter with almost supernatural genius, could by pen or pencil do full justice to the country of Bailunda;' 'nothing could be more lovely than this entrancing scene, this glimpse of paradise.' Little time was, however, allowed him to enjoy its beauties, as the necessity of hurrying forward before the men utterly broke down was too pressing to be trifled with.

Indeed soon after, twenty men complained of being unable to continue the journey; 'swelled legs, stiff necks, aching backs, and empty stomachs being the universal cry.' It therefore became necessary to adopt some decisive step; and Cameron decided to throw away everything but instruments, journals, and books; and taking a few picked companions, make a forced march to the coast. It is already well known that this measure proved successful; that Benguela was reached, though not a day too soon, as even twenty-four hours' delay would have probably caused the scurvy which had attacked him to end fatally; and that those left behind were succoured, and ultimately restored to Zanzibar, while Lieutenant Cameron returned to England.

Thus concludes the graphic and well told narrative contained in these two volumes, which, despite some trifling literary shortcomings, are thoroughly deserving of recommendation to the reading public. Their story is simply told, but the interest is well maintained throughout, especially on those points which touch on the horrors of the slave-trade and the evil results of Portuguese rule. In conclusion, we may add that since Dr Schweinfurth published *The Heart of Africa*, no book on African travel has appeared with illustrations in any way comparable with those which embellish these volumes.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] *Across Africa.* By Verney Lovett Cameron, C.B., D.C.L., Commander Royal Navy, Gold Medallist Royal Geographical Society, &c. Two vols. with numerous Illustrations. London: Daldy, Isbister, & Co., 56 Ludgate Hill. 1877.

SUNSHINE AND CLOUD.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.—SUNSHINE.

CHAPTER I.—ISAAC WEBB.

Isaac Webb was twenty-four years of age. He was very tall, very thin, and very pale; on the whole, his appearance was not prepossessing. To these outward gifts might be added two inward ruling passions—love of self and love of money. It may be taken that the one was as powerful as the other. Some people said that he loved Isaac Webb more than the root of all evil; others, that he loved the said root more than the said Isaac Webb: the point was never decided, so they may be bracketed equal. But he had some good points, as every one has. In the first place, he was by no means of a suspicious or jealous turn of mind. This may have proceeded from the great confidence he had in his own judgment; for he thought himself a very shrewd fellow, a very deep dog. 'You're not to be easily bowled over, Isaac,' he would say to himself very often, rubbing his hands; 'and if anybody thinks he can snuff you out, let him try it on, and burn his fingers—ha, ha!' Such were Isaac's modest reflections on his own sagacity.

Another point to be scored to him was his abstemiousness. But certain uncharitable people ascribed even this to a second motive. 'For,' said they, 'he don't eat much because of the economy of the thing; and he does not drink anything except water, not because he's pledged to it, or because stronger drink don't agree with him, for why does he make up for it when he can do it at somebody else's expense?' This is what they said, and it certainly was rude of them to make such remarks; but it must be admitted that Isaac did not despise the creature comforts of this life when he did not have to stand treat to himself. Now it is impossible to account for this fact; he could not himself—never even attempted it. He had many other little peculiarities and traits of character, but they only revolved as minor worlds around the great suns above specified.

Isaac Webb was an orphan; that is to say his father had died when our hero was yet in his infancy; and his mother feeling her first husband's loss to be so deplorable, had joined herself unto another, and had emigrated with that gentleman to Australia when Isaac was about thirteen years old, leaving that worthy youth to the care of her half-brother, who in *his* turn had departed this mortal life about a year previous to the opening of this story, leaving its hero entirely to his own devices. He had a few other relatives scattered about the country, but none on whom he bestowed more than a passing remembrance. In the first place it was cheaper, for he had nothing to expect from them; and in the second, he did not want them, nor did they want him. {218}

His visible means of subsistence were derived from the rents accruing from a whole nest of cottages situated in the country town near which he resided, together with a few good-sized parcels of garden-ground and sundry other 'effects,' including about a thousand pounds in ready-money put out at interest, but on which he could lay his hand whenever he thought proper. Altogether his net income (after deducting a decent amount for repairs, tenants who travelled by night unexpectedly, and other casualties) amounted to about two hundred and fifty pounds a year; and on this sum he had boarded, lodged, and clothed himself since he came of age, and had contrived out of it to put by a very pretty slice as well.

