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COLLECTION

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THE DESULTORY MAN.

THE

DESULTORY MAN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"RICHELIEU," "THE GYPSY," ETC.

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1836

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DEDICATION.

TO MISS M. L. BOYLE.

My dear Miss Boyle,

I dedicate to you a work, the greater part of which was written many years ago, and long before I had the slightest intention of submitting anything I wrote to public criticism. It was intended originally for the amusement of some of my personal friends; but many of the papers got beyond that limited circle, and some I published myself anonymously in various periodicals[1]. Those which were so published, received from persons whom I believed to be competent judges, so much praise that I determined to attempt a longer and more laboured composition, and to strive without concealment for the approbation of the public. Many of my friends attempted to dissuade me from so doing; and, while they assured me that they doubted not my capability of acquitting myself well, endeavoured to make me look upon literary efforts in a light in which such ennobling pursuits could never appear to my eyes.

Suspecting, notwithstanding their praises, that their view was, to save me from a disappointment which they saw that my own want of abilities would inevitably call upon me, I induced a friend to lay the first volume of a romance I had begun, before one to whose judgment I might well look with full reliance. The opinion which was pronounced upon that volume led me to proceed at once, without hesitation; but still I had many a voice raised, amongst my friends, against my purposes. The dread of criticism was endeavoured to be instilled into me, the difficulty of calling public attention was displayed to deter me, the slight foundation for my hopes of fame, the anxiety of suspense, and the bitterness of disappointment. But still, supported by the opinion of a few in whom I had greater confidence, I persevered; and never have regretted that I did so.

You, my dear young friend, are about to try the same adventure; and I cannot do better than dedicate to you these pages, from the success of which my first literary hopes were derived. At the same time I cannot help feeling in regard to your forthcoming romance, a considerable share of responsibility, as it is upon my opinion, given after having read it through, and thought of it in every point of view, that you are about to send it forth to seek the favour of the world. The feeling of that responsibility has of course been increased by hearing persons for whom we both entertain a high esteem, address to you the same dissuasions which were employed towards myself at the outset of my literary career, and by having been asked whether, with the deep and sincere regard which my wife and myself feel towards you and all the members of your immediate family circle, I can judge impartially of your book. I feel the responsibility however without apprehension, for I know that I am impartial: and the sincerity of my regard for you and yours, instead of taking from my impartiality, has only rendered it more stern and severe. I say to you now, as I said when first I read the work, "Go on and fear not." I will stake any small literary reputation I may possess upon your success. Whether the work may have the vogue of some romances written upon the fashionable *coteries* of the day, I do not know; but I think it may have more; and I do not scruple to assert that every one who can estimate genius guided by high principles, and the poetry of the heart inspired by noble feelings and guided by pure taste, will read that work (especially the second volume) with delight and approbation. This is the best success which can attend any work: those who are worthy of loving what is good, and capable of appreciating what is beautiful, will admire and approve; and a long line of illustrious ancestors, may--if such things be permitted--look down on you with applause, as you send into the world a book which contains so much of which you may be justly proud. I say again, go on to success; and I may add, in the words of Francis the First, "*Ma lance contre un écu d'Espagne, vous gagnerez la partie*."

To you then I dedicate the following pages, not because I think them at all worthy of your acceptance, but because they contain those things from which I first obtained an augury of future success. May my auguries in your favour be verified even more fully than in my own case; but that they will be verified to the full extent of your expectations, is the strongest conviction of,

My dear Miss Boyle,

Yours most truly,

G. P. R. JAMES.

The Cottage, Great Marlow,
26th September, 1836.

THE

DESULTORY MAN.

Ven dulce soledad, y al alma mia
Libra del mar horrisono agitado
Del mundo corrompido
Y benign la paz y la alegria
Vuelve al dolcente corazon.--MELENDEZ.

I sit alone, with time sufficient before me to put down a record of the last year of my existence, and with the desire, if be possible, to gather together into one view, all the thoughts and feelings, and incidents and anecdotes, which have filled up one of the most painful periods of my existence. Of the many acts which went before that epoch I must speak, though briefly, in order that others may comprehend how I am what I am; but I will not dwell thereon, for the detail might be tedious to others, and in some degree would be painful to myself, although, in looking back upon the occurrences of those earlier years, I already begin to experience that sort of interest which clings in general to the past. Time acts upon events as upon fine pictures, softening every harshness, mellowing every tint, and blending all into richness and harmony. It is true that sometimes he takes away the brighter colours, and leaves but the darker shades, and in the end is sure to obliterate all entirely: but even to the last, there is a pleasure in tracing the faint remains of things once bright, as we gaze upon an old painting, and seek out, amidst the wreck of beauties, those that the waves of time have not yet swept away.

The very mention of those days calls up again to view the events they brought with them, almost as vividly as at the time. In solitude and silence the images of a thousand things, gone for ever, come back upon my mind. The past alone is ours; it is our grand possession in the wilderness of time; it is all that we call our own. Memory fixes her eyes ever upon it, like a miser watching his treasure, and culls out the brightest recollections, to place them at the top of her store. Fancy seeks there for many of the materials for the gay fabrics of imagination; and wisdom, too, borrows from the past to provide against the future. Pilgrims as we are, wandering on towards a distant shrine, over a rough and painful road, let us pluck the wild blossoms that grow by the road to deck our pillow, ere we lay down to rest; and though perhaps we can neither give to our own tale, or to that of others, the same interest with which we have felt or have listened, still let us gather up, ere it fades into forgetfulness, all that the old reaper Time lets fall upon our path.

I know not well whether I write for myself or others: whether these pages will alone serve to recall to my own mind, in after years, events and tales that are now vivid, but may then be partly effaced from the tablet of memory; or whether they will afford some amusement and some instruction to persons who neither know the writer nor are acquainted with his history. Lest the latter should be the case, I write the following sketch of my early years:

My name, then, is James Young, and I was born the second son of an officer in the navy, who had fought in the battle which destroyed the fleet of Llangara, and in that which immortalized the name of Rodney, who gained honour and glory, but little worldly wealth; and died in battle when I had reached the age of eight years, leaving an income of about twelve hundred per annum for the support of his widow and two children. I remember well, even at this moment, the people telling me that my father was dead, and endeavouring to explain to me what death is. But though I could understand that I should never see my parent again, and wept bitterly to think that it was so, yet I could not get my mind to grasp the meaning of being dead, till an accidental occurrence, which took place a few weeks after the news of my father's death had reached England, gave me the first tangible idea of death, and filled me with awe and horror. I had gone out with my brother, who was five or six years older than myself, and was walking on with him rapidly towards Hyde Park, when at the corner of Grosvenor Square we saw a crowd gathered round the step of a door, which I think at that time belonged to the house of Admiral Berkeley. With boyish curiosity we pressed near, and I heard some one say as we approached, "Oh! the man is dead, quite dead, you had better get a shutter, and carry the body to the workhouse."

The idea of death had never ceased to occupy my mind and excite my curiosity since I had been told that my father was dead; and I instantly cried out, "Is he dead? Oh, let me look at him--let me look at him!" The sound of my childish voice uttering such an exclamation caught the attention of those around, and whether they believed that I might be related to the dead person, or were actuated merely by a sudden impulse, I cannot tell, but they made way instantly, and letting me into the circle, stood round with a part of their attention now withdrawn from the former object of their contemplations to myself, as I stood habited in deep mourning, gazing upon the body, with all the simplicity, but more than the feelings, of childhood. The dead man was dressed like a respectable tradesman, and had, I suppose, fallen down in a fit of apoplexy; but there he lay with his jaw dropping upon his throat, his glassy eyes wide open, and his limbs stretched out in all the rigidity of death. People may say what they please on the similarity of sleep and death, but, even to a child, the awful difference of the two was so conspicuous, that it seemed to freeze the blood in my young heart, and I never asked what death is again.

My brother was destined for the navy, and my father had fancied that his family interest was sufficiently good to obtain for me the post of *attaché* to some embassy, by which means he hoped

that I might be enabled to make my way in the diplomatic world. Four hundred a-year, three on my reaching one-and-twenty, and one hundred in reversion, after my mother's death, he had calculated would be sufficient to procure me the proper education for that mode of life to which I was destined, and to support me during the toils and privations of the probationary state of unpaid *attachéship*. The rest of his fortune, sooner or later, was willed to my brother; and, joined to my mother in our guardianship and the execution of his will, was his banker and old friend, Mr. Somers, of whom I shall have to speak much more hereafter. Within a year after my father's death my brother went to sea, and I was sent to school, in order to gain so much Latin and Greek as are needful to an *attaché*, but with especial injunctions to my master to bestow far more attention upon the living than upon the dead languages. I was at this time a gay and lively boy, full of fun, daring, and impudence, but with what neither I nor any one else suspected, namely, a wild and ungovernable imagination, which was constantly leading me into scrapes during my youth, and which has been, by turns, my bane and my consolation since I reached the days of manhood. The French master at the school was an emigrant and a gentleman, both by birth and habits; and as the instructions which he had to bestow upon me were more extended than those which he was called on to give the rest of the boys, it very naturally happened, that a closer intimacy and regard took place between us than existed between himself and the others. I liked his language, too, and his manners; and soon finding out that my imagination was of a very irritable nature, he kindly, but perhaps injudiciously, supplied it with plenty of food, either by telling me tales of the wars of La Vendée, or by lending me books which he received from a circulating library to which he subscribed. Although French notions of delicacy and morality are very different from our own, it is but fair to say, that in every other respect but that of furnishing excitement to a fancy already too excitable, he showed much care and prudence in the books which he selected for me. Poetry he gave me abundantly, both French and English, but it was of the best kind, and with books of travels he also supplied me, which sometimes certainly raised my curiosity on points that might as well have been left to elucidate themselves, but which had no tendency to weaken my mind or corrupt my morals. I was idle enough, certainly, but I was tolerably quick in intellect, and consequently contrived to please all the different masters in a certain degree, though those I liked best were certain both to command more of my attention and respect than the others.

At the end of six months I returned home for the holidays, and, on the very first interrogation in reference to my progress at school, established, to my mother's full satisfaction, the fact of my being a miracle of genius and application. Mr. Somers, the banker, had come down himself to bring me home in his carriage, and after leaving me some hours with my mother he returned to dine, bringing with him his little daughter as a playfellow for me. He was a kind good-hearted man; and, after asking we several questions, to satisfy himself that I had not misused my time, *he* also declared himself perfectly satisfied. I remarked, that both he himself, his servants, and his daughter, who was then about six years old, were all in mourning, and I afterwards found that he had lost his wife some months before.

I need dwell no further on my life at school, though the mixed character of the studies which I there pursued, and the nature of the books with which the good-natured Frenchman supplied me, gave that desultory character to my mind which it has never lost. I had a great greediness for information, without much regularity of arrangement or steadiness of pursuit; and when I left that school, which was at the end of two years and a half, I knew a great many things that other boys did not know, and a great deal less of many things than they did know.

What was the occasion of my quitting the school remains to be told. About half a year before I did quit it, my mother became Mrs. Somers, and my brother, whose ship was at Deal, was present, as well as myself, at the wedding, which was to give us a new father and a new home. Mr. Somers was very kind, and looked very happy; my mother was serious, but her vanity was flattered in various respects, and she easily found means to persuade herself that she was doing what was quite right and expedient. My brother, as smart as a naval uniform could make him, was as gay as a lark, and in robust health; and little Emily Somers, who was now a sweet girl of about eight years old, looked all delight, and was only too sure that she should love her new mamma most dearly. Strange enough to say, I was the only person who did not fully participate in the gaiety of the occasion. I had been, I am afraid, a spoilt child; my mother had seemed to love me better than any thing on earth; and certain it is that, even at that early age, I felt a degree of jealousy when I thought of any one else except my brother sharing in her affection. My poor brother was soon destined to leave me alone in her love. He returned to his ship as soon as the wedding breakfast was over, and shortly after sailed for the coast of Spain. One epistle, dated Gibraltar, informed us that he was well and happy, but the next ship-letter my mother received was written in the hand of the captain--an old comrade of my father--and its purport was to inform her, that her eldest son had fallen a victim to one of the severe fevers which occasionally visit the Peninsula.

My worldly prospects were of course greatly changed by this event. I was far too young myself--even if at any time of life I could have known such feelings--to derive the smallest portion of consolation for the loss of my brother from the acquisition of fortune which thus befell me: but my mother and Mr. Somers saw the affair both in an affectionate and in a worldly light. They both grieved sincerely, I am sure, for my brother, who was, as Mr. Somers declared, a very good lad indeed; but they both agreed also, that there was a considerable difference between four hundred and twelve hundred per annum; and my mother was delighted to believe, and Mr. Somers well pleased to suggest, that a private tutor might now very well be kept for me at home,

instead of putting Mrs. Somers to the pain of having me always at a distance from her maternal eye. Thus I at once received the news of my brother's death and a summons to return to Portland Place, which was destined to be my home till I set out in the world for myself.

On my arrival I found my mother installed mistress of a splendid mansion, furnished newly from the garrets to the cellars, with a very kind and affectionate husband, and a lovely little girl for her companion in the person of his daughter. Her affection for myself, however, seemed to have increased rather than diminished, and it was easy to perceive that my will was to be her law. Two years before, such a perception would have ruined my disposition for ever, but I had already been some time at a school with, a great many boys older than myself. I had been drilled into some kind of discipline by the masters, and beaten into some knowledge of myself by my elders in the school. I had learned also a habit of scrutinizing my own thoughts and feelings, as well as those of other people, very unusual at that period of life, which has never left me, though I acknowledge that I have but too often been wrong in my conclusions, not only in regard to others, but even respecting myself. If our fellows in society can, for purposes of their own, throw a veil over their actions which we can seldom penetrate, surely vanity, passion, interest, and every other modification of selfishness, can, with art a thousand-fold more specious, still conceal from us the springs and motives of what is passing in our own bosom. It is only long-confirmed habit, dear-bought experience, and strong determination, which can tear away the mask successfully in either case. However, I had a strong sense of what is just and right also, and I was not long in perceiving that my mother not only loved me a great deal better than little Emily Somers--which I should not have objected to, because it seemed natural--but she also contrived to show that partiality in a manner which was not fair towards Emily. What Emily did was seldom right--what Emily said was always nonsense with her stepmother--and many and many a time have I had to fight Emily's battles, and defend Emily's cause, and petition in Emily's behalf, when the dear little creature neither did, nor said, nor desired, any thing but what was right. Emily felt the change, and as yet remembered her own mother sufficiently to weep over that change; but she was of a gay and happy disposition, bearing no malice, forgetting injuries, retentive of kindness, frank, true, and gentle; yet, withal, with a firmness of determination on points where some internal principle of rectitude told her that she should be firm, which contrasted strangely enough with the general mildness and placidity of her character. I could, were I so inclined, write down a thousand examples of this peculiar trait in her character; but as I intend merely to give a sketch of those years, it will be unnecessary. Suffice it, that when Emily had positively pledged herself to do or not to do any particular thing, no one attempted to turn her from it, for we all learned to know that it would be in vain.

It must be added, however, that these firm resolves were but seldom taken, and then only upon great occasions, when we were sure, sooner or later, to discover that Emily was right, for they were the offspring of firmness and not obstinacy, and I have often seen her execute her resolve with tears, so great was the struggle between her inclination and her sense of right.

Soon after my arrival in London, a tutor was found for me, and brought with him to our family a strong recommendation. Yet, although he was a learned and clever man, I am not sure that he was exactly the person best calculated to bring up a youth of a fiery temperament and an erratic imagination like myself. He had been long in Germany, it seems, where his mind had become strongly tinged with a sort of mysticism, a small portion of which soon communicated itself to me, and which only served to set my fancy wandering more wildly still. But that was not alone the evil which his residence in foreign lands had wrought in him. His moral principles had become strangely twisted, and though he advocated most eloquently the strictest adherence to truth, and was most rigorous and exact in his notions of justice and equity, yet, upon many other points, his notions were sadly relaxed. He was a tall uncouth man, too; by no means thin, but with no breadth of bone, and only gifted with a considerable quantity of muscle and fat, covering a frame originally long and narrow. Nor were his manners peculiarly pleasant, though they were by no means harsh or rude, but he was extremely fond of a joke, and knew no limit in pursuing it: often too, before the joke was apparent to other people, his fancy, tickled by some internal movement of his own mind, would set him off into long fits of laughter, during which his eyes would stream and his shoulders shake as if he were actually in convulsions.

Under his care and instructions I remained seven years, reading when it pleased me, for my mother took care that my own will was the only measure of my studies. Nevertheless, I read a great deal; for when I was fatigued by great corporal exercise, the craving of my mind for constant employment always returned, and I sat down with greediness to whatever was presented to me. A good deal of Latin, a very little Greek, an immensity of French, and a certain portion of Italian and Spanish, were thus run through, with, perhaps, little benefit; but the whole system of my studies, if that can be called system which had no regularity, was altered from what it had been when I was at school. It was my tutor's maxim that a man was born to know every thing, and consequently, no expurgated editions were put into my hand. The warmest of the Latin poets, and the least chaste of the French and Italian, were given to me without ceremony; and where I wanted notes or interpretations, my worthy tutor supplied them fully, sometimes in a grave and scientific manner, sometimes laughing till he was ready to fall from his chair. Immense quantities of English also did I read, ancient and modern, good and bad--Milton's purity and Rochester's filth; Southey's inimitable poetry, and the novels of Maria Regina Roche. Four books especially took possession of my imagination, and remain to the present time amongst those in which I can read every day. They were the Arabian Nights, Don Quixote, Gil Blas, and Southey's Curse of Kehema. My love for Shakspeare, Milton, and Wordsworth, came at an after period; and

towards the age of seventeen, I began to read the romances of Sir Walter Scott--works which were calculated to do my mind the most infinite service, to blend the love of virtue with the spirit of adventure, and tame wild imagination to the uses of the world.

Fencing, riding, cudgel-playing, varied the time with mathematics, geometry, and astronomy. History came in for a great portion of my attention, and books of travels maintained their share. Thus did I become one of the most desultory beings that the world ever produced; so that, before I was eighteen years of age, my mind was literally like a pawnbroker's shop, full of an odd assemblage of unconnected things, huddled together in the storehouses of memory, unmarked and disarranged, and difficult to be got at. Many of these stores also were calculated to be injurious to me in various ways; they did prove so, certainly, in some degree; but that they did not become more so, I owe, I believe, to two causes--first, my early fondness for the writings of Southey, where virtue, robed in poetry and eloquence, is splendid enough to catch even imagination; and next, my having fallen in love before I was much exposed to the temptations of the world.

The reader--if any one do read these pages--will easily divine the object of that early, but not less permanent, affection. Emily Somers had become, from the circumstances which I have related, my little pet and protégée. I loved her because I protected and defended her even against one whom I loved also. But soon I began to take an interest in the development of her mind, and I used to write out the purest and most beautiful passages of all I read, to read to her again; and learned to love her from the sympathy and the reciprocation of mutual ideas which this produced: but, by the time I was eighteen and she was sixteen, other feelings began to make themselves felt in my bosom. Then came the period when, from a very pretty child, she burst forth into one of the loveliest girls that it was possible to behold, and I soon learned to love with all the ardent and thrilling passion of manhood. Such is the history of my affection for her, and it is hardly necessary to say that it was returned. She had known me from infancy; she had never met with any thing but kindness at my hands; she had made me on all occasions her protector and her confidant; and she had found something even in the faults and foibles of which my character was composed to excite her interest. Neither did she see much of any one who was likely to compete with me in any respect. Our society, though large, was rather general than intimate; my mother was very averse to the idea of introducing Emily, what she called, *too soon*; and thus, before she mingled with the world, her heart was given never to be recalled.

Roving over the earth as I did, from time to time, I had made some friends and a good many acquaintances; but I did not give them great facilities of rivalling me in Emily's affection. At Mr. Somers's house I had my own apartments, where I received my own visitors--not indeed with any confessed purpose of keeping them away from Emily, but perhaps with some latent feeling of jealousy, which endured till I felt certain that I possessed her love in return. In such matters I was much more learned than she was, and soon found out the state of my own heart, but I did not so easily convince myself of the state of her's; for sisterly affection was too cold a return to satisfy so ardent a nature as mine, and I feared that the feelings which she entertained towards me might be of no warmer a kind. Perhaps, indeed, if I had always remained near her, her feelings might have remained such as I feared they might be; but I was absent from time to time, and returned from a long visit to Paris, just at that period of Emily's life when a woman's heart is most open to the more powerful affections. That she would marry me if I asked her, I felt sure, but I wished her to love me with all that thrilling ardour which I felt towards her, and I only learned to believe that she did so by one of those sudden glimpses which accident sometimes gives us into the best-concealed feelings. I was accustomed to treat her in every respect as a sister, to employ every endearing term towards her, and to use all those kind familiarities which one does to a dear and near relative. Thus one day, when I was in my twentieth year, and she was approaching eighteen, I returned from some visits I had been paying, and, finding her alone in the drawing-room at work, I sat down beside her, and threw my arm lightly round her.

"I have been spending part of the morning, Emily," I said, "with your friend Helen ----" (naming a very lovely girl, who was a frequent visitor at our house); and, as I spoke, I could see the colour come and go in Emily's cheek in a manner that excited my curiosity.

After a moment, however, she raised her eyes, and said, "She is a very charming girl indeed, James, and I dare say will make an amiable wife."

"I dare say she will, Emily," I answered with a smile; "pray do you know who is to be the happy man?"

"Oh, James, James," she said, shaking her head in a manner that she meant to be wholly playful, but which certainly had a touch of sadness in it, "do not try to be mysterious with me, my dear brother. I heard papa and mamma talking about it this morning, and saying what a good thing it would be for you and her."

"And did you believe it, Emily?" I exclaimed. "Could you be so mistaken? But I am glad you have told me, dear girl, for certainly I will never set my foot in that house again alone, till Helen ---- is married."

"Dear me! I have forgot something up stairs," cried Emily, starting up and going towards the door with her face turned entirely from me. But she passed two looking-glasses ere she reached the end of the room, and the first showed me something very bright swimming in her eyes and

reflecting the light from the windows; the second displayed those bright drops running rapidly over her eyelashes, and rolling down her cheeks. I was by her side in a moment, and, closing the door she had partly opened, I drew her gently back to the sofa, where, holding her fondly to my heart, I kissed away the tears from that beloved cheek. "Dear Emily," I said, "never believe that I am going to marry any one in the whole world, if Emily Somers will not accept me herself."

It were tedious, perhaps, to detail all that followed. I soon gained a confession that I was loved as I could desire, but I could not make Emily promise to be mine positively, till I had spoken both to her father and my mother, and as we knew that neither would consent to our union before I had reached one-and-twenty years of age, and judged that they might make us spend the interval apart if we mentioned the matter before, we determined--or rather I determined both for Emily and myself--to say nothing upon the subject till that period had arrived. The familiarity which had already existed between us gave us every opportunity of expressing our feelings to each other, and I promised Emily to claim her hand without further concealment, on the very day that should see me the master of my own actions.

I knew Emily too well to feel one doubt from the moment that she told me her heart was mine, and I even took no small pleasure in seeing the attention and admiration she excited when, at my wish, my mother took her out into society, and gave several large parties at our own house, for the purpose of introducing her. At these parties I paid her ordinary attentions, but no more; and left her entirely to her own guidance in regard to her conduct towards other men: and yet I cannot but say, that amongst all who flattered, and courted, and sought the beautiful heiress of the rich banker, I never saw her give the slightest encouragement to any one but myself.

I was thus perfectly at my ease; but there was one person that frequented our house, who was apparently far from being pleased at the attentions which Emily received. This was the son of a man almost omnipotent on the stock exchange. His father, born a Jew, and converted to nominal Christianity by the revelations of self-interest, had been early connected with Mr. Somers in large pecuniary transactions, and Alfred Wild, the son, had, in consequence, always been a privileged visitor in the family. He had received a good education, was gentlemanly in his manners when no violent passion was called into action, and often proved a pleasant companion to myself, when I had nothing else to do. His face was fine, showing the features of the Hebrew softened and refined by a considerable admixture of Teutonic blood; his grandmother having been a German, and his mother an Englishwoman; but at the same time, there were moments when it assumed an expression both of cunning and of malice which was any thing but agreeable. To me he was always excessively kind and civil, and although from very early years he saw more of Emily than any one else except myself, it never entered my thoughts to be jealous of him, nor indeed to fancy that he had any particular affection towards her, till I saw the uneasiness which he could not conceal, when at any of our parties she was singled out as an object of attention and admiration by other men. Even when I did perceive this fact, it gave me no apprehension, for of Emily I was sure; and with the rest of the family, it was the tale of the village schoolmaster over again: my mother I had commanded all my life, and she completely commanded Mr. Somers.

At length my twenty-first birthday arrived, and upon it had been fixed three great events by the members of our family. Mr. Somers had previously reserved that morning for winding up his accounts with me as executor to my father. I had appointed it in my own mind as the day for demanding Emily's hand, and my mother had issued cards both for a great dinner-party and for a ball at night. My first meeting on that morning was with Emily, and a dear and tender meeting it was. I next visited my mother in her bed-room, where she always breakfasted, and to her I first told my purpose with regard to Emily. At first she seemed very much surprised and a little vexed; but Emily had grown wonderfully in her good graces since she came out, and after a little while, she told me, only to make my proposal to Mr. Somers, and then to refer him to her, when she would settle every thing with him as I wished it.

Poor Emily I could see was in a terrible state of agitation during breakfast; but I gained a moment ere I followed her father to the library, to tell her that I had spoken with my mother and obtained her full consent. Nothing could have afforded her more relief; for towards her, when my mother did not interfere, Mr. Somers was indulgence itself, and she had no doubt of his approbation, as soon as she heard that my mother's had been obtained. The first part of my business with Mr. Somers was somewhat tedious; for he insisted upon my looking over the executorial and guardianship accounts, item by item, and then, taking me to the bank, put me in possession of my own property, amounting now, by his excellent management, to more than twelve hundred per annum, independent of my mother's jointure, which was settled upon a small landed estate.

When this was all done, and we had returned to the house in Portland Place, I shook my good step-father by the hand, and thanked him warmly for all the kindness he had shown me, as well as for the prudence and skill with which he had managed to increase so largely my little patrimony. "And now, my dear sir," I added, "you very well know that one favour done always brings on a demand for another; so I am going to ask you for a present."

"What is that? what is that?" demanded Mr. Somers. "Very happy I am sure, my dear boy, to give you any thing I have. What is it? Oh, I guess! The chestnut mare! Well, you may have her. Take her, take her; she is too gay for me--getting old and heavy, James, now. Take her, take her!"

"You mistake me, my dear sir," I replied. "The gift I ask is much more valuable than that. It is

neither more nor less than the hand of your daughter Emily."

The idea had evidently never crossed Mr. Somers's mind till that moment; and from some cause my application seemed to embarrass him. "Dear me! Dear me!" he exclaimed, walking up and down the library; "I declare I do not know what to do--I have not committed myself, certainly--but yet--well, it does not signify--but what will your mother say?"

"My mother gives us her full consent, my dear sir," I replied, "and desired me to beg that you would speak with her on the subject."

"Certainly, certainly! Of course I shall," replied Mr. Somers. "But what says poor little Emily?--You have taken care to secure her, you dog, I am sure? What says the poor dear girl?"

"Secured her affection I hope I have, my dear sir," I replied; "but still she has bound herself by no promises."

"No, no! quite right," replied Mr. Somers; "nor I either, luckily. But I'll go and speak with your mother, James--I'll go and speak with your mother;" and he walked towards the door. Ere he reached it, however, he turned, and, holding out his hand to me, added, "I'm sure you know, my dear boy, that I will never oppose any thing that may be conducive to the happiness of Emily and yourself. There may have been a little talk between me and an old friend about her marriage with some one else; but I have not committed myself, and I will not oppose your wishes; so go and tell her so, and make her mind easy, poor girl."

The consultation between Mr. Somers and my mother was soon brought to a close, and I was called to hear the result. After a sort of half explanation, by which I found that Mr. Somers, as he had before hinted, had embarrassed himself by speaking of Emily's marriage to somebody else, I was told that if I would consent to go abroad again for half a year, we should be united on my return; but that in the mean time, I was to leave matters exactly as they were, so that if any one else made their proposal, Emily might be able to say that it was from her own free will that she rejected him. As far as I was concerned this was quite satisfactory, feeling as sure of Emily's conduct as if she had been already my wife; but to guard her from troublesome importunity, I made it a stipulation that no one else was to be suffered to press their suit upon her after the first proposal, and that in all cases her rejection was to be considered definite. This was agreed to; and when Mr. Somers was gone, my mother informed me that this arrangement had been made solely to give him time to extricate himself from his embarrassment, in order that no persons might say he had been misleading them with false hopes. She herself, however, undertook to guard Emily for me, and if possible to keep all other suitors from teasing her during my absence.

I soon found that she instantly employed the surest means of obtaining that object by spreading the report of a positive engagement between Emily and myself. Her maid was first made the depositary of the secret, and thence it proceeded upwards and downwards in all directions, so that, ere dinner-time, it had reached my own servant, who, while I was dressing, congratulated me on the occasion in all due form. From him also I first learned positively who was the rival aspirant to the hand of my sweet Emily; for my mother (I suppose from fears of my violence) had refused to tell me; but my servant had been recommended to me by no other than my worthy acquaintance, Alfred Wild, and now with tender malevolence, while he offered me his felicitations upon my approaching happiness, he took an opportunity of commiserating the disappointment of his late master and patron.

The day ended happily, Albert Wild did not make his appearance, Emily's mind was calm, and mine was full of hope and delight. The idea of visiting the continent was not at all disagreeable to me. I would certainly rather have taken Emily with me, but I had a great deal of the boy still in my nature, and many and marvellous were the pleasures which I anticipated from my short tour. Whither I was to direct my steps, became the first question, but that was soon decided. I was not disposed to wander far from home. Emily besought me not to go to Paris, which I had visited twice before, and which was somewhat disturbed at the time, and I determined to cross from Brighton to Dieppe, and roam about Normandy and Brittany till the long six months were expired. Amongst the desultory stores of information which I possessed, I knew a good deal of those two provinces of Old France, and looked forward with much pleasure to exploring a part of the country, which at that time had not been so much betravelled as the rest of the country; and as both Emily's heart and my own were rendered more accessible than ever to all the wiles of imagination, I willingly promised her to collect every tale and anecdote of the lands through which I passed, and on my return to make her a sharer in all the thoughts and feelings that my visit to a foreign country, under such circumstances, called up in my bosom.

I will not dwell upon the pain I felt in quitting, even for a short period, one so deeply beloved; for no one, with an imagination less exciteable than mine was then, can conceive all the vague and whirling visions of sorrow and misfortune which assailed me in bidding her adieu for the first time since our affection for each other had grown into maturity. At Brighton I met with an acquaintance who was bound also to France, and we agreed to travel together as far as our roads lay in the same direction. The passage took place without any occurrence worthy of note, and late in the evening, or rather in the beginning of the night, we arrived at Dieppe, and took up our abode in the dwelling of Monsieur Petit, who, at that time, kept the only tolerable inn which the place possessed.

Notwithstanding love, and the pain of quitting my native land, and the somewhat sickening feeling of hope delayed, I slept as soundly as it is possible for man to sleep, and woke late the next morning to see as bright a sun as ever shone, pouring his rays in at the window. As soon as I was dressed, I took out pencils and paper to sketch landscapes and houses, and pen and ink to sketch men and events, and I seldom ceased to employ either the one or the other for several months. I was busily preparing them for use when in walked Monsieur Petit to wish me good morning, and my meeting with him is the first sketch of that year, the course of which I am about to detail.

THE RAMBLE.

Let them think as they will, so I might be at liberty to act as I will, and spend my time in such a manner as is most agreeable to me.--Dr. Atterbury.

"Had I been you, Monsieur Petit," said I, pointing to the great black rafters overhead, "when I built this house, I would have spared all that useless wood in the *plafond*, and put it under my feet."

Monsieur Petit assured me, that he had nothing to do with it; for that the house had been built a hundred years before he was born.

"I forgot," said I, looking at him, and drawing in my own mind a comparison between the fat well-looking landlord, in his green *redingote*, and the French innkeeper of a century ago, with his powdered wig, sallow cheeks and long pigtail, "I forgot, you are certainly of a newer make." It is truly a different animal, the breed has changed amazingly.

"But the salon!" added the aubergiste, "the salon, where my friend waited me to breakfast. He had arranged that himself, and I would perceive that it was *d'un goût unique*."

I went down to the salon. It was indeed *d'un goût unique*. The walls were painted in imitation of porphyry, with niches containing the Venus and Apollo; but the floor was still of brick, the doors had no idea of shutting, and Venus, with the true spirit of a *ci-devant*, seemed more ashamed of the straw chairs and dirty deal table for ever under her nose, than even of her nudity.

"What a strange nation this is!" thought I. Here you will find the arts and sciences in a cottage, and the loves and graces in a kitchen; and yet one is often obliged to pick one's steps in the corridor of princes.

To my friend, France possessed more novelty than to me: and as we sallied forth to examine the town, the first step in this *terra incognita*, perhaps he thought me rather cold and uninquisitive; but what was new to him was old to me, and it had thus lost a part of its bright freshness. It is wonderful how soon the gilded outside of the world tarnishes by use.

We wandered through the streets some time, and at length arrived at the faubourg, called *le Pollet*, the only part of the ancient city of Dieppe, which escaped the bombardment of 1694. The dress and customs of its amphibious denizens begin to be somewhat adulterated with the common modes of the day; but still they are a people quite distinct from the rest of the inhabitants, and on their *fêtes* may yet be seen the red or blue close-fitting coat, with all the seams covered with a broad white lace, and the black velvet cap, and the immeasurable garment which clothes their nether man. Their language is also totally unintelligible to the uninitiated, and there are many among them who can scarcely speak a word of French.

It is not extraordinary that such people as the Welsh, the Highlanders of Scotland, and the Bas Bretons, should maintain their ancient habits; for they may be considered as separate nations; but it *is* singular that the Polletais, surrounded by the French of Dieppe, and in constant communication with them, inhabiting alone a petty suburb of a petty town, should have preserved, from age to age, a total separation in manner, dress, and language.

Besides the Pollet, the only object we met of any great interest was the shop of an ivory-worker. In former days the Dieppois had a station on the coast of Africa, called also Dieppe, which supplied France with great quantities of spice, but more particularly with ivory; and it is, perhaps, from this circumstance, that the people of this country have carried the art of working in ivory to such a high degree of perfection.

If I remember rightly, Ovid describes the statue of Pygmalion as of ivory, and the beautiful

copies we saw here of several celebrated figures made me easily conceive how the Greek fell in love with his own work. Indeed, so much in love were we with the work even of other people (which never comes half so near our affections as our own), that it was with some difficulty we got away from the shop, and did not even do that, until our purses were lighter by several napoleons.

I would advise every one, in entering a foreign country, to remember that he cannot buy everything, however cheap it may appear. Many a man has ruined himself by such economy. The ivory we bought was certainly well worth the money, but we acquired, in addition, a little anecdote of Napoleon's wars. While we were occupied with our purchases, a young Frenchman, with but one arm and a red ribbon at his button, looked in and spoke a few words to the turner, who, after he was gone, told us his history, with a mixture of fun and sentiment which is peculiarly French. I afterwards passed through the country in which the scene was laid, but will tell the story here.

THE RECOMPENSE[2]

The sun was shining as fair as the sun could shine in a beautiful May morning; bright, yet gentle; warm, but fresh; midway between the watering-pot of April and the warming-pan of June, when, in the beautiful valley of Vire--every body knows Vire--but, lest there should be anybody in the wide world who does not, I will point out the means of arriving at it.

Get into the stage-coach, which journeyeth diurnally between London and Southampton; enjoy the smoothness of the road, bless Mr. M'Adam, put up at the Dolphin, and yield yourself to the full delights of an English four-post bed, for no such sweets as stage-coach, smooth road, or four-post bed, shall you know from the moment you set your foot on board the steam-boat for Havre, till the same steam-boat, or another, lands you once more on the English strand.

Supposing you then arrived at Havre--get out of it again as fast as you can; rush across the river to Honfleur; from Honfleur dart back to Caen; and after you have paused five minutes to think about William the Conqueror, put yourself into the diligence for St. Maloe, and when you have travelled just twelve leagues and a half, you will come to a long steep hill, crowned by a pretty airy-looking town, whose buildings, in some parts gathered on the very pinnacle, in others running far down the slope, seem as if coquetting with the rich valleys that woo them from below.

Go to bed; and should you bathe your feet beforehand--which if you are of our faction you will do--walk over the tiled floor of the inn bed-room, that you may have a fit opportunity of abusing tiled floors, and of relieving yourself of all the spleen in your nature before the next morning. Then, if both your mood and the day be favourably disposed, sally forth to the eastern corner of the town, and you will have a fair view over one of the loveliest valleys that nature's profuse hand ever gifted with beauty; the soft clear stream of the Vire too, is there, winding sweetly along between the green sloping hills and the rich woods, and the fields and chateaux, and hamlets, and the sunshine catching upon all its meanderings, and the birds singing it their song of love, as its calm waters roll bountifully by them. Look upon it, and you will not find it difficult to imagine how the soul, even of an obscure artisan in a remote age, warmed into poetry and music in the bosom of that valley, and by the side of that stream.

It, then, in that beautiful Vale of Vire, not many years agone at Francois Lormier went out to take his last May walk with Mariette Duval, ere the relentless conscription called him from his happy home, his sweet valleys, and his early love. It was a sad walk, as may well be imagined; for though the morning was bright, and nature, to her shame be it spoken, had put on her gayest smiles as if to mock their sorrow, yet the sunshine of the scene could not find its way to their hearts, and all seemed darkened and clouded around them. They talked a great deal, and they talked a long time; but far be it from me to betray their private conversation. I would not, for all the world--especially as I know not one word about it--except, indeed, that François Lormier vowed the image of Marietta should remain with him for ever; should inspire him in the battle, and cheer him in the bivouac; and that Mariette protested she would never marry anybody except François Lormier, even if rich old Monsieur Latoussefort, the great Foulan, were to lay himself and fortune at her feet; and in short, that when his "seven long years were out," François would find her still a spinster, and very much at his service.

"Mais si je perdais une jambe?" said François Lormier.--"Qu'est ce que c'a fait?" replied Mariette.

They parted--and first to follow the lady. Mariette wept a great deal, but soon after got calm again, went about her ordinary work, sang her song, danced at the village fête, talked with the talkers, laughed with the laughers, and won the hearts of all the youths in the place, by her unadorned beauty and her native grace. But still she did not forget François Lormier; and when any one came to ask her in marriage, the good dame her mother referred them directly to Mariette, who had always her answer ready, and with a kind word and gentle look sent them away refused, but not offended. At length good old Monsieur Latoussefort presented himself with all his money-bags, declaring that his only wish was to enrich his *gentile* Mariette; but Mariette

was steady, and so touchingly did she talk to him about poor François Lormier, that the old man went away with the tears in his eyes. Six months afterwards he died, when, to the wonder of the whole place, he left his large fortune to Mariette Duval!

In the mean while François joined the army, and, from a light handsome conscript, he soon became a brave, steady soldier. Attached to the great Northern army, he underwent all the hardships of the campaigns in Poland and Russia, but still he never lost his cheerfulness, for the thought of Mariette kept his heart warm, and even a Russian winter could not freeze him. All through that miserable retreat, he made the best of every thing. As long as he had a good tender piece of saddle, he did not want a dinner; and when he met with a comfortable dead horse to creep into, he found board and lodging combined. His courage and his powers of endurance called upon him, from the first, the eyes of one whose best quality was the impartiality of his recompense. François was rewarded as well as he could be rewarded; but at length, in one of those unfortunate battles by which Napoleon strove in vain to retrieve his fortunes, the young soldier, in the midst of his gallant daring, was desperately wounded in the arm. The star of Napoleon went down, and foreign armies trod the heart of France.

Pass we over the rest.--Mutilated, sick, weary, and ragged, François approached his native valley, and doubtful of his reception--for misery makes sad misanthropes--he sought the cottage of Madame Duval. The cottage was gone; and on inquiring for Madame Duval, he was directed to a fine farm-house by the banks of the stream. He thought there must be some mistake, but yet he dragged his heavy limbs thither, and knocked timidly against the door.

"Entrez!" cried the good-humoured voice of the old dame. François entered, and unbidden tottered to a chair. Madame Duval gazed on him for a moment, and then rushing to the stairs called loudly, "Come down, Marlette, come down, here is François returned!" Like lightning, Mariette darted down the stairs, saw the soldier's old great-coat, and flew towards it--stopped--gazed on his haggard face, and empty sleeve, and, gasping, fixed her eyes upon his countenance. 'Twas but for a moment she gazed on him thus in silence; but there was no forgetfulness, nor coldness, nor pride about her heart--there was sorrow, and joy, and love, and memory in her very glance.

"Oh François, François!" cried she, at length, casting her arms round his neck, "how thou hast suffered!" As she did so, the old great-coat fell back, and on his breast appeared the golden cross of the legion of honour. "*N'importe!*" cried she, as she saw it, "*Voilà ta récompense*." He pressed her fondly to his bosom. "My recompense is here," said he, "my recompense is here!"

THE PAINTINGS.

A painter must raise his ideas beyond what he sees, and form a model of perfection in his own mind, which is not to be found in reality, but yet such a one as is probable and rational.--RICHARDSON.

When I was a child, nothing pleased me so much as the woodcuts in Gay's fables, and my nurse could do any thing with me if she promised me a pretty picture. The taste has grown up with me, and I have as much difficulty in passing a printseller's window without looking in, as some people have in passing a book-stall. In returning from our ramble, we fell upon a shop of the kind; but that which most amused us was an engraving of the departure of Louis XVIII., on the return of Napoleon from Elba. In truth, there was little to be represented, except the good old king getting into his carriage in a great fright. But the object of the painter was to represent the sorrow of the people of Paris; and for this purpose he has drawn the two sentinels in tears, one hiding his eyes with his hand, and the other on his knees, not a little embarrassed with his musket, while a great many other tragic attitudes were expended in the background. Frenchmen in many of their undertakings seem striving to do better than nature, and, consequently, nine times out of ten they caricature what they attempt. Their most glaring efforts of this kind are in painting and engraving, and there they appear to have totally forgotten that the *beau ideal* does not consist in generating what nature never produced, but in assembling the most beautiful objects which naturally harmonize together.

Painting is one of the most purely imitative of the arts, and the utmost licence which its greatest masters have allowed it, is simply the power of choosing and combining what is pleasing to the eye, and rejecting all that can offend it. This, however, does not content the present school of painting in France. They must have something such as never was, and never will be, and in their colouring especially they have succeeded to a miracle.

David's naked Spartans are brilliant instances of how far art can go beyond nature; for

certainly never was any thing seen under heaven like the skins of those polished gentlemen. Take away the shields and helmets, and a very slight alteration would convert the three hundred arming for Thermopylæ, into Diana and her nymphs bathing; and even then they would be somewhat too pretty, for without doubt the goddess's hunting-parties, gave her a much more russet tint than David has thought proper to bestow upon the hardy warriors of Greece.

Perhaps the great corrector of all things, time, may deprive these pictures of their adventitious glare of colouring; but even then, though they may be admired for their fine bold outline, one violent defect can never be banished, the forced and extravagant attitudes of some of the principal figures. David had certainly a strange penchant for sans-culotteism; he never missed an opportunity of leaving his heroes without any apparel except a helmet, which sits rather preposterously on a naked man.

The grand and dignified simplicity of the ancient masters forms a most striking contrast with the laboured and overcharged productions of the present French school. A modern painter, certainly possessing very great talent, has attempted a picture of the deluge. He has crowded into it great many horrors, all very horrible; but the principal group will be sufficient. It consists of a family vainly endeavouring to escape from the surrounding destruction by climbing a rock in the foreground. The agonies of such a moment might have been expressed most touchingly, had the artist chosen to keep within the bounds of moderation: but no, he must out-herod Herod; and, consequently, he has contrived to make one of the most dreadful situations the human mind can conceive actually ludicrous.

The principal figure is that of a man, who, like pious Æneas, carries his father on his back, certainly not in the most elegant or picturesque attitude possible, while with one hand he pulls his wife up after him rather unceremoniously. The wife for her part suffers considerable inconvenience from a young gentleman behind, who, having a mortal aversion to being drowned, has got his mother fast hold by the hair, by means of which he almost pulls her head off her shoulders.

The whole family are certainly not very comfortably situated; and, in fact, the old gentleman who is riding on his son's shoulders is the only one at all at his ease, and he appears to have a very good seat, and not to care much about it. Yet I have heard this picture lauded to the skies both in France and England.

Poussin painted a picture on the same subject. It scarcely could be surpassed. The scene is a wild mountainous desert, which the ever-rising waters have nearly covered. The ark is seen floating in the distance, and a solitary flash of lightning, shown dimly through the thick rain, breaks across the lurid clouds in the background. Amongst the dull bleak rocks in front, a monstrous serpent winds its way slowly up, to avoid the growing waves. The sky lowers upon the earth, and the earth looks heavily back to the sky: all is wild, silent, and solemn; one awful gloom, and mighty desolation.

In every art but that of music, and perhaps even there in a degree, nature furnishes us with a standard by which to regulate our taste. In judging of what is most beautiful in nature herself, there may be many opinions; but that which is out of nature altogether must always be in bad taste. The same Being which formed every thing in this beautiful world formed equally our minds to enjoy and admire it. He made nature for man, and man for nature, with perfect harmony between his soul and all that surrounds it; and the least deviation from those forms, to which the great Artist restrained his work is discord to the human mind. Whenever we see any thing distorted from its original shape, or represented in circumstances in which it could not have been placed, without thinking, of why, our taste revolts as from something impossible and untrue.

With respect to engraving I can say but little, as I have no knowledge of the art; but it strikes me that in modern French prints, at least, there is hardness without force, and feebleness without softness; nor have I ever seen the beautiful roundness of flesh well represented.

A French, artist of some merit assured me, one morning, that the arts had now migrated from Italy to receive their highest degree of perfection in France. In that point, I believe, every other nation on the face of the earth will be found to differ from this favoured people.

But there is, however, one observation to be made, not only with respect to painting, but to all other arts. They are far more generally diffused in France than in England. The French have always conceived perfection in the arts to be a part of the national glory. Their king and statesmen have thought the encouragement of arts and sciences at home, to be as much a part of their duty, as the defence of their country in the field, or the maintenance of its interests in the cabinet; and the wise spirit which has actuated them of course has produced its result upon the minds of the people. The taste for what is beautiful--one great step to the taste for what is good--is general throughout France, and every one strives to gratify it in its degree. Amongst us it is the wealthy and the great alone, who have the inclination to seek, or the power to patronize, the arts; and paintings or statues are found almost solely in their collections. In France, every second person is taught to draw, whether he succeeds or not. Every little town has its gallery and museum; all the world are admitted to study if they like, and improve if they can; and the chimney-sweep and the peer stand side by side to criticise or admire.

THE LOVER'S LEAP.

Hei milli quod nullis amor est medicabilis herbis.

A walk through a strange town after dark possesses fully as much interest as a walk in the day-time, if it be but well timed and properly conducted. There is a pleasure in the very act of exploring, which can never be so fully enjoyed as when we find our way through any unknown place half hidden in the obscurity of night. But it is necessary that it should not be all darkness. We should choose our time when the greater part of the people have shaken off the load of cares which weigh them down in the light, and when national character walks forth freed from the bonds of daily drudgery: yet it should be long before man has extinguished his mimicry of heaven's best gift, and whilst most of the shops are lighted up, shining out like diamonds in the gloom around.

I had been preaching this doctrine to my friend after dinner, till I fairly persuaded him to turn theory into practice, and try a night ramble in the town of Dieppe; though our landlord, Monsieur Petit, who, looking upon us as true Englishmen, doubtless counted upon our drinking another bottle if we stayed at home, informed us that there was absolutely *nothing* to be seen in Dieppe, for that the *theatre* was closed.

However, forth we sallied, like the Knight of La Mancha and his Squire, in quest of adventures. At first we tumbled over some posts, and then hid nearly fallen into the basin; but after this we found our way into some of the principal streets, which were all filled with a sauntering do-nothing crowd, and ringing with the idle merry laugh which always springs from the careless heart of a Frenchman as soon as he is free from labour or pain. There is no medium with him; merriment or melancholy, and as much of the first with as little of the last as Heaven chooses to send.

At the bottom of one of the streets was a low Gothic archway, with a swinging door, which we saw move backwards and forwards to admit several persons of a more serious demeanour than the rest. After considering whether it was love or religion made them look so grave, we concluded that it was the latter, and determined to attempt, in person, the adventure of the swinging door, which soon admitted us into a long high aisle. All was darkness except, where, at the further extremity, appeared an illuminated shrine, from which sundry rays found their way down the far obscurity of the church, catching, more and more faintly, as they came upon the tall columns and the groins of the arches, and throwing out the dark figures of the devotees who knelt before the altar. The side aisles and more remote parts of the building were scarcely at all affected by the light; but passing up in the shadow of the arches to the right, we came suddenly upon a young couple engaged in earnest conversation. Probably two of the many whose open communion is barred by the hand of circumstance, and who had chosen that spot to tell the feelings they were forced elsewhere to hide.

The facility which the ceremonies of the Roman Catholic religion lend to intrigue, requires no comment. But too often the ever-open churches on the Continent are made a place of rendezvous; frequently with thoughts which such a sacred spot should scare, but often also for more pardonable purposes.

I remember a circumstance of the kind which happened under my own eyes; but ere I begin to tell it or any other story, let me premise that, as most of my tales are true tales, and as many of the people who figure in them are still acting their part upon life's busy stage, I must bargain for one concealment throughout, and take care not to give the name of the particular person who played this or that part on this or that occasion. Indeed, most frequently, I shall not even put down, with any degree of accuracy, the name of the town or place in which the various events occurred, for this very simple reason; that, making no pretensions to novelty or invention, and all that I relate being simple matter of fact, well known in the place where it occurred, the anecdotes I relate would be easily attached to those who were the principal actors therein.

Under this discreet view of the case, then, the distinctive appellation of the town, city, or burgh, in which the following circumstances occurred, shall be as tightly sealed up in silent secrecy as a bottle of Hervey's sauce, Ball's patent mustard, or any other savoury thing which it is difficult to open. However, though I do not give the name, I may at least give the description, which, indeed, is necessary to the right understanding of my story.

In a part of France, not a hundred miles from the fine port of St. Malo, stands a town containing some eight thousand inhabitants; anciently a fortified place of considerable strength. It is pitched on the pinnacle of a high hill, with its antique battlements, covered with time's livery, the green ivy and the yellow lichen, still frowning over the peaceful valleys around, and crowning the rocky ridge which confines the river Rance. That valley of the Rance is as lovely as any in Europe; now spreading out for miles, it offers a wide basin for the river, which, extending in proportion; looks like a broad lake; now contracting to a narrow gorge, it confines the stream between gigantic rocks that rise abruptly from its edge, and sombre woods that dip their very branches in its waters. But it is where the town, which I have just mentioned, first bursts upon

the sight, that the scenery is peculiarly picturesque. Winding through a deep defile of rocks, which cut off the neighbouring view and throw a dark shadow over the river, the stream suddenly turns a projecting point of its shores, and a landscape of unequalled beauty opens on the sight. Rich wooded valleys, with soft green slopy sides, broken with crags, and diversified with hamlets, are seen diverging in every direction, with the Rance winding forward in the midst of them; while high in air, lording it over all around, rises the stately rock on which the town is placed, with wall and battlement and tower hanging over its extreme verge. In front, and apparently immediately under the town, though in reality at about two miles distant from it, lies a high craggy piece of ground, which the water would completely encircle were it not for a narrow sort of isthmus which joins it to its parent chain of hills. This is called the *Courbúre*, from the turn which the river makes round it; and I notice it more particularly from being the exact scene of my story's catastrophe.

In the town which I have above described, lived, sometime ago, a very pretty girl, whom I shall designate by the name of Laure. Her mother was well to do in the world; that is to say, as things go in Brittany, where people can live splendidly for nothing at all, and do very well for half as much. However, *Madame* could always have her *pot au feu* and her *poulet à la broche*, kept two nice country lasses, one as cook and the other as *fille de chamber*, and had once a-year the new fashions from Paris to demonstrate her gentility. Laure's father, too, had left the young lady a little property of her own, amounting to about eighty pounds per annum; so that, being both a fortune and a belle, all the youth of the place, according to the old Scotch song, were

> Wooing at her,
> Pu'ing at her,
> Wanting her but could nae get her.

However, there was something about Laure which some called pride, and others coldness; but which, in truth, was nothing more nor less than shyness, that served for some time as a complete safeguard to her maiden heart. At length the angel, who arranges all those sort of things, singled out a young man at Rennes, called Charles ---- and gave him a kick with his foot, which sent him all the way from Rennes to the town in which Laure abode. It is but thirty miles, and angels can kick much farther, if we may believe the Normans. (I cannot stop for it now; but some other time, when the reader is in the mood, I may relate that Breton story of Saint Michael and the Fiend, and you shall hear how the saint kicked him from hill to hill for forty leagues or more.)

However, Charles's aunt lived not far from Laure's mother, and many a time had she vaunted the graces of her nephew's person. According to her account he was as tall and as straight as a gas-lamp-post, as rosy as a Ribston pippin; with eyes as brilliant as a red-hot poker, teeth as white as the inside of a turnip, and his hair curling like the leaves of a Savoy cabbage; in short, he was an Adonis, after her idea of the thing: and Laure, having heard all this, began to feel a sort of anxious palpitating sort of sensation when his coming was talked of, together with sundry other symptoms of wishing very much to fall in love.

At length his arrival was announced, and Madame ---- and Mademoiselle Laure were invited to a *soirée* at the house of Charles's aunt. Laure got ready in a very great hurry, resolving, *primo*, to be frightened out of her wits at him; and, *secondo*, not to speak a word to him. However, the time came, and when she got into the room, she found Monsieur Charles quite as handsome as his aunt had represented: but, to her great surprise, she found him to be quite as timid as herself into the bargain. So Laure took courage upon the strength of his bashfulness; for though it might be very well for *one*, she saw plainly it would never do for *two*. The evening passed off gaily, and Laure, as she had determined from the first, went away over head and ears in love, and left the poor young man in quite as uncomfortable a condition.

I need not conduct the reader through all the turnings and windings of their passion. Suffice it to say, that both being very active, and loving each other very hard, they had got on so far in six weeks, that their friends judged it would be necessary to marry them. Upon this Laure's mother and Charles's aunt met in form to discuss preliminaries. They began a few compliments, went on to arrange the money matters, proceeded to differ upon some trivial points, grew a little warm upon the subject, turned up their noses at each other, quarrelled like Turks, and abused each other like pickpockets. Charles's aunt called Laure's mother an old cat, or something equivalent! and Laure's mother vowed that Charles should never have her daughter, "she'd be hanged if he should!"

The two young people were in despair. Laure received a maternal injunction never to speak to that vile young man again: together with a threat of being locked up if she were restive. However, the Sunday after Pâques, Laure's mother was laid up with a bad cold, and from what cause does not appear, but Laure never felt so devout as on that particular day. She would not have staid away from mass for all the world. So to church she went, when, to her surprise and astonishment, she beheld Charles standing in the little chapel of the left aisle. "Laure," said he, as soon as he saw her, "ma chère Laure, let us get out of the town by the back street, and take a walk in the fields."

Laure felt a good deal too much agitated to say her prayers properly, and, looking about the church, she perceived that, as she had come half an hour before the time, there was nobody

there, so slipping her arm through that of her lover, she tripped nimbly along with him down the back street, under the Gothic arch and high towers of the old town gate, and in five minutes was walking with him in the fields unobserved.

Now what a long sad pastoral dialogue could one produce between Laure and Charles as they walked along, setting forth, in the language of Florian, and almost in the language of Estelle, the poetical sorrows of disappointed love. It would be too long, however; and the summary of the matter is, that they determined that they were very unhappy--the most miserable people in existence--now that they were separated from each other, there was nothing left in life worth living for. So Laure began to cry, and Charles vowed he would drown himself. Laure thought it was a very good idea, and declared that she would drown herself too. For she had been reading all Saturday a German romance, which taught such things; and she thought what a delightful tale it would make, if she and Charles drowned themselves together; and how all the young ladies would cry when they read it, and what a pretty tomb they would have, with "Ci gissent Charles et Laure, deux amans malheureux!" written upon it in large black letters; and, in short, she arranged it all so comfortably in her own mind, that she resolved she would not wait a minute.

As ill luck would have it, they had just arrived at that rocky point which I have before described, called the *Courbúre*, when Charles and Laure had worked each other up to the necessary pitch of excitement and despair. The water was before them, and the only question was, who should jump in first, for the little landing-place from which they were to leap would hold but one at a time. Charles declared that he would set the example. Laure vowed it should be no one but herself: Charles insisted, but Laure, being nearest the water, gained the contested point and plunged over.

At that moment the thought of what he was going to do came over Charles's mind with a sad qualm of conscience, and he paused for an instant on the brink. But what could he do? He could not stand by and see the girl he loved drowned before his face, like an intruding rat or a supernumerary kitten. Forbid it heaven! Forbid it love! So in he went too--not at all with the intention of drowning himself, but with that of bringing Laure out; and, being a tolerable swimmer he got hold of her in a minute.

By this time Laure had discovered that drowning was both cold and wet, and by no means so agreeable as she had anticipated, so that when Charles approached, she caught such a firm hold of him as to deprive him of the power of saving her. It is probable that under these circumstances, her very decided efforts to demonstrate her change of opinion might have effected her original intention, and drowned them both, had not a boat come round the *Courbure* at that very moment. The boatman soon extricated them from their danger, and carried them both hone, exhausted and dripping, to the house of Laure's mother. At first the good lady was terrified out of her wits, and then furiously angry; but ended, however, by declaring, that if ever they drowned themselves again, it should not be for love, and so she married them out of hand.

THE CHÂTEAU.

A naked subject to the weeping clouds,
And waste for churlish Winter's tyranny.--KING HENRY IV. *Second Part*.

We intended to proceed on our journey the following morning, but our valet-de-place, who had a longing for more five-franc pieces, put in the claims of the old château of Arques, and we went to visit it next day.

I am fond of ruins and old buildings in general, not alone for their picturesque beauty, but for the various trains of thought they excite in the mind. Every ruin has its thousand histories; and could the walls but speak, what tales would they not tell of those antique times to which age has given an airy interest, like the misty softness with which distance robes every far object.

No one ought to pass by Dieppe, without visiting the old castle and town of Arques. It is but a short ride, and the road is far from uninteresting. The fields are rich, highly cultivated, and decked with a thousand flowers, and at some distance before reaching Arques, the ruin is seen on the height above, standing in the solitary pride of desolation.

A ruin ought always to be separate from other buildings. Its beauties are not those which gain by contrast. The proximity of human habitations takes from its grandeur. It seems as if it leant on them for support in its age. But when it stands by itself in silence and in solitude, there is a dignity in its loneliness, and a majesty even in its decay.

Passing through Arques, the château is at some distance, on the height which domineers the

town. The hand of man has injured it more than that of time. Many of the peasants' houses are built of the stone which once formed its walls; and the government has, on more than one occasion, sanctioned this gradual sort of destruction.

What remains of it has, I believe, been either sold or granted to some one in the town: but, however, a gate has been placed, and some other precautions taken to prevent its further dilapidation.

A pale interesting boy, with large blue Norman eyes, brought the keys and admitted us within the outer walls; but a weak castellan for those gates which once resisted armies! for in truth he could scarcely push them open. A few more years, and the château d'Arques will be nothing. It, is, however, still an interesting sight, and so many remembrances hang by it, that one is forced to dream. Memory is like the ivy which clothes the old ruin with a verdure not its own.

The county of Talou, of which Arques was the capital, was given by William the Conqueror to his uncle, in order to attach him more sincerely to the crown, but the gift had not that effect. Revolt against his benefactor was the first project that entered into his head, and he built the castle of Arques, in order to fortify himself in his new possessions. There he for some time resisted the forces of the king, and yielded not until his troops were little better than skeletons with hunger and fatigue.

William revenged himself by clemency, and again loaded his ungrateful uncle with favours, wishing, as his historians say, rather to attach him by benefits, than to pursue him as a rebel.

It was here also that the faithful Helie de Saint Saen resisted the endeavours of Henry I. to carry off the young heir of Normandy, and from hence he fled with his protégé, demanding from the neighbouring powers assistance for the child of his dead benefactor.

During the various wars of England and France, sieges and battles innumerable passed by the château d'Arques, like waves beating against a rock. But the last most splendid deed it looked on before its ruin, was the defeat of the armies of the Ligue by Henry IV. of France, the last chevalier. In the life, in the words, in the actions, even in the faults of Henry IV., there is the grand generosity of a bright and ardent spirit, that mingling of great and amiable qualities which excites interest as well as admiration.

The Ligueurs were ten to one, but; as he said, he had God and his good right, and he conquered. The same free spirit that bore him through the battle dictated the manner in which he announced it to his friend in the well-known words: "Pends toi, brave Crillon, nous avons combattu à Arques; et tu n'y étais pas!" Had he written pages he could not have expressed half so much!

One of those same happy speeches of Henry IV. would appear to have been dexterously borrowed by an Italian poet. In those days of peril, when no regal distance could exist between the king and his subjects, Bassompierre's bed lay next to that of the monarch, and Aubigny's next to him--and both fancied that Henry slept. "Our master is ungrateful," said Bassompierre; "he casts all good things at the feet of the Ligueurs, and we, who have served him with our fortunes and our blood, are in absolute want."

"What say ye, there?" cried the king. "Do you not know that I am obliged to *buy* these Ligueurs? but you are my own."

"Pardon, pardon, Sire!" exclaimed Bassompierre, alarmed for the effects of his indiscretion.

"Parle donc! parle donc!" replied Henry. "Le roi dort, c'est un ami qui t'écoute."

Very nearly the same idea is expressed by Metastasio, in the Clemenza di Tito--

> *Tito*-- Odimi! O Sesto!
> Siam soli i. Il tuo Sovrano,
> Non è presente. Apri il tuo core a Tito,
> Confedati all' amico. Io ti prometto,
> Che Augusto nol saprâ.

It is possible, however, that Metastasio never thought of Henry IV. when he made Titus speak thus; add, even if he did, the idea was well adapted, for both in the character of Henry and that of Sully, there is an antique simplicity which seems essential to grandeur of mind. I know not how it is, but one naturally looks upon Sully as a Roman. He too fought at Arques by the side of his master; and it is impossible to gaze over the plain without feeling that it is a place where great deeds might be well performed.

From the edge of the hill, about a hundred yards from the château, is seen the whole field of battle. It is a beautiful scene, with the wide plain, below, and the river meandering through it; the heights of St. Étienne, beyond, and the valley narrowing towards Dieppe. On the other hand rises a high woody hill, with a road winding down to the town, and the ruins of the castle standing solitary in the midst.

It was at a beautiful time, too, that I saw it. One of those bright autumn days when the clouds, and the sunshine, and the blue sky seem all interwoven together. A heavy black storm came sweeping upon the wind, and for a minute or two involved every thing in mist and in darkness, and then passed away, leaving behind a rich rainbow, and nature more beautiful for her tears, and the sun shining out on the gray ruin, seeming to smile at the decay of man's fabrics, while the works of Heaven remain unchanged and ever new.

LA GALETTE.

Hunger, that most domineering of all tyrants, took advantage of our ramble to bully us sadly; and though we had not neglected to satisfy his morning demands, before we set out from Dieppe, he contrived to force us into a dirty little cottage at Arques, which the people called "l'Auberge!" It was the strangest combination of kitchen, and pig-sty, and hen-roost, that ever I saw.

Cooking and cackling and grunting were all going on at once when we arrived, and some of the joint produce was offered for our luncheon, in form of a dish of eggs and onions, swimming together in lard. The people of the house seemed to consider this mess as the acme of cookery; but in spite of sundry epithets bestowed upon it, such as *charmant*, *délicieux*, etc., we had bad taste enough to prefer some plain boiled eggs, whose friendly shells had kept them from all contamination.

I suppose that particular dishes become as it were national property, because they are so nasty that no one can eat them, except those who are brought up to it; but certainly when our mouths have been seasoned to any of these national messes in our youth, every thing else seems flat, stale, and unprofitable. They are so intimately combined with all our early recollections, that, in after years, they form no small link in that bright chain of memory which binds our affection so strongly to the days of our infancy.

It is all very bathotic and gross, I know; but, nevertheless, salt salmon and peas to a Fleming, gruyere to a Swiss, or barley broth and oatmeal porridge to a Scot, will do more to call up old and sweet remembrances of home and happiness, and early days, than the most elaborate description. But all this is nothing to the power which a *galette* has morally and physically upon a native of Brittany.

I do not mean to speak any thing profanely, but had Eve been a Bretonne, Satan might have offered her an apple to all eternity. She would not have said *thank you* for it. Nay, had it been a whole apple-pie, she would but have turned up her nose, and we might all have been in Paradise up to this present one thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven. He might have prated about knowledge too, as long as he liked; it would not have made any difference, for the Bretonnes have seen no bluestockings since Madame de Sévigné's time, and I never could find ten of them that knew the difference between London and Pekin, or that wished to know it. But if the tempter had offered her a *galette*, good bye Paradise! She could never have withstood it. She would but have bargained for a little milk, and a piece of butter, and gone out as quietly as my fire is doing at this moment.

But it may be necessary to explain what sort of a thing a *galette* is; the receipt is as follows:

Take a pint of milk or a pint of water, as the case may be, put it into a dirty earthen pan, which has never been washed out since it was made; add a handful of oatmeal, and stir the whole round with your hand, pouring in meal till it be of the consistency of hog-wash. Let the mess stand till next morning, then pour it out as you would do a pancake upon a flat plate of heated iron, called a *galettier*; ascertain that it be not too hot, by any process you may think fit. In Brittany they spit upon it. This, being placed over a smoky wood fire, will produce a sort of tough cake called a *galette*, which nothing but a Breton or an ostrich can digest.

In this consists the happiness of a Breton, and all his ideas somehow turn upon this. If you ask a labouring man where he is going, he answers, "Manger de la galette;" If it rains after a drought, they tell you, "Il pleut de la galette;" and the height of hospitality is to ask you in "pour manger de la galette."

I remember a curious exemplification of what I have said above, which occurred to, me, during a former residence in Brittany. All orders of monks, except that of La Trappe, having been long abolished in France, it is very rare ever to meet with any, except when some solitary old devotee is seen crossing the country upon a pilgrimage, and then he is always distinguished by the "cockle hat and staff," under which insignia he passes unquestioned; being considered *in bond*, as mercantile folks would say. However, as I was passing one day through Evran, I was surprised to see a regular Capuchin, walking leisurely through the streets without any symptoms of pilgrimage about him. He was a very reverend-looking personage, clad in his long dark robes, with his cowl thrown back upon, his shoulders, and his high forehead and bald head meeting the sun unshrinkingly, as an old friend whom they had been accustomed to encounter every day for

many a year. His long beard was as white as snow, and a single lock of hair on his forehead marking where the tonsure had ended, made him look like an old Father Time turned Capuchin.

He was a native of Brittany, I learnt, and had quitted his convent during the revolution; not, indeed; with any intention of breaking the vow he had taken, or of abandoning the mode of life he had chosen: but it was in order to seek an asylum in some foreign country for himself and his expelled brethren. This he found in Italy, and now, after a thirty years' absence, he had returned under a regular passport to sojourn for a while in his own land.

The motives for such a man's return puzzled me not a little. The ties between him, and the world were broken. Memory and early affections, I thought, could but have small hold on him: or was it because the past was so contrasted with the present, that it had become still dearer to remembrance?

It was not long before I found means to introduce myself to him, and discovered him to be both an amiable and intelligent man. After some conversation, my curiosity soon led me to the point. "It is a long way to travel hither from Italy, father," said I, "and on foot."

"I have made longer journeys, and for a less object," replied he.

"True," I went on, "this is your native land, and whither will not the love of our country lead us."

The Capuchin smiled. "I did not come for that," said he.

"Probably you had relations or friends whom you remembered with affection," I added; my curiosity more excited than ever.

"None that I know of," replied the monk.

"You think me very inquisitive," said I.

"Not in the least," he answered; "I am very willing to satisfy you."

"Then let me ask you," I continued, "if you came hither for some great religious object."

"Alas! no, my son," he replied. "You give me credit for more zeal or more influence than I possess."

"Yet, surely, you had some motive for coming all this way on foot," said I, putting it half as a question, half as an established position.

"Oh, certainly," he replied, "I had a motive for my journey, and one that is all-sufficient to a native of Brittany. But it was not from any great religious or any great political motive; nor was it either to see my country, my family, or my friends."

"Then for what, in the name of heaven, did you come?" exclaimed I.

"Pour manger de la galette," replied the monk.

ENGLISH TRAVELLERS ON THE CONTINENT.

C[oe]lum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt.--HORACE.

It was late ere we returned to Dieppe, and we were sauntering quietly up stairs towards our own apartments, when a waiter, carrying in a portion of the evening meal to some guests in the public room, showed just sufficient of the well-lighted *salon*, to tempt us in. On entering we learned that the table d'hôte supper was over, but we found seated at the hospitable board of Monsieur Petit, who never suffered any one to go away empty who was inclined to eat, an English traveller, who, like ourselves, had arrived too late. A man who wishes to make any thing of travelling ought to put all his prejudices in the lumber-room before he sets out, and if he finds them musty when he comes back, so much the better. On the road they are the most inconvenient part of his baggage, never useful, and always in the way. There are few people who adhere to their prejudices more strongly than the English. We are insular in more than geographical situation, and amongst the multitude of our countrymen, with the multitude of their feelings, character, and pursuits, one out of a thousand is not to be met with on the continent, who is not just as prejudiced as when he set out--perhaps more so, for finding a strong confirmation of many of his pre-conceived ideas, he takes it as a confirmation of *all*, and intrenches himself the more firmly in his original opinions.

It may seem like heresy to say it, but, after having visited many countries, I am still inclined to think that France in its various parts, notwithstanding its proximity to our own country, retains more points of interest, more of the *couleur locale*, than any other land. But an Englishman, who travels to see France and French people, ought always to dine at the table d'hôte, wherever he finds one. The higher classes of all nations are too nearly alike to offer any very striking points of difference to a casual observer, for the general principle of all is to conceal what they feel and what they think, at least in public; but the mixture of a table d'hôte affords almost always something worth studying. It is in such circumstances that we find the most legible pages in the book of human nature. The classes of Englishmen travelling in France are somewhat altered since Sterne's time. The economical traveller is not so simple as he was then: there are also travellers who go for luxury; there are travellers for novelty; there are travellers for information; and there are travellers who journey forth into the world from the mere necessity of locomotion. These last are very numerous amongst the English. One of this class, finding the disease coming on violently, builds himself a low carriage, with very substantial wheels, and plenty of room for his feet. He furnishes it with all the peculiar luxuries of London, strews the left-hand seat with novels, and, placing himself in the interior, with his servant behind, draws up the windows, and fancies he is travelling through Europe. The profound meditations which he enjoys in the inside of his painted box are seldom if ever interrupted, except when the carriage stops, and he asks, "John, where am I?" The servant holds open the door, touches his hat, and replies, "At Rome, sir!" and the traveller, yawning, walks into the inn.

There are several varieties of this class merging into others. One morning a party of them came into the aisle, when I was in the cathedral at Rouen (a very beautiful specimen of Gothic building, let criticism say what it will). The only attention they gave it was one vacant stare, which wandered heedlessly over the rich ornaments and the most magnificent combination of arches that architecture can produce--swore it was *fine*, *very fine*, and walked out. I asked the valet-de-place who accompanied us, how long English travellers staid in general, when they visited the cathedral. He said, "About five minutes; but if they staid longer at all, they generally made it nearly as long as we had been."

I am not particularly given to cathedral hunting, nor am I fond of what Forsyth calls "picking the bare bone of antiquity," but when I meet with any thing either beautiful in itself, or which awakens in my mind a pleasing train of ideas, I am apt to give it more than five minutes.

At ---- I met with another traveller, still more decidedly locomotive. He was a very gentlemanly young man, and I think might have been something better, but habit had given his mind a sad twist. I asked him what he thought of the Pyrenees, from whence he had just arrived. He replied that "the roads were very fine;" he had gone nine miles an hour up and down hill. I inquired if he had been at Bagnères de Luchon. "Oh, yes," answered he, "I rode there from Bagnères de Bigorre in six hours." Such seemed to have been the amount of his observations on one of the most beautiful countries of Europe. He was travelling against time.

Many who travel for health, without the command of a very large fortune, lose, I am convinced, as much by the want of those comforts they are accustomed to at home, as they gain by change of air. However, I am equally certain that the mind has far greater power over the body than we generally imagine; and that the mere rapid change of scene and incident acts as powerfully as any medicine in the Pharmacop[oe]ia.

Those who come abroad for economy may certainly now find it either in France or Germany. In almost all parts of Italy they will find themselves deceived. There is one thing, however, to be observed, which is, that English people on the continent do not save by the cheapness of the country only, but they economize by living as foreigners do.

There is another class of travellers who come abroad to procure greater luxuries than they can in England on the same income. I should be sorry to censure a large portion of my countrymen, but I think that those are scarcely excusable, who have neither curiosity nor desire of information, nor limited means, nor ill-health to plead, but who, with sufficient to maintain their rank in society at home, habitually spend their fortune in a foreign country. Their virtue at all events is not patriotism.

DIEPPE--THE EVENING.

> Certes he was a most engaging wight,
> Of social glee and wit humane tho' keen,
> Turning the night to day and day to night.
>
> CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

The traveller we met at Dieppe could be included in none of the classes I have just mentioned.

He was a young officer of artillery returning from the Ionian Isles. He had travelled much in Italy and Greece, had a great deal of information, was willing to communicate it, and communicated it well.

I feel myself under a debt to every one who gives me an agreeable half-hour; and certainly the evening we spent in his society left a very pleasant impression behind it. For the first few days after we have quitted our native land, we feel a certain degree of loneliness, which makes us creep closer to any stray countryman we may happen to meet, than our national reserve would permit us to do under any other circumstance. On our part, therefore, there was no backwardness, and our young officer had been travelling so long, that I dare say he never remembered what the word *stranger* meant. In a foreign country, knowing no one, we were thrown upon each other for amusement, and we were not long in finding it. Each told his anecdote and his tale. We peopled the little salon at Dieppe with characters from every quarter of the globe. We forgot the place, and the time, and more than one hour had waned after midnight before we retired to rest.

Much of what passed is gone from my recollection, but, amongst other questions, I remember asking what was the state of a college which had been founded in a distant country, by a noble countryman of ours?

"The matter," replied he, "is rather oddly ordered at present, for you must know that, when I saw it, there were eleven professors and three scholars; but the most singular part of the whole is, that the professor of theology is a reputed atheist, and the professor of languages stutters so as to be unintelligible in any. We went from anecdotes to tales, and one which he said he had heard while crossing the country from Marseilles towards ---- made an impression on my mind that will not easily be effaced. He called it"

THE STORY OF THE BEAUTY OF ARLES.

Ah chi mi taglie la mia pace antica,
E Amore? Io nol distinguo, Alcun mel' dica.--METASTASIO.

With a frame of iron, a strong fixed mind, and a dauntless determined spirit, Armand Villars went forth into the world, seemingly well calculated to sustain its sorrows, and to repel its dangers. There was a likeness in his mind and person; the beauty of his countenance was of that stern grave cast which suited his character, and his form was of the same powerful nature as his spirit.

In youth he was unlike the rest. It was not that his mind was brighter, but it was that it never bent: and the very energy of his calmness gave him command amongst his companions, if companions they may be called, for there is little companionship where there is no similarity. Yet still they courted him to be amongst them, and might have taught him to fancy himself above the common level of his kind, but Villars was proud, not vain. A vain man acts for others, a proud man for himself. And Villars thought of his own opinion, scarcely dreaming that others would judge of him at all.

It was remarked of him, even as a boy, that his passions were difficult to move; but that, like a rock hanging on a mountain's brow, their tranquillity once disturbed, they carried all before them in their course; and years, as they passed over his head, by teaching him greater endurance, rendered his anger, when excited, but the more dangerous. It was not like the quick flash of the lightning, hasty and vehement, but as short-lived as it is bright; but it was that calm, considerate, sweeping vengeance, which, like the snow that gathers silently on the edge of the precipice, descends to overwhelm all that is beneath.

He was unrelenting too, for he never dreamed that mercy might be combined with justice. He would never have pleaded for himself, and he could not be expected to feel for others.

His youth passed away as the flowing of some undiscovered river, whose strange waters are never fretted by the barks of far-exploring man. He knew nothing of any world but the world of his own mind; and his only commune was with his own feelings, which were as things apart.

And yet there was a bitterness in standing thus alone. There was a pain even in, the solitude of his own thoughts: and he strove to assimilate them to something which at least *had been*. He was fond to pore over the records of ancient virtue, and the history of those firm inflexible beings, who rooted out from their bosom all the soft verdure of the heart's kinder feelings, and raised in its place a cold shrine to unrelenting justice. Here only he seemed to have imagination: and here would he ponder and dream, till he wondered that such a state of things did not still exist. He would fain have thought that virtues like these contained within themselves the principles of immortality.

He forgot that historians, even when they do not augment the worth of what they relate, to

render it the more worthy of relation, do not seek to commemorate what is petty. So that the *few great actions* alone are recorded, while the multitude of meannesses are forgotten. Like the fabled eagle, that is fond to gaze upon the sun, he fixed his eyes alone on what was bright. He would ask himself, Why might not France produce a Brutus or a Cato? Was the soul of man degenerate? Had it lost that power which sustained it in the inspiring days of ancient glory? No! He felt the same spirit stirring within *his* bosom, and he resolved that he, at least, would live a Roman.

Such were the aspirations of his youth; but they were mixed with little of that wild warm glow which animates the enthusiast. His feelings, like the waters of a deep mountain-lake, were calm and cold, though they were clear and profound. When he did feel, he felt strongly; but the lighter things of the world passed him by as if they had not been.

In the same old ill-fashioned town of Arles, which gave birth to Armand Villars, lived another youth, somewhat elder in point of years, but far younger in character. We will call him Durand. He was one out of the many--a gay, brave, thoughtless boy, with a touch of pride, a good deal of vanity, and an infinity of good-nature. He was one of those pieces of unmoulded clay, which the world forms and hardens. He might have been any thing; but in that same school of the world, he that at first may be any thing generally, at last, learns to be bad. I have said he was thoughtless; but he was by no means without talents, and those which he had were suited to his character. He was penetrating, but not profound; he was active but not industrious; he had more quickness than wit; more imagination than judgment.

As we generally over-estimate that which we do not possess, we are inclined to admire qualities opposite to our own. Durand had early fallen into society with Armand Villars. Habit did much to unite them, but the very difference of their minds did more; and dissimilar tastes often led them to the same pursuits.

They would wander together through all the remains of antiquity, with which the neighbourhood of Arles is enriched. Sometimes they would linger for hours in the *Champs Élysées*, poring over the tombs and sarcophagi: sometimes they would, stray near St. Jean, along the banks of the Rhone, trying to trace out the ancient palace of Constantine; and sometimes they would stand and gaze upon the river itself, and almost worship it, as it rolled on in proud magnificence towards the ocean.

But still the objects which led them, and the combinations produced in the mind Of each, were very very different. Durand did not look upon the Rhone merely as an object of picturesque beauty. He loved it as a mountaineer loves his mountains: he loved it with that instinctive affection which we feel towards all objects associated with the earlier and brighter hours of our existence, connected with the first expansion of our feelings, and commingled with all our youngest ideas. The grand and the great, in nature, are always matter for remembrance. They are the landmarks in the waste of years, that guide our memory back to every thing that is pleasing in the past.

The scene where it happened is still intimately mixed with every circumstance of happiness, and we love the spot, even when the pleasure has passed away. The Rhone was the grandest object connected with any of his infant recollections, and as such he loved it, without any further combination, or any endeavour to know why.

Villars would not have been satisfied to feel, without knowing why he felt. The Rhone was nothing to him, without its name in history; but it recalled to him the days of Cæsar, and every struggle the ancient Gauls made for the independence of their country: and there was a feeling of pride mixed with the remembrance, which seemed, in a degree, to transfer itself to the object that excited it; and he became almost proud of the Rhone, because he admired the deeds which its banks had witnessed.

It is a country fertile in ruins. It seems as if time had taken a barbarous pleasure in leaving there the wreck of mighty works as trophies of his all-destroying power; and in wandering amidst them, Durand would mark the elegance of the capital, or the fair proportion of the architrave which had once adorned some palace or some temple, whose lord and his parasites, whose idol and its worshippers, had long been forgotten in the silence of things that are no more; and he would point out the beauties to his companion who, for his part, would carry his thoughts back to the days of Rome; to the mind, whose energy had conceived, and to the men, whose labour had perfected, those giant fabrics that shame the pigmy efforts of our later times; and while Durand would laughingly contend, that the Romans were neither braver; wiser, nor better than the race of modern men, Villars would exclaim against the degeneracy of mankind, and grieve that he had not lived in those days of glory and of liberty.

They were at that period of life when passion is strongest, and imagination most vivid, and when judgment; like a young monarch, forgets his painful duties and leaves his throne vacant, while he wanders amongst the pleasures and diversions of his new estate. They were at this period of life, when the revolution began to throw a new and too strong light upon the world. In the enthusiasm of republican spirit, the revival of ancient institutions, and all the brilliant fantasies which rapidly succeeded each other, many of the wisest and the best got bewildered; nor was Durand one of the last to adore this phantasmagoria of antique forms. *His course* is soon told. He quitted his native city; but before he went he embraced Villars with all the ardour of his

new sect. He called him "*citizen*" and "*brother*," he vowed that their friendship should be everlasting.

He joined the army formed for the defence of the republic. His talents, his daring courage, and some of those accidental circumstances of fortune which decide not only the fate of men but of empires, combined to raise him above his compeers. His mind readily embraced every thing that was brilliant. He was naturally witty, and shrewdly perceiving that a jest would often pass where a reason would not, he raised up for himself a sort of philosophy which taught him to laugh at every thing, good or bad, and with this he passed safely and honourably through all the vicissitudes of a changing state, and found himself in the end even as he could have wished to have been--selfish, heartless, rich, respected, and in power.

The life of Armand Villars was different. For a while he looked upon the grand scene which was playing before him, and rejoiced at the revival of ancient virtues--for he hoped that it was so--but yet there was something in it that he distrusted. He looked for the great independence of soul, the generous self-devotion, the steady purpose of right, and the stern patriotism which sacrificed all private feeling to public good. He looked for Roman laws and Roman spirit, and he found but a wild chaos of idle names, and an empty mockery of ancient institutions; and, unwilling to yield the favourite illusion, he turned his eyes away.

It was then that every Frenchman was called to bleed for his country, and Villars willingly quitted the ungrateful scenes that were passing in France, to place himself in the ranks of her defenders. In the field as in the city, the same calm firm spirit still animated him. He fought as if life had for him no charms, nor death any terrors. But it was not the courage of romance. There was none of the headlong ardour of enthusiasm; there was none of the daring of thoughtless temerity; there was none of the reckless valour of despair. There was in his bosom alone the one fixed remembrance that he was doing his duty--that he was fighting for his country--together with that calm reasoning courage which knows danger and despises it.

He rose in command, but he rose slowly, and it was not till late in the campaign of Italy that he attained the rank of colonel. Italy was a land which had long been the theme of his thoughts. He was now there, amongst the ruins of that stupendous fabric, the record of whose ancient glory had been his admiration and delight. He was on the spot where Romans had dwelt, and he fought where Romans had bled; and if any thing like ardour ever entered into his nature, it was then. The habits, too, of his boyish days seemed here to resume their empire. He would wander, as he had done in youth, among the wreck of ages past, and indulge in long and deep meditations in the midst of empty palaces and neglected fanes. He would re-people them with the generations gone, and conjure up the great and wise of other days. The first and second Brutus seemed to rise before him--the men who had expelled a Tarquin, and had slain a Cæsar--he that had sacrificed his children, and he that had sacrificed his friend to his country. Virginius, too, and his daughter; and Manlius, and, in short, all the train of those whose deeds gave a splendour to the times in which they lived, and whose names history has for ever consecrated.

Italy teems with recollections of every kind: for courage, and wisdom, and power, and arts and sciences, and beauty, and music, and desolation, have all in turn made it their favourite dwelling-place; and though the train of thought which Villars followed was but of one description, there was matter enough for that; and he might have indulged it for ever, but that the more busy and Warlike occupation of the present gave him but little time to ponder over the past. Another fate too awaited him--a fate which he little dreamt of.

In a skirmish, which took place near Bologna, he was severely wounded, and carried to the house of an old Bolognese lady, whose rank was rather at variance with her fortune. For though she prized illustrious birth, as the purest and most permanent species of wealth, and perhaps valued it the more, inasmuch as it was the only sort of riches that remained to her, she nevertheless found it very difficult to make this refined treasure supply the place of that coarser material, gold; at least in the opinion of others, who obstinately continued to think, that rank must have fortune to support its pretensions, or else it is worse than nothing.

It is supposed, that sometimes their pertinacity almost persuaded her of this also: but as the old countess had not the one, she endeavoured to make the other do: and like a poor man, ostentatious of his last guinea, she contrived to render every one well aware of her rank and family. However, she was a kind-hearted woman, and though she would talk of her cousin the prince, and her nephew the duke, the poor and the sick would always share of what little she had, and when she had nothing else she would give them a tear.

She received the wounded soldier with all the kindness of her nature. It mattered not to her of what party or of what country he was. She was happy enough to have no politics, and as to country, the sick were always of her own. She received Colonel Villars, therefore, as her son--she nursed him herself--she did more, she made her daughter nurse him: and it never seemed to enter into the head of Beatrice, or her mother, or Villars, that there could be any thing dangerous in it to either. Yet Villars was handsome, strikingly handsome, and Beatrice was an Italian beauty, dark, and soft, and graceful; and it was not long before the touch of her small hand, as she fastened the bandages on his arm, made a thrill pass through the soldier's breast, which he did not understand. He fancied that Beatrice must have touched his wound, and yet her fingers went so softly, that they seemed to tremble lest they should press it too roughly. Still Villars attributed the strange thrill that passed across his bosom to that cause. "Or else what could it be?" he would

ask himself. And yet by some odd perversion of reasoning, Villars always preferred that Beatrice should fasten the bandages, rather than her mother; although the old countess went so dexterously to work, that she produced no thrill at all.

Such were his feelings. Now this was the first time that Villars had ever been tended by female hands. But though this was not the first time that Beatrice had given her aid to the wounded--for a long war and its consequent miseries, bringing many calls upon their kindness, and their hearts being naturally benevolent towards all mankind, the two ladies had learnt to act almost the part of dames of romance, and unblushing to assist to their utmost all those who needed it--though this, I say, was not the first time that Beatrice had lent her aid to the wounded, it was the first time that she had ever felt that anxiety for any one, which she now experienced towards Villars. The loss of blood had weakened him much. His heart was all the softer for it, and his manner more gentle; and Beatrice began to feel pity, and admiration, and love; especially when she perceived that the being so cold and stern to all others was softened towards her. But it went on in silence in her heart, and in that of Villars, till the assurance gradually crept upon him that he loved: and he wondered at his weakness, and then he asked himself, "was it possible that his affection could be returned?" and sometimes he would hope, and sometimes he would doubt, till his feelings became too painful for endurance; and he resolved that he would conquer the passion which unmanned him, and fly for ever from the object that excited it.

Women are taught to keep their affection, like a rare gem, hidden from all eyes in the casket of their heart; and it is not till, by some mishap, the key is lost or stolen, that man finds out what a treasure there is within. Beatrice heard Villars name the day of his departure without an apparent emotion. She saw that day approach, too, as calmly as she had heard it appointed. It is true, that her cheek grew a little paler, and that her eyes would often rest upon the ground; that in singing her voice would tremble, and that she did not seem so fond of music as she had been formerly. But she would laugh when any one called her thoughtful, and assured her mother that she had never been in better health.

Villars, as I have said, had made a firm resolution to depart; but, like most other resolutions in this changeable world, it was not destined to be kept. The day previous to that which he had fixed for his departure, the mother of Beatrice was struck with apoplexy, and in two hours after, the fair creature that he loved was an orphan, alone in the wide world, drooping in sorrow, and clinging to him for support in her affliction. Could he leave her? He never asked himself the question. He stayed, and after a time Beatrice became the bride of Armand Villars.

New feelings now began to spring up in his heart. The sweeter, gentler associations of existence now began to cling round him, and mellow the harshness of his character, like the green ivy twining round the rugged bark of the oak, and softening its rude majesty. Life took a new aspect. A brighter sun seemed to have risen over the world. He forgot the past, and in the delight of the present found a boundless store of anticipation for the future.

There are few whose fate has been so desolate, that one clear day has not, at some time, shone through and brightened their existence. Oh, it is like being in a boat upon a summer sea! Every circumstance of joy dances round us, like the ripple of the waves in the morning sun. Heaven seems to smile upon us like the clear blue sky, and the breath of time wafts us gently, but swiftly, on our course, while hope points onwards to the far faint line of the horizon, and tells us of a bright and golden shore beyond.

And who is there, that, when all seems sunshine, would look around him for a cloud?

Villars dreamed; but that dream of joy was soon to be broken. The tie which linked him to social being was soon to be rent. Beatrice died, and with her every gentler feeling of his bosom; and his heart became their sepulchre, never to be opened again.

Villars became old in an hour. There is no such thing as time. It is but space occupied by incident. It is the same to eternity as matter is to infinite space--a portion out of the immense, occupied by something within the sphere of mortal sense. We ought not to calculate our age by the passing of years, but by the passing of feelings and events. It is what we have done, and what we have suffered, makes us old.

Beatrice died, and the heart of her husband became as a thing of stone. To any other, perhaps, the daughter she had left him would have recalled, in a tenderer manner, the joys he had lost, and re-illumined the bright affections which her death had extinguished. There are some persons in whose bosom the necessity of affection seems placed by nature, never to be eradicated. But with Villars it was not so. He cursed the weakness which had enthralled his heart, and made it either a prey to love or sorrow; and he fortified himself against the assault of any mortal feeling. He would do his duty strictly, fully, towards his child; but that was all which he ever proposed to his own mind.