His place of habitation consisted of two small rooms over a little grocer's shop at Dambourne End in Southshire, about a mile distant from the town of Dambourne, in which place his patrimony was situated. He was engaged in no business, though fully appreciative of the L. S. D. side of the question, but considered that his interests and fortunes were bound up in the cottages and garden-ground, and that he should be leaving the substance and grasping a shadow if he in any way neglected the inheritance and devoted his time to any other pursuit—at all events at present. Thus he had lived from day to day for the last few years without any kind of change to vary the monotony of his existence. He had but few friends, and those of a very commercial character, and no luxuries or amusements beyond a second day's paper, and an occasional—very occasional—new suit of clothes. Therefore it was not so very extravagant of him to take into consideration, in the early summer of the year 1868, whether it would not be well to treat himself to a little change of air and scene. He had not, he fancied, been feeling quite the thing lately; and he thought it might be a wise proceeding on his part to recruit his health and spirits, and at the same time add to his already large store (in his own eyes) of shrewdness and worldly knowledge. Of course he never for a moment contemplated anything so costly and unnecessary to him as a mere pleasure-trip, so did not need to consider the most comfortable and enjoyable place whereat to spend the next five or six weeks of the summer. Not at all. He had only to make up his own mind as to the place where it would be possible to find anything fresh to add to his crowded storehouse of facts, monetary and otherwise.

As he that June evening thus ruminated in his little parlour over the shop, a bright idea suddenly occurred to him. 'Isaac,' said he, 'where have your wits been wool-gathering all this time? Oughtn't you to have known in a twinkle that there was only one place that would do for you? London's the only place that's fit for *your* capabilities, my boy; and London it shall be.'

CHAPTER II.—OUR HERO PREPARES TO GO TO LONDON.

There were, however, one or two little matters to be arranged, before Isaac could give himself up to his journey in search of fresh experience. One was to endeavour to find a tenant for his lodgings during the time that he would be absent from them, because it would never do for him to pay for the use of two beds and sleep only in one. But in this he met with no difficulty; for on

his popping the question (not matrimonially of course) to Mrs Clappen, his landlady, she immediately averred that the circumstance was providential. Isaac himself did not quite see how Providence was likely to be interested in so mundane a matter as lodgings to let, so ventured to ask why.

Mrs Clappen explained. 'Well, sir,' said she, 'a young gent which is quite a stranger to me, looked in the shop, you see, yesterday mornin'—yes, it must ha' been in the mornin' time, for Mrs Swaller had jest come in for to get some Epsin salts for her little boy, which is things I don't 'old no belief in myself, though sellin' 'em for the benefit, as you may say, of them as does; and I was jest a-asking Mrs Swaller if she wouldn't have a packet or two of grits to make a little gruel in order to comfort her little boy's stumick, as you may say, and she was jest a-sayin' as her youngest child's teeth, which is a twelvemonth old come next Sunday week at a little afore two, wasn't doing as she could wish, when this gent, which is a stranger to me, as you may say, looked in the door, and says: "Ladies," he says—them was his words—"Ladies, I am hextremely sorry to disturb you, more particular in your maternal simperthisin's," he says; "but does either of you ladies 'appen to know whether anybody 'appens to 'ave a good-sized room, or two small uns adjoining, which would be equally convenient, ladies," he says, "to let at a lowish figure for about a month or so in a week or two, ladies."

'We was naturally taken with 'is *h*air and that; and I says to Mrs Swaller: "Do you know of any think that would do for this 'ere gent?" I says. "Well, no, I don't, not 'ereabouts," she says; "but I 'eard Mrs Speller, what lives up agen the 'pike, say as 'ow she wouldn't mind meetin' with a genteel party, which of course we 'ave 'ere," she says, alludin' to 'is *h*air; "but that's a couple of mile furder on," she says, "and might be too far for the gentleman. And besides," she says, "she couldn't board him, and that might be naturally ill-convenient." And the gent, he says, with a pleasant smile, quite afferble: "Ladies, I mustn't be no furder away from Dambourne town than this," he says; "and if you don't know of nothink else, ladies," he says, with a hamiable smile, "'ere's my address," he says, "in case you 'appen to 'ear of anythink.—Good mornin', ladies," he says; and with that he went off, as you may say.' Mrs Clappen, quite out of breath, wiped her face with her apron as she concluded her narrative.

After a few questions from Isaac as to what the person was like, and if Mrs Clappen thought he would take care of the place, and not wear the carpet out, and so on, it was settled that she should write to Mr Scamplin, for such was his name, offering him her apartments for six weeks certain, at the same price her present lodger was paying; and stating that they would be at his disposal at that day week, if he liked to take them, and on his giving two references; Mrs Clappen declaring that she ''ad no doubt from 'is *h*air' that all would be satisfactory, and that Mr Scamplin would come to terms.

The following morning, found Isaac with his tailor—Mr Batfid by name—who carried on a small business at Dambourne, and who exhibited in his window a placard (pinned on to an antique pair of hunting breeches) announcing in faded red-and-blue characters the fact of all orders and repairs being executed with fidelity and despatch; which gave one the idea that any unfortunate coat or other garment that might come under Mr Batfid's manipulation was forthwith mutilated and murdered, a black flag being hoisted to celebrate the event. But Isaac formed no such suspicious notions, but took himself to the industrious proprietor, and ten o'clock found him in the agonies of measurement with Mr Batfid—a very small man—on a chair behind him, stretching up to his collar. These preliminaries ended, and the material (of a good wearing colour) chosen, the small but highly respectable man of business was all but thrown off his balance by Isaac's announcement that he must have the complete suit home in four days from that time. Mr Batfid declared that he did not see how he could possibly accomplish so much in so short a time. 'For,' said he, to give weight to his argument, 'you must remember that you are a very tall gentleman, a very fine figure, sir, and all the seams are naturally very long.'