There was, indeed, one tribute he paid to the memory of Beatrice. She had loved music. Her mind had been attuned to all harmony; and she had delighted in all that was bright and sweet in every art which softens the asperities of human existence. And Villars resolved, he scarcely knew why, to give his daughter all her mother's accomplishments. It was like writing her epitaph on the heart of her child. This only seemed to show the least spark of feeling yet unextinguished in his breast; for there was now a degree of bitterness mixed with the original sternness of his

character. He looked upon the world with disappointed eyes, and gladly turned away from the view, for there was nothing but a desert round about him.

France no longer needed defenders. His duty to his country was done; and, quitting the army, he collected together his little property, and retired to dwell near his native town of Arles.

It was more probably chance than any taste for picturesque beauty, which directed him in the situation he chose for his future residence; but of all the neighbourhood it was the most lovely and the most retired. It was surrounded by wood, with the Rhone sparkling through the trees beyond, and the remains of an antique Roman arch crowning the hill above. The country was covered with olive-grounds and vineyards, and scattered with small villages: but there was not for a considerable distance round--indeed, nowhere near, except in the town of Arles--a house of any consequence, whose proximity might have disturbed the solitude of his retirement; and here, for fifteen years, lived Armand Villars, secluded from a world he despised, seeking no commune but with his own thoughts, and dividing his time between the cultivation of his ground, solitary study, and the education of the daughter which Beatrice had left him.

On their first arrival at their new dwelling, little Julie offered no particular promise of beauty. Her large, wild, Italian eyes, and the dark hair which clustered round her forehead, were all that could have saved her from being called a very plain child. But as years passed over her head, and she grew towards womanhood, a thousand latent charms sprang up in her face and person. Like a homely bud that blossoms into loveliness, her beauties expanded with time, and she became one of the fairest of nature's works.

Beauty can scarcely be well described. I know not how it is; whether imagination far exceeds nature, or whether remembrance is ever busy to recall what love once decked in adventitious charms, but every one has raised an ideal standard in his own mind, which is fairer to him than all that painter or statuary ever portrayed. Description, therefore, must fall far short of what Julie really was. Let all men, then, draw from their own mind. She was lovely as imagination can conceive; and there were few of those who, by any chance, beheld her, that were so critical or so fastidious as to find or fancy a fault in her beauty; and as the strangers who did see were ever sure to ask, among the neighbouring peasantry, who she was, and to describe her by her loveliness, she soon acquired the name of the Beauty of Arles.

It seldom happens that many perfections cluster together. If beauty be granted, wit is often denied; and if wit and beauty unite, vanity, or some other deteriorating quality, is generally superadded. But it is not always so. Nature had dealt liberally to Julie of all her stores. She might know that she was lovely, for where is the woman that is not conscious of it; but in her solitude there was none to tell her of her charms, and she was not vain of them. The bright wild genius, the warm vivid imagination, that revelled in her breast, and sparkled in the dark flashes of her eye, was guided and tempered by the softest, gentlest, heart that ever beat within a woman's bosom. She had no means of comparing her own mind with that others, and she did not know that it was superior; and all the accomplishments and knowledge that her father had taken care she should acquire appeared to her what all human knowledge really is--but little to that which may be known.

In the mean time, the mind of Armand Villars had undergone scarce any change; his feelings were the same; but, if at all altered, they were only the harder and the more inflexible. If his daughter possessed his affection, it was seldom that any trait of gentleness betrayed it; and, as if fearful of again loving any human thing, he passed the greater part of his time in utter solitude, from which even his child was excluded.

Julie feared her father, but she loved him too. Her heart, like a young plant, clung to that which it grew beside, however rugged and unbending; and in those hours which she was allowed to spend with her parent, she strove to win him from the sternness of his nature, and draw from him a smile of affection or approbation; and if she succeeded, it was a source of joy to her for many an after hour.

Her pleasures, indeed, were so few, that she was obliged to husband them well, and even to seek new ones for herself. She lost none of those unheeded blessings which nature scatters on the way of ungrateful man. She had joy in every fair sight and every sweet sound. To her the breathing of the spring air was a delight, the warbling maze of the brook a treasure. The notes of the forest birds--nature's own melody--was to her the sweetest concert; and, thankful for all that a good God had given, she would long for the wings of the lark to soar into the blue air and sing her gratitude at the gates of heaven. She would wander for hours through the fair lonely scenes around, when the prime of morning glittered over the earth, or when the calm evening, like a gentle mother, seemed soothing nature to repose; and her life passed like the waters of the broad Rhone, glittering on in one sunshiny course amidst all that is beautiful in nature.

Thus went hour after hour, and day after day, in peaceful solitude and undisturbed repose; ignorant of a corrupted world and all its arts, and blessed in her ignorance. It was one bright evening in autumn, when the world was full of luxuriance, before the grape was plucked from its branch, or the olives began to fall, and the robe of nature, though somewhat embrowned by the sun of many a summer's day, had not yet lost all its verdure. Her father had shut himself up in his solitude, and Julie wandered out towards the ruined Roman arch that crowned the hill above their dwelling. From the height the whole country round was exposed to her view. It was a gay

scene, where all the rich gifts of generous nature were spread out at large. The green foliage of the vine covered all the slopes; and olive-grounds, with their white leaves glistening in the sun, skirted the vineyards, and sheltered the peasants' houses and villages that were thickly scattered over the landscape, while the bright waters of the Rhone bordered it along, and formed a glittering boundary to the very edge of the horizon.

Julie gazed on the scene for a moment, and contemplated all its wide luxuriance. But there was something too general in it. She knew not why, but she turned away with a sigh, and, descending into the valley, seated herself under some almond-trees, watching the lapse of a small brook that wound murmuring along towards the Rhone.

She was buried in contemplation, it matters not of what, when she was roused by quick footfall coming down the little path that led from the hill. It was a stranger whom she had never before seen, and one that she would have fain looked at again if it had not been for modesty's sake, for he was a sort of being not often beheld in that nook of earth. In the glance she had of him, when the sound of his footsteps first called her attention, she saw that he was young and handsome. But it was not that; there was something more. There was the grace; the elegance, the indescribable air of the high and finished gentleman; and Julie, as I have said, would fain, from curiosity, have taken another look: but, however, she turned away her eyes, and fixed them again upon the brook, as if deeply interested in the current of its waters. The stranger passed close by her, and whether he turned to look at her or not, matters little, but somehow it happened that before he had got ten yards, he stopped and returned, and, pulling off his hat with a low inclination of the head, asked her the way to Arles.

The direction was very simple, and Julie gave it as clearly as she could; but, nevertheless, the stranger seemed not quite to comprehend, and lingered as if for further information. So, seeing his embarrassment, she told him if he would come to the top of the hill, she would show him the line of the high road, and then he could not mistake; and accordingly she led the way, and the stranger followed: and, as he went, he told her that he had sent forward his carriage to Arles, intending to walk straight on, but he had been induced to quit the high road, in order to see the beauties of the country.

It was but a few steps to the top of the hill, and could but afford time for a conversation of five minutes; but, for some reasons which he did not very well stop to analyze, the stranger would not have lost them for all the world; therefore he had begun at once, and he continued with ease, but with a diffidence of manner which showed he was afraid of offending. He spoke rapidly, as if he feared to lose a moment, but with that smooth eloquence which wins its way direct to the sources of pleasure within us; and to Julie's timid and simple replies he listened as if they contained his fate. When he spoke, in turn, there was something in his manner perhaps too energetic, but yet it was pleasing, and Julie attended with no small degree of admiration and surprise; and before they had reached the top of the hill, she had settled it in her own mind that he was a being of a superior order.

The high road lay at a little distance, and she pointed it out to him. The stranger thanked her for the kindness she had shown him again and again, and still he was inclined to linger; but there was no excuse for it. Julie afforded him none, and, taking his leave, he bent his steps towards the road. When he reached it, he turned his head to take one more glance of the object that had so much interested him, but Julie was no longer there.

The stranger hurried on to the town, and his first question on reaching it was directed to ascertain who it was that he had seen.

"Oh!" cried the aubergiste, half interrupting the stranger, though respectfully, for he had sent forward a splendid Parisian carriage, with servants and saddle-horses, and more travelling luxuries than visited that part of the country in a hundred years--"Oh, it must have been Mademoiselle Villars, the beauty of Arles."--"It could be no one less," echoed the garçon.

"Villars!" said the stranger--"Villars! It is very extraordinary!"

Now; why it was extraordinary nobody at the inn knew. But it so happened that early the next morning the young stranger ordered his horses to be saddled, and his groom to attend him, and setting of with that kind of ardour which characterized all he did, galloped along the road towards the spot where he had seen Julie the day before. He gave a glance towards the hill. She was not there; and, turning his horse into a road which led down towards the Rhone, he rode straight to the dwelling of Armand Villars. It had been an old French country-seat, or château; one of the smaller kind, indeed, but still it possessed its long avenue of trees, its turrets with their conical slated roofs, and a range of narrow low building in front, with small loophole windows, through the centre of which *avant-corps* was pierced the low dark arch that admitted into the court-yard. The stranger contrived to make himself heard, by striking his riding-whip several times against the gate, which was at length opened by an old man who had long served with Colonel Villars in Italy, and had followed him to his solitude.

"Could he see Colonel Villars?" the stranger asked. The old grenadier glanced him over with his eye, and seemed half inclined to refuse him admittance; but on the young stranger's breast hung several crosses, which told of deeds done against the enemy, and the heart of the old soldier warmed at the sight. "Colonel Villars," he said, "was not much given to seeing strangers,

but if Monsieur would ride into the court he would ask."

The young stranger turned his horse to pass in, but his horse was not so well inclined to go through the low dark arch as his master, and showed symptoms of resistance. The stranger again reined him round, and spurred him towards the gate. The beast became restive, and, plunging furiously, endeavoured to throw his rider; but the stranger was too good a horseman, and, angry at his obstinacy, he urged him on with whip and spur. Unfortunately he did so. The horse plunged, reared, and threw himself over to the ground, with his master under him.

His own servant and the old grenadier came immediately to his assistance, and disengaged him from his horse; but it seemed as if their aid had been too late. The stranger was wholly insensible. At first they thought him dead, and it was some minutes before the yet lingering animation again made itself visible; but as soon as the old grenadier saw it, he went into the apartment where Villars and his daughter were, and simply told them that a young gentleman had been thrown from his horse at the gate, and he believed he was dying.

Pity's purest dwelling is in a woman's breast. Without thinking, Julie started up, and in a moment had flown to the assistance of the stranger. Villars followed more slowly. It was a duty to aid a fellow-citizen, and he proceeded to obey it.

Every man who has fallen off a horse, stunned himself, and broken his arm, must, or at least ought to, undergo the same treatment. Let us suppose, then, the duties of humanity paid; let us also imagine that the stranger, in some degree recovered from his fall, had told that his name was Charles Durand, the only son of Villars's old friend and early companion,--and there was a softness even in the memory of those young days which melted, in a degree, the sternness of the old soldier. It was more so when he found that Durand, though in place and in power, and basking in the beams of courtly favour, had not forgotten him, and had directed his son in passing by Arles to inquire for his former companion--and *offer him his services at court*, the young man added, but his voice, rather faltered as he said it. It might be that he knew the emptiness of such promises in general, or perhaps that he was too well acquainted with his father's character, or it might be that his hurt pained him at the moment. But however it was, when he saw Julie standing by the couch on which he was stretched, and attending him with the kindness of a sister, he almost blessed the accident which had given him a title to her care.

I know not how it is, but amongst all the wild theories and dreams that have been formed about the human heart and its passions, none ever suited itself to my fancy so well as that--it is an eastern one, I believe--which supposes the hearts of two persons destined to love each other formed, by the angel whose task it is, out of the same clay: so that in whatever regions they may be placed, and in whatever different state of life, when they do meet, there is always a world of undefinable sympathies between them, and affections apart from all the rest of the earth. Perhaps it is only a few, and those by especial favour, that the angel forms of these twin hearts; all the rest must wander about the world without any soft companionship of feeling. Be that as it may, from the very first moment that Charles Durand had met Julie Villars new sensations had been born in his bosom. She was lovely, the loveliest perhaps he had ever seen, though he had been long accustomed to mingle with the bright and the fair; but in her there was the beauty of simplicity, the charm of native unaffected innocence, and that was what he had seldom met with at all, and certainly never before so rarely combined. There were many more----

But what is the use of searching any further for that which made him love her from the first. Grant but the eastern supposition to be true, that their hearts were formed of one clay, and the matter is settled at once. A little superstition, and a few good broad theories, save man a great deal of trouble and research, and, perhaps, lead him as right as any of the hundred roads which philosophers and moralists are always busy paving for him.

During his illness, which was severe from the accident he had met with, his attachment had time to become fixed; and he did not lose the opportunity of endeavouring to excite a return. In truth, it was not very difficult; Julie's heart was cast in nature's gentlest mould, and this was the first time that any thing like affection had approached it. From her infancy she had formed for herself companionship from whatever was near her. She had watched each individual flower as it blossomed, till she loved it, and loved it only to mourn the fall of its fragile beauty! She had taught the birds to know her, and to sing their wild notes in her path without fear. But now, it was something far far beyond anything she had ever felt or ever dreamt of. What a new bright state of existence became hers, when Charles Durand's love first flashed upon her mind. She painted to herself all the charms of reciprocal attachment in its brightest state. She knew nothing of the world and its falsehood. She knew nothing of human nature and its weakness, and she fancied it all without a cloud. She invested every thing in the verdant colouring of her own heart, and lighted it up with the sunshine of her own mind, and it made a picture she could have gazed on for ever.

Before she was aware of his affection, she had looked forward to his recovery with mingled emotions. There was certainly a good deal of pleasure, on his account, in the speculation; but she did not like to think of his departure, which would be the natural consequence. Now that she knew herself loved, and that she could look upon her own attachment for him without feat or shame, she never dreamt that a separation was possible; she yielded her whole soul to the delight of the moment, and saw nothing before her but one bright interminable track.

Durand's mind was not so much at ease. There were some blighting thoughts would come and wither his opening happiness. He knew his father's ambitious nature, and feared to ask himself how, it would brook his union with the simple girl of Arles. Brought up amidst scenes of profligacy and vice, though with a heart naturally good and pure, Charles might have formed some less honourable scheme for obtaining Julie, but there was a purity in her every thought that spread a holy light around her, and he felt that the very idea was profanation.

In youth, we seldom let foresight give us much annoyance, and Charles Durand's resource was not to think upon the subject at all. He loved Julie as deeply as man can love. The idea of losing her was insupportable, and while the hours slipped away in her society, he would not debase such unalloyed happiness by one sordid care for the future.

Whether he heeded not or saw it not, or, from his long seclusion from the world and natural slowness of affection, did not perceive its consequences, Armand Villars took no notice of the growing intimacy between his daughter and the young Durand, probably he never saw it; for, continuing to live in the same retirement, he suffered the presence of Charles to make scarce any change in his conduct. He had merely accorded him a dwelling in his house because he considered it a duty, and once in the course of each day he paid him a calm, cold visit, inquired after his health, and recommended him to the care of his daughter; for, he said, "that was more a woman's task than a man's;" and the rest of the day he passed in utter solitude.

In the mean time, Durand's health rapidly improved, and he was soon enabled to accompany Julie in her rambles along the banks of the Rhone. Oh, what a new world was now opened to her! Nature had acquired a brighter hue, pleasure a richness it never owned before. All, all delight was doubled by having some one to participate. There was a new state of being sprung up for her--the existence of mutual affection--an existence totally apart from every thing else of earth.

A great change, too, had taken place in all the feelings of Charles Durand. As he wandered on with Julie, he wondered that the beauties of nature had never before struck him as they did now. He asked himself what madness could have taught him to enjoy the false brightness, the unmeaning whirl, the lying gaiety of such a place as Paris; and, as he looked at the fair simple girl by his side, he learnt heartily to despise the artificial beings with whom he had been accustomed to mingle.

One bright summer evening, they passed by the spot where they had first met. The same colouring was on the trees, the same bright hues were glowing in the west, but every thing was richer and lovelier in their eyes.

"Oh, Julie," said Charles, "how I shall ever bless this spot! I remember standing by yon old triumphal arch on the hill, and looking over the wide scene of abundance displayed below. It was rich, it was beautiful; but as I descended into this valley there was a sweet calmness, a lovely repose, which left the heart nothing to wish for, and far more than compensated for the expanse of the other landscape. Surely it was a type of what I was to feel after having seen you. Before, the gay world of the capital and its wide indistinct society seemed to offer a life of delight not to be met with any where else. But now, to be with you thus constantly, and separated from all the world but you, is a happiness far beyond my brightest dreams. It has made me a miser. I would admit none to share it with me for worlds."

Julie answered nothing, but she looked up in Charles's face with a glance that he had no difficulty in translating. A moment after the beam in her eye passed away, and was followed by a slight sigh. Charles would needs have it translated too, and as he could not do it himself, he applied, to its author. Julie said that she did not know that she had sighed. Charles assured her that she certainly had.

"I was thinking at that moment," answered Julie, "that I ought as soon as possible to communicate this to my father. Perhaps it was that which made me sigh; for though I am sure he loves me, yet he is naturally so stern that sometimes he frightens me."

A cloud came over Charles Durand's brow, for she forcibly recalled his thoughts to the point from which he had long essayed to banish them, and he begged that she would delay the communication she proposed until he had time to write to his father and ask his consent to their union. Julie looked down, and contending emotions called the blood into her cheek. There was something in the idea of the least concealment repugnant to the bright candour of her mind; and she told Charles that she was sure it never could be right.

Concealment! Charles assured her that he never proposed such a thing. No, let their affection be as open as day. If her father himself perceived it, it was at once avowed; but if he did not, it would be better to wait till his authorized him to demand her hand. He added several reasons, to which Julie replied nothing. She was not used to contend with any one, much less with one she loved; but her heart was not at ease. It was the first cloud which had obscured the morning of her life, and it cast a deeper shadow than she had fancied any thing could throw over her mind! They walked up the hill to the ruined arch of triumph, and gazed for a moment on the plain below; but Julie's heart did not expand to the scene. They turned again and wandered down to the brook, but the valley hid lost a portion of its peace.

Charles expressed a wish to rest there ere they returned. Julie seated herself in silence where

she had been placed when first they met, and Charles, casting himself down by her side, tried to convince her that he was right, for he saw that she was not yet satisfied.

"I suppose," said she, turning to him with a smile, though it was rather a melancholy one--"I suppose I ought to be convinced, for I have nothing to say in reply. But, at all events, be it as you think fit. Of course I shall say nothing to my father until you approve of it. I have never yet wanted confidence in any one."

If the last sentence implied any thing reproachful, Charles did not or would not perceive it. He took Julie's hand and pressed it to his lips, while the colour mounted more deeply in her cheek, and her dark eyes were bent down upon the ground. What she had said, however, was overheard by another, whose presence neither Julie nor Charles had observed. Her father, by some chance, had that night, turned his steps in the same direction that they had, and he now stood before them.

Charles was the first who raised his eyes, and they instantly encountered the fixed stern glance of Villars.

"Well, young man," said he, in a deep, bitter tone of voice, "you have rested with me long enough. You have accepted of my care, you have betrayed my hospitality, you have recovered from your illness, and now begone."

Charles exculpated himself boldly, but to one that did not attend. He declared again and again that his every intention was most pure and honourable.

"Honourable!" repeated Villars, with a scoff. "Whatever were your intentions, he who could teach a child to deceive her father is unworthy of my daughter. Begone, sir! I hear no more; never let me see your face again. Come, weak girl," he added, turning to Julie, down whose cheeks the tears were rolling in silent bitterness, "wipe away those tears, and do not let me think you unworthy of your race;" and he led her back to the château; passing on straight to his own library.

Julie covered her face with her hands. The tears were still running down her cheeks, and though she knew her father's inflexible nature, there was a remonstrance struggling in her heart, to which she would have fain given utterance, but the stern glance of Villars, which never left her for a moment, frightened her and took away her words.

An instant after the old servant came in, and told them that M. Durand desired to see him. Julie clasped her hands and extended them with an imploring look towards her father. "Silence, child!" cried he; "Julie, not a word!" and followed the servant from the room.

Whatever might have passed between him and Charles, when he returned there was a deeper spot upon his brow, and his step had something of angry haste in it as he advanced to where his daughter sate.

"Julie," said he, "on your duty to me as your father, I command you never to see that young man again." Julie paused.

"Do you hesitate? Disobedient girl! Mark me, one moment more, and I cast you off for ever. Julie, you know me. I am not used to say what I do not perform. Promise me instantly never again willingly to see Charles Durand, or we are no longer father and child."

It was a dreadful alternative, and Julie promised.

How blighting is the loss of what we love! Affection is as the sunshine of existence, and when it is gone, the rest is all darkness. The flowers of life, the beauties of being, are all obscured, and we wander blindly on through an unseen world, which might as well be a desert as a garden, in the deep shadow of that starlight night.

It is not so much that which we have not as that which we lose, that we sigh for. Had Julie never known the charm of mutual affection, all would still have been bright, but now day after day went by, the blank of passing existence.

At length the news reached her father that Charles had left Arles, and, sinking into his usual habits, he permitted Julie to pursue the rambles she had been accustomed to take. But nature to her had lost its loveliness. The flowers seemed withered, the song of the lark sounded harsh, and she wandered slowly on, occupied with sad thoughts. She raised her eyes to the arch of triumph on the hill above. There was a figure standing by it, which passed quickly away, but it recalled to Julie the time she had first seen Charles Durand, and the hours they had spent there together, and, placing the past happiness with the present sorrow, the contrast was too strong, and she wept bitterly.

Though she found no pleasure in the scenes she had formerly loved, yet she had no inducement to return home. All there was cold, and she wandered on farther than had been her wont. She had proceeded nearly an hour, when she heard a quick step behind her. She knew not why, but it caused her an emotion of fear, and she hurried her pace. "Julie!" said a voice she could not mistake; "Dear Julie! It is I." She turned, and Charles caught her in his arms, and

pressed her fondly but gently to his bosom.

Julie said nothing, but hid her eyes upon his shoulder and wept; but the dreadful promise she had made her father was to be told; and at length, summoning all her resolution, she did so.

Charles did not appear so much surprised as she expected. "Julie," said he, "after the promise you have made, if we part, we part for ever. Let us never part!"

It was a scheme he had formed immediately on quitting her father's house, and he now displayed it to Julie in the brightest colours it would admit of. He had been wandering about the country ever since, he said. His carriage had been always on the road prepared for a journey. He had counted much upon his Julie's love. He had procured a passport for Paris. The moment they arrived she should give him her hand at the altar. His father should use all means to soften hers, and there could be no doubt that Villars would soon relent. He pleaded with all the eloquence of love and hope. Even despair lent him arguments. He had strong allies, too, in Julie's own breast: her love for him, her fear of her father, and the dreadful overwhelming thought, that if she once parted from him she should never see him again. A doubt of him never entered into her mind; but there was something in the idea of accompanying him alone to Paris, which made the blood rush into her cheek. All the delicacy of a pure mind, and the fear of doing wrong, caused her to shrink from the very thought: a thousand opposing feelings came one after another through her breast, and gazing anxiously in the face of her lover, "Oh no, no, Charles!" she replied, "do not ask me;" and, striving to call up all her sense of duty, she added, more firmly, "Impossible!"

A deep settled gloom came over Charles's countenance--a calm impressive look of despair. He took both Julie's hands in his, and pressed them twice to his lips. "Cruel girl!" he said, in a low voice, which He strove to command to steadiness; "you love me less than I thought. Hear me," he continued, seeing her about to speak, "hear me to the end; for your reply will be my doom. I am not rash, but I can never live without you. My fate is on your lips. Am I to live or die? for within an hour after you have quitted me, I shall have ceased to exist. Speak, Julie! Do you bid me die? for that is the alternative."

Julie gazed on him for a moment, as if she scarcely comprehended the import of his words; and then again hid her eyes upon his shoulder and wept. "Speak, speak, Julie!" cried Charles.

"What would you have me say?" she asked. "You force me to do what I think wrong. How can I refuse what you wish, when such is the alternative? Oh! Charles, it is you that are cruel now!"

Charles caught eagerly at the concession. He thanked her again and again; and he seemed so happy, that Julie could scarce repent that she had yielded. Yet still she would have lingered; and as Charles led her gently on towards the spot where his carriage stood, he was obliged to display a thousand reasons to prove to her that she was doing right; for, at every step she hung back; and though she wished much to believe herself justified, yet still the tears trickled down her cheeks, and her eyes dared not rise from the ground. But hesitation was now too late, and in a few minutes she was on the way to Paris.

During their whole journey, Charles's conduct was a course of quiet respectful attention. He strove to soothe Julie's mind; he sought to amuse it, but he never suffered any gaiety to jar with the sorrowful tone of her feelings. He seemed to feel, as painfully as she did, the want of her father's approbation, but he endeavoured to oppose to that the bright prospect of their future happiness. He spoke of quitting all the luxuries of Paris for the sole delight of her society; to let their lives glide away in some beautiful part of the country, love gilding with its sunshine even the winter of their days. In short, he called up all the dreams that man is wont to form in the brighter stage of his existence, when young imagination fashions out every distant object into some fair shape of its own; and so well did he image his wishes as hopes, and paint his hopes as certainties, that Julie suffered her mind to be carried a stage beyond reality, and forgot the uncomforts of the present in the bright future which he depicted.

It was night when they arrived in Paris, and an undefinable feeling of terror and loneliness spread over Julie's mind as she felt herself a stranger amongst the multitude. Charles seemed instinctively to enter into her feelings, and gently pressed her hand to his lips, as if he wished to tell her that there was at least one heart that beat warmly with hers.

After passing along several long dimly-lighted streets, the carriage stopped at the hotel to which it had been directed, and Charles applied himself to make all those arrangements for Julie's comfort, which she was hardly able to do for herself.

"And now, Julie," said he, "there remains but one thing more; I will instantly go to my father's hotel, end bring you his consent to our union."

"Oh, Charles! wait a moment, do not leave me yet," cried Julie; "I can bear any thing but solitude."

Charles pressed her to his bosom, and, sitting down beside her, gazed fondly over every lovely feature as she sat with her eyes bent upon the ground. She saw that he waited merely to gratify her, and that his mind was fixed upon the interview with his father, and at length, conquering her feelings, she bade him go.

Charles promised that he would instantly return, and left her, but at the same time he ordered his servant to stay at the hotel. "Show Mademoiselle Villars," he said, "the same service as if she were your mistress, and my wife, which she will soon become."

As soon as Charles was gone, Julie burst into tears. She knew not why, but there was a deep depression of spirits hung over her which she could not dissipate, and she wept profusely. She had scarcely reasoned herself out of giving way to her grief, when Charles returned.

"My father," said he, "is absent a few leagues, from Paris, but he comes back to-morrow evening. So, dear Julie, my hopes must be delayed."

Charles saw that she had been weeping, but he took no notice, and applied himself, during the evening, to wean her thoughts from every subject of sorrow, and he succeeded, if not in entirely calming, at least in greatly soothing, her mind. The journey had much fatigued her, and Charles left her at an early hour. "For your sake, Julie," he said, "I must not stay in the same hotel with you, but I will be with you early to-morrow."

It was Charles's task, during the whole succeeding day, to occupy Julie's thoughts by various subjects of interest, so as to prevent them ever recurring to her own situation. He gave her mind no time to fall back upon itself. Neither did he himself wish to think the approaching interview with his father offered much that he dreaded, and he would not let his thoughts rest upon it.

At length, however, the evening came, and he again left Julie upon the same errand that he had done the night before. In going to his father's hotel, he, walked with extraordinary rapidity, as if he were afraid that reflection should intrude upon him by the way; but, on being informed that his father had returned some time, he paused to collect his thoughts, took two or three turns in the court, and then entered the room where his parent was.

Far different from the sprightly lad that long ago consorted with Armand Villars, old Durand, in passing through life, had lost many of the better qualities which had distinguished him in boyhood: circumstances had so often induced him to glide from one opinion to another, that he had but small pretensions to sincerity. Fortune had made him proud, and the lesser points of morality had gradually become effaced, in mingling with corrupted society. He was still a man of courage, of wit, of talent, and, as he had never cried very loud for any particular party, his changes in political opinion had never been criticised very severely. He was also a man of pleasure, an Epicurean, but one that forgot some of the best tenets of his sect. Every thing was to be sacrificed to pleasure except interest; and all was to yield to that. His affection for his son was strong, but there was much of it pride; and though on his return he received him kindly, it was more like the reception of an old companion than a son.

"Well, Charles," said he, after the first few minutes, "so your broken arm is whole again: and what has become of the beautiful little nurse you wrote to me about? You owe her a good deal, in truth."

"I owe her everything, sir," replied Charles, "and as to what has become of her, she is at this moment in Paris, and----"

"Ha, ha, ha! so that is the way you repay her," interrupted his father, laughing. "Charles, Charles, you, are a sad libertine. But take care what you are about; you will certainly get your throat cut. That sulky old Roman, her father, will not take it quietly, depend upon it. I remember him when a boy; his anger was not easily moved, but, when once excited, his vengeance was not like that of a child."

"I rather think, sir, that you mistake me," replied Charles. "Julie is purity itself. I love her beyond everything on earth, and I have now come to ask you to sanction my immediate union with her."

The astonishment, the anger, the scorn, which gradually gathered over old Durand's countenance while his son was speaking, is beyond expression. "Young man!" cried he, "are you mad? Have you become a driveller and a fool?"

Charles had expected opposition, and now he used all the eloquence he possessed, all the entreaties most likely to move. He expressed himself firm in his resolution of marrying Julie; but declared that he never could be happy without his father's approbation. But it was in vain. His father listened to him for a moment, and then, without any answer whatever, but a look of mingled pity and contempt, left the room. Charles's heart burned with indignation, and, darting from the house, he passed rapidly to the hotel. He did not, he would not think, and he had entered the room where Julie sat, before the first irritation had passed from his mind.

She was sitting directly opposite, and as he entered she raised her eyes with such a look of glad expectation, that it quite overwhelmed him, and, striking his hand against his forehead, he walked up and down the room for a moment, without speaking.

"In the name of heaven, Charles!" exclaimed Julie, "what is the matter?"

Charles took her hand, and led her back to the sofa from which she had risen. "Julie," said he, "my father is as cruel as yours. He refuses his consent to our union; but be assured----"

At that moment the deadly paleness, the wild despair, of Julie's countenance, stopped him as he spoke. Charles had deceived himself, and still more deceived her, with respect to his father. She had never imagined the possibility of his refusing, and now it came like the stroke of death. All the horror, all the desolation of her situation flashed upon her mind. It stunned, it stupified her. Every sense, every thought was overwhelmed in the wild tempest of her disappointed hopes, and she sat gazing in the face of her lover in dumb inanimate despair.

Charles at first attempted to call her to herself, but in vain. She sat like marble. At length, starting up, "Julie," he cried, "I go again to my father, and be sure I will bring you his consent, or I will die at his feet!"--and he quitted the room.

But Julie heard him not. She sat with her hands clasped, and her eyes fixed upon the door. Her senses were bewildered. A sudden panic seized her, she knew not of what. She started up, and, as if she flew from something which pursued her, she ran down the stairs of the hotel into the street. She passed rapidly along the Rue Royale to the Place Louis Quinze. The cool air revived her, and thought began to return, when some one caught her by the arm with a grasp of iron; she turned and cast herself at his feet.

"My father! Oh heaven, my father!" cried Julie. Villars answered nothing, but held her tight by the wrist, while he drew a poniard from his bosom.

"Disgrace your father's name!" said he at length. "If you have a prayer to offer to heaven, offer it now, for the blood of Villars shall never flow in impure veins!"

Julie strove to speak, but terror left her no voice. At length she cried, "Indeed, indeed, I am innocent!"

"Art thou a *liar* too?" cried Villars, casting his cloak over her head, and raising his hand. "Thus I wipe out your infamy!"

He plunged the dagger in her bosom--he raised it again, but no--he could not repeat it--there was a faint smothered cry--a shudder like the flutter of a dying bird, and then it lay a cold inanimate weight upon his bosom--It was done! But then the implacable unyielding spirit which had thus far sustained him forsook him for a moment, and he stood stupified, without thought, without feeling, without remembrance.

"I have done my duty!" he cried at last, and hurrying down to the banks of the river, descended to the very edge, and laid his lifeless burden in the water--gently, and cautiously, as if he were afraid of waking her. He gazed upon her--smote his hand upon his breast. "I have done my duty!" he said, "I have done my duty!" But hell was in his heart, and he fled.

When the Union American merchantman was lost on her passage from Havre to Charleston, there was one man who refused to enter any of the boats. He had taken his passage at Havre the very day the ship sailed, and, during the five days which elapsed between her leaving the port and her being wrecked, he was never heard to proffer a word to any one. He passed the days and the greater part of the nights, in walking backwards and forwards, with his eyes fixed upon the deck, and at that awful moment, when tempest and destruction surrounded them all, the deadly strife within his own bosom seemed to have rendered him insensible to the war of elements without.

Some one kindly pressed him to enter one of the boats. "Leave me, leave me," said he in French; "my grave is made!"

God knows whether it was he, but the passengers who escaped represent him as of the same age and form as Armand Villars.

On entering the cemetery of Père la Chaise, proceed directly to the foot of the first hill, and, turning into the alley to the left, you will find a plain obelisk of white marble, without epitaph or inscription, except the simple name "Julie!" It stands in a little garden of flowers, enclosed with a fence of iron; and I have myself seen a young officer, with more than one decoration on his breast, removing those that were withered, and binding fresh wreaths round its little boundary. It never wanted flowers in any season, for he came every day to deck it himself, though the colour gradually forsook his cheek, and pale corroding care was marked in every feature. One day he came no more, and shortly after he was laid in the earth beside her he loved. But before he died, he expressly forbade *his* name also to be inscribed on the monument which he had raised to his lost Julie.

Such was the tale of our new acquaintance, nearly in his own words; but as he spoke rapidly and fluently, the time it occupied in telling was not, or at least did not seem, long. We felt that he had a good right to call upon us for a return, and finding myself, as usual, when I wish to recollect a good story, totally bankrupt of memory, I turned to the friend who had accompanied me from England--a gentleman in every sense of the word, a man of refined taste and excellent heart. I was very sure that, if he could so far conquer his laziness as to begin, whatever he told would prove interesting; but idleness was predominant, and he was endeavouring to push back the burden to my shoulders, when Monsieur Petit, who seemed to divine the spirit which held us

so long together, glided into the room, and told us, that if we were curious in wine, he had some Burgundy so perfect in its kind that he would beg us just to try it.

We nodded the universal head; and while our worthy host was producing his nectar, my friend, stimulated by the very anticipation, gave me one reproachful look for stirring him from his repose, and said, "Well, well, since it must be so, I will try if I can remember a story I once heard of our own country, and give you *Two Scenes from the Civil Wars*."

TWO SCENES FROM THE CIVIL WARS.

SCENE I.

It was late on the night of an early day in spring--perhaps about two hours past midnight--and yet the inhabitants of a small lonely dwelling on the edge of a large piece of common-ground, lying about ten miles from Farringdon House, were all awake and up, and, with anxious eyes, gazing from the small long windows upon the blank darkness that hung over the world. A single candle stood upon a plain oaken table in the midst of the room, by the light of which might be seen, at one of the windows, a small finely-formed female figure, which still preserved all the lines of exquisite beauty, though a certain degree of stiffness, corresponding well with some deep wrinkles on the cheek, and with the white hair that was braided from the forehead, spoke the passing of many years under the petrifying power of Time, since that form had been in its prime, and the beauty, which still lingered, had known its first expansion. Leaning over her shoulder was a second figure so like the first--but with every grace which time had nipped in the other, just blown; with the cheek unwithered, and the brow unseared--that it seemed a living picture of what the other had been some twenty years before--a portrait in a family picture-gallery, where human loveliness may see and moralize on all the graces that the eternal reaper has gathered as he flew.

At the second window was a somewhat untidy maid-servant, contrasting strongly, in her slatternly disarray, with the plain neatness which decked the two other figures, whose garb I shall not pause to describe; let it suffice that it was of white, and fashioned in the mode of the time, A. D.164-, though either poverty, simplicity of taste, or deference to the puritanical mania of the day, had deprived it of every extraneous ornament.

The night upon which the whole party looked out was dark and sad; for the moon had gone down, and the clouds over head, though not particularly heavy, were quite sufficiently so to hide every star, and cast a deep gray shadow over the wide extent of undulating moorland which, in the day-time, stretched away for many a mile within view. A few faint streaks of pale light upon the edge of sky separated the darkness of the heavens from the darkness of the earth, and marked where the prospect ended; and thitherward were turned the eyes of all, watching with strained and anxious gaze a particular point on the dim horizon, where, every now and then, bright red flashes, sudden and sharp, but circumscribed and momentary, broke upon the night, followed by a distant report as quick and transitory.

No one spoke while those flashes continued; but the silence itself seemed to show the intense anxiety which was felt, by the tenants of that chamber, in regard to the events of which they obtained so dim and unsatisfactory a view. At the end of five minutes, however, the sudden bursts of light entirely ceased; the reports were no longer heard; and the elder of the two ladies, turning away from the window, said, in a low voice, "It is over: God's will is wrought by this time!"

The younger said nothing; but, clasping her fair hands together, raised her eyes towards the dark, heavens, while her full sweet lips moved silently, offering up a petition to that never-closed ear which hears the still voice of the heart's thoughts as plainly as the loudest-tongued appeal.

In a moment after, the clattering sound of horses' feet was heard coming quickly down the road. At first it was faint and distant--the dull heavy tramp of several fleet steeds galloping over moist ground; but soon it came nearer and nearer--left the turf of the common--clanged over the firm and stony road--came close to the house--passed it--and died away in the distance.

"They are flying!" said the younger lady. "Oh, my mother, they are flying! Surely some of the dark powers of the air must assist those bloodthirsty fanatics. They are flying; do you not hear the horses galloping on?"

"Nay, nay, Margaret," replied the other, "it may be the roundheads who fly. Though Goring and his cavaliers marched by here, we cannot tell what way the struggle may have turned, or on what side he attacked the rebels. So it may well be the traitors that fly themselves. But look out, look out; your eyes are younger than mine, and less dimmed with tears; perchance you may catch a passing glimpse that will give us glad news."

The younger lady pressed her eyes close to the window; and though, by this time, the first

party of fugitives had passed the house, yet the distant sound of others coming nigh met her ear; and she continued to gaze upon the faint line of the road towards a spot where the yellow glare of the gravel, which distinguished it from the ground about it, was lost in the general darkness of the common. At length three dark figures came forward with tremendous speed; at first so near together, and so hidden by the night, that she could hardly distinguish them from each other; but gradually the forms became more and more clear; and, as they darted past the house, she exclaimed in a glad tone, "They are the rebels, they are the rebels flying for life! I see their great boots, and their morions without crest or plume!"

"But they may be pursuing those who went before," said her mother, with a less elated tone; "they may be the followers, and not the flyers, Margaret."

"No, no, they are flying, in good sooth!" replied the young lady; "for ever and anon they turn their heads to look behind, and still they urge their horses faster each look. But they are gone! And now pray God that victory may not cost us dear! I would that my brother were come back, and Henry Lisle."

"Fie, Margaret, fie!" said her mother; "give God undivided thanks; for if my son and your lover be both left upon the field of battle, we ought still to feel that their lives were well-bestowed to win a victory for their royal master."

Margaret covered her eyes with her hands, but made no answer; and, in a moment after, fresh coming sounds called her again to the window. It was a single horseman who now approached; and though he rode at full speed, with his head bent over the saddle, yet he continued his course steadily, and neither turned his look to the right or left. As he approached the house, his horse started suddenly from some object left by the road-side, plunged, and fell; and the rider, cast with frightful violence from his seat, was thrown on his head upon the ground. A deep groan was, at first, the only sound; but, the moment after, the horse, which had borne him, starting up, approached close to the body of its master, and, putting its head to where he lay, by a long wild neigh, seemed at once, to express its sorrow and to claim assistance.

"If it be Essex or Manchester, Fairfax or Cromwell, we must render him aid, Margaret," said the mother; "never must it be said that friend or enemy needed help at my door, and did not meet it. Call up the hind's boy, Bridget; open the door, and bring in yon fallen man."

Her commands were speedily fulfilled; for though brought low in her estate, the Lady Herrick was not one to suffer herself to be disobeyed. The stranger was lifted from the ground, placed in a chair, and carried into the house. His eyes were closed; and it was evident to the elder lady, as she held the candle to his face, that, if not killed, he was completely stunned by his fall. He was a hard-featured man, with short grizzled hair, and a heavy determined brow, on which the lines of habitual thought remained, even in the state of stupor into which he had fallen. He was broadly made and muscular, though not corpulent; and was above the middle size without being tall. His dress consisted of a dark gray coat, which clove to him with the familiar ease of an old servant; and a brown cloak, which, in truth, had lost much of its freshness in his service. Above his coat had been placed a complete cuirass, the adjustment of which betrayed great symptoms of haste; and by his side he wore one of those long heavy blades of plain steel which had often been the jest of the cavaliers.

His head was uncovered either by hat or morion; and the expanse of his forehead, the only redeeming point in his countenance, was thus fully displayed. The rest of his face was not only coarse in itself, but bad in its expression; and when, after some cold water had been thrown over it, he revived in a degree and looked around, the large, shrewd, unsatisfactory eyes which he turned upon those about him had nothing in them to prepossess the mind in his favour.

The moment that consciousness had fully returned, he made an effort to start upon his feet, but instantly sunk back again into the chair, exclaiming--"The Lord has smitten me, yet must I gird up my loins and go, lest I fall into captivity."

"Fear not, fear not!" replied Lady Herrick, whose humanity was somewhat chivalrous, "you are in safety here; wait for a while till you are better able to mount, and then get you gone, in God's name, for I seek not to foster roundheads more than may be. Yet stay till you can ride," she added, seeing his hand again grasp the chair as if to rise; "women should know no enemies in the hurt and wounded."

"Nay, but, worthy lady," replied the parliamentarian, "should the crew of the Moabitish General Goring follow me even here, to smite me hip and thigh, as they have vowed to do to all who bear arms for godliness sake, or to bear me away captive--"

"Fear not, fear not!" answered the lady; "none should dare, by my hearth's side, to lay hands on one that common mercy bade me take in and shelter--fear not, I say. That is right, Margaret," she added seeing her daughter pour some wine into a glass for the use of the stranger; "take that, it will revive you, and give you strength to speed on."

"Nast thou caught the stranger's horse, Dickson?". she demanded, turning to the boy who had aided in bringing in the commonwealth man, and who now re-entered the room after a momentary absence.

"He is caught and made fast below," replied the lad; "and here are my young master and Master Henry Lisle coming up from the court. They have beaten the roundheads, and killed Colonel Cromwell, and taken his whole army prisoners!" Scarcely had he time to pour forth this rapid tide of news when the door was thrown open, and two young cavaliers, in broad hats and plumes, followed one another rapidly in, each taking with the lips of the two ladies that dear liberty consecrated to intimacy and affection. "Welcome, welcome, my gallant son!" cried the mother, as she held the first to her bosom.

"My own dear Margaret!" whispered the young gentleman who had followed, as he took the unresisted kiss which welcomed him back from danger and strife. But further congratulations of every kind were suddenly stopped, as the eyes of the two cavaliers fell upon the stranger; who had now recovered strength to rise from his seat, and was anxiously looking towards the door beyond them.

"Who, in the devil's name, have we here?" cried Sir George Herrick. "What cropped-eared villain is this?"

In vain his mother explained, and strove to pacify him. The sight of one of the rebels raised again in his bosom all the agitating fury of the fight in which he had been just engaged; and neither the prayers of his mother or his sister, the promises they had made to the stranger, or their remonstrances to himself, had any effect. "Ho, boy!" he exclaimed, "bid your father bring a rope. By the Lord of heaven, I will hang this roundhead cur to the oak before the door? Bring a rope, I say!" and, unsheathing his sword, he advanced upon the parliamentarian, calling upon his companion to prevent his escape by the door.

The stranger said not a word, but bit his nether lip; and, calmly drawing his tuck, retreated into one corner of the room, keeping a keen fixed eye upon the young cavalier, who strode on towards him. Margaret, seeing that all persuasion was vain with her brother, turned her imploring eyes to Henry Lisle, who instantly laid his hand upon his companion's cloak, "What now?" exclaimed the other, turning sharp upon him.

"This must not be, George," replied the other cavalier.

"Must not be!" thundered Sir George Herrick; "but it shall be! Who shall stay me?"

"Your own better reason and honour, I trust," replied the other. "Hear me--but hear me, Herrick! Your lady mother promised this fellow safety to stay and to go; and upon her promise alone, she says, he staid. Had that promise not been given, we should not have found him here. Will you slay a man by your own hearth, who put confidence in your mother's word? Fie, fie; let him go! We have slain enough this night to let one rebel escape, were he the devil himself."

Sir George Herrick glared round for a moment, in moody silence, and then put up his sword. "Well," said he, at length, "if he staid but on her promise, let him take himself away. He will grace the gibbet some other day. But do not let me see him move across the room," he added, with a look of disgust, "or I shall run my blade through him whether I will or not."

"Come, fellow, get thee gone!" said Henry Lisle, "I will see thee depart;" and while his companion fixed his eyes with stern intensity upon the fireplace, as if not to witness the escape of the roundhead, he led him out of the chamber to the outer door.

The stranger moved forward with a firm calm step, keeping his naked sword still in his hand, and making no comment on the scene in which he had been so principal a performer.

As he passed through the room, however, he kept a wary glance upon Sir George Herrick; but the moment he quitted it, he seemed more at ease, and paused quietly at the door while the boy brought forward his charger. During that pause, he turned no unfriendly look upon Henry Lisle; and seemed as if about to speak more than once. At length he said in a low voice, "Something I would fain say--though God knows we are poor blinded creatures, and see not, what is best for us--of thanks concerning that carnal safety which it may be doubted whether----"

"No thanks are needed," interrupted Henry Lisle, cutting across what promised to be one of the long harangues habitual with the fanatics of that day, "no thanks are needed for safety that is grudgingly awarded. I tell thee plainly, that, had it not been for the lady's promise, I would willingly have aided in hanging thee with my own hands; and, when next we two meet face to face, we shall not part till the life-blood of one or other mark our meeting-place!"

"It may be so, if such be God's will," replied the parliamentarian, "and I pray the Lord to give me strength that I may never be found slack to do the work appointed me."

"Thou hast never been so yet, though it be the work of the evil one," answered Henry Lisle, and then added, "I know thee, though none else here does, or it had fared harder with thee in despite of all promises."

"Thou knowest me!" said the stranger, without testifying any great surprise, "then thou doest the better deed in Israel; and I will trust, notwithstanding thy present malignancy, that the day of grace may yet come to thee. Farewell!"

Thus saying, he put his foot in the stirrup, and mounting somewhat heavily the horse which was now brought up for him, rode away across the common.

Time flew--years passed--the temporary success obtained by General Goring over the forces of Oliver Cromwell was swept away and forgotten in a tide of brilliant triumphs won by the parliamentary general, who trod upon steps of victory to the government of an empire. He had conquered his opponents by the sword; he had conquered his partisans by hypocrisy; he had subdued all to his will, and, under the name of Lord General, ruled with more power than a king.

In the mean while, Sir George Herrick and Henry Lisle had fought to the last in the cause of their ancient monarchs; and their zeal--like that noblest of human energies, hope--had grown but the stronger under the pressure of misfortune and distress. Amongst the various chances of the civil war, five times had the day been appointed for the union of Henry Lisle with Margaret Herrick, and five times had some unforeseen mishap intervened to delay what all so much desired. Each day that went by, Lady Herrick, with means quite exhausted and hopes quite depressed, longed more and more to see her child united to a man of talent, and firmness, and resource; and each battle that passed by, Sir George Herrick, struck with a presentiment of approaching fate, thanked God that he had lived to place his sister's hand in that of his friend.

The last time the marriage was suspended, was on the fatal-call to Worcester field, where Sir George Herrick fell; and Henry Lisle only escaped to bear his companion's last request to Margaret, that without further pause or delay, without vain ceremonies or useless tears, she would give herself, at once, to her promised protector. Their wedding was a sad one--no glad peal, no laughing train, announced the union of the two lovers; and, ere the day of their bridal was spent, Henry Lisle was a prisoner, journeying towards the tower of London. His trial was delayed some time; but when it took place it was soon decided. No evidence was wanting to his full conviction of loyalty to his king; and the block and axe was the doom pronounced upon him. A brief three days lay between him and death; and Margaret, who was permitted to see him, clung in agony to her husband's bosom. Lady Herrick to whom he had been more than a son, gazed, for some time, with equal agony, upon his fine, but faded countenance, which, worn by toil, and anxiety, and long imprisonment, was still more clouded by the hopeless despair of her he loved. But suddenly, without a word, the mother turned away, and left the prison.

SCENE II.

It was in that great and unequalled hall, whose magnificent vault has overhung so many strange and mighty scenes in English history, and whose record of brief and gorgeous pageants reads as sad a homily on human littleness, as even the dark memorials of the tomb. It was in Westminster Hall, on the 16th day of December, that, with the clangour of trumpets and all the pomp and splendour both of military and civil state, a splendid procession moved forward to a chair or throne, raised on some ornamented steps at the further extremity of the building, Judges, in those solemn robes intended to give dignity to the judgments they pronounce, and officers, dressed in all that glittering panoply destined to deck and hide the rugged form of war, moved over the echoing pavement between two long ranks of soldiers, who kept the space clear from the gazing and admiring multitude. But the principal figure of the whole procession, the one on which all eyes were turned, was that of a stout, broad-built man, with a dingy, weather-beaten countenance, shaggy eyebrows, and a large red nose. His countenance was as unprepossessing as can be conceived; nor was his dress, which consisted of plain black velvet, at all equal to those which surrounded him: But there was something in his carriage and his glance not to be mistaken. It was the confidence of power, not the extraneous power of circumstance and situation, but of that contracted internal strength which guides and rules the things around it. Each step, as he planted it upon the pavement, seemed destined to be rooted there for ever; and his eye, as it encountered the glances of those around, fell upon them with a calm strength which beat them to the dust before its gaze. Passing onward, through the hall, he ascended the steps which raise the chair of state; and, turning round, stood uncovered before the people. The two keepers of the great seal, standing on his right and left, read a long paper called the Institute of Government, by which, amongst other things, the Lord General, Oliver Cromwell, was named Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England. The paper was then signed, an oath was administered, and, putting on his hat, the figure which had advanced to the chair sat down, amidst the acclamations of the people, while all the rest continued to stand around uncovered.

Various other ceremonies were performed; and then the great usurper, rising from his seat, led back the precession towards the door of the hall; but scarcely had he traversed one half of its extent, when a woman, who had been whispering to one of the soldiers that lined the way, pushed suddenly past, and cast herself at Cromwell's feet. "An act of grace, Lord Protector!" she exclaimed, "an act of grace, to bring a much needed blessing on the power you have assumed!"

"What wouldst thou, woman?" demanded Cromwell "somewhere I have seen thy face before, what wouldst thou? If thy petition be conceived in godliness, and such as may be granted with safety to these poor disturbed realms, it shall not be refused on such a day as this."

"When Colonel Cromwell failed in his attack on Farring-House;" said Lady Herrick--for it was she who knelt before him: "and when General Goring surprised and cut to pieces his troops at night near Warnham common"--Cromwell's, brow darkened, but still she went on--"he fled from a disaster he could not prevent, and was cast from his horse, stunned, at the door of a widow

woman, who gave him shelter. He was the enemy of her and hers, and flying from a battle in which her own son had fought; and yet she gave him rest and comfort, and opposed that very son, who would have shed his blood by her hearth. There, too, Henry Lisle interposed to save his life, and was successful; otherwise, Lord Protector, I tell thee, thou wouldst never have sat in that seat which thou hast taken this day. Condemned by, your judges for acting according to his conscience, I now ask the life of Henry Lisle, in return for the life he saved. Grant it--oh, grant it, as you are a man and a Christian!"

Cromwell's brow was as dark as thunder; and after gazing on her for a moment in silence, his only reply was, "Take her away; the woman is mad--take her away and put her forth; but gently--gently--bruise not the bruised--so--now--let us pass on; for, in truth, we have been delayed too long."

Put out of the hall by the soldiers; her last hope gone; her heart nearly broken for her child and her child's husband, Lady Herrick wandered slowly on towards that sad place where she had left all that was dear to her. The gay and mighty cavalcade, which conveyed the usurper back to his palace, passed her by like one of those painful dreams which mock us with sights of splendour in the midst of some heavy woe; and before she had threaded many more of the solitary streets, robbed of their population by the attractive ceremony of the day, a single trooper galloped up, gazed on her for a moment, and rode on. At the tower, no formalities were opposed to her immediate entrance of the prisoner's chamber--she was led to it at once; the door was itself open; an unsealed paper lay upon the table; Henry held Margaret in his arms; and tears, which she never before had seen in his eyes, now rolled pitifully down his cheeks, and mingled with those of his bride; but, strange to say, smiles were shining through those tears, and happiness, like the rainbow sun, beamed through the drops Of sorrow.

"Joy, mother, joy!" were the first and only words. "Joy, mother, joy!--Henry is pardoned!"

By the time the second scene was over, the bottle was out and the clock struck one. The lamps, too, were burning low and dim, and it would have been an excellent moment for a ghost story to wind up the evening. But our dear new-found friend was about to set out by the steam-packet for England, early the next morning; our horses were ordered for Rouen at six o'clock, and we were forced to say good night.

The next morning we were punctual to our hour, and reached the fine old city of the Seine, whilst day was still shining bright upon it. The place itself is too well known to need description, and nothing occurred of any interest that is not comprised in a single letter which I wrote thence to a friend now dead. It was never sent, and is only worth preserving as a memorial of the first suspicion that entered my mind, that my servant might not be dealing fairly with me, a suspicion which; if it had been then confirmed, might have saved me many a long hour of misery.

TO W. H----, ESQ.

Rouen, 1824.

My dear H----,

You will be surprised to find that we have got no farther on our pilgrimage than Rouen, but my desultory habit of never proceeding straight to any object, and suffering myself to be tempted always by the collateral; makes our progress slow. We arrived here, through some beautiful valleys, filled with manufactories of cotton: and after passing by a long alley of fine trees, wound through a number of narrow dull streets, to the Hotel----, which, though one of the best in the town, still offers that mixture of finery and filth which pervades all French inns. The *salle à manger*, I am convinced, has never been swept or cleaned since its construction. The dirt may sometimes have been kicked out by accident, but can never have been removed intentionally.

Our breakfast was served to us on very handsome plate; but a pig, followed by some turkeys, walked in from the court with a cabbage-leaf in his mouth, and with true French urbanity, seemed very much inclined to keep us company at our meal. Although we explained to him in the clearest manner that we wished to be alone, we had some difficulty in keeping him out, as the door would not shut, and he appeared to have right prescriptive to a free entrance. Shortly after, we had the company of our landlady, who, though much more *élégante* than a person of the same class in England, has the most tremendous tongue that ever woman was blessed with. She began upon her own history, and went through it from the beginning even unto the end. She informed us that her husband was *bête*, but *bon*, explained to us her opinions upon various points of morality which did not exactly coincide with our own, and was then going to enter upon another story--when, as we could not get rid of her as we had got rid of the pig--we wished her good morning, and took a ramble through the town.

The general appearance of Rouen is dull, but there is an air of antiquity about it which I have

often found wanting as a characteristic in places considerably older than this. One of the first things which attracted our notice was the beauty of the women: certainly never did I see such a number of pretty faces, as there are here framed and glazed at shop windows, with their large dark eyes glancing at us like diamonds as we pass by. But this is no subject for you, Sir Stoic; old mouldering monuments, and crumbling ruins, will better suit your musty, antiquarian soul. You would revel were you with us here. This place is one great museum of ancient buildings: every thing smacks of old days; and memory has plenty of occupation in raking up all the histories that each object recall.

I have seen good paintings of the Cathedral as it appeared some years ago, before the spire was burnt; and though the people lament very much its fall, I cannot say that I think the building has lost by the accident. The spire was light and elegant certainly, but it did not seem to me to harmonize well with the rest of the church. I believe that we wore out the patience of our valet-de-place, staying nearly three hours to examine every part of it, and admiring and re-admiring the beautiful combinations which the light Gothic arches present at every step you take along the aisles. Round some of the principal columns there is a curious sort of open balcony, which I do not remember to have seen any where else, and which has a very pleasing effect.

After remaining so long in the interior we mounted the tower, and proceeding through a little door which led to the outside, found ourselves amongst all the grotesque figures with which our good Norman ancestors ornamented their churches. There were monkeys, and bears, and parrots, and dragons, and devils, and saints; all pellmell, jostling against each other, without any respect for persons.

It was singular to remark, that the iconoclastic spirit of the French revolution had found out the statues of the saints and martyrs even up here, and chopped their heads off without mercy, leaving the devils as the proper images of the spirit of the time. It certainly was the most ridiculous fury that ever seized a mad nation, to think of beheading blocks of marble. When the sans-culottes entered the town of Nancy in Alsace, they found, amongst other things, the statues of Apollo and the nine muses; these they immediately christened the King and the royal family, and proceeded to guillotine them on the spot. The busts of Voltaire and Rousseau were about to undergo the same fate, but the librarian of the town saved them, by announcing them as the very patriarchs and apostles of the revolution.

Immediately after the Cathedral, we saw the Abbey church of St. Ouen. It wants the vast solemnity of the other, but more than makes up for it, by the correctness of the proportions, and the minute elegance of all the parts. A very beautiful effect is produced by the disposition of the font, which is so placed as to reflect almost the whole interior of the building.

From St. Ouen we went to the Library, whose principal curiosity seems to be an old illuminated psalm-book, which must have cost a world of useless labour to the monk who, as the librarian informed us with no small emphasis, occupied fifty years of his life in painting it. Afterwards, in rambling through the town, we came to the spot where poor Jeanne d'Arc was burnt. It is called La Place de la Pucelle; and in a neighbouring house we were shown the cabinet in which, it is said, her judges deliberated their cruel sentence. It is a dark, gloomy, octagonal room, lined with black oak; and one naturally repeoples it with the merciless countenances of those who once sat there, to gratify their bloodthirsty malice on the poor enthusiast who had been the means of their overthrow. There can be little doubt that the Maid of Orleans was nothing but a visionary, and as such became the tool of Agnes Sorrel and her party, to whom the delivery of France front the English yoke is really to be ascribed.

A great part of the common dwelling-houses in Rouen bear evident marks of their ancient construction, but the one I have just mentioned, in the Place de la Pucelle, is particularly worthy of remark, on account of a curious relief on one of the pavilions, representing the famous meeting of Henry VIII. and Francis I. between Guisnes and Ardres. Most of the figures are very perfect, and on various parts of the building there are some curious sculptures and arabesques. Before the revolution, the number of churches in Rouen, must have been immense; at every step the vestiges of some of these edifices present themselves, converted into workshops or storehouses: and there remain a great many, still appropriated to the purposes of religion. The French possess an infinity of monuments of this kind, but they are not careful of them. It is truly disgusting to see quantities of dirty stalls and outhouses raised against their finest buildings, and all sorts of nuisances practised against them in midday. The interior is also often spoiled by the bad taste of those who have the charge of them; frequently we find the fine stonework painted all sorts of colours; no qualm of conscience opposes itself to adding a Greek doorway or skreen to a Norman church; and the horrid daubs of pictures which are to be met in the finest churches in France, would disgrace a barber's shop.

The churches in Rouen, are, I believe, without exception Gothic, which appears to me to be far better suited than any other architecture to the character of the Christian religion. There is that pensive kind of shade which invites the mind to thought. The grandeur of the objects, and the vastness of the proportions, make us feel our own littleness: we find ourselves as nothing in the temples we ourselves have made; and our thoughts naturally turn to Him who created all.

Certain it is, that the purer the religion, the less is it connected with external appearances; but so little have we the power of abstracting our ideas from the immediate matter of our senses, that there are few who have not, at some time, felt that a great degree of solemnity in all which

surrounds us, is absolutely necessary, when we would turn the whole current of our thoughts towards the sublime object of our devotion. Pomp and show, and stage effect, are beneath the dignity of religion; but when under a dispensation which guides the heart and its feelings, as well as the body and its actions, the creature kneels to adore its Creator, the solemnity of every object around can never be too great for such an awful occasion.

The religion of the Greeks, in harmony with their climate, their customs, and their minds, was one of striking and brilliant ceremonies, formed to excite the passions and dazzle the imagination; with more show than feeling, more elegance than solemnity.

The architecture of their temples was consonant both to the nature of the people and their religion, light, rich, and graceful, and full of forms more calculated to excite pleasure and admiration, than thought or devotion, it had far more grace but less grandeur than the Gothic. Its very perfection is the cause of its wanting solemnity. The pillars are exactly proportioned to the building, and the ornaments to the parts which they adorn; every thing is gradual and easy; but in Gothic architecture, all is abrupt and striking. The minute ornaments which are too small to distract the attention from general effect, give, by contrast, an additional vastness to the high pointed arches, and enormous columns. The very disproportion of the parts makes the whole appear larger than it really is, the soul of man seems to have power to expand amidst the gigantic vaults, under which he walks as an insect; and his mind naturally takes a tone from the solemn vastness of the building.

To you, who are almost as great a Goth as myself in these points, I am not afraid to express my opinions; although I have no architectural knowledge to support them. I am apt to judge alone from my feelings, and certainly I never experience the same sensation of awe in any other building that I do in a Gothic cathedral.

Nothing has occurred to myself worth commemorating since our arrival in this city, if I except some suspicions which have assailed me regarding my worthy servant Essex. You remember the fellow and his extreme plausibility. Amongst other points of his character he affected no slight dislike to his former master, your acquaintance Wild; representing him as the most violent and malevolent of human beings. On going to the post-office myself, the other day, I saw fixed up amongst the letters which have not been forwarded for want of postage, one addressed to no other person than Alfred Wild, Esquire, and that address, too, written in the precise hand which delivers me my weekly accounts. What, this means I do not know; but I mentioned to my friend B----, while the fellow was in the room, the fact of having seen a letter addressed to Wild, but not forwarded for want of postage. The next day the letter was no longer there. This, however, might be nothing, did I not feel very sure that--at whose instigation I know not--the rascal gives himself the trouble of watching me in my various rambles through the town. If I detect him, he will return to England with a broken head, although he can find out but little in my goings forth which can injure

Your's ever,

J---- Y----

THE JOURNEY.

> Quatuor hinc rapimur viginti et millia rhedis
> Mansuri oppidulo quod versu dicere non est
> Signis perfacile est. Venit vilissima rerum
> Hic aqua. HORACE.

What can it be? It can not be food, nor climate, nor customs, which make two races of people, living side by side, so very different from each other. Certain it is, that beauty stops short at the gates of Rouen; and that from thence to Berney, they are the ugliest, ill-looking generation that ever I beheld. Not a pretty face was to be seen for love or money. Nature seemed to have expended all her beauty upon the scenery.

About three leagues from Rouen we stopped at the foot of a high hill, and climbing amongst some fine oaks to the left, arrived at the top of a pinnacle, which commanded the whole country round. It was as beautiful a view as can be conceived. One vast forest, with innumerable valleys winding away towards the horizon covered with rich wood; but as the withering touch of time had not affected all the trees alike, the thousand autumnal tints of the foliage, and the various shadows thrown by the undulations of the country, offered a variety and richness of colouring seldom to be equalled.

The height where we stood had anciently been fortified, and some parts of the walls are still remaining, which bear the name of *The Château of Robert le Diable*. Whence the celebrated legend of that personage derives its origin I know not. The only account I could obtain of him in this part of the country was from an old woman not to be relied on.

"In the old times," she said, "when Normandy was separate from France, the lord of that castle, *The Comte Robert*, was a bold, wild young man, rather famous for doing what he ought not to have done. His lady mother had been a strange, solitary being, living separate from all the world after her husband's death, only entertaining herself with books, which the people judged to be of sorcery, because nobody but herself understood them, and only talking with spirits; so the people said, though nobody had ever been present at any of these ghostly *conversazione*. Be that as it may--in her last moments she was attended by a capuchin of the neighbouring monastery, who was so horrified (it appeared) at the confession of her monstrous sins, that he was seen to stagger out of the castle like one distracted; and when one of the servants, entirely from love to his mistress, and without any curiosity whatever, ran after him to ask, what was the matter, he replied, like a man out of his senses, swearing that he would not drink the other bottle and crying out that the young count was *the devil*, and his mother not a whit better. Now the valet, who was a very religious man, and believed every thing a capuchin said to him, returned to the castle and told all the people that, his young master was *the devil*.

"'*C'est le diable*,' said the valet. '*Le diable!*' cried the butler, laying his finger on his proboscis. '*Le Diable!*' exclaimed the écuyer, pulling up his boots. '*Le Diable!*' said the countess's maid, getting closer to the écuyer. 'Do not be frightened, Jeannette,' whispered he, 'the devil himself shan't hurt you--' What he said more was lost in a buzz. 'Fie! don't be blasphemous, Roger,' cried Jeannette, 'who knows what may happen?' and so they talked it all over, and agreed that it was very possible that the young count might be *the devil*.

"When the old lady was safely dead and buried, Count Robert ordered his cellar to be replenished, for it had fallen much to decay; and getting together a great company of young knights and nobles, they fell into all manner of excesses; hunting till they were tired, eating till they were full, and drinking till they were drunk, bespattering the *old* women with dirt from their horses' feet, and kissing the *young* ones in a very unbecoming manner. So that every body cried out that Count Robert was--*le diable*.

"Now it so happened that the Count fell in love with the abbess of the convent of Beauchamp, whom her brother, the Marquis of Millemonte, had caused to take the veil. He having some religious scruples and qualms of conscience to paying the dower her father had left her, in case she entered into the state of matrimony. Nevertheless, the count, who cared little about religious matters, set his brains to work; and taking the method of the famous Count Orry, he obtained admission to the convent; so that every body cried out more than ever, that Count Robert was certainly--*le diable*.

"The news of this occurrence was not very palatable to the Marquis of Millemont, but Count Robert heeded not whether he liked it or no, and went on in revelry and feastings, till one night, the marquis, with a large company, suddenly broke in upon him, and began to lay about him without mercy. Now, though the count was as drunk as the sow of a certain celebrated personage, he fought so hard, that every one swore Count Robert was *le diable*; till, overpowered by numbers, he was driven, with the few of his followers who remained alive, from chamber to chamber, even to the outer wall; whence, sooner than be taken, he threw himself down into the ditch of the castle; and all those who were by vowed and averred, that the water where he fell hissed and fizzed, as if a piece of hot iron had tumbled into it, which completely convinced all the world that Count Robert was really nothing but *le diable*.

"From that time to this," said the old woman, "the château has gone gradually to decay. I remember it, standing high above every thing around, but now the upstart trees measure their height against it, and in the greenness of their youth seem to mock its forlorn old age, forgetting that they shall decay and fall like it, and like me. Every year robs it of something; and it is only wonderful that it has not fallen before, as for many a century it has never been inhabited: for who would dwell in the château of *Robert le Diable?*"

I hated sentiment at that time of my life; and as the *old* woman was beginning to grow somewhat sentimental on the old castle, we wished her good morning, and proceeded as fast as we could to Berney. The postmaster, or rather the post-mistress, for it was a women, was very civil and good-tempered, and as she kept an hotel into the bargain, we should have lodged with her, had it not been for a wet court-yard between the inn and the street. It had been originally carpeted with straw, which had since been beaten into a mash and wetted with a fortnight's rain, so that with the assistance of a number of oxen, horses, goats, and pigs, it had been rendered quite impassable. We went then to *l'Equerre* where we were shown through the kitchen into a single room with two beds. I hinted to the landlady, that we should require two rooms, and here began our first battle. She had no idea, it appears, of people occupying two rooms, when one would do. But I kept to my point, and told her that an Englishman always required a room to himself. She said that it was very extraordinary. I agreed to that, but told her that the English were an extraordinary nation, and when they could not get two rooms they always went away. Thereupon, she instantly gave us what we required, though she had vowed fifty times before that she had but that one apartment vacant.

While dinner was preparing we went out to visit the churches, and walked through the beautiful valley of Charentonne. We staid a moment in the cemetery, but there was only one tomb to be distinguished from the routine of epitaphs commonplace. On the one I speak of appeared a broken rose, rudely sculptured in the stone, and below were written some lines, the idea of which was better than the versification.

"Flower of a day, that blossom'd but to die,
In native earth thine earth-born beauties lie:
Not so thine odour, tho' thy stem be riven,
It, on the blast that broke thee, rose to heaven."

On our return to the inn, our dinner was placed before us. It consisted of some soup and bouilli, some abortive trout, that I believe on my conscience were originally intended for gudgeons, a stewed hare, or *civet de lièvre* (which probably was some poor unfortunate cat, for I never could get a sight of the hare-skin), and some plates of vegetables. I saw by this that our bill would be high; for, on the same principle that "he ne'er forgives who does the wrong," an innkeeper who serves you ill always makes you pay for it.

I was not disappointed. Our charges, next morning, were at least twice as much as by any reasonable calculation they ought to have been; and, consequently, I struck off one half of the bill. The landlady vowed that she would not take one sous less than she demanded, and I vowed that I would not give her one sous more than I offered. She swore I should not quit the house till I had paid it. I informed her that the carriage was at the door and that I was going. She said she would go to the maire. I told her to make haste, then, for that I was in a hurry. She flew into a violent passion, and I affected to fly into another. I counted out the half of the bill upon the table; she took it up and put it in her pocket, and the matter being thus settled, we both recomposed our faces. I wished her good morning and perfect health; and she expressed hope, that if we again passed through Bernal, she should have *le plaisir infini de notre pratique*.

Happy, happy, happy people! An English landlady would have growled for two hours afterwards.

There is more of the *beau ideal* of cottage life in France than in England. One meets with more of those bright and striking points of original character among the peasantry of France in a day, than one would find in England in a month. All over the world cultivation has put nature out of fashion, and man is all the smoother but none the brighter for it; but, however, it sometimes happens that in our wanderings we find little bits of pure unadulterated nature that are worth any price; and when I meet with such, I ask Memory to pick them up and put them in her pocket for me. It is true that she, careless slut, often drops what is good, and hoards up what she had better cast away; but still I have a little treasure in her hands, consisting simply of bright pictures that I have gathered together as I journey on. Things seen for a moment and passed by. A group of children playing; a girl drawing water, a striking effect of light and shade, or the passing away of a storm, will give me more pleasure and remain longer upon my memory than all the graces and attitudes even of a Taglioni.

In passing through Normandy alone, a painter, who could sketch rapidly, with taste and imagination to guide him, might soon fill his portfolio with groups that would set him above all the artists in the world. I remember as we drove out of Bernay, there was a girl standing at the window of a cottage by the road-side; she was young, and her form had all the loveliness of youth, the wild grace of nature, and the richness of simplicity. Her hands leaned upon the bar of the window, and she seemed watching the progress of a cloud that flitted across the blue sky, with her eyes raised towards heaven, and her brown hair falling back from her face. She was worth all the Magdalens that ever were painted.

The gardens of the Guinguettes, too, are prodigal of undisguised nature. In the evening of a summer Sunday, all the youth of the neighbourhood assemble there to dance away the afternoon, and all is harmony and joy. Nature has full room to act, and she always does it beautifully.

I know not well which is the cause and which the effect--whether a French peasant's peculiar amusements render him a better tempered animal than an Englishman of the same class, or whether it is a disposition naturally gentler, that leads him to those amusements. Certain it is, that his amusements are generally milder in their kind, and more good-humoured in their execution than an Englishman's; and I cannot help thinking, that if our country magistrates would but encourage and revive the nearly forgotten rural sports of our ancestors, many good feelings which have been lost; would come back with those innocent pastimes.

The object of all mankind is happiness; and the object of all good lawgivers is to secure the greatest possible portion of it to those they govern. Every thing that renders the people gentler among themselves, renders them happier; and there is no greater bond of union amongst a whole nation, than general attachment to ancient customs.

In France, every thing is done for the people's amusement. The government aid it; the magistrates encourage it; and the rich, look on with pleasure, while the poor enjoy themselves. It unites all classes of society by the strongest ties; and while an Englishman sits drinking before a public-house, abusing the laws he neither knows nor understands, a Frenchman dances away his

hours, contented with himself and all the world.

Among the lower classes of the peasantry (I do not, speak of the inhabitants of cities) the evils of the revolution were little felt. The conscription was the only thing that affected them; and whilst almost every other class lost the better part of their character they remained the same. They may be savage in their resentments, but it needs real injury to excite them; and in their amusements they are mild, cheerful, and orderly. At the fairs and at different fêtes, where there are various sports and prizes supplied at the expense of government, it is truly astonishing to see the general good humour and regularity which prevails; and, in spite of the gensdarmes who stand looking on like the ushers of a school on a half-holiday, nature is not at all checked to produce it. On the contrary, she is always breaking forth; and it is the very spirit of happiness which she breathes, well pleased with herself and with all around her. I have often wished for the pencil of a Wilkie to sketch the faces, I have seen grinning at a merry-andrew, or watching the efforts of a poor devil on a tourniquet,[3] striving to keep the unsteady machine on the balance, till he arrives at the prizes within his view; and just when he fancies that he grasps success, round flies the tourniquet and down he falls amongst the people--and what then? Why the people laugh, and he laughs too; and takes his place at the end of the file to try his luck again.

I once saw a country girl watching her lover trying hard to win a tempting mouchoir, which no doubt they had both determined to be the finest thing in the world to deck her out next Sunday at mass. She looked timidly round her every now and then, as if she feared that the eagerness she felt in her heart should shine out before the world, and then she fixed her eyes upon her lover again, while he got on by degrees, till at last the mischievous tourniquet turned him and his hopes upside down together. The long compressed breath burst from the girl's lips in a deep sigh, but the lad gave a gay look through the crowd, and a smile to where his mistress stood, as much as to say--"I am not beaten yet;" and took his place again. But there were half a dozen to try their fortune before him; and as they came nearer and nearer the poll on which the prizes hung, he regarded them anxiously; and I could see that it was not he hoped they would fall, but that he feared they would take the very mouchoir he had fixed his heart upon. I do not know why, but something had made me determine that one way or another the girl should not go away without a mouchoir; and so now, having an interest in the matter, when it came to his turn again I watched him as eagerly as any one. But he managed well, and proceeding slowly and cautiously came near the prizes, gave a spring at the mouchoir, and brought it to the ground. In the triumph of his heart he could not help holding it up to his mistress, which called a laugh from the people. But it mattered little; the girl paid for her mouchoir with a blush; and taking the arm of her lover walked away as happy as a princess--nay a great deal happier.

WORDS AND THINGS.

And all the rest is leather and prunella.

As we rolled on at a very tolerable pace, towards le Mans, we met a troop of conscripts on the road; forced from their homes, torn from all early and dear associations--and there they were, as gay as larks, singing and laughing till the welkin rang. Yet the French people do not like the conscription. The government of Napoleon had become intolerable from it; and the irksome taxes comprised under the title of *droits réunis*, was another source of discontent. It is a very general mistake to suppose that words are merely the representatives of ideas, when every day experience shows us that a change in words is often of much more consequence than a change in things. The Bourbon family, on their restoration, promised that the *conscription* should be abolished, and that the *droits réunis* should no longer exist; and consequently their names were expelled from the catalogue of government terms: but as it was found absolutely necessary that the king should be supplied with soldiers, and the state with money, the name of *jeunes soldats* was substituted for *conscrits*, and *contributions indirectes* for that of *droits réunis*. This proved highly satisfactory to all; and there were only a few weak-minded individuals, who took snuff, and pretended that, in reality, things remained just as they were.

We rolled on.--One little act of kindness, one smile from a warm and benevolent heart, is worth all the cant and politeness in the world. It was a changeable autumn day, and as we came to the top of the hill which overlooks the rich valley of Gacé, a dark heavy storm, which had obscured the sky for more than an hour, suddenly broke away, and left the whole scene beaming in light and loveliness. My friend was much fatigued, and as we were about to change horses here, we agreed to stay and dine. The post-house was the inn, and, on driving up to the door, a fine portly old man, and two black-eyed blooming girls, came out to greet the travellers on their arrival with so much frankness and good-nature in their faces that, had we been travelling on life and death, we must even have stayed to dinner there. The first room in all Norman inns is the kitchen, and thither Monsieur Butet led us, and introduced us in form to *Madame sa femme*, who was the

counterpart of her husband--the same age and size for a woman as he was for a man, with the same look of hilarity and health, and the same frank open countenance that bade you welcome before she spoke. Every thing, too, around them was clean and neat, and bespoke a family of cheerful regularity. My feet were very wet with getting in and out of the carriage to pay the postboys, so the two girls took me under their special protection, and setting me by the side of the large chimney, blew up the fire to dry me, while Madame Butet got, the dinner ready, and her husband showed my friend to a room where he could lie down. I will not say they were civil--civil seems a mercenary word--they were kind.

At dinner they gave us the best of every thing they had; and if we required any little change, it was done with alacrity and good humour. The two girls served us, and laughed and talked, and showed their white teeth, as if they had known us for a hundred years; and the father came in to ask if we had every thing we wished. After dinner he begged to know if he should put to the horses, for, if we intended to go to Alençon that night it was growing late; but we told him that we intended to spend the night with him. He made us a low bow, and said that we did him too much honour, that his was a poor, little inn, and they had nothing to offer us but good will. The *bourg*, too, had nothing curious or interesting to amuse us, he added; yet he must say, that though he had visited many places, he had never seen a sweeter valley, or a neater little town than Gacé.

The next morning was market-day, and before the windows we had all the women of the country round, in their high white caps and bright gowns either of blue or red. Amongst other commodities, one which had a great sale was the sabot, or wooden shoe; and Mademoiselle Butet advising me to buy a pair to put on in getting out of the carriage, I begged her to send for some to let me see. When they came, she tried them on for me herself, showed me how to wear them, chaffered the vender down five or six sous in the price, and carried them off to show her father what a pretty pair of sabots she had bought for Monsieur.

We had every reason to be contented at Gacé; we were well lodged, and fed, and treated, and the bill was but a trifle. It contained only one word--"bonne chère," good cheer; and was not more simple than the people themselves.

I was almost afraid that some little thing might lower these good souls in my opinion; but no, it went on to the last in the same kind, good-humoured, unpretending way. They had welcomed us like friends, and so they bade us farewell; and coming all out to the door, they wished us a pleasant journey, and many happy years, and looked after us long as we drove away.

Several circumstances amused me much in passing from Alençon to le Mans: but I gradually got tired of my position, and was not at all sorry when the carriage drove up to the inn. It was a cold, cheerless, drizzly night, as one could wish for; and as I hate to take the worst view of a place, by looking at it through a mist of any kind, I turned my eyes obstinately towards the large arched entry of the inn, without regarding whether the town was black, white, or gray. There was, a little sort of bureau on the left hand, and at the door was standing one of the most interesting beings I ever beheld. It was altogether a picture we seldom meet with. The light fell sideways, and showed as beautiful a face as any in the world, in that deep relief of light and shade which Rembrandt only knew how to manage. It was very fair, and very pale; the hair was simply braided on the forehead under a cap shaped like a nun's; and the long dark eyes, as they were turned towards the spot where we stood, caught the light, but seemed more to absorb than to reflect it. There was a degree of quiet peace in the attitude, and a tranquil calmness in the countenance, which expressed a thoughtful mind, and a gentle unperturbed spirit, better than any eloquence could have done it; and the silver cross which hung by a black ribbon round her neck and rested on her hand, seemed to point out more particularly the bent of her thoughts. I know not why (for I never scrutinize my motions), but as I passed by, I instinctively pulled off my hat. My companion was equally struck with myself; and one of our first questions went to obtain further information. "She was daughter (they told us) of the mistress of the house, and intended to become *religieuse*."

I asked if there was any reason. Perhaps some sorrow had given her mind that bent--some disappointment of that kind which rests on woman's heart like a blight, till the whole tree withers? but they told us no; that she had always been thus. She was, it seems, one of those calm, quiet spirits, which are as strangers in the midst of the busy world, taking no part in its cares and its joys, and looking sorrowfully upon all the evil that is done and suffered, She was very good, the people said, and very charitable, and every body loved her; and for the moment I felt a degree of grief that her heart had never met any one that was worthy of its affection. But no, it was better not; for love is but a brighter name for pain; and God forbid that a spirit which turned towards heaven, should be weighed down by any of the passions of earth.

In the evening I missed my friend for half an hour; and when he rejoined me, "I have been talking with our nun," said he, "over the fire." But I begged him not to tell me any thing about it. "I would not have done it for the world," said I.

"Why not?" demanded he:--and as some one else may ask the same question, and think I meant differently from that which I did, I will give the reasons now, as I gave them then. I would not have done it for the world; for I never like to compare the paintings of fancy with the originals. Realities are seldom the pleasantest parts of life. Hope, memory, and, even enjoyment, are more than half imagination. Every thing is mellowed by distance; and when we come too near, the airy

softness is lost, and the hard lines of truth are offered harshly to the eye. Half our sorrows are the breaking of different illusions: sometimes they must be broken; but when, without danger to himself, or injury to others, man can enrich the scene before him with ideal beauties, he is foolish to examine minutely the objects of which it is composed. The cottage, with its broken thatch and shining piece of water in the foreground, is picturesque and beautiful in a landscape;--but what is the reality? The dwelling of misery, decorated with a horse-pond! The splendid pageants, that dazzle the lesser children at a theatre, are but dirty daubs of paint and tinsel; and it is the same with the stage of the world. It never answers to be behind the scenes. In life, I have met with but two things equal to what I fancied them--sunrise from a mountain, and a draught of water when I was thirsty.

A FRENCH COOK.

There is no man on earth, I believe, who has not figured to himself a sort of animal totally distinct from every thing else in nature, and called it in his own mind a *French cook*.

It is, in a manner, an historical character; and from the very nursery we accustom ourselves to picture him with a long pigtail and a nightcap, skinning cats and fricasseeing frogs. But the breed is nearly extinct: I had sought for one of the true race all over France with the zeal and fervour of an antiquary, and long had only the mortification of finding every kitchen filled with plump, greasy professors (who for fat and solemnity, might have occupied any chair in a Dutch university), skimming their dirty saucepans, and mercilessly compounding mutton and beef to supply the cravings of a nation who have nearly abandoned frogs,[4] snails and vipers, to feed upon the same gross aliments as the English. As I have said, much had been my mortification; but there was a reward in store for me, Le Valliant could not have been more gratified when he first met with the giraffe than was I, when, on entering the kitchen at le Mans, my eyes fell upon the minister of the culinary department. It was the *beau ideal* of a French cook! and had Hogarth seen him, he would have made him immortal.

He was about sixty, and as thin as could be well desired. His complexion was *café au lait*, set off by a pair of small eyes, high up in his head, as black as jet, and sparkling like the charcoal under his saucepans; while his hair, as white as snow, stuck out in full friz, like a powder-puff, and supported a candid nightcap, which, leaning slightly to one side, let the tassel sway peacefully over his left ear.

Whether it was from constantly leaning to the side of royalty (for he had been an *émigré*), or from some accident, I do not know, but one of his legs was rather shorter than the other. This, however, nothing deteriorated the dignity of his deportment; and when he appeared in the midst of stews and sauces, with his gray jacket, his snowy apron, and his knife by his side, my imagination became exalted: his nightcap assumed the appearance of a wreath; his jacket transformed itself into pontifical robes; his knife became the instrument of sacrifice; the *b[oe]uf au naturel* changed to the bellowing victim; the kitchen to the porch of the temple; and I began to fancy myself in ancient Greece, when suddenly he advanced towards us with a smiling air, and placed chairs for us by the fire. "Sit down English gentlemans," said he, in a barbarous corruption of my native language; "sit down, sit down. Oh! I go make you nice dinner. I be in England; I make the kitchen to Lord Salisbury. Do you understand Lord Salisbury? *Connaissez-vous* Lord Salisbury."

What between himself and his English, I have seldom met any thing equal to him. He had all the importance, too, of his profession; there was a gravity in his emptiness, and a politeness in his gravity. When he cooked, his whole soul seemed in the dish; but when any one addressed him, his face relaxed into a smile, and the dish was forgot. The pride of his heart was in his saucepans, which hung up in innumerable shining rows above our heads, burnished like the armour of Achilles, and from those saucepans he produced fare worthy the great Lucullus. Indeed, he was the best cook I ever met; but that is easily accounted for. He had been cook to a seminary of Catholic priests, and quitted it upon some quarrel. The good father directors, soon finding how much their palates lost by his absence, wished him to return; and he showed with no small triumph a letter he had received to that effect. I copied, and give it word for word. The colouring might be heightened, but it is better as it is; and, as a specimen of an epistle from a priest to a cook, it is unique:--

"MON CHER MONSIEUR, "*Paris*, 8 *Juillet* 1823.

"Voici ce que Monsieur le Supérieur m'a dit de vous répondre. 'Si vous voulez être bien raisonnable, bien gentil, être bon chrétien, vous conformer en tout aux règles de la maison, vous n'avez qu'à revenir au plus tôt. Je ferai votre affaire.' Voilà ses propres paroles.

"Je me réjouis de cette heureuse nouvelle que je vous apprends. Je dis que c'est pour vous une heureuse et très-heureuse nouvelle, car où peut-on être mieux que dans une maison où, si l'on veut, l'on peut se sanctifier si facilement et mériter le bonheur du paradis? Venez donc au plus vite, venez dans ce saint séminaire, où vous vous rendrez digne du ciel, j'en suis sûr. Je suis avec amitié votre très-devoué, "JEAN-BAPTISTE C----."

"P. S. Je me porte beaucoup mieux."

THE TABLE D'HÔTE.

If our landlord supplies us with beef and with fish,
Let each guest bring himself, and he brings the best dish.

--RETALIATION.

The table d'hôte of the Boule d'Or at le Mans was like an *olla podrida*. There was a little of every thing; all the odd ends and scraps of society bashed up in one dish. Next to me, on the left, was an old noble, Grand Cordon of one of the orders of merit, who had come to put his son to the college at la Flèche. He had seen much of the world--had been an emigrant and a wanderer. There were the traces of many sorrows, dangers, and cares, on his countenance; but if ever the heart finds an interpreter in the eye, his had not been hardened by the trials of life. He had that sort of urbanity in his face, which probably in youth had been accompanied by a gayer and a quicker spirit, though years had left nothing but the calm placidity of demeanour, which, if it does not spring from benevolence, at least appears to do so.

On my other hand was a young travelling linen draper--a good example of French education. He had been brought up at a college, but that had not spoiled him for trade. He would talk with equal learning of Horace and cambric, and spoke as scientifically of the measurement of angles as the measuring of ribbons. He had scraps of Latin and samples of cloth, and added, moreover, a political system, which was certainly of his own manufacture. Neat my friend sat a very elegant old man, with a long-waisted Windsor gray coat, and ruffles, in the mode of 17--, to his shirt, which peeped timidly out from under the cuffs of his coat, like a ci-devant ashamed to show himself amongst the upstarts of fashion. They were kept in countenance, however, by a powdered wig, with two long rows of curls on each side, and a tapering pigtail that, like a ship, furrowing its way through the sea, marked the coat with a white track all down the centre of his back. Towards the end of the meal, a priest, newly arrived, came in with his servant, and they both sat down to table together. Each was as dirty as can well be imagined, but the master was, in this respect, pre-eminent. Nature had kneaded him with a round, fat, copper-coloured face, which had evidently little acquaintance with soap and water, and his black rugged beard apparently went from Sunday to Sunday without the touch of innovating steel. His hands, which probably fate had originally designed for pig-driving, were now as dirty as if they still followed that employment, and these he thrust unmannerly into the dish, without vouchsafing a word or a look to those around him.

It is the poetry of life to see a man superior to his station, and rising above his fate; but it is distressing to find the station thus degraded by the man. However, he and his servant sat together; and talked together, and ate together; and, most probably, the servant would have been very ill pleased if he had dined on meaner fare than his master. A Frenchman of this class can live upon any thing. If he cannot get better, a galette and butter-milk, or soupe maigre and a beurrée, will content him. But, if they be within reach, two services and a dessert are not at all too much for him. An Englishman of the same rank never aspires to more than a piece of meat and a mug of ale; but he must have that, or he cries starvation.

The French have a kind of irritable jealousy towards the English; which sometimes makes them forget their general politeness; Give them but a civil word, make the least advance, and they receive you with open arms; but show them that cold reserve, with which an Englishman generally treats all strangers, and every Frenchman's hand is on his sword.

I believe we had been rather silent during dinner, but the young traveller on my right soon commenced snarling against the English. He began about manufacturers, as something in his own line; saying that we pretended to rival the French, but if we lowered our duties we should soon find how far we were surpassed by the taste and elegance of French productions. The émigré on my right, said that he was not quite convinced of that. The superiority of our machines, the industry of our population; and the vastness of our resources, he said gave us infinite advantages over every competitor; and he was afraid that France would be obliged to call forth all her energies before she could equal us, without thinking of going beyond.

The gentleman in the ruffles observed mildly, that England must have a very unproductive climate. He had lived long, he said, upon the coast of Brittany, and remarked constant boat-loads of fruit, vegetables, and eggs, embarked for England. The fruit and vegetables he could understand; for that entirely depended upon the atmosphere, but he could not imagine why we had no eggs. I replied that it was, probably, because our hens being naturally of colder constitutions than the French fowls, had a greater penchant for celibacy.

"The truth is," said the old nobleman, "that those who have never been in England, do not know what England is. Her productions are perfectly capable of supplying her population, but her immense wealth giving her the means of excess, she is not content with what she absolutely wants, but drains other countries of their necessaries to furnish her with luxuries, and the least check throws the burden on the lower orders.

"True," said the young traveller, "England is glad enough to drain other countries; and without doubt, she now only proposes to open her ports, to overburden us with her useless gold, in exchange for our substantial commodities. England talks of her liberal policy, but it is her own interest only she consults, and would gladly ruin the world to enrich herself with its spoils."