'It did not occur to me before,' said Isaac; 'but I ought to have gone to the ready-made place lately opened at the corner, for I am told their charges are very low, and there is of course no delay in getting your things home.'

Mr Batfid hoped if he had any respect for his fine proportions that Mr Webb would never come down to that; and finally promised, in order to oblige a customer, that the garments should be finished by the time named, even if he only took a few passing winks of sleep on his board until they were completed.

Isaac having thus arranged matters with the worthy tailor, bethought himself that he had neither invested in new boots nor a new hat for a long time past, but had been wearing out sundry old ones, formerly in the occupation of his mother's half-brother, lately deceased; so betook himself to the necessary shops for providing himself with these luxuries; and having walked past the cottages and garden-ground, took himself and his new purchases home to his lodgings.

Two days later the post brought a letter from Mr Scamplin, engaging Mrs Clappen's rooms, and inclosing two London references (whence also he hailed), which were about as useful to that estimable lady as if he had mentioned a friend in Greenland and referred her to *him*; but she had such trust 'in 'is *h*air,' that she was sure it was all right; and Isaac, not being of a suspicious turn of mind, fell in with her views on the subject. So Mr Scamplin was written to, and the matter was settled.

Isaac having given the cottages and garden-ground into the charge of an old school-fellow of his, who was proprietor of a stationer's business (on a very limited scale as to stationery) and a night-school (very limited also as to learning, charges, and scholars), patiently waited for Mr Batfid's promise to be fulfilled, and was ready for his flight.

CHAPTER III.—IN THE METROPOLIS.

Mr Batfid was true to his word, and the new clothes were duly delivered; and when day broke on the 13th of June, all was in readiness for Isaac's departure. Mrs Clappen, after much cogitation, could put this journey down to no other cause than her lodger's marriage on the quiet; not that she had reason to suppose he meditated taking such a step, but as he was so 'close' in his manner, she was pretty sure he would not take her into his confidence until the fact was accomplished. Although this was not Isaac's intention just at present, yet he had often thought whether he, as a landed proprietor, ought not to take unto himself a wife. With so very much on his side, he had no doubt of being able to find, whenever he might think proper to seek, a lady not only ready but eager to ally herself to so desirable a partner.

The only bar to his taking upon himself the holy estate of matrimony had been the expense; since he justly considered that no two persons, be they ever so economical, could by any possibility subsist on the same amount of rations, &c. as one, even supposing them to be like the wedded couple celebrated in song, one of whom could eat no fat, the other no lean, and thus, by a happy division of labour, accomplishing the cleanliness of the platter. It was not likely that Isaac would be so fortunate as this; and supposing he were, he and his good lady would not be able to do a similar thing with regard to clothes as the before-mentioned happy pair did with regard to victuals.

Isaac had many times considered this matter, and with his usual perspicuity, had arrived at the conclusion that there was but one course open to him; to wit, his alliance with some lady possessing sufficient means of her own to be able to bear her share in the cost of housekeeping—thus making matrimony subservient to patrimony; and his intention was to look out for such a party.

The sunlight peeping into Isaac's bedroom awoke that wary individual, who proceeded to arise and dress himself in his new apparel. This apparel was not, after all, entirely satisfactory, inasmuch as Mr Batfid, too much impressed apparently with the magnitude of his undertaking, had exaggerated the length of the seams and the fineness of his customer's figure; for Isaac found himself arrayed in a pair of inexpressibles very much too long, a waistcoat very much too tight, and a coat very much too high in the neck, very much too long in the sleeves, and likewise in the waist.

Nothing could be done but brace up the first until they nearly mounted to his arm-pits (and were even then too long), let out the second as far as it would go, and turn up the cuffs of the third. Thus habited, and with a cotton umbrella in one hand and an old carpet-bag in the other, Isaac made for the railway station, caught the 10.33 train, and was whisked up to London in an hour and five minutes.

He was not an entire stranger in that city, for he had visited it once before in company with his mother's half-brother, and remembered where to put up; namely, at a small coffee-house in the neighbourhood of Islington. Arrived there and a small bedroom engaged, the umbrella and bag were deposited in a corner, and Isaac, after carefully locking the door, took himself out for a stroll, telling the landlord he would be back at six o'clock, when he would regale himself with a chop and slice of cheese by way of dinner. Not that he entertained any high-fangled notions about dining late, but because of the economy of the thing; for a bun and a glass of water contented him in the middle of the day; and by this arrangement of six o'clock dinner, tea and supper were both dispensed with, these two meals per day being thus ticked off to Isaac's credit.