There was something very warm came rising into my cheek, but the old emigrant made a slight inclination, as much as to say, "let me answer him," so I said nothing.

"You are very wrong, sir;" replied he to the young man. "You are wrong, and unjust. At a period too unhappy to France for a Frenchman willingly to recal, did England take any unhandsome advantage of her position? Who would have refused her, if she had demanded ten times more than she required? And since then, of what has she defrauded the nations? Of what has she robbed the world? Her only object has been to guard and protect her commerce which, is her existence; and this she has scarcely done as much as her able policy and successful arms gave the title to expect, and the power to exact. So much for her government; now for her people. No one shall say one word against them before me. When I was an exile and a wanderer, without a country, and without a friend, the English received me, protected me, supported me. The nation gave me the means of existence, and individuals made that existence happy. France is the country of my youth and of my love: in my young days I drew my sword for her, but have never unsheathed it against her. France shall have my bones when I die, and my affection while I live; but England shall ever have my gratitude, and Englishmen my esteem."

He spoke, and the fire that had animated him, passed away, and left his countenance as mild and tranquil as it had been before.

At Tours I parted from the friend who had hitherto accompanied me, as he intended to visit Blois and Orleans, while I was bent upon wandering awhile in Brittany, which to my mind, filled as it was with the memories of La Vendée and of the war of loyalty was quite a new land of romance. To Rennes I first bent my steps, and there accidentally made some acquaintances who proved very serviceable in directing my steps aright to the various places of interest in the province. I shall not, however, pause to narrate all my excursions, as I am not writing an itinerary of Brittany--though to say the truth I know few parts of the world which present more points of interest. There is a frankness and good humour, too, about the people, which is very agreeable. They want perhaps a part of the refinement of the Parisians; but they make up in sincerity for all deficiencies in polish. I cannot, indeed, say that their morality is very rigid, nor can I boast that while I remained amongst them I avoided the ordinary errors into which youth and inexperience are but too apt to fall. The thought of Emily Somers, however, as well as still holier thoughts, kept me from any very reprehensible conduct, and I took care by constantly writing to her to prevent her from fancying that I had forgotten her even for a moment.

I had been absent from England between four and five months when some occurrences took place which must be mentioned. After various expeditions to different parts of the country, I was thinking of turning my steps towards my native land, and had returned to Rennes with that view, when I was again called back half way to Nantes by a tale which I may call

THE PEASANT OF BRITTANY.

CHAPTER I.

There is, in a wild and unfrequented part of Brittany, a small farm-house, which I was now led to visit with as much reverence as many a devout worshipper has felt, at the shrine of his saint. It is situated at the distance of about a league from the small town of Nozay, and is within sight of a solitary windmill on the hill beyond that place, called the *Moulin à vent de Bolhalard*. Around it are about thirty acres of arable land, sheltered by the slopes that sweep down towards it on three sides; but beyond that little patch of cultivation, the hills around are, as every one knows who has visited that part of France, covered with heath, which, on the table-land at the summit, ends in the sandy unproductive sort of track called *landes*. It is a bleak and desolate scene, and, even when the sun shines in all his summer brightness, its aspect is wild and solitary; but when, as is frequently the case, the sky above is covered with cold gray clouds, or when the chill easterly wind sweeps over the unprotected plains, there are few places that I know which offer an appearance of more cheerless dreariness than the farm of Dervais.

Early one day in the beginning of the month of June, and in the year 1794, the old farmer, who at that time cultivated the little spot of productive land which I have mentioned, and fed his sheep upon the neighbouring heaths, stood before his door gazing up towards the sky, as if to ascertain what sort of weather was to predominate during the day. I may be permitted to describe him; for the name of La Brousse should live for ever, where honour, and good faith, and generous devotion, are valued amongst men. Like the generality of Breton peasants, he was tall, bony, and powerful, with long arms and muscular hands, which, even at that period of his life, would have performed many a feat of extraordinary strength. He must have been more than sixty years of age, and the long curling locks of white hair, which, like every Breton, he preserved with reverential care, hung down upon his shoulders, and over a forehead high and broad as that of Milton. Persons who had been accustomed to mark the features common to particular counties in England, would have taken him for a Cornish man, by the peculiar cast of his countenance; and it is more than probable that his blood was derived from the same stock. His eye was of a clear dark blue, beneath a marked overhanging eyebrow; and his long straight pose, and rounded chin, offered traces of beauty which had survived even the ruinous effects of time. His dress was simply that of a peasant of the province. The expression of his countenance at the time I speak of, was stern and melancholy. Well, indeed, might it be so; for, in the Vendean wars of the preceding year, his two sons, his only children, had fallen in fighting gallantly against the revolutionary tyranny; and, childless in his old age, he stood and saw his country each day accumulating crimes, and drowning her best hopes in blood.

As he paused before his cottage-door on the day I mention, and gazed up to the sky, he saw nothing but thin gray clouds drifting slowly over the wide awful expanse of heaven, promising one of those warm wet days which so often serve as a link between the summer and the spring; but, when he let his glance sink to the side of the hill, he beheld a young woman descending towards him by a little path, which traced its wavy line amongst the heath and fern, till both heath and fern were lost in arid *landes* beyond.

"Some one seeking milk," he thought at first, as his eye rested on the figure; and he was about to turn into his house, to see whether he had any to spare; but there was something in the form of the approaching visitor, something in the step and in the air, that made him pause, and watch her coming more closely, while a strong expression of anxiety gradually, appeared in his straining eye.

She came on rapidly, as if in haste, and yet with a wavering and uncertain step, like one much wearied. When nearer, too, he saw that her clothes were not those of a peasant girl, and through haste, and terror, and fatigue, there shone an air of grace and dignity not to be mistaken. La Brousse took an involuntary step to meet her; and, as if he understood it all at once--as if he saw that she was the wife or child of some Vendean chief, flying from the revolutionary butchers--the words, "Poor thing!" were murmured ere he asked a question.

When she came near, the spectacle she offered was a sad one. She was young and graceful, and exquisitely beautiful, but weariness, sorrow, and terror were written in every line of her countenance, while her dress was soiled and torn, and dabbled in many parts with blood. Her story was soon told; for none of those attached to the cause of royalty, even in the times of the bitterest persecution, ever hesitated to rely entirely upon the loyalty and honour of the Breton peasantry; so that Clara de la Roche, the daughter of the unhappy marquis of that name, who fell in the route of Mans, related her tale to the ears of the good farmer La Brousse, with as much confidence, of sympathy, protection, and good faith, as if she had been relating it to the ears of a parent. After her father's death she had followed the fortunes of her only brother, through all the horrors of the Vendean war, till he also had fallen about a week before; and from that time she had wandered on, without companion or home, friend or protector, through a country in which famine was fast treading upon the steps of war; where her only food was obtained from charity; and where some of the many horrible deaths which had been invented by the diabolical cruelty of revolutionary tyranny, awaited her the moment she set her foot within the walls of a town. Good old La Brousse had once given shelter to her brother after some unsuccessful effort in the royal cause; and she had now sought him out, and besought him with tears, to let her live even as a servant in his house, till some of those dreams of triumphant loyalty, in which the Vendeans still indulged, should at length be realized.

The old man led her in as tenderly, and as affectionately, as if she had been his own child, set before her all his cottage afforded, soothed her sorrow, and spoke the sweet hope of better days, and happier fortunes. "She could not act as his servant," he said, looking at her small beautiful hands; "for her appearance would at once betray her; but the daughter of a noble royalist, and especially a child of the house of La Roche, should never want bread or protection, while old La Brousse could give it, though the very act might cost his life. Mademoiselle, however, must consent to lie concealed," he added; and he showed her how the back of one of those *armoires*, which are so common in that country, had been contrived to act as a door to a little room beyond, which was lighted by a concealed window, and which, though extremely small, was neat and comfortable. Here, La Brousse told her, she must spend the greater part of her day, as her brother had done while he lay concealed in his house; but that, at night, when the doors and windows were all closed, she might come forth in security, and towards dusk might even venture to take a walk across the *landes*.

The prospect of such a state of existence would have been horrible enough to most people; but to Clara de la Roche it offered that blessed repose and security--that temporary cessation of

terror, and horror, and fatigue--which had filled every hour of her being during the months just past; and with joy she took up her abode in the chamber, which, indeed, was little different from a prison in any thing but the name. While the good old peasant was still in the act of showing her how to open and to close the door at will, a step was heard behind them; and, turning quickly round, Clara beheld a pretty peasant girl, of about eighteen or twenty, entering the cottage; while old La Brousse told her not to be afraid, as it was only Ninette, a cousin's child, who kept his house for him, and who might be trusted as much as himself. Clara had no fears when she beheld a peasant, and she felt too, as most women would feel, that although she might see but little of Ninette, yet there was great comfort in having one other of her own sex constantly near her. The peasant girl too, habituated to such scenes, seemed to understand her situation at once, and came forward to speak to her with much kindness; but the tidings that she had seen horsemen upon the hill, riding about as if in search of some one, abridged all ceremony, and Clara at once took up her abode in her place of concealment.

Scarcely was the door in the back of the *armoire* closed, and the interior of the cottage restored to its usual aspect, when Clara, as she listened anxiously, heard the tramp of horse--to her ears a sound accursed--and the shouting voice of soldiery disturbing the quiet solitude in which she had taken refuge. In another moment they entered the cottage, and she soon found that she herself together with several other royalists, was the object of their search. With breathless anxiety she continued to listen while the whole house was examined, with the exception of the very spot in which she lay concealed. Nor was her fear to end, even when the soldiers had satisfied themselves that she was not there; for, having given the farm of Dervais as a rendezvous to several of their comrades scattered over the hill, the dragoons remained for several hours, drinking, singing, and mingling together in a foul strain, which they called conversation, blasphemy, ferocity, boasting, and ribaldry. At length, however, after many a weary moment spent by Clara in intense anxiety, the soldiers were joined by their their companions; and, mounting their horses, they once more rode away, leaving her to a longer interval of peace and security than she had known for many months.

CHAPTER II.

To the inhabitants of La Brousse's cottage the rest of the day passed in peace. With the old man and his young relative it went by in their usual occupations. To Clara de la Roche it passed in sleep; for grief and fatigue weighed heavy upon her eyelids, and she had not known one undisturbed hour of secure repose for many a long day. She was still asleep, when a light tap on the concealed door awoke her, and the voice of Ninette was heard, informing her that she might venture out of concealment, as the house was closed for the night. Clara now found herself in complete darkness, and had some difficulty in opening the door; but at length she discovered the spring, and issued forth gladly--for, whatever security it may bring along with it, confinement to one small space is never without its pain. The wide kitchen of La Brousse's farm-house was only lighted by one small resin candle; but the eyes of Clara de la Roche were dazzled for a moment, and she was in the midst of the room, ere she perceived another figure besides those of the good farmer and his young relation. It was that of a man of about six-and-twenty years of age, dressed in the garb of a peasant, and with a complexion so bronzed by the sun, as to speak plainly habits of constant exposure and toil. But still there was something in his appearance which at once made Clara de la Roche doubt that he was altogether that which he seemed. It was not alone that his face and his figure were as handsome and as finely formed as it is possible to behold; for impartial nature as often bestows her more perfect gifts upon the children of active industry as upon those of cultivation--and his was evidently a frame inured to toil and exertion; but it was that, with all, there was a calm grace, and easiness of position and of movement which is generally acquired, not given--which springs more frequently from cultivation of mind than from perfection of body--and which is difficult of attainment, even under every advantage of station and fortune.

When Clara entered, he was leaning with one hand upon a large oaken chair, his head slightly bent, and his eyes raised towards the opening door; but the moment he perceived that the steadfast gaze with which he regarded the fair fugitive raised a bright blush upon her cheek, he dropped his look to the ground; and, though there was space enough for all, drew back a step, as if to give her greater room to advance.

Old La Brousse, who saw their eyes meet, and the surprise that painted itself on Clara's countenance at beholding a stranger, instantly came forward to quiet her apprehension, by saying, "My nephew, Mademoiselle!" But though Ninette looked from Auguste to the face of the young lady, with a glance that seemed to claim Clara's admiration for the handsome young peasant, yet she appeared, the moment after, to think that the eyes of Auguste de la Brousse expressed somewhat more of admiration for the fair fugitive than was necessary or becoming. The whole family, however, were kind and gentle towards her, and Clara sat down with them to their homely supper. Ninette was soon all gaiety; but the young peasant was grave, and even sad. Nevertheless, in the course of the evening, he spoke to Mademoiselle de la Roche more than once; and, when Clara retired to her place of concealment, she needed no other voice to tell her that neither his birth nor his education had been amongst the peasantry of Bretagne.

To some persons, who he could be, and what could be his real situation, would have afforded

matter for much thought and speculation; but Clara de in Roche settled it in her own mind at once. "He must be one of the young nobility of la Vendée," she thought. "He could be none else than one, like herself, seeking refuge in concealment and incognito from persecution and destruction;" and, of course, a bond of sympathy and esteem was instantly established between her own heart and that of the young stranger.

She saw neither him nor La Brousse, however, during the whole of the next day, though Ninette visited her more than once, and often turned the conversation to Auguste. It is wonderful how keen women's eyes are in seeing into other women's hearts; and although Clara herself was yet scarcely nineteen, and had possessed as few opportunities as any one of judging what love is, yet she was not long in discovering that there was a spark of affection for the young stranger lighted in the bosom of poor Ninette, which she feared, from what she suspected of his real station, might prove hereafter dangerous to her peace. Many were the questions that she asked concerning Auguste's history; and Ninette, with whom the subject was a favourite one, replied to them all, although, at the same time, she thought that Mademoiselle was somewhat too particular in her inquiries. The answers that Clara received, however, were not such as tended to clear away her suspicions. Ninette declared that Auguste came from a branch of old La Brousse's family, which had long inhabited another part of the country, and that he had not been more that ten days at the farm, whither he had come to help his uncle, who found some difficulty in carrying on his agricultural operations since the death of his two sons.

At night, as soon as the house was completely closed in, and all prying eyes excluded, Clara again ventured from her place of concealment; and certainly, if she had before appeared handsome in the eyes of Auguste, she now, refreshed by repose, looked loveliness itself. Clara could not but feel that she was admired; and perhaps, at another moment, the admiration of the young stranger--whose tone, and manner, and language, as well as his appearance, all belied the character he assumed--might not have been unpleasant to a heart naturally gentle and affectionate, and ready to cling to any thing for support and consolation. But she saw, at the same time, that every look which Auguste turned towards her, every word that he addressed to her, inflicted a pang upon Ninette; and though Clara well knew that the passion the poor girl was nourishing could only end in her ruin, if the object of it was base, and in her unhappiness, if he were noble and virtuous, yet her heart was not one willing to inflict pain upon any human being; and she remained cold, silent, and reserved, where, she would gladly have confided her feelings, her sorrows, and her hopes.

During the course of the day that followed, Ninette scarcely came near the place of Mademoiselle de la Roche's concealment; and although, two days before, Clara had regarded it with delighted satisfaction, as the first secure resting-place she had found for long, she now began to feel the confinement and the solitude irksome. Her own thoughts, which were full of painful memories, varied by hardly any thing but apprehensions as painful, were certainly not the sweetest of companions during the long hours of a solitary summer's day, and she would have given much for a book to while away the time. At length, however, night came, and this time it was the voice of La Brousse himself that gave the signal for her to come forth. Ninette was sitting pettishly in one corner of the room, while Auguste stood by the table with his hand resting upon a small packet of books, which he was not long in offering to Clara, as a means of occupying her solitary hours. He did so with the calm and graceful ease that characterized his every action; but there was a light in his eye as he did so, that added a pang to all those that Ninette was already inflicting on herself, and gave even Clara no small pain on her account, though her own heart beat, and her own cheek burned, she scarce knew why.

Clara would fain have shrunk into herself, although the society even of a peasant was a relief, after the long hours of solitude which she had lately passed; but good old La Brousse strove to win her into cheerfulness, by all that simple unaffected kindness could effect; and the young stranger, without attempting to assume the air or tone of a lower station than her own, led her onward into conversation in despite of her determination, by a gentle, unobtrusive mingling of respect and tenderness, in which there was nothing to repress or to repel.

The conduct of Ninette, indeed, acted as a restraint upon all. She sat gloomy and frowning, biting her pretty lips in silence, while old La Brousse chid her, though not unkindly, for her ill-humour; and the young stranger, unconscious of the feelings he had himself excited, gazed upon her with surprise. Perhaps it was Clara de la Roche alone that saw and understood the real motives of the poor girl's behaviour, She did not, indeed, know that from the first hour that Auguste la Brousse, as the young stranger called himself, had set his foot across the threshold of the farm of Dervais, Ninette had determined that he should be her lover whether he would or not. She did not know that he had treated her from the first with cool indifference; nor that Ninette, in order to attract his admiration, had coquetted herself into a passion for him, which had received no encouragement; but she clearly saw that love was at the bottom of the poor girl's heart, and she felt grieved that her presence should in any way give her a foretaste of the disappointment that she was destined ultimately to undergo. Her own heart, however, was clear. She could not but acknowledge to herself, indeed, that the young stranger was perhaps the handsomest man she had ever yet beheld; that his beauty was not alone the beauty of feature, but the beauty of expression also; that he was graceful in person; and that his conversation had a varied power, which carried attention into admiration, and a tone of noble feeling that gave admiration the basis of esteem. But the heart of Clara de la Roche, though kind, and gentle, and tender, was not one easily to be won. The scenes in which she had mingled--the dangers, the

sorrows, the privations which she had undergone--had raised her spirit above all lighter things; and the only qualities that could win her love, were those which had been tried by the fiery ordeal of difficulties and perils. Though she was but nineteen, she had learned to distrust imagination, and rely upon deeds rather than appearance.

There was another safeguard, too, to her heart. Her hand, she knew, had been promised by her father to the son of an old and dear friend; and although she had never yet met him to whom she was destined--though the death of her father and brother left her free from all such engagements--yet a touch of the same enthusiasm which inspired the loyalty of her house, mingled with her veneration for her father's memory, and made her set a watch upon her own feelings, lest she should ever be tempted to violate the promise that he had given.

The evening passed, however; and at length, Clara again retired to her place of concealment. Sleep came not near her pillow for many hours; for the pain that her presence was inflicting upon Ninette, grieved her deeply, and she revolved in her own mind the idea of quitting the asylum she had found, and once more seeking an abode where her sojourn might occasion no uneasiness, except such as was absolutely inseparable from her situation. We will not say, indeed, that when she looked into her own heart, she might not there find some feelings that confirmed her in such a purpose. She did not love the young stranger, it is true; for she was one of those who had been taught early to avoid the first seeds of any thing that we do not wish to cultivate. But she would not but acknowledge that he was amiable, interesting, graceful, and handsome; and he was, moreover, the only one so gifted that she was likely to behold, if she remained where she was. She determined then, ere long, to make her way, if possible, to the house of some relations in the neighbourhood of Rennes.

CHAPTER III.

While Clara was in this state of uncertainty, she remained in all the watchfulness of doubt; but when her resolution was once formed, she fell into a profound sleep, from which she did not wake till late upon the subsequent morning. The sun had been up for several hours, and the small room, to the precincts of which she was confined, was close and oppressive; and after listening for a few moments at the partition, to ensure that no strangers were in the farm, she knocked gently, to call the attention of Ninette.

No one answered; but on listening again, she plainly heard the young *paysanne* bustling about her usual occupations in the kitchen, and she once more endeavoured to make herself heard. Still no reply was returned, and concluding that some danger existed, of which she was not aware, she desisted, and merely opened a small window, consisting of a single pane of glass, which, concealed amongst the masonry, served to give a portion of air and light to the apartment itself, without being discernible from the courtyard into which it looked.

Clara succeeded in drawing back the window, as she had done before on the preceding day; and a soft fresh air of summer, that now breathed warm and fragrant upon her cheek, made her long for peace and freedom. The little aperture was too high to afford any view of the world without; but Clara paused to listen, in order that her ear might not be quite so much prisoner as her eye. The first sounds she heard from the court, however, were not the most welcome. There was the tramp of armed men, with the grounding of muskets; and the next moment she could distinguish plainly from the other side, the voice of old La Browse speaking angrily to Ninette as he entered the kitchen in haste.

"Base girl!" he cried, "what means these soldiers without? You have betrayed us, Ninette--you have betrayed us--and have brought the stain of treachery upon my hearth! Out upon thee!--out upon thee! base girl!"

Even as he spoke there were other sounds in the cottage; and it was now evident that the house was in the hands of a party of the revolutionary troops from Nantes. Clara trembled in every limb; but she gently drew near and listened at the door that opened into the *armoire*, while the commandant of the detachment, with many a threat and many a blasphemy, interrogated old La Brousse upon the place of her concealment. She was mentioned by name--her person was described, and there could be no earthly doubt that the information which led to the search that was then in progress had been accurate and precise. Still old La Brousse held out; and as the soldiers seemed ignorant of the exact place of her concealment, he sternly refused to aid them by a word. At, length there was a pause; and then the voice of the commandant was again heard in a tone of command.

"Take him out into the court," he said. "Draw up a party--place the old brigand against the barn-door, and give him a volley! Let us see whether the wolf will die dumb! If she be given up, you save your life, old man!"

"It is not worth saving," replied La Brousse; and there was a noise of feet moving towards the door. As we have said, Clara de la Roche trembled in every limb; but she did not hesitate: with a firm hand, she withdrew the bolt of the concealed door, and in the next moment stood before her pursuers. The scene around her was one that might well make her heart quail. In the midst of a number of ferocious faces, sat the well-known Carrier, one of the most sanguinary monsters

which the French revolution had generated. His naked sword lay beside him on the table, and with his hand he pointed to the door, towards which a party of the soldiers were leading poor old La Brousse. In the other corner of the apartment, overpowered by the consciousness of base treachery, lay fainting on the floor the unhappy Ninette, not even noticed by those to whom she had betrayed the secret intrusted to her; and several soldiers were seen descending the staircase that led to the rooms above, through which they had been prosecuting an ineffectual search. The suddenness of Clara's appearance, and her extraordinary beauty, seemed for a moment to surprise even Carrier himself, and starting up, he gazed upon her for an instant, at the same time making a sign with his hand to the soldiers who were leading the old farmer towards the door.

Clara was very pale, and her heart beat with all that hurried throbbing to which the struggle between horror, terror, and noble resolution, might well give rise. "I claim your promise, sir!" she said, advancing towards the leader of the revolutionary force: "I claim your promise, sir! You said, if Clara de la Roche were given up, yonder old man's life should be spared."

Carrier paused, and still gazed upon her; but his pause proceeded from no feeling of mercy towards poor old La Brousse, nor from any difficulty in finding an excuse for violating his promise. Such considerations never impeded the progress of a Jacobin. He did pause, however; and with a look, conveying to the mind of the unhappy girl more feelings of repugnance than the aspect of death itself might have done, he answered; "You are as bold as you are beautiful. Knowing yourself to be a brigand,[5] and the daughter of a brigand, are you not afraid?"

"I have done no wrong," replied Clara, "and why should I fear?"

"Well, well," he answered, "the time may come, and the time will come, when you will fear; and when such is the case, send for Carrier, who may then, perhaps, find means to console you. As for that old brigand," he added, assuming an air of dignity, "I will keep my word. Set him free; but take care, Citizen La Brousse, how you venture to shelter an aristocrat again. There will be no mercy for a second offence."

Clara looked upon her own fate as sealed, but she thanked Heaven that her safety had not been purchased by the blood of the devoted old man; and, patiently suffering herself to be placed on horseback, she was led away towards Nantes, the streets of which city, and the river which flowed past its streets, were every day stained with the blood of creatures, young, and fair, and beautiful as herself.

As the last soldiers wound away from the farm, the leader selected five from amongst them, and gave some orders in a whisper, which instantly made them turn from the line of march that their comrades were pursuing, and take the path over the hill. This done, he himself rode up to the side of the unhappy girl he had captured, and poured into her ears a strain of wild and ferocious raving about revolutions, mingled with words of impure and fearful import, that made her heart sink.

At length they approached the town of Nantes. It was a beautiful evening in the height of summer, with the whole sky full of purple light; while the splendid city, rising from the banks of the water, was reflected in a thousand glistening lines from the bright bosom of the river. The air was light and soft; the heavens were calm and cloudless; there were birds singing in the tranquil freshness of the evening; and every thing spoke of peace and happiness. But as the party which escorted Clara de la Roche approached the banks of the Loire, her eye rested on a large boat, filled with human beings of every age, and sex, and class--from the old man with snowy hair, to the curly-headed child--from the lovely girl of eighteen, to the aged matron whose remaining hours could have been but few at best--from the old chivalrous noble of France, to some refractory Jacobin--from virtue and purity itself, to her who gained the means of life, or of luxury, by the abandonment of all holiness of heart. They were tied together; and though some wept and cast down their eyes, while others looked up, appealing to the glowing heaven above them, all were silent. At length two or three ferocious-looking wretches, who had been pushing the boat forward towards the centre of the river, leaped into a smaller boat by its side. A cannon-shot was heard as a signal, a rope was drawn, which seemed to pass under the larger bark; it rolled for a moment, as if upon a stormy sea--settled heavily down--there was a loud parting shriek, as its human freight bade the earth adieu for ever, and a howl of fierce delight from the monsters that lined the shore.

Clara closed her eyes, and when she opened them again, the boat, with all that it contained, was gone; but where it had last appeared, the waters were rushing and bubbling, as if the shallow river scarcely concealed the struggles of the two hundred victims who at that moment had found eternity beneath its waves. The brain of the poor prisoner reeled; her heart felt sick; the next moment sense forsook her, and she fell from the horse that had borne her through such a scene of crime and horror. A brief pause, of happy forgetfulness followed next; and then, when her eyes opened, she found herself in a close dark dungeon, with a multitude of her fellow-creatures lying round her, in loathsomeness, and misery, and disease, and despair.

CHAPTER IV.

It was night, and the farm of old La Brousse was left in solitude, for he had indignantly sent the unhappy girl, who had betrayed the secrets of his dwelling, back to her family; and suspecting that his own life and liberty had not been left to him, when much smaller offences were daily visited with death, without some treacherous motive, he had himself gone forth to seek, in the most obscure parts of the desolate track amidst which his house was situated, the young stranger whom we have seen under the name of Auguste. By some evil chance, however, they had missed each other; and, after the place had remained for some time without the presence of a single breathing thing, the door was gently opened and the young stranger entered, habited as usual in the dress of a peasant. He looked round the vacant kitchen in some surprise at seeing it dark and untenanted, and then, approaching the foot of the stairs, he pronounced the names of La Brousse and Ninette. No answer was of course returned; but while he was anxiously striving to obtain a light from the half extinct embers, the door was again unclosed, and the old farmer stood beside him.

"Haste, haste, La Brousse!" cried the young man, "Get me a light, and bring me my sabre and my bugle. I hear Carrier is roaming the country with one of his infernal bands of murderers. He must be met with ere he returns to Nantes; and I have named the rendezvous for daybreak to-morrow at the Mill of Bohalard."

"It is in vain, Monseigneur!" replied the old man, "it is in vain! By this time he is in Nantes; and he has dragged Mademoiselle de la Roche along with him."

Had there been a light in the chamber, the countenance of Auguste might have shown the old farmer that deeper and more powerful feelings were excited in his bosom by those words, than either common friendship or the peculiar interest of Clara's situation could inspire; but there was no light, and while the young Vendean remained in horror-struck silence, his companion proceeded rapidly to detail all that had occurred during the morning.

Even when he had done, Auguste made no reply for several minutes; and his first words were only, "My sabre and my bugle!"

Casting himself down in a chair, while the old man went to bring the articles he demanded, from the place where they were concealed, the other covered his eyes with his hands, and remained for several moments in deep and painful thought, from which he only roused himself for a moment to bolt the door by which he had entered. La Brousse at length returned; and Auguste, while buckling on his sabre and slinging the horn over his shoulder, grasped his arm and whispered, "Up to the high window, La Brousse! I heard a noise but now in the court. Arm yourself as best you can, and then bring me news of what you see below--quick! the moon is shining!"

The old man speedily came back with a fowling-piece in his hand, and a broadsword by his side; and he now replied in the same low tone, that there were men evidently skulking under the shadow of the barn.

"You see why your life was spared, La Brousse," said his young companion. "It is but that, by granting you a longer space, I might be entrapped along with you. But they shall find that we can sell our lives dearly. What say you? shall we go forth?"

"With all my heart, Monsieur le Comte," answered the stout old man. "I have nothing to care for now, and nothing to regret but the fate of that poor young lady; and perhaps I might not have been able to serve her, even if they had let me live."

"We may both serve her yet!" answered his companion. "Now open the door!" and drawing with one hand a pistol, which had lain concealed in a thick silk handkerchief that was tied round his waist, he held his bugle in the other, and prepared to go forth the moment the way was clear. As soon as his foot was beyond the threshold, "Qui va là?" was shouted from several different sides of the court-yard; and the next moment five men with levelled muskets advanced into the moonlight, exclaiming, "Rends-toi, brigand!"

He raised the bugle to his lips, and for all reply, blew one long loud blast, waving back La Brousse who was following him, and then sprang once more into the cottage. For a moment the soldiers seemed uncertain; but, as he retreated, the word "Fire!" was given, and the next instant the five muskets were at once discharged. Three of the balls whistled through the doorway; but by that time the young Vendean was himself masked by the wall, and had forcibly pulled the old farmer back out of the line of fire.

"Now, La Brousse, now!" he exclaimed, again starting forward into the court as soon as the muskets were discharged, and levelling his pistol at the head of the foremost assailant. The old man was by his side in an instant, taking a steady, fearless aim, by the light of the moon, at the left-hand man of the attacking party. The soldiers rushed forward, but ere they closed there were two distinct reports, and the odds were reduced to three against two.

The struggle that followed, however, was a fierce one. It was the bold heart and the strong hand doing the bidding of hatred and revenge. Old La Brousse, notwithstanding the load of years, overpowered one of the assailants that might have been his son, and cast him headlong to the earth, while Auguste cut down another; but the third sprang upon the old farmer, while

struggling to terminate the contest with his first opponent, and, seizing him behind, mastered his arms and tied them in a moment with all the skill of a jailer. At that instant Auguste turned upon him; but the man that La Brousse had overpowered now rose up but little hurt, and the young Vendean found himself attacked at once by two well-armed men, each equal to himself in personal strength. The game they seemed resolved to play was a deadly one; while one kept him engaged, the other loaded his musket, and the fate of Auguste seemed decided; but scarcely had the cartridge been crushed down into the gun, when a large stag-hound dashed down from the high grounds into the court, and at once sprang to the throat of the second soldier, at the very instant he was levelling his weapon at the head of the young Vendean. Self-preservation--always the strong principle of man's nature--made him turn the gun upon the faithful dog; but the unwieldy length of the musket at that time used in the French service, rendered it nearly impossible to bring the muzzle to bear upon the body of the animal, as it still hung by the grasp it had taken of his throat; and, in attempting to effect his purpose, the soldier fired and missed entirely his four-footed assailant, while the recoil of the gun, unsupported by his shoulder, shattered and disabled the hand by which it was held.

The dog, however, was accompanied by still more serviceable allies; and in a minute or two after, while Auguste still prolonged the combat with his opponent, and the gallant hound still held his grasp of the other, nine or ten men, in the wild costume of Vendean soldiers, warned by the bugle of their leader, poured into the court and overpowered all resistance.

The revolutionary soldiers were made prisoners in an instant; and as there were many words of very doubtful augury in regard to their fate passing amongst the Vendeans, they pleaded hard for life. For a moment or two no one heeded their entreaties, and Auguste himself gazed upon them with a look expressive of contempt rather than pity, while his companions untied the hands of good old La Brousse. "Bring out a light, La Brousse!" said the young man, "I would fain see the face of at least one of those gentry. His voice does not seem unknown to me."

The light was brought, and held alternately to the countenances of the two men who had prolonged the contest so fiercely, when the glare of the burning resin lighted first upon the features of a young, and then upon those of a middle-aged man, without displaying any extraordinary brutality of expression, or any marks of those savage passions which might be expected in the willing followers of the bloodthirsty Carrier.

"'Tis as I thought," cried Auguste, as he gazed upon the face of the elder. "How is it, fellow, that you, who were so long faithful to our cause, are now amongst the foremost of its base adversaries, and are especially chosen to capture the son of your ancient master and benefactor?"

"I was faithful to your cause," replied the man, with an abruptness which the revolutionists greatly affected, "as long as I had no opportunity of abandoning it; and I was chosen to capture you, because I knew your person. But I am pleading for my life--or rather for that of one to whom life is more valuable--this young man here, my son; and I know well that I must offer something more than words to purchase it at your hands. Listen to me then--if you will spare us and set us at liberty, I will set free her who was taken from this place this morning."

"Ha!" cried Auguste; "free and unharmed?"

"Free and unharmed as she went," replied the other. "You had better take my offer, for it is her only chance for life."

"But how can I trust you?" demanded the young Vendean "you who have already proved yourself false and faithless?"

"Neither false nor faithless!" replied the soldier. "Your father forced me to join a cause of which he had never asked my opinion, and should not have wondered at my quitting it without asking his permission. But I waste words; you require some better assurance of my good faith than a mere promise, and I offer you here my son. Keep him in your hands; and if I do not deliver over to you Clara de la Roche, safe and well, at the time and place I shall appoint, shoot him on the spot."

Some further conversation ensued, which it is unnecessary to detail. The soldier named the time--the night following--and the place--a sequestered spot upon the banks of the Loire, about two miles above the city of Nantes. He spoke boldly in regard to his power of performing what he promised. His son willingly undertook to be his surety; and after some discussion amongst the Vendeans, in regard to the propriety of liberating him, he was at length set free, and departed.

CHAPTER V.

It was a soft calm night, with the moon shining clear and sweet in the sky, and one or two planets wandering like boats of light over the surface of the profound blue ocean of the heavens. All the world, too, was hushed in sleep; and, as the young Vendean took his way toward the spot appointed for the exchange of the two prisoners, not a sound was to be heard but the steps of his own party. That party, however, was reduced to four; for, feeling that he had no right to peril

lives which might be of infinite import to the noble cause he had espoused, in an enterprise which he could not but acknowledge was wholly inspired by personal attachment, Auguste had positively refused the company of any but old La Brousse, and one other attached friend who would take no refusal. Between them they led the young soldier who had remained in their hands as a hostage; and as they advanced through a winding dell, the tall trees of which hid the Loire from their sight, they paused at every aperture in the thick foliage, to gaze out anxiously over the waters. A thin light haze, however, was rising over the river, and though its course could be plainly discerned, yet the more minute objects which moved upon its bosom--if there were any--were hidden from their sight. At the low sandy landing-place, where they at length arrived, all was still obscure; and they remained till the wind brought upon their ears, the chime of the distant clocks of Nantes, striking the hour of midnight. Almost immediately afterwards, the dull sound of oars was heard from the water, and a small boat was seen shooting up the middle of the stream. In it there appeared but two persons, and one of them was evidently a female. The heart of the young Vendean beat quick, while the rower pulled on and then guided his boat direct to the landing-place. It glided rapidly through the water, touched the shore, and in a moment after the hand of Clara de la Roche was clasped in that of her deliverer.

The young soldier was immediately set at liberty; and, without the interchange of a word, sprang into the boat, and was dropping down the Loire with his father, while Clara, hardly believing her senses, was hurrying on with her new companions towards a spot where horses had been prepared to carry them away from pursuit.

"Oh, sir, I feel that I have to thank you for more than life!" she said at length, turning to him whom we have called Auguste.

"For nothing--nothing, dearest girl!" he answered. "Nay, do not start!" he added, marking the surprise which the expression he had used towards her called forth: "nay, do not start! Did not the man who set you at liberty tell you, that it was into the hands of Auguste de Beaumont he was about to deliver you? Did he not say, that it was to the care and guidance of your promised husband that he was about to yield you?"

Clara had no time to reply; for, ere she could express by one word any of the mingled emotions which such tidings might well call up in her heart, there was a rustle in the trees--a rush of many feet--a momentary struggle; and, in the end, she found herself once more a prisoner by the side of her lover, while a troop of revolutionary soldiers from Nantes insulted them by every sort of bitter mockery and coarse jest.

"Well, well! we have set the rat-trap to some purpose!" cried one. "So, brigand, you thought to carry a prisoner away from the town of Nantes without even paying the fees!" exclaimed another. "She is your promised wife, too, is she?" said a third. "Well, to-morrow you shall have a republican marriage of it!" Amidst such jeers, the prisoners were dragged on to Nantes, now understanding well that the brief liberation of Mademoiselle de la Roche had been but a trap to decoy the whole party. Few words were spoken amongst the prisoners. Consolation was in vain--hope there was none--Robespierre lived, and death was the only prospect. Auguste de Beaumont pressed the hand of Clara, and Clara whispered with a few bitter tears, "You have sacrificed yourself for me!"

This was all that passed, ere in separate dungeons they were left to wait their approaching fate--Clara enduring with the true fortitude of woman, and Auguste de Beaumont chafing at his chains, with the impetuosity of one who had never been aught but free.

It would be more harrowing than interesting to detail the passing of a night in the dungeons of a revolutionary prison. That night, however long and dreadful it might seem to Clara de la Roche, passed at length; and, by daylight, the minions of the grossest tyranny that ever darkened the earth, came to drag the unhappy girl to the fate reserved for all that was great and noble in France. Strange however to say, that fate did not seem in her eyes so appalling as one might suppose. Weary of persecution, and terror, and flight, and uncertainty, and grief, there was an anticipation very like a feeling of relief; in the thought of one brief step leading to immortality, and peace, and joy; and she advanced to the cart destined to drag her to the place of execution, with greater alacrity than her tyrants were accustomed or willing to behold. In the fatal vehicle were already placed Auguste de Beaumont, the friend who had accompanied him on his ill-starred expedition, and good old La Brousse, the farmer of Dervais. They waited but for her alone, and, when she was placed in the car, the word was given to march.

The procession moved forward through the streets of Nantes, towards the river, escorted by a small body of cavalry; and, though the hour was yet early, it was remarked that large crowds were collected to see a sight which certainly had not the advantage of novelty in that unhappy town. There was a deep solemn stillness, too, in the multitude, as the cart rolled through the midst of them, that had something in it portentous as well as awful; and a low murmur, like the rush of a receding wave, was heard as the history of the two younger victims was whispered amongst the people.

The tyrants, however, had no dread, and the vehicle went slowly on; when, in passing the end of a narrow street which led towards the Place d'Armes, the clatter of a horse's feet at full gallop was heard from a parallel avenue. The horse galloped on, but the street was filled with people, and for a moment there were heard loud murmurs at the further end. The next instant came a

profound silence, during which nothing was distinguishable but the creaking of the heavy cartwheels, and the slow tramp of the soldiers' horses; but then, one loud stentorian voice shouted, with a sound that was heard through the whole street, "ROBESPIERRE IS DEAD!!! DOWN WITH THE TYRANTS!!!"

A cry of joy, and triumph, and encouragement, burst from the multitudes around. As if bound together by some secret arrangement--though none, in truth, existed, save detestation of the sanguinary tyranny of the Jacobins--As if animated by one spirit--though men of almost every party were present--the crowds rushed on from every quarter upon the cart, which was dragging new victims to immolation. The soldiers were overpowered in a moment; one or two were killed on the spot. The cords that tied the prisoners were cut--a thousand hands were held out to give them aid--a thousand voices cried, fly here, or fly there; but at length one more prudent than the rest, exclaimed, "To the gates! To the gates!" and in five minutes Auguste de Beaumont, bearing Clara in his arms, and followed by their fellow prisoners, was clear of the city of Nantes.

One of the heroes of the Bocage, Auguste was well experienced in every art for baffling a pursuing enemy. No sooner was the tumult in the city known, than Lamberty called forth the troops, and Carrier mounted his horse. But the news met them in the street, that on July the 27th just four days before--Robespierre, their patron and example, had ended his days upon the public scaffold.

Terror took possession of them; their measures for repressing the rising, or for overtaking the fugitives, were weak and vacillating; and ere night, Auguste de Beaumont and Clara de la Roche were far from all pursuit.

Time passed, and the struggle of loyalty and good faith against oppression, tyranny, and crime, continued in La Vendée for some months longer; but when, at length, the cause became desperate, and hope was at an end in France, a small fishing-boat conveyed Auguste de Beaumont and his bride to England. In regard to old La Brousse, he calmly returned to the house he had ever inhabited, and, strange to say, received no molestation therein, till death fell upon his eyelids as a tranquil sleep.

Carrier and Lamberty, it is true, had little time to think of the victims who had escaped them, or to point them out to others. Their fate is well known, and surely was well deserved. As for Ninette, who had betrayed to the revolutionary rulers the refuge of Mademoiselle de la Roche, she is said to have married a corporal in the guard, who afterwards rose to the rank of a general, and who displayed no great tenderness towards his lady in subsequent years, although her chief fault in his eyes was, that she did not bear her blushing honours with as much grace as he could have desired.

THE DISASTERS.

After visiting the cottage of old La Brousse, I proceeded by a cross road, and hired horses to the little town of Redon which I had never seen; and, arriving at night, I entered, as usual, the public room of the inn. A party of four French officers were there assembled; and amongst them one with whom I had been well acquainted at Rennes. He was a frank, gallant young fellow, somewhat hasty and irascible, but still generous and kind-hearted withal. It is the rarest thing in the world to see French officers drink too much; but, on the present occasion, the bottle had evidently been circulating rapidly, and my friend, whom I shall call Monsieur de la Grange, in order to cover his real name, rose and embraced me, on perceiving who it was, with a degree of enthusiasm proportioned to the quantity of wine he had imbibed. I, for my part, was affected by a sort of intoxication of another kind, and forgetting that many of the French officers were but the children of the revolution, I related my visit to the cottage of old La Brousse in very high-flown language. La Grange scarcely suffered me to come to an end before he called the object of my admiration. "A cursed old Chouan!" Words ensued of a sharp and angry nature, generating others bitterer still; and before I had tasted the supper which the aubergiste busied himself to prepare for me, a challenge had been given and received. The only difficulty was the time and place. I had no friends in that neighbourhood who could give me assistance on such an occasion, and I proposed to void our differences at Rennes. This, however, the French officers could not agree to, as they had been detached from the garrison of Rennes only two days before, and my want of a friend was removed by the kindness of an officer of infantry who was present; and who offered, if I would trust in him, to give me every aid in his power.

I accepted his proposal with pleasure; the meadows near the town were appointed for the meeting, and the hour named five o'clock the next morning. I will not dwell upon my feelings during that night, nor even upon the rencontre of the next morning, as the consequences were more important to me than the event itself. To say the truth, I felt less upon the subject than I ought to have done, and could scarcely get my mind to grasp the belief that I might be killed. I

knew that such might be the case, but yet it did not come home to me; and though I sat down calmly to write to Emily in case of the worst, and to make my will in her favour, yet I did it but with little care, making sure that I should have to tear it next day. I was woke out of a sound sleep by my second, whose gentlemanly kindness and attention towards a foreigner, under such circumstances, well deserve my gratitude, and proceeded with him through a cold, damp, misty morning to the field. Leaving every thing of course to be settled by those around us, my adversary and myself soon brought our own part of the business to an end, I remaining severely wounded in my right arm, and he being led from the field with his hand so completely disabled, that I believe he has never yet recovered the use thereof.

We had not taken the precaution to take a surgeon with us from the town, and consequently, notwithstanding all our own efforts and those of our seconds also, we were both faint from the loss of blood by the time we reached the inn. To do my antagonist but justice, however, let me say, ere I go further, that ere we quitted the field, he grasped my left hand with his (for the right of each was disabled), and taking all the blame upon himself, expressed bitter sorrow for what had occurred. On arriving at the town, too, there was but one surgeon to be found: La Grange insisted upon his attending to me first, and my wounded arm was accordingly subjected to all the torture of surgical investigation. The man of healing, however, seemed really to understand his business; and according to his direction I went to bed, where I soon fell asleep. It was but, however, to wake with great fever, and when I proposed to go on to Rennes on the following day, the surgeon assured me that the consequences of my stirring from my bed for the next week might be the loss of my arm, the bone having been injured though not broken.

Thus was I kept in the little town of Redon for nearly a month, my wound seeming to get worse instead of better. One of the greatest annoyances which I suffered, was the not being able to write to various friends with whom my correspondence was already somewhat in arrear; but I still took measures to relieve the minds of those who were most dear to me from anxiety, by making my servant write twice under my dictation to Mr. Somers, giving a full account of all that had occurred, and begging him to assure Emily and my mother that I, was not seriously hurt.

I also directed Essex, for such was the servant's somewhat lordly name, to write to the director of the post at Rennes, begging him to forward all letters which might arrive at that place, to Redon; but no letters reached me, and at length my anxiety grew so great that, notwithstanding the damp heat of the weather, and my surgeon's strenuous opposition, I put horses to my carriage, and set out for Rennes.

I certainly had felt very feverish and ill for two or three days before I took this resolution, but that only strengthened me in it, as I attributed the feeling of general illness which I now experienced, to the air of the place, which was not particularly healthy. This view was perhaps right, but I had not acted upon it soon enough, for before I reached Rennes, I was in a state of delirium from typhus fever, and I have very little remembrance of any thing that occurred to me during the fortnight which followed.

When I recovered my consciousness, I found myself in the wretched inn at Rennes, in a state of the most deplorable weakness, mental and corporeal; and strength returned so slowly, that for several days the medical men would not even suffer me to speak, except to ask for what I wanted. My first inquiry, after this prohibition was removed, was for letters from England, but they would not suffer me to have those which had arrived, merely telling me that all my friends were well.

At the end of another fortnight, several letters were given me, and I looked over them eagerly to find the handwriting of Emily Somers. There were none from either my mother, Mr. Somers or Emily, and I hastily opened one which I saw was from the hand of my intimate friend B----, but how did it begin?

"My dear Young,

"I have anxiously, but hesitatingly, thought of writing, to offer you some words of consolation. Every day since your mother's death--"

The letter, dropped from my hand, and I fell back in the chair in a state of stupor, from which it required three or four days to rouse me. The letters, which had been sealed with red wax, had been given to me by the surgeons not anticipating such a result; but the sudden news which I then received, threw me back in my recovery, and ten days more elapsed before they would suffer me to read those sealed with black, which they had at first withheld, The first I now opened was from Mr. Somers. It consisted merely of a few lines, informing me drily that my mother had been taken ill in the night, and died before the following morning.

"Sir Henry Halford informs me," he went on to say, "that the disease which so speedily terminated her life, must have been long undermining her constitution; but I cannot help adding, that the reports she has heard of her son's conduct on the continent, had greatly affected her spirits, whatever effect they might produce upon her health."

I looked to the date, it was more than two months old; and I hurriedly turned to another letter, on which I recognised the handwriting of Emily. It was of a later date, not more than a month had elapsed since it had been written, and it began.

"Dearest, dearest James,

"I cannot--I will not--believe all they tell me of you, although your long and unaccountable silence would seem to give weight to what they say. I write to you by stealth, I confess, but I feel it my duty, after all that has passed, to beg you, if you still love Emily Somers, and would save her from misery, to come over to England without an hour's delay----"

The surgeon stood by me while I read, but the effect was very different now; my arm was nearly well, and in all respects I was better than I had been when I read the former letter. These, too, stirred up within me an energy to meet the exigency of the moment which communicated itself even to my corporeal frame. I saw that there was evil going on, and destruction to all my hopes hanging over my head, like the Persian's sword, by a single hair; but it raised a spirit to resist and to struggle, and, instead of yielding either to grief or apprehension, I called loudly for my servant. As soon as he appeared, I demanded if he had carefully sent the letters I had dictated to him at Redon, and I fixed my eye upon him with a firm conviction of having been deceived. His colour wavered like that of a love-sick girl, while he replied that he had; and I instantly answered, "Sir, you are a lying scoundrel, and no longer my servant!" He then proceeded to be insolent, but I begged the surgeon to send him out of the room, and in a few brief words explained to him, that matters even more important to me than life called me to England, and that I must set out the day after the subsequent one.

The worthy surgeon, who was both kind and skilful, seemed not a little astounded at my determination; but finding that it was immovable, he replied, "Well, then, you must make no exertion in the interim. Let me arrange the business of your passport, settle your affairs, and make all your preparations. I will then accompany you to the coast, and do all I can to prevent this dangerous necessity from producing your death."

I agreed to his proposal at once, and never had more cause to be thankful than I had for having confided in him. He, at my request, paid Master Essex, and sent him out of the house; engaged me another servant, who saved me all exertion; and, after taking a world of trouble, he not only got me safely started on my journey, but, by skilful management, contrived that the fatigue and change of air should not only not retard my convalescence, but should improve my health. At Havre I entered the steam-boat, and kept myself perfectly quiet on board till we landed, gaining strength from the sea air, and preventing myself even from thinking, lest I should take from myself the powers which I had a presentiment that I should need in their full activity. I slept a good deal on board the vessel, so that when we arrived at Southampton I felt myself quite sufficiently well to proceed at once to Louden. I arrived in town about five o'clock in the morning, and, forcing my way into the Clarendon, wrote a note to Mr. Somers, telling him of my arrival, alluding briefly, but firmly, to false reports having been spread of my conduct, and mentioning the fact of my having been ill for two months, and ignorant of all that had passed in London. This I left with the waiter, ordering it to be sent at eight o'clock, at which time Mr. Somers rose, and then lay down to rest myself till nine, When the servant called me at that hour, he put an answer to my letter into my hands. It was to the following effect:

"Dear Sir,

I have just received your's, which requires great consideration, and in the course of the morning I will call upon you. In the mean time let me hint, that as my daughter Emily is at present engaged to Mr. Alfred Wild, your visits in Portland Place might be considered indecorous.

"Your's truly,

CHARLES SOMERS."

The mystery, then, was solved. She was engaged to Alfred Wild; but that engagement, I well knew, could only have been brought about by some foul deceit; and I resolved, that, if I lived at least, it should never be executed. Indignation was now my best friend, for it kept me from feeling any thing else; and notwithstanding Mr. Somers's injunction to the contrary, I instantly, I instantly ordered a coach and proceeded to Portland Place. Mr. Somers, I found, had just gone out; and, without asking any further questions, I walked straight up stairs to the drawing-room, passing the servant who opened the door, and in whose demeanour I observed a degree of lazy carelessness very different from the smart activity which had reigned throughout the household during my mother's life. In the great drawing-room there was no one; but, pushing open the folding-doors, I entered the little drawing-room, and was at once in the presence of Emily Somers.

She was sitting gazing on an unfolded letter--it was the one I had sent her father in the morning--and the tears were still rolling rapidly down her cheeks. At the sound of my step she started up, gazed at me wildly for a moment, as if she hardly knew me--and well she might doubt whether it was the same person who had left her--and then at once cast herself into my arms and wept aloud.

It is scarcely possible to tell all that passed, but I found that her father, after showing her my letter, had gone out in a state of terrible agitation to the father of Alfred Wild, what to do she did not fully explain; but in her whole account there was a confusion and a wildness, which showed me that there was much, very much, that I did not comprehend; and I should have been naturally

led to investigate all the facts in the first place, had not her reiterated exclamations of "Then you do love me still, James? You have not forgotten me? You have not acted as they said?" induced me first to vindicate myself. I told her all that had happened. I related the duel, my sickness, the conduct of my servant, and, with imprecations on the head of Alfred Wild, I told her that I believed, from the first, the man Essex had been bribed to furnish matter against me. She turned very pale at the language which I used towards my enemy, and certainly it was violent and improper; but, interrupting what she was about to say upon it, I eagerly entreated her to explain how she had been entrapped into an engagement with a man she neither loved nor esteemed, and to promise me solemnly to consider that engagement as nothing when compared with her troth plighted to myself.

"What could I do, James? What can I do?" she exclaimed, "when my own father besought, entreated, almost went on his knees to his own child--when they persuaded me that you loved me no longer, and that you were living with the wife of another man!"

"But surely, Emily," I cried, "you do not hesitate now which engagement is to be kept--the one obtained by fraud and falsehood, or the prior one, sealed by affection and esteem. You do not, you cannot hesitate, or you are not my Emily--not the Emily I left!"

"I am--I am your Emily," she replied, casting herself again upon my bosom, "and I do not hesitate, James; but indeed you do not know all, and I am afraid that I must not tell you all; but I will go on my knees to my father to beseech him to tell you the whole, and if he loves me as he says, to break all ties with that wretched man."

"Wretched indeed!" I cried; "but *I* will find a means to break them, Emily, and in the mean time promise me--"

But at that moment there was a furious knock at the street-door. "It is he! It is he!" cried Emily, starting up as pale as death, "I cannot, I will not see him any more! But, oh! James, go home quick, for my father will be with you soon, and I would not have you miss him for the world."

I tried to detain her for one word more, but there was the sound of a hasty step running up stairs, and darting from me, she rushed out of the room. I followed to the door, and just caught a sight of her retreating figure as at the top of the great staircase she turned to enter her own room. Coming up the flight of steps below me, however, was an object which called all my thoughts into another direction. It was Alfred Wild himself, and never shall I forget the expression of his countenance as our eyes met. Rage, jealousy, disappointment, and fiendish malice, were all as plainly to be read there, as the thunder can be seen in the lurid cloud, even before it bursts: but feelings as bitter were in my heart, and as he came rapidly up the staircase I strode forward to meet him. We met at the top of the staircase. "What do you do here?" I cried. "How dare you ever to set your foot again in a house that you have made miserable by your falsehood and your baseness?"

"Beggarly puppy!" he began to reply; but I gave him no time to proceed further; for catching him by the collar and the back, with the momentary strength of overpowering indignation, I cast him from the top of the stairs to the bottom; and then following him, as he rose bewildered with his rapid descent, I spurned him with my foot into the hall. He did not offer to strike me again, but snatching his hat from the hands of one of the servants who had picked it up as he rolled down stairs, he shook his clenched fist at me, with his teeth set fast, and darting through the open door, sprang into his curricle and drove away.

For my part I hastened back to the Clarendon, and instantly wrote a now to my friend B----, begging him to come to me directly; and even while waiting his arrival, I sat down, I am sorry to say, with all the fierce feelings of a Cain in my heart, and penned a note to the man who had so bitterly injured me, calling upon him to meet me the next morning in order to atone with his blood for the calumnies he had uttered against me. In less than half an hour B---- was with me; and I put the note into his hands, telling him the fact which had given rise to such a measure. He read it over; but did not approve. It was so fierce, he said, and violent, that he could not let me send it. I then told him to dictate one to me, and I would write it, provided it admitted of no compromise; for I would accept no apology. He agreed, and I sat down to the task; but ere I had written the first words the waiter came in and put a note into my hand.

It was from Emily, and contained but a few words, but those few words were important. She wrote to me, she said, to warn me, lest I should madly hurry forward to destroy both her happiness and mine. From what I had let drop, she continued, while speaking with her, as well as from the noise she had heard after she had left me, she augured ill of my intentions towards the man who had injured me, and she wrote to prevent me from committing an act which would place an eternal bar between her and me. Her religion, she said, and all her feelings taught her to look upon the man who killed another in a duel as a murderer, and such a one should never have her hand. She could not, she added, and would not attempt to argue the matter at length with me, but she thought it right at once to inform me, however dearly she might love me, she would never, under any change of circumstances, become my wife if Alfred Wild were slain by my hand. A few words of tenderness were added, which went sweetly to my heart, but did not at all tend to make me suppose that Emily would fail in keeping her determination. I knew her too well to believe that she would change; and starting up, somewhat to B----'s surprise, I walked in much

agitation once or twice up and down the room. I felt myself obliged, at length, to show him Emily's letter, and after some further explanation, he advised me kindly to let the matter rest for the present, as I had vindicated my own honour by inflicting personal chastisement upon my adversary.

While we were still talking over the matter, the waiter announced that a gentleman desired to speak with me, and I ordered him to be shown in, expecting to see Mr. Somers. The visitor, however, was a stranger, but his business was soon explained. He came on the part of Mr. Alfred Wild, he said, to ask the name of any friend with whom he could arrange the preliminaries of a meeting, which I must perceive was inevitable. I immediately pointed to my friend B----, and informed Captain Truro that we had been already talking over the matter, and then whispering to B---- not to let the meeting be deferred beyond the next morning, I left them together, retiring to my own bed-room.

In about ten minutes B---- called me, and informed me that the hour and place had been fixed for six, on Wandsworth Common. Captain Truro was gone, and my friend remained with me some time, making every sort of necessary arrangement, but he remarked my eye often resting upon Emily's letter, and kindly said, "You must not think of that letter, Young. I dare say Miss Somers will view the matter in a different light when she finds that you have not been the challenger."

"No, no!" replied I, "in her opinion it will be just the same. But as you say, I must not think of the letter, for I have but one course before me. I do not feel at all inclined to let such a scoundrel escape, and I cannot do so if I would; for not to fire at him would be tacitly to acknowledge that I felt myself in the wrong."

"I am afraid it might be so construed, indeed!" replied my friend; "but at all events take my advice, and make up your mind exactly how you are to act, for I have known very fatal consequences ensue from hesitation in such circumstances."

The rest of the day past much as may be imagined. I was agitated, undoubtedly; but it was with strong contending passions. I had some faint conviction that Emily was in the right, and that to kill another in a duel was as much murder as to slay a fellow-creature under the influence of any passion whatever. Against this thought I had nothing to support me but the world's opinion; and in order to feel as little like a murderer as possible, I strove to forget the injuries I had received, and to think that I was only acting in conformity to the code of honour; but still, whenever my mind dwelt upon Alfred Wild, and I thought of how nearly he had deprived me of Emily, or fancied that he might still bar my way to her I loved so deeply, I felt passions rising up in my bosom which I trembled to examine. I tried then to occupy my mind with the expectation of Mr. Somers's visit; but he never came, and at dinner my friend B---- returned, having determined to sleep at the Clarendon that night, that his early rising might not alarm his own family, and perhaps produce some interruption of our proceedings.

During the evening he strove to occupy my mind with other thoughts, after having satisfied himself that I was quite prepared, as far as worldly matters went, for any event which might occur on the following morning. At four o'clock the next day we were called, and breakfasted by candle-light, and in the gray of an autumnal morning got into the carriage with the case of pistols, and with my new French servant upon the box; wondering what it all could mean. We first drove to the house of the surgeon, who had been previously warned of our coming, and then rolled on to Wandsworth as fast as we could. Here we arrived a full quarter of an hour before our time, and leaving the carriage on the road we wandered about the common. I was very chilly from the morning air, and I could not but wonder at how differently I now felt, agitated as I was by violent and terrible passions, from what I had experienced on the former silly duel in Brittany, where I was agitated by no passions at all, and could almost have laughed at the whole business. Some five minutes before the time, also, my adversary appeared, and never did I see a countenance expressing more malevolent feelings than his did at the moment when we met. I could see his eye fixing fiercely upon me, and his lips muttering, as if he could scarcely refrain from giving utterance to all the hatred that was in his heart. I felt not much less towards him; but I had sufficient command over myself to prevent it from appearing, and waited with sufficient appearance of calmness while the ground was measured and the pistols loaded. The only words which were spoken by either my adversary or myself, were occasioned by the seconds measuring twelve paces.

"Twelve!" he exclaimed; "why the devil not make it eight?"

"Eight, by all means, gentlemen," I said. "I cannot be too near him."

"Over a handkerchief, if you like," he added; but B---- interfered, exclaiming, "Nonsense! Nonsense, gentlemen! You must leave all that to us, if you please."

The ground was accordingly measured, and B----, putting the pistol in my hand, said, in a low tone, "Keep your side to him, and your arm masking your side. The words will be, *One--two--three--Fire!* You are a good shot, I know of old, and he is too angry to hit you; so, if you try, you may perhaps wound him without killing him."

Whether it was that he saw my eye upon him, marking him well, or what, I do not know; but while the seconds were taking their places, I saw a degree of agitation suddenly come over my

adversary, and his knees rather bend and shake. At that moment, however, Captain Truro began to give the signals; and as he went on I raised my pistol, exactly at the word "Fire" pulling the trigger. It went off with a sharp, clear, ringing sound, and I evidently saw him reel. But he now slowly and deliberately raised his weapon, which he had not done before, and pointed it at me with a steady aim. We all looked on with some feeling of anxiety, no doubt; but at that moment his left knee began to bend. His hand seemed agitated with a convulsive jerk, and at the very instant that he pulled the trigger he fell back upon the turf. The ball passed through my hat, half an inch above my head; but I instantly ran forward with the other, to see what had occasioned his fall. Captain Truro and B---- raised him, and we found the ground beneath dyed with blood. The surgeon, who was at a little distance, now came up, and, aided by the rest, stripped off his coat and waistcoat. The bosom of his shirt was actually dripping with gore; and, pulling it down, there instantly appeared that small aperture through which the waters of life were flowing away so fast. For a moment the cold air seemed to revive him. At least he opened his eyes as the surgeon held his head upon his knees, and I am certain that he saw me, for the expression of his pale, ghastly features, which at first had been calm, became, for an instant, full of hatred. The next instant, his eyes rolled fearfully in his head ere they became fixed; and never will the sight of that countenance be obliterated from my memory.

The surgeon pointed with his finger to the carriage.

"Do you want your instruments?" demanded Captain Truro.

"There is no use of instruments here, sir," replied the surgeon in a low voice, "he is dead! What I mean is that you had all better get into the carriage, and be gone as fast as possible. Stop not till you are in France, for this seems to have been a bad business. Send me one of the servants, however, and bid the other carriage drive up as near as possible."

I would fain have lingered; but B---- and Captain Truro forced me away, and the former got into my carriage with me. The latter declared he would stay by the body of his friend, and take care of his own safety afterwards.

"On the road to Brighton!" cried B---- to the postilions, "As fast as you can go!"

They very well understood the cause, and set off at full gallop, while I sank back in the corner of the carriage, clasping my hands over my eyes, in the vain attempt to shut out the image of that dark ghastly countenance, with the rolling meaningless eyes, as they had glared upon me, ere the triumph of death was complete.

B---- was also very much affected, and for some way not a word was spoken. At length, fancying that he ought to attempt to console me, he spoke a few words, to which I replied, intending to answer as firmly as I could; but it was with the strangest sensation that I ever experienced that I found that I was talking incoherent nonsense; knowing what I ought to say, conscious that I was not saying it, and yet feeling it impossible so to rule my mind as to utter what I wished. B---- looked at me aghast, and I could just contrive to say "Wait a little! wait a little! I am confused and ill!" That was the last sensation and those the last words that I remember for some time.

It was hardly to be expected, that rising from a sick bed, I should take such a journey, undergo such agitations, and pass through such scenes without suffering in the end. I did not exactly what is called relapse, for the illness that followed bore but little analogy to that which I had suffered before. They called it a brain fever, which I suppose means inflammation of the brain, but at all events, it kept me for three weeks on a sick bed without the use of my senses; and, when I was restored to consciousness, it seemed only to be that I might suffer the more acutely; for what was I to wake to?--the consciousness of being a murderer, the knowledge that Emily was lost to me for ever!

I found myself in a small cottage at Worthing, with my French servant and my friend B---- attending me with the most devoted kindness. As soon as he found that I was able to comprehend him, B---- told me that before I reached Brighton, I had been in a state of furious delirium, raving incessantly of a hideous face that looked at me; and that consequently perceiving that it would be impossible to cross in the public steam-boat next morning, he had turned off with me from Brighton to Worthing, where he had taken the first cottage he could find.

"At first," he continued, "I assumed feigned names both for yourself and me; but I perceive already by the newspapers, that it was unnecessary, as the family have announced their intention not to prosecute."

My health now daily improved; but still it was very slowly, for the physician who attended me could in no way minister to the mind diseased, and in addition to deep remorse for what I had done--for sending a sinful fellow-creature to his long account, with all his worst failings hot about him--in addition to grief for the loss of her I loved, a loss which I felt to be as certain as if she no longer existed, there was yet another dreadful weight upon my mind, which overcame all powers of resistance in my heart, and rendered my recovery slow and imperfect. I never attempted to close my eyes at night without being visited by a horrid vision, the effect of an over-excited imagination, which kept me awake till two or three o'clock in the morning.

The ghastly countenance of him I had slain seemed gazing at me from between the curtains. Whichever way I turned, whichever way I looked, there it was, with the two dim rolling eyes fixed upon me, and that same look of inveterate hatred animating every pale feature. In vain I reasoned, in vain I struggled: there it was every night, and sometimes it haunted me in the day also. At first the torture was dreadful, for I tormented myself beforehand with the expectation of its appearance; but as my corporeal strength increased, and the powers of my mind in some degree returned, I struggled with the delusion, and so far conquered my own feelings, as to banish the sight from my thoughts when the object was not actually before me.

After I had been gradually recovering for about a week, however, I met with another blow, which not only threw me back, but embittered feelings which were sad enough before. Not being able to write myself, I had dictated to B---- a few lines to Emily, telling her how I had suffered, and that I was convalescent; trusting that, however firm she might be in her determination, she would be glad to hear of my recovery, and perhaps hoping, against my better knowledge of her character, that by gradually renewing our intercourse I might eventually lead her to break her resolution against me. At the end of three days, however, B----'s letter was returned to him, opened, indeed, and evidently read, but without a word of comment or reply. He found himself bound to tell me, and a dead sort of desolation, amounting to despair, fell upon my heart, which it is impossible to describe.

Nevertheless, my corporeal health continued to improve, and my mental health also; at least so far, that the wild and horrible vision of my dying adversary began to trouble me less frequently. If I fatigued myself severely, I could fall asleep without seeing that ghastly countenance; and, after discovering that it was so, I took means to produce that effect every night, so that in time I banished it from my pillow entirely. In the day, however, it would still sometimes intrude upon me; and though my mind had recovered a sufficient degree of vigour to struggle against my own feelings, though I revolved many a plan for conquering them altogether, and determined and re-determined to make some great effort in order to shake off the melancholy that hung upon me, yet for several weeks I failed to carry my schemes into effect, and remained in a state of hopeless despondency. All the morning I passed in walking along the sea-shore, gazing upon the rolling waves, or siting with my hands covering my eyes, and brooding over the past. Towards night I always endeavoured to fatigue myself as much as possible, but this was the only exertion I made. I never opened a book--I never wrote a line--and all my days passed in the same dull monotony.

B---- was very kind, endeavouring by all means to soothe me, and bring my mind back to some degree of tone. Almost all his time he devoted to me; once or twice, indeed, visiting London, and now and then going upon a fishing excursion, into which he endeavoured to tempt me, by many an eloquent description of the pleasures he derived from the sport. At length, one day when he returned from London, and found me still apparently in the same state, though in truth I had passed the two preceding days in fresh determinations to exert myself, he sat down and read me a homily on mental weakness, wilful repining, and self-abandonment, with so much kindness and feeling, joined to so much good sense and eloquence, that my often broken resolutions took a firmer character than they had ever yet done, and I replied, "Well, well, B----, do not suppose that I have not been thinking of all this; and I have determined to change my conduct, as far as possible to cast away thought, and to mingle again with the world, seeking in its noise and turbulence, distraction from my own thoughts. But I cannot do it here in England, B----. If you like to accompany me, I am ready now to set out for any part of the world. I will try to make you as good a companion as I can; and though I shall never again be what I have been, yet I feel now that I can cover over my melancholy from the eyes of the world, and may soon, perhaps, laugh the more loudly because it is all hollow within; and if I laugh, 'tis that I may not cry; but never mind, I am prepared to do it now. A few days ago I could not have done it; but I have been schooling and tutoring my own heart, and I find that I can play my unreal part in the world's drama like another; feeling that I am but acting all the time, it is true, but not without a hope, indeed, that I may sometimes deceive my own heart as well as the eyes of others. My plan now will be, to give my mind constant occupation--to leave no moment of the day unemployed--to see every thing--to mark every thing--to mingle with every thing, as I travel on. If the road offer nothing but stones, to examine every stone as I pass, sooner than let my mind rest even for one moment on itself; and, in short, to live as much out of myself as it be possible for man to do. You said, the other day, that you had no tie to England; and if such a plan suit you, let us set out together. Leave me when you are tired of me and my ways; but in the mean time be to me a companion and friend, and keep me, by your presence, from many of those evil actions into which I might otherwise perhaps be hurried, by the recklessness of bitter disappointment, and the hopeless, fearless dreariness of remorse."

My friend B---- willingly entered into my views. Few arrangements were necessary to either of us. I had but one letter to write, and it was merely a letter of business to my banker; for Mr. Somers, on settling his executorial accounts with me on my coming of age, had requested that I should bank with another house, as he thought it better in general for friends and relatives to keep all their money matters separate. Thus my first act in mingling again with the world was as simple and uninteresting as it well could be; but yet it was a trial, and I delayed a whole day before I could make up my mind to begin. When I did, the matter proved more easy than I had expected. The answer was merely one of business, written by a clerk; though in the banker's own hand appeared a postscript, saying, "Mr. Somers and Miss Emily are as well as can be expected."

Those few words had nearly overset all my firmness, but after a struggle I regained it again, and, two days afterwards, we left our cottage for Brighton. Three days had now elapsed since my imagination had called up again that dreadful countenance, and with a sort of fearful, anxious hope, I began to trust that I should see it no more. As the carriage drove up to "The York," however, it was dark; and there it was again before me, in the very passage, and it required every exertion of my reason to enable me to go on. B---- saw me shudder and hesitate, and in a low voice asked what was the matter. "Oh that face!" I answered with a groan. "Hush!" he said, understanding me in a moment, for I had before told him of this infirmity, "Hush! Conquer it always, and it will go of entirely in time. It is less frequent, you see, already!" The sight of the waiters hanging round stimulated me to exertion, and walking on I entered the inn, the face of course vanishing before me.

During the whole evening I hardly dared look round the room, however; and to begin at once with my plan of occupation, I made my servant give me my writing-desk, and sat down to write sketches of any thing on earth,--my own observations, my own feelings, the appearance of external objects, any thing in short that would engross my mind. I have preserved the first night's work of the pen even to the present moment; but it is wild, vague, and scarcely coherent. Nevertheless I pursued the same plan afterwards, with better success, whenever I had an evening unoccupied, writing down whatever I happened to recollect of occurrences last past. Those stray sheets give a better picture of my mind, and the progress which I made towards a better state of health and feeling, than any thing I could write at present; and I add them therefore to these pages, with no further alteration than may leave the narrative unbroken.

Late at night we embarked in the steam-boat for Dieppe, intending to follow nearly the same route which I had pursued on a former occasion, but instead of turning into Brittany, to go on from Tours into the south of France, the air of which provinces the physician at Worthing thought might be beneficial to me.

Of course there was much in England that I wished to forget. Sickness, and sorrow, and pain of every kind, and I felt sure that nothing would do me more general good, than to leave my own land, and all its remembrances behind me, according to the plan I have just mentioned, and to travel into France, where I had spent many happy days once before. As I pondered over my journey, the thought of those times had come back upon my heart like a gleam of sunshine in the midst of winter, and warmed me into energy to undertake it.

It was night, then, when we set out; and while the steam-boat cut her way through the darkness, I felt as if I were leaving sorrow behind me, but as day broke, and the far faint line of my native land appeared bright and soft between the waters and the sky, all the remembrance of my youth, all the hopes that had failed, and the pleasures that had fled, came rushing upon memory, and made it one of the most painful moments of existence. Thank God, there was no one to see me. I was alone upon the deck.

The rising of the sun is always one of the most superb sights in nature, but is never so splendid as when he comes over the sea. The very waves seemed emulous to catch his beams, and a flight of light feathery clouds in the zenith, met the rays even before they reached the earth, and kept blushing with brighter and brighter hues till the whole day burst upon the sky.

> "El sol, velando en centellantes fuegos
> Su inaccessible magestad, preside
> Qual Rey al universo, esclarecido
> De un mar de luz, que de su treno corre."

It was one of the most magnificent mornings I ever beheld, and I tried to fix my whole mind upon it, and to call up every train of ideas that might occupy my attention. I brought to my remembrance a multitude of descriptions from various poets of the rising day, and wondered to what poetical fancy the ancients were indebted for the allegory of Aurora (one of the most splendid fictions which adorns their mythology), I tried to imagine that I saw the goddess of the morning opening the gates of light. I forced upon recollection the paintings of Marmontel, and Byron, and Shakspeare, and Milton, and Homer. But in vain--my thoughts still wandered to all I was leaving, and my eye still turned towards the lessening shores of England; till the far lumen of my native land grew fainter and fainter upon the sky, till one object after another, like every joy of existence, was gradually lost to the sight, and blue distance closing over all, I was in the midst of the ocean with nothing but waves around me. It was but too good an image of my own fate.

THE WAKING.

Ah! che non sol quelle, ch' io canto o scrivo
Favole son; ma quanto temo, o spero,
Tutto è menzogna, e delirando io vivo
Sogno della mia vita è il corso intero.
--METASTASIO.

It was one of the sweetest sleeps I had ever enjoyed. Fatigue had been bountiful to me, and given me back a blessing I had not known for many a weary night. It is only when we have lost them, for a time, that we learn to appreciate Heaven's gifts. The whole world is full of sweets that we taste not, till sickness teaches us that our very faculties are joys, or confinement makes us esteem the wooing of Heaven's free air, the choicest blessing of existence. God has loaded us with bounties, and yet man, the spoiled child of creation, whimpers for the toys he cannot gain.

It was one of the sweetest sleeps I had enjoyed for long, and when I woke and saw the sun shining through a window down to the floor, the massy black rafters of the ceiling, with wood enough to build twenty modern houses, the old-fashioned gilt chairs, and the cabinet with cherubim's heads at all the corners, the tiled floor, and wide vacant chimney, together with the looking-glass and its long frame, half occupied by the portrait of a lack-a-daisical shepherd piping behind a squinting shepherdess, and Cupid looking out from behind a bush, all sorts of recollections of a French seaport came crowding upon me.

From the window was a gay scene, with the people of the market jostling, bustling, and chattering, and flirting about, with a thousand lively colours in their garments. And there was the old lumbering diligence before the door, and the pump, and the beggars, and the shoe-blacks; those that will do any thing, and those that will do nothing, and all the hangers-on of a French inn. Wherever I turned, it was France all over; and for a moment I fancied that I had never quitted it, that I had never gone back to England, that I stood there still, where I had stood less than a year before, and that the interval, with all its sorrows, was but a dream, a melancholy dream.

I cherished the illusion: I called up every image of those days; I thought of all the gay scenes I had witnessed, and the bright, and the kind, and the happy with whom I had then mingled. I recalled the friends that had entwined themselves with the best feelings of my nature: those who had made me no stranger in a foreign land. I saw the smile with which I had always been welcomed, and the extended hand and the beaming eye. My thoughts were turned from every painful recollection. I dwelt for one moment in the temple of oblivion, and then busy craving memory, that "meddlesome officious ill," came in, and did it all away.

It was but a moment, but it was a moment snatched from pain. It was but an illusion, but it was a happy one. Passing on rapidly through the country, my mind seemed every day to recover its tone. I saw no more of the horrid countenance which had so fearfully haunted me, till one day entering the cathedral of Suez, in Normandy, while the horses were changing, we stopped near a new and handsome monument, the white stone of which shone out in strong contrast with the dim and gloomy aisles. B---- asked the sacristan who was with us, the name of the person to whom it was erected.

"It is raised by the family of Monsieur Guillon," he said. "Poor young gentleman! He was killed in a duel about three years ago!"

I started, and raised my eyes, and instantly from behind one of the large heavy pillars looked out the ghastly countenance of my dying enemy, with the same look of bitter hatred convulsing his pale features, that they had borne ere his eyes closed for ever.

THE PLACE OF DREAMS.

I suppose that all human beings feel alike on those points, but certainly when the sun shines I am materially happier; his brightness seems to penetrate into the heart, and to make it expand like a flower.

The first decidedly fine weather we had had since our arrival in France, began at Le Mans, and during our journey towards Tours, through a country that became richer and more rich as we advanced; scarcely a cloud overshadowed the sky, except occasionally one of those light summer vapours that, skimming along over the landscape, gave a partial shadow as it passed, enough to vary, but not darken, the scene.

At Château du Loir we began to meet with the abundance of Touraine. Fine peaches at six for four sous, and delicious pears at a price still lower, with grapes for a penny the cluster, all began to show that we progressed in a land of summer. It was here, too, that the first vineyards made

their appearance, climbing up the sides of the hills on each side of the road, and giving a luxuriant colouring to the view, though not, indeed, offering half the picturesque beauties which are attributed to them by imagination.

Tours--I know not why, but it excited in my mind a sensation of melancholy. When I visited it before, was at the time of the unhappy and ill-contrived revolt of Berton at Saumur; and returning with the officers of a party of the troops that had been sent to disperse his undisciplined forces, we spent several agreeable days in the antique capital of Touraine. In general, we are fond of fixing upon some spot for building our castles in the air, and Tours and the Loire had yielded me many a foundation for those unsubstantial structures, which, as they so often do, had crumbled away, and left me nothing but the ruins behind.

Independent of individual associations, too, Tours is one of those places which has many recollections attached to it, especially since the Wizard of the North has raised again the fallen walls of Plessis les Tours, and conjured up the king of the people, Louis XI., the effects of whose hatred to the nobility were felt even in the eighteenth century. But his mulberry-trees are no more, and all that he did for the commerce of his favourite city is equally fallen to nothing. The abbey of St. Martin, whose abbots were once kings of France, is almost entirely destroyed, though there are two of the old towers still standing, at so great a distance from each other as to show the enormous extent of the ancient building. Besides all this, are there not a thousand shadowy visions come floating down the sea of time from the dreamy ages of chivalry and romance--Charles VII. and his knights, Alençon, Dunois, the Maid of Arc, and Agnes Sorrel? The beautiful Gabrielle d'Estrées too, owed her birth to Tours: but, unlike Agnes Sorrel, her best quality was her beauty, and for *that* her countrywomen are still deservedly famed.

In many respects it is a magnificent town. The Rue Royale, the Cathedral, the bishop's palace, and a fine bridge over the river, are the first objects the eye falls upon in entering the city; but before all, is the Loire itself, flowing on in calm majesty through the richest part of one of the most fertile countries in the world. Its banks were covered with all nature's choicest gifts at the time we entered Touraine, and, as if feeling the loneliness of the scene, the stream seemed to linger amidst the beauty that surrounded it. Long, long ago, it was the song of the troubadours. The Langue d'Oc and the Langue d'Oil took its waters for a boundary, and many noble deeds have rendered it famous in history. It was the birth-place, too, of the Count of St. Maurice, whose fate, with all its curious turns of fortune, told over the glowing fruit and the sparkling wine of the land in which he dwelt, had deeper interest than it may have here. He who narrated the tale called it.

THE FATE OF THE DUC DE BIRON.

Francis, Count of St. Maurice, was born at Tours, in the year 1580. His father perished in battle before his eyes opened to the day, and his mother scarcely survived his birth a week. His patrimonial property had been wasted in the wars of the League, and his only inheritance was his father's sword, and a few trembling lines written by his dying mother to the famous Baron de Biron, with whom she was distantly connected by the ties of blood. A trinket or two, the remnant of all the jewels that had decked her on her bridal day, paid the expense of arraying the dead wife of the fallen soldier for the grave, and furnished a few masses for the repose of both their souls; and an old servant, who had seen her mistress blossom into woman's loveliness, and then so soon fade into the tomb, after beholding the last dread dear offices bestowed upon the cold clay, took up the unhappy fruit of departed love, and bore it in her arms, on foot, to the only one on whom it seemed to have a claim. Biron, though stern, rude, and selfish, did not resist the demand. Ambition had not yet hardened his heart wholly, nor poisoned the purer stream of his affections; and gazing on the infant for a moment, he declared it was a lovely child, and wondrous like his cousin. He would make a soldier of the brat, he said, and he gave liberal orders for its care and tending. The child grew up, and the slight unmeaning features of the infant were moulded by time's hand--as ready to perfect as to destroy--into the face of as fair a boy as ever the eye beheld. Biron often saw and sported with the child, and its bold, sweet, and fearless mood, tempered by all the graces of youth and innocence, won upon the soldier's heart. He took a pride in his education, made him his page and his companion, led him early to the battle-field, and inured him almost from infancy to danger and to arms.

Although occasionally fond of softer occupations--of music, of reading, and the dance--the young Count of St. Maurice loved the profession in which he was trained. Quick-sighted and talented, brave as a lion, and firm as a rock, he rose in his profession, and obtained several of those posts which, together with the liberality of his benefactor, enabled him, in some degree, to maintain the rank which had come down to him without the fortune to support it. Attaching himself more and more to Biron every year, he followed him in all his campaigns and expeditions, and paid him back, by many a service and many a care, the kindness he had shown him in his infancy: so that twice had he saved the marshal's life, and twice, by his active vigilance, had he enabled his leader to defeat the enemy, before he himself had reached the age of eighteen.

Gradually, however, a change came over the mind of Marshal Biron. Henry IV., his too good master, became firmly seated on the throne of France, and Biron, attributing all the king's success to his own support, thought no recompense sufficient for his services, no honours high enough for his merit and his deeds. Henry was anything but ungrateful, and though, in fact, he owed his throne to his birth, and to his own right-hand, more than to any man on earth, he, nevertheless, loaded Marshal Biron with all the honours in his power to bestow. He was created a duke and peer of France, high-admiral, and lieutenant-general of the king's armies; and many a post of distinction and emolument raised his revenues and his dignity together. But still he was not satisfied: pride, ambition, and discontent, took possession of his heart; and he meditated schemes of elevating himself, till the insanity of ambition led him to thoughts of treason. His manners, too, grew morose and haughty: he was reserved and distant to those he had formerly favoured, and his household became cold and stately.

At the same time, a change, but a very different change, had taken place in the bosom of the young St. Maurice; and to explain what that change was, a fact must be mentioned, which is in itself a key to all the new feelings and the new thoughts, the new speculations and the new hopes, which entered into the bosom of the young, but fortuneless count, about the end of the year 1600. About eight years before that period, there had been added to the family of the Duke de Biron a young niece, of about nine years old, a lively, gentle girl, with bright hair and soft blue eyes, and pretty childish features, that had no look but that of innocence when they were in repose, but which occasionally took a glance of warm, happy eagerness, with which we might suppose an angel to gaze on the completion of some bright and mighty work. In her childhood, she played with the young St. Maurice, till they loved each other as children love; and just at that age when such things become dangerous to a young girl's heart, fluttering between infancy and womanhood, the Duke de Biron was ordered to Brussels on the arrangements of the peace, and taking St. Maurice with him, he sent Mademoiselle de la Roche-sur-Marne to a convent, which she thought very hard, for her father and mother were both dead, and all that she loved on earth the Duke carried away with him.

St. Maurice was left behind at Brussels to terminate some business which Marshal Biron had not concluded, and when, after some lapse of time, he returned to France, and joined the Duke at the Citadel of Bourg, where that nobleman commanded for the King, he found Marie de la Roche no longer the same being he had left her. The bud had at once burst forth into a flower, and a flower of most transcendent loveliness. The form which his arm had encircled a thousand times, in boyish sport, had changed in the whole tone of its beauty. Every line, every movement, breathed a different spirit, and woke a different feeling. The features too, though soft as infancy, had lost the roundness of infancy, and in the still innocent imploring eyes, which yet called up all the memory of the past, there was an eloquent glance beaming from the woman's heart, in which childhood was all outshone.

The young Count felt no alteration in himself, but was dazzled and surprised with the change in her, and felt a sudden diffidence take possession of him, which the first warm unchanged welcome could hardly dispel. She seemed scarce to dream that there was a difference, for the time that she had spent in the convent was an unfilled blank, which afforded scarce a circumstance to mark the passage of a brief two years. The Duke de Biron received his young follower with rough kindness, but there were always various causes which kept him more from the society of St. Maurice than formerly. There were many strangers about him, some of whom were Italians, and St. Maurice saw that much private business was transacted, from a knowledge of which he was purposely excluded. The Duke would take long, and almost solitary rides, or go upon distant expeditions, to visit the different posts under his government, and then, instead of commanding at once the young soldier's company, he left him to escort Mademoiselle de la Roche to this fair sight or that beautiful view. In the pride and selfishness of his heart, he never dreamed it possible that the poor and friendless Count of St. Maurice would dare to love the niece of the great Duke de Biron, or that Marie de la Roche would ever feel towards him in any other way than as the dependent follower of her uncle.

But he knew not human nature. Mademoiselle de la Roche leaned upon the arm of St. Maurice as they strayed though the beautiful scenery near Bourg, or yielded her light form to his grasp, as he lifted her on horseback; or listened to him while he told of battles and dangers when he had followed her uncle to the field, or gazed upon his flashing features and speaking eye while he spoke of great deeds, till her heart beat almost to pain whenever his step sounded along the corridors, and her veins thrilled at the slightest touch of his hand. St. Maurice, too, for months plunged blindly into the vortex before him. He thought not--he hesitated not at the consequences. But one feeling, one emotion, one passion filled his bosom,--annihilated foresight, prudence, reflection, altogether,--took possession of heart and brain, and left the only object for his mind's conception--love!

It went on silently in the bosom of each; they spoke not what was in their hearts; they hardly dared to look in each other's eyes for fear the secret should find too eloquent a voice; and yet they each felt and knew, that loving, they were beloved. They could not but know it, for, constantly together, there were a thousand voiceless, unconscious modes of expression, which told again and again a tale that was but too dear to the heart of each. And yet there is something in the strong confirmation of language which each required for the full satisfaction of their mutual hopes, and there are moments when passion will have voice. Such a moment came to them. They were alone; the sun had just sunk, and the few gray minutes of the twilight were

speeding on irrevocable wings. There was no eye to see, no ear to hear, and their love was at length spoken.

They had felt it--they had known it long; but the moment it was uttered--its hopelessness--its perfect hopelessness--seemed suddenly to flash upon their minds, and they stood gazing on each other in awe and fear, like the First Two, when they had tasted the fatal fruit of the knowledge of good and evil. But the never-to-be-recalled words had been breathed, and there was a dread, and a hope, and a tenderness, mingled with every glance that they turned upon one another.

Still the Duke de Biron did not see, for his mind was so deeply engrossed with the schemes of his mad ambition, and the selfishness of his pride, that nothing else rested in his thoughts for a moment. Messengers were coming and going between him and the Duke of Savoy, a known enemy to France, and whenever he spoke with St. Maurice, it was in terms of anger towards the good King Henry IV., and of praise and pleasure towards the cold-hearted monarch of Spain. Often, too, he would apparently strive to sound the disposition of his young follower, and would throw him into company with men of more art and cunning than himself, who would speak of the destruction of the Bourbon line as necessary for the good of France and the tranquillity of Europe, and insinuate that a time might be at hand when such a sacrifice would be completed. St. Maurice frowned, and was silent when the design was covered, as often happened, with much art, and boldly spoke his mind against traitors when the treason was apparent.

At length one day he was called to the presence of the Duke, whom he found alone. "Come hither, St. Maurice," said his friend; "I have brought you up, young Count, from your infancy to your manhood--I have been your friend in fair days and foul--I taught you the duty of a soldier, and the duty of an officer--I have raised you higher than any other man in France could do, or would do--and now tell me--whether do you love best Henry of Bearn or me?"

"Your words, my lord," replied St. Maurice, "taught me in early years to love the King, and your actions taught me to love yourself; but the honour of a French noble teaches me to love my duty, and that joins ever with my love towards my King."

"Ha!" exclaimed Biron, his dark brow burning, "must you teach me what is duty?--Begone, ungrateful boy!--leave me--thus, like the man in the fable, we nourish serpents in our bosom, that will one day sting us--begone, I say!"--St. Maurice turned to quit the cabinet, with feelings of sorrow and indignation in his heart: but grief to see his benefactor thus standing on the brink of dishonour and destruction, overcame all personal feeling, and he paused, exclaiming, "Oh! my lord, my lord! beware how you bring certain ruin on your own head ----." But remonstrance only called up wrath. Biron lost all command over himself. He stamped with his heavy boot till the chamber rang; he bade St. Maurice quit his presence and his dwelling; he stripped him, with a word, of all the posts and employments which he had conferred upon him, and bade him, ere two days were over, leave the castle of Bourg, and go forth from his family; a beggar as he had entered it. Nor alone, in his rash passion, did he content himself with venting his wrath upon his young follower, but he dropped words against the monarch and the state, which left his treasonable practices beyond a doubt.

The young Count heard as little as possible, but hurried from the presence of a man whom pride and anger had frenzied, and hastening to his chamber, he paused but to ponder over all the painful circumstances of his own situation. Nothing was before him but despair, and his brain whirled round and round with that vague, wild confusion of painful ideas, which no corporeal agony can equal. The predominant thought however, the idea that rose up with more and more frightful prominence every moment, was the necessity of parting from her he loved--and of parting for ever, without one hope, without one expectation to soothe the long cold blank of absence. He could have borne the unjust and cutting unkindness of the Duke--he could have borne the loss of fortune, and the prospect of that hard, fierce struggle which the world requires of men who would rise above their original lot--he could have borne the reverse of state and of station, comfort and fortune, without a murmur or a sigh; but to lose the object in which all the ardent feelings of an ardent heart had been concentrated, was more, far more than he could bear. Thus he pondered for near an hour, letting the bitter stream of thought flow on, while every moment added some new drop of sorrow, as reflection showed him more and more the utter hopelessness of all his prospects.

The setting out of a large train from before his window, first roused him from his painful dream, and though he knew not why, he felt relieved when he beheld the Duke de Biron himself lead the way, caparisoned as for a journey. The next moment found him beside Mademoiselle de la Roche. Her eyes were full of tears, and he instantly concluded she had heard his fate; but it was not so. She was weeping, she said, because her uncle had come to her apartments very angry on some account, and had harshly commanded her back to her convent the next day; and as she told her lover, she wept more and more. But when he in turn related the Duke's anger with him, and his commands to quit the citadel--when he told her all the destitution of his situation--and hopelessness of winning her when all his fortune on the earth was his sword and a thousand crowns, Marie de la Roche wept no more, but drying her bright eyes, she put her hand in his, saying, "St. Maurice, we will go together! We love each other, and nobody in the world cares aught about us--my uncle casts us both off--but my inheritance must sooner or later be mine, and we will take our lot together!"

Such words, spoken by such lips, were far more than a lover's heart could resist. Had he been

absent when that scheme was proposed--had he not seen her--had he not held her hand in his--had her eyes not looked upon him, he might have thought of difficulties, and prudence, and danger, and discomfort to her. But now her very look lighted up hope in his heart, and he would not let fear or doubt for a single instant shadow the rekindled beams. He exacted but one thing--she should bring him no fortune. The Duke de Biron should never say that he had wedded his niece for her wealth--if she would sacrifice all, and share his fate, he feared not that with his name and with his sword, and her love to inspire him, he should find fortune in some distant land. Marie doubted not either and willingly agreed to risk herself with him upon the wide unknown ocean of events.

It seemed as if all circumstances combined to enable them more easily to make the trial. The Duke de Biron had gone to Fontainbleau, boldly to meet the generous master he had determined to betray, and the old chaplain of the citadel, whose life St. Maurice had saved at the battle of Vitry, after many an entreaty, consented to unite him that very night to his young sweet bride. Their horses were to be prepared in the gray of the morning, before the sun had risen, and they doubted not that a few hours would take them over the frontier, beyond the danger of pursuit.

The castle was suffered to sink into repose, and all was still; but at midnight a solitary taper lighted the altar of the chapel, and St. Maurice soon pressed Marie to his heart as his wife. In silence he led her forth, while the priest followed with trembling steps, fearful lest the lightest footfall should awaken notice and suspicion; but all remained tranquil--the lights in the chapel were extinguished, and the chaplain retreated in peace to his apartment.

There was scarcely a beam in the eastern sky when St. Maurice glided forth to see if the horses were prepared. He paused and listened--there was a noise below, and he thought he heard coming steps along some of the more distant corridors. A long passage separated him from his own chamber, and he feared to be seen near that of Marie, and be obliged at once to proclaim his marriage, lest her fair fame should be injured. He therefore determined to hasten forward, and strive to gain his own part of the building. He strode on like light, but at the top of the staircase a firm hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a loud voice demanded, "Who are you?" St. Maurice paused, undetermined whether to resist and still try to shake of the person who stopped him, or to declare himself at once; but the dim outline of several other figures against a window beyond, showed him that opposition was vain, and he replied, "I am the Count of St. Maurice; why do you stop me, sir?"

"In the King's name, I arrest you, Count of St. Maurice," replied the voice; "give me your sword."

"In the King's name, or in Marshal Biron's, gentlemen?" demanded St. Maurice, somewhat bitterly. "You jest with me, gentlemen; my lord the Duke I may have offended, but the King never."

"I said in the King's name, young gentleman," replied the other gravely, taking the sword, which St. Maurice yielded. "You, sirs," he continued, turning to those who stood near, "guard the prisoner closely, while I seek for the Baron de Lux."

St. Maurice was detained for a few minutes in the corridor, and then bade to prepare to journey to Fontainbleau. The whole castle was now in confusion, and all the principal officers of Marshal Biron, the Count found, were, like himself, under arrest. At his earnest entreaty, the Count de Belin, who commanded the party of royal troops, permitted him to take leave of her he had so lately wedded, though only in his presence. Marie de la Roche-sur-Marne was drowned in tears, but alarm for her uncle's safety easily accounted for that, and the few low words of comfort and assurance which St. Maurice spoke, betrayed not at all the secret of their union. She suffered him to speak uninterrupted but by her sobs; but when he bent over her hand he raise it to his lips, with the formal courtesy of the day, all was forgotten but her love and her despair, and casting herself into his arms, she hid her eyes upon his shoulder, and wept with the bitter agonizing tears of unavailing love.

The old Count de Belin gently unclasped her arms, and removed St. Maurice, who turned, and grasping his hand, said, with a meaning look, "Sir, you are a soldier and a gentleman--our confidence, I am sure, is safe?"

"Upon my honour," replied the officer; laying his hand upon his heart, and St. Maurice was satisfied. He was soon after put on horseback, and conducted with several others to Fontainbleau, from whence he was immediately carried to Paris, and lodged in the Bastile. But it may be now time to turn to him whose weak ambition had brought ruin on his own head.

As is well known, the Duke de Biron, summoned by the king to his presence on clear information of his treason, proceeded at once to Fontainbleau, depending fully on the fidelity of the very man who had betrayed him, and entered the gardens in which Henry was walking, at the very moment when the monarch was declaring, *that beyond all doubt he would not come*. He advanced at once towards the king, and Henry, whose frank and generous heart would fain have believed him less guilty than he really was, embraced him according to his custom, saying, "You did well to come, Lord Duke, otherwise I should have gone to seek you;" and, taking him by the hand, he led him into another garden, where he could speak with him unobserved. There Henry at once, with the noble candour of a noble heart, told him that good information had been

received, of his having carried on a long correspondence with the enemies of the state. "Speak the truth, my lord," he added; "tell me all, and, good faith, no one shall know it; the matter shall go no further, and all it shall cost you shall be a sincere repentance."

The Marshal replied, proudly, that he had nothing to confess, and that his purpose in coming, was to meet his accusers. There was a rudeness in his answer, which was not the boldness of innocence; and Henry, turning away, rejoined the court. Still the king tried more than once during the day to win from the traitor one repentant word. He again and again solicited him to speak. He sent his friends to him, and his relations; and though urged by his council--before which full proofs of the Marshal's guilt had long been laid, and which had taken prompt measures, as we have seen, for securing his followers and dependents--still Henry's heart rebelled against his better judgment, and would not suffer him to order his arrest. "If this matter be tried, and proved against him," said the King, "justice must have its way, for the sake of public example; but I would fain avert the necessity." At length, even at midnight, Henry once more called his treacherous servant to his presence; and again begged him, for his own sake, to confess his fault. "Let me hear from your own mouth," said the monarch, "that which with great sorrow I have heard from too good authority; and on a frank acknowledgment, I promise to grant you pardon and kindness. Whatever crime you may have committed or meditated against my person, if you will but confess it, I will cover it over with the mantle of my protection, and forget it myself."[6]

"Sire!" replied the Marshal boldly, "I have nothing to say but what I have said. I did not come to your majesty to justify myself, but to beg you only to tell me my enemies, that I may seek justice against them, or render it to myself."

Henry turned away disgusted, and the Duke advanced through the door of the saloon into the antechambers beyond. At the door of that, however, which led out upon the staircase, he was met by the Count de Vitry, who, seizing his right hand in his own left, caught the hilt of Biron's sword with the other hand, exclaiming, "The King commands me to give an account of your person, sir. Yield me your sword."

Biron started, and a mortal paleness came over his face; for it would seem that he never dreamed for a moment, either that the monarch had accurate information of his treason, or would proceed to do justice against him. He suffered himself to be disarmed, however, and led to a secure apartment, where, after he had recovered from his first surprise, he passed the night in violent and intemperate language, injurious to his own cause, and indecent in itself. From thence he was conveyed to the Bastile, and his trial proceeded with great rapidity. A thousand efforts were made to save him, by his friends and relations; and Henry was besieged, wherever he appeared, with tears and petitions. But the day of mercy had gone by; and the same monarch who had almost supplicated his rebellious subject to say one word that might save himself, now sternly declared that justice must take its course; and that whatever the law awarded, without fail should be put in execution.

In the meanwhile, St. Maurice passed his time in bitter meditations, confined in a dull cell of the Bastile, which, though not absolutely a dungeon, contained nothing but one of those small narrow beds whose very look was like that of the grave, a crucifix, and a missal. The hours and the days wore on, and he saw no one but the people who brought him his daily food, and a few persons passing occasionally across the inner court of the Bastile; so that solitude and sad thoughts traced every day deeper and deeper lines upon his heart, and upon his brow. He thought of her whom he loved--of what her situation was, and what it might be; and when that was too painful, he turned his mind to his own fate, and tried to look it calmly in the face, but still the image of Marie rose up in every scene, and reduced all the native resolution of his heart to woman's weakness.

He was thus one day cast heedlessly on his bed, when the door of his cell opened, and the jailer desired him to follow. St. Maurice rose and obeyed, and a few minutes brought him to a larger chamber, which he was bade to enter. At the other side of the room there stood a middle-sized man, habited in a plain suit of rusty black velvet, with strongly marked aquiline features, and gray hair and beard. His eye was keen and quick, his forehead broad and high, and there was something peculiar in the firm rooted attitude with which he stood, bending his eyes upon the open door. Even had St. Maurice never seen him before, he could never have doubted that he was a King.

"Come hither, Sir Count," said Henry IV. abruptly; "tell me all you know of this treason of the Duke de Biron. Tell me all, tell me true, and, by my faith, you shall have full pardon."

"Sire," replied St. Maurice, "when my father died in the service of your majesty, and my mother left this world a few days after my birth, I was left a penniless orphan, for all our fortunes had been lost in your royal cause----" Henry knitted his brow--"I was a beggar," continued St. Maurice, "and the Duke de Biron took pity on me--brought me up--led me to the field--protected--provided for me----"

"Hold! hold! Hold!" cried the King. "Say no more! say no more--get you gone--yet stay--I seek not, sir, this unhappy man's death. Justice shall be done, but no more than justice--not severity. If you know anything which can mitigate his offence, speak it boldly, and the King will thank you; anything that may render his crime less black."

"I know little, Sire, of the Marshal's late conduct," replied the Count, "for in truth I have been less in his confidence than formerly; but this I know, and do believe, that he is one of those men to speak, aye, and to write, many base things in a hasty and a passionate mood, that he would be the last on earth to act."

Henry mused for a moment in silence, and then, without any farther observation, ordered St. Maurice back again to his cell.

Another long week passed, and day after day grew more weary and horrible than the last. Each hour, each moment, added to anxiety, uncertainty, and expectation, already beyond endurance. The rising and the setting of the sun, the heavy passing away of the long and tardy minutes, the wide vague infinity through which apprehension and care had leave to roam, overwhelmed his mind, and shook even his corporeal strength. Each noise, each sound, made him start; and the very opening of his cell door brought with it some quick indistinct fear. It is said that those long accustomed to solitary confinement, get inured to the dead, blank vacancy of existence without action, lose hope, and fear, and thought, and care; and exist, but hardly can be said to live. But St. Maurice had not yet had time to let one of the fresh pangs of his situation become lulled by the opiate of custom, and every moment of its endurance was a moment of new agony. He heard no tidings, he received no comfort, no hope from any one. The very joys that he had known, and the love he valued most, became a torture to him; his own heart was a burden, and while the future was all dark and lowering, the past was full of regret, and prolific of apprehension.

At length, one evening, an unusual number of footsteps traversing the court below, called him from the bed on which he usually cast himself in prostrate despondency, and he beheld, from the small window of his cell, a number of people gathered together in the open space, of a quality which showed at once that some great and formal act was about to take place within the walls of the prison. The Chancellor was there, and various judges and officers of the Parliament, and a number of the municipal body of Paris were on the spot, with clerks and serjeants, and the two chief *prévôts*. A small body of soldiers also guarded the different doors of the court, and on the side next to the garden was raised a scaffold, about five feet above the ground, at the foot of which a strong man in black stood, with two others of an inferior grade, examining the edge of a large heavy sword, which was suddenly put into the sheath on the sound of some voices at the other side of the court.

At that moment the Duke de Biron was brought in through the opposite door, accompanied by several of the officers of the prison. His dark swarthy countenance was not a shade paler than usual, and, with his hat and plume upon his head, he walked boldly forward with an erect and daring carriage; but as his eye first fell upon the scaffold, he paused a single instant, exclaiming, "Ha!" He then strode forward again, as if he had been marching against an enemy, and came to the foot of the ladder which led to the scaffold. There he paused and looked round him with furious and impatient eyes, as if he would fain have vented the wrath that was in his heart upon some of those around him.

"Sir Chancellor! Sir Chancellor!" he cried, "you have condemned a man more innocent than many you have suffered to escape, and that upon the evidence of two perjured villains. You have done injustice, sir, which you could have prevented, and you shall answer it before God.--Yes, sir, before Him to whose presence I summon you before a year pass over." Then turning to the commandant, he added, "Ah, Monsieur de Roissy, Monsieur de Roissy! had your father been alive, he would have aided me to quit this place. Fie! fie! is this a fate for one who has served his country as I have?"

"My Lord Duke," said the Chancellor, "you have heard the sentence of your peers, and it must now be executed. The King commands me to demand the insignia of that noble order to which you once belonged."

"There, sir, take it!" cried the Duke, giving him his star and riband. "Tell the King, that though he treat me thus, I have never broken one statute of the order to which my deeds in his service raised me. Pshaw!" he continued, turning from the priest, who now pressed him to confess--"I make my confession aloud. All my words are my confession.--Still," he added, as his eye rested for a moment on the scaffold and all the awful preparation for his fate, "still, I may as well think awhile of where I am going."

He then spoke for a few minutes with the priest who stood by his side. His countenance grew calmer and graver; and after having received absolution and the sacrament, he looked for a brief space up towards the sky, then knelt down before the scaffold, and prayed for same time, while a dead silence was maintained around--you might have heard a feather fall. As he still knelt, the sun broke out, and shone calmly and sweetly over the whole array of death, while a bird in the neighbouring garden, wakened by the sunshine and the deep stillness, broke into a clear, shrill, joyful song, with the most painful music that ever struck the ear.

The prisoner started on his feet, and, after looking round for an instant, mounted the scaffold with the same bold step wherewith he had approached it. His eyes, however, still had in them that sort of wild, ferocious gleam, which they had exhibited ever since his arrest; and though he seemed to strive for calmness, and displayed not a touch of fear, yet there was an angry spirit in his tone as he addressed those around him. "I have wronged the King," he said, sharply, "I have

wronged the King. 'Tis better to acknowledge it. But that I ever sought his life is a lie and perjury. Had I listened to evil counsel, he would have been dead ten years ago. Ah! my old friends and fellow-soldiers," he added, turning to the guards, "why will none of you fire your piece into my heart, instead of leaving me to the vile hands of this common butcher?" And he pointed to the executioner. "Touch me not," he continued, seeing the other approach him with a handkerchief to bind his eyes--"touch me not with those hellish fingers, or, by heavens, I will tear you limb from limb! Give me the handkerchief."

He then cast his hat away from him, and bound his own eyes--knelt--prayed again for a moment--rose suddenly up as the executioner was about to draw the sword--withdrew the covering from his sight--gazed wildly round him for an instant, and beckoned one of the officers to tie up his long hair under the handkerchief. This was immediately done, and his eyes being covered, he called out, "Haste! haste!"

"Repeat the *In manus*, my lord," said the executioner, taking the heavy sword, which had hitherto been concealed by the attendants.

Biron began to repeat the psalm of the dying--the blade glittered in the air--swayed round the head of the executioner; and before the eye could trace the blow which ended the earthly career of the unfortunate but guilty soldier, his head was severed at once from his body, and Biron was no more.

A feeling of intense and painful interest had kept St. Maurice at the window till the moment that the unhappy soldier covered his own eyes with the handkerchief; but then a sensation of giddy sickness forced him away, and he cast himself down once more, with bitterer feelings than ever at his heart. The world seemed all a hell of cares and sorrows, and he could have died that moment with hardly a regret. After he had lain there for nearly two hours, he once more rose, and approached the window. The crowd were all gone, but the dark scaffold still remained, and the young soldier drew back again, saying to himself, "Who next? who next?" He lay down and tried to sleep, but his throbbing temples and his heated blood rendered the effort vain. Strange wild images rose up before his eyes. Fiends and foul shapes where grinning at him in the air. Fire seemed circling through his veins, and burning his heart; he talked; with no one to hear--he raved--he struggled--and then came a long term of perfect forgetfulness, at the end of which he woke as from a profound sleep.

He was weak as a child, and his ideas of the past were but faint and confused. The first thing, however, that returned to memory was the image of his cell, and he cast his heavy eyes around, in search of the bolts, and bars, and grated windows; but no such things were near. He was in a small but handsome room, with the open lattice admitting the breath of many flowers, and by his side sat an old and reverend dame, whom he had never seen before. A few faint but coherent words, and the light of intelligence re-awakened in his eye, showed the nurse, for such she was, that the fever had left him, and going out of the chamber, she returned with a soldier-like man, whom St. Maurice at once remembered as the old Count de Belin, who had arrested him at Bourg. Many words of comfort and solace were spoken by the old soldier, but St. Maurice was forbidden to utter a syllable, or ask a question, for several days. A physician, too, with grave and solemn face, visited him twice each day, and gave manifold cautions and warnings as to his treatment, which the young gentleman began soon to think unnecessary, as the firm calm pulse of health grew fuller and fuller in his frame. At length one day, as he lay somewhat weary of restraint, the door opened, and Henry IV. himself stood by his bed-side. "New, faith, my good young Count," said the monarch, "I had a hearty mind to keep you to silence and thin bouillon for some days longer, to punish certain rash words spoken in the Bastile, casting a stigma upon royal gratitude for leaving faithful friends, who had lost all in our behalf, to poverty and want. But I have lately heard all your story, and more of it than you thought I ever would hear; and therefore, though I shall take care that there be no more reproaches against my gratitude, as a punishment for your crimes, I shall sell you as a slave for ever. Come hither, sweet taskmaster," he added, raising his voice, "and be sure you do all that woman can--and that is no small power--to tease this youth through all his life to come."

As the King spoke, the flutter of a woman's robe--the bright, dear eyes--the sweet, all-graceful form,--the bland glad smile of her he loved, burst upon the young soldier's sight; and she, forgetting fear, timidity, the presence of royalty--all, all but love, sprang forward at once, and bedewed his bosom with her happy tears.

SAINT RADIGONDE.

It was fair-time when we arrived at Poitiers, and twelve o'clock at night, so that we had some difficulty in getting beds; but going into the kitchen, by dint of a little love, and a great deal of civility, I prevailed upon the chambermaid to give us two which had been reserved for a couple of

gentlemen expected from Tours.

When I returned to the hall I found my friend with two Frenchmen, Now, under all circumstances, an Englishman generally keeps the distance of two yards between him and a stranger; but as I had determined to go through the world precisely as I would do through a menagerie, and to see all the strange beasts that are in it, I approximated myself, in general, to all those whom Heaven threw in my way. The two Frenchmen were waiting for supper, and so were we; therefore without more ado we all sat down together, and as I much wished to find out the famous field of Poitiers, I soon began to ask a great many questions. But they knew nothing about it. They had never heard of it; and they had lived in the neighbourhood for years, so that they were sure the battle I spoke of could not have happened in their day. "Most probably not," said I. "It must have been before the revolution," said the other Frenchman, who was a good, fat, substantial farmer, come into the town to buy and sell at the fair. "But as Monsieur was fond of curious things," he added, "he ought by all means to see the church of St. Radigonde, where the mark of the Saviour's foot was still to be beheld." And he set to tell me how it happened, and all about it. His story was somewhat after his own fashion, it is true, but it is not a whit the worse for that. "Saint Radigonde," he said, "was a Catholic, and the sister of *Clovis*; who was father to *Henri Quatre*." "I thought that they were more distantly related," said I. But he stuck to his biography, and continued. "Well, Clovis was a very warlike monarch as well as his son, and being engaged in a most tremendous battle, he sent to his sister to desire her prayers, which she very readily granted him; and while thus piously engaged, our Saviour appeared to her and promised her the victory for her brother, leaving the mark of his foot in the marble.

"Clovis triumphed over his enemy, and so great was his gratitude for this manifest interference of Heaven in his favour, that he instantly became a sincere Catholic. For you know," said the narrator, "that before that time he was a *Protestant*."

"I have heard," replied I, "that he was a Pagan."

"A Pagan or a Protestant," said he, "it is all the same thing."

I was well pleased with any absurdity. The memory of more poignant griefs had worn away so far as to permit my feeling amused with many things--pleasure I derived from but few! Under the attack of very severe griefs, imagination is the first of the mind's soldiers that yields or revolts to the enemy; but, as those griefs pass on, leaving us conquered, imagination, is the first to return to console us. Grief, when it grows fanciful, is in its first stage of amelioration. Then comes the power of laughing long before we learn again to enjoy.

THE CURIOSITIES.

I am as fond of seeing curiosities as any other grown child that ever existed; and as my companion was of the same mind as myself, the first thing we did the morning after our arrival at Poitiers, was to visit the ruins of the amphitheatre; which are very little worth seeing, except to those who love ruins for their own sake. The arena is filled up with gardens, and though the whole site is perfectly well marked out, but little of the walls exist at present. It was the son of the proprietor who showed us over the spot. He might be an idiot, or he might not, but he gave us no information, and kept grinning at us, and listening to our foreign dialect with evident marks of horror and astonishment. On our departure he followed us into the street, and still kept staring in our faces, till my friend appealed to my better knowledge of France to ascertain what he wanted. I answered, "*A franc*." My companion was incredulous, but I put my hand in my pocket, and drawing one out, I begged the young gentleman to give it to "*la domestique*." He took it immediately, with great satisfaction, and whether the servant ever received it or not, is between her young master and herself.

We went to the church of St. Radigonde too. It is really singular how prone the human mind is to lend itself to every sort of absurdity. We are made of odd clay certainly, of so soft a temper in our youth, that it takes the first form it happens to find, and then hardening there, would sooner break than quit it. There were a dozen old women at the church door, who make a livelihood by fixing themselves in the suite of Saint Radigonde, and we were instantly assailed by *la bonne Ste. Radigonde prie pour vous*, together with much counting of rosaries, and all the rest of Catholic begging. On entering the church we found an iron grating with a fine figure of the saint, dressed in a blue cloak powdered with *fleurs de lys*, not at all unlike one of the figures placed at the head of a ship. There, too, was what they are pleased to call the foot-mark of our Saviour, covered with some bars of iron, and an inscription above, to give authority to the falsehood. Round about it were scattered several pieces of money, from a sous to a franc, which my companion, in his fisherman's slang termed ground-bait.

Farther on is the tomb of the saint, with a silver lamp ever burning, the gift of Anne of Austria,

in gratitude for the restored health of Louis XIV. after his illness at Metz, which the Queen attributes entirely to Saint Radigonde. In imitation of this royal credulity, multitudes of persons affected with various maladies have hung up at the shrine little effigies of the afflicted parts, modelled in wax: so that there are enough of waxen legs and arms to furnish the largest doll-shop in Europe. Passing through a low arch, we descended by a few steps to the sort of vault in which lies the stone coffin, supposed to contain the body of Saint Radigonde. This, the pious take care to adorn with large tapers, much to the gratification of the priests and the wax-chandlers.

THE BOTTLE OF SAUTERN.

Benedetto
Quel claretto
Che si spilla in Avignone.--BACCO IN TOSCANA.

We were tired with our ramble, for besides the amphitheatre and Saint Radigonde, we had been to the cathedral and the promenades, and had walked for two or three miles along the road towards Paris, to see the beautiful rocky scenery which flanks the entrance to the town, and which we had passed the night before by moonlight. Finding that we could actually eat no dinner at the inn, (they were all so occupied with the people of the fair,)we strolled out to a restaurateur's in the neighbourhood, before the door of whose house a woman, with a voice like a Stentor, and a face like Baron G----, was singing the acts of our Saviour, in a sort of little booth covered all over with gospel pictures, which the man who played the accompaniment pointed out with his fiddlestick, one by one, as she came to them in her song.

We went into the *restaurant*, and notwithstanding the multitude of the fair, met with a very good dinner, composed of heaven knows what. There is no use of inquiring into these things.

After dinner we ordered a bottle of Sautern, which was marked in the *carte* at *two francs ten sous*. It was in a kind of despair that we did it, for the red wine was worth nothing. It came.--People may talk of Hocheim, and Burgundy, and Hermitage, and all the wines that ever the Rhone or the Rhine produced, but never was there wine like that one bottle of *Sautern*. It poured, out as clear as the stream of hope ere it has been muddied by disappointment, and it was as soft and generous as early joy ere youth finds out its fallacy. We drank it slowly, and lingered over the last glass, as if we had a presentiment that we should never meet with anything like it again. When it was done, quite done, we ordered another bottle. But no--it was not the same wine. We sent it away, and we had another--in vain--and another--there was no more of it to be had.

It was like one of those days of pure unsophisticated happiness, that sometimes break in upon life, and leave nothing to be desired; that comes unexpectedly--last their own brief space, like things apart--and are remembered for ever.

THE FIELD OF POITIERS.

"It is very strange," said I, "that no one can tell me where it lies."

But I forgot that the French, very wisely, never remember the battles they lose: and as here their kingdom was overthrown, and its king taken prisoner, they of course made the more haste to forget it. So I desired my guide to conduct me to the Pierre Levée, and resolved to seek the field of battle myself.

It is simply a Celtic monument, the Pierre Levée, and is only curious from its insulated situation; but as I always like to have the best information going, I asked the guide what he thought of it.

Common people have two ways of disposing of things that they would not else know what to do with. If they want to send them away, they send them to the devil; if they do not know where they come from, they bring them from heaven. This latter was the case with my guide and the Pierre Levée; so he told me, that it dropped from the skies four hundred thousand years ago.

As *this* is a more probable account than any I have read or heard of, concerning these Celtic monuments; and as it fixes the date precisely, I feel myself bound not to withhold it from the world.

I sought the field of battle by myself, and a long and weary search it was. No one could give me any account of it, and many had never heard of any battle there at all. There was a spot struck me at length, as offering the most probable position. I pitched the Black Prince's camp on a small rising ground, and disposed King John's army round about him, so that he could not escape. There was a wood that covered the archers, just in front; and a wide open space, having the advantage of the field, which I filled up with horse. Then there was a body of strong men at arms resting on the village below, flanked by the spears of the guard; and down between the English and the river, was the whole division of Ribemont and Clermont. I drew it out in my own mind as clearly as possible. It was as fine a battle as ever was seen; and I set my heart upon its being just there.

There was a group of peasants playing at the door of a grange, and as I saw one whose face I liked. I went up and asked him whether there had not once been a famous battle there. But he made me half angry by telling me, "No, that it was farther on." He overthrew all my host, as completely as Edward did that of France. "Tenez, monsieur," said he "you see that high tree in the distance; if you walk straight towards it, about a quarter of a league on this side, you will find a heap of large stones which we call *les pierres brunes*. You are then on the field of battle." I asked if he was sure. "He was certain," he said, "for that he had ploughed there often; and many a large bone, and rusty piece of armour, had he turned up with the ploughshare."

They were almost the words of Virgil.

> "Scilicet et tempus veniet cum finibus illis
> Agricola, incurvo terram molitus aratro,
> Exesa inveniet scabrâ rubigine pila,
> Aut gravibus rastris galeas pulsabit inanes,
> Grandiaque effossis mirabitur ossa sepulcris."

I followed the peasant's directions, and found myself certainly in the midst of that field, where the few struggled against the many, and conquered--where the mild warrior received his fallen enemy as a brother, and taught him, if not to forget, to bear his captivity. Were there many such adversaries, mankind would blush to draw a sword.

And it was here, that there were deeds of valour and of strength; of cruelty and generosity, and fury and calmness; of inconsiderate daring and cool calculating wisdom, and all that sum of good and evil which buys the bauble glory.

And for what did they bleed? For what did they fall?--the heroes of that splendid field of carnage?--to be forgotten! To have their bones turned up and ground by the iron of the plough, and their unhonoured dust trodden by the peasant's heel. The knight's sword rusting in peace beside his enemy's corslet, and the ashes of the coward and the brave amicably mingling in their native earth. To be forgotten! Their very burial-place unknown, but to the hind whose ground they fattened with their blood, and the pale antiquary who rakes amongst their bones for something ancient! The deeds that, even in dying, they fondly fancied would be immortal, overwhelmed beneath the lumber of history, or blotted out by fresher comments on the same bloody theme! The names they thought engraved deep in the column of Fame, erased by Time's sure destroying hand! The thrones they fought for and the realms they won, past unto other dynasties; and all the object of their mighty daring as unachieved as if they had not been!

Such is the history of every field of battle.[7]

THE DILIGENCE.

By this time we had given up the system of posting, A man who does not travel in the diligence loses one half of what he ought to see. From Poitiers to Angoulême, we had two places in the *coupée*, or front part. Our companion was a tall, good-looking man, who at first did not make any great show of politeness. He had been a military man, and perhaps took us for what French soldiers were accustomed to call Pekins.

Marshal ---- once being invited to dine with Talleyrand, was much after the hour appointed.

"We have waited for you, sir," said Talleyrand, on his arrival. The marshal said he could not help it, that he had been detained by a Pekin, just as he was going out.

"What do you call a Pekin?" asked the statesman.

"Nous appelons Pekin," replied the marshal, "tout ce qui n'est pas militaire."

"C'est comme nous," said Talleyrand coolly: "nous appelons militaire, tout ce qui n'est pas civil."

Our companion, however, soon fell into conversation. It is a bait that Frenchmen cannot resist; and now he was polite and agreeable as he had at first been repulsive; but when he found that I was not only acquainted with many persons he himself knew, but was also fond of all field sports, his civility knew no bounds. Nothing would satisfy him but a promise that we would visit him at M----, where he was receiver-general: and there he would give us inexhaustible amusement both in hunting and shooting. Pardon me, my dear Count, if this ever falls into your hands; but when you can be so amiable a companion as you afterwards proved, you ought never to repel a poor stranger, who lies at your mercy for the comfort of a long journey.

We stayed but a day at Angoulême. Indeed there is nothing beautiful in the town, except the view from the height on which it is placed; and nothing amusing, except the marine school, which, the government have placed here, in the most inland position they could find.

On the arrival of the diligence, which was to carry us to Bordeaux, we found that all the places were taken but four, I forget who was in the *coupèe*: in the centre there was the strangest mixture that can be imagined. There appeared a Bordeaux merchant, three nuns, a libertine officer of dragoons, and two pointer dogs his companions.

In the *rotonde* with us were the keeper of the *bureau des diligences* (or stage-coach-office) and his daughter. If any were to draw her picture from the same class in England, how much mistaken they would be! She was everything that youth, and beauty, and simple elegance, could make her. Set her in a drawing-room and call her a princess, and there was nothing in her manners would give the lie to the appellation. She had never before been from her home, and was now going to see the great fair at Bordeaux; and she was full of the eagerness of youth, curiosity, and inexperience: but there was no inelegance about it: her sensations were always gracefully expressed, and seemed to amuse her as much as any one else.

As the sun rose next morning and shone in at the window of the diligence, the light fell upon her fair face and braided dark hair, as she lay asleep upon the shoulder of her father, who gazed upon her closed eyes and motionless features with that peculiar look of soft affection alone to be seen in the face of a parent. It was as lovely a picture as I ever saw. He caught my eyes fixed upon them; but there was nothing in my look that could give offence, and he smiled, looking back upon his child once more, and saying, "Pauvre enfant!" He spoke as if he felt at once that I could enter into all his sensations. Many a man--I am afraid many of my own countrymen--would conceal such feelings, simply from the fear of being laughed at; yet surely, of all sorts of *mauvaise honte*, that is the worst which makes us ashamed of what is pure and noble, and natural and beautiful. A few more leagues brought us to Bordeaux. But as I have a story to tell, I must not pause long even to give an idea of the town in which the scene is laid. I will allow myself two pages and a half.

Bordeaux is certainly one of the handsomest towns in France., The old city, like most other old cities, is narrow and confined. The builders of that day seem to have imagined that there was not room enough in the world for them, and have therefore packed their edifices into as small a space as possible. The finest parts of the town are beyond the old walls, the line of which is still to be distinguished by the appellation of Fossé, given to the new streets, now built upon their former site. The river, being, as it were, the wet-nurse of Bordeaux, the houses have accumulated upon the bank, following the bend of the Garonne, in one of the most splendid crescents that can be conceived; and a beautiful bridge of seventeen arches, with a fine simple triumphal gate, at the end of the Rue des Salinières, adds not a little to the beauty of the scene.

The town is formed, in general, of a light kind of stone, very easily worked, which, perhaps, is one cause why the private hotels and principal streets are so magnificently decorated in the upper stories--but it is in the upper stories alone, for the ground-floor is generally occupied by petty ill-contrived shops, and never by any means harmonizes with the higher parts of the building. I have seen the lower story of a princely habitation tenanted by a cobler, and a small pastry-cook's dirty shop below one of the finest houses in Bordeaux.

The theatre, too, which is a very superb piece of architecture, has its arcades crammed full of book-stalls and old-clothes shops. In short, the incongruity which mingles more or less in everything French, shows itself nowhere more strongly than in the buildings of this town, certainly one of the most beautiful in France.

Bordeaux occupies a much larger space than is absolutely necessary for its population. Long rows of trees, planted in the finest streets, magnificent public gardens, and promenades, now fill the ground, which in the city's earlier days would have been piled up with story above story, and warehouse over warehouse, till earth groaned under the load. But luxury follows commerce, and the great merchants of Bordeaux must have room to breathe; this, however, is not without its consequence,--the extent of the city makes it fatiguing to walk from one end to the other. As Doctor Pangloss would have said, "Men were made to be carried; in this best of all possible

worlds, and therefore we have carriages." Now, those who have none of their own, are plentifully provided with *fiacres*, which are generally far superior to those of either London or Paris.

The cathedral is a fine gothic building, the towers, of which make a beautiful object in the view, when seen from the heights beyond the town, but in point of architecture it is far inferior to many others in France.

Bordeaux is highly susceptible of embellishment, which, indeed, it receives every day in the greatest degree. Formerly, between the *Quai des Chartrons* and the *Chapeau Rouge*, stood a sort of citadel, called the *Château Trompette*. This has been thrown down since the peace, and the site, together with the glacis, has been levelled and portioned out for new buildings and promenades. Many a tale, however, is told in Bordeaux of the old citades, and amongst others one of a MISER'S STEP-SON.

When the army of the Duke of Wellington was marching upon Toulouse, a deputation was sent to him from the royalists of Bordeaux, promising that if he would detach a small force in that direction, the town should be given up to him for the king. Immediately Rumour, with her thousand tongues, sent about the town all manner of reports: lying here, and lying there, till she frightened all the peaceable inhabitants out of their wits. The commandant of the Château Trompette was resolved (they said) to defend it, for Napoleon, to the last; and there he lay, with a formidable force, keeping the tri-coloured flag flying continually, and threatening to turn his cannon on the town if it submitted to the English. On the other hand, came the news that the British and Spanish forces were marching upon Bordeaux, and that their general threatened, if a shot was fired in its defence, to give the town up to the fury of the soldiers; and immediately, murder, assassination, pillage, and rapine, got into all the old women's heads in the place; and nothing was thought of by every one of them but to find some hole in which to hide their daughters and their money, till the storm had blown over.

There was at that time living at Bordeaux, an old Welsh lady of the name of Jones; and, like Jephtha, judge of Israel, she was blessed with one fair daughter whom she loved passing well. She had continued to live on in France, through peace and war, without minding any one; and, as she said, had never been frightened at any thing, since her poor dear husband's death, till she heard that the English and Spaniards were going to take Bordeaux by 'sault.[8] For the Spaniards, she understood, were voracious savages; as to the English, she did not mind them.

At the time of the French revolution, old monasteries were to be sold for an old song, and nunneries were to be had for the having. Thus it so happened, that in those days, Monsieur Emanuel Latouche (who had once been a Jew, and had become professionally a Christian, though he was strongly suspected of being of no religion at all,) had acquired, under a revolutionary sale, the property of the convent which lay on the one side of the Rue de l'Intendance, and the monastery which lay on the other. Now Monsieur Emanuel Latouche, for reasons best known to himself, espoused a certain French lady; his marriage with whom appeared to be the proximate cause of his Christianization; and having imbibed her fortune and bought the buildings aforesaid, he set up as a great dealer in marine stores. After a certain period of connubial felicity, the lady died; and left to the care and guidance of Emanuel Latouche, a certain remnant of herself, called a son, which she had had by a former marriage; and, as Monsieur Latouche was reputed to cheat all the world, he was by no means so inconsistent as not to cheat his own step-son, at least so it was generally supposed. Finding that it would be a much better speculation to let the monastery aforesaid, he prevailed upon old Mrs. Jones, whom we have heretofore mentioned, to take a great part of it, assuring her, as a further inducement, that, in case she should in future have any thing to hide, he could show her a place in that very house which would never be discovered by the keenest eyes.

It is not known whether Mrs. Jones was biassed by this information or not; but, however, she took up her abode in that part of the monastery which looks down on the Marché St. Dominique on the one hand, and on the Theâtre Français on the other; and Monsieur Emanuel Latouche, with his step-son, continued to live in the old convent on the other side of the Rue de l'Intendance. It was by these means that an intimacy first took place between pretty Lucy Jones and Edward Fontange, the step-son of Monsieur Emanuel Latouche.

There can be no doubt, since Horace says it, that the best plan is to begin in the middle of a story; but there is, notwithstanding, some trouble in working up one's lee way. Being arrived at the point we have now reached, however, all the rest is simple. Having put a handsome young man and a pretty girl together, what in the name of Heaven can they do but fall in love with each other? It is what they always do in novels, and poems, and plays, and I am afraid in real life too, for propinquity is a terrible thing; and, for my own part, I am a firm believer in animal magnetism, that is to say, as far as attraction and repulsion go. However that may be, Edward Fontange and Lucy Jones tried very hard to fall in love with each other, and, after a short time, succeeded to a miracle; so much so, indeed, that Mrs. Jones, perceiving what was going on, thought fit to speak to M. Latouche upon the subject, desiring to know if he intended to take his step-son into business with him; in which case she should not scruple, (she said,) to give him her daughter.

But M. Latouche informed her that he should do no such thing, that his step-son was no better than a beggar, whom he had educated out of affection for his dearly beloved wife deceased, and

that, further, he would not give him a farthing, or do anything else for him in the world; whereupon Mrs. Jones quarrelled with Monsieur Emanuel Latouche, called him a miserly old curmudgeon; and, going home, turned young Fontange out of her house, and bade her daughter Lucy think no more of the young vagabond.

Now love being, as Mrs. Jones herself admitted, no better than a pig, the best way of making him go on is to pull him back by the hind-leg; and, consequently, Lucy Jones, who was the most obedient creature in the world, thought more than ever of Edward Fontange, saw him on every occasion that she could contrive, and, it is supposed, let him now and then take a stray kiss, without saying any thing but "Don't," which he, being a Frenchman, did not at all understand.

It was at this time that the Duke of Wellington's army crossed the Pyrenees; and fear took possession of Mrs. Jones, who was not only terrified for her daughter Lucy, but also for certain sums of money, which she had kept long under lock and key. What was to be done? She puzzled a long time; but, in a moment, the words of Monsieur Emanuel Latouche came to her remembrance. He could show her (he had said) a place in that very house which would never be discovered by the keenest eyes; and as she thought of it, her hopes became exalted; she seized a candle from the table, without saying a word, and rushed into the cellar. For where could it be, she asked herself, but in the cellar? Lucy, who beheld her mother so suddenly seized with the spirit of locomotion, naturally imagined she was mad, and followed her as fast as she could. Her first supposition appeared confirmed, when entering the cellar, she found her mother gazing fixedly upon a small iron cross in the wall. "There it is, sure enough," cried Mrs. Jones; "there it is!"

"Are you out of your senses, mama?" demanded Lucy, respectfully; "are you mad? There's what?"

"Why the terraqueous suppository, girl," answered Mrs. Jones, who had forgotten a considerable portion of her English during her residence in France. "The terraqueous suppository, which that old curmudgeon, Latouche, told me of when he attrapped me into taking this old conventicle."

"I do not see any repository at all," said Lucy; "I see nothing but the cellar wall and an iron stancheon to keep it up."

"Nonsense," said Mrs. Jones, "I'll have a mason this minute, and get to the bottom of it." So away she ran and brought a mason; but the first thing was to make him keep secresy; and having conducted him in pomp to the cellar, she shut the door, and made her daughter Lucy give him the Bible. "Swear!" said Mrs. Jones, in a solemn tone, like the Ghost in Hamlet--"Swear!"

The mason held up his hand.

"Swear never to reveal," etc. etc.

"*Je jure tout ce que vous voudrez*--I swear any thing you like," replied the mason; and Mrs. Jones, finding this oath quite comprehensive enough, set him forthwith to work upon the wall just under the iron cross; when, to the triumph of Mrs. Jones and the astonishment of Lucy and the mason, a strong plated door was soon discovered, which readily yielded them admission into a small chamber only ventilated by a round hole, which seemed to pass through the walls of the building and mount upwards to the outer air. Nothing else was to be found. The rubbish was then nicely cleared away, a chair and a table brought down, and the mason paid and sent about his business; when, after having looked in the dark to see that there were no sparks, for the chamber was all of wood, Mrs. Jones and her daughter mounted to upper air, and retired to bed, not to sleep, but to meditate over the *convent subterranean*.

It was about the middle of the next day that an officious neighbour came in to tell Mrs. Jones that the British forces were approaching the town. "There could be no danger," he said; "but nevertheless the tricolored flag still flew on the walls of the Château Trompette, and Lord Wellington had sworn he would deliver the town to the soldiery if there was a shot fired. It was very foolish to be afraid," he said, trembling every limb, "but the people were flying in all directions, and he should leave the town too, for he had no idea of being bayonetted by the Spaniards."

"Let us shut the street-door," said Lucy, as soon as he was gone, "and all go down together to the hole in the wall, and when it's all over we can come out."

"No," replied Mrs. Jones; "you, Lucy, and the maid, shall go down; but I will stop here, and take care of my property; perhaps I may be able to modulate their barbarosity."

"Lord, ma'am!" cried the maid, "you'll be killed--you'll be ill-treated."

Mrs. Jones replied, very coolly, that they never would think of killing an old woman like her, who had but a few years to live, and she was not afraid of anything else.

The maid then vowed if her mistress remained she would stay with her, and the tears rolled, down her cheeks at the idea her self-devotion. Lucy said, very quietly, that she also would stay with her mother. But Mrs. Jones would not hear of it, finding her daughter very much resolved to

do as she said, she had recourse to a violent passion, which was aided by the noise of a drum in the street, and seizing Lucy by the arm, she snatched up the box that held her money, carried them both down stairs to the cellar, and pushing them into the dark chamber, shut the door with a bang; after which, she returned to the maid, for whose safety she had not the same maternal regard, and waited the event with "indomptible" fortitude.

In the mean time Lucy remained in the dark. The first thing she did, was to feel about for the chair, and sitting, down, she had a good opportunity of crying to her heart's content. She was still engaged in this agreeable occupation, when she heard a knocking as if somebody wished to come in. Lucy wiped her eyes and listened. It could not be her mother--she would have come in at once without any such ceremony; besides, it did not seem to come from that side. Lucy listened again; the knocking continued, but evidently came from the opposite part of the chamber, and appeared not so near as the cellar. Lucy now got upon her feet, trembling as if she had the palsy, and began to approach the sound. She knocked over the table, and almost fainted with the noise; she picked up the table and knocked over the chair, and then again, *vice versâ*, stopping awhile between each to take breath.

Having arranged all that, she tumbled over her mother's money-box, broke her shins, and hopped about the room on one foot with the pain for full five minutes; then not being able to find the chair, she leaned against the wainscot for support; but the wainscot gave way. with a crack as if it moved on hinges, and she had almost fallen headlong into another room as dark as the first.

Lucy now doubted whether she ought to be most surprised or frightened, but fright had decidedly the majority when she heard something move in this same dark chamber on the opposite side to that by which she herself had entered. Now Lucy, though she had never studied modern tactics was possessed of many of those principles which are supposed to constitute a good general, and in the present instance, not having an opportunity of reconnoitring her ground, and finding her forces totally inadequate to meeting an adversary of any kind, she resolved upon making a retreat under cover of darkness, but unfortunately she had neglected to observe which way she had advanced, and for a moment could not find the entrance into the other chamber. The noise which she had at first heard of something moving, increased; she became more and more bewildered, ran this way and that, till--ugh! she ran against something soft and warm, which caught fast hold of her, and in this interesting position she fainted. What could she do else?

O ye bards and "romanciers," give me some delicate description of a young lady recovering from a fainting fit! But no--when Lucy opened her eyes, she found herself sitting in the manner that European young ladies and gentlemen generally sit, with an engaging youth, no other than Edward Fontange, sitting beside her in mute despair, and from time to time, fanning her face with the tails of his coat, while a lamp, with its accompanying phosphorus-box, stood by with its dim light, showing in more gloomy horrors the walls of a dark vault, which, to the terrified eyes of Lucy, seemed interminable.

Forgetting all the "ohs!" and the "ahs!" of the two lovers, together with question and answer without end, be it briefly stated, that Edward Fontange had never contrived to forget Lucy Jones; and always remembering that it was his want of fortune which had broken his love-dream, he incessantly meditated the means of remedying that wherein fate had wronged him. But all ordinary plans demanded years, long years, to perfect, and love would brook no delay. He had heard, however, of hidden treasures, and of monks who had concealed immense sums during the revolution, and he bethought him of searching the cellars of the old convent where he lived, without ever dreaming that he should there, find a subterranean communication with the dwelling of his Lucy. Upon his first examination, he was struck, like Mrs. Jones, by an iron cross in the wall, and resolved, like her, to come to the bottom of it the first opportunity.

The first opportunity arrived with the arrival of the British troops, for his good step-father, not having the most courageous disposition, flew instantly to the country with his wealth, and left Edward to take care of the house. No sooner was he gone, than poor Edward descended to the cellar, and with a good pick-axe and a strong arm, set to work upon the cellar-wall. He soon, like Mrs. Jones, discovered a door, and a small chamber exactly similar to her's. Examining this more closely than she had done, he soon found his way to an extensive vault, and on narrowly viewing the walls with his lamp, he discovered another iron cross, smaller than the former. Here he set to work again with his pick-axe, when suddenly he thought he heard a noise as if something fell. He listened, and hearing it again, he blew out his lamp for fear of an intruder. Two or three subsequent clatters succeeded, then a creak as if of an opening door, and immediately after, he clearly heard some one move and breathe in the vault.

Whether it was curiosity, or one of those odd presentiments that sometimes come over us, or any other of the many motives by which we may conceive a man in such circumstances to be actuated, does not matter, but his prudence left him: he advanced to find out what it was that produced the noise; got hold of a woman's gown, and in a minute after, had his own fair Lucy fainting in his arms. As may be supposed, he lighted his lamp, and, on finding who it was, went through all the stages of surprises; consternation, and anxiety, He then tried several ways of bringing her to herself, amongst which was kissing her more than once, but that did not answer at all, for the more he kissed her the more dead she seemed to be. But at length, as I have said, after a reasonable time, she opened her eyes, and then she had violent fits of astonishment, etc., which were calmed and appeased by hearing an account very similar to that which has just been

recited.

Lucy had no curiosity at all, she cared for nobody's affairs but her own; nevertheless, simply out of affection for Edward, she insisted on his going on with his researches under the little iron cross in the wall while she was present. She would not have it delayed a moment, and looked on as if she had been the most curious person in the world. Edward worked away. The wall was soon demolished, and behind it appeared no door, but a small cavity and a small wooden chest.

"Here it is! here it is!" cried Edward, in a transport of joy, taking it out and setting it on the ground. "Lucy, dear Lucy, you are mine at last. I would give nothing for the treasure if my dear Lucy did not share it."

Lucy could do nothing but cry, for the generosity of her lover's sentiments left her no other answer. However, she took the lamp and both knelt down to look what was written on the top, when, O horror! the only word which met their view was "Reliques." Edward, gazed on Lucy, and Lucy looked at Edward without saying anything.

"Well, let us see, at all events," said Edward at last, and taking up the pick-axe he very soon opened the case, when sure enough nothing presented itself but old bones and mouldering scraps of linen. "Sacre blue!" cried Edward. Lucy said nothing, but she thought, the same.

"Hark!" cried her lover, "there is your mother."

But no, they listened--there was nobody; and they again turned to gaze upon the box.

"Lucy," said Edward, "I am very unfortunate to lose you again in this manner."

"You do not lose me, Edward," said Lucy; "do you think it is money I care about."

Edward caught her to his breast, held her there a moment, then starting back, much to Lucy's surprise, "It's all nonsense," cried he, "old bones could never be so heavy." Then down he went upon his knees, and away with the relics; the first tier was bones, and the second tier was bones, but the third was of bright shining Louis d'ors, and Edward starting up, caught Lucy in his arms and kissed and re-kissed her till he had almost smothered the poor girl.

The next thing was, what was to be done with the money, for though Edward believed himself to be the legitimate owner thereof, yet he had some twinges as to its being found in the premises of his step-father; at length, after many pros and cons, "Go you back, Lucy," said her lover, "to the room where you were, and be not afraid, for there is no danger to the town or any one in it: for my part, I'll take the money and away to M. G----r, who was a good friend to my poor mother; he is the soul of honour, and will tell me what I can do honourably;--one more kiss, and then good-bye, but say nothing to anybody of what has happened till you hear from me."

It was two days after this that Monsieur Emanuel Latouche paid a visit to Mrs. Jones, for the apparent purpose of congratulating her upon the quiet and peaceable state of the town, but in reality to inform her that his scapegrace step-son had found a treasure in his cellar and run away with the same; "but," said Emanuel, "I will make him refund every sous, or send him to the galleys for a robber."

"Surely," said Mrs. Jones, "you would never think of sending your wife's child to the galleys, Monsieur Latouche!"

"I would send my own father," replied Emanuel. As he spoke, the door opened, and in walked no other than Edward Fontange and his mother's friend Monsieur G----.

Now Emanuel Latouche looked rather blank to see this accompaniment to the tune of his step-son, but thinking it probably best to attack rather than be attacked, he began upon poor Edward in most merciless terms, reproaching him with ingratitude, threatening him with the galleys, and asking him, if the house where he found the treasure was not his.

"I think not," replied Monsieur G---- to this last question--"I think not, Monsieur Latouche; it certainly is not, if you bought that house with the money of that young man's mother which was left to him at her death: take my advice, be content with what you have, for I am not very sure that if this matter were investigated, you yourself might not find your way to the galleys instead of sending him there."

There was something in the tone of Monsieur G---- that wonderfully calmed Emanuel Latouche, who at first had been inclined to fight it out strongly, but upon second thoughts; he swore he was ill treated--very much ill treated; but as "sufferance was the badge of all his tribe," he walked out of the room, grumbling as he went. And as for the rest--why, "Hey, for the wedding!"

A PARTY OF PLEASURE.

Every one knows that there is a vast tract of barren sand, called by the French people Landes, which, skirting the Bay of Biscay, extends for many hundred miles, from the mouth of the Gironde into the Spanish province of Biscay. The breadth of this sandy zone is from twenty to a hundred miles, all of which is wild, sterile, and desolate, the only relief to the bleakness of these moors being the shadow of several vast forests of pine, which have been planted at different times in the patriotic hope of winning the desert into cultivation. Such a tract is, of course, thinly peopled, but still it is so in a degree, and there are even to be found spots of luxuriant fertility, first cousins to the oasis of Ammon *côte de la mer*. One of the wildest parts, however, lies between Bordeaux and a little fishing town called La Teste, situated on the edge of the "Basin d'Arcachon," a large inlet from the Bay of Biscay, to which it is joined by a narrow channel of some leagues in length.

It had long been my wish to explore these Landes, and at length an advertisement appearing in one of the papers that a diligence would go to La Teste one day in the Christmas week, I instantly caught at the idea, and my travelling companion, a M. de B----, and myself, engaged places in this conveyance under the idea of seeing the Landes at our ease. However, one of the party cried off the night before, and De B---- and myself set out without him armed with a partridge-pie and a pair of pistols. The diligence was crowded with a company consisting of two Jew brokers, three pointer dogs, an exciseman, and two sportsmen, together with guns and brandy bottles, and having been drawn slowly for about two leagues through roads that would be a disgrace to the Sandwich Islands, our conductor made us get out to lighten the carriage.

The wildness of a desert now began to reign around us. Vast tracts of sand and uncultivated moor; with large, pine forests, were the only objects visible, except when a cart, exactly like a hog-trough covered with a gipsy's tent, was drawn past us by two dun oxen, while the master, stretched at his full length with his head out at the front, goaded them on with a long stick; the whole giving a very Hottentotish appearance to the scene. It also sometimes happened that we distinguished, moving across the distant sky, an elevated being, who from his long thin shanks and shapeless body, you might have taken for a large ostrich or a gigantic crane, but would never have fancied to be a human creature, until near inspection let you into all the machinery of stilts and sheepskins. Just after passing one of the forests, I was surprised to hear the first notes of Corelli's hymn to the Virgin, whistled clear and shrill in the distance; but it soon varied into a wilder air, and the musician approached us with immense strides, lifting his stilts high over every obstacle, without ever ceasing to knit a pair of stockings which he held half-finished in his hand. We wondered at his coming so near, for the Landois generally avoid all strangers, but on entering into conversation with him, we found that he had served in the army, spoke tolerable French, and was more civilized altogether than the rest of his countrymen. However, after an absence of seven years, old habits had resumed their empire; he came back to his deserts, once more mounted his stilts, and went whistling about, knitting stockings and tending sheep; as contentedly as if he had never seen fairer countries or mixed in more busy scenes.

After stopping here a minute or two, De B---- and myself walked merrily after the other travellers, who had gone on to a solitary little *auberge* called the Croix de Hins, and on our arrival found the good woman busily engaged in slaying the cock which was to serve for our dinner. The diligence arrived half an hour after us, and having here imbibed a reasonable quantity of vinegar, by courtesy termed wine, together with garlic and other delectable savours, we once more entered our machine and again commenced our journey. I say commenced, for the diligence was never destined to finish it. About a hundred yards from the inn it plunged into a most profound rut, which, like the problem of the longitude, set all getting through it at defiance: and, in fine, after having spat, sworn, pushed, pulled, and stamped, damned the road, cursed the vehicle, and flogged the horses, the postilion informed us that he could go no farther, and was about to retread his steps towards Bordeaux.

The landlord of the *auberge*, seeing that we were poor wayfaring strangers, and most charitably wishing to take us in, was equally against our proceeding, either backwards or forwards, assuring us that we should be murdered if we went on, and frozen if we went back. The country before us, he said, was all under water, and filled with carniverous savages, who lived upon mutton and woodcocks, and if we returned it would be midnight before we arrived at Bourdi-ou, as he called it in his Gascon jargon.

All this tremendous description induced our fellow-travellers to return whence they came, but De B---- and myself, animated with the ancient spirit of chivalry, and fully prepared to encounter windmills and giants, procured a couple of guides, and proceeded on our journey on foot.

The first thing which excited my companion's attention, was the face of one of our guides, which, if it would not have furnished Salvator with a bandit, would have served Mrs. Radcliff very well for an assassin, which name we instantly bestowed upon him. De B---- pointed out to me also, that this good gentleman, with his dogged scowl and averted look, had a trick of whispering to the other guide the moment our eyes were off him, and ceased the moment we looked at him. Now as my friend had a considerable sum upon his person, which he had not thought fit to leave at his lodgings, all this made him regard the guides with a jealous eye; nor were his uncomfortable sensations at all diminished by our friend the assassin entering into conversation with us and entertaining us with a most terrific account of the robbers, murderers, troglodytes,

and barbarians inhabiting the Landes. About four o'clock we came to the last house we were to meet with, and having gone in to get some refreshment, I took out one of my pistols, made the guide admire its exquisite workmanship, and boasted that I could kill a sparrow with it at twenty yards distance. This had rather an odd effect, his note was instantly changed. He told us that they were all honest people in the Landes, and swallowed all he had said before with wonderful facility.

The night was beginning to fall when we quitted this house, the country wilder and more deserted than before; and shortly after, our guide quitted every vestige of a path and led us into the depth of the forest, which consists entirely of enormous pines raising themselves singly out of the light sand, without any underwood whatever, except some scattered knots of heath, the only shrub which will grow in that ungrateful soil.

Night fell heavily without a star; we were walking up to our ancles in sand, (the most fatiguing thing one can imagine,) and on arriving at the ford of La Motte, we found it impassable from the quantity of rain which had fallen. We had now to wander along in the darkness seeking for another ford. We kept as near the river as we could, but the country was all under water, and at length the guide swore he had lost the way; he said, however, that he knew of a hut where he could get a lantern.

That a man who had lost his way, should know where to get a lantern, appeared so strange, that I now began to have serious doubts of his intentions, and insisted on his going on, following the course Of the river. After proceeding for a long and weary way, the sound of a water-mill caught my ear, and the guide running on crossed the little bridge and threw open the door of the mill. A broad glare of red light instantly burst forth upon the darkness, and the precise scene of "The Miller and his Men" presented itself in the interior. The hearth was occupied by a lighted pile of wood, fit to roast an ox, and round a table covered with dishes and immense large bottles, ten or twelve men were seated, whose rugged beards of many days' growth, dirty countenances and strange apparel, did not bespeak them of the orderly class of human beings. They had all been drinking hard, and round about were scattered carbines, pistols, and implements of all sorts that the least accorded with the peaceful trade of a miller.

Seeing that there was no retreating, I walked directly in, and though at first they did not seem well to understand the motives of our visit, the miller, who, though not drunk, was scarcely sober, came forward to speak to me. He had first, I must remark, been spoken to by our whispering guide, and now he vowed that we should stay there the night; that it was madness to go forward, the country was under water, and we had still five leagues to travel. On my expressing my intention of proceeding, he grew angry, swore, *Pardi*, I *should* stop, and with a large oath asked what I was afraid of. I told him that I was afraid of nothing, but only intended to go on. His brow was getting more and more cloudy, but however, the guide drew him aside and spoke to him for a moment or two. What he said I do not know, but thereupon our miller snatched one of the large bottles from the table, and coming forward held out his hand to me. "*Eh bien!*" he exclaimed, "*touchez la! Nous sommes amis*." And filling a glass for himself and another for me, he knocked his hard against mine, drinking to our better acquaintance. He then opened the gate of the other bridge, and suffered us to depart in peace. Far be it from me to judge harshly of him, but I have since heard that he is generally suspected of carrying on more than one illicit trade, and all the people to whom I mentioned the subject at La Teste, did not seem to relish the idea of passing a night under his roof, though they all said he was *un brave homme! un fort brave homme!*[9]

We now recommenced our journey in utter darkness, and as we proceeded, found half the country underwater; but nevertheless, we went on, sometimes stumbling over the stumps of trees and bushes; sometimes jumping from sand-hill to sand-hill, sometimes over our ancles in sand, and sometimes up to our middles in water. I was extremely fatigued when we arrived at the mill, but now, hour after hour, and league after league, went by, and the weariness began to be insupportable. We all fell several times in the sand, from pure exhaustion. No one can have an idea of the overpowering sensation of fatigue which we experienced. My head turned giddy--all the powers of life seemed failing--and I firmly believe that another mile would have ended all; but at last we caught sight of a distant light. It gave us new courage, and with a strong effort we reached the village inn, from whence this ray of hope had proceeded. It was the last exertion I could make, and I fell into a chair by the fire without speech or motion.

But woman, gentle woman, came to my aid with the kindness of a ministering angel, although clothed in the form of a pippin-faced landlady, a cocoa-nut-headed chambermaid, and, half-a-dozen old Gascon women, who would have beaten any witch in Lapland out of the field. Blessed sleep succeeded, and I was idle enough to dream nothing all night. The morning had not long dawned, however, When I was woke by a variety of uncouth sounds in a sort of measured cadence, proceeding from before the window of the room in which I slept, and I was obliged to recollect that it was Christmas-day ere I could make anything of the noise.

But even when this was remembered, and I comprehended that the good folks of Guizan, where I then was, were singing Christmas carols, or, as they are called in France *Noels*, still the language was such a strange compound, that I had to summon all the Gascon in my brain to any aid, before I could gather anything like common sense. Let those try that like--

"Rebeillats bous, mainades

Canten nadau alégremen,
Lou Hillet de Marie
Nous bau de saubement."

On getting up, the first thing that attracted my attention was a sight of the people's feet and legs passing by the top of the window without their bodies, the height of their stilts carrying the rest of their persons so high in air that the low window of the *auberge* only afforded a view of half a man at a time. Be it remarked, however, that at Guizan the use of stilts is quite a work of supererogation. In the sandy parts of the Landes this contrivance is very necessary to enable the shepherds to follow their flock; but Guizan, situated upon a little oasis of extremely fertile land, by the side of Basin d'Arcachon, requires no such machinery. From the window of the *auberge* nothing was to be seen but green meadows and vineyards, with large fields of maize; and a rose-tree growing against the house was even then, at Christmas, in full bloom. All this formed a strange contrast with the day before, when our eyes had been wearied from morning till night by the endless expanse of barren sand, or the sombre monotony of pine forests. Guizan seemed a little paradise; and The people, supposing our taste to be similar to that of Cowslip, who declares in the "Agreeable Surprise,"

"If I was a goddess, I'd have roast duck."

treated us with roast ducks for breakfast; dinner, and supper.

Here, in this secluded nook of earth, live about five hundred souls, cut off from free communication with their fellows by the broad sands on one side, and by the Bay of Biscay on the other; and yet I never saw a happier looking race. English gentlemen, it may easily be supposed, are rather rare animals in the famous city of Guizan, and, consequently, during the three days we stayed, at all our meals we had a large congregation to see the wild beasts eat. Our landlord set himself down at a small distance to tell us stories and amuse us between mouthfuls; his son and daughter lingered round with their fingers in their mouths; the pippin-faced landlady and the cocoa-nut-headed chambermaid bustled about with plates and dishes, while a whole host of Landois poked in their heads through the half-open door.

Strange to say, that amongst a people who thus crowded round two strangers with the curiosity of Esquimaux, were yet to be found a billiard-table and a ball-room--and stranger still; the village possessed both players and dancers who would not have disgraced the first city in Europe.

The original place of our destination, *La Teste*, lay at the distance of a few miles, and having procured horses and a guide, we set out the next day to pay it a visit. The way lay through a tract which seemed to consist of nothing but pathless wilds, but on looking nearer, we found that even here the careful hand of man was to be traced. The sand was in many places propped up with hurdles to give a fastening for the roots of trees; and we observed that large slips had been cut out from the bark of the various pines, to draw the turpentine, which was suffered to collect in little tanks at the foot of each tree.

Meeting with nothing at La teste particularly worthy of attention, we returned to our *auberge* at Guizan, and it being Sunday evening, we found all the villagers assembled in the ball-room to conclude the day with a dance. It was really a delightful sight. In one corner of the room was a mountain of *sabots* and stilts, and, in the centre, all the young people of the village were dancing in their wooden socks to the sound of a most infamous fiddle, with a degree of grace and agility that would have done credit to the opera. In the meantime, the elder persons were sitting round, holding back the children, and dandling the infants to the time of the dance. There was nothing harsh in the picture: it was all smiling good-nature and untaught native propriety of demeanour.

Our next day's trip was to explore the shores of the Basin d'Arcachon, which is a large inlet from the Bay of Biscay, of about thirty-eight leagues in circumference, joined to the main sea by a narrow channel less than a league in width. Nothing very curious presented itself, except the immense quantity of wild fowl by which the place is literally infested. The view, however, as the mist cleared away, became wild and singular. The indented shores of the bason--sometimes rising into high hills of light yellow sand, sometimes entered down to the very water's edge with large forests of black pine, over whose dark masses appeared occasionally glimpses of some far blue mountains--made up altogether a strange and sombre scene, which was not without the beauty of sublimity. Sailing on along the bason, we passed the end of a long avenue, cut in the heart of one of the deepest forests, which displayed at the extreme of its perspective a small white chapel, dedicated to *Notre Dame d'Arcachon*. This is a place of pilgrimage to which the deep-sea fishermen repair to offer up prayers for their success, before setting out on their voyage. If their fishing prove good, the Virgin probably hears no more of it, but if they meet with a bad cast, they come back and curse our Lady for her pains. We extended our excursion to the Bay of Biscay, and having enjoyed for a few minutes the contemplation of the vast unbounded ocean, we returned to Guizan, with a grand storm coming on from the north-west.

Such is an account of my first visit to that desolate tract of sand called the Landes, extending along the shores of the Bay of Biscay, from the mouth of the Gironde to Bayonne. Upon different occasions I have since crossed it in every direction; from Bordeaux to the Teste de Buch, from La

Teste to Mont de Marson, and from Guizan to Bayonne.

It happened that I had once taken up my abode for a few days in one of the small cottages near the ford of Lubie, in the very heart of the Landes, where a few poor huts are huddled together, as if they sought protection, in their near companionship, against the encroaching enmity of the solitary desert. The occasion of my being there matters not to my present object--suffice it, that by a little kindness I had gained the good-will of the shrivelled old Parens and his wife, who owned the tenement, and that the said good-will had been mightily increased by a small donation of money, which, though a trifle to me, was more than they could have gained in many a month by their unprofitable occupation of gathering the resin or *goudron* from the pines in the forest round about. From their youth to their age they had dwelt in the desolation, and withered in the solitude, of the bleak wastes that surrounded them; nor did they seem to have ever entertained a wish beyond the confines of that cheerless place, which, however solitary, however desert, had seen the birth and extinction of all their hopes and passions; had been the scene of all their cares and happiness, and was the spot where all their treasure of memory lay, now that Hope had spread her wings and fled to a world beyond.

Seldom had either of them visited Bordeaux, which they seemed to consider as the *ultima Thule*. Yet the old man was looked upon as a kind of oracle by the few Landois in the neighbourhood, many of whom were indeed the offspring of his own loins; and others, a second race beyond. But kindred was not his only right to reverence; he was learned in all the ancient superstitions of the Landes, and the depository of all the old customs and habits of his race--customs and habits always most sacred to people who live thus separate from their fellow-men.

I was often in the habit of walking out in the evening after it was dark, to enjoy that sort of perfect solitude which I had never seen but there; but I always remarked, when I made my preparations to that effect, a degree of uneasiness come over the countenance of my host, which he seemed to seek some opportunity of expressing in words. At length he ventured to remonstrate. It was dangerous, he said,--it was wrong. My first question was of course directed to ascertain in what the danger consisted. He said it was tempting Providence. The sands were full of bad spirits, and Heaven knows what might happen if they found me wandering about there alone after the sun had set and the moon had risen. The remembrance of the Arabian siltrims immediately crossed my mind, and, perhaps, caused me to smile; and the old man shook his head sadly, saying, that he had too much cause to know that such fears were just. The English, he said, being all Protestants, which he supposed meant atheists, did not believe in spirits, and that I would only laugh at him if he were to tell me all that he knew; but nevertheless, there were things which had happened not far from that spot which would make me tremble if I heard them.

My curiosity was now excited, and, giving up my walk, I begged him to tell me to what he alluded.

In reply, he told me a variety of tales, some approaching probability, some simply extravagant. But that which struck me most was the following. I give it in his own words, noted down immediately after.

THE STORY OF THE BAD SPIRIT.

Many years ago I lived at Guizan, and gained my bread as a fisherman, like most of the other inhabitants of the place. I had been married about five years, and had one child, which was the most beautiful in all the village, and my wife and I doted upon it; for it was so sweet and good-tempered that it was scarcely ever known to cry, and would play about the cottage all day without ever troubling any one. It so happened, that being out one time in a storm, my wife vowed an offering to our Lady at Arcachon, in case of my safe return; so that the next time I went upon the Basin d'Arcachon, I took her and our little girl into the boat, and sailing along the shore, I landed them just where the forest opens, and one can see the chapel of Notre Dame, at the end of the long avenue of pines. While I sailed on upon the bason (for I was not going that day to the high seas,) my wife went up to the chapel, with my little girl running by her side; and when she went in to say her prayers, she left the child playing about in the wood hard by. However, on coming out again she could not find her little girl, and was looking all round, when she suddenly heard something cry in the wood. You may judge how quick she ran, but nevertheless she was just in time, for when she came up, there was poor little Donine, lying on the ground, with her eyes almost starting out of her head, as if she had been strangled. It was a long time before her mother could bring her to herself; but when she could speak, she said that a great woman in white had come out of the wood, and had coaxed her to go along with her, but that when she got her so far from the chapel, she caught her by the throat, and squeezed her so tight that she forgot everything else till she found herself in her mother's arms. As this was evidently one of the bad spirits, we were very anxious about it; for these evil beings, when once they have resolved the destruction of any one, never quit their purpose till it is accomplished. So we got a cross which had been blessed, and tied it round Donine's neck, and bade her never to take it off, for fear of the white woman. Well, while she was young, several times when she had been out for a moment or two, after night had fallen, she would run into the cottage all panting with fear, and crying out that she had seen the white woman. But, as she grew up, we left Guizan, and came to live here, and we had three or four other children, so that the matter was forgotten. When she was about sixteen, however, she fell in company with the son of the miller at the Croix de Bury;

and as she had grown up as beautiful as she was when she was a child, he persuaded his friends to come and ask her in marriage, though they were somewhat against it at first, for we were poor and they were rich; but the matter was soon settled on our part, and they were promised to each other.

One evening, a week or two before they were to be married, they went out together to a wedding at La Mothe, and he was to see her safe home at night. While they were there (as he told us afterwards,) he saw the cross hanging round her neck, and as it was of a peculiar shape, he made her take it off to let him look at it; which she did willingly enough, thinking of nothing but her lover, and having long forgotten all about the woman; so that she did not remember to get it back again. They went on dancing till it was dark, and then came away together; but before they had gone far, she asked him for the cross, and he then remembered that he had left it behind. So he said that he would run back and fetch it in a minute, if she would wait there for him; but she, fearing nothing, said she would walk on, and he would soon overtake her. Accordingly, away he went, and got the cross from the house, and ran off as hard as he could to overtake Donine. As he came into the little wood between this and La Mothe, his heart seemed to misgive him, he said, and he thought he heard some one cry; so he ran the faster, to come up with her; but suddenly his foot struck against what he thought a bush, and he fell. As he did so, his hand touched something that was smooth and soft, like a woman's cheek, and looking near, he found that it was Donine, lying senseless in the path. He called to her, but she made no answer; and taking her up in his arms, he ran with her, like a madman, till he came to our door.

The old man's voice became troubled, and his wife had been weeping silently for some time. All that I could gather further was, that Donine was gone for ever, and that her lover, reproaching himself both for having taken away the cross, and for having left her in the wood, soon fell into consumption; to which the inhabitants of the Landes are particularly subject.

"My wife and I," added the old man, "had other children, whom we loved as well as poor Donine, but he, poor fellow, had only her, and he did not remain long behind. So that the bad spirit had two victims to satisfy her instead of one."

In whatever country it has been my fate to sojourn, I have always accustomed myself to mingle with the people, and in doing so, I have observed, that a belief prevails in every part of the world, that there does exist another order of beings, distinct from the material creation.

I was one day talking over the subject with a friend who had been long in India, and his arguments as well as a tale he told me of an apparition, not unlike that which had appeared to poor Donine, though of a more beneficent character, struck me forcibly. He was in general a very still, quiet man, listening attentively, speaking little, and never entering into long discussion; but upon the first mention of a doubt regarding the existence of spirits between the mortal beings of earth and the Deity, he roused himself in a way that I had never seen before, and in the somewhat sonorous language which he always used even in his shortest speeches, poured forth opinions which were evidently the result of long and intense thought.

"In every land to which fate has conducted my footsteps," he said, amongst every nation with whom it has been my lot to sojourn, I have uniformly found a belief in the existence of intermediate beings, forming a link in the grand chain of nature, between man and the Deity, The foolish pride of philosophy, believing nought but what is brought within the immediate range of its circumscribed vision, would fain establish that the great Creator has stayed his omnipotent hand at that strange compound of spirit and matter called man; or else would seek to prove that God has only employed the grosser part of existing things, and that man himself was totally material. Analogy, however, (which is the only means of argument within our power,) totally opposes itself to both of these two theories. In regard to the last, the thousand varied forms which we every day behold, and the thousand beautiful and minute grades by which matter is led from the simple clod to the most perfect of our conceptions, proves evidently the will of the Deity to vary and employ all that which is within the immensity of his power. To admit that there is a God, is to admit that there is a spirit. I have ever held a disbelief in the existence of such a thing as a rational atheist, and if there is spirit, analogy teaches us that. God would somewhere and in some way link it with matter: as we find that every class of things are connected with each other, so that it is often difficult to distinguish the bird, the beast, the fish, and the reptile, from the approximating being in another class, so that it is even difficult to say where animation begins, and where the vegetable or mineral ceases. Thus we have every reason to suppose that the Almighty would continue the chain of his creation without a gap; and link the earthly part of man to that essence which approximates more nearly to himself. In regard to the second theory: how it has pleased Omniscience to carry on the system beyond this world, its denizens cannot hope here to know; but it is analogical to conclude, that God has not limited himself to the variations of matter, but has equally willed the existence of other classes of beings, continuing the same grand gradations throughout the whole of his sublime creation.

"It has always appeared to me, that some latent truth will ever be found in opinions, which are held by all nations. There are hidden chains of reasoning perfectly undefinable, which go on in the minds of all men, and convince them of particular facts, with a certainty beyond demonstration which no argument can overthrow, and no sophistry can materially shake. Of this nature is man's persuasion of his own existence, and of the existence of a material world. But there are also other convictions, which, though not so perfectly established, and equally

incapable of proof, may be considered almost certainties by the general conclusion of all nations to that effect.

"I have just said, that in all the countries in which it has been my fate to reside, I have ever found a conviction prevail of the existence of a class of beings, (if I may use the expression), just beyond the limits of clay; in fact, our next link in the chain of existence. This belief was of course expressed under the form of a thousand superstitions, but still the foundation was the same; and as I always make it a point of sparing even prejudices, when I cannot remove them, instead of jesting at the tales which I have at different times heard upon the subject, I have always listened with attention, and given way to the feelings of those who recited them. So often has this occurred to me, and so great a wanderer have I been, that I have at present by me sufficient notes of the various vague forms which this belief takes in different countries, to compile an epitome of the superstitions of almost all nations.

"When a part of the English troops," he continued, "marched from India, to co-operate with our army in Egypt, I eagerly seized the opportunity thus offered of visiting in safety several interesting countries, which I might never again have the means of seeing. I easily obtained permission to accompany the army, and set out as upon a party of pleasure; but before our landing, I was seized with a violent fever; and all that my friend Colonel M---- could do for me, was to leave me in charge of a respectable Arab, at Cossier, while the army pursued its march towards the Nile. I need not repeat all that has been said upon Arab hospitality; it is a well known fact, that the highest degree of that virtue is to be found amongst a people, the business of whose life is rapine and plunder. But my host was of a very superior description: and having broken bread and eaten salt together, I was, as he expressed himself, his brother, and truly as a brother, did he treat me. He was a merchant, carrying on a considerable trade in gums and spices, and every year he made a journey into Egypt, where the luxury of the Mamelukes offered a ready mart for his merchandize. It wanted but a short time to his annual expedition, and when I had recovered from my illness, I was glad enough to wait a few weeks, till such time as I could cross the desert under the protection of his escort. When the time for our departure arrived, we sat out, guarded by a tribe of the Arabs of the desert, whom my friend and his companions hired as a protection to their caravan. On our journey, as there was not water wherewith to perform the ablutions prescribed by the Mahommedan religion, the dry sand of the desert was used as a substitute; and observing my host, or, as I may call him, my protector, for such indeed he was on every occasion, I remarked, that with particular prayers, he took care to bare his arms, and rub the sand from the tip of his little finger to the joint of the elbow; but what most attracted my curiosity, was the appearance of a leathern thong, serving to bind upon his arm a small leaden tablet thickly engraved with a peculiar character, which I immediately perceived to be neither Arabic nor Persian.

"During my residence in his house, that degree of intimacy had arisen between us, which warranted my asking the meaning, of what I had seen. He was a man of much simplicity of character, though possessing very considerable information; and the innumerable questions which he was in the habit of asking me relative to England and India, had induced me to inquire much into the various customs of his country, on which subject he had been uniformly frank and explicit, to a degree not common among the Arabs. On the present occasion, however, no sooner had I demanded what was the reason he wore a piece of lead bound upon his arm, after the fashion that I had seen, than I perceived the blood rising high in his dark cheek; and he replied, with no small hesitation, that it was nothing particular. My curiosity was still mere strongly excited by his reluctance to explain, and I pressed him upon the subject.

"'I know,' said he in reply, 'that the Franks are all atheists, and do not believe in the existence of spirits, therefore, Sheik----,' naming me, 'would only laugh at his brother if he were told the history of that talisman.'

"However, on my assuring him that he could not believe in spirits more fully than I did, his countenance cleared, and with the habitual piety of a Mussulman, thanking God for having enlightened me, he promised to tell me the next day the whole story of the piece of lead and its cabalistic inscription.

"About half-past one on the morning following, we began our march; and as it was uncommonly cold, my friend Abul Coumel and myself rode forward as fast as we could, leaving the caravan to follow. The plain, to the west, was bordered by high rocks of red granite, and we made all speed to reach them before daybreak, on account of the shadow which their various indentations afforded; for in that country, though the nights are chilling the extreme, no sooner does the sun rise above the horizon than the air becomes heated as by a furnace, and travelling from that moment is almost impossible. The morning was just breaking when we reached the granite mountains, and choosing a spot which afforded some shade, and at the same time commanded a view of the plain, so that we might not lose the caravan, we dismounted from our horses, and seated ourselves under the rock. Abul Coumel (as well as myself, who had by this time acquired some Arab habits), took several pieces of coarse bread from his wallet, and shared them with his horse. He then turned towards Mecca and said his prayers; after which he seated himself by me, wrapped his barrakhan around him, to keep him from any drifting sand, and proceeded with the tale connected with his talisman."

ABUL COUMEL AND HIS TALISMAN.

Truth, (said Abul Coumel) is as the waters of the Zemzem well, a gift which Allah gives to these that believe in him. I delayed to tell thee, my brother, how I became possessed of this talisman, until such time as we should be amongst these rocks, because it was here that I received it, in the manner that I am about to relate. About fifteen years ago, ere the hand of time had mingled my beard with white, I was returning from Cairo to Cossier, after having disposed of all my merchandize to Ibraham Bey, who being a careful and avaricious man, bought up all the goods which came into Egypt, and afterwards retailed them at a great profit to his less provident companions. My heart was glad, because the road to riches was before me, and I forgot the proverb, "In the midst of prosperity there is danger." Accordingly, the slow journeys of the caravan became hateful in my sight, and I lingered on the green banks of the Nile, thinking, with a swift horse, to overtake the rest of my company ere they had proceeded more than a day's journey. I was accompanied by a slave, whose horse carried the bags of water, and early in the morning we set out joyfully on our way; and as we went along the slave sang sweetly, and told many pleasant tales to beguile the time, so that the desert rang to our music and laughter. But it was thus we, forgot to make haste, and when morning broke we had not proceeded half so far as we thought to have done. The hot wind now began to blow; and to gain strength, we took a part of the water we had brought with us, and gave part to our horses, and so we proceeded; but the slave sang no more, and the desert looked the more dreary, because we were alone. We rode on for four hours longer, and then came to the summit of these hills, where we had expected to overtake the caravan; but we looked all around, to the east, and the west, the north, and the south, and not a living thing was within sight; all that we could see was a boundless sky, and a boundless plain, and dry sand, and a burning sun. However, we descended from the hills and took our way along the plain; but silence was upon our lips, for we feared to open our mouths lest we should increase the thirst we had little means to satisfy. At length, after two hours more, the slave said "Master, I thirst," and I bade him take some of the water, but to use it frugally. Nevertheless, he, seeing that I took none, was ashamed to drink before his master, so that we rode on with our thirst still unquenched; and at the end of another hour he said, "Master, I must drink, or I die." So turning round, I beheld that his face was changed, and his eyes had become like blood, and I said, "Drink, why hast thou not slackened thy thirst before?" But he answered not, and in a moment the bridle dropped from his hand, and he fell off his horse upon the sand. It was all in vain that I poured what yet remained of the water into his mouth or upon his forehead. Azraël claimed him for his own: his lips were black; and his tongue had grown dry and yellow, like the withered heart of an old sycamore tree.

Now, finding that he was dead, and that the thirst was gaining also upon me, I sucked the inside of the water bags, for there was no water in them, and mounting my horse I rode on in search of a well; and I went along the sand like lightning, for the fear of death was behind me. But no well could I find, and every instant the fire within my heart and on my lips grew more and more burning; I felt as if a serpent were eating my eyeballs; and when I looked round upon the desert and the angry sky, the world seemed all to be in flames. For another hour I rode on, and then I felt a few drops of water, for they were not tears, start out of my eyes and roll over my cheeks, burning as they went. I knew that it was the sign of death, and my heart turned sick when I thought of my own home and the pleasant shores of the Red Sea; and giving up hope, I turned towards these rocks, to find some spot where I could at least die in the shade; but ere I reached them life was forgotten, and I remembered the world no more.

What happened for some time, I know not, but at length I woke as from a deep sleep, yet so weary did I feel that I could not move hand nor foot; but I could see that I was lying at the mouth of a cave, and the large stars were shining bright in the sky. As soon as I began to move, a sweet woman's voice said, "Rest thee, brother; be thy cares at peace, for God has seen thee in the desert, and has brought thee help." And the voice was as soft and musical as the wind of heaven. So I lay still, but I could not sleep for weariness; and all through the night I saw a white figure moving round me, and every now and then it poured some cool liquor on my lips, and murmured what seemed a prayer, in a tongue that I could not understand. At length, towards morning, I fell into a sound sleep, and after a long time was wakened by some one kissing my forehead; whereupon I opened my eyes, and beheld, a woman, more beautiful than can be described. I was now strong with repose, and I rose up on my feet; but no sooner had I done so than the woman gave a great cry, and fled into the depth of the cave.

It was in vain that I called, and in vain that I sought, touching the rock all round; no one answered, and no one was to be found; and after a time I went out of the cave and found my horse feeding upon some of the rushes of the desert. I then went into the cave again, and lay down where I had been lying before, upon the bed of dry straw, thinking that the beautiful woman would come back when she thought I was asleep; but it was not so. And after having lain there some time, I heard two or three persons come into the cave, and one of them said, "Here is Abul Coumel, lying dead also." Upon which I opened my eyes, and found that it was a party of my friends, who had come back from the caravan to seek me. When I told them what had happened, at first they laughed at me, and said I had dreamed; but presently, seeing the bed of straw that had been made for me, they began to search also, but found no one, neither could they by any means discover another outlet to the cavern. At length they all determined that it must have been one of those spirits of the desert called Siltrims; but I maintained another opinion, for the Siltrims are always a malevolent and wicked race; whereas, this, by its actions, showed itself to belong to that order of genii, which were at first rebellious, but which, having submitted, are

allowed to wander about the earth, doing good actions, and counteracting the efforts of the evil genii. In this I was confirmed when I came to say my prayers, for I then perceived that during the night a piece of lead had been bound round my arm, which was evidently a talisman against all bad spirits; and ever since that time, in addition to the prayers appointed by the law, I every day thank God for having sent one of these good spirits to my relief.

Such was the story told by my Indian friend; and thousands of such tales are still common in the Landes of France. The similarity of character which prevails amongst the superstitions of all countries and all nations, from Indus to the pole, may, perhaps, be the effect of tradition, more probably the effect of the universal principles of human nature, acting upon an indefinite, but no less deeply implanted conviction of the existence of another order of beings nearly approaching to ourselves in the scale of creation. While I remained in the Landes, I gathered together a great number of these stories, which were found in abundance round the Christmas fireside of our little inn at Guizan. Nothing, however, of any great interest, affecting ourselves, occurred during our farther residence in the Landes, and after staying a few days longer we procured two of the horses which are employed in carrying fish from La Teste to Bordeaux, and proceeded to the latter city, at a pace well calculated to dislocate every bone in our skins.

BOBECHE.

> And in his brain,
> Which is as dry as the remainder biscuit
> After a voyage, he hath strange places crammed
> With observations, the which he vents
> In mangled forms.

Distance of time, like distance of space, gives to everything that sort of indistinctness which excites curiosity and even admiration. The deeds of our forefathers, as they gradually fade away and lose their place among the things that are, become clothed with an unreal splendour, and the habits and customs of other days, however insignificant in themselves, acquire a degree of interest as they recede from us, as much owing to their age as their originality. I will own I am fond of prying into old fashions and peculiarities; there is something attractive in their simplicity; and, in travelling along, whenever I find any vestige of the kind, I am as much rejoiced as ever was antiquary who had fished up a noseless bust out of the Tiber.

Amongst all the usages of former times, none was better than that of the court-fool, or licensed jester; but now-a-days men's vices and their weaknesses have become too irritable, and few are inclined to do penance under the scourge of satire.

Satirical talent is the most dangerous thing in the world. Those who possess it may be admired, but they are seldom liked; and who would barter love for admiration? In other days, none but a wit could be a fool, but now none but a fool would be a wit.

There is a man in France who, by some odd mistake of nature, has been born a couple of centuries too late, and has thus been deprived of an opportunity of turning either his wit or his folly to account. Poor Bobeche found it did not answer in Paris; the scene was too large for him; and he has retired for a time to Bordeaux, to exercise his talents amongst the Gascons; and here every evening he harangues the multitude from a little stage erected in the Alées de Tourny. Sometimes it is a dialogue between the fool and another; sometimes a soliloquy; and the people listen to both with profound respect and attention. I have often mingled with the crowd, and stood for a good hour, not so much to listen to his jests, as to examine the jester; for he is the only approximation to the old court-fool I ever saw. Of course his dress is peculiar to himself. It consists of a small three-cornered cocked-hat, stuck on one side of his head, and a close red coat of the ancient cut. His countenance has a strange mixture of vacancy and meaning, of solemnity and fun. He seems always to be searching for one idea, and stumbling upon another by accident, and appears scarcely to know whether it be wit or nonsense when he has uttered it; and in truth there is, nine times out of ten, somewhat of both. But still, he keeps his imperturbable gravity; and his round unmeaning face, and dull leaden eye, prepossess you in favour of his folly; so that any wit which he displays has the greater effect, from giving no notice of its approach.

Bobeche has the same failing as all his predecessors: he has no respect for the great. In fact, he cares not upon whom or on what subject he breaks his jest. It must have its way, light were it will; and they say that he has more than once been obliged to expiate the offences of his noddle by two or three weeks' cool reflection in prison. If this be true, it has not made him a whit the wiser; for I have heard the very questions most tender in France made the subject of his unlucky witticisms, and the king and every member of the government sported with in turn.

Bobêche is not "le Glorieux," but it is a variety of the same genus. The extraordinary author of Waverley is always true to nature in his depiction of character, and it has been a great subject of interest to me to trace in remote spots and corners of the earth the original lines which he has beautifully copied, and very often to find *that* realized, which I had before imagined to be merely the conception of a brilliant imagination.

Though I have undertaken to tell my own history, I feel a strange disinclination to speak much of myself, especially during my stay at Bordeaux. My mind was in that vacillating and unsettled state which is perhaps the most painful that human nature can endure. It was at that point where sorrow degenerates into both levity and bitterness, the most dangerous of all conditions; but a letter which I wrote about this time, and which has since fallen into my hands again, will give a better picture of my state of thought than any thing I could write now.

MY DEAR R----,

Surely if I am an odd being, as you say, you are another! What in the name of heaven could induce you to write to any other person at Bordeaux about the letter which lay at the post-office for you? However, I have taken the business out of your friend's hands, and sent it on to you myself. It was in verity my own letter, and, as you will see by the post-marks, has been upon its travels for some time. The truth is, I put it in the post for Boulogne, where I fancied you were, and to which it went without the postage being paid. Some friend of yours at Boulogne, you being gone, put your London address upon it, without *affranchissement*, and in consequence it was sent back to the postmaster here, and so forth.

What its contents were, I quite forget; some great nonsense, I dare say. But who in this age of the world would write sense, when Feeling has been strangled for a traitor, Virtue publicly whipped for breaking all the commandments, Generosity turned out to beg his bread, and Charity (I do not mean ostentation) sent to the treadmill? In short, when Vice is triumphant, Folly is sure to come in for a share in the administration, and Nonsense becomes the only patron to whom a wise man can apply. There is no such thing, my dear R----, as being mad in this world. It is only being in the minority; and instead of saying that a man has been put in a lunatic hospital, we ought to say that he has been confined by the majority. However, I hope that my letter, which was a sad raw cub when it left my hands, has been improved by travelling, in which case it may give you some amusement.

You ask me a variety of questions, to very few of which I can reply. What has made me stay at Bordeaux so long is a problem which I should be happy if any one could solve for me. It has been from no particular or general attraction. Here the climate is disagreeable, and the society, generally, not much better. There are few that I care about, there is none that I love, there is little to amuse, there is little to interest. It must have been by some law of gravitation that I settled down here, and until some propelling force of sufficient power acts upon me, I suppose I shall not budge.

Your next question is, "When do you return to England?" I cannot tell. The very idea is wretchedness to me. I think it was the Helvetii--was it not?--who, without rhyme or reason, collected together all the provisions they could find, burnt their towns and villages, and left their own country to seek another. But with me it is not from any distaste to England that I leave it. I love it because it is my country. I love it for its free institutions and noble privileges; for its brave spirits and generous hearts; and I am proud of it for its grand pre-eminence over a corrupted world. But it is a country where I have suffered much and lost much, and I cannot calmly think of returning to the scenes which must recall so much bitterness.

But, to change the subject, I have been to see a curious receptacle for our mortality. It is a sort of bone-house, called "*Le Caveau des Morts*," placed under the tower of an old church, now converted into a station for a telegraph. The first notice we had of such a place being in existence, (for the people of Bordeaux know nothing,) was the sight of the name placarded on the door, and entering, we found ourselves in the inside of an old Gothic building, in company with an animal that at first view might be taken for Caliban. He was a shapeless man, dressed in a rough, shaggy coat, that descended to two feet clad in immeasurable *sabots*. On his head he wore a large black nightcap, that alone suffered to appear the lower part of his face and two small dark eyes, together with the tips of a pair of elephantine ears. For the first few minutes we could get nothing from him but a kind of growling bark, which proved to be cough, and he himself turned out the sexton and bell-ringer, and very readily, in consideration of a franc, conducted us down a narrow staircase in the wall, to descend which, I was obliged to bow my head, and my companion to go almost double.