The first few weeks of his sojourn passed in a manner that would have been intolerably slow to anybody else, but did not appear so to him. There was much for him to see and admire in his own way, and this way was to walk about from morn till eve through the crowded streets, and more particularly those which were devoted entirely to business. Thus, next to a visit to the Docks, perhaps his favourite walk was through Upper and Lower Thames Street, where he would watch the loading and unloading of the various goods and merchandise. Not indeed with any distinct and particular purpose; but it was a delight to him to gaze upon these outward signs of the wealth within, and to ruminate on the possibility that he might one day acquire a share and interest in some large money-making business, which would serve as a stepping-stone to yet greater wealth and influence; and to be able to purchase such an interest was probably one of the reasons for his parsimoniousness. A laudable ambition, so far as it went; but the end was more thought of than the means by which it was to be accomplished; not indeed that he harboured an intention of any dishonesty, but he simply considered that the more he scraped, the sooner the final consummation would be attained.

POISONED ARROWS.

That savages in various quarters of the world possess the knowledge and means of rendering their arrows poisonous, is a statement which is generally believed by ordinary individuals, from the schoolboy fresh from the perusal of books of adventure and travel, to his more mature and less sanguine elders. When, however, this topic is subjected to strict and sober investigation, it is found to present elements of inconsistency, or at anyrate of doubt, which at once tend to modify the previous and apparently well-founded belief of the inquirer. It is, in fact, found that the knowledge and use of deadly poisons by savages have been simply taken for granted, and that

most of the stories or tales of the marvellous effects of wounds inflicted by poisoned weapons are based upon no kind of reliable evidence. These remarks apply to the general accounts given of the practice of savages in this respect. It is well known, however, that in some special instances an accurate practical knowledge of vegetable poisons is possessed by certain savage races. Thus the famous Woorali poison, obtained from a plant allied to that which affords the *Strychnia* of medicine, is used as a poison by South American tribes; and the juice of an allied plant (*Strychnos cogens*) is used to poison arrows in Darien and Panama.

But putting cases of poisoning by matter derived from vegetables entirely out of the question, it is also a matter of belief that savages have become possessed of the knowledge that animal matters in a state of putrefaction or decay, when introduced into the circulation, are capable of causing serious consequences, or even death itself. Accordingly certain races were believed to poison their spears and arrows by dipping them in the putrefying carcase of some animal; the results of wounding by these weapons being supposed to resemble those seen familiarly amongst ourselves, in the case of medical men and others who have accidentally punctured themselves whilst performing *post-mortem* examinations or dissections. Here again, however, elements of discrepancy appear. For the pathologist demands generally the existence of some special poison, generated by some special process in the course of putrefaction. In other words, cases of true blood-poisoning by decomposing animal matter are not of invariable occurrence after dissection-wounds; and such cases are further subject to modifying conditions in the patient—such as those of age, state of health, and susceptibility to the action of the poison.

Some highly interesting and important information on the present subject has recently been afforded by the inquiries of Staff-surgeon Messer of the royal navy, into the reputed poisonous qualities and nature of the arrows of South Sea islanders—a race which, more perhaps than any other tribe of savages, has been credited with the knowledge and use of poisoned weapons. Dr Messer had an excellent opportunity of making investigations into this subject during the visits of H.M.S. *Pearl* to the New Hebrides islands, and to the islands of Banks and Santa Cruz, in the summer of 1875; and as certain cases of wounding with arrows occurred under Dr Messer's eyes and were treated by him, his remarks on this subject possess a more than usual interest.

The common belief that savages possess the requisite knowledge and skill to manipulate and concentrate vegetable poisons, so that these poisons may prove of effective kind when applied to weapons, and used, it may be long after the application of the fresh poison, is freely commented upon in an adverse manner by Dr Messer. He further points out that savages themselves may firmly believe in the deadly nature of their weapons, without having any idea of the really innocuous nature of the substances with which they have smeared them. And great allowance must also be made for the influence of fear and superstition. The implicit belief in the poisonous nature of the weapons forms a point of no mean importance in the consideration of the causes whereby serious or fatal effects are produced. The 'nervous system becomes liable,' to use Dr Messer's words, 'to certain diseases on the slightest provocation;' and once convinced of the deadly nature of the weapon which has wounded him, the savage—and the civilised man also—comes to regard a fatal result as inevitable—this result accruing simply from 'want of moral courage to resist disease.'

The chief element in cases of poisoning which appears to have given countenance to the reality of the effects of the poison, is the occurrence of tetanus or lock-jaw after wounds. This disease, {221} familiar to every medical man, as also resulting from injuries entirely dissociated from poisoned wounds, is ascribed by the uninitiated and ignorant to the effects of the poisoned weapons of the savage. And hence the belief in the potency of the virus becomes more and more assured. Thus, as is well known, Commodore Goodenough and a party of men were fired at with arrows at Carlisle Bay in Santa Cruz. The officer and five men were wounded by arrows, and a second officer had his hand scratched with the point of an arrow held in the hand of a native. The wounds in every case were slight. But the ship was ordered to return to the more temperate climate of Sydney, in order to give the sufferers the best chance of averting, what Dr Messer feared might possibly be favoured by the heat of the climate—namely, the occurrence of tetanus. All went well until the fifth and sixth days after the reception of the wounds, when the Commodore and two of his men began to shew symptoms of this disorder, which unfortunately proved fatal to the three patients within sixty hours.

Now, as Dr Messer proceeds to remark, here were three cases which might be cited, and which have been referred to as proving the actual occurrence of poisoning after the wounds of arrows. But the query which science asks is, whether the symptoms in these cases present any difference from those in ordinary cases of tetanus, and whether anything special occurred in their history to indicate the action of a specific poison? Without entering into particulars, it may be asserted that these cases, in every detail, presented nothing unusual or inconsistent with the idea of their being instances of ordinary tetanus. The occurrence of the disease was favoured—as is well known to medical men—in the wounded by the mental excitement and fear consequent on the belief that the arrows had been poisoned. There was, in fact, an utter absence of all the symptoms of poisoning; and the tetanus did not occur under any unwonted conditions, but simply under those which favour its development after injuries of ordinary kind. Where then, it may be asked, is the evidence of poisoning? To this query the obvious reply must be that, as regards the reputed poison of the arrows, no evidence is forthcoming, from the entire history of the case.

The actual investigation of the arrows of the natives of the South Pacific islands forms by no means the least interesting part of Dr Messer's communication. The arrows are generally composed of three pieces—the shaft made of a light cane, the head composed of hard wood, and the point or barb formed simply of the sharpened end of the head, of a sharp bit of bone, of the

fin-spine of a fish, or the spine of a sea-urchin's shell. Specimens obtained from the New Hebrides measured three feet in length, and weighed about eighty grains; the points being formed of a piece of human bone of very tapering form, and ground down to a very fine point. The point was smeared with a black substance which had dried in separate masses upon the bone. The arrows which were fired upon Commodore Goodenough and his party at Carlisle Bay, Santa Cruz, were four feet in length, and had points, composed of slender and sharp pieces of human bone, about eight inches in length. The 'poisoned' arrows are carried about in quivers, and are not only carefully looked after by the natives, but are very difficult to obtain, presumably on account of the natives being jealous that the purchasers might become possessed of the knowledge of the poison, which in their eyes renders the weapons so valuable. The arrows of the Santa Cruz islanders were not carried as poisoned arrows almost invariably are, and were readily sold to the crew of the *Pearl* by the natives.

As far as could be ascertained, the processes adopted by the South Sea islanders to poison their arrows, consist firstly in the habit of inserting the weapons in various parts of a decomposing human body; the neighbourhood of the kidneys being usually preferred for this purpose. Now, as already remarked, it so happens that physiologists and medical men are in possession of some very definite information regarding the manner in which decomposing animal matters act on the human organism. And on the other hand, there appears to be an utter lack of evidence obtained from the observation of cases of poisoned-arrow wounds, to shew that there is any analogy between the symptoms observed in these cases and those prevailing after blood-poisoning. It is also very worthy of remark that tetanus—the commonest result of poisoned-arrow wounds—is not known to be caused by the introduction, within the system, of decomposing animal matter.

The second mode in which the natives of the South Pacific islands are believed to render their arrows noxious, is that of smearing them with some poisonous vegetable matters. It is probable that if poisoned arrows are really prepared by savages in any way, it is in this latter mode that they are rendered noxious. But there is an evident discrepancy between the action of any known vegetable poisons and the symptoms observed after wounding with the arrows of savages. Thus woorali acts by paralysing the muscles concerned in breathing. 'Corroval' and 'bao,' two poisons allied to woorali, act by causing coma or stupor and paralysis of the heart. The effect of the Upas tree of Java (*Strychnos tiente*) is to produce artificial tetanus; and strychnia introduced into the blood directly, as by inoculation, gives rise to marked symptoms, which resemble tetanus—but with this remarkable and notable distinction, that the tetanic convulsions set in *immediately* after the poison has been introduced into the system, and not after several days of incubation. Thus it is clear, from this latter fact alone, that strychnia and its allies can hardly represent the poisons with which the arrows of savages are smeared—admitting that these weapons are poisonous in any degree.

The historical accounts of cases of wounding by the arrows of savages, evince a singular want of any distinct or decided evidence to prove the clearly specific nature of any symptoms observed. Thus Mendaña in 1595 remarks that the Santa Cruz islanders were believed to use poisoned arrows, but the Spaniards did not believe the poison to be of very noxious kind. Burney in the *History of Discoveries in the South Seas* makes an observation to the same effect; and as Dr Messer well remarks, probably no fatal case occurred—with one exception—from wounding with the arrows, else such a result would have surely been mentioned. In 1797 Carteret in the *Swallow* visited Santa Cruz, and several of his crew were severely wounded by arrows of the usually reputed and poisonous kind. Three fatal cases occurred, but no mention is made of the effects being due to poison—a fact which would have been expected to have been duly chronicled from its interesting, if also sad, nature. Direct experiments with poisoned arrows are mentioned in the second volume of Forster's account of Cook's *Voyages*; the arrows being those of the New Hebrides islanders. A dog was wounded with the weapons, but no ill effects followed; whilst fishes were not affected after being wounded with these avowedly poisonous weapons. A pig wounded in 1827 by a poisoned arrow from the Santa Cruz islands, exhibited no symptoms whatever; and it is noteworthy to find that in the attack on Bishop Patteson's party at Santa Cruz in 1864, after which two deaths from tetanus occurred from wounding by arrows, the weapons were said *not* to have been poisoned. Here we find an effect produced from non-poisoned arrows similar to that observed in the case of Commodore Goodenough after wounding with weapons reputed to be poisoned.