On getting to the bottom we entered an almost circular vault, roofed by Gothic arches and paved with the mouldering remains of frail humanity. B---- took the candle from our sexton, and standing in the midst, held it high above his head, looking like some colossal spectre; while the light gleamed faintly round, catching on the groins of the vault and the rows of ghastly dead, half skeleton half mummy, which were ranged along the walls. As soon as he had lighted a lamp in the middle, our guide, in the true tone of a showman at a fair, began to give us an account of the place and what it contained. He told us first, that the ground on which we stood was fifty feet deep in dead. When the family vaults of the cemetery, he said, were full, the bodies which were

not found corrupted were removed to this cavern, and took their station against the wall, as we saw them; and pointing to the one next the door, he assured us that it had lain in the earth for five hundred years, although the skin and flesh, dried to a thick kind of leather, were still hanging about its bones. He then went round them all, occasionally giving us little bits of their history, which might or might not be true, sometimes moralising and sometimes jesting, bringing strongly to my mind the grave-digger in Hamlet. It was strange to see him, just dropping into the grave, joking with the grim tenants of the tomb as if he were himself immortal. At length, he conducted us once more into the upper air of the tower, from whence we immediately issued into the most populous part of Bordeaux, swarming with the busy and the gay, the beautiful and the strong, all hurrying through an agitated existence towards the same great receptacle we had just left. It was a strange contrast.

The cathedral here is not so fine as many others we have seen. A few days ago we heard a fine military mass, at which the archbishop assisted. I was pleased with the service, notwithstanding all the overdone stage-effect of the Catholic ceremonies; but after the soldiers had marched out and the church was cleared, it was most disgusting to observe the effects of the French people's bad habit of spitting. There was actually a rivulet of saliva on each side of the church where the military stood. The archbishop is one of the best men in existence, but they say rather superstitious. A good story is told of him here, which, most probably, has its portion of falsehood. His cook-maid, it is said, gave herself out as possessed by a demon. Now, Monseigneur having no taste for such an inmate as this in his cook-maid or his house, proceeded instantly to exorcise the gentleman, ordering his chaplain to put his head to the lady's stomach and collect the devil's answers.

"Does the devil speak?" asked the archbishop, after a long address to the unearthly visitant.

"Yes," replied the chaplain.

"What does he say?" demanded the prelate.

"He says," answered the other, "*Je m'en fiche--i. e*. I do not care a groat."

So the archbishop gave it up as a bad job.

You say true: it is an extraordinary country, "La belle France;" but yet, in other days, I used to find much in it that gave me pleasure; and amidst the many faults that crowd upon the eye of a stranger on his first visit to any foreign country, I could descry many good qualities. At present my eye is jaundiced, and I dare not judge. I should be sorry to form an opinion of France from Bordeaux, but certainly there is vice enough here to supply a moderate kingdom.

I do not remember whether I have given you any account of Bordeaux before; if so, pardon the repetition. Not satisfied with the ordinary means of gambling, the good people have here invented one for themselves expressly. The price of brandy, you must know, is excessively subject to variation, and upon this they speculate, making bargains for time, as our stock-jobbers do, by which means fortunes are lost and won with extraordinary facility. The life of one of these men is brandy: he rises thinking of brandy--he writes about brandy all the morning--at dinner he talks about it--at the coffee-house he asks the news of brandy--at the theatre he makes a bargain between the acts, and then going to bed he dreams of a hogshead.

The upper classes of the Bordelois have the reputation of being not a little depraved. The next rank is a degree less corrupt; and lower down comes a race rather famous. You have heard of course of the Grisettes of Bourdeaux, and certainly they do appear the prettiest little beings that ever were turned out of a band-box, as they go tripping along the streets with their neat shoes and well-turned ankle and leg, which they do not at all scruple to show somewhat more than necessary. When in their working-dress, they wear a handkerchief shrewdly twisted round their head, a gown of common printed muslin, but cut in the most elegant form, and a little black silk apron, with a pocket on each side before, into which they put their hands to keep them warm in the winter.

Their dress at balls, and on fête days, is of the richest materials that can be found--expensive silks of the brightest colours, and a quantity of lace, which is principally displayed in the cap, that is then substituted for the handkerchief on the head. I am sorry to say that these young ladies are not generally famous for their morals. It is not, indeed, to be expected that they should be so. The same disgrace is not attached to the loss of virtue in this class as it is in England. If I may use the expression, they do not lose cast as they would with us, and are far from being disgraced amongst their fellows, by any degree of immorality except infidelity. All this does not prevent them from marrying when they arrive at a certain period of life, and making often better wives than those who, in the higher ranks, never went astray till they were married.

It is extraordinary, amidst this general dissolution of morals, how our fair countrywomen at Bordeaux keep themselves from all contamination. As you may suppose, there are a multitude of English families here, and I have never yet heard, a whisper against the female part of them. I know several persons here; some very agreeable, some who might be very agreeable if they would; but in general the society is confined to cold formal dinner-parties, which are little calculated to promote *sociality*. I do not at all thank a man for giving me a dinner. I can always get that for myself; but if he invites me to meet pleasant people, and adds one happy hour to the

little stock of enjoyment that man can find in life, he lays me under an absolute obligation.

There are many Protestants in Bordeaux, and consequently a Protestant chapel, which I have attended frequently. Did you ever remark how intolerant a persecuted sect becomes? The horrible severities exercised for long upon the French Protestants have excited in them the most violent hatred to the Church of Rome; and even from the pulpit they do not spare their mother church. There is, however, here one of the best preachers I have ever heard, a Monsieur Vermeille. His sermons are by no means equally good; but I have heard him on many occasions burst into the most powerful strain of eloquence you can conceive. But my own eloquence is becoming rather tedious, and therefore I shall merely bid you farewell.

Your's ever,

J.P.Y.

LA CHASSE.

* * * * But if the sylvan youth,
Whose fervent blood boils into violence,
Must1have the chase, behold, despising flight,
The roused-up lion, resolute and slow,
Advancing full on the protended spear.--THOMSON.

I had been wandering about one day in the neighbourhood of Bordeaux, indulging a variety of desultory meditations, following the uneven tenor of my own mind, sometimes sad and sometimes gay, and sometimes of that odd mixed nature where melancholy and mirth are so intimately commingled, that there is no separating them, when turning round an angle in the road, I had a figure before me whose occupations puzzled me not a little. He was one of that class of beings now nearly extinct, who still cling with pertinacity to powder and pigtails. His face was round, his cheekbones high, his complexion mummy-coloured, his nose turned up and primed with snuff, and in the cavities on each side stood two little dark eyes like black currants shining through a dumpling. The castor which covered his head was intended for a modern hat, but it had still a strange hankering for the form of the old-fashioned shovel, far more pinched behind than before, with the rear rim strongly turned up, as if to avoid the collar of his coat. It seemed that his head had been so long accustomed to wear cocked-hats, that whatever he put upon it assumed something of that form. To finish the whole, on each side under the brim lay two long rows of powdered curls, which flew off in an airy pigtail behind. This sort of man ought to be recorded, for in the course of years it will become unknown, like the mammoth; and strange remnants of whigs and pigtails will be found to puzzle the naturalist and antiquary.

But it was his occupation that I did not understand. He was creeping along by the side of a ditch, with his knees bowed, and eagerness in his air, and ever and anon he clapped to his shoulder a long machine, which seemed of a mongrel breed, between a duck-gun and a cross-bow; having the long barrel and stock of the one, and the arc and cord of the other. Continually as he placed it at his shoulder, I heard something plump into the ditch, on which he shook his head with evident mortification, and proceeded a little farther. I followed at the same stealthy pace, and he seemed rather flattered than discomposed by the attention I gave to his movements. At length he look a long and steady aim, drew the trigger, the bow twanged, and rushing forward with a shout of exultation, he seized an immense frog he had just shot, and held it up in triumph by the leg.[10]

"Qu'elle est belle! Qu'elle est belle!" cried he, turning to me as I came up. "It was a long shot, too," he added.

I paid him a compliment upon the achievement, and asked if he had had much sport.

He said, "No, that the weather was so hot that the frogs kept principally to the water, and they had been so much hunted that they were very wild."

"How!" cried I; "you do not shoot them sitting?"

He told me that he did, and asked me how I thought they ought to be shot?

I told him that to shoot them sitting was mere poaching, that he ought to take them in the leap.

He said "that a young man like me might do those things, but for an old man like him it was not so easy, but, however, that he would try."

I assured him that he ought to do so, and having examined his *arbalète*, I left him to endeavour to shoot frogs flying if he could.

As I went home I could not help moralizing upon the change which has taken place in Frenchmen since the revolution--a change which has altered them entirely, and yet left them nearly as different from the English as ever. I then asked myself in what the difference between us and our neighbours consisted, and I laid down in my own mind a whole table of

DISTINCTIONS.

> Liberiùs si Dixero quid, si fortè jocosiùs, hoc mihi juris
> Cum veniâ dabis.--HORACE.

They may be true or they may be false, but I beg it to be understood that they are given with perfect good humour towards a people for many of whom I have a high personal regard.

An Englishman is proud, a Frenchman is vain. A Frenchman says more than he thinks, an Englishman thinks more than he says. A Frenchman is an excellent acquaintance, an Englishman is a good friend. A Frenchman is enterprising, an Englishman is indefatigable. An Englishman has more judgment, a Frenchman more wit. Both are brave, but an Englishman fights coolly, a Frenchman hotly. The latter will attack anything, the former will be repulsed by nothing. An Englishman in conversation seems going a journey, a Frenchman is taking a walk. The one plods hard on to the object in view, the other skips away from his path for the slightest thing that catches his attention. There is more advantage in conversing with the one, more pleasure with the other. An Englishman generalizes, a Frenchman particularizes. An Englishman when he tastes anything says that it is good, that it has an agreeable flavour; a Frenchman describes every sensation it produces in his mouth and throat, from the tip of the tongue down to the stomach, and winds it up with a simile. An Englishman remarking an opera-dancer sees that she dances well, with grace, with agility; a Frenchman notes every *entrechat*, and can tell to a line where her foot ought to fall. An Englishman must have a large stock of knives and forks to change with every plate: a Frenchman uses but one for all, and it sometimes serves him for a salt-spoon, too. An Englishman in his own country must have two rooms; a Frenchman can do very well with one; he dines there when he cannot go out, receives his company there, and can do everything there. A married Englishman requires but one bed, a married Frenchman must have two. In general an Englishman is willing to submit to the power of the law, but inclined to resist military force; the contrary proposition is the case with the French.

A Frenchman is constitutionally a happier animal than an Englishman. He is born a philosopher. He enjoys to-day, he forgets the past, and lets to-morrow take care of itself. No misfortunes can affect him, he floats like a bit of cork on the top of the waves which seem destined to overwhelm him. He makes his servant his confidant, the coffee-house his library, the man next him his friend, the theatre his fireside;--and his home--but he has nothing to do with that.

He is gay, witty, brave, and not unfeeling, but his character is like the sand on the sea-shore, where you may write deeply, but a few waves sweep it away for ever. That perverted word 'sentiment' in its true sense he knows little of. But are there many men in all the world who know much more.

A Frenchman is not so insincere as he has been called. It is true he makes vehement professions which mean nothing, but he makes them in a language the expressions of which are all overcharged, and in a country where they are justly appreciated. As money, the representative of labour, has in every country its relative value, so words, the current coin of conversation, vary in import amongst various nations, and have a rate of exchange with foreigners. Thus, if an Englishman takes a Frenchman's professions at the value the same would hear in England, it is his own fault, for the rate of exchange is against them. Besides, they are *obliged* to use large words, there is no small change in France. In conversation, as well as in commerce, there is nothing circulating but heavy five-franc pieces. A boot is said to fit "*divinement*," and a tailor tells you that there is "*de quoi se mettre à genoux devant*" the coat he has just made for you. I have heard a boot-jack called *superb*, a pair of stockings *magnifique*, and a wig *angelique*. A man offered me "*poudre à la rose*," to make my boots slip on; and an old woman who had strayed a kitten, called it "expatriating her cat." An Englishman says, "I am glad to see you;" a Frenchman "*Je suis ravi de vous voir*." It comes to the same thing in the end. Everything in France is *au dessus du vraisemblable*, and the language not more than the rest. An Englishman's passions are like his own coal fire, difficult to kindle; but long before they go out, have more heat than flame, more intensity than brilliancy. A Frenchman is like a fire of wood that crackles and flames and

blazes, that is lighted in a minute, and in a minute extinguished.

The French, though they are daily improving, are still certainly a dirty people,[11] not in their persons but in their houses and habits. In this, as in everything else, they are the most inconsistent nation in the world. In their habitations there is the strangest mixture of splendour and want of cleanliness, and in their manners an equal mingling of elegance and coarseness. One must often walk up a staircase where every kind of dirt is to be found in order to arrive at a palace, and a thousand things that shock all notions of delicacy are here openly done and talked of by the most polite.

A Frenchman's politeness consists much more in small talk and petty ceremonies than in any real elegance of person or of mind. They have told the world so often that they are the most civilized nation in Europe, that the world believes it. It is true, they have an immensity of the jargon of society, a quickness in catching and appreciating the tastes and ideas of others, and a great fund of good-nature, which makes them love to see all around them at their ease; but their vanity stands much in the way of their politeness. An Englishman may perhaps over-rate both himself and his country, but he is contented with his own opinion, and cares little what others think on the subject; but a Frenchman wishes every one to acknowledge, and takes the greatest pains to prove, that France is the first country and himself the first man in the world. A Frenchman, however, has much more of the two great principles on which real politeness is founded than an Englishman. He is by nature an infinitely more good-humoured being, and he has more of that inestimable quality which he himself calls *tact*.

If the French called themselves simply the most polite nation in the world, we might be inclined to admit the claim. When they say they are the most *civilized*, we instantly deny it. I have seen an actress and a famous actress too, stop in the midst of one of Racine's finest speeches to spit in her pocket handkerchief, before the whole audience. I asked the gentleman next me if such were a common occurrence. He seemed surprised at the question, and said, what could she do? She must spit! Did we not spit in England? he asked. I told him not in general, and never in genteel society. He said, "Oh!" and without doubt did not believe a word I said; for, let it be remarked, that the French generally have no more idea of our manners and customs than if we were placed at one pole and they at the other. A great proportion of the French people look upon us as a kind of Sandwich Islanders--imagine that we never see the sun--that our atmosphere is one constant fog--that we eat nothing but beef and potatoes--that we drink nothing but tea and porter--and that our only ripe fruit is. baked apples.[12] Let me do them justice, however; rarely or ever would an Englishman have been insulted by the populace of France with those brutal appellations which the lower classes in England did not fail to bestow upon the French, when they discovered them in the streets of London during the war. If the higher class of society in France, is not so refined as the same class in England, and I do not scruple to say that it is not, there is much more urbanity, and real or acquired politeness, amongst the peasantry of the former country. One or the greatest differences, however, between the two countries is the one which is least favourable to England and the most honourable to France. France is always anxious to improve, and the whole nation drags on the unwilling few. England is always suspicious of improvement, and the talented few drag on the unwilling nation.

I have hitherto in general spoken of French men; what shall I say of French women? If I say but little, it is not that I think them in any degree less charming, less graceful, less fascinating than others have thought. To criticise them would be a task invidious and not for me. If they have anything about them that might as well be altered, I say, heaven forbid that it should be otherwise; for as perfection is certainly not to be found amongst men, it would place too terrible a difference between the sexes if it were to be met with in women.

BEGGARS.

I'll bow my leg and crook my knee,
And draw a black clout o'er my e'e;
A cripple or blind they will ca' me,
While we shall be merry and sing.
THE GABERLUNZIE MAN.

There is a singular mode of begging existing at Bordeaux, which at all events has the merit of novelty. In passing along the Cours de Tourny, which is lined on each side by a row of fine elms, the eye is attracted by a number of little boxes, and cups, with a small slit in the top, large enough to admit a two-sous piece. Some of these are fixed to the trees, and some are placed in the centre of a chair left at the road side, without any one to guard it. It was some time before it struck me that this was for the purpose of soliciting charity; but upon inquiry, I found that it was

an invention of late years, which at first had considerable success. The originator did not at once hazard his little box on the highway without interpretation, but fixed a placard upon one of the trees just above it, stating that it belonged to a "pauvre malade," who could not quit his bed; and, adding a list of as many misfortunes as he thought necessary, he summed up by begging the charitable passenger to drop his alms into the *coffre* below.

As he neglected to take out a patent for his invention, of course there immediately appeared an infinity of other "pauvres malades," who contrived to levy a considerable contribution from the inhabitants of Bordeaux. Some placed a chair to represent their person: some were afflicted with one disease, some another. In short, various improvements took place, the thing being understood, and everybody knowing what the box meant, the placard was dispensed with, and the passenger's imagination was left to supply any malady for which he had a particular predilection.

Begging is in France a perfect trade, and by no means one of the least profitable. The streets, the highways, and all public places are infested with troops of beings of the most miserable appearance, with everything, that rags, filth, and disease can do to make them equally objects of disgust and compassion. But let it not be thought that these wretches, often scarcely human, are left to so sad a fate by any mismanagement of the many excellent charitable institutions of France. Misery is their profession. To cure than of their maladies would be a robbery, and to furnish them with any employment, they would consider as one of the worst sorts of tyranny. Idleness is their liberty, and disease is their fortune. A sore leg is at any time better than a trade, and a withered arm is a treasure.

In the towns, they have particular stations, which may be looked upon as shops where they expose their miseries, as they would any other kind of merchandise. There was one, I remember, at Bordeaux, who had scarcely any vestige of form left. He used to come to his station on horseback, (for he was a man of some consideration), and setting himself on the ground, he displayed his legs, which were dreadfully deformed; as a tradesman sets out his goods in his shop window.

All the cottages that border the high road are filled with little mendicants, who rush forth at the first sound of a carriage, and torment the unhappy traveller, sometimes for miles. One of their most common methods of begging is to throw a bunch of flowers into the window, and then never quit the vehicle till they are paid for them. Such a mode of soliciting charity may seem very poetical; but never in my life did I see such a race of dirty, ragged, pertinacious little vagabonds.

It is the same all over France. In every thing else the various provinces differ essentially, but in beggars they are all equally well supplied. I have visited the north, the south, the east, and the west of France, and have found no visible difference. From the Place de la Comédie, at Bordeaux, passing along the allées and the Cours de Tourny to the Place Dauphine, a distance of about half a mile, I once met three-and-twenty beggars; and on the bridge at Pau I have counted nineteen. Although many of those who are now common mendicants, played parts, more or less conspicuous, in the French revolution, I do not believe that it added greatly, if at all, to the number of beggars in France. The wars of the League and those of the Fronde certainly did add to the number; but in those wars there was no purifying principle, no ennobling motive on the part of the insurgents: all was selfishness, vice, or caprice. In speaking of the wars of the Fronde, Voltaire says:

> Les Anglais avaient mis dans leurs troubles civiles un acharnement mélancolique et une fureur raisonée. Ils donnaient de sanglantes batalles et le fer décidait tout.
>
> Les Français, au contraire, se précipitaient dans les séditions par caprice et en riant. Les femmes étaient à la tête des factions, l'amour faisait et rompait les cabales.--VOLTAIRE--SIECLE DE LOUIS XIV.

Amongst the beggars in the streets of Bordeaux there is an old man, said to have been bourreau, or executioner, in that city, during the revolution. Perhaps an executioner is one of the most extraordinary beings in nature. Cut off from all human feeling, to embrace by choice the occupation of deliberately slaying his fellow-creatures, seems a paradox in the history of man. There is certainly a strange principle of destructiveness mingled with all nature, in a way and for reasons that we cannot divine. But here seems an innate cruelty getting the better of all that man learns from his infancy. An executioner must be a being apart from all nature, who, without passion or prejudice to stimulate him, throws off all feeling of humanity, breaks from all social charity, and exposes himself to the abhorrence of mankind, for the sole delight of embruing his hands in human blood.

Before the revolution the office of bourreau was confined to particular families. It was a curse that descended from generation to generation; all fled from, all detested the unfortunate man fated to be the instrument of his fellows' death, and he himself, cut off from society with kindred beings, often grew morose and cruel, destroying without regret that race which refused him all community.

But when this odious inheritance was abolished, and it became a voluntary act, thousands stepped forward eager for the office of blood-spiller, and in all the horrors which succeeded, no one was ever wanting to do the work of death.

As the office of executioner is the most extraordinary that man can choose, so perhaps the

French revolution is the most extraordinary event in the history of mankind.

It seems as if all nations were more or less like a man subject to occasional fits of insanity, and that they cannot proceed beyond a certain period without an unconquerable desire to destroy everything, which at other times they are most careful to preserve. From some of these maladies they recover, and have afterwards a more perfect health than if they had never occurred, but often the effects of the disease remain long after it has itself ceased.

The French revolution in general, taking it from its very commencement to its close, produced some good amidst a mass of evil; but there were particular periods, when all thought of right seemed abandoned, which did as much as the destruction of all order, the abolition of all law, the contempt of all religion; and the annihilation of every principle and every feeling, can effect towards a nation's overthrow. It often happens that man in doing wrong in one way, unintentionally do good in another; but those who governed France at the periods of which I speak, with a comprehensiveness of mind which, happily for the world, is not always attendant upon crime, contrived to be uniform at least in evil; and left no one good act for which history could accuse them of inconsistency. At the same time, they took care to prove to the world, by a rare combination of qualities, that it was in ill alone that they were uniform, by mixing the maddest display of folly with the affectations of philosophy, and uniting levity with slaughter. Humanity shudders at the remembrance of such deeds; not alone because they were bloody, but at the horrid frivolities with which they were accompanied. It appears as if the love of destruction had seized like a mania upon all the nation with a power ungovernable, had taken the place of every better feeling, and left every weakness and every defect in more than original force.

Never was the national levity of the French more conspicuous than during great part of the reign of terror. While every day shed fresh blood, and the deputy who superintended the work of murder at Nantes, found the guillotine but a means of slaughter in detail, not at all suited to his comprehensive mind; while he fell upon the happy expedient of embarking his victims in a covered boat, and sinking them wholesale in the river: at that very time the opera was as fully attended and the card-tables as gay as ever; jokes were cut upon the guillotine by those who were next to undergo its stroke, and the murderer handed his snuff-box to the victim whom to-morrow he condemned to death. In future ages the minute points of this vast tragedy will scarcely be believed. Many of its horrors are but faintly remembered even now, and the benefits which accrued from it are far overrated. The *dîme*, the *corvée*, and almost all the *droits seigneuriaux* were falling or had fallen even before the actual revolution began, and every other abuse would have gradually yielded to the power of time and the increase of knowledge. But the French were not contented to wait; they slew a good king, deluged their fields in blood, and stained their annals with crime, to obtain what a few years would have peaceably brought about.

France has never yet perfectly recovered the revolution; the character of the people has been injured by it, and all the foundations of society have been shaken. No definite ideas regarding any of the great questions which affect the happiness of a community have been left; and though it is not improbable that from this chaotic condition a new and brighter system may arise, yet the state of transition has already lasted long enough to be an intolerable evil. Though I am inclined to believe that in France, as in other countries, an improvement in morals has taken place in regard to religion, the bad results produced by the revolution have been very extensive. Yet it is curious to observe, that among all the blasphemies and follies with which the French amused themselves at that period, a feeling of the absolute necessity of some religion manifested itself continually. Even in their greatest absurdities, it is evident. At the moment that a statue to eternal sleep was erected, pointing to the tomb, it was proposed to grant a patent to the Almighty for the invention of the world, upon condition that he ceased to meddle with human affairs. At another time, fruits and all things necessary to the support of man were proposed as the object of human adoration; but the conviction of our dependence upon some superior being, and the necessity of worship, was always breaking forth.

The revolution has, in a manner, divided the kingdom into various sects, of which the three principal are bigots, sceptics, and hypocrites. The bigots consist in general of that portion of the higher ranks who actually suffered in the revolution, and that portion of the lower whom it neither enlightened nor led astray. The sceptics consist of those who either never had any religion, or who lost it in the theories and sophistry of the day, and these form the great bulk, I am sorry to say, of the thinking and scientific in one class, and the vicious and thoughtless of another. The hypocrites are those in all stations to whom long practice in political dissembling has given a facility in dissembling altogether. There are two other sects. The French protestant and the unbigotted and enlightened French catholic, but these are few in comparison. They comprise, however, many of the most talented and most virtuous of the nation.

The sceptics are, of course, divided between many opinions. Many are materialists; one or two fancy themselves atheists, but a great majority follow what they call a purism. They allow the existence of a supreme Being, are doubtful in regard to the immortality of the soul, and profess to hold the moral doctrine of the Evangelists, although they deny it a divine origin. They labour, according to the reasoning of various pseudo-philosophers, to prove that the moral code of Christianity was merely a compilation by the eclectists of Alexandria from the most celebrated doctrines of the ancient philosophers, joined with the principle of universal charity which they own to be found in no other composition than the gospel. But they attempt by no means to dispose of the sect of Christians mentioned in the celebrated letter from Trajan to Pliny; nor to account for the extraordinary circumstance of the philosophers of Alexandria having borrowed

the name of Christ, (as they suppose,) and having raised upon it such an apocrypha of history, circumstances, and details, all of which could have been contradicted at the time, had they been false. According to their own theory they are obliged to imagine much more and believe much more without proof, than if they were to receive the history which the divine volume gives of itself.

From all that I have seen in France of the consequences of their great national calamity, I am convinced, that however revolutions may call forth latent talent, and acuminate the mind of man, however necessary they may sometimes be as a defence to liberty and a check to tyrants, general virtue owes them little, and the very principles of social happiness are by them destroyed.

LA BREDE.

Tutta fra se di se siessa invaghita.--BERNARDO L'UNICO.

What the world are accustomed to consider as great and brilliant actions, have very often their origin in pride or ostentation, while home virtues, and less obtrusive qualities, though their motive does not admit of doubt, and their nature is mixed with no evil, are scarcely ranked in the catalogue of good deeds, and even if known are rarely appreciated. The rich man who spends a part of his fortune and bestows a portion of his time on public charities, claims unanimous applause as his just reward, and mankind are willing to grant it without any investigation, either of his actions or their incitements; but the man who without possessing any wealth to give, delights to see every one cheerful and happy around him, and finds his pleasure in his fellow-creature's peace, receives but small gratitude, and meets with little admiration.

For my own part, I am thankful to every one who gives me happy moments. There was a little circle at Bordeaux, in which I have spent some of the most pleasant hours of my existence. The follies and vices, the turmoil and discontent, of a large city never set foot there. It was composed of a few, that could feel and enjoy all that was beautiful in art or nature, whose native resources were equal to their own contentment, and who without shunning, required nothing from the world. Time passed not slowly with them; music, and reading, and conversation succeeded; each borrowing a charm from the other, and linking themselves together; so that the evenings flew insensibly; and the hour of our separation always arrived before we were aware of its approach.

In the mornings, we often left the town and spent the day in the most beautiful parts of the environs; and the scenery was always sure to suggest some new idea, which again celled forth a thousand more, and every one happy themselves, endeavoured to add to the happiness of others. It was in one of these expeditions that we went to visit the little town and château of La Brède, once the residence of the famous Montesquieu. The house is a true old French *château*, with its turrets, and drawbridges, and garden within the ditch, and loopholes for firing through the walls and all the little *et cæteras*, which carry one's mind back to ancient days; but the devil, or some spirit hostile to antiquity, has put it into the proprietor's head to whitewash the towers of La Brède; and there they were, hard at it, trying to metamorphose the old mansion of Montesquieu into the likeness of a Cockney cottage on the Hampstead road.

The owner was absent, but we were admitted immediately, and taken, in the first place, into the apartment where Montesquieu had composed his *Esprit des Lois*. A little more reverence for old times had been shown here; the room was exactly in the state he left it when he died; there was his arm-chair, and all the rest of the old damask furniture, spotted and stained in a truly classical manner; and there was the hole the sage had worn in the marble by resting his foot with mathematical precision always on one spot. We saw it all--all, which is nothing in itself, but something in its associations. We were then taken through the house, which appeared a large rambling kind of building; but, to tell the truth, I do not recollect much about it, except one large hall of very vast dimensions, where lay an old helmet, which something tempted me to put upon my head, and which I once thought must have remained there for ever, for, as if to punish me for the whim, during some time I could get it off by no manner of means. I have said that I remember little about the house; the reason was this--I was thinking more at the time of the woman who showed it to us than of anything else in it, aye, or of Montesquieu into the bargain. Now there may be many people who would judge from this confession, that she was some pretty *soubrette*, whose beauty had taken my imagination by the ear. But no such thing: not that I am not fond of beauty in every shape, but the case was different in the present instance. What or who she was I do not know; but if Dame Fortune had placed her in any other situation than that of a lady, the jade of a goddess ought to be put in the pillory for a cheat and an impostor. Her dress was of that dubious description which gave no information; but her manners--her air--her look--told a great deal. She was grave without being sad. It was a sort of gentle gravity, that seemed to proceed more from a calm, even disposition than from any grief or sorrow; and when she smiled, there

was a ray of pure, warm light came beaming from her eyes, and said that there was much unextinguished within. They were as fine eyes, too, as ever I beheld. Yet she was not handsome; though, if I were to go on with the description, perhaps I should make her out a perfect beauty, for I saw nothing but the expression, and that was beautiful. I could draw her character, I am sure, and would not be mistaken in a single line; for her voice was exactly like her eyes, and when the two go together one cannot be deceived; there was a mild elegance in it that was never harsh, though sometimes it rose a little, and sometimes fell, and gave more melody to the French tongue than ever I had heard before.

Now reader, for aught I know, you may be as arrant a fool as ever God put breath into--for I hope and trust this book will be read not by the wise part of mankind only--should that be the case, Lord have mercy upon the publisher. But do not be offended. You may, (under the same restrictive "for aught I know,") be as wise as king Solomon or wiser; but, whatever be your portion of wit, you will have seen, in all probability, long before now, that there was something in this girl that interested me not a little. What that was can be nothing to you, for it proceeded from private feelings and private recollections, which you would make nothing of if you knew them this minute.

However, there was a question which none of us could decide: was she one of the family of the château or was she not, and how were we to bestow the little donation usually given to the servants under such circumstances? However, the elder lady of the party took it upon herself; and while I was standing in the garden where Montesquieu used to work with his own hands, figuring to myself the philosopher of the laws, digging away in his full nightcap and variegated dressing-gown, she put the money, into the hands of her companion, begging that she would give it to the servants. The other looked at her with a smile which might have been translated half a dozen ways. It might have been, "I am a servant myself"--it might have been, "I see your embarrassment." But, however, she said that she would give it to them, and bidding her adieu, we proceeded to the carriage. We had scarcely all got in, when she came tripping over the drawbridge, with a bouquet of flowers in her hand. She gave them with one of those same bright smiles, saying, that perhaps we might like to have "*Quelques fleurs du jardin de Montesquieu*." We took them thankfully, and she re-entered the house, leaving us more than ever in doubt.

THE CHATEAU DE BLANCFORD.

Quant è bella giovinezza
Che si fugge tutta via
Che vuol esser lieto, sia
Di doman non c'è certezza.--TRIOMFO DE BACCO.

There is scarcely any character in the range of history, which I am so much led to admire as that of Edward the Black Prince. Combining all the brightest qualities of a hero and a man, his glorious actions and his early death, all give him a title to our interest and admiration. One of the last excursions which we made with the friends I have just mentioned was to a little town called Blancford. It lies, as it were, behind Bordeaux, upon an eminence which commands all the country round, with a far view over the plains of Medoc, and the bend of the Garrone lying at your feet. In a valley, at a short distance, stand the walls of an old castle, in which the Black Prince is said to have passed some of the last hours of his existence; and this was the real object of our pilgrimage.

Having ordered dinner, and left the carriage at Blancford, we wandered down, through some of the beautiful lanes, all breaking forth into the first blossoms of spring, to the ruins of the old château, which afford a sad picture of the decay of human works.

The walls, built to resist armies, had crumbled to nothing before the power of Time. We nevertheless amused ourselves for more than an hour, climbing amongst the old ivy-grown remains, and fancying the various beings that, from time to time, had tenanted that spot now so desolate. It was all imagination, it is true; but 'tis one of the greatest arts in life, thus to give food to fancy and to supply her with materials from the past. It is less dangerous than borrowing from the future. I forget whether it is Lord Kaimes, or Allison, or who, that accounts for the pleasure which we feel in the sublime and beautiful, principally from the exercise of the mind in new combinations. I feel that there is some truth in it; for when I can let my imagination soar without restraint, I try to separate myself, as it were, from her, and view her, as I would a lark, rising and singing in the sky, and enjoy her very wanderings.

So much amusement did we derive from our speculations that we lingered there long. A variety of shrubs and foliage had decorated the old ruin in a fantastic manner; and as we descended into one of the dungeons, where probably many a captive had told his solitary hours, a

free wild bird started out, at our approach and took its flight into the unconfined air. On the highest pinnacles of the walls, where the hand of man could never reach, Nature has sown little groups of wild pinks, that hung bending in the wind, as if to tempt one to take them. I endeavoured in vain to obtain some of them, for one of the ladies of the party, between whom and my friend B---- feelings were growing up which ended in much happiness at an after period. To punish my awkwardness, they called upon me to write a ballad on the subject. I did my best to comply, for we all strove to bring our little share of amusement into the common stock, and I felt myself more peculiarly bound to contribute, as I believed in my heart that many of these amusements, and especially that of whiling away the evening with little tales and sketches, had been devised for the purpose of turning my mind from every painful thought. These contributions gradually accumulated into a short miscellany, which, as it comes decidedly into the recollections of this year, I will give, as far as my memory serves, and call it "Scraps."

We left the old castle with a feeling of regret. We had had time to establish a kind of friendship with it, and did not like to quit it. After dinner we wandered on to the brow of the hill, and sitting down, watched the landscape as the closing evening varied all its hues. It had been a fine clear day; no pain had reached us ourselves and no storm had come across the sky--all had been bright and unshadowed. The last moments of such a day are precious, for who can say what to-morrow will bring forth? and all feeling it alike, we lingered on till the edge of the sun touched the horizon, and then returned to the busy haunts of man.

SCRAPS.--NO. I.

THE LADY AND THE FLOWER.

There be of British arms and deeds
  Who sing in noble strain,
Of Poitiers' field, and Agincourt,
  And Cressy's bloody plain.

High tales of merry England,
  Full often have been told,
For never wanted bard to sing
  The adieus of the hold.

But now I tune another string,
  To try my minstrel power,
My story of a gallant knight,
  A lady, and a flower.

The noble sun, that shines on all,
  The little or the great,
As bright on cottage doorway small,
  As on the castle gate.

Came pouring over fair Guienne
  From the far eastern sea;
And glisten'd on the broad Garrone,
  And slept on Blancford lea.

The morn was up, the morn was bright,
  In southern summer's rays,
And Nature caroll'd in the light,
  And sung her Maker's praise.

Fair Blancford! thou art always fair,
  With many a shady dell,
And bland variety and change
  Of forest and of fell.

But Blancford on that morn was gay,
  With many a pennon bright,
And glittering arms and panoply
  Shone in the morning light.

For good Prince Edward, England's pride,
  Now lay in Blancford's towers,
And weary sickness had consumed
  The hero's winter hours.

But now that brighter beams had come
  With Summer's brighter ray,

He called his gallant knights around
To spend a festal day.

With tournament and revelry,
To pass away the hours,
And win fair Mary from her sire,
The lord of Blancford's towers.

But why fair Mary's brow was sad
None in the castle knew,
Nor why she watch'd one garden bed,
Where none but wild pinks grew.

Some said that seven nights before
A page had sped away,
To where Lord Clifford, with his power
On Touraine's frontier lay.

To Blancford no Lord Clifford came,
And many a tale was told,
For well 'twas known that he had sought
Fair Mary's love of old.

And some there said, Lord Clifford's love
Had cool'd at Mary's pride,
And some there said, that other vows
His heart Inconstant tied.

Foul slander, ready still to soil
All that is bright and fair,
With more than Time's destructiveness,
Who never learn'd to spare!

The morn was bright, but posts had come
Bringing no tidings fair,
For knit was Edward's royal brow
And full of thoughtful care.

The lists were set; the parted sun
Shone equal on the plain,
And many a knight there manfully
Strove fresh applause to gain.

Good Lord James Talbot, and Sir Guy
Of Brackenbury, he
Who slew the Giant Iron arm
On Cressy's famous lea.

Were counted best; and pray'd the prince
To give the sign that they
Might run a course, and one receive
The honours of the day.

"Speed knights! perhaps those arms that shine
In peace," Prince Edward said,
"Before a se'nnight pass, may well
In Gallic blood be dyed.

"For here we learn that hostile bands
Have gather'd in Touraine,
And Clifford with his little troop,
Are prisoners, or slain.

"For with five hundred spears, how bold
Soe'er his courage show,
He never would withstand the shock
Of such a host of foe."

Fair Mary spoke not; but the blood
Fled truant from her cheek,
And left it pale as when day leaves
Some mountain's snowy peak.

But then there came the cry of horse,
The east lea pricking o'er;
And to the lists a weary page
A tatter'd pennon bore.

Fast came a knight, with blood-stain'd arms,
And dusty panoply,
And beaver down, and armed lance,
In chivalric array.

No crest, no arms, no gay device
Upon his shield he wore,
But a small knot beside his plume

Of plain wild pinks he bore.

For love, for love and chivalry,
Lord Clifford rides the plain!
And foul lies he who dares to say
His honour ere knew stain!

And Mary's cheek was blushing bright,
And Mary's heart beat high,
And Mary's breath, that fear oppressed,
Came in a long glad sigh.

Straight to the prince, the knight he rode,
"I claim these lists," he cried,
"Though late unto the field I come
My suit be not denied.

"For we have fought beside the Loire,
And dyed our arms in blood,
Nor ever ceased to wield the sword
So long as rebels stood.

"Hemmed in, I one time never thought
To die in British land,
Nor see my noble prince again,
Nor kiss his royal hand.

"But well fought every gallant squire,
And well fought every knight,
And rebels have been taught to feel
The force of British might.

"And now in humble tone they sue,
To know thy high command,
And here stand I these lists to claim,
For a fair lady's hand.

"For Mary's love and chivalry
I dare the world to fight;
And foul and bitterly he lies
Who dares deny my right!"

"No, no, brave Clifford," Edward said,
"No lists to-day for thee,
Thy gallant deeds beside the Loire
Well prove thy chivalry.

"Sir Guy, Sir Henry, and the rest
Have well acquit their arms,
But Edward's thanks are Clifford's due
As well as Mary's charms.

"My lord, you are her sire," he said,
"Give kind consent and free,
And who denies our Clifford's right
Shall ride a tilt with me."

Gay spake the prince, gay laugh'd the throng,
And Mary said not nay,
And bright with smile, and dance, and song,
Went down the festal day.

And when Lord Clifford to the board
Led down his Mary fair,
A knot of pinks was in his cap,
A knot was in her hair.

For it had been their sign of love.
And loved by them was still,
Till death came gently on their heads
And bowed them to his will.

And now though years have passed away,
And all that years have seen,
And Clifford's deeds and Mary's charms
Are as they ne'er had been.

Some wind, as if in memory,
Has borne the seeds on high,
To deck the ruin's crumbling walls,
And catch the passing eye.

They tell a tale to those who hear,
For beauty, strength, and power,
Are but the idlesse of a day,
More short-lived than a flower.

Joy on, joy on, then, whilst ye may,
  Nor waste the moments dear,
Nor give yourselves a cause to sigh,

Nor teach to shed a tear.

SCRAPS.--No. II.

LINES TO A WITHERED ROSE.

I cast thee from me, poor child of day
  Like the lost heart that bore thee now wither'd and dead,
To open no more in the sunshiny ray.
  Thy fragrance exhausted, thy loveliness fled.

'Tis the bright and the happy, the fresh and the gay,
  Alone that are fitted to flaunt in man's sight,
When withered, far better to cast them away,
  Than to mock their dull hues with the glitter of light.

No culture can ever restore thee thy bloom,
  Or waken thy odour, or raise up thy head,
The wretch's last refuge, the dust and the tomb,
  Is all I can give, now thy sweetness has fled.

O who would live on, when life's brightness is past,
  When the heart has lost all that once bade it beat high?
When hopes still prove false, and when joys never last,
  'Tis better to wither--'tis better to die.

I cast thee from me--away to the earth,
  More happy than others that must not depart,
Doom'd to bear on their grief 'neath the semblance of mirth,
  With silence of feeling, and deadness of heart.

SCRAPS.--No. III.

DESULTORY CONVERSATIONS WITH THE MAN IN THE MOON.

BY A TRAVELLED GENTLEMAN.

I have wandered almost all over the face of this globe, which, notwithstanding everything that geographers have said upon the subject, appears to me to be nothing more nor less than a great melon; and I am much mistaken, if, when Parry gets to what we call the North Pole, he does not find it to be only a stalk.[13] But as I was saying, I have wandered almost all over it, and in so doing, I have met with a great many extraordinary characters, but with perhaps none more singular than the person with whom I held the conversations which follow.

Now, though I do not suppose anybody will have the hardihood to doubt my having had what Sterne calls an affair with the moon, in which, as he justly observes, there is neither sin nor shame, yet, for the gratification of the present society, I am very willing to explain how I first became acquainted with the gentleman from whom I have since derived so much moonlight and information.

I remember one day when I was at Shirauz, I had been out into the Vakeel's garden, drawling away my time, as is usual with me, and finding myself tired, I went into the tomb of Hafiz, squatted myself down in a corner, and began stroking my beard slowly with my right hand like a pious Mussulman. Several Persians came in while I was thus employed, and seemed wonderfully edified by my piety and solemnity, and after they were gone I fell asleep.

I always make a point of dreaming; indeed I should think I lost one half of my existence if I did not. During our dreams is perhaps the only portion of our being, that we live without doing any harm to ourselves or anything else.

That evening I jumbled a great many odd things in my head, and whether it was the influence of Hafiz's tomb or what, matters little, but I became critical in my sleep. I quarrelled with my old friend Shakspeare--I found out all his anachronisms. "How the mischief, sir," said I "could you be such a fool as to make the Delphic oracle exist at the same time with Julio Romano in the Winter's Tale?" Shakspeare hung his head. "And, besides," I continued, "having written many a stiff sentence, which neither you yourself nor any one else understand, you have stolen, most abominably stolen, from Saadi. 'And the poor beetle that we tread upon, etc.,' is absolutely the

same as that passage in which he says, 'Life is sweet and delightful to all who possess it, and the ant feels as much as the hero in dying.' Billy, Billy! I am afraid you have not taken enough pains to correct your sad propensity to deer stealing."

"My dear sir," answered Shakspeare mildly, laying his hand upon the sleeve of my vest, "I never heard of Saadi in all my life; and let me assure you, that it is perfectly possible for two authors to think alike, aye, and write very much alike too, without at all copying from each other."

"But the reviewers don't think so," said I.

"There were no reviewers in my day," answered Shakspeare. "I have been plagued enough with commentators, Heaven knows! but with reviewers, thank God, I have had nothing to do. Why, my dear sir, I should have died under the operation."

Shakspeare was going on, but the last call to evening prayer, which a bell-mouthed muezzin was bellowing from a neighbouring minaret, put a stop to his oratory by wakening me from my dream.

It was a beautiful evening; the sun was just going down over far Arabia; the sky was purpled with the last rays of his departing splendour, the evening breath of the rose pervaded all the air, and the ear of heaven was filled with the reposing hum of creation. I offered up my prayers with the rest, and then stood gazing at the great orb of light as he sunk to his magnificent repose.

The moment that the last bright spot of his disk had disappeared, the eastern world was all darkness. No soft twilight in that climate smooths the transition from the warm light of day to the depth of night; but to compensate, the stars shine more brightly and come quicker upon the track of day, and in a moment a thousand beaming lights broke out in the heaven as if they were jealous that the sun had shone so long; while on the earth, too, the fire-flies kept hovering about as if the sky "rained its lesser stars upon our globe."

Men have strange presentiments sometimes, and we have a great many great instances of them in a great many great men. Now whether it was a presentiment that I should meet the Man in the Moon that evening, which made me linger out of the city, I cannot tell at this interval of time. But so it was that I did linger, and got wandering about down in the valley till the moon rose clear and mild, and weaving her silver beams with the dark blue of the sky, it became all one tissue of gentle light. Just at that moment, on a bank where the moonbeams appeared all gathered together, I saw a little old man with a dog by his side and a lantern in his hand--take him altogether, not at all unlike Diogenes.

Wherever I go I adopt the country that I happen to be in, lest at a pinch it should have nothing to say to me, not as most men do, by halves, growling like a bear all the time they do it; no, but altogether as a man does a wife, for better, for worse--laws, manners, superstitions, and prejudices. Now, had I followed this excellent custom in the present instance, I ought, in Persia, to have imagined my old man to be a Ghole *instanter*, or, at best, a Siltrim; but somehow forgetting a few thousand years, I could not get his likeness to Diogenes out of my head, and walking up to him, I asked him if he were looking for an honest man, adding, that if he were, I should be happy to help him, for that I wanted one too.

"No," said the old man, "I am looking for sticks."

"Sticks!" echoed I, "you will find none on this side of the valley--you must cross the stream, and amongst those bushes you will find sticks enough."

"But I cannot go out of the moonshine," said the old man.

I now began to smoke him, (as the vulgar have it.) "Ho, ho!" said I, "you are the Man in the Moon, I take it?"

"At your service," said my companion, making me a low bow.

"Well, then," I continued, "I will go and gather you a faggot, and afterwards we will have some chat together, and you shall tell me something about your habitation up there, for I have often wished to know all that is going on in it."

The Man in the Moon seemed very well pleased with the proposal. The sticks were soon gathered, and sitting on the bank together, he set the lantern down beside him whistled to his dog, which was one of those little, black, round-limbed, short-tailed curs, which seem of no earthly use but to bark at our horses' heels, and then entered into conversation without further ceremony. Indeed, ever after, in the many conversations which I have had with him, and which perhaps the malicious may term fits of lunacy, I have had reason to think of him as I did at first--namely, that he was a very shrewd, chatty old gentleman, not at all slack in showing any knowledge he possessed, and who, if he had not read much, had at least seen a good deal.

CONVERSATION I.-PERSIA.

"Sages and philosophers," said the Man in the Moon, "always show the certainty of what they advance by the descrepancy of their opinions. You must have remarked, my dear young friend----"

"I beg your pardon," interrupted I, "it is rather an odd appellation to bestow upon a man of my standing, who have more white hairs in my head than black ones."

The Man in the Moon burst out laughing with such a clear, shrill, moonlike laugh, that he made my ears ring. "Why you are but a boy," said he, "in comparison to me, when you consider all the centuries that I have been rolling round and round this globe. But listen to me. You must have remarked that no two wise men ever were known to think alike upon the same subject, while the gross multitude generally contrive to coincide in opinion, and, right or wrong, don't trouble their brains about it. Now, while in every age different theories have been formed amongst the learned respecting the moon and its structure, the vulgar have uniformly come to the same conclusion--namely, that it is made of cream-cheese."

"But, my dear sir," cried I, "remember that science very often, like a part of algebra, sets out with a false position; the error of which being subsequently discovered and corrected, leads to a just conclusion."

"As you say," replied the Man in the Moon, "philosophy is little better than a concatenation of errors."

"I did not say any such thing," interrupted I.

"Well, well, don't be so warm," he continued, "I am not going to discuss the point. I will now tell you what it really is, which is better than all theory. The common classes have not judged with their usual sagacity about the moon, which is not, in fact, made of cream-cheese, nor, indeed, as Mr. Wordsworth obscurely hints, in his profound old poem of 'Peter Bell,' has it any similarity to a little boat, except that of carrying me about in it. Nor is it a crepitation from the sun, nor a windfall from the earth, which has gone on in *statu quo* ever since Galileo took the business out of the sun's hands by crying out, *E pur se mouve*. As to all that Ariosto said upon the subject, that is a pure fudge. No, sir, the moon is----but I must tell you that another time, for I see that I must be gone!" So saying, he snatched up his lantern, laid his faggot on his shoulder, and called to his dog, who appeared to have a mortal aversion to the excursion, for no sooner did he perceive his master's intentions than he clapped his tail between his legs, and ran away howling.

"Truth! Truth!" cried the Man in the Moon to his dog. "I call him Truth, sir, for he is very difficult to be caught hold of," said the old man, when he had got him; and now, having tied him by a string, he wished me good bye, and began walking up a moonbeam which soon conducted him out of sight.

SCRAPS--No. IV.

A YOUNG LADY'S STORY.

It was somewhere in Italy--the precise spot matters but little; one might fix it anywhere, from the Milanese to Calabria, though in all probability it was some place in the southern part of that beautiful land which has met the fate that so often follows loveliness--ruin even for its charms.

It was the close of a burning day about the middle of September; there had been a sort of feverish heat in the air during the whole morning, which, as the evening came on, settled down into an oppressive sultriness, that impeded respiration, and rendered the whole world languid and inactive. All was still, but it was not the stillness of repose. No animal enlivened the scene, but where a heavy crow took its long, slow flight across the sky, or a straggling fire-fly gave a dull and fitful gleans amongst the dank vapours that came reeking up from the flat marshy fields on either side of the road.

A solitary traveller rode along towards the dark wood before him, and ever and anon seemed to turn his eyes towards the edge of the horizon, where enormous masses of deep bleak clouds appeared to swallow up the setting sun. From time to time the roll of distant thunder announced the coming storm; and as darkness grew over the face of the earth quick flashes of lightning started like genii of fire from the gloom, and shed a livid horror on the scene. The traveller hurried on dismayed, while torrents of rain began to drench the bosom of nature; but strange to say, and unaccountable, he never once thought of returning to the inn where he had spent the day, and which was not half a league behind. However, as storms, like all other uncomfortable things, are rarely of eternal duration, the one in question began to subside. The rain ceased, and the traveller went on at an easy pace, hoping every moment to find some hospitable shed where he might dry his clothes and wait out the rest of the tempest.

The road at length turned off abruptly to the right, and narrowing insensibly, assumed the appearance of a winding lane, at the end of which stood a house of respectable, but dreary, aspect. The traveller paused: a strange, undefinable, dreamy apprehension took possession of his mind, and though by a strong effort he forced himself to proceed, it was not without something like a presentiment of evil that he clambered through a gap in the garden-wall, leading his horse by the bridle.

The first object that struck his view was a tall white figure, standing in a menacing attitude, at the end of a long, bleak, gravel walk. Start not; it was not a ghost, though the traveller was half-inclined to think so, till he walked up to it, and found that it was merely a noseless, moss-grown statue, rising from a wilderness of weeds which had once been an arbour. Our traveller smiled at his mistake, and leaving his horse to explore the garden alone, he made the best of his way to the house. It was a square building of gray stone, and as the pale lightning gleamed from time to time on its broken windows and yawning doors, it looked astonished and frightened at its own solitude. The traveller participated in its emotions, and as he entered the dreary vestibule his heart sunk within him. There were doors on either side, and a staircase at one end of the vestibule, but the traveller felt no inclination to penetrate into the interior of so gloomy an abode--the more so, as it appeared totally uninhabited, and every one knows that such places are always the most alarming, seeing that there must be some cause for leaving them thus to their fate. The wind moaned sadly through the half-opened doors, and the traveller's situation became every moment more unpleasant; so that he resolved at last to do that which he might as well have done at first, namely, return to the inn, and wait for the morning to continue his journey. The dead leaves which the wind had driven into the vestibule rustled fearfully under his feet as he walked towards the door; but he made his exit in safety, and taking his horse by the bridle, regained the broken garden wall with a step of forced composure, for the traveller wished sadly to persuade himself that he was not frightened at all. When, however, he found himself safe on horseback, and in a fair way of reaching the inn, the rapidity of his movements and the long deep shudder which accompanied his parting steps, gave sufficient evidence of the uneasiness of his sensations.

Arrived at the place of his destination, of course his first inquiry was on the subject of the mysterious habitation he had left; so while he drank some warm wine to raise his spirits, he sent for the landlord to tell him all about it. The host stared,--he had never heard of such a place. The traveller described its position and appearance exactly. The landlord had been born and brought up in that neighbourhood but had never seen either lane or house answering the description.

The boys of the inn were called, but they were as ignorant, or as lying, as the host, who said, with a smile, that perhaps his guest was mistaken.

This was not to the borne; the traveller offered a reward to any one who would accompany him in a second visit to the house in question. As money does great things, he had soon more than one volunteer, and off they set with lights and horses. They travelled on for some way at a rapid pace, and the stranger frequently stopped to look about him,--no house was to be seen. He perfectly recognized every object on the road which he had seen before, to a certain point, but there it assumed a new appearance. He must have passed the lane, he thought, and turned back again, amid the stifled merriment of his companions, but neither lane nor house was visible. All was straight, flat, and uniform. The traveller was as grave as a judge, but the rest could no longer conceal their laughter, and he himself, feeling rather shy on the subject, was glad to dismiss them with the promised reward.

He then proceeded on his journey alone, endeavouring to persuade himself that his late adventure was a dream, or something very like it. Scarcely, however, were the people of the inn well out of sight when, strange to say, the road bent mysteriously, as if by magic, to the right, and there it stood--the enchanted house at the end of the lane!!!

This time (thought the traveller) I will pierce the mystery, if it cost me my life. Leaving his horse in the lane, he entered the garden by the breach in the wall; he passed the old statue, he ascended the broken steps, and soon found himself in the solitary vestibule. There his nervous terrors redoubled. It seemed as if all the inhabitants of the Red Sea had agreed to haunt his imagination at once. Still, however, he went on, and began to mount the ruined staircase. He had reached the first landing, and was about to continue his ascent, when the whole building seemed to give way at once, and he sunk senseless amid the crashing ruin.

11 was a bright, clear, autumnal morning; all nature seemed to waken refreshed from her sleep; the dew began to sparkle in the early beams; the birds sang up the rising sun; and the clouds of night rolled sullenly away, as if to avoid the brilliant presence of the day, when some peasants, who were gaily going forth to their morning labour, were suddenly struck by seeing a horse saddled and bridled, but without a rider, engaged in cropping a scanty breakfast of the herbage which grew at the side of the road. A few steps further showed them our poor traveller, lying senseless and bleeding near a heap of stones. The good souls took him up, and carried him to one of their cottages, where they succeeded in bringing him once more to life. It was only, however, for a short period. He gave directions for sending off a messenger to his friends, and to the inquiries concerning the state in which he was found, replied, by relating the above adventure, after which he lingered for an hour or two without speaking, and expired.

The people of the neighbourhood are divided in opinion respecting the traveller's narrative.

Some opine that he fell asleep on his horse, dreamed the whole story, and was killed by a very opportune and natural tumble. But others, with much more show or probability, attribute the whole to the machinations of some evil spirit.

SCRAPS--No. V.

THE LAW OF BABYLON.

MEMOIR.

Sheweth,

That although there be one person in this society who has obstinately and wilfully refused to make any contribution in writing towards our evening's amusement, it is, nevertheless, proposed to excuse him on the same principle that the grand Desterham of Babylon excused a certain wit of that city.

Be it known, then, that the laws of Babylon were all founded on the grand principle, that crimes are simply diseases, and that punishments are the remedies by means of which alone the malefactor can be cured of the malady under which he labours. Thus, when a man was afflicted with the thieving disease, they applied hanging, which was found infallible. For minor maladies, such as lying, cheating, swearing, etc., they had various remedies;--the bastinado, ear-slitting, nose-cutting, actual cautery, and many others; but it was all for the patient's good, and to cure him of his ailment. Now, in Babylon, as in all large and flourishing cities, one of the greatest and most unpardonable crimes was wit. It was held as the most dangerous species of treason, and punished accordingly, especially as the grand Desterham, at the time I speak of, had once been suspected of having thought a witty thing, though he never said it, and was of course much more severe than any other judge, in order to prove his zeal for the law, and abhorrence of witty practices.

It happened in the moon Assur, at twenty-three o'clock in the forenoon, twenty-five thousand years four days and seven minutes after the world's creation--as specified in the indictment, and copied into the register of the court--a certain citizen of Babylon was brought before the grand Desterham and his four colleagues, charged upon oath, with being a wit and a traitor. After the court had slept over five-and-twenty witnesses for the accusation, the prisoner was put upon his defence, being first told that he was indefensible.

The prisoner, however, undertook to prove that he was not a wit but a fool. "For," said he, "if I had possessed any wit, I should not have been fool enough to show it. If, therefore, I have not shown any, you must acquit me of having any; and if I have shown any, you must pronounce me to be a fool for so doing, and consequently must acquit me any way."

The judges all looked at one another, and not understanding what the prisoner meant they judged it to be blasphemy, and ordered him to be bastinadoed on the soles of his feet, after which they proceeded to judgment on the accusation, and unanimously found the prisoner guilty.

But the prisoner's counsel running over the indictment with his nose, found a flaw therein. For whereas it was stated that the time was twenty-five thousand years four days and seven minutes after the creation of the world; it was proved by the chief astrologico-astronomer to the Empire, that it was only twenty-five thousand years four days, six minutes and a half, so that the prisoner saved his life by half a minute, and was dismissed with the court with a suitable admonition.

But the warning was in vain, he soon fell into his old courses; and one unlucky day was again brought before the grand Desterham, his guilt clearly proved, and finally he himself ordered to be hanged, in the hope that this application might entirely remove the disease.

The grand Desterham himself assisted at the operation, and the poor patient was exhibited on a high scaffold with a rope about his neck.

"Citizens of Babylon," said he, addressing the people, "rejoice! You shall soon see into what elevated situations wit brings a man in this sublime empire."

As he spoke the hangman hoisted him up, but the grand Desterham vociferated, "Cut him down, cut him down; he is incorrigible."

The other members of the court objected greatly; but the grand Desterham quoted the universal principle of the law, and added, "that as the patient before them was evidently incurable, the remedy could have no effect."

The poor wit was therefore allowed to go at liberty, but the grand Desterham brought an old

house over his head, for he was shortly after banished, being strongly suspected of good sense and judgment, though it was never clearly proved against him.

SCRAPS.--No. VI.

WRITTEN IN A BOOK OF DREAMS.

This life 's a dream--so all have thought,
  Philosophers and poets too,
And rhyme and reason both have wrought,
  To prove what most have felt is true.

The warrior's dream 's a fiery chaos,
  For glory ever flying on;
The statesman's an unceasing race,
  Full often lost and seldom won.

The merchant dreams of loss and gain,
  And gold that never brings content;
The student's a dull dream of pain,
  'Midst mouldered books and hours misspent.

The lover in his airy hall
  Has joy-dreams ever in his view,
And, though the falsest of them all,
  His dream perhaps is sweetest too.

The poet's dream 's a dream of dreams,
  Of phantoms seen and passed away,
Like dancing moats in sunny beams
  Which shine but while they cross the ray.

Yes, all's a dream, but who would part
  With one fond vision fancy knows,
One bright delusion of the heart
  For all that waking reason shows?

Who'd quell the notes Hope gaily sings,
  Because they're tuned so witchingly?
Who'd pluck Imagination's wings,
  Because they bear her up too high?

Let those who would so close this page,
  Where many dreams recorded lie;
It ne'er was meant to please the sage,
  But feeling's heart and fancy's eye.

SCRAPS. No. VII.

RABAS.

There is a garden near Bordeaux called Rabas, which may be considered the perfection of bad taste in gardening; I never saw anything so studiously ugly. There are straight walks as mathematically unnatural as if they had been laid out by an inhabitant of Laputa. There are hermitages, cottages, and wilderness, fit for Bagnigge Well's tea-gardens, together with sundry lions and tigers glaring in painted pasteboard. All the trees are pared as closely as possible, and there is eke a labyrinth for people to lose themselves, or not, as they like best.

It was in the said gardens of Rabas, which belong to a rich family in the neighbourhood, that these lines were written, at the request of a young lady who was expected soon to change her name.

Remember the moments of pleasure when past,
For they keep still a trace of their lovliness, Lady,
Let the memory too of these flat gardens last,
With their trees cut so straight, and their straight walks so shady.

Come pledge me the oath I dare ask of thee yet,
Come pledge me the oath that their memory claims,
These gardens and moments, ah! ne'er to forget,
While your name is Anna, and my name is James.

But, Lady! O Lady! your sex is so fickle,
There is no believing a word that they say;
Old Time like a reaper walks on with his sickle,
And gathers no emptier harvest than they.

Not content with discarding their fashions and dresses,
With their very own names they don't scorn to make war;
Thus while 'Young' my identity ever expresses,
You soon may be somebody else than you are.

Come, find me some oath that more surely may bind thee;
Come swear then by something that never shall change,
By the grace with which nature has lavish entwined thee,
Which time ne'er shall alter nor fortune estrange.

By thy smile's witching power, by thy mind's airy flight,
That lark-like soars high o'er the place of its birth,
And tuning its song in the porches of light,
Seems to sorrow that e'er it must sink to the earth.

Come swear then--but what can I swear in return?--
To remember thee ever wherever I rove,
Though my heart may be dead, and my breast but its urn,
I offer thee friendship--'tis better than love.

DOMESTIC LIFE IN FRANCE.

Mortel, qui que tu sois, prince, brame, ou soldat,
Homme! ta grandeur stir la terre
N'appartient point à ton état,
Elle est toute à ton caractère.--BEAUMARCHAIS.

There are two words wanting in French which an Englishman can scarcely do without, *comfort* and *home*. The hiatus is not alone in the language, the idea is wanting. Speak to a Frenchman of pleasure, he can understand you--of gaiety, amusement, dissipation, he has no difficulty: but talk to him of *comfort*, and explain it how you will, you can never make it intelligible to him. In like manner, he will comprehend everything that can be said on the theatre, the coffee-house, the club, the court, or the exchange; but *home*--there is no such thing. *Chez-soi* is not the word: *intérieur* comes nearer to it, for that particularises, but still it is not home--home, where all the affections of domestic life, all the kindly feelings of the heart, all the bright weaknesses of an immortal spirit clad in clay--where all, all the rays of life centre, like a gleam of sunshine breaking through a cloud, and lighting up one spot in the landscape while all the rest is wrapt in shadow. We may carry ambition, pride, vengeance, hatred, avarice, about with us in the world; but every gentler feeling is for *home*: and miserable is he who finds no such resting-place in the wide desert of human existence.

I speak not of all Frenchmen. I have met some who had the feeling in their hearts, and scarcely knew what it meant. They had formed themselves a home, but had not a name for it. But these are the accidents, and in the generality of French families it is not, nor it cannot be so.

Marriage in France is one of the most extraordinary things that ever was invented. It is a state into which men enter, seemingly, from a principle of inevitable necessity--the *besoin de se marier*, or else who would engage their fate to that of a person whose mind, education, and disposition, is generally wholly unknown to them? The first principle of a woman's education all over the world is deceit. She is taught, and wisely taught, to conceal what she feels. But in France they try to teach her not to feel it at all. Educated in the greatest retirement, watched with the most jealous suspicion, as soon as a favourable opportunity presents itself, she is brought forward to show off all her accomplishments, before a man, who is destined for her husband, and is bidden to assume his tastes, and coincide in his opinions. Little affectation,

however; is necessary. It is all a matter of convention. The one party wishes for a wife, and marries without knowing anything about her; the other wishes for liberty, and is married without caring to whom. This is the great change in a Frenchwoman's life. While single she is guarded, and restrained in everything; each action each word, each look is regulated; but the moment she is married all is freedom, gaiety, and dissipation. From a caterpillar she becomes a butterfly, and flutters on amongst the multitude to be chased by every grown child that sees her. These are not the materials for happiness! But this is not all. Every circumstance, every custom on these occasions leaves little room for the expectation of domestic felicity.

A young lady is to be married, and a young gentleman is found in the necessary predicament. She is promised a certain dower, and he is possessed of a certain fortune, into the state of which, as in duty bound, her parents make the strictest inquiry. But the case is widely different on the part of the young gentleman. No inquiry must be made by him. The character of his future bride it is impossible for him to know, that of her relations concerns him little, and into their means of giving the dower they promise, he is forbidden to inquire, on pain of excommunication. Any doubt on the subject would show that their daughter did not possess his love!--O that prostituted name love! used every day to quality the basest and most ignoble feelings of our nature.

But to go on with the history of a French marriage. The contract generally imports, that the father of the young lady shall pay a certain yearly sum to her husband, and a further sum is promised to be left her at the death of her parents. The benefits of this arrangement are obvious and manifold, and well calculated to check the exorbitant power which husbands have over their wives.

A part of the ceremony, and one of the most essential, is the *corbeille de marriage*, or wedding present from the lover to his bride. This is scarcely a matter of courtesy alone, as some might imagine, but almost of right, which the young lady would yield upon no consideration whatever. It is a sort of price, and is expected to be the amount of two years' revenue.

The *corbeille* is a basket lined with white satin, and containing a variety of articles of dress and jewellery. One indispensable part is a cashemere; and the rest is made up of laces, diamonds, and all the thousand little nothings which enter into the composition of a fine lady.

The civil ceremony at the commune is all which the present law requires, but the religious part is seldom if ever dispensed with. The first takes place generally in the morning, without any display. The ceremonies of the church however are delayed till near midnight, and have in general the advantage of new scenery, dresses, and decorations. The higher the class, and the better the taste of the parties, of course, the simpler are all the arrangements, and the fewer and more nearly connected are the persons present. With such a system is it possible that there can be such a thing as *home?* That it is possible--that it may be found, is one of the finest traits of the French character. All their habits, all their customs, from time immemorial, have been opposed to domestic life; and yet they occasionally create it for themselves.

TRAVELLING.

Ye glittering towns with wealth and splendour crown'd,
Ye fields where summer spreads profusion round,
Ye lakes whose vessels catch the busy gale,
Ye bending swains that dress the flowery vale,
For me your tributary stores combine,
Creation's tenant, all the world is mine.--THE TRAVELLER.

What was the cause of our setting out so late the personage who certainly had the chief hand in it best knows, but it was between four and five o'clock in the afternoon before we got from the door of the Hôtel de France, on our way towards Pau and the Pyrenees.

The carriage, too, was unlike anything that the ingenuity of man ever before invented; not indeed from itself, but from its appendices: every hole and corner was crammed with all sorts of conveniences. There was a whole subjunctive mood of comforts---everything that we might, could; should, or ought to want, piled up in grotesque forms both inside and out. I never saw anything like it but the carriage of a lady, whom I once met coming from Italy, and that, indeed,--Heaven help her, poor thing, for I am sure when she was in it she could not help herself.

At length, however, we did set off, and passing by several *guingettes*, or, as it may be translated, tea-gardens, though they drink no tea there, left Bordeaux behind us and proceeded on our way to Langon. It was night ere we reached Barsac, not more worthy fame on account of its good wines than its bad pavements. For what purpose they were constructed, I defy any one

to explain; but they answer three objects, breaking carriages, laming horses, and jolting the unfortunate traveller to such a degree, that were there any thing contraband in his composition, it would be sure to be shaken out of him.

At Langon we stopped to supper, during which important avocation, we were waited on by a smiling, black-eyed country girl with scarcely a word of French to her back; for be it remembered, that here, on the banks of the Garonne, all the peasantry speak Gascon, as their mothers did before them; and after having made several ineffectual attempts to arrive at our little attendant's intellects, through any other channel than that of her native tongue, I was obliged to have recourse to that as a last resource. Never did I perceive joy and satisfaction so plainly depicted, as in her countenance, when she heard the first two or three words of Gascon which came out of my mouth; but the effect was not so good as might have been anticipated, for in that language she had no lack of expressions, and would fain have entered into a long conversation with me, which put my knowledge to the stretch. However, in the mean time, my companion, from what whim I know not, had persuaded the rest of the people in the house, that I was a Chinese, to which, perhaps, my fur travelling cap lent itself in a degree. He explained to them also, that China was the country from whence tea was brought, and to this, I believe, we were indebted for the best tea the place could afford, and for being stared at all the rest of the evening.

We travelled on from Langon with the intention of sleeping at Bazas, but by the time we arrived at that place, the night was so far wasted, that we agreed to continue our route without stopping.

The dress of the country people now began to vary; we had no longer the high Rochelle caps, which the women in Bordeaux sometimes wear, and which resemble very much the helmet of Hector, in the picture of his parting from Andromache; nor the neat twisted handkerchiefs, with which the grisettes dress their heads, but, as a substitute, a flat, square piece of linen, brought straight across the forehead, and tied under the chin in the fashion of the Landes. We had lost, too, the neat, pretty foot and well-turned ankle, with the stocking as white as snow, the shoe cut with the precision of an artist, and sandled up the leg with black ribbon; and instead had nothing but good, stout, bare feet, well clothed in dirt, and hardened by trotting over the rough roads of the country. The men were generally dressed in blue carter's shirts with the Bearnais berret, not at all unlike in shape the Scotch blue bonnet, but larger, of a firmer texture, and brown colour.

We breakfasted at Roquefort, celebrated, I believe, for nothing although there is a sort of cheese which carries the name of Roquefort about with it, and in the town is a pottery, said to be upon English principles. This we did not see, but pursued our journey to Mont de Marsan, the capital of the Landes, where we began to enjoy de benefits arising from monopoly when applied to posting, being obliged to wait nearly an hour for horses. Monopoly may be called injustice to the many for the benefit of a few. In great public works, which no one man could have the means to execute, and where individual competition is either impossible or destructive, governments are but just to grant particular privileges to the companies of men who undertake them, and to secure to them a reward apportioned to the enterprise; but, in every instance where various persons can place themselves in comparison one with another, in the service of the public, the public alone can minutely judge, and justly reward, and by so doing secure to itself the best servants at the lowest price. The French government, however, are rather fond of monopoly; that of posting is only one amongst several. As far as a monopoly can be well organised for the benefit of the public, posting in France is so. One postmaster is stationed in every town, who has alone the right to furnish horses for the road. He is obliged by law to be provided with a certain number, according to the size and position of the place in which he is established, but this number is very frequently insufficient, and not always complete.

Many provisions are made for rendering the postilions attentive to their duty, and civil to the traveller. Their recompense is fixed by the post-book at fifteen sous per post of two leagues; but the ordinary custom is to give them double, and generally something more, which they make no scruple of demanding, though positively forbid to do so by their instructions. Every postmaster is obliged to hold a register, in which any complaint either against himself or his postilions may be recorded by the traveller, and countersigned by the next commissary of police. This is generally visited every month, and the punishment consequent on any serious charge is very severe.

Our delay at the Mont de Marsan enabled us to walk through the town, which seemed to our post-bound eyes an ill-built, straggling place enough, with the people not very civil, and the streets not very clean. Notwithstanding, we found our inn, the cleanest and neatest we had seen in France; I could have fancied myself in old England if they would but have charged the Sautern ten shillings a-bottle.

The want of horses here was but a prelude to what we were to meet further on, for at Grenade we found that two carriages, which had preceded us, were waiting for the return of the postilions from Aire: so to make the best of it, we ordered our dinner and strolled out to the bridge over the Adoure, where we amused ourselves by talking all the nonsense that came into our heads, and watching some washerwomen washing sheets in the stream below. They do it with extreme dexterity, taking the largest sheet one can imagine, and after having folded it in their hands, with one sweep extend it flat upon the surface of the river; they then dip the end next them, and catching a little of the water pass it rapidly over the whole by drawing the sheet quickly to the bank.

After having watched this proceeding for some time, we returned to dinner, which consisted principally of the legs of geese salted, a favourite dish all over this part of France; and then amused ourselves by scrutinizing the antics of a large black monkey in the inn-yard.

I have an invincible hatred towards a monkey. It is too like humanity--a sort of caricature that nature has set up, to mock us little lords of creation. To see all its manlike, gentlemanlike ways of going on, gave me a bitter sense of humiliation. It is very odd, that we should thus dislike our next link in the grand chain of the universe.

A PRIME MINISTER'S MONKEY.

Il mio cuore gl'inalza un monumento dentro me stesso, tanto durevole quanto la mia vita. Aveva egli della bonta per me: ma e per chi mai non ne avea?

GANGANELLI.

Several years ago I went one day to dine with the Duc de R----. The world say that he was not the greatest of ministers, but he was much more--he was the most amiable of men. However, that does not signify, he is dead now: and if politicians have forgotten him, he at least made himself a memory in the affection of the good, and the gratitude of the poor.

He lived at that time in the Rue de Bac; and as I knew him to be punctual, I got into the cabriolet exactly at nine minutes and three quarters before the time he had appointed; for I calculated that it would take me just so long to drive from the end of the Rue de la Paix to the Rue de Bac, allowing one minute for a stoppage, and half a minute for a call I had to make at ---- It does not signify where, for surely much mischief could not be done in half a minute.

However, the stoppage did not take place; and I changed my mind about the call; so that I was nearly as possible one minute and a half before my time. The duke was still more incorrect, for he was three minutes and a half after his. Thus, by the best calculation, there were exactly five minutes to spare. Accordingly, a page showed me into a saloon to wait the arrival of the duke. Now there was a fire in the *salon*, (I did not say a stove,) no, but an actual fire, with an arm-chair on one side and the duke's favourite monkey; on the other. So I sat myself down in the arm-chair, and began considering the monkey; who seemed not at all pleased with my presence. He grinned, he mowed, he chattered, and every now and then made little starts forward, showing his white teeth all prepared to bite me, I am not fond of being bit in any way, so I first of all took up the tongs, thinking to knock his brains out if he attacked me; but then, I thought that it would be cowardly to use cold iron against an unarmed monkey; and putting down the tongs I resolved on kicking him to atoms if he pursued his malicious inclinations. But just at the moment that we were in this state of suspended hostilities, the duke came in to make peace, like some more potent power between two petty sovereigns.

"I was just speculating monseigneur," said I, "upon the policy of kicking a prime minister's monkey."

"It would be bad policy with some men," said the duke, smiling; "but I hope that Jackoe has given you no reason to use him so severely."

"None precisely, as yet, my lord," replied I; "but he threatened more active measures, and, I believe, we should have come to blows if you had not come in."

"It was only fear," said the duke; "fear that makes many men as well as monkeys assume a show of valour; for Jackoe is a very peaceable gentleman: are not you, Jackoe?"

The monkey, with a bound, sprung into the duke's arms; and I never saw a more complete contrast than there was between the fine intelligent countenance of the minister, and the mean, anxious, cunning face of the ape.

"By heaven!" cried I, "it is the best picture I ever saw."

"What?" asked the duke.

"Why, your excellence and the monkey," answered I; and for fear he should misunderstand me, I added boldly what I thought, "It has all that contrast can do for it. It is it once the two extremes of human nature. You monseigneur, at the height of all that is great and noble, and the monkey coming in at the fag end, a sort of selvage to humanity."

"You do not consider the monkey as a human being?" asked the duke.

"If he is not," said I, "in truth he is very like it."

Monsieur de S---- coming in interrupted the duke's reply, but by his affection for the animal, I do not think we differed much in opinion.

AIRE.

Let school-taught pride dissemble all it can,
These little things are great to little men.--THE TRAVELLER.

O Aire, Aire! It shall never forget thee. Not because Alaric king of the Visigoths made thee his habitation, but because within thy walls were we detained a whole night for want of horses, devoured by vermin, pestered by postilions, and bamboozled by innkeepers.

Be it known to every traveller, of every kind, sort, and description, whatever be his aim, object, or occupation; wherever he comes from, or wherever he is going, that if he travel in a "*petite caliche*," with two persons in the inside, and one servant on the out, together with a compliance to all the forms and regulations, as laid down in the book of French posts, he is not obliged by law to have more than two horses to the said *calèche*, paying for each at the rate of forty sous per post. But be it equally known, that at every relay he comes to, the postmaster will endeavour to force upon him a third horse, which being then thirty sous per post for each horse, will be then ten sous more than he would otherwise pay. Now every man may easily make the calculation for himself, and settle the accounts between his comfort and his pocket as he likes best. The rich traveller will say, "Hang the ten sous!" the poor traveller will say, "Why, it is a consideration!" The avaricious traveller will always have his thumb between those two leaves of the post-book; and there will be one sort of traveller who will say, "Though *I* can afford to lose it, there may be some who follow that cannot, and therefore I will not submit to the imposition."

Now we being poor travellers, and in the category above mentioned respecting the *calèche*, we held out for our ten sous per post, and met little annoyance on that account, till we arrived at Aire; but there the postilion would insist upon being paid for three horses, though we had had but two. I called for the postmaster. He was not to be found, and as it was apparent from the number of carriages having priority of ours, which were waiting in the inn-yard for want of horses, that we should not be able to depart that night, we took a stroll down to the river, leaving the angry postilion keeping guard over our vehicle.

At the ford, just arrived from the Pau side of the Adoure, we met two carriages proceeding to the same miserable inn where we were lodged. They were filled with a lovely family from our own dear land, and I know not why, before we knew who or what they were, we could have sworn to them, and proudly too, for our country people.

In a few minutes the postilion rode after us, desiring us, in a sulky tone, to pay him, and as we found that the postmaster had now returned we went back with him. There was nothing to be said against the law, and in consequence the matter was decided in our favour; we paid the sum due, and for the sake of his insolence gave the postilion but thirty instead of forty sous, which we had been in custom of paying.

As soon as he had got it his rage broke forth in the most violent abuse of England and Englishmen. Everything that his fancy could invent in the way of vituperation was poured upon us, the more especially as he perceived that it highly amused a crowd of French *laquais* and postilions, who had nothing better to do than to look on. I let him proceed as long as he pleased, and then, as he was going to mount his horse, and ride away, I stopped him; desired the postmaster to produce his register, took a pen from the ink, and was about to inscribe my complaint in form. But now the whole scene was changed; nothing was heard but prayers and entreaties that I would give up my design. The postmaster gently opposed my approach to the book. The postmaster's wife took hold of the skirts of my coat; and assured me that the "boy was ruined" if I insisted. "Utterly ruined," echoed the postmaster. He was "*bon garcon*," some of the neighbours said, "but *mauvaise tête*."

I replied, that his *mauvaise tête* must be corrected, and made a show of insisting; but now they became clamorous. Could I have the heart, they asked, to throw him for ever out of bread? I said that if that were the consequence perhaps I might not. They assured me it was, that he would never be employed again, and used so many arguments, that I had a good opportunity of relinquishing what I had scarcely intended seriously; and, with a very grave admonition, suffered our youth to ride away.

Of all the wretched places that ever poor traveller was tormented in, the most wretched is that

inn at Aire. No dinner was to be got, for all that was in the house had been given to the English family we had seen arrive. No milk was to be had for our tea. Only one bed-room was vacant, with two dirty beds, filth, fleas, bugs, and a bad smell. However, here we laid down in our clothes; but no sooner were we asleep than we were galloped over by the vermin in every direction--it was like a charge of light horse. At length, with the morning came the happy news that there were horses; and away we went towards Pau. I can fancy a Catholic soul getting out of purgatory nearly as happy as we were to leave Aire.

We now met a great many of the peasantry, men and women, riding the short mountain horses. The features of the people, as well as the scenery, were here very different from what they had been in the neighbourhood of Bordeaux, and all showed that we were entering Bearn. Here, as in many other parts of France, no such thing is thought of as a side-saddle for a woman, who rides exactly like a man, and very frequently quite as well. I once knew a lady in Brittany, who, both for mustachios and horsemanship, would have done admirably for a cavalry officer.

The country gradually rose into hills, generally richly cultivated and scattered with wood; but nothing was yet to be seen of the Pyrenees. The character of the scenery was generally very much like that of Devonshire, but there was a great difference in the peasantry, who were here poor and ill-looking in comparison.

Going up a steep ascent, as we approached nearer to Pau, we were tormented by a parcel of little, dirty, ragged children, who, with a peculiar kind of tormenting drony song, kept begging by the side of the carriage; there were at least twenty of them, who, with flowers in their hands, continued to run by our side for near a mile. At length they left us; and, on reaching the top of the hill, an unrivalled scene burst upon our view. Immediately below was a broad plain, or rather valley, with a little world of its own within its bosom--villages, and hamlets, and vineyards, and streams, rich in fertility, and lighted up with sunshine--all peaceful, and sweet, and gentle;--while directly behind the hill that bounded it on the other side, rose the vast line of the Pyrenees, in all nature's grandest and most magnificent forms. It is impossible to describe the effect that such mountain scenery produces--one gasps, as it were, to take it all in. After contemplating for any time those immense works of nature, if we turn to look at the dwellings of man, which seem crouching themselves at the feet of their lofty neighbours, the lord of the creation dwindles to an insect, and the proudest of his palaces looks like the refuge of a caterpillar. Before we can reconcile ourselves to our own littleness, we have to remember that this insect, with his limited corporeal powers, has found means to make the vast world, and all that it produces, subservient to his will and conducive to his comfort, and then, indeed, his mind shows as exalted and powerful as his body is feeble and insignificant.

I cannot help thinking, that there is a sort of harmony between the spirit of man and all external nature; the heart expands and the mind enlarges itself to all that is bright and grand. A wide, beautiful scene steals us away from selfish griefs and cares; and it would appear to me impossible to do a bad or a base action in the presence of these awful mountains.

THE BIRTH-PLACE OF HENRI IV.

Even in the most monotonous existence, every day gives rise to so many little accidents, each of which bears its comment and its counter comment, and its subsequent and collateral ideas, that were one to write a diary, in which thoughts had a place as well as circumstances, we should pass one half of our time in recording the other.

Three hundred and sixty-five registers every year of one's life! Aye, and registers crammed full, too; for where is the man whose paucity of ideas is so great that he has not at least five in a second?--If they would but invent a way of writing them, what a blessing it would be! for at least fifty escape past redemption while one is engaged in transcribing a word of three syllables.--Thus I have forgotten what I was going to say! But certainly it is the most extraordinary thing in nature, and clearly shows of what a different essence is the soul from the body, that mind so far outstrips every corporeal faculty. Before the tongue or the hand can give utterance or character to any one word, thought has sped on before for some hundreds of miles, called at every post-house on the way, ordered new horses and refreshments, and is often, alas! obliged to come back to his master, whom he finds lumbering on in a heavy post-chaise, the Lord knows how far behind.

But, to return, for surely I have quitted the subject far enough. If I were to write an exact account of everything that happened at Pau, and everything we said and thought thereupon, it would make a goodly volume and be sufficiently tiresome, no doubt; but as I am getting rapidly towards the end of the first half of that period which I have undertaken to commemorate, and have yet got all my journey through the Pyrenees to tell, I must not dilate.

Nevertheless, I love narrative and hate description; and I would a great deal rather tell everything simply as it happened, and what it called up in my own mind, than huddle them all together, like an account of the Chinese empire in a book of geography, beginning with the boundaries and ending with the Lord's Prayer in Chinese.

However, as it must be done, I will begin boldly, and give a regular account of Pau, the chief town of the Basses Pyrenées--a very neat little place, situated on the ridge of a hill, crowned by the château where that love and war-making monarch, Henri Quatre, first saw the light of day. In the valley below runs a broad, shallow river, called the Gave[14] of Pau, which frets on with the tumultuous hurry of a mountain stream, and dashing petulantly over every little bank of stones it meets in its way, passes under a pretty stone bridge, which leads on the road to the Eaux Bonnes, and to the village of Jurançon, famous for its wines. Beyond the town, proceeding along the ridge of the hill, (which runs with the course of the river due west), there is a fine park planted with beech-trees, which afford a complete shade from the heat of the sun. The highest walk, extending for nearly a mile, commands a most beautiful and ever-changing view of the mountains, which lie, pile above pile, stretched along the whole extent of the southern sky. Indeed, they form a scene of enchantment, and are never for a moment the same--sometimes so involved in mist, that they form but a faint blue background to the nearest hills--sometimes so distinct, that one might fancy he saw the izzard[15] bounding from rock to rock. The course of the sun, also alters them entirely by the difference of the shadows; and the clouds, frequently rolled in white masses half-way down their peaks, give them an appearance of much greater height than when they stand out in the plain blue sky. But however they may appear, even at the times they are clearest, there is still that kind of airy uncertainty about them which makes one scarcely think them real. They seem the bright delusion of some fairy dream, and indeed, I was almost inclined to suppose it a deception, when on waking the third morning after my arrival, I looked for the mountains, and found that, like Aladdin's palace, they were gone--not a vestige of them remaining--not a trace where they had been. The sky, indeed, was cloudy, but the day otherwise fair; and to any one unaccustomed to mountain scenery, it would appear impossible that any clouds could hide objects at other times seen so near. But so if was: for two days we saw nothing of them, and then again the curtain of clouds rose majestically from before them, and left the whole as clear and grand as ever.

The best view is certainly from the park, where, looking over the river and the village of Jurançon, scattered amongst beeches and vineyards, the eye runs up a long valley, marked at various distances with clumps of trees and hamlets, and every now and then a tall poplar or two lessening in the perspective, till the first rising rocks appear beyond, seeming to block up the pass, and increasing one above the other, more and more faint and misty, till the abrupt "Pic du Midi" towers above them all, looking like a cloud upon the distant sky.

The climate of Pau is variable, but never very bad; the changes, while I was there, were frequent, but not very excessive. Lodging is dear and scarce, but every other convenience and luxury abundant and cheap, so long as one keeps within the range of nature's productions, for the arts have made but small progress in the town since Henri Quatre's time.

The country round is rich in itself, and richly cultivated; and, indeed, it is not often that scenes of such sublimity are mingled with so much fertility. From the window of our lodgings, we could look over a wide view, covered with woods and vines, large fields of maize and corn, with peach and plum-trees growing in the open country, and the bright red blossom of the pomegranate mixing with the dark foliage of the other trees, and forming a strong contrast, not unlike that of the rich valley with the rocky mountains beyond.

The society here is very agreeable during the winter. There are many English, who have made it their residence; but it is too distant, and too retired, for those of our countrymen whose extravagance, or whose crimes, have driven them from their native country; nor have any of the coldly proud, or ostentatiously rich, yet found their way thither. The English, therefore, are gladly received, and even esteemed, by the French of Pau, who (unlike the natives of many other parts of France) have no cause to be afraid that either their purse or their consequence will suffer by admitting British travellers to their society: The best parts of the French character, also, are to be met with here, while many of the vices which find a hot-bed in great cities are lost in this retirement. I should suppose that the climate of Pau was healthy; the people seem strong, and with their brown skins, small black eyes, long dark hair, and the peculiar cap they wear, put me in mind of Calmuck Tartars. They are in general short, broad made, and muscular. In almost every other country we daily see huge mountains of flesh, that look like tumuli for entombing the soul; but there is nothing of the kind at Pau. They are sturdy, but not fat--well-fed, but not pampered. As I am speaking of the inhabitants of Pau, I must not forget the nightingales, the lizards, and the butterflies, which form no contemptible part of the population. The lizards are actually in millions, basking in the sun, and walking leisurely about, with all the insolence of a tolerated sect. No sooner does the sun begin to set, than the nightingale renders the whole air musical with its song. There is a little valley just below the town, warm, tranquil, and wooded, and here they congregate in multitudes, and wait for the night to begin their tuneful competition. I have, indeed, occasionally heard them in the day, even here, where the day is intensely hot, but it is only for a moment--a sort of rehearsal for the evening; and I must confess, that however beautiful the notes may be in themselves, they want half the charm in the broad light. They seem peculiarly appropriated to the night. There is a sort of plaintive melody about them, that is lost in all the gay buz and bustle of sunshine. But at night, when the dull crowd, whose feelings are

more purely animal, have left Nature to her own quiet pensiveness--when there is no sound to distract, and no light to dazzle--the song of the nightingale comes like the voice of the spirit rising alone to heaven, with that kind of melancholy, solitary sweetness, which harmonises so sweetly with anything vast and beautiful.

I am not very well sure that I could make my feelings on the subject understood, and therefore I will not try, but go onto the butterflies, some of which are extremely beautiful. There is a superstition amongst the common people concerning one of these insects they call "the angel." They suppose that the etherial spirits visit earth under its form, and that whoever is fortunate enough to have one of them in his house, is exempt from the friendly visits of all evil spirits, and from many of the common misfortunes of life. On which principle, they do not at all scruple to catch them--and, angel or no angel, stick them on a cork with a large pin. But this is nothing to a diabolical way they have of making fishing-lines in Spain.

FLEURETTE.

I know not, in truth, how it has happened, but certain it is, that a great portion of the inhabitants of Pau have a very strong resemblance to Henri Quatre. One might indeed say, here, that he was the father of his people, at least there is a great family likeness. However, the Bearnais are both fond and proud of him. All the shop-windows are full of portraits of the warm-hearted monarch and very often is added that of poor Fleurette, the gardener's daughter. She was the first object of his love. He was very young, when one of the princes of his family passing through Bearn, accompanied him to the archery-ground. There were many of the youths of the neighbourhood shooting for the prize, which was a bouquet of flowers fastened on the butt; and many a Bearnaise girl looking on, and hoping that her lover would be the winner. Amongst others were Fleurette and her father, the old gardener of the château. She was a lovely, simple, country girl, and the young prince, scarcely less simple than herself, felt strongly attracted towards the gardener's daughter. Apparently it was without any design that he first began to speak to her; but the charm grew upon him: insensibly his language became more ardent, and then first began that sort of undefined courtship, which has from thenceforward been called "Conter Fleurette." He was so occupied it seems, that he did not even perceive that all the rest had missed the mark, till his cousin turned, saying to him, "Shoot, Henri; shoot Henri;" and gave him the bow. His arrow did not miss, and at once lodged in the bouquet, which was no sooner won than given to Fleurette.

What were the use of telling a long story about an every-day matter? Henry loved and was loved in return; but Fleurette was a country girl, and her lover was her prince. It is easy to imagine all the stages of the business. She commenced by admiring him as her prince; as such, too, she was flattered and pleased by his attention. She began to think less of the rank and more of the lover. She forgot the rank altogether, but he himself became more dear. She loved him not as a prince but as a man, and yielded as a woman. And then all the golden dreams of hope and passion came hovering round her. She never fancied such a thing as broken faith. She never thought that princes could betray. She never believed that Henri's heart would change. He would love her, and she would love him, until their lives did end. His glory would be her pride, and his good be her happiness.

Thus it went on from day to day; every evening he stole away from the castle to meet her. There was a pleasure in the secrecy, though all the world knew how matters went; and when any one asked where the prince was gone, the reply was, "Conter Fleurette."