Accounts given by missionaries of the probable nature of the poisons used to render arrows noxious, appear to shew that the natives of the North New Hebrides and Banks' islands do not themselves attach importance to the effects of the substance with which the arrows are poisoned, but seem to regard the innocuous human bone, forming the point of the weapon, as a powerful agent in producing deleterious effects. The poisons, according to the evidence of the missionaries, are derived from vegetables; the plants used in Banks' islands being 'Toe,' a species of Euphorbiaceæ, and 'Loke,' a climbing plant, allied to Strychnia. The same evidence declares the fact that the usual effects of wounding with arrows so prepared are inflammation, and occasionally tetanus; but the important remark is also made that the natives of the South Pacific are very subject to tetanus 'after wounds *not* produced by poisoned arrows,' and that this disorder is also common among the natives independently of wounding.

Professor Halford of Melbourne University—an authority on snake-bites—gives evidence to the effect that dogs and pigeons exhibited no evil effects after being wounded in various ways by poisoned arrows, obtained from the Solomon Islands, and by the substances obtained from these weapons.

That Dr Messer's observations on this subject therefore afford good grounds for believing that

many of the reports relating to the deadly nature of the arrows used by the South Sea islanders are decidedly erroneous, there can be no reasonable doubt. And that many of the cases of so-called poisoning are due simply to mental fear and the physical irritation inducing tetanus, seems also a fair inference. But there can be no doubt, that at the same time, travellers and missionaries, by careful observation, might furnish scientific men with secure data upon which to establish sound conclusions. At present, the entire body of evidence clearly warrants us in entertaining a negative opinion regarding firstly the generally poisonous nature of the arrows of South Sea islanders; and secondly regarding the use by these races of any active poison derived from decomposing animal matter.

MINDING THE BAIRN.

The little story of 'Rob Graham,' which lately appeared in these pages, may possibly have aroused some interest concerning the poor but by no means insufficient manner in which children are reared among the Scottish peasantry. They get their food regularly, though in a plain way. They are usually stuffed into holes and corners to sleep. The older girls take charge of the younger; even the boys are pressed into this sort of service. All without exception run about barefooted in summer—not altogether on account of the cost of shoes, but from preference. Where there are burns to paddle in, and waters to cross, shoes and stockings would only be an encumbrance.

A farm establishment in Scotland is familiarly known by the Anglo-Saxon term, the *toun*. It is so called by the workers on the farm. Embraced in the toun, though situated perhaps at a hundred yards distant, is a row of cottages with little gardens behind them. These are the quarters of the hinds or ploughmen and their families. Ordinarily, there are dwellings for five or six hinds, besides one for the grieve or overseer. Latterly, the condition of the hinds—at least in the southern counties—has been greatly improved. They are each allowed so much oatmeal per annum; and perhaps a cow, which is allowed to graze with the cows of the farmer. There is an allowance of a rig or two of potatoes. A pig may be kept. The farmer engages to give the use of a horse and cart to drive a certain quantity of coals. Besides these indispensable allowances, there is a wage paid in money. The total value may be estimated at from fifty to sixty pounds a year. That does not seem a large income, but the outgoings are small—very different from what they are among artisans in large towns, where everything has to be bought and paid for. There is the house free of rent; the oatmeal for the porridge; milk from the cow in abundance; potatoes for the lifting and storing; coal driven to the very door; vegetables from the garden; fresh and pure water from the mountain rill; hams of the last year's pig dangling from the ceiling. For all this there is doubtless pretty hard labour in the field and barn; yet there are many assuagements. The labour is regular and healthful. Nothing is paid for seats in the parish church; the minister exacts no fees for baptisms; the children are educated for a trifle in the nearest school; even before the late access of educational power, there was no want of schooling, nor was there any disinclination to make use of it. We do not remember ever visiting the house of a Scottish peasant and not seeing books—very frequently a large family Bible—and that is saying a good deal.

For anything like thrift and comfort, there is of course a dependence on the wife. She has no servants to assist her. She could not pay for help. She is wife, house-servant, and cook all in one. Woe be to the hind who marries a slattern, one who likes finery and has a taste for delicacies! This, however, rarely occurs. We can say that within our observation the hinds' wives are thrifty and industrious, making the best of matters within their sphere. To use a common phrase, they soon 'fall into a family.' Then arise new duties to be encountered. We have often been filled with wonder how they at all manage to conduct their multifarious affairs. Not only the house to look after, but a crowd of children. It is a blessed thing for them that there is the open air, with the slip of green before the door, to which all the youngsters at times may be bundled, and where they rollick and tumble about, strengthening their legs and arms, and bringing their lungs into splendid exercise. Without a particle of scientific knowledge, the *clachan* generally is by intuition kept in excellent health.