At length it so happened, that amongst other guests at the château was a fair girl whose rank and beauty gave Fleurette some pangs. The world said that Henri was to receive her hand; and the ceaseless tongue of Fame kept ringing it in Fleurette's ears, till her cheek began to turn pale, and she often wandered into the woods to think in solitude. On one fair day, while she was thus employed, the prince and her rival passed before her. She could no longer doubt, for Henri held her hand, and there was an ardour in his eyes, and a tenderness in his manner, which Fleurette had wished, and hoped, and believed, were never shown to any but herself.

The hour of their meeting came; and Henri stole from the castle to the place of rendezvous. It was close to a spring which, falling from the rock, had formed a deep basin for itself below; and, round about, the trees had grown up, nourished by its waters; and as if in gratitude bent down over the clear still pool, hiding it from the rays of the obtrusive sun.

Henri waited--all was calm, and still, and silent; but there was no Fleurette. He grew anxious, alarmed--perhaps his heart smote him. He walked rapidly backwards and forwards, when suddenly he saw a scrap of paper lying in his path. He hurried back to the castle, opened it, and read, "You have passed near me."

The prince's agitation called instant inquiry upon him. But all mystery, all concealment was now over; an agony of fear and doubt had taken possession of his mind; and calling loudly to others to aid in his search for Fleurette, he hurried from the château. Servants followed with lights, and soon found the unhappy girl, whose sorrow had been short, though keen. She had chosen the wild basin, the spot near which had so often been the scene of her happiness, now to be her grave. Her heart had never loved but once, and broken to find that love betrayed.

Henry was nearly frantic, but remorse was now in vain. Her father, too, who was left in the world alone--the tale had reached him, and he came to where his poor child lay. His eye first fell upon her lover; he clasped his hands, while agony and wrath struggled hard in his bosom. "O that thou wert not my prince!" he cried, "O that thou wert not my prince!" and he cast himself down beside her.

It was long ere Henri forgot Fleurette; perhaps he never forgot her, for that first passion which sheds a new light upon our being--the brightest thing our youth has ever known--hangs fondly round remembrance, and yields neither to years nor sorrows. Time softens it; but memory hallows it; and on the tomb raised in our heart to past affection, is graven, an inscription which nothing can erase--"To the brightest friend of our youth, Early Love"--so runs the epitaph, "this sepulchre is given by Experience, Memory, and Regret;" Hope too would have added her name, but her eyes were dim with tears.

The character of Henri Quatre would certainly have been brighter had he wanted those failings of which poor Fleurette was the first victim: yet, as a man of strong passions, in a dissolute age, as a king, a conqueror, a soldier, warm, generous, enthusiastic, our sterner morality is but too much inclined to unbend towards him, and to attribute his faults to the same ardent nature which might lead him occasionally into error, but which carried him on to so many noble exploits.

The love, that the Bearnais bear to the memory of their native prince is beyond all bounds. In the reign of a vainer monarch, Louis XIV., a subscription was opened at Pau for erecting a statue to Henri. Louis liked statues to nobody else but himself: and though he did not absolutely prohibit the proposed monument, he caballed and intrigued with the people of the place, till he forced them to change their original intention into erecting a statue to himself, instead of one to his progenitor.

It was accordingly fixed in its place with great pomp; but in an inscription on the pedestal the Bearnais took care to state, that the statue was erected, "à Louis XIV. roi de France et de Navarre, *petit fils*[16] de notre grand Henri."

THE EAUX BONNES.

Nulla di più immirabile che un suolo il più fertile sotto il clima più bello, ovunque intersecato di vive acque ovunque popolato da villaggi.--GANGANELLI.

From the higher range of the Pyrenees, which forms as it were an immense barrier between France and Spain, run a multitude of lateral valleys, each enclosing within its bosom its streams, its villages, and its plains, possessing its own peculiar race of inhabitants, its own usages and superstitions, and often having little communication with any world beyond its boundary of mountains. One of the sweetest and (until late years) one of the least frequented of these valleys, is the Valley d'Ossau, which leads apparently in a direct line to the foot of the Pic du Midi de Pau. I had often stood in the park, and looked up the long vista of hills before me, fancying a thousand things in the blue indistinctness of distance, and lending it as many charms as imagination can bestow on uncertainty; a longing took possession of me, to approach myself nearer to these airy hills whose fairy brightness haunted me: and I was never satisfied till we were on our way to the Eaux Bonnes. Of this little watering place, lying in the deepest recesses of the mountains, report had told such tales, that I got out of patience with my own fancy for believing them. You stupid fool, said I, to Imagination, you are only getting up a disappointment for yourself and me; methinks experience ought to have made you wise by this time; witness all the unpleasant scrapes into which you have plunged me. Just as I was reasoning thus with Fancy, came by a blind man, led by a dog; the sturdy cur would come into our court-yard, for some little affair of his own, and kept tugging and pulling at the rope which tied him, till the blind man, who felt he was going wrong, but did not know by what means to set him right, was fain to comply and let him have his own way. So I gave up the matter too, and we ordered horses for the Eaux Bonnes, for it was impossible for the blind man's dog to tug him into our court-yard one bit more violently than my fancy tugged me into the mountains. And hereby I leave and bequeath the similitude between a blind man and his dog, and any man and his fancy, to any person who may be disposed to profit by the same; giving up all right, title, and claim whatever; upon the said similitude or simile, and declaring and avowing that I will have nothing more to do with it. Always provided,

nevertheless, and be it hereby understood and agreed, that these presents be no further considered as gift, bequest, donation, or legacy, than as far as in me lies to give, bequeath, or devise, the similitude or simile aforesaid, inasmuch as it may have been uninvented, unpossessed, and unappropriated, by any other person or persons whatsoever, otherwise, this item to be null, void, and of no effect, anything hereinbefore said to the contrary notwithstanding.

By the time the horses came the next morning, I had quite resolved to be very much disappointed; and I got into the carriage, with precisely the same sort of unwillingness that the animal usually cited as the most striking example of consistency evinces when it is obliged to run according to its driver's will instead of its own. However, the day was fine, and nature seemed resolved to smile me into a good-humour. We rattled down through the town, passed the bridge over the river, commented on the number of beggars, admired the view of the town from the banks, and then turning in amongst the lesser hills which lie to the left of the valley d'Ossau, lost at once the prospect of the mountains, and might have forgotten that we were in the Pyrenees.

Indeed, the soft slopes covered with meadows and fields, handsome modern houses and pleasure-grounds, and streams that flowed gently on with scarcely more force than sufficient to turn a mill, took from us all remembrance that we were within a few miles of some of the highest mountains in Europe.

As we proceeded, however, the scene gradually began to change; the houses were less frequent, and seemed to gather themselves into villages, the rivers became more rapid, and the country, though highly cultivated, assumed the appearance of a fine park; large clumps of oak and fir, lying scattered in every direction, and the tops of the hills hiding themselves in deep plantations. Still we saw nothing of the Pyrenees, and even the people seemed to differ in nothing from the common Bearnois of Pau, except, indeed, that the women had discarded their shoes as well as stockings, or rather carried them in their hands instead of on their feet.

We stopped at last to change horses at Savignac. A gentle slope leads from the village through some thick trees into the valley; and dashing down with all the *éclat* of fresh horses and postilion we found ourselves, in a moment, in a scene that leaves description, and almost imagination, behind.

The valley winding up to the Peak, again lay before us; but we were now amongst the mountains indeed, and on either side, at the distance of less than half a mile, rose crags, and precipices, and hills covered with pine, towering to the very sky, and forming, as it were the impassable walls of the garden into which we were entering;--for it was a garden. Up to the very foot of the rocks, and climbing up the hills, wherever a spot of vegetable mould was to be found, the highest cultivation was extended, and the most extraordinary verdure. The hay and the corn harvest were both in progress at the same time and the new-mown fields appeared as if covered with rich green velvet, on which the large trees and rocks threw a beautiful transparent shadow. There were a thousand little objects of interest that filled up every spot the eye could rest upon, and satisfied it altogether. The valley all along was spotted with small villages, which seemed to creep for shelter close to the foot of the mountains. Not far on, stood a high rocky mound covered with the ruin of some feudal castle, and below lay a hamlet with its little church and the path winding up to it. Multitudes of small mountain-bridges crossed the river all the way up its course, as it came dashing and foaming over a bed of rocks. The crags, on either side, were broken and interspersed with rich hanging wood, and kept narrowing in the distance, till they seemed to meet, precipice over precipice, with the high conical Pic du Midi, rising purple above them all; and at the same time the warm sunshine, pouring over the hills, gave to all the further parts of the valley a kind of luminous indistinctness. I cannot describe it! It was a congregation of the grandest and the most minute, the most opposite and the most harmonious beauties, that nature can produce!

After having staid some time to admire, we passed on over a light, elegant little bridge, and followed an excellent read towards the Eaux Bonnes. In a valley which turns away to the left, lay the little town of Alurdi, scattered amongst some lesser hills. Part of it has been twice destroyed by avalanches, but the people still continue to build up the houses exactly on the same spot.

However grand the hills may appear, the eye, unaccustomed to such vast objects, does not judge rightly of their height till it compares them to something with which it is familiar. The steeple of Alurdi served us as a guide to estimate the objects around, and the effect was so extraordinary, that we both laughed on measuring it against the mountain behind. I am sure I know not why I laughed, for there is nothing in the littleness of man's works to make him merry; but so it was, and we went on.

Approaching Laruns, the valley appears terminated by high crags, and we could just distinguish the road to Spain, leading into a deep ravine, which seems scarcely more than a crevice in the rock. But here, turning off to the left, we passed through the town of Laruns itself, which is as odd a building as ever I beheld. Perhaps some people might find a great deal of amusement in searching into the history of the place, for both the materials and structure appear of an antique date. The lower story of the houses are only inhabited by the cows; pigs, and horses; and the number of pretty faces which the sound of a carriage called stare at the travellers, seemed as if they were looking out of the drawing-room windows. The streets are so narrow, that it is scarcely possible to pass; neither did I see a shop of any kind in the place. Over many of the doors we remarked the form of a serpent interlaced with two bars of iron, and the

windows, which were without glass, consisted only of a kind of gothic frame of black marble, giving an extraordinary church-like appearance to the houses.

After passing through Laruns, as we entered another long valley to the left, we turned to take one more look at that which we were quitting. It was quite fairy land, a perfect scene of enchantment. The valley, full of villages, hamlets, and cultivation, undulating in a thousand slopes, and broken by woods and rivers, was all lighted up by the clear rays of the declining sun; while the wild heavy rocks and mountains to the west, rose in deep masses against the sky, no longer separated into detached portions, but all confounded in profound shadow, and airy, uncertain obscurity.

Language is all emptiness, and fails before any thing great or strong. Reader, I must take you to the valley d'Ossau, and set you where I stood, and win the sun to shine upon it as then he shone, before I can make you comprehend its loveliness.

We soon lost sight of it. After going on for a short time amongst some English-looking hedge-lanes, we again came out upon the edge of the hill; the road passing along the brink of a steep descent, at the bottom of which ran the river, roaring amongst the rocks. At one part, we found the people engaged in banking up the road, which was not upon the surest foundation possible, and which, having apparently a strong dislike to an elevated situation, was rather inclined to slip down into a more humble station in the valley below. The way taken, or rather the method in which they were proceeding to prop up the road, was somewhat curious. About twenty men and women were employed, some in digging earth for the embankment, others in carrying it to the spot. The machinery of a wheelbarrow never seemed to have entered their imagination, but as soon as a shovel full of earth was dug out, the women took it on their heads, in a small wooden trough, not at all unlike a butcher's tray, only not so large, and thus carried it at a slow pace to its destination, talking all the way; so that, upon a fair calculation, each woman could fill up about a cubic yard per diem.

It was not long now before we reached the Eaux Bonnes, a little town consisting of about a dozen large white houses, thrust into a gorge of the mountains. They are generally divided into small bed-rooms, and fitted alone for lodging the greatest possible number of the strangers who come to drink the waters. In fact, it looks as if a bit of Hastings, or Tunbridge Wells, and that a bad bit too, had been exported to the Pyrenees. The well is highly sulphureous, tasting most disagreeably of bad eggs; but it is supposed to have the most extraordinary effect in the cure of consumptive complaints, and thus, either for fashion or health, there are a great many people who come to drink of its waters.

The morning after our arrival, I wandered down to a cascade in the valley. I have seen much grander waterfalls, but rarely one more beautiful. By my eye, I should guess the height to be about forty feet. The scenery round is richly wooded, rocky, and picturesque, and the body of water considerable; but the principal effect is produced by the stream, after having fallen eight or ten feet, striking a projecting piece of a crag and rising back again in foam and spray, almost to the same height as that from which it fell. It then again descends, rushing down over the rock, with a roar which is heard for a great distance. At particular times, the sun, finding a way for its beams across the woody screen that hides it from above, shines upon the foaming mist that always rises from the water, and arches it with a sunbow. But I am not sure that it is not more beautiful without, in the calm simplicity of the white rushing stream, the dark rocks, and hanging wood.

THE EAUX CHAUDES.

> * * * * On ev'ry nerve The deadly winter seizes, shuts up ev'ry sense, And o'er his inmost vitals creeping cold, Lays him along the snows a stiffen'd corse, Stretch'd out and bleaching in the northern blast.--THOMSON.

Blood-horses do not suit precipices, I am very well aware of that; but the two beasts which they brought forth to carry us to the Eaux Chaudes, were so tremendously irregular in appearance, so like the mountains they were destined to climb, that when I got across the ridge of my unfortunate hack, I could have fancied myself astride upon the Pic du Midi. However, they did very well, much better in all probability than better beasts would have done, and thus they went away, jogging on, lashing themselves with their tails, and kicking most unmercifully to get rid of the flies, but always with a kind of solemn gravity, which showed them well accustomed to it all, and neither at all inclined to discompose themselves nor their riders. As we went on, returning on the path we had passed the day before, we saw all the world in the fields getting in the harvest, trotting up and down the mountains with their bare feet, and as gay as the larks that were singing over their heads. To bring home the hay, they gather it into large linen cloths,

forming packages very like feather beds these they roll down the hills as far as they can. When they cannot do so, they carry them, as they carry everything all through the mountains, on their heads; and difficult as the man[oe]uvre may seem, we saw more than once a girl stoop down to drink at a well, satisfy her thirst, and rise again, without ever removing the immense load of hay she carried on her head.

We were soon again in the beautiful valley d'Ossau, passed through Laruns, and following the road which I have said we saw going towards Spain, we entered a deep ravine, or pass in the mountains, where five men might dispute the passage with a world. There is not more room than for three horses abreast; and the rocks around rise high, bare, and inaccessible. At the end of the pass, the river which we had lost appeared pouring out into a deep hollow covered with rocks, trees, and underwood, the ravine widened into a narrow valley, varying from two to six hundred yards wide, while stupendous mountains rose on every side and shut out the world. Here some pious soul has hollowed out a little chapel in the rock, where the traveller may turn in to pray; and there could scarcely be a spot more solemn. In these passes, too, the storms of the winter months are most tremendous, with hurricanes and whirlwinds of snow so dreadful, that it is a common saying, "Here let not the father expect his son, nor the son expect his father." I have been told that this proverb originated in the story of a youth who had gone to hunt the izzard in the valley of Héas, when one of these storms occurred. His father, alarmed for his safety, went out to seek him. The young man arrived with his game, but finding his father absent on his account, returned to look for and bring him back. It would appear that the son had found, his parent almost overpowered by the storm, and being strong and vigorous had taken him in his arms to carry him home, for they were afterwards found lying together buried in the snow.

After keeping for some way along the steep which overhangs the river to the right-hand, we crossed a little bridge called *Le Pont Creusé*, and passed under the rocks to the left. It now becomes a country of cataracts, for every quarter of a mile a stream comes bursting over the top of the mountains, and descends from fall to fall for six or eight hundred feet. A very picturesque figure presented itself in our way; it was that of a Spanish smuggler, with his large sombrero, netted hair, and loaded mule; and I could not help remarking in his countenance, a kind of wild independence which I had not seen amongst the French mountaineers. God knows how he came by it, whether from his race or his country, or the continual habit of encountering and conquering dangers and difficulties in his illicit traffic, but there was something fine and grand, though bad, in the expression, not only of his face but figure.

Soon after passing him we arrived at the Eaux Chaudes, which consists simply of two ranges of houses built between the river and the mountain. The style of the place is exactly like that of the Eaux Bonnes, but it possesses several different springs, although the general nature of the waters appeared to me much the same as those of the former fountains.

Near the Eaux Chaudes is a mountain, called *La Montagne de la Grotte*, from a famous cavern situated near its summit, whose extent cannot exactly be ascertained, on account of a stream which impedes the passage at about three hundred yards from the entrance.

At the village we made an agreement with a guide to conduct us to the grotto. He was a shrewd, intelligent fellow, and spoke tolerable French, a thing rather rare in that part of the country; but he had acquired also a very excellent notion of the method of cheating travellers, together with a true French estimation of English purses and gullibility. Let me here remark, that the inhabitants of the Pyrenees, as far as I have seen, have little of the simplicity of mountaineers. The season for drinking the mineral waters bringing a great influx of strangers to spots at other times almost deserted, has taught the people of the country to gain as much as they can, and make hay while the sun shines, by cheating all the travellers within their reach to the utmost, so that whoever is obliged to employ them had better make their bargain beforehand.

Our guide having furnished himself with the necessary candles, etc., we proceeded along the valley, and crossed a bridge called *Le Pont d'Enfer*. I know not why, but in all mountainous countries they seem fond of attributing some of their bridges to the devil. In Wales, in the Alps, in the Pyrenees, one-half of them derive their name from that black personage, who, I should suppose, had something more serious to think about than building bridges. That which we now passed over had nothing very diabolical in its construction, and having again crossed the stream, our guide pointed out to us the grotto with a stream pouring down from it into the valley. It seemed a kind of garret-window in the mountain, which itself was little less perpendicular than the side of a house. We were told, however, that we might ascend on horseback, and on putting it to the proof, found that which had appeared impracticable, not only possible but easy, rendered so by means of a zig-zag path, which conducted by easy stages to the very mouth of the grotto. Arrived there, we were obliged to stop to cool ourselves, for the air of the interior was actually freezing.

I have always been disappointed in grottos and caverns; and this, like all the rest which I have seen, gratified me but little. It was a vast hole in the mountain, filled with large petrefactions in a great variety of forms; one of which, descending from above in the shape an elephant's trunk, kept pouring forth a heavy shower of water, forming pools, that emptied themselves into the river in the centre. It was altogether far more curious than beautiful; and whether it was that my mind was not in train to enjoy, or what, I know not, but I found little to interest and less to admire.

However, after having dined at the Eaux Chaudes, on passing through the deep ravine by

which we had come, we had again new subject for pleasure in the view down the lovely valley d'Ossau. We returned to it with that feeling which man experiences on coming back to something loved, and we naturally called it *our valley*.

It was on the hills near the Eaux Bonnes that I first met with that luxuriance of flowers for which the Pyrenees are famous. The morning before our departure, I took a walk over the mountains to a cascade higher up in the valley than that which we had formerly seen, and in the course of an hour gathered more than forty different species of flowers, a great many of which I had rarely seen before. The butterflies were nearly as numerous, and as brilliant in colour, and I was almost tempted to catch some of them; but as I had no means of preserving them, to have done so would have been but useless cruelty.

We lingered for several days at the Eaux Bonnes, enjoying ourselves much; for it was one of those spots in which we can well live, "the world forgetting." Every morning offered some new expedition through beautiful scenery; and in wandering amongst the rocks and woods, by the side of the bright streams, and over the blue tops of those ancient mountains, a calm and placid thoughtfulness fell upon me, different in every respect both from the fits of dark gloom which had been so frequently my companions, and from the wild and reckless spirit of excitement, by conjuring up which, I strove at other times to gain assistance, to wage my constant warfare against Memory.

How long I might have remained there I do not know, had I not been driven thence by a return of my mental malady, which, though the fits were less frequent, more easily banished, and less painful in their effects, had never left me entirely. At Bordeaux I had suffered once or twice from the same delusion; and I only seemed to escape by constant occupation of mind and body.

In the present instance, I had roamed out early one morning, and had climbed one of the highest mountains during the continuance of a fog which I knew to be the forerunner of a bright summer's day. I was alone; but I ascended the mountainside so far, as to have all the vapours below me, and to get the blue sky around me. The whole world below was covered with the fog, which lay condensed and even, like a calm wide ocean, while round about on every side, from the surface of the mist, rose innumerable the granite peaks of the mountains, offering the same aspect which doubtless they had done when they looked down long centuries before upon the universal deluge. It was an extraordinary scene, and I paused to gaze upon it long; but as the sun advanced, he dispelled the mists, and descending by the valley of the cascade, I stopped by the side of the falling water. After gazing upon it for a moment, I raised my eyes, when suddenly, through the spray of the fall and amongst the bushes on the other side, I saw again that fearful countenance. Covering my eyes with my hand, to shut it out, I hurried back to the inn, and told my friend B---- what had occurred.

"Let us return to Pau," was his only reply, and we accordingly set out at once. My command over my mind, however, was now greater than it formerly had been; and ere we reached that place I had regained my calmness, and was prepared to act my allotted part with the rest.

THE FRIENDS.

* * * * * * Nor purpose gay,
Amusement, dance or song, he sternly scorns,
For happiness and true philosophy
Are of the social still and smiling kind.--THOMSON.

Our cook--yes, our cook--for we took it into our heads to keep house at Pau, and did not repent of it, for Therese behaved as well in our household as ever girl did, and besides other merits, could make fruit tarts and British dishes, having lived two years with the English family that I have said we met at Aire.

Our cook then, on our return from the Eaux Bonnes, was called upon for her accounts, inasmuch as cooks must eat and drink like other animals, and we had told her to provide herself with what she liked during our absence. Her bread and her wine formed a regular weekly bill apart, but farther than that, her expenses amounted to--and she was as fine a fat rosy-cheeked lass as one would wish to see--amounted to the sum of three-halfpence per diem. I could scarcely forbear laughing, but I did so for the good of society. If I had laughed she would have charged the next people two-pence a-day, as long as she lived, and rightly too, for surely no one would be economical and laughed at for their pains?

Two days after our first arrival in this little capital of the Basses Pyrenees, we strolled down into a valley below the town, and loitered along by the banks of the river, seeing several groups

pass us, knowing no one, and known of none, and perhaps not wishing a little to place ourselves in the midst of some of them, and have our share of the conversation of Pau as well as the rest. At length, however, a party came near, and I began to have a strange undefined remembrance of the form of one of the persons composing it. I was not wrong, I had known her just before she left school; there was all the change from an interesting girl to a lovely young woman; but it was the same person, and she had not forgotten me either. We were kindly greeted, and quickly became no longer strange even with the rest of the party. To know them was to have the highest regard for them all. We were glad to seek their acquaintance, and acquaintance soon ripened into friendship. Within their little circle we found all that could be desired--talents, and grace, and cheerfulness, and nature, and in their society we had some of the happiest hours we met with on the continent.

Whether my companion had told tales of my rhyming propensities, or whether I had been my own accuser, I forget: but I was soon called upon for verses, and drawings. I agreed to contribute if others would do so too; and we once more drew a magic circle round us in which the spirit of poetry and romance rose up and whiled away many an hour at our bidding. Some of the pieces which I myself contributed I know were bad enough, I was sorry that I had written them; but I now only remember one or two--the rest of the tales and anecdotes were given by others. The first thing of the kind which I shall transcribe was occasioned by a lady accusing me of having composed nothing for her--I asked for a subject, but she replied that I must choose one myself, she would give me "nothing."

NOTHING.

'O quantum est in rebus inane!'

'Tis nothing all--our hopes our fears,
Our pleasure's smiles, our sorrow's tears,
Our dreams of pride, our thoughts of care,
Are lighter, emptier than air.

'Tis nothing all--the splendid earth,
The boons of art's, or Nature's birth,
With all that memory recalls,
From nothing rose--to nothing falls.

The emmet Man toils on in vain
To monument his hours of pain,
While giant Time pursues his way,
And marks his footsteps with decay;

Tracing on all that he destroys
The epitaph of man's short joys,
The sentence of the great and small,
The certainty--'tis nothing all.

'Tis nothing all--the mighty man
Who conquer'd realms and world's o'erran;
What is he now? Himself? his fame?
A heap of dust--an empty name.

Rome! Rome! Where is the wealth, the power,
The pride of thy meridian hour,
Thy tyrant standard which, unfurl'd,
Waved o'er a tributary world?

'Tis nothing all--and Canæ's plain,
And Carthage towers, and Leuctra's slain,
And all the deeds that deathless seem
Are broken, like an idle dream.

Without the better hope that flows
From the pure skies o'er human woes,
Like sunset ere the night succeed,
All would be nothingness indeed.

And yet we love to leave behind,
Some faint memorial to mankind,
A trace to fellow things of clay
Of something kindred passed away.

And when Time's work is wrought on me,
Some eye perchance these lines may see,
Without which, to the world and you,

One of the families of which our little circle was now composed had passed some time in Brittany; and amongst the first stories contributed was one by Colonel C----, under the awful title of "Le Sorcier," preceeded by some observations upon that province.

LE SORCIER.

The introduction of customs does much more to conquer a country than even an invading army. Lorraine, Alsace, and Franche Comté, were annexed to France by Louis the Fourteenth. By imparting to them the manners and habits of the French people, he soon rendered them easy under their new yoke; and fettering their minds by the chains of custom, he secured himself effectually against all danger of revolt. Not so in regard to Brittany. A decided fief of the crown of France, and long, by failure of male issue as well as alliance with the house of Bourbon, merged entirely into that kingdom, the inhabitants of the ancient dukedom of Bretagne still obstinately retained their old manners and customs, looking upon their barbarism as a sort of privilege, and repelling all attempt at improvement as a commencement of tyranny, and a first effort to deprive them of their liberties. If, as is very much the case, France in general is many years behind England in all the arts of life, Brittany is at least a century behind the rest of France, but more especially that part of the country called La Basse Bretagne. We must, of course, except the higher classes, the majority of whose members, by long association with the rest of the French nobility, have acquired the general manners of the country. There are, nevertheless, several families who, retired in the wilds of the land, retain, in some degree, the habits of their ancestors; but it is of the lower classes that I would speak at present. I saw but little of that part of the country, but I heard much of it from several persons who had frequented La Basse Bretagne, and as far as I have been able to learn, the inferior orders are characterized by but few good customs. Lazy, dirty, and slovenly in their persons and habitations, they possess corresponding qualities of mind: they are, I was assured, most frequently obstinate, ignorant, superstitious, and vindictive; yet at the same time are hardy, courageous, and resolute, opposing a sort of sullen, inert, unconquerable resistance, to all attacks upon either their rights or prejudices. We read of a refractory mule upon whom a lion was let loose, in the ducal menagerie at Florence, but who, retiring into a corner, received the monarch of the woods on his first attack with such a severe kick, that he was fain to forbear any further aggression upon so sullen an enemy. In this manner did the Bas Bretons receive Louis the Fourteenth, who would willingly have given them some degree of civilisation: but they repelled all his efforts; and every foot of the roads which he attempted to carry through the forests and wilds of that impregnable country, was actually cut at the point of the bayonet. If they have at all changed since that time, it has been by such very slow and imperceptible degrees, that the amelioration can scarcely be traced. They retain their own unseemly garb; they speak nothing but their own inharmonious language; they wallow in their own indigenous dirt, and, I am told, transmit the itch as an heirloom from generation to generation. In many of their habits, they resemble the lower Irish; but the comparison would be unfair to our Hibernian brethren.

The people of La Haute Bretagne are much more civilized, but still, in the lower ranks of life, are a very simple, ignorant, poor race, with many habits and customs and superstitions peculiar to themselves, which render them highly interesting to a traveller.

Having stated thus much, to give some slight idea of the people to whom I am about to introduce my hearers, I will proceed to tell an anecdote, the authenticity of which I can safely vouch for, as it occurred within my own immediate observation.

Every one has heard of the Whisperers of Ireland, who pretend to, and really possess, the extraordinary art of taming the wildest horses, which they apparently accomplish, by the simple process of whispering in their ears, This faculty of whispering is not at all confined to Ireland, however, but is common, in different forms, to a great many other countries. Every one has heard of the Laplander's habit of whispering in the ear of his rein-deer; and in various parts of Brittany, several of these whisperers are to be met with, whose success is invariable. They are there called *Sorciers*, and generally exercise the trade of farriers, curing horses of a variety of diseases in a manner truly extraordinary. One time, being at the little village of Bècherel, we had an opportunity of seeing the skill of the Sorcier put to the proof. Our worthy host, Monsieur de G----, had shortly before purchased a beautiful horse, whose only defect appeared to be, that nobody could ride him; and we do believe that Alexander himself would have found no means of taming this Bucephalus. After having spent a whole morning together with our host and his groom, in the vain endeavour to conquer the vicious spirit of the animal, our friend, Monsieur de G----, shrugged up his shoulders, with the usual gesture of a Frenchman when he is forced to have recourse to some unpleasant expedient. "*Il n'y a pas de remède*," said he; "the horse must be sent to the sorcier;" and accordingly he gave orders to his *garçon d'écurie* to take it down the next

morning to the village at which the aforesaid sorcier made his abode. This occasioned inquiries, the answers to which soon determined us not to allow the taming of the shrew to take place without our presence; and on the first expression of a wish to be on the spot at the time, our friend, whose hospitable kindness and desire to give us all kinds of information and pleasure during our visit to his house we shall not easily forget, instantly arranged a party for the next morning, in order to let us see the effect of the sorcier's power, in the first instance, and afterwards shoot over the ground in our return to the *manoir*.

About six in the morning we set out, on horseback, for the dwelling of the sorcier, with a groom leading the horse in question, who remained quiet enough as long as no one attempted to mount him. However, after riding about six miles, as we came near the place of our destination, M. de G---- resolved to see whether the distance might not, in some degree, have quelled the spirit of the animal, and giving his own horse to the groom, he mounted the other, who let him fix himself very peaceably in the saddle, but at the moment out friend attempted to urge him forward every muscle in his body seemed to be animated with rage. He reared, he plunged, he kicked, and left no means untried to shake his rider from his back. M. de G---- was a good horseman, and kept his seat; but he soon found that his situation was not a pleasant one, and attempted to dismount; but this the animal would not suffer either, rearing more tremendously than before, and showing a strong inclination to throw himself over on his Master. Just at this moment, a short, sturdy little man, attracted by the noise, came forth from the blacksmith's shop, towards which we had been apparently directing our steps, and approaching the spot, looked on for a moment as a spectator, merely exclaiming, "*le coquin*"! At length, the groom, impatient of his apparent apathy, cried out, "Mais souffle donc, François! Il va tomber, je te dis."

"Does Monsieur wish it?" demanded the sorcier, for such he was.

"Nom de Dieu!" cried the groom; "S'il le veut!"

As soon as he had said these words the sorcier watched his opportunity, and threw his arms round the horse's neck, who, not accustomed to such embraces, reared more violently than before, raising the little man off the ground with him. But he kept his hold, not at all embarrassed, and contrived in that awkward situation, to fix his mouth upon the orifice of the animal's ear. What he did, we know not. No one can suppose that the mere breathing in the animal's ear could have any effect; but his hands were occupied holding tightly round his neck, and the only thing we could observe was that firm pressure of the mouth upon its ear. However, in a moment, the animal became less restive, stood still, shivered a little, as with cold, and from that moment his spirit was gone.

Monsieur de G---- dismounted, paid the sorcier his ordinary fee, which was no more than a few francs, and after the excitement, and surprise, and all that sort of thing, had passed away, we took to our guns and turned our steps homeward. It may well be supposed that our conversation for the rest of that day turned very much upon the sorcier; and, after several anecdotes of the same nature as the above, M. de G---- related the following.

"Our Curé," said he, "is a very excellent good man, but a little superstitious; and, about two years ago, hearing a great deal about this sorcier and his feats of magic, he considered it his duty to preach against him; which he did so effectually for more than one Sunday, that the poor blacksmith lost all his custom; and as the priest had taught the peasantry to consider him as somewhat worse than the devil, he might have starved, if a circumstance had not happened which delivered him from the anathema.

"Our good Curé had saved from his stipend a few hundred francs, with which he determined to buy himself a horse, to enable him to visit the farther parts of his extensive *cure* with less inconvenience. Accordingly, when the fair of Dinan came round, he set out, and, confident of his own judgment, bought himself a beast, which, doubtless, he imagined possessed all the qualities with which horse was ever indued. It was brought home the next day, and in the face of the whole parish, the saddle was placed on his back, and the Curé mounted.

"The horse stood stock still. The Cure gave him a gentle cut with his whip. The beast did not budge. The priest then applied a smarter blow. The horse lashed out behind, and in a minute the Cure was seen flying, like, a black swan, into the pond before his own door, while the horse, as if quite satisfied with the exploit, stood as immoveable as a stone, with his head down to his knees, and his ears bent back upon his neck.

"What could be done?--the Cure was not a man to try it again; and though he offered his horse a bargain to every one in the village, nobody would buy it. Day after day passed, and the horse stood in the stable, eat the Curé's corn, and did nothing. More than once, the idea of applying to the sorcier occurred to the Curé. At first he could not resolve upon such a thing; and many an argument did he hold with himself concerning the propriety of it. At length, however, the necessity of the case overcame his scruples, and he determined to send him to the sorcier; but how to do it, now became a serious question. He had preached so much against the practice that he was ashamed of yielding to it himself.

"At length, however, he took courage, and one dark night led the horse with his own hands all the way to the house we were at this morning. As soon as our friend François saw him, 'Ah, Monsieur le Curé,' said he, 'I thought you would come to me at last; but do you think I will cure

your horse after you have ruined me?' The Cure now tried all his eloquence; but the sorcier was as hard as a flint; however, at length, he was somewhat moved.

"'Allons, Monsieur le Curé,' said he, 'I will make a bargain with you. You have preached me down when I could do you no good; you shall now preach me up--and I'll cure your horse.' This was a hard pill to swallow, and François would do nothing to gild it; but what could the Curé do? The priest could get on no longer without his horse, and the horse would not budge a step under the Curé. So there was only one question asked: 'Has the devil anything to do in the matter?' 'Not a whit!' answered François; and the horse being left at the sorcier's for security, *on Sunday*, we had a sermon completely clearing François from the accusation of dealing with the devil; and *on Monday* the Curé was cantering all over the country."

"I will tell you a much more extraordinary story of a cure than that," exclaimed the colonel's brother, as soon as the tale of the Sorcier was read. "It occurred in Brittany, too; under my own eyes, also, while I lived at the house of an excellent Breton, a Dr. R----.

"Every one has heard of the mania for leeches which has lately prevailed in France. Like all other manias, this did not long confine itself to the capital or its environs, but rapidly spread to every province and, every department; and, like the blood, which, impelled by the heart, finds its way to the most minute corners and remote extremities of the human frame, the doctrine of universal leechification gradually insinuated itself to the ultimate ends of his Most Christian Majesty's dominions. Not a canton so small but read the work of Monsieur Brousset; not a town so diminutive but had its regular consumption of leeches averaged amongst other articles of first necessity; not an apothecary's shop so insignificant, but possessed its dozen or two of jars replete with these little black benefactors of humanity; and not a pond nor a ditch where might not occasionally be seen some unfortunate wight up to his neck in the water, with a peculiar sort of net in his hand, endeavouring to entrap the aquatic practitioners to come and perform phlebotomy gratis. If a man had a pain in his head, he was ordered to apply leeches; if he had a pain in his toe, it was all the same thing. The gout, the apoplexy, a dropsy, or a consumption; the head-ache, or the heart-ache, or the stomach-ache, were all treated after the same fashion; and leeches were voted *nem. con*. the universal panacea applicable to every disease which afflicts poor little humanity. In short, the doctors were saved a great deal of trouble, the patients were probably none the worse, the apothecaries grew fat as well as the leeches, and many a man made a fortune, who, if it had not been for his *sangsues*, would probably have been *sans sous*.

"At the time that this practice was becoming general, my worthy friend and landlord, Monsieur le Docteur, was smitten with the desire of sucking his patients' blood--not personally, but by proxy; so that of all the words that the French Academy permit the nation to make use of, and which, when I left them, consisted of thirty-two thousand seven hundred and sixty one and a-half[17], the word most frequently in the mouth of Monsieur le Docteur was *sangsue*.

"But before I proceed farther, I must briefly tell you, what sort of a machine a French doctor in a country town is. It is a thing that walks upon two legs, or trots upon four, as occasion serves; that knows nothing of medicine, a good deal of surgery, and will go ten miles for two shillings. My worthy friend, then, Monsieur le Docteur ----, resided at Quimper, in La Basse Bretagne. His fame was high, and not without cause, so that if a man fell off a tree and broke his neck within fifteen miles of Quimper, Monsieur le Docteur was sure to be in at the death.

"When last I was in Brittany, I spent six weeks very pleasantly with the Doctor and his family, and, as he was a good horseman and a pleasant companion, I accompanied him more than once when he rode to visit some country patients. Thus I was conducted one day to the little village of Kerethnac, some ten miles from Quimper, where my friend had plenty of occasions to exercise his curative propensities. One man had broken his leg, another had dislocated his wrist, and a third had a sore throat. To this last, without loss of time, the Doctor ordered the application of twenty leeches, seemingly sorry that he could not prescribe them for the others also; and having dispatched his business as quickly as possible, we remounted our horses and returned to Quimper. The road was a pleasant one, and two days after, when Monsieur le Docteur proposed to revisit Kerethnac, I was not unwilling to accompany him. On arriving at our journey's end, I went into all the huts with my friend. Huts they were, indeed,--a combination of pig-sty, cow-house, and bedchamber. But to proceed. After having looked at the broken leg, and ordered some camphorated spirit for the dislocated wrist, the Doctor entered the house of his sore-throated patient, the first piece of whose goods and chattels that presented itself being his wife.

"'Well, my good woman,' said the Doctor, 'how is your husband to-day?--better, no doubt.'

"'O yes, surely,' answered the woman. 'He is as well as ever, and gone to the field.'

"'I thought so,' continued Monsieur le Docteur. 'The leeches have cured him! Wonderful effect they have! You got the leeches, of course.'

"'Oh, yes, Monsieur le Docteur, they did him a deal of good, though he could not take them all.'

"'Take them all!' cried our friend. 'Why my good woman, how did you apply them?'

"'O, I managed nicely,' said the wife, looking quite contented with herself. 'For variety's sake, I

boiled one half and made a fry of the other. The first he got down very well, but the second made him very sick. But what he took was quite enough,' continued she, seeing some horror in the Doctor's countenance, 'for he was better the next morning, and to-day he is quite well.'

"'Umph!' said the Doctor, with a sapient shake of the head. 'If they have cured him that is sufficient; but they would have been better applied externally.'

"The woman replied that she would do so next time; and I doubt not, that if ever fate throws a score of unfortunate leeches into her power again, she will make a poultice of them."

"But there is no miracle in your story, my good brother," exclaimed the colonel, as the other concluded; "you vowed you would tell a much better story than mine. Now my friend's horse was cured by a whisper, your patient's sore-throat by an emetic; the one was miraculous the other nothing more than common.

"O, if you want a miracle," replied his brother, "you shall have one, and out of the same province also."

A MIRACLE.

Prince Hohenloe, I mean the great miracle-monger of Germany; has surely said enough and done enough to convince Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, that miracles are quite as easy now-a-days, as they were a thousand years ago, and that good Dame Nature has grown somewhat doating, and will let him do anything he likes with her. Now, I believe it thoroughly, for more reasons than one, and do not scruple to call all the world fools who disbelieve it. At all events, I am sure to have one half of the old women of Europe on my side; and besides, I can vouch the matter from ocular observation: that into say, not that Prince Hohenloe commits miracles, but that even without him, they are as easy as ever--so easy, I am sure I could do one myself. But to my tale.

There is a deep embowering lane, not far from Corsieul, where the road winds slowly down between two high cliffy banks, till it comes to a low dell, through which flows one of the clearest streams I ever saw, so pure, so beautiful, the peasants have seemingly thought it next to sacrilege to hide it even by a bridge, and left it openly to traverse the road and wash your horse's weary feet before he begins the long ascent of the opposite hill. Though steep and fatiguing, that road has still a peculiar sort of charm, which compensates the trouble of climbing to the top; and even were the ascent less difficult, one would be tempted to linger long in the sweet contemplative shade and silence that hangs about it. The rocky banks break into a thousand picturesque forms; and wherever a patch of vegetable earth has been able to fix itself, there has sprung up the richest verdure, varied by a thousand shrubs, and herbs, and flowers,--honeysuckle, and eglantine, and sweet-briar, and the pure, large convolvulus,, and the deep blue pervanche, the lily of the fields, the hyacinth and the violet. Above, the trees hang, as if planted in the air, and throw a green, soft shade across the rich tints of the road, except where a gleam of sunshine breaking through, catches upon the salient points of the rock and chequers the deep shadows of the leaves with a dancing light. The silence to the ear has the same effect as the shade to the eye; for there no sound is to be heard, except when some wild bird bursts into song amidst the trees above, or when a low, sweet murmur rises up from the stream below. There is, as I have said, a magical charm in the whole, which compels one to linger in his progress; yet there is a reward in store for those who climb to the top; for suddenly the whole scene changes, and one of the most extensive prospects bursts upon the eye that can be conceived; hills, and valleys, and villages, and woods, and streams, mingled in gay confusion, growing fainter and fainter in the distance, till the far ocean closes the whole, looking like a faint cloud upon the border of the sky, from which indeed it would scarcely be distinguished, did not the bold Mont St. Michel rise abruptly up, and catching all the rays of the sun, mark the limits of the horizon. In front, as a sort of foreground to the landscape, stands the little chapel of St. Anne, with a few houses surrounding it, and a group of trees sheltering it from the wind.

I was one day riding to Corsieul with my friend, Monsieur R----, to see the curious Roman remains which have been found in that neighbourhood, when, as we mounted the hill, and came suddenly in sight of the chapel of St. Anne, we saw a vast variety of booths and tents, with a multitude of people, men, women, and children, in all their gay holiday attire, waiting round the chapel for the commencement of the mass. "I had forgot that to-day is the fête of St. Anne," said R----, "would you like to see a miracle. There is one performed here every year."

"Above all things, let us see it," replied I. So we dismounted, and went into the chapel. There were a great many people waiting about, to see (I suppose) if they could get a bit of miracle too; but above all others, we remarked one old woman, with whom the saint had to deal more particularly. She seemed very poor, and very devout; for, not being able to kneel, from her lameness, she sat before the shrine telling her beads, and praying as hard as she could; while a young priest stood beside her to keep off the profane vulgar, being probably of opinion, with the

copy-line, that, "evil communications corrupt good manners." However, we remarked that her dress was that of a remote canton, and we learned from the people round that she was a stranger, come from a great way to see what St. Anne would do for her. "A prophet is no prophet, in his own country," says the old proverb, and I rather think that saints take care not to practise their miracles upon their next-door neighbours. However the mass commenced, and at the appointed place the old lady began to cry out. The priests swung their censers at her head, as if they would have broke it; and before the mass was over, the miracle was completed, and the lame woman firmly re-established on her legs.

We spent a very pleasant day at Corsieul, and before we returned, it was dark. In passing by the Chapel of St. Anne, however, we saw all the tents and booths, illuminated; cider and *eau de vie* handing out in abundance; and, in short, a complete fair, in honour of the miracle and the saint. Hearing the dulcet notes of a cracked fiddle in one of the tents, we dismounted and went in, when, to our surprise, we beheld the miraculous old lady dancing away as hard as she could, and doing *dos-à-dos* with a bumkin of Corsieul. Now let those deny miracles that like--I saw this myself. I do not mean to say I saw that the woman was lame, but I will swear that she danced.

Our next evening's contributions were of a more serious character, and the two first came from the pen of my excellent friend Colonel W----, whose long residence in India, though it had injured his health, and whitened the hair upon his brow, had not taken away one fine feeling or impaired one high principle.

THE REPROOF OF ALLI.

In a country, situated at the northern extremity of India, and upon the very verge of the delicious valley of Cachemere, which it rivalled in beauty and surpassed in luxury, lived Alli el Assur, the glory of his illustrious house. None of the Oolasses of Afghaunistan had ever produced so many great men, none had ever so glittered with treasure, none had ever so shone in arms, as the tribe of Assur. But the fame of his ancestors was to the glory of Alli as the pale light of the morning-star, when the sun begins to beam upon the heavens. The day rose upon his splendour but to set upon his magnificence. Every hour saw his riches increase, and every hour saw his power extended.

But not for wealth alone was he famed; his wisdom and his knowledge were wafted to every quarter of the earth. The morning heard his words repeated in the east; the evening listened to his saying in the west: the southern star beheld his advice followed, and his counsels were borne on the wings of the north wind. For in the dawning of his youth, Alli had travelled over distant countries, and wandered among unknown people. Fringuistan had imparted to him all her arts; and all the wonders of Africa had been displayed before his eyes. He had conversed with the Moolaks of all lands, and spoke the tongues of many nations.

And Alli knew that he was wise. The pride of knowledge revelled in his heart, and he said, "There is no God, for I cannot see him, neither can mine ear hear his voice; and if there exist a Being governing the mighty universe with power and wisdom, why is evil permitted in the world? and why has he acted as he has done? It is against my reason to believe this thing, neither can my mind give it credit."

At five hours' journey from one of the palaces of Alli el Assur, there dwelt a certain hermit, who was much revered for his wisdom and sanctity, and much loved for the mildness of his heart. He lived afar from the rest of his race, because he loved contemplation, not that he loved not man: and in the solitude of the desert he waited for the angel of death.

And a desire entered into the heart of Alli to hear the words of the Solitary: "For where is the learned man," exclaimed he, "with whom I have not conversed and where is there knowledge that I have not sought for it?"

He mounted his horse while day was yet young in the sky; and, while the dew which evening had left still glittered undisturbed on the bosom of the flowers, proceeded, without attendants, to seek the place where the hermit made his abode. Nature was robed in her beauty, as a young bride, to meet the warm glances of the early sun: and the heart of Alli was glad, and expanded to the loveliness of the world. He directed his course by the river Hydaspes, that, like a golden lizard, drew along its mazy track, in the beams of the rising day. Its limpid waters seemed living in the rays, so full were they of motion and of music; and the rays, like divers, seemed to dip through the transparent waves, and raise the bright pebbles from the bottom to the surface of the stream. The banks were covered with flowers, and gay water-lilies, like youthful maidens in their pride of beauty, danced upon the bending waves. All was at first fresh and delightful, as the spring of early life; but soon the sun rose high above the mountains, the birds retired to the

shadow of the trees, the wild beasts couched in the deepest recesses of the jungle, and Alli grew weary and faint with the heat of noon. However, the river itself, as if tired of the glare of sunshine, led its waters into the gloom of the forest, and Alli, following its course, quickly heard the roaring voice of the cataract, and his heart was rejoiced, for the dwelling of the hermit looked upon the fall of the waters. The sound grew louder and louder, the trees fell away from the strife of the stream, and the river again appeared forcing its way between the high rocks, which, approaching gradually towards each other, constrained it to plunge furiously over the precipice into the valley below.

Sitting at the foot of the crags was an old man, whose white beard descended below his girdle. His dress was as simple as his heart was pure; his form was stately and erect, and his eye beamed with the light of a benevolent spirit. More than a hundred winters had shed their snows upon his head, and more than a hundred summers had led him to the brink of the grave: his look was fixed upon the mist which arose from the cataract: his mind was bent upon the cloud which hangs over eternity; and his soul was elevated with the thoughts of death.

Alli dismounted and saluted the man of years. "My son," said the hermit, "thou seemest fatigued with exercise, and exhausted with the heat. Enter into this cave, which is my dwelling; eat of the food which is prepared for the stranger; rest and refresh thyself; and when thy limbs have recovered their vigour, and thy mind is calmed by repose, come and we will hold communion of this world, and what is beyond."

Alli entered the cavern, and returned after a short space, and sitting down by the old man, he poured forth the thoughts of his bosom.

"How beautiful is nature!" said he; "how lovely in every season! how mild in spring! how gay in summer! how luxuriant in autumn! how grand in the winter storm! and yet to man the spring brings illness, the summer yields fatigue, the autumn demands his labour, and the winter sees his death! Miserable in the midst of perfection, desolate in the heart of plenty, and wretched is he, even in the moment of enjoyment. What is he but a mixture of clay rendered sensible to pain, and affections destined to be quelled in death? And yet this animated mass of earthly sorrow vainly pictures to himself a Being whom he calls all good, who sees his misery, yet will not alleviate it, and who gave him being but to render him unhappy. Can this thing be? No!--there is no God. It is but the monstrous imagination of man's own heart!"

"What is there," answered the old man, "that has not a cause? And if each thing has a cause, all must have a cause; and that which was the cause of all, must have power over all, must love all, and protect all which it caused. And what is man, the insect of an hour, that he should say, I cannot understand, therefore I will not believe? Alli el Assur! (for by thy thoughts do I know thee,) listen to the words of experience--hearken to the voice of years--mark what I shall say to thee; for I am old, and thine own wisdom shall tell thee that my words are true!

"Know then, that at the bottom of the sea there is a certain animal, whose size is so minute, that ten of them would stand upon the point of thy scimitar. This animal never stirs from the place of its birth; and the term of its life is shorter than the being of a butterfly. It so happened, that as insect of this kind fell, by chance, upon the back of one of those large amphibious creatures which sometimes betake themselves to the land, and thus it was carried within sight of the dwelling of man. When it returned to its companions of the ocean, it related all the wonders it had seen, but found no one to believe.

"'Thou tellest us,' said one, 'that there is a being on the earth whose size is immense, and whose faculties are so wonderful, that all nature is open to his view; whose vast sight could comprehend the whole of this rock; and in short, whose senses are excellent in every particular: and yet thou sayest, that this being is stupid enough to move from place to place without being forced to do so and has the excessive folly to live on the land instead of dwelling in the sea, the natural element of all creatures existing. But granting even all that to be true, thou hast also said, that this great being builds himself a shell to creep into. Now, were he endowed with the powers you describe, he would of course, sit still at ease in one place, and enjoy the fluid that circulates round him, as we do. In this, as well as in a thousand other points, thy story is improbable and inconsistent, nor can we believe it, for our senses tell us it is not true.'

"'My friend,' replied the travelled insect, 'attempt not to scan the actions of a being above thy comprehension, nor measure his power by thy own littleness. Neither tell me that this being is not, because thy mind is too confined to reconcile his deeds to thine own ideas.'

"Man! man! vain man!" continued the hermit, "how much less art thou in comparison to the most High God, than is that insect in comparison to thee! Measure thyself by that mountain. Art thou not small? Yea, as a worm. How petty is the part which that mountain forms in the bulk of the earth. That great earth, on which thou art but an atom, is little to many of the planets; it is insignificant to the sun; it is as a grain of dust amongst the millions of orbs, which even thy limited sight can behold in the firmament; and what is it to the immensity of eternal space?[18] Look at that grain of sand: canst thou tell me its fabric? canst thou separate its parts? No!--Stretch thine ambitious soul; try to grasp the idea of infinity of time, of space, of matter. Thou canst do neither. And wilt thou, who canst not comprehend either the greatest or the least, wilt thou measure the actions of Omnipotence, by the standard of thine own littleness, and deny his power, because thou dost not understand its operations?

"No, Alli el Assur, return to thine own dwelling, and be wise enough to know, that the wisdom of the wisest is, to the works of the Almighty, but as a drop of water to the ocean; aye, to an ocean of oceans: and henceforward, never deny because thou canst not comprehend; but learn, that with all thy knowledge thou knowest nothing."

THE VISIONS OF HASSAN.

The day faded into twilight; the flowers ceased to look upon the sun: the bulbul poured his notes of melody unto the star of the evening; and sleep stole over the sorrows and weariness of the universe. But while the eyes of a world were closed, Hassan the destitute woke to grief and meditated on despair.

"This morning," exclaimed he, "I was great amongst the greatest, a prince among princes, an eagle on a rock; but midday saw me in the hands of mine enemies, as a gazelle struck by the falcon; and evening beholds me as a wandering star, as the genii torch which is hurled into the vacancy of night: cast down from my throne, exiled from my land, wandering I know not whither. O Allah! Allah! great is thy wisdom, and merciful thy providence; suffer not my heart to blaspheme, nor my soul to doubt that thou art the Highest." Thus saying, Hassan cast himself upon the earth, and groaned in the bitterness of his misery. While he lay thus prostrate and grovelling like a slave upon the ground, he heard a voice, like thunder, echoing through the mountain.

"Hassan!" said a voice, "weak child of clay, humbled in thy career of pride, dost thou murmur that God hath chastised thee? Now look into the valley before thee, and say, what dost thou see?"

Hassan raised his head and looked into the valley. "I see," replied he, "a great stream, and there is a cloud at its source, and a whirlpool at its conclusion, so that I see not from whence it comes, neither behold I whereunto it goeth."

"That," said the voice, "is the stream of life. The cloud is the time of man's birth. Beyond is the eternity past. The whirlpool is the time of man's death, and beyond is the eternity to come. All must float from the one to the other, and what man shall say that his lot is harder than another? for death is a cup of which all must taste, and life is a trial which all must endure. Therefore is God good from the beginning even unto the end. Now bow down thy head unto the earth; give praise unto Allah, and then look into the valley once more."

Hassan did as the voice commanded.

"And now what seest thou?" said the voice.

"I see," answered Hassan, "a cottage and a palace; and there is above them both a fearful storm of lightning and thunder; and, lo! the bolt strikes the palace, and the cottage is untouched."

"That palace," said the voice, "is prosperity, and that cottage is adversity. The lightning strikes the proud and passes by the humble, and glory is due to God, for his name is the Impartial. And again, what dost thou behold?"

"I see," said Hassan, "a large nest upon a high place, and in it there lies a young bird. A fox approaches the nest, and the young bird is destroyed; and now behold an eagle drops upon the fox, and it also is no more."

"Thou shalt not hurt the smallest," said the voice, "lest the greatest frown upon thee; nor shalt thou injure the weakest, for the strongest beholds thine actions; and glory is due to God, for his justice is retributive. Now bow down thine head and pray, that thou mayest be able to endure." And Hassan prayed. "Once more, what dost thou behold?"

"It is my capital city in flames," said Hassan with a firm voice; "and I see my palace crumbling in the fire, and I see a woman striving to escape;" and the voice of Hassan became weak, as with great fear. "O Allah! save her," cried he; "it is her I have injured! it is Zelekah it is my beloved!" And he started forward to snatch her from the flames; but as he was about to plunge over the edge of the precipice, his arm was caught by one behind him. The vision passed away, and the valley once more relapsed into the darkness of night.

Hassan turned round, and by the trembling light of the stars, beheld a man of venerable years and benevolent deportment. Hassan was about to speak, but the old man commanded him to listen; and Hassan instantly remembered the voice he had before heard.

"Listen unto me," said the old man, "for what thou hast seen is all a vision, Thy capital city

sleeps in peace; but it is no longer thine. Thy palace still stands in its strength; but thou art an exile from its walls. Thy Zelekah lives secure; but thou hast lost her by thine own passions. I am thy good genius, and hadst thou before listened to my voice, thou wouldst have been even now the lord of a fair land; the master of a willing people; the bridegroom of thy beloved. When thou soughtest first the love of Zelekah, the cottage girl, did not a voice remind thee, that thou hadst vowed to wed the daughter of the Caliph, and none but her; and did it not whisper, that though without vice thou mightest sacrifice thine ambition to thy passion, it was criminal to break thine oath, and dishonourable to forget thy promise; and when thou didst carry away by force the girl that loved thee well but loved virtue better, did not the same voice say; 'Thou art acting wrong; thou art misusing the power of a prince; thou art violating the rights of thy people?' Man, man! must thy good genius ever speak in thunder to make thee hear?"

Hassan hid his eyes with his hands, and the geni went on.

"Thou art punished by the loss of thy throne; thou art punished by the loss of thy beloved: but still more shalt thou be punished, by hearing that Zelekah, the cottage girl, was the daughter of the Caliph,--was thy promised bride--whom the wisdom of her father had absented from the too great splendour of his court."

"Allah! Allah!" cried Hassan; "deeply, but justly, hast thou chastised my wickedness."

"There is peace," said the geni, "in repentance. It is still in thy power to retrieve thy fortunes, and thou shalt ever be wiser from thy sorrows. Go, and remember, that when thou thinkest thyself most alone, then is the eye of God upon thee, and that every bad deed incurreth the wrath of Him to whom the greatest sovereign of the earth is but as a worm, yea, less than the meanest of insects. That God himself is good, and by no means will he endure evil."

Hassan cast himself at the feet of the geni; but when he raised his eyes, the old man was no longer there, and he found himself lonely on the brink of the precipice; but nevertheless his heart was much lightened, and his mind was calm; and, instead of yielding to despair, he now prepared for whatever fortune could inflict, or constancy endure; and laying himself down, sleep came over his eyes, and lulled the sorrows of his heart.

The morning was bright in the east; the sunbeams wandered over the hills; the flowers perfumed the early breeze; the woods were melodious with the warbling of the birds; and creation was animated with the wakening hum of life; when Hassan woke from his slumber, chastened by adversity, and strengthened by repose. "When," said he, "when have I, on the glittering alcove, resting on softness and surrounded by luxury, when have I tasted of calm so unbroken, and sleep so grateful, as on this barren rock, unguarded by any but by Providence, and unseen but by the eye of the Almighty?" And kneeling towards Mecca, he said the prayer of the morning. When he had concluded, he rose, and descended into the valley below, by a narrow path, which wound round the side of the mountain.

At the bottom of the hill, surrounded by tall palm trees, rose a spring of clear water, pouring music and freshness upon the air around; and as he drew nigh, Hassan beheld the form of a woman bending ever the fountain, and a strange feeling came over his heart, a mingling of joy and fear; for he felt as one that comes back to the home of fathers, and knows not what tidings shall greet his return. But as he drew near, he saw a leopard touching amongst the trees, and prepared to spring upon the girl beside the fountain. Now the heart of Hassan was as the heart of a lion, calm, and without fear; and drawing his scimitar, he smote the wild beast and drove him forth, wounded and howling, to the woods; and turning towards her he had, saved, as his mind had presaged, he beheld the light of his soul.

Zelekah extended her arms towards him.

"O Hassan!" cried she, "and have I then found thee?"

Hassan pressed her to his heart.

"Did Zelekah seek for him that had wronged her," he asked; "could she still love the tyrant who tore her against her will from the humble habitations of peace and the lowly mansions of uninterrupted quiet?"

Zelekah answered not, but her silence had a voice, and Hassan's heart was glad.

"O Zelekah?" said he, "I have learned, by my follies and my punishment, what experience will teach to all men, that adversity may try the body, but that our soul is tried by prosperity. I have failed in the ordeal, and am unworthy to enjoy the advantages which my own deeds have forfeited, and which the hand of justice has withdrawn; but still if thy love remain, Hassan is happier as an exile than as a prince. Come, let us retire to some humble spot; far from cities and from man's resort, where we may live with peace the number of our days; and when Azrael shall knock at our gate, we shall meet the angel of death with resignation." And Hassan and Zelekah fled from the world, and found peace in solitude.

Time flew away with his silent wings, changing the face of the world; and a heavy war vexed the kingdom from which Hassan had been driven. The people remembered him with regret, and began to ask amongst themselves, "Why have we not Hassan, who led us on to victory; on whose

scimitar sat the death of our enemies? Hassan, the strong arm of war--the mighty man in the battle--the prince that we have chosen, is slain, and our foes rejoice in our defeat. Why have we not Hassan to deliver us from our enemies?"

And Hassan heard the tidings; and baring his arm, he flew to the battle, and smote the enemies of the land: and the people rejoicing, seated him gladly on his throne. Zelekah shared his joy, as she had shared his sorrow; and peace and abundance dwelt in the land, and justice and mercy stood on each side of the throne: for Hassan never forgot his vision on the mountain, and remembered that God is good, great, and impartial; and that evil will by no means be endured by the Almighty.

After such efforts to amuse and instruct as these on the part of one so much more entitled to repose than ourselves, neither I, nor the friend who was with me, could refuse to do, our best in some more laboured composition than a few verses, and, by the third night after, we had produced the two tales which follow.

THE STORY OF AZIMANTIUM.

We are weary of the present--Let us turn and rest our minds for a while upon a tale of the past.

There was a dreamy stillness in the air--there was a golden glory over the sky--there was a music in the far-off hum of distant nature sinking to repose--there was a fragrance in the soft breath of the valley, as it stole timidly through the multitude of drowsy flowers, as if afraid to wake them from their evening sleep; all told of one of those few days which last in loveliness from their dawning to their close--so full of every fine essence of joy, that we tremble to see them pass, lest we should never find anything so beautiful upon earth again. The whispering murmur of the small long waves, as they wooed the quiet sands upon the seashore--the pale and timid lustre of the stars, as they shone out, one by one, through the still purple heaven--the slow changes of a rosy cloud, as it dallied with an unseen wind--spoke peace!--Peace, the first, last, great blessing--the mightiest of promises--the object of virtue, of wisdom, of knowledge--the only desire that experience leaves--the hope beyond our life--the glory of eternity--Peace!

High-eyried on the rocky eminence, where now the overthrown stones of a massy wall tell of cities and their dwellers, past like shadows down the dim vista of the gone, stood the fair town of Azimantium, with its long-disused battlements, its temples, and its columns, marked in fine lines of shadowy purple, high upon the broad expanse of the rich evening sky. The mountain on which it stood, clothed in the splendid robe of the setting day's calm violet-colour, hung over the valleys and the plains around, with an air of protecting majesty. On one side, a gentle slope, covered with green pastures, and clumps of high trees, with ever and anon a temple or a villa in their shade, declined softly towards the fair land of Greece--the country of poetry and song--to which Azimantium had long belonged. Two other sides, that towards the Euxine,[19] and that which looked over Thrace, were rough and steep, broken with gigantic crags; and though many a piece of smooth short turf intervened between the masses of cold gray stone--though many a tree waved its leafy arms, as if in sport, above each rugged cliff, and many a green parasite trailed its fantastic garlanding of verdure over the harsh and stony limbs of the mountain--no footing was there for things of mortal mould. The goat, the sure-footed goat, looked down, with sidelong glance, from the flat summit above, but tempted not the descent; the fox earthed himself at the foot; and but the eagle, of all living things, in his kingly loneliness, chose it for his dwelling, from its very solitude. The fourth side turned towards the barbarian enemies of the Grecian name, and frowned defiance in one savage, dark, unbroken precipice.

But now all was peace around. Splendour, and feasting, and music, reigned through the Grecian empire. The brow of every man was calm and joyful, the voice of every one was rich in poetry and song; and it would have seemed that nothing but a smile had ever curled the lip, or danced in the eye. O fatal softness! O hard lot of man! that peace can never rest without power! that enjoyment can never continue without strength! that the shield, and the glaive, and the javelin, should be the only safeguards of tranquillity!

All was peace. Many a century of decaying years had swept over the proud fabric of the Roman Empire and what had been mighty was now hastening towards a name. The men who had conquered a world, mouldered in the dust; and their children were contented to enjoy. The arms which should have wielded the sword, or braced on the shield, now only raised the cup, or struck the lyre. Voices which, in former days, would have breathed the soul of freedom to the swelling hearts of a mighty people, or pleaded for the laws before that senate which should have been immortal, now sung the loose and ribald song, in The halls of luxury and the resorts of intemperance, or urged some vain and subtle theme, in schools that had become schools of folly. Honour was no longer to the brave, or to the good; and, though peace spread over the whole

eastern realm, it was peace bought by tributary gold; won by degradation, and spent in effeminacy, indulgence, and vice.

One small city alone, of the whole empire, still held within its walls the nobler spirit of Rome's ancient days. One small city alone, like an altar to some sublime but nearly forgotten deity, upheld the flame of virtuous courage--simple, grand, noble, independent--enjoyed the smile of peace, but feared not the frown of war, reposed without softness, and rejoiced without debauchery. That city was Azimantium. Its youth, trained to the nobler amusements, only descended from the free mountain-air of their sky-surrounded dwelling to war with the wild beasts of the forests around, or to chase the swift deer over the Thracian plains. Such were their sports of peace; and if a lingering influence of the genius-breathing climate taught the Pentelican marble to start into life, woke the Achaian flute, or struck the Teian lyre, the godlike spirit of a purer age gave fire to the song, and vigour to the statue.

The mighty and majestic scenes amidst which they beat, raised and dignified the hearts of Azimantium; and though the passions of humanity were there in all their force, the better soul, the nobler purpose of the mind, linked those passions to all that is grand and dignified in nature. The aspirations of the spirit, and the desires of the body, were not waging the horrific struggle mutually to destroy each other; but, joined together in thrilling fellowship, like the immortal twins of Laconia, they strove alone to guide and elevate each other. Love dwelt in Azimantium; but it was that brighter love, wherein the radiant share of the deathless soul infests the earthly portion with a blaze of light.

I have said that it was the evening of a summer's day--a day such as is hardly known to more northern climates--a day on which the kingly charioteer of heaven seems to hold some high festival, and robe himself in more majestic lustre. The sunshine had passed, and it was evening--but an evening full of rays. It seemed as if some mysterious power had robbed the daylight of half its beams, to weave them into purple with the dark-blue woof of night, and then had studded it over with golden stars, to curtain the cradle of the sleeping earth.

Through the still calm valleys at the foot of the mountain of Azimantium--by the side of the living stream that sparkled onward on its brief gay course--amidst tall and scattered trees, where the nightingale raised his glorious anthem to the first star--wandered two of the children of that city, who had seen no other dwelling, and never desired to do so. They had risen from infancy in scenes which had every day grown dearer; and as years had flown, mutual love, uncrossed, unopposed, untainted, had given those scenes a light, whose spring was in their own hearts, a charm wrought by that potent magician, Affection. They loved as fully as mortal things can love; and from all external nature, from every song, from every sight, a sweet communion of thrilling enjoyments gathered itself round their mutual hearts. The memory of all their past was together; the joy of the present was tasted together; the future--misty and vague as that dim profound must ever be--they never dreamed could be otherwise than, together. One month had yet to fly ere the dearest; because the most durable, tie was to bind Honoria to Menenius for ever; and now they wandered alone through those sweet valleys, and amidst those soft scenes, unwatched, undoubted, by those whose duty was to guard and protect, because there was not one heart within the bounds of the city, who dared to think that Honoria was unsafe with Menenius.

They talked of love and hope; and those bright visions that, in the summer-morning of our youth, dance before our dazzled and untaught eyes, came thick upon them: and they lent each other willing aid to raise fabric after fabric, out of thin air alone, till the unsubstantial architecture reached to the very sky. O how they dreamt! and though a sultry and unnerving air grew up, one knew not whence, casting a sort of doubtful faintness on Honoria's frame; and though vague rumours of danger to the state, and new demands from the pensioned enemies of the Eastern Empire, had reached the ears of Menenius, an atmosphere of their own hope surrounded them, in which joy seemed to breathe secure.

They had wandered long, pouring their souls into each other's bosom, till at length they turned to mount the gentle assent that led them to their home. And yet they lingered, and yet they paused to take another look over the twilight world which spread out beneath, wider and wider at every step as they ascended; and to say, "How fair!" and still to speak one kind word more. As thus they paused beneath a group of tall trees, near which an ancient tower marked the burial-place of the great of other days, and stretched their eyes over the darkening landscape, a sudden feeling of terror shot through Honoria's breast--she knew not why. She heard nothing, she felt nothing, she saw nothing, which could awaken fear, and yet with a sudden and instinctive impulse, she clung to Menenius, exclaiming "What is coming?"

The horses that were feeding on the slope, with a shrill cry broke in madness down the hill; an eagle started from the rock below, and screaming, soared into the sky; while the lover cast his strong arm round her he loved, and unconsciously laid his hand upon his sword. All felt the dreadful coming of some great change.

It came--with a roar like the accumulated thunder of a thousand storms! The lightning, bursting from no visible cloud, swept over the clear blue sky, and shone amongst the stars; and, in the livid blaze, the towers of Azimantium, with each line dark and clear on the broad glare, were seen to quiver, and rock, and fall; while, beneath the lovers' feet, the earth heaved and panted, as if the globe were rent with dying agonies. The air was one wild scream--the sky, from pole to pole, was all on fire--the ground refused its footing. Then came a moment of dead calm.

All was silent! all was still! and Menenius felt Honoria's arms relax the terrified clasp in which they held him! "It is over, beloved," whispered he, as if to break the restored tranquillity even by his voice: "It is over; thank God, the earthquake has passed by!"

But before the words were well pronounced, a fitful gleam, a broader flash, another roar, swept through the air; the ground yawned and quivered; the tottering tower beside them was hurled in crashing ruins over the brink. Menenius caught at a tree for support; but it, too, shaking like a willow bough in a storm, swayed to and fro, and staggered as if plucked up by some gigantic force. Its boughs crashed; its centuried roots gave way, and rushing on those who had sought support in its strength, it overwhelmed them in its descent. What was the lover's only thought as he fell? To save her he loved; and by a sudden, scarcely conscious, effort of all his natural vigour, he kept her off, while the uprooted tree was dashed upon himself.

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The earthquake had passed by, and become a thing of memory. Nineteen of the towers of Constantinople had fallen; the walls of Azimantium lay broken and destroyed; and on the day which was to have lighted the marriage torch for Honoria and Menenius, the lover lay, slowly recovering from the evening of the earthquake, and the beautiful girl watched him with glad, yet anxious eyes. The father of Menenius, too, stood beside him, and marked the reviving glow in his son's cheek with joy, although there was a deep and thoughtful shadow on his brow, which brightened into something of triumph and of hope, as his eye ran over the bold and swelling muscles of his frame, and thought that but a few days more would restore that frame to all its pristine vigour. The triumph and the hope were those of a true son of ancient Greece, for they were kindled and inspired by the proud thought that the energetic strength of mind and body which were no longer united in himself; would, in his son, prove the safeguard of his country.

He had news to tell which might well have quelled the feeble spirits of that degenerate age, but Menenius was a child of Azimantium, and knew not fear, even though crushed, and sick, and wounded. He had borne the cautions of the leech, and the restraint of a sick chamber, with somewhat of impatience and disdain; but when his father told him that the false Bishop of Margus had opened the gates of that city to the barbarian Attila, the destroyer of arts, the waster of empires, the scourge of God; that unnumbered myriads of the Huns were pouring over the frontier barriers of the eastern empire; that Sirnium and Sardica, Ratiaria and Naissus, had fallen, and that but a few days more would see the blood-gorged savages beneath the rocks of Azimantium, Menenius became docile as a lamb to all that might hasten his recovery.

Honoria's cheek grew pale, and her lip forgot its smile, but not a word of fear was breathed upon the air, and her dark, dark eye shot out rays of more intense and brilliant light, as she gazed on each piece of her lover's armour, and scanned them jealously for fault or flaw.

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There was a cry through the whole of Greece, "They come! They come!" Over the fields, through the valleys, on the mountains; from voice to voice, and castle to castle, and city to city, the cry went forth, "Death to the nations! They come They come! Vultures, prepare to feast! They come! They come!"

All fell down before them or fled, and those who timidly spoke but the name of war, died by their own hearths. Fortress after fortress, town after town, was attacked and taken, and plundered and destroyed; not one stone was left upon another, and captivity and the sword shared the children of the land between them; and still went on the cry, "They come! They come! Vultures, prepare! They come! They come!"

The weak luxurious Romans of that degenerate day, knew not the very arms with which to oppose their barbarous enemies. What did the song avail them? What the dance? What the wine-cup and the feast? Could the soft-tongued sophist cheat the dark Hun from his destined prey? Or the skilful lawyer shew Attila the code which forbade the strong to plunder and subject the weak? No, no! After three disgraceful scenes of defeat, all fled, or yielded, or died, or were made slaves, and the whole land was red with flaming cities, and with blood-stained fields.

At length, the watchers on the steep of Azimantium beheld a dim cloud sweeping over the distant prospect, so vast, so mighty, that the whole land seemed teeming with a fearful birth. "They come! They come!" was all the cry; "They come! They come! The myriads of the North! Warriors, prepare your swords! They come! They come!"

On they swept, like the wind of the desert. The ruined walls of Azimantium, rifted by the earthquake, offered nothing to oppose their progress. Three sides, indeed, were defended by Nature herself, but the fourth was free, and up the soft slope they rushed, tribe upon tribe, nation upon nation, flushed with conquest, hardened to massacre, eager for spoil, contemptuous of danger and death.

Across the narrowest part of the approach--where the steep natural rock on one side, and the chasm left by the overthrown tower on the other, impeded all passage by the smooth ascent--in long bright line, with casque, and buckler, and blade, stood the youth of Azimantium, between their dear familiar homes and the dark enemy. On rushed the Huns, with glad eyes gleaming in the fierce thirst for blood, The horsemen came first, their harness loaded with the golden ornaments of plundered cities, and hanging at each knee the bleeding head of a fresh slain Greek, while myriads of foot swarmed up behind them, so that, to the eyes above, the whole steep appeared alive with a dark mass of rushing enemies. An ocean of grim faces was raised to the devoted city, and glared upon the young band of Azimantines, as the first-prepared sacrifice to the god of victory.

Nearer and more near they came. Forth flew the Scythian javelins, and, repelled from a thousand shields, turned innocent away, and then, the gazers from the house-tops of Azimantium might see the closer fight engaged. The unbroken line of gallant champions still maintained the strife against the swelling multitude that rushed like a tremendous sea upon them. Barbarian after barbarian fell stricken from his horse, and still they saw the battle rage, and swarms of fresh enemies pour up to the assault. Still waved the swords, still advanced the spears, and still the bands of Azimantium held their narrow pass, while behind them stood the old men of the town, to encourage them by the presence of their fathers--to carry them fresh arms--to bear away the dead.

But oh, what a sight it was, when first the gazers beheld four of the parents separate from the rest of the wavering crowd, and, bearing a heavy burden, come back towards the city! Oh, with what terrified speed did mothers, and sisters, and wives, and the beloved, rush forth to meet the ghastly spectacle, and learn the dreadful truth! And oh, how they crowded round, when the old men laid down their load, and the cloak cast back, shewed the fair boy stricken in his spring of beauty, the red blood clotted in his golden hair; the energy of being passed from his young eyes, and the "pale flag of death advanced" where the joy of life had reigned.

His sister wrung her hands and tore her hair, and wept, but his mother gazed calmly, proudly, painfully, upon the clay. Then bending down to take one kiss of his cold cheek, "Weep not," she cried, "weep not, Eudocia, for your brother! He, the first, died for his country! My child is in heaven!"

"They come! They come!" was shouted from below! "Fly to the altars! Lo, they come! they come!" and breaking through the line of brave defenders, on rushed a body of the Huns. On, up the steep they urged their horses, reeking with blood and battle--on, on, towards the city. The women fled to the churches and to the shrines, but there was none to defend the town; the streets were vacant; the youths and old men had alike gone forth to battle; the Huns were at the gate, and all seemed lost.

It was then that Menenius, red from the brow to the heel with the blood of his enemies, shouted to his brave companions to follow him, and hurling a gigantic Scythian down the steep, with one bound he passed the chasm, and lighted on a point of rock where the foot of man had never stood before--another brought him to a higher crag, whence a small green ridge ran round the steepest of the precipice under the city walls.

One after another his bravest comrades followed. Some missed their footing and were dashed to atoms on the rocks below; but still another and another succeeded, for Azimantium knew not fear. The Huns were on their threshold, and who dared hesitate? A hundred of the most agile passed the depth, pursued the green path, cleared another and another spring, reached the city wall, climbed over its ruined stones, and in the narrow entrance street met the victorious Huns, who had paused to plunder the first shrine they found.

No words were spoken: nor javelins nor arrows were now used: brow to brow, and sword to sword, the struggle was renewed. But who can conquer men who combat for their hearths? The Huns fell, died, or were driven backs; for that narrow way had no outlet but by the gate through which they had entered, and the close street where fought the youth of Azimantium. Not a Grecian glaive fell in vain, and at every step Menenius trod upon a slain barbarian. Like a reaper, each sweep of his unceasing arm made a hollow vacancy in the rank before him, and death grew so fearfully busy amongst the Huns, that vague imaginings of some supernatural power being armed to their encounter, took possession of their bosons. The form of the young hero swelled to the eyes of their fancy. "It is a god!" they cried; "it is a god!" They shrank from his blows--they turned--they fled. Those who were behind knew not the cause of terror, but caught it as it came. Each saw his fellow flying, and, touched by the same dim unnerving influence, sought but to fly. "A god! a god!" they cried, and rushed forth tumultuously on those who followed towards the city.

The broken line of Azimantium through which they had forced their way, now divided into two by the barbarian multitude, still waged terrific warfare on either side, while Menenius, pressing on with his companions, drove the ferocious Huns from the gate. The contagious terror of the fugitives spread to those without, and all were hurrying down the descent, when one chief rushed through the struggling crowd. "A god?" he cried. "This hand shall try his immmortality!" And on he urged his steed against Menenius.

For an instant the Greeks paused in their pursuit, and the barbarians rallied from their flight, and all eyes turned upon the Hun and his opponent. The fate of Azimantium--the last relic of

Grecian and of Roman glory--hung upon that brief moment. An instant decided all, for before fear could become hope in the hearts of the Huns, the charger of the barbarian chief was wild upon the plain, and he himself, cleft to the jaws, lay motionless before Menenius. A thousand souls seemed in the hero's bosom, and plunging into the midst of the enemies, he drove them down the steep. All Azimantium followed, and their footsteps were upon the necks of the dying. The rout was complete, and terror and dismay hung upon the flank of the defeated Huns; but still Menenius urged the furious pursuit. On, on he cleft his way. He marked not, he saw not who was near, he heeded not, he felt not what opposed him. His eye was fixed upon a white and fluttering object which was borne along amidst the brown masses of the flying barbarians, and towards it he rent his way, while his unwearied arm smote down all things that impeded his progress, as if but to make a path to that.

As long as the rout and the pursuit were confined by the narrow sides of the ascent to Azimantium, he kept that one spot in view; but afterwards, when the path of the flyers opened out upon the plains, the horse which bore it carried it away from his straining eyes, while the gray falling of the evening gave every distant thing a vague, shadowy, uncertain form, like the objects of the past seen through the twilight memory of many years.--He followed it to the last--night fell, and it was lost.

With triumph and with song the children of Azimantium wound up towards the city. Joy! joy! joy! was in their hearts and victory upon their brows. They had overcome the myriads, they had conquered the invincible! they had rolled back the barbarian torrent from the gates of their glad city, and every step that they took among the unburied dead of the enemy, told they had won for themselves both victory and peace. With a quick step, but with a cast-down eye and a knitted brow, Menenius, the hero of the triumph, followed the path up the hill. Every voice was glad, every heart seemed joyful, but his; but there was a fear, a dread, a conviction in his bosom, that his was the home that had been plundered of its treasure, his was the hearth to be for ever desolate. He strode on to the town, and joy and glory hailed him; and gratitude and admiration proclaimed his name to the skies. They called him the deliverer of his country, the saviour of his native place--they saluted him as victor--they acknowledged him as chief.

"Honoria?" he asked, "Honoria?" but no one answered. Honoria was gone. Since the entrance of the Huns into the city, Honoria had not been seen; and casting himself down upon a couch, he hid his eyes in cloak, while gladness and rejoicing filled the midnight air, and all Azimantium was one high festival.

'Twas strange, 'twas wonderfully strange! that one small city of the greatest empire in the world--while an inundation of barbarians poured over the land--while fortress and town were cast down and levelled with the earth--while legions fled dismayed, and nations bowed the head--and while the very suburbs of Constantinople, the imperial city, beheld the fearful faces of the Huns,--'twas strange, 'twas wonderfully strange, that one small city should stand in its solitary freedom, bold, fearless, and unconquered. 'Twas strange, 'twas wonderfully strange! Yet the deeds of the children of Azimantium are recorded in an immortal page, wherein we read, that "they attacked in frequent and successful sallies, the troops of the Huns, who gradually declined their dangerous neighbourhood; they rescued from their hands the spoil and the captives, and recruited their domestic force by the voluntary association of fugitives and deserters."[20]

In every sally, in every irruption made by the Azimantines into the vast tract of country now covered with the Huns, Menenius was the leader; and in the fierce incessant warfare thus carried on, he seemed to find his only consolation, his only enjoyment. At other times, he would sit sad and gloomy, his vacant eye fixed unobserving upon space, and his heart meditating sad dreams. In the visions of the night, too, when weariness dimmed the fire in his heart, and suffered his eyes to close, the white and fluttering object he had pursued in the fight of Azimantium would again be carried off, while imagination would fill up all that sight had not been able to ascertain, and the form of Honoria, torn away from him by the barbarian, would hold forth its phantom arms, and implore aid and succour in vain. Then his vigorous and manly limbs would writhe with the agony of his dreaming soul, till horror and despair would burst the bands of sleep, and he would start again upon his feet to wreak his great revenge upon the enemy. And yet there was a quality in his soul which--although while an adverse sword was drawn, or a threatening bow was bent, his step was through blood and carnage, his path was terror and death,--yet there was a quality in his soul which suspended the uplifted blow when the suppliant and the conquered clasped his knee; and many was the train captives which he sent home to the city; the pledges of future security and respect to Azimantium.

At length when seventy cities had fallen before the Scythian hordes, and nought but ruins were left to say where they had been, and to point to after ages the sad moral of an empire's decay, the weak Theodosius, unable to protect his subjects, or defend himself, agreed to treat with the mighty Barbarian, and to buy precarious peace with gold and concession, when he dared not purchase true security by the sword. Attila dictated the conditions and Theodosius yielded to all his demands but one, with which the emperor had no power to comply; and that was, that the city of Azimantium should restore the captives taken from the Huns. Attila felt how little power a feeble and degenerate monarch could have over a fearless, noble, unconquerable race; and he felt, too, that all his own power, great and battle-born as it was, could scarcely suffice to crush the hearts of Azimantium. The monarch of all the Eastern empire confessed his inability to compel the restoration of the captives; and Attila, the terror of the world, the scourge of God, the

conqueror of nations, treated on equal terms with the small city of Thrace.

Oh, how the heart of Menenius beat, when the monarch of the Huns, by the mouth of his envoys, proposed that all prisoners taken between his myriads and the city of Azimantium should be mutually restored! And oh, how his bosom heaved, when, surrounded by the Hunnish cavalry, the little knot of Azimantine captives were conducted up the hill! But were was Honoria? where was the beloved?

The Huns declared that they had delivered all, and Honoria was not there--Honoria, without whom all was nothing. Ten of the principal barbarian chiefs were detained as hostages for the safety of her who had not returned; while the envoys of Attila were sent back to learn the savage monarch's will. The reply soon came, that if any of the chiefs of Azimantium dared to trust himself in the dominions of Attila, he should have free means and aid in making every search for the captive said to be detained. Maximin and Priscus, the messengers added, were then on their journey as ambassadors from the imperial court to the king of the Huns, and if the Azimantine chief would join them at Sardica, he would be conducted to the presence of Attila, who loved the brave, even when his enemies.

Menenius sprang upon his horse, and followed by a scanty train, took the way to Sardica, his heart torn with the eternal struggle of those two indefatigable athletes, Hope and Fear. Still, as he went, his eye roamed over the landscape--for even the absorbing sorrow of his own breast had not obliterated his love for his country--and how painful was the sight upon which the eye rested! Desolation--the vacant cottage, the extinguished hearth, the threshold stained with blood, the raven and the vulture gorged and gorging, the mangled and unburied slain, the overthrown cities, the deserted streets through which the speedy grass was already growing up where multitudes had trod--the grass--the verdant and the speedy grass, which, like the fresh joys of this idle world, soon covers over the place that we have held when once we are passed away--ruin, destruction, death--such was the aspect of the land. And as he gazed and saw--the thought of all the broken ties and torn fellowships, the sweet associations and dear thrilling sympathies dissolved, the wreck of every noble art, the scattering of every finer feeling, which the blasting, withering, consuming lightning of war had there accomplished, found an answering voice deep in the recesses of his own wrung and agonized heart. At the ruins of Naissus--for one stone of the city scarcely remained upon the other--he joined the legates of the emperor, and with them pursued his way. His mind was not attuned to much commune with his fellows; and though Priscus, with learned lore, tempted him to speak of science, and arts, and philosophy; and Maximin, with courtly urbanity, which softened and ornamented the sterner firmness of his character, and Vigilius, the interpreter, with subtle and persuasive art, strove to win the Azimantine chief to unbend from his deep gloom, Menenius could neither forget nor forgive, and sadness was at once in his heart and upon his brow.

Over high mountains, through brown woods, across dark and turbulent rivers, the ambassadors were led on by that part of the barbarian army which was destined to be both their protection and guide. They saw but few of the inhabitants of the country, and little cultivated ground. Droves of oxen and sheep seemed the riches of the land. Pasture appeared to be the employment of the people, and war their sport.

Their march was regulated by the Huns who accompanied them, and by them also was each day's journey limited. The spot for pitching their tents was exactly pointed out, and the hour for departure was not only named, but enforced. Each day, long before that hour came, Menenius was on foot, and he would wander forth in the morning sunshine, and gaze through the deep vacuities in the woods, or let his eyes rest upon the misty and uncertain mountains, while the vast wild wideness of the land would force upon his heart the madness of hoping that his search would prove successful.

Thus had he gone forth one morning, when, in the glade of the forest where their tents were raised, he saw before him one of the barbarians whom he had never beheld before. The cold stern eye of Menenius rested on him for an instant, and then turned to the dim woods again. There was nothing pleasing in his form or in his countenance, and Menenius was passing on. He was short in stature, but broad as a giant, and with each muscular limb swelling with vigour and energy. His head was large and disproportioned--his face flat--his brow prominent--his colour swarthy. A few long and straggling hairs upon his chin, and deep lines of powerful thought, told that he had long reached manhood, while his white and shining teeth, and his bright keen, speckless eye, spoke vigour undecayed by one year too many.

"Whither stray'st thou, stranger?" said the barbarian; "can a Greek enjoy the aspect of solitary nature; can the dweller in cities--the pitiful imitator of the meanest of insects, the ant--can he look with pleasure on the wilds that were given man for his best, and original home?"

"Thou art ignorant, Hun!" replied Menenius, "and with the pride of ignorance, despisest that which thou dost not comprehend. Man, in raising cities and ornamenting them with art, only follows the dictates of nature herself. To the brutes she gave the wild world, but added no intellect to her gift, for the world, in its wildest state, was sufficient. To man she gave intellect, and the whole universe, full of materials, on which to employ it. He who is most elevated by nature herself, will use her gifts in the most diversified ways, and he who least uses them, approaches nearest to the brute.--Nay, barbarian, roll not thy furious eyes on me; I sought thee not, and he who speaks to me must hear the truth."

For several minutes, however, the Hun did roll his eyes with an expression of fury that strangely contrasted with his perfect silence. Not a word did he speak--not a quiver of the lip betrayed the suppression of any angry tone, and it was not till the fierce glance of his wrath was completely subdued, that he replied, "Vain son of a feeble face, upon whose necks Attila, my lord and thine, has trod, boast not the use of arts which have reduced thy people to what they are, and made them alike unfit for war and peace. Look at their bones whitening in the fields; look at their cities levelled with the plains; look at their manifold and wicked laws, which protect the strong and oppress the weak; look at their silken and luxurious habits, which effeminate their bodies and degrade their minds. This is the product of the arts thou praisest. This is the degrading civilisation that thou huggest to thy heart."

"Not so, Hun," replied Menenius: "the corruption which thou hast seen with too sure an eye, springs not from art, or knowledge, or civilisation. It springs from the abuse of wealth and power. The Roman empire was as a man who, covered with impenetrable armour, had conquered all his enemies, and finding none other to struggle with, had cast away his shield and breastplate; and lay down on a sunny bank to sleep. In his slumber, new adversaries came upon him, his armour was gone, and he was overthrown. The armour of the empire was courage, decision, and patriotism, the slumber was luxury, and thus it was that the myriads of thy lord penetrated to Constantinople, and destroyed the cities. The arts thou despisest, because thou knowest them not, had no share in bringing on the slumber which has proved so destructive; but let the Huns beware, for the giant may awake."

"Ha!" cried the barbarian, with a triumphant smile, "what is the city that could stand an hour, if Attila bade it fall?"

"Azimantium!" replied Menenius.

The Hun threw back his broad shoulders, and glared upon the Thracian chief with a glance more of surprise than anger--then gazed at him from head to foot, visited each particular feature with his eye, and marked every vigorous and well-turned limb with a look of scrutinizing inquiry. "Thou art Menenius!" he exclaimed abruptly, after he had satisfied himself, "Thou art Menenius! 'Tis well! 'Tis well!--I deemed thou hadst been Maximin."

"And had I been so," asked Menenius, "would that have made a difference in thy language?"

"Son of a free and noble race," replied the Hun, "ask me no further. That which may well become thee to speak, would ill befit the suppliant messenger of a conquered king; and that which I would say to the vanquished and the crouching, could not be applied to the brave and the independent. Happy had it been for thy country had she possessed many like to thee, for then she would have fallen with honour: and happy, too, had it been for Attila, my lord, for then his triumphs would have been more glorious."

Menenius was silent. The tone of the Hun was changed. The rudeness of his manner was gone; and though he spoke with the dignity of one whose nation was rich in conquests, there was no longer in his language the assumption of haughty superiority which he had at first displayed.

"And thou," said Menenius, at last--"Who am I to fancy thee?"

"I am Onegesius, the servant of Attila the King," replied the Hun; "and mark me, chieftain of a brave people. Hold but little communion with the slaves of Theodosius as they pass through the dominions of the Huns. The lion may be stung by the viper, if he lie down where he is coiled. Now, farewell;" and thus speaking the Hun turned, and with a proud, firm step, each fall of which seemed planted as for a combat, he took his path away from the Grecian tents.

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The ambassadors pursued their way, and, after some days, encamped late at night upon the banks of the dark and rushing Tebiscus.

The heavens were obscured by heavy leaden clouds driven by the wind into large masses, through the breaks of which, a dull and sickly moon glared forth with a fitful and a watery light upon the misty earth. The dim shapes of shadowy mountains, too, were vaguely sketched upon the sky, covered with quick passing shades, while ever and anon the winds howled forth their melancholy song, a wild and sombre anthem to the grim genius of the scene around.