The hind's wife, in looking forward to a family, is hopeful that her first-born may be a female. The hope is quite natural. In high life, where it is important to have a male heir to an estate, it is anxiously hoped that the first will be a boy; and when he makes his appearance, the bonfires are set ablazing. Among the cottagers we are talking about, there is no heritage but toil. The poor wife, foreseeing what may be her fate—a 'heavy handful' of children—piously wishes that she may be provided with a girl, who will grow up to help her in her interminable round of duties. Heaven has heard and answered her prayer. A baby girl is placed in the loving arms of her mother. We need not be surprised that the infancy of this eldest daughter, as conventionally considered, is curtailed in order that she may qualify for the position of nurse to her brothers and sisters. As early as her sixth year, she has not only to superintend the amusements of those next to her in seniority, but to undertake the sole charge of the baby while the parent is otherwise necessarily employed. And it is marvellous how aptly a child so placed will assume the air of responsibility, and evince the tact and solicitude of maternity! When children better circumstanced are yet devoted to the interests of their dolls, she is seated at the cottage-door, or on the green bank amongst the daisies, singing to her little human charge, or with matronly pride twining chaplets of the simple flowers for its adornment. Her engrossment would be perfect, but that she has occasionally to cast her eye in the direction of the burn to see that Johnnie, aged four, has not ventured too close to its margin; or to look that Bessie, in the innocence of her two and a half

years, does not pull the tail of the faithful but cross-grained old collie which snoozes on the grass beside them. Returned home with her charges as gloaming falls, the baby is transferred to its mother; but the little maid's anxieties are not yet ended. She assists Johnnie and Bessie to their suppers, and then, amid pleasant reminiscences of the day's simple events, undresses them for bed. In virtue of her position in the household, she herself is permitted to sit up an hour or two later, and is rewarded for her good behaviour by being permitted for a short time to nurse baby in its night-clothes. Thus the first-born girl grows up to womanhood—her mother's right hand and the friend-in-council to each and all of her nurslings.

Where the elder children are boys, the less fortunate mother has to do her best with the material at her disposal—that is, invest one or other of her manikins with the rôle of nurse. The character is not so natural, nor can the experiment, we are afraid, be considered an invariable success; and yet we have known boys with strong innate love for children, whose skill and devotedness in nursing would put to shame many a woman of average maternal instinct. But however that may be, the young rustic rarely escapes altogether what to many of them is at times the irksome task of 'minding the bairn,' although, on the score of his incipient manhood, he may the earlier transfer the service to his juniors. At one stage or other of his boyhood, if his supply of sisters is limited, he is liable to be called from his hoop or marbles, or to forego his projected bird-nesting, in order to rock the cradle or dandle the baby while mother washes up the house or gets ready father's dinner. Even the youngest of the family does not always succeed in evading the doom of his elders; for one or other of these having married young and settled down in the neighbourhood, has of course defied all that philosophy has said or might have to say on the subject, and straightway added to the population; so that nothing is more natural than that the immature uncle or aunt should be wheedled or coerced into tending their still tenderer relatives until one of them shall have developed sufficiently to assume the hereditary duties of its position.

A curious reversion of this case is when the grandchildren are called upon to 'mind' their uncles or aunts—a by no means inconceivable circumstance, when the frequency of early marriages among the poor is considered. We remember some years ago, while on a visit in Forfarshire, that this very subject was broached by our hostess, who, as faithful helpmate of the minister, was herself mother-in-chief to the parish. She told us of a poor woman who had had a great number of children, all of whom had died young except one, a girl, who had married early, but who also died, in giving birth to an infant son. The infant was taken care of by the bereaved grandmother, who was still in the prime of life, and who had herself, after the adoption of her grandson, other two children, one of which survived, a fine boy of fifteen months old. At our friend's invitation we visited with her the humble cottage where this singular combination of relationships existed. The mistress was busy churning as we entered, while seated by the fire was the grandson, some eight or nine years of age, engrossed in the task of amusing the baby. After greeting the good dame in homely kindly manner, the minister's wife turned to the children and asked: 'How are you to-day, Jockie?'

'Fine,' answered the little fellow bashfully.

'And how is your uncle?' continued his questioner with a merry twinkle in her eye and a significant glance at us.

'Ou, he's fu' weel; only gey girnie whiles wi' his back-teeth,' glibly answered the urchin, throwing aside his shyness when his precious charge had become the subject.

'Dear me, Jockie,' laughed my friend, 'you will have some trouble with him then?'

'Whiles,' soberly said the boy, who, although conscious that the question was meant for banter, seemed unable to restrain himself on a matter evidently near his heart. 'He disna sleep weel, an' I'm obliged to sit up at nicht an' whussle till him; but he's guid, puir mannie, when the fashious teeth are no troublin' him.'

We were much affected by the artless affection which Jockie displayed towards his uncle; and learned recently with pleasure that he had, through the minister's good services, been appointed pupil-teacher in what was formerly the parish school; and that his nursling, hardier than the rest of the family, was acquiring his first knowledge under his nephew's affectionate tuition.

Without pleading ignorance of the evils frequently attendant on the practice of intrusting children with the care of infants, we prefer simply to accept it as inevitable, and to contemplate the advantages with which it is as undoubtedly accompanied. In the first place, it is this early discipline, this facing of the harder realities in their lot from the outset, which could alone prepare those in the humbler walks of life to tolerate the position in which their maturer years will have to be spent. The girl whom necessity has taught the rudiments of housewifery simultaneously with her alphabet, and the mysteries of nursing together with the secret of making pot-hooks and hangers, will blend most naturally and easily into the mistress of a poor man's home, where the anxieties and solicitudes common to women are indefinitely multiplied. If not so palpable, the value to boys of the knowledge of simple household duties is after all scarcely less important; for aptitude in these is perhaps the most efficacious weapon with which he can enter the lists of a determinately arduous life. In their acquirement the future workman has been taught self-reliance and the habit of industry—qualities on which his success mainly depends; while he is specifically prepared for the not uncommon eventuality—as soldier, sailor, or emigrant, or even in the ordinary casualties of married life in his own sphere—of having to minister to the physical wants of himself and others. Nor in the last of these situations will his juvenile experience of 'minding the bairn' be without its useful application; for at meal-times, in his evenings off work, and even in the night-watches, he will be called upon to accept his share in those solemn rites which his domestic felicity has entailed.

There is a reflection too of a far higher character to which the consideration of this simple theme not inaptly gives rise. Solicitude for the welfare of those whom they have cared for and protected remains with the elder brothers and sisters in greater or less force throughout life; and the younger members of the family can never wholly divest themselves of the confidence and respect which such services have engendered. Each unit in the tale of the poor man's family thus stands to the other not merely in the fraternal, but, in varying degrees, also in the filial relation. Hence that wonderful tenacity of kindredship by which they are distinguished. Diverging careers, conflicting interests, petty jealousies, and even animosities, may temporarily step in to arrest the current of their affection; but the advent of calamity or sorrow to one or other is a signal which rarely fails to reunite them in bonds stronger than ever. Is not blood, after all, thicker than water, in their own idiomatic phrase? The successful digger or colonial shepherd needs nothing more transcendental than the memory of the humble home in which all were mutually dependent, to send his tenderest thoughts wandering across the ocean which divides him from his playmates and friends. Wherever their various lots may be cast, there is to the end a common haunt in which their loving spirits may meet, in the 'auld clay biggin' or 'humble cot' where each in his turn performed his part in 'minding the bairn.'

The family affections are, moreover, the pith and marrow of patriotism; and who will venture to estimate the degree in which a nation's stability is dependent upon the primitive economy of the poor man's household? It is only by association with the loves and sorrows and joys of his childhood that the external surroundings of his home become endeared to the heart of man. How naturally Burns arises, in his *Cotter's Saturday Night*, from the more immediate reflections which the happiness of his humble characters suggests, to that eloquent exclamation in praise of his native land, beginning,

From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs.

CAPTURING OSTRICHES.

The greatest feat of an Arab hunter is to capture an ostrich. Being very shy and cautious, and living on the sandy plains, where there is little chance to take it by surprise, it can be captured only by a well-planned and long-continued pursuit on the swiftest horse. The ostrich has two curious habits in running when alarmed. It always starts with outspread wings against the wind, so that it can scent the approach of an enemy. Its sense of smell is so keen that it can detect a person a great distance long before he can be seen. The other curious habit is that of running in a circle. Usually five or six ostriches are found in company. When discovered, part of the hunters, mounted on fleet horses, will pursue the birds, while the other hunters will gallop away at right angles to the course the ostriches have taken. When these hunters think they have gone far enough to cross the path the birds will be likely to take, they watch upon some rise of ground for their approach. If the hunters hit the right place and see the ostriches, they at once start in pursuit with fresh horses, and sometimes they overtake one or two of the birds; but often one or two of the fleet horses fall, completely tired out with so sharp a chase.—*Newspaper paragraph.*

SONNET.

Oft let me wander hand-in-hand with Thought
In woodland paths and lone sequestered shades,
What time the sunny banks and mossy glades,
With dewy wreaths of early violets wrought,
Into the air their fragrant incense fling,
To greet the triumph of the youthful Spring.
Lo, where she comes! 'scaped from the icy lair
Of hoary Winter; wanton, free, and fair!
Now smile the heavens again upon the earth;
Bright hill and bosky dell resound with mirth;
And voices full of laughter and wild glee
Shout through the air pregnant with harmony,
And wake poor sobbing Echo, who replies
With sleeping voice, that softly, slowly dies.

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