The tents were pitched, the plain meal was over, the mead had passed round, and sleep had relaxed every weary muscle of the travellers' limbs, when suddenly a hurricane rushed over the whole scene, the river rose, the rain came down in torrents, and the temporary encampment was in a moment overthrown. Drenched and terrified, the legates of the Emperor disengaged themselves with difficulty from their falling pavilions, and called loudly for help. Noise and confusion spread around, and the roaring stream rising quickly over the meadow in which they had been sleeping, the howling of the overpowering wind, and the heavy pattering of the rain, added to the disturbance and fear of the scene.

A moment after, a blazing light upon the nearest hill rose like a beacon to direct their steps,

and thither the ambassadors were led by the Huns.

Menenius, after he had provided for the safety of his horses and attendants, followed the rest. As he approached the light, he saw, by the figures of several Huns supplying a large fire of dry reeds with fresh fuel, that it had been raised on purpose to guide any travellers overtaken by the storm, to a place of shelter and repose. Attention and kindness awaited him, and he was instantly led into a large wooden house, where Priscus and Maximin were already seated by a cheerful hearth, at which a young widow, the wife of Attila's dead brother Bleda, was busy in the gentle cares of hospitality. Along the extreme side of the apartment was drawn a line of Scythian slaves, armed as became those who waited on the widow of a king; and as Menenius entered, their rank was just closing, after having given exit to a form which made the Thracian chief, start forward, as his eye caught the last flutter of her retiring robes. "Who passed?"--he exclaimed, abruptly, forgetting, in the anxious haste of the moment, all idle ceremony. "Who passed but now?"

"Ella, the daughter of the king, and her maidens," was the reply. The heart of Menenius sunk, and his eye lost its eager fire. In a few brief words he excused his abruptness; but the widow of Bleda was one of those whose kind hearts find excuses better than we can urge them. "The maiden is fair," she said, "and well merits a stranger's glance. In truth, she knew not that there was another guest of such a mien about to be added to our hearth, or she would have staid to pour the camus and the mead. Much would she grieve were she not here to show that part of hospitality." And Bleda's widow sent a maiden to tell her niece that Menenius, the Azimantine chief, sat by the fire untended.

She came--a dark-haired girl, with a splendid brow, and eyes as pure and bright as if a thousand diamonds had been melted to furnish forth their deep and flashing light. A rose as glorious as that upon the brow of morning warmed her cheek, and a quick untaught grace moved in her full and easy limbs, like those of a wild deer. But she was not Honoria; and the eye of Menenius rested on her, as on a fair statue, which, in its cold difference of being, however lovely, however it may call upon admiration, wakens no sympathy within our warmer bosoms.

She, however; gazed on him, as on something new, and strange, and bright; and there was in her glance both the untutored fire of artless nature, and the fearless pride of kingly race, and early acquaintance with power. For a moment she stood, and contemplated the Thracian chief, with her sandalled foot advanced, and her head thrown back, and her lustrous eye full of wild pleasure; but then suddenly a red flush rose in her cheek, and spread over her brow, and, with a trembling hand, she filled a cup of mead, touched it with her lips, gave it to Menenius, and again retired.

Menenius lay down to rest, but his dreams were not of her whom he had seen. Gay visions of the former time rose up and visited his brain. From out the dreary tomb of the past, long-perished moments of joy and hope were called, as by an angel's voice, to bless his slumber--Honoria--Azimantium--happiness.

Pass we over the onward journey. After a long and tedious march, the ambassadors arrived at the royal village of the Huns, which was then surrounded by uncultured woods, though at present the rich vineyards of Tokay spread round the land in which it stood. Houses of wood were the only structures which were boasted by the chief city of the monarch of one half the earth; and to the eye of the Greeks, everything seemed poor and barbarous in the simplicity of the Huns. Yet, even lowly as were their cottage palaces, they had contrived to bestow much art on their construction. Fantastic trelliswork, and rich carved screens, and wreathed columns, cut of polished and variegated woods, were scattered in every direction; and while the first faint efforts of an approach to taste were to be found in the taller buildings and in the more correct proportions of the royal dwellings, the idea of war--the national sport and habitual passion, of the people--was to be seen in the imitative towers and castles with which they had decorated their dwellings of peace.

Attila himself had not yet returned from his last excursion; but a day did not elapse before his coming was announced by warrior after warrior who arrived, their horses covered with gold, and their follower's laden with spoil. All his subjects went forth to gratulate their conquering monarch; and the Greeks, standing on a little eminence, beheld his approach. First came innumerable soldiers, in dark irregular masses, and then appeared chieftain after chieftain, all the various nations that he ruled. Then was seen a long train of maidens, in white robes, walking in two lines, each bearing aloft in her hand one end of a fine white veil, which, stretching across to the other side, canopied a row of younger girls, who scattered flowers upon the path. Behind these, mounted on a strong black horse, clothed in one uniform dark robe, without jewel, or gold, or ornament whatever, came the monarch whose sway stretched over all the northern world.

As he advanced, he paused a moment, while his attendants raised a small silver table, on which the wife of one of his favourite chiefs offered him refreshments on his return. He was still at some distance, but the Greeks could behold him bend courteously to the giver, and raise the cup to his lips. The table was then removed, and onward came the king--nearer--more near--till Menenius might distinguish the features of the dark Hun he had met in the forest.

Menenius sat in the lonely hut which had been appointed for his dwelling, and while the shadows of night fell like the darkening hues of time, as they come deeper and deeper upon the brightness of our youth, hope waxed faint in his heart, and dim despondency spread like twilight

over his mind. Alone, in the midst of a wild and barbarous land, the depths o, whose obscure forests were probably unknown even to the fierce monarch whose sway they owned, how could he, unfriended, unaided, dream that he would ever discover that lost jewel, which had been torn from the coronet of his happiness? Never! never! never to behold her again! To journey through a weary life, and fall into the chill, solitary tomb, without the blessed light of those dear eyes which had been the starlike lamps of his existence--to dwell for ever in ignorance of her fate, while his fancy, like the damned in Hades, could find nothing but the bitter food of horror and despair--Such was his destiny.

"Attila the king!" exclaimed a loud voice, as he pondered, and Menenius stood face to face with the Monarch of the North, while the light of the pinewood torch glared red upon the dark features of the Scythian, and gave to those grim and powerful lines a sterner character and fiercer shade. His voice was gentle, however; and, seating himself on the couch, he spoke with words which had in them a tone of unshared, undisputed, unlimited authority, but elevated by the consciousness of mental greatness, and tempered by admiration and esteem.

"Chief of Azimantium," said the Hun, "while the slaves of a vain and treacherous king wait long ere they are permitted to breathe the same air with Attila, the king of nations disdains not to visit the leader of the brave. Mark me, thou chief of the last free sons of Greece! The sword of thy country is broken--the sceptre of thine emperors passed away. The seed is gathered which shall sow grass in the palaces of kings--the clouds are collected which shall water the harvest of desolation. Greek, I boast not of my victories--it sufficeth Attila to conquer. But calmly, reasonably measure thy people against mine, and think whether the small band of Azimantines, were they all inspired by the God of battles with courage like thine own, could save the whole of degenerate Greece from the innumerable and warrior people of the north. What--what can Azimantium do, all unsupported, against a world?"

"Each son of Azimantium," replied Menenius, "can offer up a hecatomb of Scythian strangers, and give his soul to heaven upon the wings of victory. This will Azimantium--and then--perish Greece!"

A shadow passed across the monarch's brow.

"Be not too proud," he said, "be not too proud! A better fate may yet befall thy city and thy land. So well does Attila love Azimantium, that he claims her as his own from the Greek emperor; and to win her citizens to willingness, he offers his daughter--his loved--his lovely daughter to her chief. Pause!" he added, seeing the quivering of Menenius' lip: "pause and think! Reply not! but remember that thus may Greece be saved--that the safety or destruction of thy land is upon thy tongue. Pause, and let the sun rise twice upon the meditation of thine answer."

Thus spoke the monarch, and in a moment after, the Azimantine chief was once more left to solitude. Deep and bitter was the smile of contempt that curled the lip of Menenius; for in the proud glory of his own heart, he forgot how low Greece had fallen amongst the people of the earth, and in the imperishable memory of his love, the mention of another bride was but as the raving of insanity. "I!--I!--Menenius of Azimantium! wed the daughter of the barbarian! I become a subject of the Hun!--I forget Honoria!"

Another day went down, and Menenius, with the Grecian ambassador, was seated in the halls of Attila, at the banquet which the proud monarch gave at once to the envoys of the Eastern and Western empire. On a raised platform in the midst of the hall was the couch and table of Attila, covered with fine linen and precious stuffs, while fifty small tables on either side were spread out for the guests invited to the royal feast. An open space was before the board of the monarch, and behind him the hall was filled with a dark fantastic crowd of guards, and attendants, and barbarian slaves.

On the same couch with Attila sat his daughter Iërnë--that beautiful daughter whom Menenius had beheld at the dwelling of Bleda's widow; and as the Azimantine chief passed by, and poured the required libation to "Attila the Brave," the maiden's eyes fixed motionless on the ground, and the blood rose fast into her cheek, like the red morning sun rising up into the pale twilight sky. Menenius passed on unchanged and cold, and took his place with Maximin, the ambassador of Theodosius.

The fare of Attila was plain and rude, but the tables of his guest were spread with all that the fearful luxury of Rome itself could have culled from earth and sea. Ere long the cupbearer filled the golden goblet, and the monarch, rising from his couch, drank to Berec, the bravest of the Huns. Again, after a pause, he rose, but the cup was given him by his daughter, and Attila drank to Menenius, the bravest of the Greeks. Quick and sparkling flowed the mead, and then an old gray man poured to the wild chords of a barbaric lyre, a song of triumph and of battles, while at every close he proclaimed, Attila's bridal day. At length a bright troop of young and happy maidens led in, surrounded by their linked arms, three brighter than themselves, from whom the Monarch of the North was about to choose a new partner for his mighty throne. Their faces were veiled; but through the long white robes that clothed them shone out that radiant light of grace and beauty which nothing can conceal. Slowly, as if reluctant, they were brought into the monarch's presence.

Why quivered the lip of Menenius? Why strained his eye upon that first veiled figure? The veil

is gone!--To him! to him she stretched forth her hands!--The table and the banquet are dashed to atoms at his feet; and Honoria is in Menenius' arms.

A thousand swords sprang from their sheaths--a thousand javelins quivered round the hall. "Traitor! Madman! Sacrilegious slave!" was shouted in a thousand fierce voices, and a thousand barbarous tongues. But unquailing in the midst stood the Azimantine chief--his left arm round the beating heart of his young bride--his right, armed with that sword which had bowed many a hero to the dust, raised appealing to the Scythian king. "Monarch of the Huns," he cried, "this is the captive I have come to seek. As you are a man--as you are a warrior--as you are a king!--by your oath--by your honour--by your justice! yield her to me, her promised husband, and put us safely off your land. Then if of all these brave and mighty men," he added with a frown, "who draw the sword against a single Greek, there be but ten who will meet me brow to brow on the battle plain, I will write it in their blood that I am neither slave nor traitor, but a bold man, who dares to claim and to defend his own!"

Fierce wrath, stern revenge, majestic admiration, had swept over the countenance of Attila, like the broken masses of a rent thunder-cloud hurled over the sky by the succeeding blast.

"Hold!" he cried; "Warriors! put up your swords. Chief of Azimantium! you rob me of a bride; but if this be the captive you have come to seek, Attila's word is given, and safely, surely, she shall be returned to her home, were she as lovely as the moon, But with you, Greek, with your companions, Maximin, Priscus, and Vigilius, the king has still to deal, and, after what has befallen this day, expect nothing more than justice." As he spoke, he rolled his dark eyes fearfully around, then suddenly raised his hand, exclaiming, "Now, warriors! now!" and before he could strike a blow, Menenius, unprepared, was seized on all sides, and bound tight in every limb, together with the envoys from Theodosius.

All, for an instant, was wild confusion. Honoria, with the other women, were hurried from the hall; and Menenius found himself ranged with Priscus and Maximin before the throne of Attila; while, in the deathlike, ashy, quivering countenance of Vigilius, the interpreter, who stood beside him, he read detected guilt and certain death.

"Hired murderers, sent by an imperial slave to slay his conqueror and master," exclaimed Attila, after he had gazed for some minutes upon the Greeks, "do ye not tremble to find your baseness exposed in the eyes of all the universe? Stand forth, Edecon, and tell the warriors of Attila, how these men came here, under the garb of ambassadors, to slay by treachery, in peace, the king that, by battle, they could not vanquish in war. And you warriors, lay not your hands upon your swords--Attila will do justice to Attila."

At the command of the king, Edecon, who had been ambassador for Attila at Constantinople, stood forth, and declared, that in an interview with the Eunuch Chrysaphius, that favourite of the weak Monarch of the East had proposed to him the assassination of his master, and offered him an immense reward. He had affected to consent, and had that very day received a purse of gold and jewels from Vigilius, the interpreter, who was privy to the whole. The plot he had instantly communicated to Attila, and the purse he now produced. Maximin and Priscus, he doubted not, were cunning men, sent to accomplish the scheme with art; and Menenius, beyond question, was the daring murderer to strike the final blow.

Maximin spoke loudly in his own defence, and Priscus learnedly on the improbability of the tale, while the mouth of Vigilius opened, and his lips quivered, but no sound found utterance. Menenius was silent, but he fixed his bold eye upon Attila, who glared upon them all like a tiger crouching for the spring.

"Maximin and Priscus," said the king, at length, "ye are innocent! Let them be freed. As for yon trembling traitor, guilt is in his eye and on his cheek; but the sword that should smite Vigilius would be disgraced for ever, and find no blood in his coward heart. Let him buy his life, and pay two hundred pounds weight of gold to him he sought to bribe.--As for thee, Chief of Azimantium--
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"Thou knowest I am guiltless, Hun!" replied Menenius, "and bonds such as these have pressed upon my arms too long."

"Of thy guilt or innocence I know nought," replied the King; "but this I know, that I will guard thee safely till thine Emperor send me the head of Chrysaphius, the murdering slave who first sought to tempt my subjects into treachery. Away with Vigilius, till he pay the purchase of his base life; and away with this Azimantine, till Orestes and Eslaw, my envoys, bring me the head of the eunuch from my slave the Emperor."

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In the solitude of a dark unlighted hut, stretched upon a bear's hide, which had been cast down for his bed, lay the young Chief of Azimantium, pondering his hard fate, while the sounds of many a gay and happy, voice without, struck with painful discord upon his unattuned ear. Dark and melancholy, the fancies flitted across his brain like the visions of dead friends seen in the dim

atmosphere of troubled sleep, and he revolved in his mind that bold cowardice of his ancestors, which taught them to fly from the sorrows and dangers of their fate, by the sure but gloomy passage of the tomb. Was it virtue, he asked himself, or vice? wisdom, or insanity, that allied the last despair to the last hope, and made self-murder the cure of other ills? And, as he thought, sorrow took arms against his better mind, and whispered like a friend, "Die! Die, Menenius! Peace is in the grave!" A new and painful struggle was added to the evils of his state, and still he thought of death as hours and days went by.

Nor was this all; for, as the Dacians tame the lions for the imperial shows, the Hum strove to break his spirit, and subdue his high heart, by reiterated anxieties and cares. Now, he was told of wars with the Empire, and the fall of Greece: now, strange whispers were poured into his ear, of some direful fate reserved for himself: now, he heard of the great annual sacrifice offered at the altar of Mars, where a hundred captive maidens washed the platform with their blood. But still, like the great hero of the mighty founder of the Epic song, he rose above the waves that poured upon his head, and still answered, "Never! never!" when the name of Azimantium was connected with the dominion of the Huns.

It was one night when a darker melancholy than ever oppressed his mind, and despondency sat most heavy on his soul, that the door was cast open, and a blaze of light burst upon his sight. His eyes, familiar with the darkness, refused at first to scan the broad glare; but when at length they did their office, he beheld, in the midst of her slaves, that fair girl Iërnë, whose offered hand he had refused. Her cheek, which had been as warm as the last cloud of the summer evening was now as pale as the same cloud when, spirit-like, it flits across the risen moon. But her eye had lost none of its lustre; and it seemed, in truth, as if her whole soul had concentrated there to give fuller effulgence to its living light.

"Chief of Azimantium," said the maiden, "it is my father's will that you be freed, and I--that the generosity of Attila should know no penury--I have prayed, that though Menenius slighted Iërnë, he should wed the woman of his love even in Iërnë's father's halls. My prayer has been granted--the banquet is prepared--the maiden is warned, and the blushes are on her cheek--a priest of thine own God is ready.--Rise, then, Chief of Azimantium, and change a prison for thy bridal bed. Rise, and follow the slighted Iërnë."

"O lady!" answered Menenius, "call not thyself by so unkind a name. Write on your memory, that, long ere my eyes rested on your loveliness, Honoria was bound to my heart by ties of old affection; and, as your soul is generous and noble, fancy all the gratitude that your blessed words waken in my bosom. Oh! Let the thought of having raised me from despair--of having freed me from bonds--of having crowned me with happiness, find responsive joy in your bosom, and let the blessing that you give, return and bless you also."

Iërnë pressed her hand firm upon her forehead, and gazed upon Menenius while he spoke, with eyes whose bright but unsteady beams seemed borrowed from the shifting meteors of the night. The graceful arch of her full coral lip quivered; but she spoke not; and, waving with her hand, the attendants loosened the chains from the hands of the Azimantine, and, starting on his feet, Menenius was free.

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In the brightness and the blaze of a thousand torches, the chief of Azimantium stood in the halls of Attila, with the hand of Honoria clasped in his own. Sorrow and anxiety had touched, but not stolen, her beauty--had changed, but not withered, a charm. Every glance was softened--every feature had a deeper interest--and joy shone the brighter for the sorrow that was gone, like the mighty glory of the sun when the clouds and the tempests roll away.

The dark monarch of the barbarians gazed on the work he had wrought, and the joy that he had given; and a triumphant splendour, more glorious than the beams of battle, radiated from his brow. "Chief of Azimantium," he said, "thou art gold tried in the fire, and Attila admires thee though a Greek--not for the beauty of thy form--let girls and pitiful limners think of that!--not for thy strength and daring alone--such qualities are for soldiers and gladiators; but for thy dauntless, unshrinking, unalterable resolution--the virtue of kings, the attribute of gods--Were Attila not Attila, he would be Menenius. Thou hast robbed me of a bride! Thou hast taken a husband from my daughter; but Attila can conquer--even himself. Sound the hymeneal! Advance to the altar! Yon priest has long been a captive among us, but his blessing on Honoria and Menenius shall bring down freedom on his own head."

The solemnity was over--the barbarian guests were gone, and through the flower-strewed passages of the palace, Honoria and Menenius were led to their bridal chamber; while a thousand thrilling feelings of joy, and hope, and thankfulness, blended into one tide of delight, poured from their mutual hearts through all their frames, like the dazzling sunshine of the glorious noon streaming down some fair valley amidst the mountains, and investing every object round in misty splendour, and dreamlike light. The fruition of long delayed hope, the gratification of early and passionate love, was not all; but it seemed as if the dark cloudy veil between the present and the future had been rent for them by some divine hand, and that a long vista of happy years lay before their eyes in bright perspective to the very horizon of being. Such were the feelings of

both their bosoms, as, with linked hands and beating hearts; they approached the chamber assigned to them; but their lips were silent, and it was only the love-lighted eye of Menenius, as it rested on the form of his bride, and the timid, downcast, but not unhappy glance of Honoria, that spoke the world of thoughts that crowded in their breasts.

A band of young girls, with the pale Iërnë at their head, met them singing at the door of their chamber. The maidens strewed their couch with flowers, and Iërnë gave the marriage cup to the hand of Honoria; but as she did so, there was a wild uncertain light in her eye, and a quivering eagerness on her lip, that made Menenius hold Honoria's arm as she was about to raise the chalice to her mouth.

"Ha! I had forgot," said the princess, taking back the goblet with a placid smile, "I must drink first, and then, before the moon be eleven times renewed, I too shall be a bride. Menenius the brave! Honoria the fair! Happy lovers, I drink to your good rest! May your sleep be sound! May your repose be unbroken!"

And with a calm and graceful dignity, she drank a third part of the mead. Honoria drank also, according to the custom; Menenius drained the cup, and the maidens withdrawing, left the lovers to their couch. Honoria hid her eyes upon the bosom of Menenius, and the warrior, pressing her to his bosom, spoke gentle words of kind assurance. But in a moment her hand grew deathly cold. "Menenius, I am faint," she cried: "What is it that I feel? My heart seems is it were suddenly frozen, and my blood changed into snow.--O Menenius! O my beloved! we are poisoned; I am dying! That cup of mead--that frantic girl--she has doomed us and herself to death."

As she spoke, through his own frame the same chill and icy feelings spread. A weight was upon his heart, his warm and fiery blood grew cold, the strong sinews lost their power, the courageous soul was quelled, and he gazed in speechless, unnerved horror on Honoria, while, shade by shade, the living rose left her cheek, and the "pale standard" of life's great enemy marked his fresh conquest on her brow. Her eyes, which, in the hour of joy and expectation, had been bent to the earth, now fixed on his with a long, deep, earnest, imploring gaze of last affection. Her arms, no longer timid, circled his form, and the last beatings of her heart throbbed against his bosom. "Thou art dying!" she said, as she saw the potent hemlock spread death over his countenance, "thou too art dying! Menenius will not leave Honoria even in this last long journey.--We go--we go together!"

And faintly she raised her hand, and pointed to the sky, where, through the casement, the bright autumn moon poured her melancholy splendour over the Hungarian hills. A film came over her eyes--a dark unspeakable gray shadow and oh, it was horrible to see the bright angel part from its clay tabernacle!

In the athletic frame of the lover, the poison did not its cruel office so rapidly. He saw her fade away before his eyes--he saw her pass like a flower that had lived its summer day, in perfume and beauty, and faded with the falling of the night. He could not--he would not so lose her. He would call for aid--some precious antidote should give her back to life. He unclasped the faint arms that still clung upon his neck. He rose upon his feet, with limbs reduced to infant weakness. His brain reeled. His heart seemed crushed beneath a mountain: but still he staggered forth. He heard voices before. "Help! help!" he cried, "Help, ere Honoria die!" With the last effort of existence, he rushed forward, tore open the curtain before him, reeled forward to the throne on which Attila held his midnight council--stretched forth his arms--but power--voice--sense--being--passed away, and Menenius fell dead at the monarch's feet.

"Who has done this?" exclaimed the king, in a voice of thunder. "Who has done this? By the god of battles, if it be my own children, they shall die! Is this the fate of Menenius? Is this the death that the hero of Azimantium should have known? No! no! no! red on the battle-field--gilded with the blood of enemies--the last of a slain, but not a conquered host--so should the chief have died. Menenius! Kinsman in glory! Attila weeps for the fate of his enemy!"

"Lord of the world! Lord of the world!" exclaimed a voice that hurried from the chambers beyond, "thy daughter is dead in the arms of her maidens; and dying, she sent thee word, that sooner than forbear to slay her enemies, she had drunk of the cup which she had mingled for them."

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Attila smote his breast. "She was my daughter," he exclaimed, "she was, indeed, my daughter! But let her die, for she has brought a stain upon the hospitality of her father; and the world will say that Attila, though bold, was faithless."

There was woe in Azimantium, while with slow and solemn pomp, the ashes of Honoria and Menenius were borne into the city.

In the face of the assembled people, the deputies of Attila, by oath and imprecation, purified their lord from the fate of the lovers. The tale was simple, and soon told, and the children of Azimantium believed.

Days, and years, and centuries, rolled by, and a race of weak and effeminate monarchs; living alone by the feebleness and barbarism of their enemies, took care that Azimantium should not long remain as a monument of reproach to their degenerate baseness. Nation followed nation; dynasty succeeded dynasty; a change came over the earth and its inhabitants, and Azimantium was no more. Still, however, the rock on which it stood bears its bold front towards the stormy sky, with the same aspect of courageous daring wherewith its children encountered the tempest of the Huns.

A few ruins, too--rifted walls, and dark fragments of fallen fanes--the pavement of some sweet domestic hearth, long cold--a graceful capital, or a broken statue, still tell that a city has been there; and through the country round about, the wild and scattered peasantry, still in the song, and the tale, and the vague tradition, preserve in various shapes, The Story of Azimantium!

THE FISHERMAN OF SCARPHOUT.

TWO CHAPTERS FROM AN OLD HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

About midway between Ostend and Sluys, exposed to all the fitful wrath of the North Sea, lies a long track of desolate shore, frowning no fierce defiance back upon the waves that dash in fury against it; but--like a calm and even spirit, which repels by its very tranquil humility the heat of passion and the overbearing of pride--opposing nought to the angry billows, but a soft and lowly line of yellow sands. There nothing grows which can add comfort to existence; there nothing flourishes which can beautify or adorn. Torn from the depths of ocean, and cast by the storm upon the shore, sea-shells and variegated weeds will indeed sometimes deck the barren beach, and now and then a green shrub, or a stunted yellow flower, wreathing its roots amidst the shifting sand, will here and there appear upon the low hills called *Dunes*. But with these exceptions, all is waste and bare, possessing alone that portion of the sublime which is derived from extent and desolation.

It may be well conceived that the inhabitants of such a spot are few. Two small villages, and half-a-dozen isolated cottages, are the only vestiges of human habitation to be met with in the course of many a mile; and at the time to which this tale refers, these few dwellings were still fewer. That time was long, long ago, at a period when another state of society existed in Europe; and when one class of men were separated from all others by barriers which time, the great grave-digger of all things, has now buried beneath the dust of past-by years.

Nevertheless, the inhabitants of that track of sandy country were less different in habits, manners, and even appearance, from those who tenant it at present, than might be imagined; and in original character were very much the same, combining in their disposition traits resembling the shore on which their habitations stood, and the element by the side of which they lived--simple, unpolished, yet gentle and humble, and at the same time wild, fearless, and rash as the stormy sea itself.

I speak of seven centuries ago--a long time, indeed! but nevertheless then, even then, there were as warm affections stirring in the world, as bright domestic love, as glad hopes and chilling fears as now--there were all the ties of home and kindred, as dearly felt, as fondly cherished, as boldly defended as they can be in the present day; and out upon the dull imagination and cold heart that cannot feel the link of human sympathy binding us to our fellow beings even of the days gone by!

Upon a dull; cold, melancholy evening, in the end of autumn, one of the fishermen of the shore near Scarphout gazed over the gray sea as it lay before his eye, rolling in, with one dense line of foaming waves pouring for ever over the other. The sky was black and heavy, covered with clouds of a mottled leaden hue, growing darker towards the north-west, and the gusty whistling of the rising wind told of the coming storm. The fisherman himself was a tall, gaunt man, with hair of a grizzled black, strong marked, but not unpleasant features, and many a long furrow across his broad, high brow.

The spot on which he stood was a small sand-hill on the little bay formed by a projecting ridge of Dunes, at the extremity of which stood the old castle of Scarphout--even then in ruins, and at

the time of high tide, separated from the land by the encroaching waves, but soon destined to be swept away altogether, leaving nothing but a crumbling tower here and there rising above the waters. Moored in the most sheltered part of the bay, before his eyes, were his two boats; and behind him, underneath the sand-hills that ran out to the old castle, was the cottage in which he and his family had dwelt for ten years.

He stood and gazed; and then turning to a boy dressed in the same uncouth garments as himself, he said, "No, Peterkin, no! There will be a storm--I will not go to-night. Go, tell your father and the other men I will not go. I expect my son home from Tournai, and I will not go out on a stormy night when he is coming back after a long absence."

The boy ran away along the shore to some still lower cottages, which could just be seen at the opposite point, about two miles off; and the fisherman turned towards his own dwelling. Four rooms were all that it contained; and the door which opened on the sands led into the first of these: but the chamber was clean and neat; everything within it showed care and extreme attention; the brazen vessels above the wide chimney, the pottery upon the shelves, all bore evidence of good housewifery; and as the fisherman of Scarphout entered his humble abode, the warm blaze of the fire, and the light of the resin candle welcomed him to as clean an apartment as could be found in the palace of princes.

He looked round it with a proud and satisfied smile; and the arms of his daughter, a lovely girl of fourteen, were round his neck in a moment, while she exclaimed in a glad tone, speaking to her mother who was busy in the room beyond, "Oh, mother, he will not go out to sea to-night!"

Her mother, who had once been very beautiful--nay, was so still--came forth, and greeted her husband with a calm, glad kiss; and sitting down, the father pulled off his heavy boots, and warmed his strong hands over the cheerful blaze.

The wind whistled louder and louder still, the sea moaned as if tormented by the demon of the storm, and few, but dashing drops of heavy rain, came upon the blast, and rattled on the casements of the cottage.

"It will be a fearful night!" said the fisherman, speaking to his daughter. "Emiline, give me the book, and we will read the prayer for those that wander in the tempest."

His daughter turned to one of the wooden shelves; and from behind some very homely articles of kitchen furniture, brought forth one of the splendid books of the Romish church, from which her father read a prayer aloud, while mother and daughter knelt beside him.

Higher still grew the storm as the night came on; more frequent and more fierce were the howling gusts of wind; and the waves of the stirred-up ocean, cast in thunder upon the shore, seemed to shake the lowly cottage as if they would fain have swept it from the earth. Busily did Dame Alice, the fisherman's wife, trim the wood fire; eagerly and carefully did she prepare the supper for her husband and her expected son; and often did Emiline listen to hear if, in the lulled intervals of the storm, she could catch the sound of coming steps.

At length, when the rushing of the wind and waves seemed at their highest, there came a loud knocking at the door, and the fisherman started up to open it, exclaiming, "It is my son!" He threw it wide; but the moment he had done so, he started back, exclaiming, "Who are you?" and pale as ashes, drenched with rain, and haggard, as if with terror and fatigue, staggered in a man as old as the fisherman himself, bearing in his arms what seemed the lifeless body of a young and lovely woman.

The apparel of either stranger had, at one time, cost far more than the worth of the fisherman's cottage and all that it contained; but now, that apparel was rent and soiled, and upon that of the man were evident traces of blood and strife. Motioning eagerly to shut the door--as soon as it was done, he set his fair burden on one of the low settles, and besought for her the aid of the two women whom he beheld. It was given immediately; and although an air of surprise, and a look for a moment even fierce, had come over the fisherman's countenance on the first intrusion of strangers into his cottage, that look had now passed away; and, taking the fair girl, who lay senseless before him, in his strong arms, he bore her into an inner chamber, and placed her on his wife's own bed. The women remained with her; and closing the door, the fisherman returned to his unexpected guest, demanding abruptly, "Who is that?"

The stranger crossed his question by another--"Are you Walran, the fisherman of Scarphout?" he demanded, "and will you plight your oath not to betray me?"

"I am Walran," replied the fisherman, "and I do plight my oath."

"Then that is the daughter of Charles, Count of Flanders!" replied the stranger. "I have saved her at the risk of my life from the assassins of her father!"

"The assassins of her father!" cried the fisherman. "Then is he dead?"

"He was slain yesterday in the church--in the very church itself, at Bruges! Happily his son was absent, and his daughter is saved, at least, if you will lend us that aid which a young man; who is even now engaged in misleading our pursuers, promised in your name."

"My son!" said the fisherman. "His promise shall bind his father as if it were my own. But tell me, who are you?"

"I am Baldwin, Lord of Wavrin," replied the stranger. "But we have no time for long conferences, good fisherman. A party of assassins are triumphant in Flanders. The count is slain; his son, a youth, yet unable to recover or defend his own without aid: his daughter is here, pursued by the murderers of her father; she cannot be long concealed, and this night, this very night, I must find some method to bear her to the shores of France, so that I may place her in safety, and, as a faithful friend of my dead sovereign, obtain the means of snatching his son's inheritance from the hands of his enemies, ere their power be confirmed beyond remedy. Will you venture to bear us out to sea in your boat, and win a reward such as a fisherman can seldom gain?"

"The storm is loud," said the fisherman; "the wind is cold; and ere you reach the coast of France, that fair flower would be withered never to, revive again. You must leave her here."

"But she will be discovered and slain by the murderers of her father," replied Baldwin. "What, are you a man, and a seaman, and fear to dare the storm for such an object?"

"I fear nothing!" answered the fisherman, calmly. "But here is my son! Albert, God's benison be upon you, my boy," he added, as a young man entered the cottage, with the dark curls of his jetty hair dripping with the night rain. "Welcome back! but you come in an hour of trouble. Cast the great bar across the door, and let no one enter, while I show this stranger a refuge he knows not."

"No one shall enter living," said the young man, after returning his father's first embrace: and the fisherman taking one of the resin lights from the table, passed through the room where the fair unhappy Marguerite of Flanders lay, recovering from the swoon into which she had fallen, to a recollection of all that was painful in existence.

"Should they attempt to force the door," whispered the fisherman to his wife, "bring her quick after me, and bid Albert and Emiline follow." And striding on with the Lord of Wavrin into the room beyond, he gave his guest the light, while he advanced towards the wall which ended the building on that side. It had formed part of some old tenement, most probably a monastery, which had long ago occupied the spot, when a little town, now no longer existing, had been gathered together at the neck of the promontory on which the fort of Scarphout stood.

This one wall was all that remained of the former habitations; and against it the cottage was built; though the huge stones of which it was composed were but little in harmony with the rest of the low building. To it, however, the fisherman advanced, and placing his shoulder against one of the enormous stones, to the astonishment of the stranger it moved round upon a pivot in the wall, showing the top of a small staircase, leading down apparently into the ground. A few words sufficed to tell that that staircase led, by a passage under the narrow neck of sand-hills, to the old castle beyond; and that in that old castle was still one room habitable, though unknown to any but the fisherman himself.

"Here, then, let the lady stay," he said, "guarded, fed, and tended by my wife and children; and for you and me, let us put to sea. I will bring you safe to Boulogne, if I sleep not with you beneath the waves; and there, from the King of France, you may gain aid to re-establish rightful rule within the land."

"To Boulogne," said the stranger, "to Boulogne? Nay, let us pause at Bergues or Calais, for I am not loved in Boulogne. I once," he added, boldly, seeing some astonishment in the fisherman's countenance, "I once wronged the former Count of Boulogne--I scruple not to say it--I did him wrong; and though he has been dead for years, yet his people love me not, and I have had warning to avoid their dwellings."

"And do you think the love or hate of ordinary people can outlive long years?" demanded the fisherman; "but, nevertheless, let us to Boulogne; for *there* is even now the King of France: so said a traveller who landed here the other day. And, the king, who is come, they say, to judge upon the spot who shall inherit the long vacant county of Boulogne, will give you protection against your enemies, and aid to restore your sovereign's son to his rightful inheritance."

The Lord of Wavrin mused for a moment, but consented, and all was speedily arranged. The fair Marguerite of Flanders, roused and cheered by the care of the fisherman's family, gladly took advantage of the refuge offered her, and found no terrors in the long damp vaults or ponderous stone door that hid her from the world; and feeling that she herself was now in safety, she scarcely looked round the apartment to which she was led, but gave herself up to the thoughts of her father's bloody death, her brother's situation of peril, and all the dangers that lay before the faithful friend who, with a father's tenderness, had guided her safely from the house of murder and desolation.

He on his part, saw the heavy stone door roll slowly to after after the princess, and ascertaining that an iron bolt within gave her the means of securing her retreat, at least in a degree, he left her, with a mind comparatively tranquillized in regard to her, and followed the fisherman towards the beach.

There the boat was found already prepared, with its prow towards the surf, and one or two of the fisherman's hardy companions ready to share his danger.

The Lord of Wavrin looked up to the dark and starless sky; he felt the rude wind push roughly against his broad chest; he heard the billows fall in thunder upon the sandy shore! But he thought of his murdered sovereign, and of that sovereign's helping orphans, and springing into the frail bark, he bade the men push off, though he felt that there was many a chance those words might be the signals of his death. Watching till the wave had broken, the three strong seamen pushed the boat through the yielding sand; the next instant she floated; they leaped in, and struggling for a moment with the coming wave, the bark bounded out into the sea, and was lost to the sight of those that watched her from the shore.

THE FISHERMAN OF SCARPHOUT.

CHAPTER II.

There were tears in the blue eye of the morning, but they were like the tears of a spoiled beauty when her momentary anger has gained all she wishes, and the passionate drops begin to be chequered by smiles not less wayward. Gradually, however, the smiles predominated; the clouds grew less frequent and less heavy, the sun shone out with shorter intervals, and though the wind and the sea still sobbed and heaved with the past storm, the sky was momently becoming more and more serene.

Such was the aspect of the coming day, when the unhappy Marguerite of Flanders again opened her eyes, after having for a time forgotten her sorrow in but too brief repose. For a moment she doubted whether the past were not all a dream; but the aspect of the chamber in which she now found herself, very different from that which she had inhabited in her father's palace, soon recalled the sad reality. And yet, as she gazed round the room, there was nothing rude or coarse in its appearance. Rich tapestry was still upon the walls; the dressoir was still covered with fine linen and purple, and many a silver vessel--laver, and ewer, and cup, stood ready for her toilet. The small grated windows, with the enormous walls in which they were set, the faded colours of the velvet hangings of the bed in which she had been sleeping, the vaulted roof, showing no carved and gilded oak, but the cold, bare stone, told that she was in the chamber of a lone and ruined fortress; but one that less than a century before had contained persons in whose veins flowed the same blood that wandered through her own.

Rising, she gazed out of the window, which looked upon the wide and rushing sea, and she thought of the good old Lord of Wavrin and his dangerous voyage; and, like the figures in a delirious dream, the forms of the old fisherman, and his beautiful daughter and fair wife, and handsome, dark-eyed son, came back upon her memory.

A slight knock at the door roused her; but her whole nerves had been so much shaken with terror that she hardly dared to bid the stranger enter. At length, however, she summoned courage to do so, and the fair and smiling face of Emiline, the fisherman's daughter, appeared behind the opening door.

Torn from the fond, accustomed things of early days, left alone and desolate in a wild and unattractive spot, surrounded by dangers, and for the first time exposed to adversity, the heart of Marguerite of Flanders was but too well disposed to cling to whatever presented itself for affection. Emiline she found kind and gentle, but though younger, of a firmer mood than herself, having been brought up in a severer school; and to her Marguerite soon learned to cling.

But there was another companion whom fate cast in her way, from whom she could not withhold the same natural attachment, though but too likely to prove dangerous to her peace. Morning and evening, every day, Albert, the fisherman's son, who had been left behind by his father to afford that protection which none but a man could give, visited her retreat in the company of his sister; and Marguerite was soon taught to long for those visits as the brightest hours of her weary concealment.

But in the meantime the fisherman returned no more. Day passed after day; morning broke and evening fell, and the boat which had left the shore of Scarphout on that eventful evening, did not appear again. The eye of the fisherman's wife strained over the waters, and when at eventide the barks of the other inhabitants of the coast were seen approaching the shore, his children ran down to inquire for their parent--but in vain.

About the same time, too, fragments of wrecks--masts, sails, and planks--were cast upon the sands, and dark and sad grew the brows of the once happy family at the point of Scarphout. The two other men whom he had chosen to accompany him were unmarried, but their relations at length gave up the last hope, and the priest of Notre Dame de Blankenbergh was besought to say masses for the souls of the departed. The good old man wept as he promised to comply, for

though he had seen courts, and lived in the household of a noble prince, he loved his simple flock, and had ever been much attached to the worthy man whose boat was missing.

Marguerite of Flanders, with a fate but too intimately interwoven with, that of the unfortunate family at Scarphout, had been made acquainted with the hopes and fears of every day, had mingled her tears with Emiline, and had even clasped the hand of Albert, while she soothed him with sympathetic sorrow for his father's loss. "Mine is an unhappy fate," she said, "to bring sorrow and danger even here, while seeking to fly from it myself."

"Grieve not, lady, in that respect," replied Albert, raising her hand to his lips; "we have but done our duty towards you, and our hearts are not such as to regret that we have done so, even though we lose a father by it. Neither fear for your own fate. The times must change for better ones. In the meanwhile you are in safety here, and should need be, I will defend you with the last drop of my blood."

The morning that followed, however, wore a different aspect. Scarcely were matins over, when the good old priest himself visited the cottage of the fisherman, and proceeded to those of his companions, spreading joy and hope wherever he came. What, it may be asked, was the source of such joy? It was but a vision! The old man had dreamt, he said, that he had seen the fisherman of Scarphout safe and well, with a net in his hand, in which were an innumerable multitude of fishes. And this simple dream was, in that age, sufficient to dry the eyes of mourning, and bring back hope to bosoms that had been desolate.

Albert flew to communicate the tale to Marguerite of Flanders, and there was spoken between them many a word of joy--joy that so often entwines its arms with tenderness. He now came oftener than ever, for the old priest by some means had learned that he took an interest in all the changing fortunes of the state of Flanders, and daily the good man brought him tidings, which sometimes he felt it a duty, sometimes a pleasure, to tell to the lonely dweller in the ruined castle.

He found, too, that his presence cheered her, and that his conversation won her from her grief. She began to cling even more to him than to his sister; for he knew more of the world, and men, and courts, than Emiline, and he thought it but kind to afford her every solace and pleasure he could give. Each day his visits became more frequent, and continued longer.

Sometimes he would liberate her, after a sort, from her voluntary prison, by taking her, with Emiline, in his boat upon the moonlight sea, or even by leading her along, under the eye of Heaven's queen, upon the smooth sands, when the waves of a calm night rippled up to their feet. At other times he would sit upon the stones of the old battlements, rent and rifted by the warfare of ages, and would while her thoughts away from herself by tales of other days, when those battlements had withstood the assault of hosts, and those halls had been the resort of the fair and brave, now dust.

Then, again, he would give her tidings which he had gained while dwelling at Namur or at Tournai; reciting the gallant deeds of the servants of the Cross in distant Palestine, or telling of the horrors of captivity in Paynimrie; and then, too, he would sing, as they sat above the waters, with a voice, and a skill, and a taste, which Marguerite fancied all unequalled in the world.

Day by day, and hour by hour, the fair inexperienced princess of Flanders felt that she was losing her young heart to the youth of low degree; and yet, what could she do to stay the fugitive, or call him back to her own bosom from his hopeless flight? It was not alone that Albert was, in her eyes at least, the most handsome man she had ever beheld, it was not alone that he was gentle, kind, and tender, but it was that on him alone she was cast for aid, protection, amusement, information, hope; that her fate hung upon his word, and that while he seemed to feel and triumph in the task, yet it was with a deep, earnest, anxious solicitude for her peace and for her security.

And did she think, that with all these feelings in her bosom, he had dared to love her in return--to love her, the princess of that land in which he was alone the son of a poor fisherman? She knew he had--she saw it in his eyes, she heard it in every tone, she felt it in the tender touch of the strong hand that aided her in her stolen wanderings. And thus it went on from day to day, till words were spoken that no after-thought could ever recall, and Marguerite owned, that if Heaven willed that her father's lands should never return to her father's house, she could, with a happy heart, see state and dignity pass away from her, and wed the son of the Fisherman of Scarphout.

But still the fisherman himself returned not. Days had grown into weeks, and weeks had become months, yet no tiding of him or his companions had reached the shore, and men began to fancy that the vision of the old priest might be no more than an ordinary dream. Not so, however, the family of the fisherman himself. They, seemed to hold the judgment of the good man infallible, and every day he visited their cottages bringing them tidings of all the events which took place in the struggle that now convulsed the land.

By this time, the King of France had roused himself to chastise the rebels of Flanders, and to reinstate the young count in his dominions. He had summoned his vassals to his standard, and creating two experienced readers marshals of his host, had entered the disturbed territory with lance in the rest. Little armed opposition had been made to his progress, though two or three

detached parties from his army had been cut off and slaughtered. But this only exasperated the monarch still more, and he had been heard to vow that nothing but the death of every one of the conspirators would satisfy him for the blood of Charles the Good, and of the faithful friends who had fallen with him.

Such was the tale told by the good priest to Albert, the fisherman's son, one day towards the end of the year, and by him repeated to Marguerite of Flanders, who heard it with very mingled feelings; for if a momentary joy crossed her heart to think that the murderers of her father would meet their just reward, and her brother would recover the coronet of Flanders, the fear, the certainty that she herself would be torn from him she loved, overclouded the brief sunshine, and left her mind all dark.

The next day, however, new tidings reached Albert, and filled his heart with consternation and surprise. Burchard, the chief murderer of the dead count, had, it was said, dispatched a messenger to the King of France, to bid him either hold off from Bruges, or send him a free pardon for himself and all his companions, lest another victim should be added to those already gone from the family of the dead count. "I have in my power," he had added, "the only daughter of Charles, called by you the Good. I know her retreat--I hold her as it were in a chain, and I shall keep her as a hostage, whose blood shall flow if a hard measure be dealt to me."

Albert fell into deep thought. Could it be true, he asked himself, that Burchard had really discovered Marguerite of Flanders? If so, it were time, he thought, to fulfil one part of his father's directions concerning her, at any cost to himself; and as those directions had been, in case danger menaced her in her retreat, to carry her to sea, and, landing on the coast of France, to place her in the hands of the king or his representative, it may easily be conceived that the execution thereof would be not a little painful to one for whom each hour of her society was joy.

The more he pondered, however, the more he felt that it must be done; but it happened that, for the last three days, four or five strange sail had been seen idly beating about not far from the coast, and Albert determined, in the first instance, to ascertain their purpose. With some young men from the neighbouring cottages, he put to sea, and finding an easy excuse to approach one of the large vessels which he had beheld, he asked, as if accidentally, to whom they belonged, when, with consternation and anxiety, he heard that they were the ships of "Burchard, Prévôt of St. Donatien."

Returning at once to the shore, he dismissed his companions and sought his father's cottage; but there he found that tidings had come during his absence that the King of France had advanced upon Bruges, and that Burchard had fled with his troops; but the same report added, that the rebels, hotly pursued by the chivalry of France, had directed their flight towards the sea-shore. Time pressed--the moment of danger was approaching; but still great peril appeared in every course of action which could be adopted. The escape by sea was evidently cut off; the retreat of Marguerite of Flanders was apparently discovered; and if a flight by land were attempted, it seemed only likely to lead into the power of the enemy.

With her, then, he determined to consult; and passing through the vaults, he was soon by the side of the fair unfortunate girl, whose fate depended upon the decision of the next few minutes. He told her all; but to her as well as to himself, to fly seemed more hazardous than to remain. The high tide was coming up; in less than half an hour the castle would be cut off from the land; the King of France was hard upon the track of the enemy, and various events might tend to favour her there.

"I would rather die," said the princess, "than fall living into their hands; and I can die here as well as anywhere else, dear Albert."

"They shall pass over my dead body ere they reach you," answered he. "Many a thing has been done Marguerite, by a single arm; and if I can defend you till the king arrives, you are safe."

"But arms!" she said. "You have no arms."

"Oh! yes, I have," he answered. "No one knows the secrets of this old castle but my father and myself; and there are arms here too for those who need them. Wait but a moment, and I will return."

His absence was as brief as might be; but when he came back, Marguerite saw him armed with shield and casque, sword and battle-axe; but without either haubert or coat of mail, which, though they might have guarded him from wounds, would have deprived him of a part of that agility which could alone enable one to contend with many.

"If I could but send Emiline," he said, as he came up, "to call some of our brave boatmen from the cottages to our assistance here, we might set an army at defiance for an hour or two." Marguerite only answered, by pointing with her hand to a spot on the distant sands, where a small body of horsemen, perhaps not a hundred, were seen galloping at full speed towards Scarphout. Albert saw that it was too late to call further aid; and now only turned to discover where he could best make his defence in case of need.

There was a large massy wall, which, ere the sea had encroached upon the building, ran completely round the castle, but which now only flanked one side of the ruins, running out like a

jetty into the waters which had swallowed up the rest. It was raised about twenty feet above the ground on one side, and perhaps twenty-five above the sea on the other; and at the top, between the parapets, was a passage which would hardly contain two men abreast. Upon his wall, about half-way between the keep and the sea, was a small protecting turret, and there Albert saw that Marguerite might find shelter, while, as long as he lived, he could defend the passage against any force coming from the side of the land. He told her his plans; and for her only answer, she fell upon his neck and wept. But he wiped her tears away with his fond lips, and spoke words of hope and comfort.

"See!" he said, "the sea is already covering the *chaussée* between us and the land, and if they do not possess the secret of the vaults, they cannot reach us till the tide falls."

When he turned his eyes to the shore, the body of horsemen were within a mile of the castle; but then, with joy inexpressible, he beheld upon the edge of the sand-hills, scarcely two miles behind them, a larger force hurrying on, as if in pursuit, with banner and pennon, and standard displayed, and lance beyond lance bristling up against the sky.

"The King of France; the King of France!" he cried; but still the foremost body galloped on. They reached the shore, drew up their horses when they saw that the tide was in; turned suddenly towards the cottage; and the next moment Albert could see his mother and Emiline fly from their dwelling across the sands. The men at arms had other matters in view than to pursue them; but Albert now felt that they were aware of the secret entrance, and that Marguerite's only hope was in his own valour.

"To the turret, my beloved!" he cried, "to the turret!" And half bearing half-leading her along, he placed her under its shelter, and took his station in the pass. A new soul seemed to animate him, new light shone forth from his eye; and, in words which might have suited the noblest of the land, he exhorted her to keep her firmness in the moment of danger, to watch around, and gave him notice of all she saw from the loopholes of the turret.

Then came a moment of awful suspense, while in silence and in doubt they waited the result; but still the host of France might be seen drawing nearer and more near; and the standard of the king could be distinguished floating on the wind amidst a thousand other banners of various feudal lords. Hope grew high in Albert's breast, and he trusted that ere Burchard could find and force the entrance, the avenger would be upon him. He hoped in vain, however, for the murderer was himself well acquainted with the spot, and had only paused to secure the door of the vaults, so that his pursuers could not follow by the same means he himself employed. In another minute loud voices were heard echoing through the ruin, and Albert and Marguerite concealing themselves as best they could, beheld the fierce and bloodthirsty Prévôt with his companions seeking them through the castle.

Still onward bore the banners of France; and ere Burchard had discovered their concealment, the shore at half a bow-shot distance was lined with chivalry. So near were they, that, uninterrupted by the soft murmur of the waves, could be heard the voice of a herald calling upon the rebels to surrender, and promising pardon to all but the ten principal conspirators. A loud shout of defiance was the only reply; for at that very moment the eye of Burchard lighted on the form of Albert as he crouched under the wall, and the men at arms poured on along the narrow passage.

Concealment could now avail nothing; and starting up with his battle-axe in his hand, he planted himself between the rebels and the princess. The French on the shore could now behold him also, as he stood with half his figure above the parapet; and instantly, seeming to divine his situation, some cross-bowmen were brought forward, and poured their quarrels on the men, of the Prévôt as they rushed forward to attack him. Two or three were struck down; but the others hurried on, and the safety of Albert himself required the cross-bowmen to cease, when hand to hand he was compelled to oppose the passage of the enemy. Each blow of his battle-axe could still be beheld from the land; and as one after another of his foes went down before that, strong and ready arm, loud and gratulating shouts rang from his friends upon the shore.

Still others pressed on, catching a view of Marguerite herself, as, in uncontrollable anxiety for him she loved, she gazed forth from the turret-door, and a hundred eager eyes were bent upon her, certain that if she could be taken, a promise of pardon, or a death of vengeance at least, would be obtained; but only one Could approach at a time, and Albert was forming for himself a rampart of dead and dying. At that moment, however, Burchard, who stood behind, pointed to the castle-court below, where a number of old planks and beams lay rotting in the sun.

A dozen of his men then sprang down, caught up the materials which he showed them, planted them against the wall beyond the turret, and soon raised up a sort of tottering scaffold behind the place where Marguerite's gallant defender stood. He himself, eager in the strife before him, saw not what had happened; but she had marked the fatal advantage the enemy had gained, and, gliding like a ghost from out the turret, she approached close to his side, exclaiming, "They are coming!--they are coming from the other side!--and we are lost!"

Albert turned his head, and comprehended in a moment. But one hope was left. Dashing to the earth the next opponent who was climbing over the dead bodies between them, he struck a second blow at the one beyond, which made him recoil upon his fellows. Then casting his battle-

axe and shield away, he caught the light form of Marguerite in his arms, sprang upon the parapet, and exclaiming, "Now God befriend us!" plunged at once into the deep sea, while, at the very same moment, the heads of the fresh assailants appeared upon the wall beyond.

A cry of terror and amazement rang from the shore; and the king of France himself, with two old knights beside him, rode on till the waters washed their horses' feet. Albert and Marguerite were lost to sight in a moment; but the next instant they appeared again; and, long accustomed to sport with the same waves that now curled gently round him as an old loved friend, bearing the head of Marguerite lifted on his left arm, with his right he struck boldly towards the shore.

On--on he bore her! and like a lamb in the bosom of the shepherd, she lay without a struggle, conquering strong terror by stronger resolution. On--on he bore her! Glad shouts hailed him as he neared the shore; and with love and valour lending strength, he came nearer and more near. At length his feet touched the ground, and throwing both arms round her, he bore her safe, and rescued, till he trod the soft, dry sand. Then kneeling before the monarch, he set his fair burden softly on the ground--but still he held her hand.

"Hold! nobles--hold!" cried the king of France, springing from his horse. "Before any one greets him. I will give him the greeting he well has won. Advance the standard over us! Albert of Boulogne, in the name of God, St. Michael, and St. George, I dub thee knight! Be ever, as to-day, gallant, brave, and true. This is the recompense we give. Fair lady of Flanders, we think you owe him a recompense likewise; and we believe that, according to our wise coast laws, that which a fisherman brings up from the sea is his own by right. Is it not so, my good Lord of Boulogne?" and he turned to a tall old man beside him. "You, of all men, should know best; as for ten years you have enacted the *Fisherman of Scarphout*."

The nobles laughed loud, and with tears of joy the old count of Boulogne, for it was no other, embraced his gallant son, while at the same time the Lord of Wavrin advanced, and pressed Marguerite's hand in that of her deliverer, saying, "Her father, sire, by will, as you will find, gave the disposal of her hand to me, and I am but doing my duty to him in bestowing it on one who merits it so well. At the same time it is a comfort to my heart to offer my noble lord, the Count of Boulogne, some atonement for having done him wrong in years long gone, and for having, even by mistake, brought on him your displeasure and a ten years' exile. He has forgiven me, but I have not forgiven myself; and as an offering of repentance, all my own lands and territories, at my death, I give, in addition, to the dowry of Marguerite of Flanders."

We will not pause upon the death of Burchard, Prévôt of St. Donatien. It was, as he merited, upon a scaffold. Explanations, too, are tedious, and *the old history* tells no more than we have here told, leaving the imagination of its readers to fill up all minor particulars in the life of the *Fisherman of Scarphout*.

These tales were followed by a moral essay on the Use of Time, which none of the party would acknowledge, though it was strongly suspected to be the production of a young lady, in the assumed character of an old man.

THE USE OF TIME.

Time, considered in the same light as the other possessions of man, is certainly of them all the most valuable, as so very small portion is allotted to each individual. Yet every means are employed by the great bulk of mankind to waste that of which our quantity is so diminutive, every art is used to dissipate what will naturally fly from us, every ilea is bent on driving away that which we can never recall.

Our first thought, on awaking from sleep is, How shall I spend the day? Surely it ought rather to be, How shall I best employ those moments of which Heaven has given me so few? which of the various modes of filling my time will be most consonant to reason and virtue--will most redound to mine own honour--will be most advantageous to society?

There is no art which would be more beneficial to the world, or which is less practised, than the economy of moments. A thousand spaces present themselves in the life of every man, which are left unoccupied, even amidst the bustle of pleasure, or the anxiety of business--too small to be employed in serious study, too sudden and evanescent to offer opportunity for any prolonged enjoyment. But these vacuities might almost always be used to produce either some harmless gratification to ourselves, or some benefit to others; some improvement of our corporeal or intellectual faculties, or some scheme for giving satisfaction, or acquiring happiness. Man need never be idle, even for an instant. If the accident of the moment deprive him of books, the page of nature will most frequently be before him. Should this also be excluded from his view, let him turn his consideration to the tablet of his own mind; let him correct its errors, let him engrave

move deeply the lines of right; let him strengthen the powers of reason, by examining and arranging his own thoughts; let him think, but not dream; and he will find an inexhaustible fund of employment and delight--a fund which is always replete with improvement, and which is constantly accessible to his research.

Moments are the most precious treasures we possess; and by them most frequently is the fate of man decided. The ultimate effects of the impulse or accident of an instant will frequently give a colouring to the whole picture of our future life; either shadow it with sorrow or brighten it with prosperity. Moments, therefore, ought never to be neglected: they ought never to be wasted in idleness, nor remain unguarded by vigilance; for, in their passing, they hurry on our fate; and on their occupation and event our happiness here and hereafter depends.

Procrastination is another of the most idle ways of wasting time:--more destructive to happiness, more baneful to society, more hostile to virtue and reason, than almost any other custom short of actual vice. It weakens the mind, it cheats the understanding, and induces a state of intellectual imbecility, always increasing and never to be overcome. It is not alone that we substitute resolutions for actions, and spend in determinations those moments which ought to be employed in doing service to ourselves or benefiting society; but the mental cowardice grows upon us, and we lose the power even of resolving, where action is necessary, and where doubt is still more dangerous than error; perplexing our mind with distressing hesitation, as opposite to necessary caution as real prudence is to headlong rashness and blind timidity. Procrastination has been called "the thief of time." It is worse! It is the murderer of man's best friend.

Was all our time filled with the obvious duties which present themselves to our view--engaged in the harmless pleasures that at every step lie in our path, or employed in well-directed observation and moral improvement were those vacant moments, which men feel so burthensome, snatched eagerly for the acquirement of knowledge, or the reciprocation of benefits--the advantage to mankind would be, not alone the increased enjoyment of existence, but also, escape from temptation to evil, and security in the path of right.

Notwithstanding these observations, every man will find that he cannot always compel his mind to any particular object; and that, when he wishes to employ profitably a vacancy in his time, he must allow his thoughts to follow in a degree their former course; or at least, guide them into a new channel by some easy means of communication.

I have often myself experienced this restiveness of imagination; and whether it be from the weakness of age, or a natural drowsiness of constitution, I know not; but, whenever I endeavour to force my ideas towards subjects unassimilating with previous impressions, especially when at all under the influence of bodily fatigue, my mind seeks to escape from the burdensome employment I would impose on it, by taking refuge in the arms of slumber.

I had one day striven hard to fix my thoughts upon subjects very nearly connected with the foregoing observations, although, at the moment, I was fatigued and exhausted with exercises and occupations unknown and dissimilar to my secluded habits; and as I endeavoured to arrange my ideas in a more distinct form, gradually they lost their course, became more and more confused, and I dropped asleep.

If it be natural for the weary meditator to sleep, it is still more natural for the poet or essayist to dream; and, indeed, I have a custom of carrying on, during the hours of repose, that train of thought, which has occupied me while awake; dressed indeed in a more fanciful garb, and marshalled with all the extravagance of uncontrolled imagination.

On the present occasion, no sooner had I closed my eyes, than, as usual, the ideas which I had impressed on my mind again appeared, but in somewhat of a different form. The whole objects in the room, however, were unchanged, even in the visions of my sleep. I still reclined in my easy chair. My table, littered with papers, was before me--the picture of my great grandfather stared me in the face from the other side of the room--my wig hung in its usual recess by the fireplace--my snuff-box remained half open on the table; and my red morocco slippers rested on their own peculiar stool, undisturbed by intruding feet.

Ina few minutes, as I fixed my eyes upon the picture of my great grandfather the reverend effigy began to move; the next instant the figure descended from the back-ground, and bowing with all the formal grace of one thousand seven hundred and seven, advanced toward the table. I returned the salutation of my revered, ancestor, and begged him to be seated--I could do no less for one who had made such advances--and then, in all that absurd caricature of real life, which dreams occasionally display, we began to pour forth an overwhelming flood of compliments upon each other, in which, however, the copiousness of my great grandfather had considerably the advantage. Indeed, he seemed resolved to indemnify himself in that one night for the ages of silence he had passed within his frame.

At length, after an oration too long to be repeated, and which, in truth, I scarcely understood, he informed me, that knowing my desire to see all the moments of my passed life, he had come out of the canvass on purpose to gratify me; and that he would immediately call them to my sight, exactly as they had really been, in distinct classes, and in regular routine.

As he concluded, he rapped the snuff-box, with which he was represented in the portrait, and

in a moment, the room was filled with little winged boys, resembling our pictures of cherubim. "These," said my ancestor, "are the first twenty years of thy life. You may observe, that most of them are blind, for men, like kittens, do not open their eyes until they have been some time in the world--those that appear all over prickles, and who flutter about with such vehemence, are the moments wasted in love--those with sleepy air, swarthy complexion, and dusty wings, have passed you while poring over old authors and musty volumes; and those that fly about casting somersets in the air, like tumbler pigeons, are the instants spent in balls and assemblies in the giddy days of youth."

"But why," demanded I, "do so many that I see carry a scull, more especially those that bear a smile upon their lips, as if they mocked the memento in their hands?"

"All those," replied he, "are moments wasted; some in folly, some in actual vice, and some passed by, unfilled by action, or unemployed by thought; but all alike, the winged hasteners of mortality."

"But are not all the others the same?" demanded I, "even those who appear so calm and placid; those few, those very few, who neither laugh nor frown, but whose looks are full of expression, and whose unclosed eyes seem to beam with approbation--surely all moments tend alike towards the tomb?"

"Those," replied he, "are the instants given to the doing of good deeds and to the pursuit of virtue; and they lead us even beyond the tomb; through the portal of death, open the gates of life, and smooth our passage to eternity."

He now called to view the next twenty years of my life, and directly another winged crowd appeared, some of whom bore ladders, many of the steps whereof were broken or irregular; and these, I was told, were the moments given to the delusions of pride and the dreams of ambition. Others were little gloomy-looking imps, which, however, often when they would seem to frown the most, would suddenly assume a smile, so placid and beaming, that a ray from heaven appeared to have fallen upon their features. These, I found, were the moments of well-conducted study, calm reflection, and self-examination. Some, again, had no bodies; and their wings were decked with all hues and colours, as if each were a rainbow; but at the same time, like the painted follower of the summer cloud, they were thin, transparent, and unsubstantial. These, he informed me, were times of vain imaginations, and unreasonable desires. A multitude came next; many of whom had the brow bent, and the corners of the mouth drawn into a kind of sneer. There were others, whose features at once displayed a tear and a smile, both so bright, it was impossible to say which was the most radiant. Of these two sorts, the first were the moments of cynicism and misanthropy; and the second displayed the times given to particular charity or general benevolence.

"And now," said my great grandfather, "for the next twenty years."

"Stop, stop, my dear sir," cried I, "remember I am not sixty yet."

"Fifty-nine years, six months, three days, eleven hours, five-and-twenty minutes, four seconds," replied he in an angry tone. The fearful recapitulation put an end both to my dream and my slumber; and starting up in my chair, I found--the clock striking.

There were many other contributions, but I have only kept a copy of two more, the first of which was suggested by the apprehensions expressed by one of the party, lest the multiplication of steam-engines should ultimately exhaust all the fuel in the world. The second was occasioned by a reference made to the days when we had first met, by one in whom the equanimity of a high mind had preserved all the freshness of extreme youth.

THE LAST FIRE.

A VISION OF STEAM.

[As I sat, a few nights ago, reading in the newspapers many alarming calculations concerning the consumption of fuel by the multiplication of steam-engines, I fell into a dose, when the following awful and prophetic vision presented itself to my eyes. Immediately on waking, it fell naturally, as it were, into verse; and I think the subject too important to be withheld from public consideration.]

I slept; and, in a vision, to my eyes
Nature's last tragedy appeared to rise.

Man's climbing mind had subtilised each art,
Sublimed the whole, and perfected each part.
Laws, arts, and arms, had undergone a change,
Not less magnificent because most strange.
Steam, mighty steam! had superseded all--
Made horses bankrupts, and made bread to fall.
Steam-boats, steam-guns, steam-kitchens, and steam-coaches,
To this perfection made the first approaches:
But this was nothing to the wondrous steaming
The future showed me as I lay a-dreaming.
Vain in description to waste precious paper--
Suffice it, Europe was one cloud of vapour!

But, ah! alas! that vapour e'er should feel
The rotatory roll of Fortune's wheel!
Fuel grew dear! French forests fell like grass;
Tynemouth, Wall-end, and Kennell, cried, "Alas!"
Nor even could the Indian savage roam
Through ancient woods, his dim primeval home.
Long every shrub, and bush, and branch, and tree,
Had heated boilers, and had ceased to be;
And men were forced to turn to uses vile
Full many a laboured, many a learned pile.
Many a volume too, and many a tome,
Sharing alike the universal doom,
Now proved a blessing, where they proved a bore,
And blazed with fire they never knew before!
Wondrous! with what avidity men brought
Those solemn works with wit and learning fraught,--
State records, parliamentary debates,
Polemic tracts, and essays upon states,--
To light the fire which every parish vowed
To warm the noses of the coal-less crowd.

Romances next were hurled into the flame;
Next poets, play-writers, historians, came;
Last, Homer, Virgil, Milton, Shakspeare, Scott,
With many a sigh, were added to the lot:
But these the unwilling owners e'en confessed
Burned longer, clearer, brighter, than the rest.
Next furniture was fetched--drawers, tables, chairs,
Beds, stools, and every sort of wooden wares;
Till men were forced to seek the aid of stones
To bear their dinners and to rest their bones;
Till all was burnt. Then surly Winter rose,
And took blue wretches by the frozen nose;
And sad it was to see each chilly wight,
With hands in pockets and coat buttoned tight,
Run up and down the waste, uncovered earth,
Cursed with black cold, sad enemy to mirth;
And, as they ran, remorse their bosoms tore,
For joys they'd heedless cast away before.
Dandies and Russians, Dutchmen, bargemen, tars,
Regretted wasted pipes and lost cigars;
And patriot Catholics and Irish priests
Thought good wood wasted on heretic beasts,
Called Smithfield fire-lighting a thriftless trade,
And bloody Mary but a wasteful jade.

Vainly they ran! No cheering warmth they found,
And the dull sky upon their mis'ry frowned;
And when they entered in their doorless homes,
'Twas stony coldness all like empty tombs.
With frenzied energy they dug the ground,
Or dived the sea. Nor coal nor wood they found!
And many a wretch would lay him down to die,
And welcome Death without one envious sigh;
No terrors found they in his icy stare--
They could not well be colder than they were.
Still many raged and struggled for warm life,
And waged with cold and death unequal strife,
Dined on raw cabbages, devoured raw beef,
Gained indigestion, but gained no relief.

One man there was--a waterman by trade,
Erst in green coat and plated badge arrayed;
Men called him Fish, and rightly him did call--
For he could dive and swim, possessing all
The useful attributes of finny birth--
Finding the water warmer than the earth,
He spent his time in diving; and one day
Found in the river's bottom, where they lay
Hid from the danger of devouring flames,

The stakes that Cæsar drove into the Thames!
"Ho, ho!" cried he; "I've found a treasure here,
Shall warm me snugly till the rolling year
Bring's jolly summer." So with might and main
He tugged them forth and bore them to the plain:--
But, now he'd got them, he had still to learn
That wood when wet is difficult to burn.
Quick-witted in himself, he well divined,
Though cold at heart, some warmth remained behind;
And having ranged the timber with much art,
He sat and dried it with his broadest part.
A long, long week, seven weary nights and days,
Drying the expectant pile he careful stays.
Thus o'er her nest the mother eagle broods;
Or thus the ph[oe]nix of Arabian woods
Sits on his aromatic pile, whose fire,
Of new life redolent, shall soon aspire.

At length 'twas dry! Now with an eager hand
Two flints he seized and fired each rotten brand--
Each rotten brand a grateful ardour showed;
Forth burst the flame, and on the sky it glowed.
High rose the flame; too high, alas! for now
An ancient woman, on a mountain's brow,
Running some worsted through a needle's eye,
(What is it not old women will descry?)
Found out the fire for Fish that furtive flamed,
And forth with scream and shout the fact proclaimed.
"A fire! A fire! A fire!" the beldam cried;
"A fire! A fire!" the village all replied;
"A fire! A fire A fire!" was echoed far and wide.

Each babe took up the tale, each ancient sire,
Though deaf, and blind, and lame, repeated "Fire!"
High, low, rich, poor, good, bad,--all cold the same,--
Loud shouted "Fire!" and kindled at the name.
First hamlets, villages, assumed the cry;
Through burghs and cities then the tidings fly;
All traced them back to where they first began;--
All bawled out "Fire!" and as they bawled they ran.
Now Fish, who selfishly had hoped alone
T' enjoy the fire that he himself had won,
Astonished sees the world around him swarm--
Millions on millions, eager to get warm!

On, on, they rushed, one on the other prest;
And still the crowd behind impelled the rest.
All nations, languages, heights, features, hues,
That the wide universe could then produce,
Running, and jostling, scrambling, tumbling came,
Jammed into marmalade around that flame.

Then Fish, indignant, cried with loud command,--
A brandished boat-hook in his dauntless hand,
"Stand back, my masters! You may all be d----d!
The fire's my own, and I will not be bammed!
Or since the generous ardour fires your soul
To seek this genial flame, from either pole,
With me, its lord, possession to contend,
And squeeze me flat my right while I defend--
Thus I defy you, caitiffs all, and dare
The bold to follow, and my fate to share!"[21]

Proudly he said, and sprang into the flame:
High o'er his head the fiery eddies came;
The crowd beheld, and, maddened with the sight,
Dashed on the blaze, and perished in the light.
The fire was out; but still they onward rushed:--
The far extremes the narrow centre pushed,
Squeezed, jammed, cast down, one on the other rose.
And many a mortal trod on his own nose.
Each in his eagerness his fellow mashed:
The sun went down--and all the world was quashed!!!

THE VOYAGE OF LIFE.

I wish I could as merry be
As when I set out this world to see,
Like a boat filled with good companie,
  On some gay voyage sent.
There Youth spread forth the broad white sail,
Sure of fair weather and full gale,
Confiding life would never fail,
  Nor time be ever spent.

And Fancy whistled for the wind;
And if e'en Memory looked behind;
'Twas but some friendly sight to find,
  And gladsome wave her hand;
And Hope kept whispering in Youth's ear,
To spread more sail and never fear,
For the same sky would still be clear
  Until they reached the land.

Health, too, and Strength tugged at the ear,
Mirth mocked the passing billows' roar,
And Joy, with goblet running o'er,
  Drank draughts of deep delight;
And Judgment at the helm they set,
But Judgment was a child as yet,
And lack-a-day! was all unfit
  To guide the boat aright.

Bubbles did half her thoughts employ,
Hope she believed, she played with Joy,
And Passion bribed her with a toy,
  To steer which way he chose.
But still they were a merry crew,
And laughed at dangers as untrue,
Till the dim sky tempestuous grew,
  And sobbing south winds rose.

Then Prudence told them all she feared;
But youth awhile his messmates cheered
Until at length he disappeared,
  Though none knew how he went.
Joy hung his head, and Mirth grew dull,
Health faltered, Strength refused to pull,
And Memory, with her soft eyes full,
  Backward her glance still bent.

To where, upon the distant sea,
Bursting the storm's dark canopy,
Light, from a sun none now could see,
  Still touched the whirling wave.
And though Hope, gazing from the bow,
Turns oft,--she sees the shore,--to vow,
Judgment, grown older now I trow,
  Is silent, stern, and grave.

And though she steers with better skill,
And makes her fellows do her will,
Fear says, the storm is rising still,
  And day is almost spent.--
Oh, that I could as merry be
As when T set out this world to see,
Like a boat filled with good companie,
  On some gay voyage sent!

THE PRISON AND THE CASTLE.

For, ah! what is there of inferior birth
That breathes or creeps upon the dust of earth--
What wretched creature, of what wretched kind,
Than man more weak, calamitous, and blind?--Pope's Homer.

In such amusements as I have described passed our evenings at Pau; but the days were generally spent in roaming through the beautiful scenery in the neighbourhood. At length, however, the time for drinking the mineral waters arrived, and we prepared to migrate with the rest. There were two objects however in Pau which we had not yet seen.

Hitherto, we had lingered away our time without either visiting the prison or the castle; and, as we were about to set out the next day for Cauterets, we proceeded to the old château, though the evening was beginning to close in. We were well aware that there was little to be seen, but to have quitted the capital of Bearn without seeing the birth-place of Henry IV., would have been a high offence.

I hate prisons--there is something so repulsive in beholding man debarred the first privilege of nature, that, however necessary it may be to the safety of society, it makes me sick at heart to see it. No man, I have been told, felt this so much as Howard, and it was this that first caused him to turn the energies of his truly great mind towards alleviating the concomitant misery of those who were already wretched enough.

However, my object was to give my mind as much occupation of every kind as I could, and we accordingly proceeded to the prison, where the first sight that presented itself, was that of a maniac in a frightful state of insanity. We paused for a moment to inquire if nothing could be done for the unhappy being; and then as we were crossing the court, the voice of one of the prisoners singing in the tower above, caught our ear, and we stopped again to listen. The air and the voice were both peculiarly beautiful, and I easily obtained the words, which I now subjoin. I will not attempt to describe the effect of the sight of the maniac and the sound of that song.

PRISONER'S SONG.

1.

I know not, and I care not, how
The hours may pass me by,
Though each may leave upon my brow
A furrow, as they fly;

2.

What matters it? Each still shall take
One link from off the chain,
Which binds me to this bitter stake
Of sorrow and of pain.

3.

Time, like a rower, plies his oar,
And all his strokes are hours;
Impelling to a better shore
Of sunshine and of flowers.

4.

I've tasted all that life can give
Of pleasure and of pain;
And is it living, thus to live
When joys no more remain?

5.

I've tasted women's ardent lip,
Glowing with Love's first fire;
And yet been forc'd the cup to sip
Of coldness or of ire.

6.

All nature has had charms for me,
  The sunshine and the shade;
The soaring lark, the roving bee,
  The mountain and the glade.

7.

And I have been the tempest's child,
  And known the lightning's touch;
Mark'd midst the mad storm's warfare wild
  Too little or too much.

8.

And I have seen my own blood flow
  Red, in the deadly strife;
And others I have taught to know
  How dear they held to life.

9.

I've play'd with being as a toy,
  Till things have lost their form,
Till danger has become a joy,
  And joy become a storm.

10.

I've lov'd as man has seldom lov'd,
  So deeply, purely, well;
I've prov'd what man has seldom prov'd,
  Since first from bliss he fell.

11.

Mine eye again can never see
  What once mine eye has seen;
This world to me can never be
  What once this world has been.

12.

Speed on! O speed! my bark, speed on--
  Quick o'er life's troubled waves;
The one that comes, the one that's gone,
  What lies beneath them? Graves.

The first apartment we were show into contained the prisoners sentenced to detention for longer or shorter periods, according to their crimes. They were all working hard, and, seemingly, cheerfully; and the jailer told me, that a great object of those to whom the government of the prison was committed was to give the prisoners habits of industry, and to prevent them, by all means, from becoming utterly debased; so that, when they again receive their liberty, they may become better members of society instead of worse. Their principal occupation seemed in straw-work; and as this is an easy and light task, and fills up the moments which would otherwise prove tedious in confinement, they all appeared rather glad of it than otherwise. A portion of the emolument proceeding from their labour goes towards defraying the expenses of the prison, and a portion is reserved for the prisoner, in order that, when he goes back into the world, he may not again be driven to crime by poverty.

We next visited the apartment where were confined prisoners who had incurred severer punishment. They were generally persons condemned to the galleys for seven years or for life, and were waiting here till their sentence should be put in execution. When we entered there were several groups playing at piquet for sums of one or two sous. Amongst others was a lawyer, who had been sentenced to the galleys for forgery. I have generally remarked that those condemned for any serious crime have a heavy stupid expression of countenance and dull unmeaning eye; but this man was an exception. In his face there was plenty of keen, piercing cunning, with a touch of sarcastic bitterness, which showed itself also in his speech. He spoke to us for some time, and, like all villains, tried to darken his view of mankind till it became of the same hue as his own character. He took it for granted that all men were rascals, but only that he had been an unfortunate one.

From hence we went to the dungeons, where still deeper crimes awaited their reward. A damp obscure stone passage led to the cell where two murderers were confined expecting their execution. They were Spaniards, and had left nothing in the perpetration of their crime to excite anything but horror. Their victim had been one of their countrymen, who, having fled from the troubles and dangers which distressed his native land, had contrived to carry away a small sum to support him in his exile; and this proved the cause of their guilt and of his death. The evidence against them had left not a doubt of the facts, but yet they were suffered to linger on from week to week, not knowing which day would be their last, while (*as we were told*,) the Spanish ambassador pleaded their cause at Paris, and endeavoured to procure a commutation of their punishment, on account of their having shown themselves *staunch royalists*. They seemed to be heavily and almost cruelly chained, but nevertheless to mind it but little, smoking their cigars, and counting their rosaries with great *sang froid*.

I spoke a few words to them in Spanish concerning their situation, to which they replied without any show of feeling, appearing very cheerful, quite careless about dying, and not particularly contrite.

Although there be no doubt that the long habit of indulging in any passion gives a peculiar expression to the countenance and sometimes even a cast to the features, I put little faith in physiognomy, in the general acceptation of the word; but I could not help remarking, that the heads of these two men were precisely similar to those of all murderers whom I have seen, almost spherical in shape, with the forehead low but rather protuberant, and the eye dull and heavy.

We went next to see the room in the castle where Jeanne d'Albret brought forth the heroic Henry IV., heard the story of her singing even in the pains of child-birth in order that the infant might prove a strong and resolute man, and were gratified with a sight of the tortoise-shell in which he was cradled--though, be it remarked that one tortoise-shell cradle was burnt during the revolution. Afterwards, however, the governor of the castle produced the present one as genuine, asserting that the one demolished was not that which had served the monarch for a cradle. Thus that which is shown at present has acquired the additional interest of uncertainty, notwithstanding which, the Bourbon family have surrounded it with gilt helmets and spears, tinsel and tawdry, which might well suit a toy-shop but not the birth-place of Henri Quatre.

As we were to set out very early the next morning for the mountains, we proposed to rest early, but did not fulfil that purpose. On the contrary, we sat late talking over all the pleasant moments which we had snatched from fate, in the little capital of Bearn, and our lucubrations ended in an

ADIEU TO PAU.

Adieu, perchance for but a day,
  Perchance for many a year;
While life's bright part shall slip away,
And Hope shall yield to Memory,
  With many a tear.

But if imagination too,
  Be not amongst things been,
Her magic power shall call to view,
The kind, the good, that brightened you,
  Re-peopling the scene.

Adieu, sweet congress of fair things,
  Stream, mountain, valley, plain;
And e'en when Time man's winter brings,
Remembrance still shall lend me wings,
  To visit thee again.

LOURDES.

Dim grottos, gleaming lakes, and fountains clear.

I believe it to be all the same, after all, whether a man travels or not; he's a stupid, cross-grained, drudging animal, not half so good as the horse that drags him on his road. Blest with reason, it serves him less than the instinct of the brute; with experience constantly flogging him for his errors, he never corrects them; half of his time he forgets what is right, and when he remembers it he never puts it in practice.

Such were my reflections on finding--what? that John had forgotten that most indispensable requisite to an Englishman's comfort, the tea-kettle, at the instant we were leaving Pau. He had done so at every place where he had stopped on the road, and now he had to bring it down stairs, to tie it on the carriage, to cover it with the oil-skin, and, in short, to detain the whole party, postilion, and horses, and all, for at least five minutes.

Now, being very well aware that when I begin to moralize on trifles I am never in the best humour in the world, and judging by this infallible sign that I was in an ill temper, from having got up at four o'clock in the morning, I placed myself deep in the corner of the carriage, and pretended to fall asleep, for fear I should quarrel with my companion, which, Heaven knows, would have been no easy matter. However, as the carriage drove out of Pau, and began rolling along, in a dull gray morning, over smooth ground, it became no longer a pretence, and I began seriously to make reparation for my morning's idleness--I mean for not having slept; as I consider, not to sleep at the moments properly appropriated for it, just as great a piece of idleness as any other misuse that man makes of his time.

I finished my nap as we crossed a bridge over the Gave not very far from Lastelle. My friend who, it appears, had occupied himself much like myself, woke up at the same time, and looking back to Pau, which we saw diminishing afar, I am sure we both, thought of the friends we left there, of the kindness they had shown to wandering strangers, and the peaceful hours we had known in their society. I may never more see them again; if so, God bless them, for I am sure they deserve it.

It was scarcely past midday when we arrived at Lourdes. The approach is not unlike some of Mrs. Radcliffe's descriptions; the hills beginning to rise high and craggy on each side, with a wild torrent rushing in a valley below; and beyond, the Castle of Lourdes, starting up on a high rock in the midst, sometimes seen and sometimes hidden, as the road winds along the side of the mountain. It was market-day at Lourdes, and a curious scene, the whole place being impassable for the crowd of the Bearnais, with their Calmuck countenances and broad berrets, and the Bearnaises, each covered with a red or white triangular hood, edged with a black border, hiding the greater part of the head, and falling low down on the shoulders.

I have before mentioned the sightseeing propensities of my companion and myself; and though I had abjured grottos, as the most unsatisfactory of all things, the first of our movements was towards the "*Spelunque* (or cavern,) *du Loup*." It lies some way on the other side of the river, and, on arriving, we found the entrance so low that we were obliged to go in, not upon our hands and knees, but upon our faces. The guide went first, and then my friend, who is six feet three, so that I thought he would never have done--there was such a quantity of him.

The cave widens rapidly after the entrance, elevating itself to a great height, and resembling in many places the niches and aisles of a Gothic cathedral. In the end it is terminated by a deep well, into which the guide threw some pieces of stone, which continued echoing, as they fell, for several minutes. But the most curious thing we observed was the soil near the mouth of the grotto, which appeared entirely formed from the fragments of insects. We examined several portions of this black sort of earth and uniformly found it composed of parts of the legs, wings, and corslets, of what had apparently been small beetles.

After the cavern, we went, in a different direction, to visit a lake said to occupy the spot where a mountain once stood, which suddenly disappeared at the time of an earthquake. The only beauty of the place was the reflection of the hills around in the deep smooth water, and one might almost fancy they saw the ghost of the vanished mountain haunting its old abode and looking up from the bottom of the lake.

The whole of the country round is strewed with old towers and castles, which have been erected at different periods; some to check the descent of the mountaineers, who used here, as well as in Scotland, to exact a kind of black mail from the inhabitants of the low lands; some to guard against the Moors, who, during their residence in Spain, used frequently to invade and ravage the country; and some are even attributed to the Romans, but I should think, from their appearance, with little foundation for the supposition.

However, like all mountaineers, the people are full of old legends; and ancient superstitions,

driven from the more civilized globe, seem to have refuged themselves in the obscurity of these unfrequented hills.

They tell a droll story of the lord of one of the old castles of which I have just spoken, not at all unlike "Alonzo the Brave and the fair Imogine," but still more like the story of the noble Morringer.

THE DEVIL AND THE CRUSADER.

Ae day as the carle gaed up the lang glen,
  Hey and the rue grows bonny wi' thyme,
He met wi' auld Nick, wha said, how do ye fen,
  And the thyme it is wither'd and rue is in prime.
I've got a bad wife, sir, that's a' my complaint,
  Hey and the rue grows bonny wi' thyme,
For, saving your presence, to her ye're a saint.
  And the thyme it is wither'd and rue is in prime.

KELLYBURN BRAES.

Is those good old times so much to be regretted, when every noble had the right and privilege of administering justice or injustice on his own vassals, when hanging was in the hands of the gentry, and law in the mouth of every feudal chief--when the crumbling towers, where the moping owl now sits in melancholy solitude, were peopled with the gay, and the bright, and the fair--when the courts where the lonely wind whistles as in mockery of their emptiness, resounded to the clang of arms and the voice of the trumpet--when feast and revel filled those halls, where now sits nothing but silence and desolation;--the bravest of the brave was the Lord of the Château de B----, and the fairest of the fair was his lady. Beauty and wit were her's, and courage and wealth were his, and all thought the Marquis the happiest of mortals, except himself. How it came about, and why, does not appear, but a violent hatred took place between the Marquis and a neighbouring Baron, but histories do not mention that the Marchioness participated in her husband's dislike.

Some said, that the Marquis was jealous, and called him "poor man!" but as if to give them all the lie, and prove that he loved his wife dearly and suspected her not at all, he came to a sudden resolution to call together his vassals and retainers and join the crusade, for it was just about this time that Peter the Hermit went through Europe like a mad dog, infecting everybody with a desire to bite the Saracens. Every wise man makes a will, and the Marquis wisely calculating that a man who goes to cut other folk's throats, may find some one by the way to cut his own, caused to be made and delivered his last will and testament, leaving all his goods and effects, real and personal, to his dearly beloved wife in case of his death; and further adding a proviso, that if he did not return or send a messenger announcing his existence within seven years, she might look upon him as dead to all intents and purposes, and marry again to her heart's content: but he made it a private request, that she would never espouse the obnoxious Baron, which she promised faithfully, not to do.

Now when the will was made as above stated by the Marquis's chaplain, who could read and write, the Marquis, who could not, made a cross at the bottom and stamped the wax with the pommel of his sword, and the Marchioness kissed her lord and wept bitterly to think of his dying at all.

At length the dreaded day of departure came. The vassals and retainers marched out of the castle in gallant array, and the Marquis's page told him that his charger was prepared, whereupon the Marchioness fainted--dead as a stone. The Marquis waited till she had recovered, and then snatched himself away and departed, while the Marchioness, with flowing tears and streaming hair, stood in the highest tower watching the horsemen till the top of the last spear was hid behind the mountain, and then she came down and said to the servant, "At home to nobody but the Baron."

* * * * *

In the mean time the Marquis joined the crusaders, arrived safely in the Holy Land, and for some time performed prodigies of valour; till at length one of these same prodigies conducted him into a Saracen prison, where he lingered, like good King Lusignan, living principally upon roasted chestnuts and mare's milk, for there were no cows in Jerusalem. His fortitude would have melted a heart of stone, but as it did not melt the stones of the prison, it served him but little,

although being of an ingenious turn, he used occasionally to carve figures on little sticks, and Make whistles out of a marrowbone when he could get one.

In these dignified employments had the Marquis expended many years, and memory, who impudently keeps throwing in our teeth all that is disagreeable, could not forbear telling him, that the sun had seven times run his course since last he left his mountain castle in the Pyrenees; and on this was he meditating, when suddenly up started a gentleman, whom he instantly perceived to be the devil.

There is no one more ill-used, in my opinion, than the above-named personage. However broad his back may be, surely all the sins are laid to his charge, and of which he is as innocent as the child unborn, are well sufficient to bow it. The poor devil! O luxury, pride, vain glory, avarice, anger, hatred, revenge, and all uncharitableness; what, what would ye do if ye had not his shoulders to cast your burden upon? *O vanitas vanitatis!* But as I was saying, the devil walked into the dungeon, whereupon the crusader crossed himself. "My dear sir," said his black majesty, "don't disturb yourself; such old friends ought not to stand upon ceremonies."

The crusader made him a low bow, saying, that the devil really had the advantage of him, and that he was not aware of having the pleasure of his acquaintance.

"Not personally, indeed," said the devil, "but you have done me so much service one way or another, that I owe you some return. You stare, my dear sir, but you have sent to my dominions, with your own hand, three-and-thirty Saracens, two renegades, and an atheist. Between you and me, it is all the same to me," said the devil, "of what religion they are, so that I have them safe; and now I have got to give you a piece of news and make you a proposal." And then the devil--whether it was that he does not patronize love of any kind, or whether he thought that the Marchioness had had enough of it to answer his purpose, or what, I don't know, but he told the Marquis, that as he had neither returned nor sent during seven years, his wife was that very night going to give her hand to the obnoxious baron, and he farther offered to carry him back instantly to his own château in the Pyrenees, if they could agree upon the terms.

This tickled the Marquis's fancy, but the devil was rather exorbitant, demanding the knight's heart and soul. The crusader replied, that his heart was his king's and his soul was his God's, and so that would not do. The devil then asked for all his wealth at his death, and to be instantly installed his chaplain, if he could prove that he had taken orders. The Marquis answered, "*L'habit ne fait pas le moine*." The devil then made several other proposals, but the knight was a stickler, and did not think a bad wife worth much. So at last the devil took off his hat saying, "What your honour pleases," leaving it to his own generosity; and the crusader, who had learnt to be a screw, said he would only give him the remains of his supper.

"You are a hard man," said the devil, "but never mind! jump up!"--and down he bent his back for the Marquis to mount. The knight sprang into the seat, stuck his knees into the devil's sides, and away they went like a flash of lightning till they arrived at the château, where they put the good people in no small confusion. The knight walked first and the devil came after, and all the servants ran into the banquet-hall crying, "The Marquis! the Marquis!" Up jumped the Baron, up jumped the Marchioness, up jumped the guests.

The Marquis's movements were rather rapid; he walked into the hall, claimed his wife, kicked the Baron, wished the company good night, overturned the supper table and spoilt the supper, so that when order was restored, and he called for something to eat, there was nothing to be had but a dozen of nuts and a bottle of wine. The knight cracked the nuts, but, according to his bargain, took care to throw the shells over his shoulder for the devil, and when he had drank his wine, threw the bottle behind him too: but the devil was too old a bird to be caught with chaff, and had been gone half an hour before. So the crusader pulled off his boots and went to bed.

ARGELES.

> Et nunc omnis ager nunc omnis parturit arbos,
> Nunc frondent silvæ nunc formosissimus annus.
> --VIRGIL.

There was nothing more to be seen at Lourdes but the castle, and as that is now used only as a state prison we did not visit it. In scenes where liberty seems the charter of the place, as it does in these mountains, its loss is doubly dreadful. Besides, we had seen enough of prisons at Pau.

At Lourdes the Pyrenees really begin, in this direction, and from thence to Argelés, we passed through a valley which made us feel the whole force and truth of the expression of "*a smiling*

country." Richly cultivated at their bases, on each side rise mountains, covered with fields of somewhat less luxuriance to their very summits. Yet they lose none of their character of mountains, for from the midst of a smooth verdant turf, a mass of cold rugged rock will ever and anon break out and hang frowning over the road; and in other places where the mountaineers have carried up the vegetable mould to the top of the crags, which they frequently do, a small green meadow will appear spreading soft and rich, in the midst of perfect desolation. At the further extremity, the view penetrates into several other valleys, which give long perspectives of hills sloping to meet hills and far passes winding on into the misty distance, till some obtrusive mountain comes with its blue head and shuts the scene.

Frequent villages are strewed all through the valley of Argelés, and every now and then some old ruin raises itself from amongst the trees, connecting the history of the past with the present beauties of the scene. The tower of Vidalos forms a striking object all along the road, standing on a wooded height, in the midst, and seen from every part of the valley.

The best and most extensive view near Argelés, is from an elevation to the north-west of the town, called Le Balandrau, and certainly it commands one of the most splendid panoramas that can be conceived. Here, as in all the valleys of the Pyrenees, a mountain torrent runs in the midst; the lower part is filled with towns and villages and woods; convents, and ruins, and feudal castles rise next, with the hamlets they formerly protected still clinging around them; and above, on every side, are seen the immense mountains over which the industry of man has spread a rich robe of cultivation. The sun, as it wanders over them, entirely changes their aspect, from time to time, without, however, robbing them of their beauty; sometimes, throwing them into deep shadow, all the minute parts are lost in one grand obscurity, sometimes, shining full upon them, a thousand objects of interest are displayed, softened and harmonized as they recede by the airy indistinctness of distance.

It had been our intention to proceed direct from Lourdes to Cauterets, but there was a charm in the valley of Argelés which there was no resisting, and we dismissed the horses, resolving to stay at the little inn, however bad the accommodation might be. But we were agreeably disappointed in our *auberge*. The people were civil and attentive, the beds clean and good, the prices moderate, and even had we been true French *gastronomes*, we must have been well contented with our fare.

We spent the day in wandering about the valley, seeking for new beauties, and enjoying all we saw; and in the evening retired to rest full of ideas of loveliness, and contented with the day.

CAUTERETS.

Hîc secura quies et nescia fallere vita,
Dives opum variarum, hîc latis otia fundis
Speluncæ, vivique lacus, hîc frigida Tempe.
--VIRGIL.

The next morning we proceeded to Pierrefitte; and while some little alteration was taking place in the harness before we could go on towards Cauterets, a gendarme came up and asked for our passports. I luckily had mine in my pocket, though it had never been signed for the Pyrenees, but it answered very well, and was civilly returned, scarcely looked at. Not so happened it to a poor traveller on foot, who it appeared had no passport to show. When a man is in the wrong, and wishes to go on in the same way, he has but two resources, to bully or sneak. The poor traveller chose the first, and a violent quarrel ensued with the gendarme, who swore that he should not proceed one step without showing his passport, called out very loud about doing his duty, slapped his hand upon his heart, and talked about his honour. Finding that bully would not answer, the traveller had nothing for it but to sneak, so he asked the gendarme to come and drink a bottle of wine with him. The gendarme did not accept the invitation, but he drank the wine, and the traveller having paid for it walked on upon his way, while the other remained on the spot, to prove, to all who doubted it, what an honourable man he was, and how well he did his duty.

When the harness was all completely arranged, we passed on through the little town, and turning to the right entered the gorge of Cauterets. Here again was a new change of mountain scenery gaining in grandeur what is lost in richness and cultivation. From Pierrefitte the road suddenly turns into a deep ravine, with the river rushing below, and immense masses of crag rising many hundred feet above. But it is not even here the bare, cold, lifeless stone. Every spot where the root of a tree can fix itself, every ledge where the least earth can rest, is abundant in vegetable life, and all sorts of beautiful foliage seem striving to form a screen for the gray rock from which they spring. The road winds on through this sort of scenery, changing at every step,

till, approaching Cauterets, the valley gradually widens, and again high mountains surround it on every side, but far bolder than those of Argelés, and covered near the tops with dark forests of pines and sapins.

Cauterets is a complete watering-place, a sort of barrack, which gets filled to the head the moment that fashion gives orders to march from the greater cities. As soon as the sound of the postman's whip was heard, all the inhabitants rushed to their windows to see who was to be added to their little world; and amid the number of white bonnets and blue, red bonnets and gray, which Paris had brought forth and Cauterets contained, we were fortunate enough to discover two or three with the owners of which we could claim acquaintance; and then there was pulling off of hats, and bowing of heads, and so forth, while a thousand gaping applicants stood round the carriage pressing for our "linge à blanchir," or for us to "manger chez-eux," so that there was practice enough in the art of refusing to train one for a prime minister.

We put up at the hotel of old Madame Lapierre, who is an original in her way. Some fifty years ago (I suppose) she kept a little *auberge* at Cauterets, when Cauterets was scarcely heard of. She has grown, into opulence as it has grown in fame and size, and now is one of the richest persons of the place. But still little Madame Lapierre retains all her old habits: six days of the week, trots about the kitchen in her original dirt, peeps into the saucepans, counts the onions, and scolds the servants, and the seventh puts on a clean muslin cap, and brings in one of the dishes herself, to show how fine she is. Withal she really is a very good old soul, civil, kind, and obliging; the only thing is, that there is no understanding a word that she says, for speaking *patois* sixty or seventy years has broken all the teeth out of her head, and spoilt her articulation.

Cauterets was as full as it could be. The violent hot weather had driven all the world out of large towns, and health, pleasure, curiosity, and fashion brought them all to the Pyrenees. Truly, truly, they could not have chosen a sweeter spot; grandeur and beauty become so familiar to the eye, that all the rest of the world does indeed look "stale, flat, and unprofitable." Besides, there are a thousand little lovely nooks unhackneyed by itineraries, which one is constantly finding out for one's self. I hate itineraries, they are a sort of Newgate Calendar, a record of all the common tours which have been executed for the last century. The Pyrenees have been but little tourified, or if they have I knew nothing about it, which came to the same thing.

There is a great difference between the Alps and the Pyrenees; the Alps are a country of mountains, the Pyrenees a chain. In Switzerland one is obliged to go to seek mountains: in the Pyrenees they start forward upon one; all that is beautiful and sublime is near at hand, and nature seems fond of changing from one form of grandeur to another.

Cauterets is surrounded on every side by majestic hills, and the walk to each of the sulphureous springs, of which there are several, displays new beauties at every step. That called La Raillère is the most frequented, and beyond it is a rich woody scene, dim and still, with the river divided into three or four streams, breaking over a high crag, and then foaming on under a small bridge of planks, which leads across from one rock to another. To the left lies a beautiful valley, to which we made an excursion with all the gay folks of the place. The ladies were carried in machines called *chaises à porteurs*, consisting simply of chairs fixed on poles and covered in with oil-cloth on all sides but one; these are carried between two men, whose dexterity is wonderful, bearing their burden up steep rocks, and over broken crags which seem quite impassable. Altogether they are not ugly in a landscape, and as we pedestrians stood upon the top of the hill and watched two-and-twenty of them following more slowly up the winding ascent, it had a very curious and pleasing effect. The pleasure of our party, however, was soon spoiled by a heavy rain, which came on and drove us back towards the town. Unfortunately, this is too frequent an occurrence in mountainous countries, and though the Pyrenees are less subject to it than many other places, they still are by no means exempt.

Though, in all probability, the good effect produced by visiting these waters, is more to be attributed to, the exercise, fine air, and beautiful scenery, than the benign influence of the nymph, yet I have seen two or three glasses from the well of La Raillère act in an extraordinary manner upon one of my friends, enabling him to walk for many miles without fatigue, which his health would not have permitted without some strong stimulus. However, the effects generally attributed to these fountains of the Pyrenees are rather amusing. The accounts published of them begin like the puff of a French charlatan, who states, that though some men make extravagant pretensions for their nostrum, that is not his case, there are only one or two diseases which his remedy is adapted to cure; and then he goes on to recite all the maladies incident to human nature.

The waters of Cauterets are thus stated to be specific in wounds, rheumatisms, affections of the liver, and the spleen, intermittent fevers, consumption, disease of the skin, and paralyses; and "etc." is put at the end to gratify the imagination of the reader, in case he should have any nondescript complaint which has not been enumerated.

THE LAC DE GAUB.

Care selve beate
E voi solinghi e taciturni orrori
Di riposi e di pace alberghi veri
O quanto volentieri
A rivedervi io torno.--GUARINI.

It often happens in the Pyrenees, that the place one goes to see is less worth seeing than the road which leads to it. We set out early in the morning for the Lac de Gaub, and passing the principal fountain of Cauterets, turned to the right where the path wound in amidst enormous rocks and forests of sapins, with not a vestige left of the civilized world,--all wild, and rough, and desolate, with the high peaks of the mountains almost shutting out the rays of the sun. The road, if it can be called a road, appears almost impracticable even on foot, but our guides told us, that the Spanish mules are frequently driven along it, and I have more than once since seen the Spaniards pass it on horseback.

The river, during its course through this valley, forms four principal cascades. The first, called "De Cirizet," is very beautiful, falling headlong down through a deep cleft in the rock, which is entirely covered with dark woods. The second, called "Le Pas de l'Ours," is connected with the other by the very tragical history of a poor bear. Be it known, then, that at the first waterfall, grew in days of yore a wild cherry tree, from which, by corruption, it acquired the name of Cirizet. It was first of all "La Cascade du Cerisier," the cataract of the cherry-tree, and from its root etymologists will have no difficulty in deriving "La Cascade Cerizet." A poor bear, who, like Parnell's hermit, far in a wild remote from public view, had grown from youth to age in harmless simplicity was wont every day to descend from his mountain hermitage and make a frugal meal upon the cherries that grew beside the fall.

However, it so unfortunately happened, that bruin was induced to vary his diet. The demon came tempting him in the shape of a shepherd and a flock of sheep and luxury, that most penetrating evil, found its way even up to his cave, whispering that every country gentleman ought to kill his own mutton.

Bruin suffered himself to be seduced by the charms of one of the sheep. It is supposed, that finding his virtue failing, he resolved to fly, but lingered still to give it one last embrace. However that may be, the separation was too cruel for either to bear, and his tender friend expired in his arms. Heart-stricken, bruin carried her mortal remains to his cave; and for some days was so overpowered with grief, that he abandoned his favourite walk to the cherry-tree cascade. At length, however, he once more took his way towards it, but ha, hapless tale! the cruel shepherd had watched his path, and dug away the support from the very stone over which his way lay as he passed the second cascade. Bruin advanced ruminating over his lost mutton;--he put his two forefeet upon the treacherous stone;--the stone gave way, and down he rolled headlong into the torrent, paying dear for not having contented himself with cherries.

The Pas de l'Ours, unconnected with its little tragedy, would be less interesting and is less beautiful than the fall of the Pont d'Espagne, where the path passing over the stream by a little wooden bridge, leads through the Port de Cauterets into Spain. Here two rivers flowing diagonally through long mountain passes, till they come near the brim of a precipice, plunge over the edge of the rock and meet in the deep chasm below, foaming and thundering as they join. Nothing can be more magnificent than to stand on the few unshaped trunks of trees which form the bridge, and look down upon the meeting of the waters, for ever rushing on with a dazzling whiteness and unceasing roar, while a thousand flowers are growing peacefully on the very brink; and a variety of shrubs and trees are dipping their branches in the spray.

When we were there the sun shone strongly on the mist which the fall raises, and arched it with a sunbow, that hung flickering over the waters like the banner of the contending streams.

The road which had been ascending all the way, now began to mount rapidly as if seeking the very clouds, and in about half an hour we reached the small mountain lake called the *Lac de Gaub*, situated at a great height above the level of the sea, but surrounded by hills still more elevated. It is calm, silent, and solitary; though the turf that dips itself in the clear waters of the lake is carpeted with a thousand flowers of every hue and living with many a painted butterfly, yet there is a solemn stillness in the whole, which makes one afraid of speaking for fear of breaking the silence which has dwelt for ages amongst those mountains. The waters, too, harmonized with the rest; they were deep, clear, and calm, without a ripple upon their bosom. I could have fancied them the waters of oblivion, and took a draught to try, but it did not answer. The only living being in the place, appeared to be a solitary fisherman, who makes his abode in a miserable hut by the side of the lake. He is the picture of Charon, and looks withered and blackened by solitude.

His dwelling, which was built of rough stones piled one on the other, boasted neither window nor chimney. The light entered by an aperture in the wall turned from the prevailing wind, and the smoke escaped, or not, as it liked best, by a hole in the roof, made for its convenience; and

yet "canopies of costly state" would not perhaps have rendered our fisherman a happier man. He had a dry and caustic humour about him, which might spring from the concentration of his own thoughts in his loneliness; and, of the economy of human life, he had at least acquired so much knowledge, as to cheat his fellow-creatures with as little remorse as he hooked a trout.

ST. SAUVEUR.

Intorno a queste fonti siedon sempre
Bei damegelli e candide donzelle
Tenere e fresche e di leggiadro aspetto
Che invitan tutti a ber quell' acque dolce.
TRESSINO. L'ITALIA LIBERATA DA GOTI.

Rumour, that winged demon, whose business and pleasure it is to torment man, like a gnat that comes just when he is enjoying his morning's sleep, and, buzzing for ever about him, sings its indistinct song in his ears, till he has neither rest nor peace--came tormenting us at Cauterets, with the news of St. Sauveur being so full that if we did not put horses to the carriage, and set out without delay, we should find ourselves worse off, in point of lodging, than even where we were, although my friend was obliged to go into his room sideways, for fear of knocking down some of the utensils, and I might have just as well been in an oven, for I was precisely above the kitchen fire.

I have just been bleeding one of my candles. The wax had gained so much upon the wick, that it was ready to die of repletion, till, making an incision with the point of the snuffers, I let out a sufficient quantity to relieve it, and the flame burnt up brighter than before. I cannot help thinking that man is like a candle. The cold part is his body, the melted spermaceti is his blood, the wick is his brain, and the flame, though chemists prove it to be only the combustion of gas, produces light and heat, of which we know nothing, any more than of the spirit.

So we set off from Cauterets as hard as we could drive; but before we got to Pierrefitte my friend's strength failed him, and we were obliged to stop at that town for the night.

From Gavarnie to Lourdes may be considered as forming but one valley,--sometimes, indeed, contracting into narrow passes, sometimes opening into wide basins, but always marked, or rather connected, by the river, which, entering at the Cascade of Gavarnie, flows on in nearly a direct line to Lourdes.

At Pierrefitte, the valley contracts to a deep gorge, like that which leads to Cauterets, but the scenery round bears a softer character. The defile is much narrower, the hills more green and smiling, and though, perhaps, the whole may be more beautiful, it appears to want grandeur, after having seen Cauterets. For some way the road winds round the projecting bases of the hills, till at length it opens upon the beautiful valley of Luz, presenting a rich scene, not unlike the basin of Argelés. Here, also, scattered villages and ruined castles are the first things that present themselves, and shortly after appears the town of Luz, in the lower part of the valley, and St. Sauveur on an eminence to the right. The latter is a beautiful little place, consisting of nineteen or twenty houses, nested in a woody part of the mountain, and looking far over the scene of loveliness around.

We arrived just in time to be too late; the lodgings which we expected to find vacant had been taken by some one else; and we were obliged to put up much in the same way that we had done at Cauterets; but the place was so beautiful, so smiling, so cheerful in itself, that we could not be out of humour with anything in it.

Madame de Gontaut Biron, one of the most amiable beings I ever met, has made St. Sauveur her favourite summer abode, and has taken pains to display its beauties to the greatest advantage. She has planned and carried into execution many of the principal embellishments of the place; and Madame de Gontaut's bridge, and Madame de Gontaut's seat, and Madame de Gontaut's walks, are always the most beautiful that can be found. Her rank and her fortune gave her the means of making herself respected, but she has used them to a better purpose, and made herself loved. She combines all the high *ton*, the uncommunicable ease and elegance of a woman to whom courts have ever been familiar, with a degree of originality and *bonhomie* which takes off from the flatness of great polish. She knows every poor person in the village, and if they are sick or in distress it is to Madame de Gontaut that they fly for assistance. She relieves their wants, she promotes their happiness, she looks upon them as her children and they almost worship her. Her's is not alone that sort of general charity, which gives but for the sake of giving, without knowledge of the object or interest in the distress: she discriminates in her bounty, and doubles it by the manner in which it is done; for her words are as kind as her actions. I have met

her often going down to the Springs, leaning on the arm of one, of the common porters of the place, asking after his family, inquiring into his affairs, and advising him in their regulation, with as much kindness as if he had been her son.

There is all the difference in the world between the benevolence which cheers and raises its object and the charity which humiliates.

A custom exists at St. Sauveur of bowing to every lady one meets in the street. Now, as the whole town is not two hundred yards long, and it is crammed as full as it can hold one may calculate fairly upon having to pull off one's hat at least a hundred times whenever a necessity exists of walking from one end to the other on a sun-shiny morning. God knows, I did not grudge it them, but it ought to be put into the list of expenses. My companion did much better, for he walked about the town with his hat under his arm, which did just as well.

BAREGES.

Quis tumidum guttur miratur in alpibus?--JUVENAL.

It is an extraordinary fact, that between the Valley d'Ossau and the Valley de Baréges an entire change takes place in the population. I never saw a handsomer race than the people at the Eaux Bonnes, and the Eaux Chaudes. At Cauterets beauty had forsaken the fair sex: the men were well-formed and good-looking, but the women quite the reverse; and at St. Sauveur, Luz, and Baréges, men, women, and children were all ugly together. A few days after our arrival at St. Sauveur we went over to Baréges, which is but at a little distance, and on our road met all the goblin shapes of fairy tales completely realized, and a great many more far too disgusting for description.

In this neighbourhood there are a great many people afflicted with the goitre. Nor had I any idea of its effects till I saw it here. This monstrous appendage to each side of the neck is horrid in itself, but those afflicted with it to any great degree, lose entirely the hue of health, become squalid and emaciated, and very frequently end in idiocy. There is no describing their appearance; and one can scarcely wonder at the treatment the ignorant mountaineers used to show them of old, considering them cursed of God, and driving them from all human intercourse.

The Cretins, or idiots, are also very common in the Pyrenees, and a large village near Bagneres de Begorre is almost entirely peopled with them, But these wretched beings are not at all held in the same degree of horror as the Caghots, or goitrous, who for many centuries were supposed, even by the physicians of the towns adjacent to the Pyrenees, to be the descendants of persons afflicted with the leprosy of the Greeks. It appears, however, to be now ascertained, that this disease proceeds from something suspended in the water of mountainous countries, which, being taken into the system, produces these obstructions of the glands. Knowing very little either of medicine or chemistry, my inquiries of course were limited; but from what I have been able to learn, the malady is confined to particular districts, both in the Alps and Pyrenees, while others in the vicinity are quite free from it. In Derbyshire the same disease is common, while in the mountains of Scotland and Wales I believe it is little known. An analytical comparison of the water of the districts in which this malady prevails might throw great light upon the subject, and be of much service to a portion of mankind, who, though happily not very numerous, are well worthy of compassion on account of their sufferings.

The road to Baréges is not particularly beautiful, and the town itself is hideous. Two rows of ill-built houses, forced into a narrow space between the river and the mountain, crammed full of the sick and the maimed, is what Baréges appears at first sight. Its mineral springs are the strongest in the Pyrenees, and famous for the cure of gun-shot wounds. There is a large hospital for soldiers, who saunter up and down the single street, in which scarcely a whole man is to be met with at once; and yet Baréges is the gayest place in the country; there are nothing but balls and parties every night. In short, it is a great dancing hospital, in which all the world caper on in the best way they can with such limbs as they have got left.

Such is Baréges in the summer; in the winter every one quits it, except a few shepherds and a few bears, who take possession of the empty houses while the snow lasts. Everything at Baréges is made to be carried away--shutters, doors, windows, and even staircases, so that nothing but the skeleton of a town is left when once the migration begins. Two things render it nearly uninhabitable after October--the tremendous overflowings of the river and the avalanches, called here *lavanges*, which frequently destroy great part of the town. It is not alone that they overwhelm all that they approach, but as they come everything trembles and falls before they touch it, without it be of the most solid construction. Such is the report of the country people, who, in their figurative language, say that all nature fears the *lavange*; but any effect of the kind

must proceed from the pressure of the air by the rapid progress of such an immense mass. Many efforts have been made to guard Baréges from this calamity by means of planting trees on the heights; but, as seldom a year passes without its occurrence, the young trees can afford no obstacle to the avalanche.

GAVARNIE.

Alps frown on alps, or rushing hideous down,
As if old Chaos was again returned,
Wide rend the deep and shake the solid pole.--THOMSON.

In returning to St. Sauveur, we saw the mountains, in whose breast it rests, as they ought to be seen to know them in their greatest magnificence. It was about half-past two, and the sun shone in such a manner as to cast a kind of blue airy indistinctness over the whole, hiding all the minuter parts, and leaving them in grand dark masses, marked decidedly upon the bright sunshiny sky. Although we had risen considerably from Luz, the sun was already hidden by the mountains to the south-west, and all the valley was in shadow. As I have before remarked, when the hills are seen covered with fields half-way to the top, scattered all over with trees, or broken into separate masses of rock, the multitude of objects prevents the eye from estimating their height justly; but it is when they are thus thrown together, in one uniformity of shade, that they appear in their true grandeur.

But as I have got upon my hands a long journey to the most splendid of nature's works, I must proceed on my way as quickly as possible. It would be tedious to describe the journey from St. Sauveur to Gedre, as it is little better than a repetition of that from Pierrefitte to Luz on a smaller scale. The passes are narrower, the basins more circumscribed, and the mountains rise higher and more perpendicularly on each side. The road, which soon becomes unfit for a carriage, sometimes sinks to a level with the Gave, and sometimes rises high on the sides of the mountain; and as my horse had a talent for stumbling, together with a peculiar predilection for the edge of the precipice, the insurance upon my neck would have been somewhat hazardous. Of course during a twelve miles' ride through that part of the country, we found a great many spots of peculiar beauty, but if I were to tell all I saw, I should never have done with the long stories of lovely hamlets nested in the wood that overhangs the stream, and marble bridges that carry the road across it, and rugged mountain heads that hide it from the sun.

At Gedre there is a famous grotto which every one talks about a great deal more than it deserves. A deep cleft in the rock overhung with woods, amidst the Gave de Héas to the valley, where it joins the other river. There is a great degree of soft quiet and stillness in the sound of the waterfall, and the deep shade of the wood hanging down and dipping its branches in the clear pools formed at the foot of the rock. The whole is certainly very beautiful, but not meriting the extravagant praises which have been bestowed upon it.

At this village, Gedre, is the last general *bureau* of the French *douanes*, and here we were obliged to take out a kind of passport for our horses, that they might be allowed to return, Here also I engaged a guide, named Rondo, to conduct me the next morning to the Brèche de Roland: and we then proceeded on our way, skirting along the foot of Mount Comelie, till we arrived at a spot called the Chaos or Payrada, which seems as if a mountain had been violently overthrown, and strewed the valley with its enormous ruins. Blocks of granite containing from ten to a hundred thousand cubic feet, scattered at large, or piled one upon another, fill up a space of nearly half a mile. No tree, no vegetation is to be seen; all is death, and desolation, and silence, except where the Gave rushes angrily through the rocks, and seems to hasten its progress to escape from such a wilderness of destruction.

About a mile more brought us to the village of Gavernie, wildly situated in the midst of flowers, and snows, soft fields, and tremendous mountains.

THE CASCADE OF GAVARNIE.

The village of Gavarnie once belonged to the order of the Temple, and we were shown the little church, said to have been erected by those military monks. There is nothing peculiar in the building, and the only thing which pretends to interest, is a collection of skulls, said to be those of eight knights who were beheaded on the little green, at the time of the barbarous extermination of their order. I believe, that as far as any truth goes, they might just as well call them the heads of eight Roman emperors. But it is no great matter--could every Templar come back and swear to his own, they would be the only persons concerned after all; and till that can be the case, one head does quite as well as another.

After visiting the church, we followed the course of the river towards the famous Cirque de Gavarnie. On setting out from the village, it seemed as if we could touch it; but it fled before us, and shortly a thick cloud came over it like a veil. We walked on, however, crossing several large basins, which had formerly been filled with water, and arrived at last in the midst of that gigantic amphitheatre, to which all other of nature's works appear but faint essays of her power. The whole was at first filled with the cloud, and we could scarcely distinguish any of the objects around; but gradually the vapour rose and passed away, and we found ourselves standing in the midst of the semi-circle of black marble, rising abruptly fourteen hundred feet in height, round an area of nearly a league. There is no describing it; the soul is lost in the vastness that it contemplates, and it is long before the eye can comprehend the grandeur of the objects before it. High above the amphitheatre lies the mountain, pile upon pile, to the very sky, like gigantic steps carpeted, with snow. Nine or ten small streams are continually pouring over the edge of the precipice, and tracing a long white line upon its dark surface; but a river far more considerable than the rest, shoots over the eastern side of the amphitheatre, from a height of twelve hundred and sixty feet, forming the famous cascade of Gavarnie.

There was still a line of heavy cloud drawn across the very summit of the fall, and below, it separated into dense thick mist, while the stream itself continued for ever pouring silently on between the two, like time between two indistinct eternities. At the same time, the sun had long, long sunk to us, and the world below was all in shadow, while far above the cloud, glittering in a kind of golden splendour, rose the icy summits of a far higher mountain, beaming with an airy unearthly light, like the faint glimpse of some more brilliant world.

Description can do nothing for it, imagination can do little. It must be seen and felt.

Although such towering heights still remained above us, we had already risen so far, that we found the snows lying at the foot of the amphitheatre, and were told that they never melt. After falling from the height, the river collects in a small basin below, and forcing its passage under the snow, forms the famous Pont de Neige[22] of Gavarnie.

Far above the Cirque de Gavarnie, and the snows and the ices which hang upon its edge, appears another perpendicular wall of rock, running along nearly from east to west, and forming a barrier between France and Spain; and nearly in the centre of this, appears a deep cleft like an embrasure--the famous Brèche de Roland. For here it is said that the Paladin Orlando, or Roland, as he is called in France, pursuing the army of the Moors, cleft the rock of three hundred feet in height, with one blow of his enchanted sword, and opened a passage into Spain. The story goes on to say, that Orlando was on horseback.

I looked in vain to see the footpath that was to conduct me the next day to the breach. I could discover nothing but one perpendicular precipice, and returned to Gavarnie, puzzling myself how it was to be accomplished.

THE BRECHE DE ROLAND.

E'en now, where Alpine solitudes ascend,
I sit me down a pensive hour to spend,
And placed as high above the storm's career,
Look down where hundred realms appear,
Lakes, forests, cities, plains extended wide,
The pomp of kings, the shepherd's humbler pride.
GOLDSMITH--THE TRAVELLER.

While we were at dinner, my musical-named guide, Rondo, arrived from Gedre, and came in to speak to me, walking with the peculiar bounding step of mountaineers. A picturesque figure he

was too, with his spear-headed pole, conical cap, cow-skin sandals, and an elegant bissack of netted cotton, which hung under his left arm. He was a small, slightly made mountaineer, with pale dark complexion, bright black eyes, and a countenance lit up with calm intelligence. He told us so many stories of accidents from storms in attempting to reach the Brèche, that my companion whose health utterly prevented him from ascending, became alarmed on my account, and begged me not to go unless the day should prove perfectly clear.

At half-past three the next morning, Rondo called me; and having dressed myself as warmly as possible, I went down stairs in the dark. The stairs led immediately into the middle of the kitchen, on the floor of which were stretched the beds of half a dozen families belonging to the inn, There were mine host and hostess, her sister and her sister's husband, and two or three cousins and their partners, on either side; quite patriarchal. I don't know whether this proceeded from the inn being very full, or whether it was usual, but so it was, that in the obscurity I tripped at the first mattress, and tumbled head foremost between a young lady and her husband, causing a sudden and violent separation, and certainly putting asunder those whom the church had joined together. The young lady started up, and I believe at first, as there was no seeing in the matter, took me for her husband, so that her first address was rather more tender than it otherwise would have been, but at that moment Rondo came in with a light, *sans cérémonie*, and enabled me to extricate myself from my very doubtful situation.

We now provided ourselves with the necessary implements for our journey: spear-headed poles, *crampons* for our feet, a bottle of brandy, and some cold meat, and setting out from Gavarnie, soon arrived at the foot of the Tours de Marborée. The morning was foggy, and by this time it had begun to drizzle; Rondo shook his head at the weather, saying that we should have a storm; so we sat down among the flowers, with which the whole place was carpeted, and held a council of war.

The mountaineers always use the most figurative language, and my guide explained to me his apprehensions; saying, that when the French mist meets the Spanish mist on the top of the mountain, they fight for the breach with thunder and with hail; that there had been threatening of war in the sky for many days, but that now it menaced more than ever, and that if the storm came when we were amidst the glaciers, where there was no shelter, death would be our portion: for that was a country, he said, where there was no good God.

However, never liking to give up what I have once undertaken without succeeding, and as it appeared that if the storm overtook us before we reached the ice, we could find some place of refuge from the hail, which was the most dangerous enemy we had to encounter, I determined to go on, at least as far as the snow, and then let our further progress be determined by the weather.

Our first effort was to pass a hill composed of loose fragments of stone, which gave way at every step. This conducted us to the foot of the precipice, on the west side, where we paused, under a shelving rock, till the rain had somewhat abated. Thence we went a little way round the base, and found the path, if path it could be called, for it was nothing but a narrow irregular break in the rock, almost as perpendicular as the rock itself, and only more practicable on account of the steps formed in it by the broken layers of stone.

We soon passed this, and then walking along a narrow ledge formed in the precipice, we came to another natural stair of the same kind, which conducted us to the height of four or five hundred feet, where we scared two eagles, (or I rather believe vultures) from the rock, which continued screaming and wheeling round our heads during great part of the ascent; and doubtless we had their best wishes for our speedy passage to the bottom.

Turning then in a degree away from the Marbarée, we came to a piece of turf slanting in an extreme angle, and so slippy with the rain, that we could scarcely keep our feet. We passed then again to the east, and once more, to my great satisfaction, began climbing the firm rock; but this did not last, and we had to change several times from rock to turf, before I found myself at the summit of the amphitheatre, on a level with the top of the cascade, which, as the clouds began to clear away, I could plainly perceive projected violently over the edge of the opposite precipice, losing itself in mist below.

It is seldom that one has an opportunity of looking down a perpendicular height of fourteen hundred feet: and I stood enjoying the sensation for much longer than I believe my guide judged *à propos*, for he seemed scarcely to know whether he ought to let me stand there or not. The tinkling of the sheep-bell, and a loud barking, two sounds I little expected to hear there, roused me from my dreaming, and conducted us towards the flock of a Spanish shepherd, which was wandering at large under the care of two enormous dogs, who now appeared mounted on the projecting rocks that flanked their charge, baying loudly at our approach.

No shepherd was with the flock, but we soon discovered his abode by a large iron pot of milk that stood at the entrance. He had chosen the little hollow under a shelf of the rock, and fenced it in with a wall of loose stones which rose breast-high, forming a dwelling of about seven feet by four. I went up to the little wall and looked over upon the shepherd, who lay extended on his cloak reading. I asked him what he was about, and looking up without the least appearance of surprise, he answered that he was *studying*. I demanded what was the subject of his study, to which he replied by stretching out his arm towards me, with a dirty dog's-eared book of Spanish

letters on geography. It is probable that the conversation might have lasted for some time in the same manner, he lying on his back, and I looking over the wall, had not Rondo come up, and desired him to give us some milk. The call on his hospitality instantly roused him, and he sprang upon his feet, one of the most picturesque figures I ever beheld.

He was a youth of sixteen or seventeen, of very perfect, though almost gigantic proportions. Before he came out of his den, he placed his large broad-brimmed hat on his head, which gave a sort of bandit expression to his full dark eyes and sunburnt countenance: He wore two double-breasted Spanish jackets, covered with hanging buttons. His feet were shod with the sort of mountain sandal called *espardin*, and in a crimson sash round his waist, he wore a sharp-pointed knife, nearly two feet long, which though only used for the simple purpose of cutting his bread, might have served very well on more murderous occasions. In short, he was a most romantic sort of gentleman in appearance; but he speedily lighted a fire, boiled us a large portion of his milk, and pressed us to his simple treat, with a cheerfulness and frankness smacking of ancient days. He joined with us too in conversation; told us that it was nearly a month since he had seen a human creature, and then it was his father, who had brought him six loaves of the black bread he set before us.

The shepherd seemed anxious to know what brought us to the Brèche de Roland; and when I told him, in the best Spanish I could muster, that it was but simple curiosity, he shook his head with a smile. I asked him why he did so, doubting whether he understood me; but he answered, that he could not imagine any one coming to such a place unless it were to feed sheep.

One thing, however, he told us, which set our minds perfectly at ease with respect to the safety of our further progress. He assured us that there were no clouds on the other side of the breach, and that there would be no storm that day. My guide seemed to place perfect confidence in his judgment, and with this prognostic we again set out.

After about half an hour's more climbing, the clouds entirely cleared away, the wind blew strongly, the sun shone glittering on the snow before us, and all announced as fine a day as we could have desired. the mountain was all shining as if strewed with diamonds, for the last drops of rain were crowded upon every blade of grass, and nested in the bosom of every flower. Nature, as if to mock the snows, had covered the whole turf to their very edge with blossoms, and the rich blue iris, and a very delicate white flower I had never seen before, were actually growing within the verge of the region of frost. As most of these had already past in the valleys, I gathered as many as I could for Madame de Gontaut; and then having fixed our *crampons*, which were but clumsy, we proceeded to climb the ice.

To the east was an immense glacier stretching over the highest part of the Marborée. It was of deep blue ice, and I could distinguish layer above layer, resting nearly vertically, which prevented all approach on that side. Stretching east and west, was the rocky wall, which forms the highest crest of the Pyrenees, and due south, cleft through as with a sword, the Brèche de Roland; but between us and it lay another glacier, at an inclination of about sixty degrees, which made the direct ascent impracticable. To the westward, however, was a large tract of soft snow, by which we were enabled to make our way to the side of the latter glacier, and cross instead of attempting to climb it. We proceeded very well up the snow, for about a quarter of an hour, at the end of which time we came to ice covered with drift, and rendered unsound by the percolation of a stream.

Here the *crampon* on my left foot turned round, by the strap coming undone, and my foot gave way, but I was still firmly fixed by my climbing-pole and my right foot. However, Rondo, who was about twenty yards distant, was alarmed and ran to my assistance, when both his feet slipped and he went flying like lightning towards the edge of the precipice. I could do nothing to save him: when suddenly, after having gone about two hundred yards, he struck his pole into the deep ice, and having regained his feet, returned to me, as quietly as if nothing had happened.

We now began to cross the glacier transversely, cutting steps with a hatchet, and after passing more than one deep chasm from six inches to two feet in breadth, we arrived at the crest of the mountain, so that I could stretch out my hand and touch it. Between France and Spain this natural barrier rises perpendicularly from the ice, and is said to be from three to six hundred feet in height.

It has an extraordinary effect to stand upon those immense masses of ice, and feel the vivid rays of the summer sun. The rarefaction of the air did not at all affect my breathing, but the humidity had become so condensed under the glass of my pocket-compass, that I could scarcely ascertain the direction of the various objects. Retracing in a degree our steps, we now without further difficulty reached the Brèche de Roland; and here, for the first time, I turned round to contemplate the scene below.

Mountain beyond mountain, valley leading into valley, stream flowing into stream, till the fading distance and the boundless sky did not meet, but blended in each other. On one side, were the whole mountains of Bearn, on the other, the whole mountains of Aragon, far, and clear, and blue. It seemed as if a giant ocean of enormous waves had suddenly been frozen, and that I stood upon their highest pinnacle.

The icy barrier around appeared to cut us off from all nature. It was perfect solitude; there

was not a flower, there was not a living creature; the very eagles we had left below: there was not a sound but that of the lonely wind whistling shrilly through the chasm in the mountain. Where we stood, we seemed far above creation, and at our feet lay all the vast and varied world, nor had I ever fancied that world so grand.

How magnificent are all thy works, great God of Nature!

THE DISCOVERY.

In coming from the mountain, while I was yet far above the surface of the vulgar earth, I saw my friend standing, watching my descent, upon one of the hills of shingle which lie at the bottom of Gavarnie, and I hastened on to meet him. There was some degree of agitation in his manner as we met, and as he grasped my hand, he said, "Do you know, Young, something very extraordinary has happened to me since you have been gone."

"Something extraordinary it must have been indeed," I replied, "to stir you from your calm placidity. But, tell me, what is it?"

"Extraordinary indeed," he replied; "but come on towards the inn. Do you know, I have seen the same appearance which has so long tormented you--I have seen again that terrible countenance which will never quit the memory of either of us!"

"Good God! is it possible?" I exclaimed; "then it is no delusion!"

"It is certainly the most extraordinary thing in the world," he replied; and then proceeded to inform me, that as he was coming down to breakfast, while looking along the dark passages at the top of the stairs, that fearful countenance had glared upon him for a moment in terrible distinctness. With prompt presence of mind he had instantly rushed towards it, but found nothing but the long corridors and empty rooms of the inn. On our return we called for the book of travellers' names, but our own were the only English names that it contained; and not a little agitated, we mounted our horses and returned to St. Sauveur.

Without pausing any longer there than was merely necessary to pack the carriage, we set out for Bagneres de Bigorre, and thence proceeded towards Tarbes. More than once we canvassed the extraordinary circumstance that had occurred; and notwithstanding all our efforts to be philosophical, it is in vain to deny that I at least felt a greater degree of superstitious awe in regard to the object which had so often tortured me, than ever I had done before. Previously I had looked upon it as a delusion, originating in a partial derangement of my own brain; but now that my friend had seen it also, it acquired the importance of a terrible reality. Every hour it weighed more and more upon my mind, and I saw that B--- was sorry that on the impulse of the moment he had communicated to me the fact of his having witnessed the same strange occurrence.

As we had set out somewhat late from Bagneres, however, the shadows were coming over the mountains long before we reached Tarbes, and as my friend B---- was rather indisposed, we determined, if the little town of St. Martin afforded a good inn, to halt there for the night. Our postilion informed us that the inn was "*admirable*," and driving up to the door we saw a crowd round it sufficient to show that it was well frequented.

There were, amongst others, five or six gendarmes on horseback surrounding a little cart, in which appeared a man loaded with irons, with another police soldier beside him. What was my surprise, however, on beholding, when the cart turned to drive off, no other than my former servant Essex, in the person of the apparent criminal. The man evidently saw me, and turned away his head; and as I had but slight grounds to love his acquaintance, I took no farther notice, merely thinking, "The rascal seems likely at length to meet his deserts."

As B---- stepped out of the carriage, however, and walked into the inn, the landlord asked him if Monsieur had come to see the body of the gentleman who had been murdered. He replied, by asking, what gentleman; and, while the host answered that there was then lying in his front room the body of a gentleman who had been murdered by his own servant as he was coming from a château in the neighbourhood, where he had been to pay a visit, B---- walked on to the door where, from the number of people, and the appearance of one or two gendarmes, it seemed the corpse lay for inspection.

The crowd made room for him to pass, and I was following, but he suddenly drew back and grasped my arm, exclaiming, "Good God! Young, do not come in here--and yet do! It is Wild!"

"Wild!" exclaimed I, rushing in; "what do you mean?" But there needed no farther question. There, on the deal board, which usually served the little *auberge* for a public table, lay stretched

the body of my enemy, Alfred Wild, at, least if mortal eyes might be trusted. My hand, it is true, had stretched him on the earth, my eyes had witnessed the convulsive agony of death, the surgeon had pronounced him to be dead, and the newspapers had announced his death; yet, there he lay, or some one so like him, that his own father would not have known the difference.

"Do you recognise the body, sir?" demanded one of the gendarmes, seeing me gazing upon it with feelings which no pen can describe, so mingled were they of hope and relief, and horror and surprise. "Do you recognise the body? for in all the letters and papers which have been found upon him he is called by one name which I do not choose to mention at present, while that in his passport is Monsieur Auguste de Vallançay."

"I think I do recognise the body," I replied; "and if it be the same his name is not Vallançay, but Alfred Wild."

"Précisement!" replied the gendarme; "that is the name on several letters which were found in his pockets. But we are going to send to the gentleman at the château, whom some people believe to be his father."

"Come away, Young," cried my friend; "this will be, at all events, a relief to your mind, and I trust may be but one step to your happiness. Come away; perhaps I had better go, before the horses are taken off, and break this event to the unhappy man's father."

"No!" I answered; "No; you are unwell yourself: I will go, and perhaps the task, painful as it is, may be some atonement for what I inflicted on the old man before."

B---- made some opposition, but I would yield to none; and getting into the carriage, begged the people round to direct the postilion to the château they had mentioned. The man knew it well, and in about three-quarters of an hour we were passing through a pair of old gray stone gates.

It was now quite dark, and the man, half peasant, half footman, who, after ringing five or six times, made his appearance, admitted me with somewhat surly scrutiny to a large vestibule, in which was burning one small ill-trimmed lamp. He then opened a door at one side, and announced "The English gentleman" upon which a voice immediately exclaimed, "If he had not the impudence of the devil, he would not show his face here again--but I will soon settle that! Send him in!"

"Some mistake!" I thought, obeying the words I had overheard, rather than the servant's half-muttered directions, and walked into a large old-fashioned saloon, somewhat better lighted than the hall. At the farther end was a table covered with the materials for making tea, and at the left-hand side sat two persons, on whom my eyes were of course instantly fixed. But before a vague sort of intuition could become really perceptive, a cry of joy met my ear, and in a moment Emily Somers, my own Emily, was in my arms. "It is James, papa! Oh, it is our own dear James!" she cried, and the happy tears flowed fast and long.

There was no mistaking the tone, the manner, or the action. Emily at least was glad to see me, and her father seemed so also, if I might judge by the hearty and reiterated shake of the hand which he now gave me. But how all this, had come about remained to be explained, and it was but by confused and desultory fits and starts that I gained an insight into what I am now about to write down.

The first light which was thrown upon the matter was by Mr. Somers himself, who when he found that I had come thither accidentally, supposing the tenants of the château to be very different people, cut across Emily's delight at seeing me, and withdrew her hand from mine.

"Stay, stay, Emily," he cried, "as Mr. Young does not know what has occurred, it is fit that he should be informed before he commits himself by a word. Remember, my love, his opinions may be altered as well as our fortunes."

"No, no, papa! No, no!" replied Emily. "For once, I will be bold and answer for him."

"But let me tell him at least," said Mr. Somers.--"Soon after you left us for France, Mr. Young, one or two of my speculations were unsuccessful, and left me a loser of nearly fifty thousand pounds; but that was nothing, and would never have been felt, had not, just afterwards, the great house of Kinnerton and Badenham, in Calcutta, failed to an immense amount. That was a shock to many a house, as well as mine, and people began to draw largely upon me; still I could have done very well if the London house of the same name had held firm; but on calling there, though they assured me of their perfect competence to meet all claims, I saw cause to doubt. What could I do? To press them was to make them stop sooner, without helping myself, and, to prepare against the worst, I went to my old friend Samuel Wild, who talked about supporting me with half a million, if it were necessary; but when he came in the evening he made it a condition that his son was to have my Emily.

"It was no time to trifle, and I told him all--her engagement to you--and everything. But he replied, that his son could prove that you did not care anything about her, and a great deal more which it is unnecessary to repeat. We held out for long; writing to you, and receiving no answer, and seeing every now and then letters from your servant Essex to young Wild's valet, telling him a great many stories about you, which we have found to be false, as we have since passed

through that part of the country and seen many who knew you and did you justice.

"However, the matter seemed plain enough then. Difficulties increased; the London house of K---- and B---- failed; a regular run was made upon our bank. Old Wild stood firm, and would do nothing unless Emily would consent. I saw nothing before me but poverty and disgrace both for me and her, and I do believe I almost went on my knees to my own child to save us both. Well, sir, she did consent, and immediately Mr. Wild paid in, in one morning, three hundred thousand pounds. We declared our intention of paying everything in gold; the credit of the house rose higher than ever, when suddenly, who should come over but yourself. Your letter first opened my eyes; for, by showing me that you had been ill and unable to write for two months, and that your servant had been playing the rascal with you, you proved to me that I had been cheated also. Well, my dear boy, I went away to old Wild, resolving, at all events, to do you justice, let come what would; and, producing your letter, I told him that his son must make good his charges or I should not suffer Emily to keep her engagement. He then thought fit to bully, and told me, that before six-and-thirty hours were over he would close the doors of my bank. I feared that he had the power to do so, but still he could not take from me my honesty, and I left him in the same determination. The first thing was, if possible, to save my credit; and I went to several old friends, telling them the real state, of the case, that I could meet all, but that it might require time. They promised to meet the next morning, and thus the day was spent without my seeing you.

"The next morning took place that unfortunate duel, and my friends also met; but ere they came to any decision, not only all that old Wild had paid in was drawn out of the bank, but every one, with whom he had a word to say came pouring in with draft upon draft. There was no stemming the current, and before noon the bank stopped. You may conceive what a state we were all in, and then came the news that you had killed young Wild in a duel. Poor Emily was more dead than alive; and to make matters worse, before nightfall there was an execution in the house. We went out of it the next morning, and, to cut my story short, when all the affairs were wound up, which did not take a couple of months, all debts were paid off, twenty shillings in the pound, and eight hundred per annum clear was left for myself. So I came out, my dear boy, triumphant; but still Emily begged me not to try it any more, but let us live upon what we have. We determined for a time to come to France. And now, James, if you love poor Emily Somers, with little or nothing, as well as you loved the heiress of the rich banker, there she is, take her, and God's blessing be upon you both."

I need not say what was my reply, but it was soon made, and I now found that the letter which my friend B---- had written for me to Emily had never been received by her, the house in Portland Place having been taken possession of by Alfred Wild's father, who doubtless had opened and returned it. My stay at Worthing, and illness there, were known both to Emily and her father; and Mr. Somers, conceiving that I must have seen the wreck of his affairs mentioned in the newspapers, had himself requested my banker to tell me when he wrote that Emily and himself were as well as could be expected, which had been done with true commercial brevity.

Alfred Wild, in the meantime, had been carried home to his father's house, but the report had already spread that he was dead; and from the moment that his father saw him in the condition in which he was brought home, the old man never spoke for any other purpose than to give orders for persecuting the family of Mr. Somers.

Great loss of blood, however, and excessive pain--for the ball had lodged in some very sensitive part--had made Alfred Wild faint upon the field at the moment he was about to fire at me; but he had suffered no mortal wound; and though he had fainted and recovered several times ere he reached his father's house, yet before night he was sufficiently recovered to know all that was passing round him. Enmity towards myself and love for Emily Somers were still the predominant passions of his heart; and conceiving some vague scheme of obtaining her and punishing me, he besought his father to give out the story of his death.

He found the execution of the scheme more easy than he imagined, for the report was in all the newspapers that he had died on the spot where he fell; and his parsimonious father's only objection arose from the expense of putting the family in mourning and the trouble of concealment. When he heard, however, what was the object, and that revenge upon me and on the family of his former friend was thus to be obtained, a chord was struck in the old man's bosom, the tone of which was not the less powerful because it had seldom vibrated before. He declared that he would give a hundred thousand pounds--he might have said his heart's blood--to ruin me and the family of Mr. Somers, and measures were instantly taken to carry his son's design fully into effect. The death was regularly inserted in the newspapers, the whole house was shut up, the servants were clothed in black, and those necessarily trusted were bribed to secresy.

I am not even sure that a false funeral was not performed; but, nevertheless, rumours of something strange got about, even before Mr. Somers quitted London. Had I remained in England, I should most likely have discovered the deceit; for Captain Truro had positively declared in several circles that his friend had not died immediately, as had been at first supposed, but, on the contrary, had revived once or twice in the carriage on their way home. No coroner's inquest being reported on the body, also caused doubt, and the gratuitous announcement that the family did not intend to prosecute did not silence rumour.

As soon as he could travel, it seems, Alfred Wild, having re-engaged his confederate Essex in

the scheme against me, set out from London for the purpose of following Emily, who, with her father, had taken refuge in a beautiful spot amongst the Pyrenees.

Whether it was with or without design--whether he had discovered the dreadful delusion with which remorse tortured me, and followed me with the fiendish purpose of confirming it--or whether his pursuing the same course was accidental--I cannot tell, but certain it is that during the whole of my journey through France he had been near me, and I cannot even now be sure of which were the occasions when my fancy deceived me, which those when I beheld his real countenance.

Speaking French like a native, and having assumed a French name, he passed unsuspected, and at length presented himself at the château which had been hired by Mr. Somers, in order to throw off his disguise and pursue his claim to the hand of Emily.

Neither the worthy banker nor his daughter were much surprised by his re-appearance, for, as I have said before, they had already learned to doubt the story of his death; but though he made his long constancy, the severe treatment he had suffered, and the vehemence of his passion, all pleas for Emily's hand, she rejected him still with cold abhorrence, and he left the house in not the best mood of mind. He, had brought his servant Essex to the château with him, to guide him, as the man had been previously sent forward from St. Sauveur to discover the house.

Master and servant, however, knew each other to be base, and many a disgraceful dispute had arisen between them already. As long as Essex had his master in some degree in his power by possessing his secret, he knew that he could wring as much money from Wild as he wanted; but as soon as ever he found, by his master's visit to Mr. Somers, that the whole was to be divulged, he determined upon a scheme for the purpose of, at one blow, taking vengeance of Wild for some former offences, and of enriching himself with the contents of a pocket-book which he knew to be valuable. The proximity of Spain was a great inducement for executing, at once, a design he had long meditated, for Essex was citizen of the world, and with a well-furnished purse could make himself happy in any country. Thus, as they returned on horseback from the château, a few angry words from the master brought on a few insolent ones from the servant. Albert Wild, it seems, must have turned to reply; for he was found not two minutes after, with the wound of a pistol-ball, running from temple to temple. Essex was instantly pursued and taken by the *gardes chasses*, who came up at the report of fire-arms, and being found with his master's pocket-book and a lately-discharged pistol, perceived that he had lost the stake for which he had played, confessed all, and ended his life upon the scaffold.

I have hurried on to the conclusion of the history of Alfred Wild and his servant; but of course, when Emily and her father had given me an account of all that had befallen them up to the moment at which I had again found them after so long an absence, I too had my tale to tell. Though the first sketch was brief, yet the after details were long in telling, for Emily would know all and everything; and while I spoke, the deep and varied emotions which crossed her countenance, the intense interest that every incident I related, every feeling I acknowledged called up in the pure bland mirror of her face, was compensation a thousand and a thousand fold for all that I had suffered.

The pains, the cares, the sorrows of the past had taught us all that sad lesson, the darkest, most grievous which experience forces on us--ever present doubt of each future moment;--and it was agreed that Emily should become mine as speedily as possible. But, alas! who can stretch his power over the next half-hour and say, "It shall be at my disposal!" Our marriage was appointed to take place before the end of the month and we were making preparations to hurry back to Bordeaux for that purpose. But Mr. Somers was obliged to attend the criminal court at Tarbe, on the trial of the prisoner Essex. The agitation and heat were more than he could bear, and after having given his evidence clearly and distinctly, he was seen to fall. I hastened to his assistance, and found that he had been suddenly struck with palsy. Borne back to his own house, medical aid was speedily procured; and he soon recovered the possession of all his faculties, but my marriage with Emily was of course delayed; and the physicians having recommended him to try the waters of Baréges, for the complete restoration of his health, we removed thither, and remained till the close of the season. His health certainly improved in a degree, but still his corporeal powers were so much impaired, his danger so great, and his situation so painful, that all thought of more joyful events was of course put aside.

After our return from Baréges, a friend in whom he placed great reliance, recommended him to a Parisian physician; and although we were obliged to wait for the return of spring, we proceeded towards the French metropolis as soon as the weather was sufficiently warm to permit of our performing the journey without danger to the invalid. It was accomplished by slow stages, and we arrived in Paris in the beginning of June. For a time the health of Mr. Somers seemed to improve under the new treatment to which he was subjected, and so far had he proceeded in his convalescence, that my marriage with Emily was fixed to take place within a month. The unfortunate twenty-sixth of July, 1830, however intervened, and the outbreaking of the last French revolution, found us tied to Paris without the possibility of quitting a capital in which, during all former political convulsions, crimes of the deepest dye had been committed. My anxiety for Emily and Mr. Somers was of course very great, for no one had any right to expect that the French populace would show such noble and magnanimous forbearance as they then did, and the re-enactment of some, at least, of the horrors of former days was reasonably to be

anticipated. When, however, the great struggle was over, and a revolution was effected, which, by its splendid moderation and magnificent integrity of purpose and accomplishment, must be received as the atonement and expiation of the former bloody and insane catastrophe, Mr. Somers, over-excited by the reports which we could not shut out from his ears, relapsed into a state worse than that from which he had partially recovered. In the mean time, I applied myself as far as possible to relieve those individual cases of sorrow and distress which every great social convulsion must leave behind. In the course of my efforts for that purpose, a little narrative of suffering fell into my hands, which may not be uninteresting--perhaps not uninstructive. It came to me through a third person, and the ultimate fate of the unhappy man who wrote it, I could never discover. It was as follows:--

THE HISTORY OF A FRENCH ARTISAN

DURING THE LAST REVOLUTION.

I was born in the beautiful valley of the Seine, near the small town of Bonnières. It is a lovely place, and I will say no more of it; for in sitting down to write all the miseries and horrors that have visited me since I left it, the fair calm spot of my birth, and the sweet peaceful scenes of my boyhood, rise up like the reproachful spirit of a noble parent before a criminal son, and upbraid me for having ever quitted my tranquil home.

My father, though but the gardener at the château, was also a small *propriétaire*; and, in his spare time, used to cultivate his own fields by the banks of the river. The château had been purchased by Monsieur V----, the rich bookseller in Paris; and in hanging about the house while a child, I became a great favourite with the good Parisian. Still my principal patron was Monsieur le Curé of Bonnières, who discovered in me an amazing genius for my catechism, taught me to read and write, gave me a smattering of Latin, and declared, that if I took pains and behaved well, he and Monsieur V---- between them, would procure me the means of studying, and make me a clergyman like himself.

My ambition was flattered with the prospect; and during my early years, the dream of my future honours was always before me; but, as I grew up and learnt to dance upon the green with the girls of the village, my sentiments insensibly changed. I began to think of leaving off dancing, and being grave, and serious, and never marrying--each with an augmented degree of horror. The decisive blow, however, was struck, when I had seen three times Mariette Dupont. We were both as young as we well could be to fall in love; but she was so beautiful, and her soft dark eyes looked so imploringly into one's heart, that from the very first moment I saw her, I felt an inclination to put my arm round her, and say, "Thou shalt be my own; and I will guard thee from sorrow, and care, and adversity; and shelter thee from every blast that blows in the bleak cold world around."

But on this I must not pause either, for the memory of such dreams is bitterness. The matter went on--I loved Mariette, and she----Ay! that joy is at least my own--lasting--imperishable, and the annihilation of a world could not take it from me--She loved me--deeply, truly, devotedly--through life--to the tomb!

Years flew by; and we were married; for my father had never liked the thought of my becoming a priest, which he looked upon as being buried alive. He said I should do much better to labour as my ancestors had done; or, since I had a superior education, could read and write, and understood Latin, I might easily make my fortune in Paris. So he willingly gave his consent to my marriage with Mariette. Monsieur V---- the bookseller, said it was always right to let fools have their own way; and the Curé frowned and united us, merely observing, that he had bestowed his time and attention very much in vain.

By my father's counsel, we determined to go to Paris immediately, for he and my brother were both sure that I should there become a great man, and Mariette had no doubt of it. "Besides," my father said, "if you do not get on there, you can come back here, and help to take care of our own ground, while I work at the château."

To Paris we went, and took a small lodging in the Faubourg Poissonnier, where, for two or three weeks, Mariette and myself spent our time and our money in love and amusement. We were not extravagant, but we were thoughtless; and surely a three weeks' thoughtlessness was but a fair portion for such happiness as we enjoyed.

At length I began to think of seeking something to do; and I had sufficient self-confidence to fancy I could even write in a newspaper. Forth I went to propose myself; and Marietta's eyes told me how high were her anticipations of my success. To the proprietors of the Constitutionnel, my first application was made; but the gentleman I saw bent his ear to catch, my provincial jargon--

looked at me from head to foot--told me I was dreaming; and turned upon his heel. How I got out of the house I know not; but when I found myself in the street, my head swam round, and my heart swelled with mingled indignation, shame, and disappointment.

It required no small effort to force myself to enter the office of another newspaper of much repute. Here I mentioned my pretensions, in a humbler tone, and only proposed that something from my pen might be received as an experiment. The clerk to whom I spoke bore my message into an inner room, and returned with a calm, business-like face, to inform me that all departments were full.

This had occupied me the whole morning; and I now returned to Mariette, who instantly read my mortification in my countenance. She asked no questions, but only cast her arms round my neck, and with a smile, which was not gay, though it was not desponding, she whispered, "Do not be vexed, Frank. They cannot know yet how clever you are. When they see more of you, they will be glad enough to have you. Besides, we can go back again to Bonnières."

The thought of returning unsuccessful to my own home, was not what I could endure. I imagined the cold eye of the curate; and the disappointment and surprise of my father and brother; and the jeers and the wonder of the whole village; and I determined to do anything rather than go back to Bonnières.

The landlord of our lodgings was a tinman, a great politician, and a literary man. All his information, however, was gathered from a paper called the G----, which he cited on every occasion. To the office of the G---- then, I went, after dinner; and, having taken a couple of turns before the door, to gather resolution, I went and modestly asked when I could see the editor. One of the young men in the office answered that Monsieur ---- was then in the house, and ushered me into another room. Here I found a gentleman writing, who looked up with a pleasant and intelligent expression and pointing to a seat, asked my business.

As I explained it to him, his countenance took a look of great seriousness; and he replied, "I am extremely sorry that no such occupation as yeti desire can be afforded you by the editors of the G----, for we have applications every day, which we are obliged to reject, from writers of known excellence. I am afraid, also that you will find much difficulty in obtaining what you seek, for one of the worst consequences of bad government is now affecting the whole of France. I mean the undue proportion between the number of the population and the quantity of employment. Where the fault lies, I must not presume to say, but that there must be a great fault somewhere is evident; otherwise every man who is willing to labour, would find occupation."

It has struck me since, that there must often be causes for want of employment, which no government could either control or remedy; but, at the time, his reasoning seemed excellent; and all I felt was renewed disappointment, and a touch of despair, which I believe showed itself very plainly in my face, for the editor began to ask me some farther questions, which soon led me to tell him my precise situation.

He mused, and seemed interested; but for a moment replied nothing. At length, looking at me with a smile, he said, "Perhaps, what I am about to propose to you, may be very inferior to your expectations; nevertheless it will afford you some occupation."

The very name of occupation was renewed life, and I listened with eagerness, while he offered to recommend me to a printer, as what is called a reader, or corrector of the press. I embraced his proposal with unutterable thankfulness; and having ascertained that I was capable of the task, by, some proof-sheets that lay upon the table, he wrote a note, to Monsieur M----, the printer and put it into my hand. I could almost have knelt and worshipped him, so great was the change from despair to hope.

With the letter in my hand I flew to the printing-house, was tried and received; and, though the emolument held out was as small as it well could be, my walk home was with the springing step of joy and independence; and my heart, as I pressed Mariette to my bosom, and told her my success, was like that of a great general in the moment of victory, before the gloss of triumph has been tarnished by one regret for the gone, or one calculation for the future. I was soon installed in my new post; and though what I gained was barely enough for the necessaries of life, yet it sufficed; and there was always a dear warm smile in the eyes I loved best, which cheered and supported me whenever I felt inclined to despond or give way.

It is true, I often regretted that I could not procure for Mariette those comforts and those luxuries which I little valued myself; but she seemed to heed them not, and every privation appeared to her a matter of pride--to be borne rather as a joy than a care. Six months thus passed; and they were the happiest of my life, for though I laboured, I laboured in the sunshine. I had perfectly sufficient time also, to make myself thoroughly acquainted with the whole art of printing, and to fit myself for the task of a compositor, which, though more mechanical, was more lucrative; and it became necessary that I should gain more, as a change was coming over Mariette which promised us new cares and new happiness. Strange, that when I looked upon her languid features, and her altered shape, she seemed to me a thousand times more lovely, than in all the fresh graces of expanding womanhood! And when fears for her safety mingled with the joy of possessing her--when her calm sweet eyes rested long and fixedly upon me, as if she strove to trace out the image of her future child in the looks of its father--a new and thrilling interest

appeared to have grown up between us, which was something more than love.

At length, one of the compositors having gone to conduct a printing office at Rennes, my object was accomplished; and I obtained his vacant place. Still the emoluments were infinitely small, for the book trade was bad, and of course the printers suffered. Sometimes there was plenty of work, and sometimes there was none; and the whole of my companions murmured highly at the government, whose imbecility and tyrannical conduct, they said, had destroyed the commerce of the country; and done everything to ruin and degrade the press. There was many a busy whisper amongst us, that nothing could save the nation but a new revolution; and as we all felt more or less the sharp tooth of want, we madly thought that no change would be detrimental to us. I doubted some of the opinions that I heard; but one of my comrades worked at the G----, which had now become a daily paper, and he used often to give us long quotations, which convinced us all that the government was opposed to the wishes of the whole nation, and that any change must be for the better.

During the autumn, I contrived to save some little portion of my wages; but the rigour of the winter, and the quantity of wood we were obliged to burn, soon consumed all that I had laid by; so that the provision for Mariette's confinement became a matter of serious and dreadful anxiety. One morning, however, I received a letter from my brother, telling me that my father had died suddenly on the preceding night. I will not rest upon all that I felt. I had always been the slave of my imagination; and it had been one of my favourite vanities to think how proud my father's heart would be to see me raise myself high in the world, and how comfortable I should be able to render his old age, when the smile of fortune should be turned upon me. But now he was dead, and those dreams all broken.

The little patch of ground which we possessed was of course divided between me and my brother; and my portion was instantly sold to provide for the occasion which was so near at hand. The depression of all property, and the haste with which I was obliged to effect the sale, rendered it the most disadvantageous that can be conceived; and what with the expenses of Mariette's confinement, a long illness which she underwent after, and a fit of sickness which I suffered myself--before the end of March my stock of money was reduced to fifty francs.

Work was by this time sufficient and regular, so that I could maintain myself, Mariette, and our boy. We had, indeed, no superfluity; we knew no luxury; and the external enjoyments which I saw many possessing, far less worthy than ourselves, were denied to us.

Mariette bore it all with cheerfulness, but I grew gloomy and discontented, and the continual murmurs at the government, which I heard amongst my companions, wrought upon me. I gradually began to dream that everything unpleasant in my situation was attributable to the state of society in which I lived. Every political change now seemed to irritate and affect me. Whereas, before I heard a word of politics, I used to work on with hope and activity, encountering hardships boldly, and feeling them the less, because I did not let my mind rest upon them, I now dwelt upon every uncomfort, and magnified it in my own eyes for the purpose of making it a greater reproach to the government, whose evil measures, I thought, caused it. I would pause long in my work to read scraps from a newspaper, and to comment on the folly and tyranny of our rulers; and thus I met several reproofs for my slowness and negligence.

The fires in Normandy I heard of with indignation and horror, and I attributed them all to the ministers, whose wickedness I thought was capable of any baseness, till one day I heard one of my more violent companions observe, that the incendaries were very much in the right, to burn down the barns and destroy the grain, as by making the great mass of the people as miserable and pennyless as themselves, they would force them to bring about a revolution, which would set all things to rights. Besides, he asked, what right had a rich man to corn, when the poor were starving?

The elections for the chamber of deputies were another great source of anxiety to me; and when I found they were all liberal, I felt nearly as much satisfaction as if I had been elected myself. At length the meeting of the chambers approached; and many a warm discussion took place amongst the journeymen printers, on the questions likely to be brought under consideration. Every one said that the ministers must go out, or dissolve the chambers; but many observed with a shrewd glance, that neither the dissolution of the chambers, nor the resignation of the ministers, would satisfy the people. "We must have a change," they said--"complete change;" and several began to talk boldly of revolution.

The continual irritation and discontent I felt, had their effect on my countenance; and Mariette grew anxious about me. She did all she could to soothe me--sat with her arms round my neck, and endeavoured to persuade me that I should be happier if I did not think of politics. "Kings and governments," she said, and said truly, "could only provide for the general good; and that there must always be many in every country whose fate destined them to labour and live hard. She could not but think," she added, "that the way to be happy, was for every one to try, by his own exertions, to improve his own condition; and neither to envy his neighbour nor to meddle with affairs in which he was not well practised."

She sought to induce me, too, to return to Bonniéres. We had never been so happy since we left it; and so sweetly, so perseveringly did she urge a request which I saw was made for my sake more than her own, that at length I consented to go, and, quitting all the vain dreams which had

led me to Paris, to re-assume the class and occupation of my fathers.

We had not money to go by the diligence; but we were both good walkers; and the baby, being brought up by hand--and that upon the simplest food--would prove but little encumbrance.

This determination was taken on Sunday the 25th of July, and the next day I gave my employer notice that, at the end of the month, I should quit him. In the meantime we determined to save every sous that was possible, in order to provide for our expenses by the way, for which we had hitherto made no reserve.

On the Monday following, I joined the rest of the printers, and we worked through the day in tranquillity. At night, however, as I was returning over the Pont Neuf, I met one of my companions, who grasped my hand, asking, with a look of intense eagerness, "If I had heard the news?" The suddenness of the question, and his look of anxiety, alarmed me. I knew not well what I dreaded, but, at all events, my fears were all personal. His tale soon relieved me of my apprehensions for Mariette and our child; but raised my indignation to the highest pitch against the government. The King, he told me, had violated the charter, struck at the liberty of the press, altered the law of election, and reduced the people to a nation of slaves.

Distant shouts met our ears as we were crossing the Rue St. Honoré; and hurrying on in the direction from which they proceeded, we came upon an immense multitude; who were breaking the lamps, and yelling execrations against the government.

I was well enough inclined to join them; but remembering Mariette, I returned home, and told her all that occurred. As I spoke, a paleness came over her beautiful face, so unusual, so ghastly, that it made me start. It seemed as if some warning voice had told her that every happy dream was at an end--that the eternal barrier had fallen between us and joy for ever. The next morning everything seemed to have passed by, which had disturbed the tranquillity of the town on the previous evening--the streets were quiet, and the people engaged in their usual occupations. Mariette mind appeared somewhat calmed; but still she looked at me anxiously, as she saw me about to depart, and made me promise more than once, that I would go straight to my work, without mingling with any mob I might see.

I kept my word; and, though I saw several groups of people gathering round the corners of the streets, where the obnoxious ordonnances were posted up, I did not even stop to read, but hurried on to the printing-house with all speed. The scene in the work-rooms was different from any I had ever beheld. All the presses were standing still; and the workmen, gathered into knots, were each declaiming more violently than the other, on the infamy and folly of the government; and, with furious gestures, vowing vengeance. The overseer came in soon after, and with some difficulty got us to our work; but, about twelve o'clock; the proprietor of the establishment himself appeared, and told us to leave off our labours.

"My good friends," said he, "the government has annihilated the liberty of the press. The type of several of the journals has been seized this morning. Our liberties are at an end without we secure them by our own force. Far be it from me to counsel tumult or bloodshed--the law is quite sufficient to do us justice. However, I have determined, as well as Monsieur Didot and all the other printers, to cease business, and discharge my workmen." We were then paid the small sum owing to each, and dismissed, with a caution to be quiet and orderly, and to trust to the law; though the very fact of turning out a number of unemployed and discontented men, upon such a city as Paris, seemed to me the very best possible way of producing that tumult which we were warned to avoid.

I soon after found, that it was not alone the printers who had been discharged, but that almost all the workmen in the city had been suddenly thrown out of employment. As I returned home, there was a sort of ominous silence about the town that had something fearful in it. Not ten persons were to be seen upon the Quais, which are usually so crowded; and it seemed as if the whole population had been concentrated on particular points.

To my great surprise, on entering my lodging, I found my brother sitting with Mariette, and holding our infant on his knee, while the child looked up in his face and smiled, as if it knew that those were kindred eyes which gazed upon it. My brother soon told me the occasion of his coming to Paris, which was to buy seeds and plants for the hot-house at the Château; and about three o'clock, as everything was quiet, I went out with him.

As we passed onward, we soon saw that all was not right. The shops were closed--the gates of the Palais Royal were shut--groups of gloomy faces were gathered at every corner--and the whole town wore the dull, heavy aspect of a thunder-cloud, before the storm bursts forth in all its fury. A few gendarmes were to be seen, but no extraordinary military force appeared; and gradually the same sort of yelling shouts came upon our ear that I had heard the night before.

As we approached the Rue St. Honoré, the cries became louder; and turning down the Rue des Bons Enfans, we found ourselves suddenly in the crowd from which they proceeded. It consisted of about five hundred men and boys, all unarmed. Some had stones in their hands, and some had sticks; but no more deadly weapons could I discern amongst them. A great proportion of the mob were discharged printers, and I was instantly recognised by several of my fellow-workmen, drawn into the crowd with my brother, who was very willing to go, and hurried on towards the Place

Vendôme, whither the rioters were directing their steps, with the purpose of attacking the house of Monsieur de Peyronnet, one of the obnoxious ministers.

The numbers in the Rue St. Honoré were in no degree tremendous; but as we entered the place Vendôme, I saw an equal body coming up the Rue Castiglione, and another approaching by the Rue de la Paix. A largo force of mounted gendarmerie was dawn up in the square; and shortly after, a party of the guard, and the troops of the line, appeared. There seemed to be considerable hesitation on both parts to strike the first blow; and as long as we kept to shouts the military remained passive. What took place towards Peyronnet's house, I could not discover, my view being obstructed by the heads of the people; but there seemed a considerable tumult in that direction; and a moment after, a lad beside me threw an immense brick at the head of the officer of gendarmerie, crying, "A bas le Roi! Vive la Charte!"

The missile took effect, knocked off the officer's hat, and covered his forehead with a stream of blood. That instant the word was given to charge; and in a moment we were driven down the Rue St. Honoré in confusion and terror. My brother could not run so fast as I could, and at the corner of the Palais Royal, I found, that he was left several yards behind, while the horses were close upon him. I instinctively started back to assist him, and seeing no other means, I seized a wine-cask that stood at one of the doors, and rolled it with all my strength between him and the soldiers. The nearest gendarme's horse stopped in full course, stumbled and fell over the barrel. A loud shout of gratulation and triumph burst from the people; and turning in their flight, they discharged a shower of bricks and stones upon the advancing cavalry, which struck more than one horseman from his saddle, and afforded time for my brother and myself to join the rest, which we did amidst great cheering and applause, as the first who had actually resisted the military. Elated by the cheer, my brother entered with enthusiasm into the feelings of the multitude, while I felt as if I had committed a crime, in injuring men who were but doing their duty.

A temporary cessation of hostility now occurred between the people and the soldiery. The gendarmerie established themselves in the Place du Palais Royal, some troops of the line took possession of the Rue St. Honoré, and the mob occupied the end of the Rue Richelieu, and the corners of the Rue Montpensier, where the new and incomplete buildings afforded plenty of loose stones, which were soon again used as missiles against the gendarmes. I would fain now have got away and returned home, but my brother would remain; and my companions, remembering the affair of the barrel, put me forward as a kind of leader; so that vanity joined with enthusiasm to make me continue, while the thought of Mariette came from time to time across my memory with a thrill of dispiriting anxiety.

The next two hours passed all in tumult. The soldiers charged us several times, and we fled, but still returned to our position as they re-assumed theirs. Many shots were fired, but few tell, and muskets, fowling-pieces, pistols, and swords began to appear amongst the crowd, while in one or two places I discerned the uniform of the National Guard, and two or three youths from the Polytechnic School. Darkness soon after this came on; the multitudes opposed to the soldiery were increasing every minute, and a cry began to run through the crowd, "To the gunsmiths' shops! To the gunsmiths' shops!"

Instantly this suggestion was obeyed. We dispersed in a moment. Every gunsmith's shop in the neighbourhood was broken open, and almost before I was aware, I was armed with a double-barrelled gun and a brace of pistols, and provided with powder and ball. The shop from which these instruments of slaughter were procured was one at the end of the Rue Vivienne, and as I came out, I paused to consider which way I should now turn.

"Let us go to the Corps de Garde near the Exchange," cried one of the men who had been near me all the day. "Lead on, *mon brave*," he continued, laying his hand upon my shoulder, "you shall be our captain." I looked round for my brother, but he was no longer there, and I followed the man's suggestion. As we went, by the advice of one of the Polytechnic School, we put out all the lamps, and spread the cry everywhere to do the same.

It was now quite dark, and our numbers increased at every step as we advanced. Opposite the Corps de Garde, at the Bourse, a small body of soldiers was drawn up, and two or three torches were lighted. A warning to stand off! was given, as soon as the troops heard our approach, and as we still advanced, increasing our pace, a volley instantly followed. A ball whistled close by my ear and made me start, but still I rushed on; and the soldiers, seeing the multitude by which they were attacked, attempted to retreat into the guard-house.

We were upon them, however, before the doors could be closed, and a terrific struggle took place, man to man. One strong fellow closed with me, and the strife between us soon grew for life. Our feet slipped, as we fell together, rolling over and over, wrapped, with a sort of convulsive fold, in each other's arms, All thought was out of the question; but suddenly getting one of my hands free, I brought the muzzel of a pistol close to my opponent's head, and fired, For an instant his fingers pressed more tightly round my throat--then every muscle was in a moment relaxed, and as I sprang up, he rolled backwards on the pavement.

The fury of excitement was now upon me, and hearing some shots still ringing within the guard-house, I was rushing towards it, when I perceived the multitude pouring forth, and a thick smoke with some flashes of flame, streaming from the windows. The guard-house was on fire,

and in an instant the sky was in a blaze. I stood to look at it, for a moment, as the fire-light flashed and flickered upon the dark and demon-like figures that surrounded the pile, and on the various dead bodies that lay in the open space the people had left, as in awe, between them and the destruction they had wrought. It was a fearful sight--sweet memories of peace and home rushed upon my brain--I shuddered at my own deeds, and turning from the whole vision of excited passion before my eyes, I ran as hard as I could to reach my home.

O never did I feel the thought of returning to the secure arms of her I loved, so exquisite, as at that moment! and I flew up the stairs rather than ran. I opened the door and entered. Mariette was kneeling by the cradle of our child. She did not hear me come in. I pronounced her name. At first she made no reply; but then turned round with a face that will haunt me to the grave and pointed to the cradle. I sprang forward and looked. There were traces of blood and bloody bandages strewed about, and round the poor infant's white and delicate shoulder were the compresses and dressings of a fresh wound.

"Good God, Mariette!" I exclaimed, "how is this? How?"

"I heard firing in the streets," she answered, with an awful degree of calmness, "I feared for my husband--ran out to see; and not daring to leave it all alone, I took my child to death. I had scarcely gone a yard, when a shot struck it my arms."

Through the whole of that dreadful night, Mariette and I sat by the cradle of our dying child--silent as the grave, with our eyes fixed upon its pale and ashy countenance, and hardly daring to lift our looks towards each other. From time to time it gave a faint and torturing cry, but in general, seemed in a panting sort of sleep, till towards four in the morning, when the breathing stopped, and I know not what gray shadow fell over its calm sweet face. I did not think it was dead; but Mariette threw her arms round my neck, and hid her eyes upon my bosom.

It was nearly midday on the Wednesday, when one of my companions came to tell me that the man who, it was reported, had been seen with me the day before, had been killed by a shot on the Boulevards, and I hastened after the messenger to ascertain the truth; for my brother had not yet re-appeared. He led me to the door of the Exchange, over which the tri-coloured flag was now flying in triumph, but on each side of the gate was stretched a dead corpse, and the first I saw was indeed my brother. Rage and revenge took possession of my whole heart. I joined the brave men who were marching down to the Place de Grève; and from that moment, I entered into every act of the revolution, with all the enthusiasm, the zeal, the fury of the rest.

It is needless to detail every scene I witnessed, and every struggle in which I shared. Suffice it, I was in most of those that occurred--at the taking and re-taking of the Hôtel de Ville--at the storming of the Louvre, and at the capture of the Tuileries. The enthusiasm amongst us was immense and overpowering; and the moderation and heroism with which it was conducted, reconciled me fully to the revolution. From time to time I ran home to soothe and console my poor Mariette, and to snatch a mouthful of bread, for our purse was now so low that we did not dare to purchase anything else. Mariette ate little while I was there, but she assured me that she had plenty, and that she generally took something while I was gone in the middle of the day. Grief and anxiety had worn her sadly; the lustre had quitted her eye, and the rose had left her cheek: and she looked at me so sadly, so painfully, as I went away, that every time I determined it should be the last.

At length the royal troops were beaten out of Paris, and the palace where monarchs had revelled, fell into the hands of the people. A few of the National Guard and a few of the common people was selected, as to a post of high honour, to guard the Tuileries during the night, under the command of a student of the Polytechnic School. I was one of those fixed upon; and having sent, by a comrade, a message to Mariette, which he forgot to deliver, I remained for the night in those scenes of ancient splendour. There was something awfully melancholy in the solitary palace and feeling of compassion for the dethroned king grew over my heart as I sat in the midst of the magnificent halls that he might never see again. As soon as we were relieved the next morning, I flew to Mariette. She had passed a night of the most dreadful anxiety, my comrade having, as I have said, never delivered my message. Her eye was hollow and her cheek was sunk, but all seemed forgotten when she beheld me safe; and seeing me fatigued and faint, she made me eat some bread and drink a glass of water, almost weeping that she had not something better to give me.

As the last bit touched my lip, a vague thought struck me that she had had none herself, and I insisted on her telling me. She cast her arms round me, and assured me with a smile, that it did her more good to see me eat than to take anything herself; but I at length drew from her that all our money was expended, and that she had not tasted anything for two days.

I thought I should have gone distracted; and after remaining for a few minutes stupified as it were, I ran to the printing-house to see if I could get work, and induce the overseer to advance me a single franc to buy some bread for my poor Mariette.

The office, however, was shut up, and I knocked in vain for admittance. I then turned to the lodging of one of my fellow-printers, who might lend me, I thought, even a few sous. I hurried up the narrow dirty staircase where he lived, and went into his room; but the sight I saw soon convinced me he wanted assistance as much as I did. He was sitting at an uncovered table, with

five children of different ages about him. His cheek was wan and hollow; and as I entered, he fixed his haggard eye upon the door, while his little girl kept pulling him importunately by the arm, crying, "Give me a piece, papa--I will have a piece of bread." "Lend me a franc," cried he, as soon as he saw me; "my children are starving--I will pay you when I get work."

I told him my own condition; but he burst forth in the midst, as if seized with a sudden frenzy, trembling with passion, and his eye glaring like that of a wild beast. "You are one of the revolutionists too. God's curse and mine upon you! See what your revolutions have brought! My children are starving--every artizan in Paris is beggared and unemployed. I am starving--my wife is dying for want of medicines in that bed--all these dear infants are famished; and all by your cursed revolutions! Out of my sight! Begone! for fear I commit a murder."

With a heart nearly breaking I returned home, and folding my poor Mariette in my arms, I gave way to tears, such as had never stained my cheeks before. She tried to sooth me--and smiled and told me that really she was not hungry--that she did not think she could eat if she had anything: but oh! I could not deceive myself. I saw famine on her cheek, and heard faintness in her tone; and after a long fit of thought, I determined to go to Monsieur V----, the great bookseller, who had been so kind to me while a boy. I told Mariette my errand, and as Paris was now nearly as quiet as ever, she willingly let me go.

It was a long way, and I had to cross the whole city, so that it was late when I arrived. Even then I found that Monsieur V---- was out; but the servant told me I could see him the following morning at nine. With this cold news I was forced to return; and no one can conceive what a miserable night I spent, thinking that every hour was an hour of starvation to the dear creature by my side. She lay very still but she slept not at all, and I felt sure that the want of rest must wear her as much as hunger.

When I rose, she seemed rather sleepy, and said she would remain in bed, and try for some repose, as she had not closed her eyes since Monday. It was too early to go to Monsieur V----, so I hurried first to the printing-office, for I hoped the tranquillity which was now returning, might have caused Monsieur M---- to resume his usual business. I only found the porter, who told me that there was no chance of the house opening again for weeks at least, if not months, and with a chilled heart I proceeded to the house of Monsieur V----.

Admission was instantly granted me, and I found the great bookseller sitting at a table with some written papers before him, on which he was gazing with an eye from which the spirit seemed withdrawn to rest upon some deep absorbing contemplation within. He was much changed since I had seen him, and there were in his appearance those indescribable traces of wearing care, which often stamp, in legible characters, on the countenance, the misfortunes which man would fain hide from all the world. There was a certain negligence, too, in his dress, which struck me; but as he received me kindly, I told him all my sorrows, and all my wants.

As I spoke, his eyes fixed upon me with a look of painful and intense interest, and when I had done, he rose, closed the door, and took a turn or two thoughtfully in the room. "What has ruined you," said he at length, pausing before me, and speaking abruptly, "has ruined me. The revolution we have just passed through has been great and glorious in its character, and all the world must look upon it with admiration; but it has made you and me, with hundreds, nay thousands, of others--beggars--ay, utter beggars. It is ever the case with revolutions. Confidence is at an end throughout the country, and commerce receives a blow that takes her centuries to recover. The merchant becomes a bankrupt--the artizan starves. I have now seen two revolutions, one bloody and extravagant, the other generous and moderate, and I do not believe that at the end of either of them, there was one man in all France who could lay his hand upon his heart and say, that he was happier for their occurrence; while millions in want and poverty, and millions in mourning and tears, cursed the day that ever infected them with the spirit of change.

"To tell you all in one word: within an hour from this time I am a bankrupt, and I am only one of the first out of thousands. Those thousands employ each thousands of workmen, and thus the bread of millions is snatched from their mouths. I do not say that revolutions are always wrong; but I do say that they always bring a load of misery, especially to the laborious and working classes--and now leave me, good youth. There is a five-franc piece for you. It is all I can give you, and that, in fact, I steal from my creditors. I pity you from my soul, and the more perhaps, because I feel that I need pity myself."

The five-franc piece he gave me, I took with gratitude and ecstasy. To me it was a fortune, for it was enough to save my Mariette. I hastened home with steps of light, only pausing to buy a loaf and a bottle of wine. I ran up stairs--I opened the door. Mariette had not risen. She slept, I thought--I approached quietly to the bed. All was still--too still. A faintness came over my heart, and it was a moment or two before I could ascertain the cause of the breathless calm that hung over the chamber. I drew back the curtain, and the bright summer sunshine streamed in upon the cold--dead--marble cheek of all that to me had been beautiful and beloved!

When the extraordinary heat of the weather which, during the whole of July was extremely oppressive, had somewhat subsided, a slight change for the better took place in our invalid; and our hopes of a permanent amendment of his health began to revive. One night, however, after Emily and myself had been gazing from the balcony of the hotel over the gardens of the Tuileries,

and watching star after star come out in the deepening sky, we turned back into the room, and sitting down at her writing-desk, I wrote upon a scrap of paper some of the feelings with which the night always filled my heart, and which fell without an effort into verse.

THE NIGHT.

The night--the night--the solemn night!
  The silent time of thought;
The kingdom of the pale moonlight
And mem'ry, when things gone and bright
  Are back to mortals brought.
The night--the night--the brilliant night
  Clothed in her starry robe:
When sweet to Hope's ecstatic sight,
Come future dreams that day's hard light
  Had banished from the globe.

The night--the night--the peaceful night!
  The pause, when each calm joy,
Which Time, that oft unpitying wight,
Has spared or granted in his flight,
  Is known without alloy.

The night--the night--how dear the night!
  Since now its dreams are sweet;
Since Hope and Love have made it bright,
And changing darkness into light,
  Have bade its shadows fleet.

"Take another sheet of paper, my dear boy," said Mr. Somers, when he saw that I had done, "and be kind enough to write a note for me." I did as he requested, when, to the surprise of Emily, and myself, he dictated a letter to the chaplain of the embassy, expressing his wish that he would perform the marriage ceremony between his daughter and myself on the morning of the Thursday following. It was then Tuesday, and a few words of astonishment rather than opposition broke from Emily's lips, but he added at once, "Let it be so, my dear child! It is your father's particular request."

Emily said no more; but hid her eyes for a moment on his bosom, and the note was dispatched. With the greatest possible privacy the ceremony was performed, and Mr. Somers, who had made an effort to be present, was lifted into the carriage, and proceeded with us to a house we had taken for the time, in the Val de Montmorency. The next day he appeared greatly better; but at night, about half an hour after he had left us, his servant came suddenly to call us, and, running to his room with Emily, we found him with the last breath of life hanging on his lips. All medical aid proved vain, and when it was all over, Emily and I both felt that it must have been some presentiment of approaching fate that had caused him to hurry our marriage.

Emily has now been long my own, linked to me for life by that sweet indissoluble bond which no two hearts worthy of happiness ever wished less firm and permanent than it is. Changes may come over my destiny, misfortunes may fall upon me again, but I look calmly on to the future; and fear not that such sorrows will ever darken the autumn of my days as those which frowned upon their spring, and which it has been my task to detail in the foregoing pages.[23]

FOOTNOTES

Footnote 1: N.B.--Many more of the tales contained in these volumes have since been published in periodicals, and I believe I may say without presumption that they have been uniformly favourably received, though the author's name was withheld. Thus, as near as possible, two-thirds of the work have been already before the public.

Footnote 2: Such was the original title of this tale, though it was altered without my being consulted, when It first appeared, to that of The Lovers of Vire.

Footnote 3: The tourniquet consists of two triangular pieces of wood fixed at about three yards

distance from each other on a horizontal pole, which serves for an axle-tree; from each angle of the one to the corresponding angle of the other is drawn a rope; and the whole machine is suspended at about four feet from the ground. At one end is placed a pole, on which hang the prizes; and at the other is a ladder for the aspirant to mount. The tourniquet is held steady till he is firmly fixed, with each of his feet resting on one of the side ropes, and his hands clasping the centre one; and then he is left to make his way to the prizes at the other end. As long as he can keep himself exactly balanced all is well; but the least pressure more to one side than the other, destroys the equilibrium, and round goes the tourniquet.

Footnote 4: Be it remarked, that this is not entirely the case. In all parts at France frogs are still in high repute. The snail, *escargot*, is a favourite food of the people of Lorraine; and, in the south of France, I have been asked whether I liked *anguille de haie* or *anguille de rivière*; meaning, whether I preferred eels or snakes.

Footnote 5: The name of brigand was the common term applied by the revolutionists to the Vendeans.

Footnote 6: These two remarkable speeches are upon record.

Footnote 7: I have left the above passage exactly as it was written many years ago, though I perceive that the same ideas have returned to me in writing another work, and have clothed themselves in very nearly the same language. I did not perceive the fact till one work was printed and the other in the press; but the accident was sufficiently interesting to me to leave the passage here, where I could blot it out.

Footnote 8: She told me the story herself, heaven rest her soul! and I use her own phraseology as nearly as a faulty memory will permit.

Footnote 9: Some circumstances were discovered afterwards in regard to a traveller for some mercantile house, who had been murdered in the Landes, which threw greater suspicion on my friend the miller, and caused him to betake himself elsewhere.

Footnote 10: Those who imagine this to be a jest deceive themselves; I have seen the same more than once since.

Footnote 11: These passages were written thirteen or fourteen years ago, since which time France has made the most extraordinary progress that any country in Europe can boast. England has also advanced, but the change is certainly not so striking between what she is now and what she was then, as that which has taken place in France in the same period; but it may be taken as a proof of the justice of these remarks, that France has become much more English than England has become French.

Footnote 12: This appears somewhat exaggerated now, but it was very little so when the passage was written; and opinions as absurd have a thousand times been uttered by men otherwise well informed in my presence. Some late books of travels in this country, however, would tend to show that the French have not yet much enlarged their knowledge of England and the English.

Footnote 13: This was written before the discoveries of Sir John Ross.

Footnote 14: "Gave" signifies water; and in the Pyrennees this name is given to all the mountain-streams.

Footnote 15: The chamois of the Pyrennes.

Footnote 16: "To Louis XIV., king of France and Navarre, grandson of our great Henry." The force of the satire is not to be rendered in an English translation.

Footnote 17: He afterwards explained that he had been admitted once to the making of a new word by the French Academy, and left it in the middle.

Footnote 18: My worthy friend maintains that our knowledge of astronomy is very inferior to that possessed by the ancient tribes of Asia.

Footnote 19: See Procopius *de Edificiis*, lib. iv. cap. xi. Several reasons have induced me to place Azimantium on the very shores of the Euxine.

Footnote 20: Gibbon.>/p>

Footnote 21: The hero of this tale is, or rather was, a real character (like all the other true heroes in the true tales of this true history). His name was Peter Fish, a waterman, plying at Hungerford Stairs, and many a time has his wherry borne me over the Thames, when I was a reckless schoolboy. He was a good-humoured soul as ever lived, rather fond of the bottle and of a little rhodomontade.

Footnote 22: Bridge of Snow.

Footnote 23: To guard against all mistakes, it may be as well to state, that all the tales, etc., which appear in the preceding pages, are the productions of one author, whether they be placed in the mouths of various persons or not, with the single exception of that called a "Young Lady's Story," which occupies ten pages, and is placed here principally to convince her that the efforts of her pen lose nothing by comparison with those of an old and practised writer.

It was my intention to have given a list of errata which the reader will have perceived are exceedingly numerous in the preceding pages. Their numbers indeed prevent me from fulfilling that purpose, and I think it but fair to remark, that though at least one half of them may perhaps be attributable to the printers, the other half must rest upon my own shoulders, as nothing has so soporific an effect upon me, as the reading of my own works, and the very dullest work of another will keep me awake, when two pages of what I call my wittiest compositions will send me sound asleep. Heaven forbid that they should have the same effect upon others, at any time but that at which "nature's sweet restorer" may be especially requisite to the refreshment of the mental or corporeal faculties of my readers.

THE END.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE DESULTORY MAN ***

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