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

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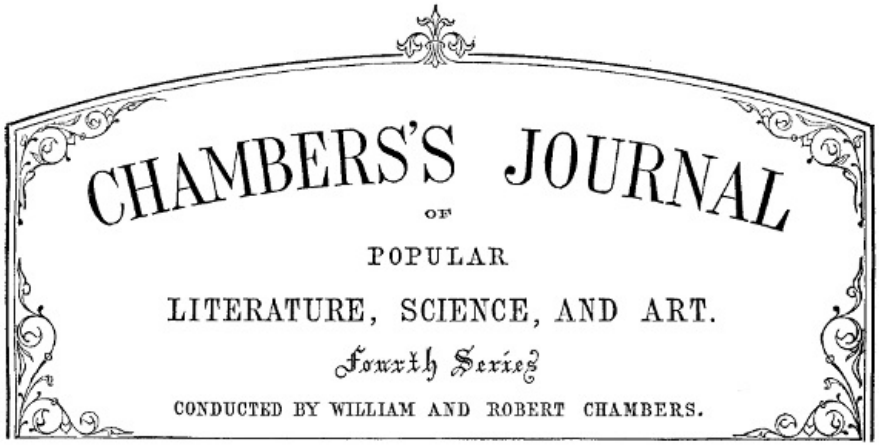


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**No. 723. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1877. PRICE 1½*d*.**

# THE GAELIC NUISANCE.

It is not a very creditable fact that after centuries of national consolidation, there should be communities within the British Islands who use different vernacular tongues and are ignorant of English. In other words, there are large numbers of persons who cannot in ordinary circumstances be directly communicated with. They can neither send nor intelligibly receive letters through the post-office. Summoned as witnesses on civil or criminal trials, they are in the position of foreigners, and stand in need of interpreters. Cut off from English books and newspapers, a correct knowledge of history, of science and art, and of passing events is scarcely possible. They necessarily vegetate amidst vague legends and superstitions. Theirs is a life of stagnation and impoverishment, in the spot where they were born; for anything like voluntary emigration to improve circumstances is only exceptional. And all this has been complacently tolerated, if not pampered, for hundreds of years by a nation full of enterprise, and which, with no injustice, aspires to be in the front rank of general civilisation.

We are quite aware that much the same thing can be said of most of the continental nations. All are a little behind in this respect. The ancient Breton language survives in France, as does the Basque in Spain. Switzerland, Germany, and Russia are respectively a jumble of spoken tongues. In Holland and Belgium, we have the Dutch, French, Flemish, and Walloon. To accommodate the inhabitants of Brussels, the names of the streets are stuck up in two languages. These continental diversities do not greatly surprise us. In frequent wars, revolutions, conquests, annexations, along with want of means, and a host of inveterate prejudices to be encountered, we have an explanation of the strange mixture of languages and dialects which still prevails in continental Europe.

The case is somewhat different in the United Kingdom, where everything but old prejudices would seem to favour a uniform native language which all can use and understand. Yet, as we have said, there exist communities who are still less or more ignorant of English. Centuries have rolled on, and notwithstanding all appliances, groups of people are yet found speaking a language which was common a thousand years ago, but now occupies an obscure and fragmentary position. We do not say that matters have not been advancing towards uniformity. Little by little, outlying communities have been satisfactorily Anglicised, not by anything like legal compulsion, but by what might be termed a natural process of assimilation. We may speak of two important cases. In the Shetland and Orkney Islands the Norwegian language existed until within the last two centuries. It is now totally gone, and the vernacular is a pure English; vastly to the advantage of the natives, who besides being open to common civilising influences, are prepared for pushing their fortunes in any part of the British dominions; some of them indeed making no mean figure in current literature. The other case is that of Galloway, a district embracing two counties in the south-west of Scotland, where the Gaelic prevailed longest in any part of the Lowlands. 'The wild Scots of Galloway' was once a well-known phrase. It has passed away along with the Gaelic speech. The Gallowegians—abounding in men of genius—are now a lively and prosperous English-speaking and English-writing people. For them the change has been a very happy one.

With a knowledge of these two instances of social improvement, there is the more reason to regret the protracted existence of non-English speaking races. No one will say that any good has come of the continued prevalence of Erse, the old Irish tongue; nor of Manx in the Isle of Man; nor of Welsh, though that, as regards literature, is considerably ahead of any branch of the once universal Celtic tongue. Considering what spirit is demonstrated in the way of books, newspapers, and otherwise, Welsh rises to a comparatively prominent position; but there always remains the unpleasant reflection, that interesting as the Welsh tongue may be, it distinctly mars national unity, and must be a drawback on those adhering to it alone, and reared in ignorance of {690}
English. To this cause is doubtless attributable the lingering of many whimsical superstitions in the Principality.

Should any one desire to see what mischiefs are effected by adherence to a language long since out of date, he should visit some parts of the Highlands and the Western Islands of Scotland, where, by a well-meant but mistaken policy, Gaelic is still perseveringly maintained. Some years since, it was our fortune to pay a visit to Barra, one of the Outer Hebrides; and the feeling which rose in our mind was that what we beheld was a specimen of Scotland as it existed in the sixth century, when St Columba spread a knowledge of Christianity in the western Caledonian regions. We seemed to step back twelve hundred years. It was a marvellous kind of look into antiquity. In their language, in their rude dwellings of stone and turf, in their religious forms, and in their dress, the people belonged to a far-back age. Their existence was an anachronism. And the curious thing was to find this condition of affairs within four-and-twenty hours of Glasgow, with its enterprise and prodigiously busy population. We have seen the Micmacs living in a way little better than dogs in the wilds of Nova Scotia, but one is not greatly astonished to see Indians dwelling in a state of primitive wretchedness. The sentiment of wonder is raised on finding natives within the British Islands still living as their ancestors did at a time coeval with Vortigern and the Saxon Heptarchy. There they are, for anything we can see, unimprovable. Speaking Gaelic and nothing else, they, in their dismal isolation, are left behind in all ordinary means of advancement. Who has not heard of the institutions plausibly and benevolently set on foot to enlighten the aborigines of the Highlands and Islands? Well, here, after all that is done, things are much as they were in the era of St Columba—people living almost like savages, without the

ability to hold intercourse with strangers, or the power to improve their circumstances, in consequence of knowing no other tongue than Gaelic. That language is their bane. It keeps them poor, it keeps them ignorant. So far as they are concerned, the art of printing might as well never have been invented. The intelligence communicated by books and newspapers is for them wholly unavailing. Practically, they are living hundreds of years before the ingenious discoveries of Gutenberg and Coster. To think that with all the costly apparatus of national education, such should be going on within the compass of the British Islands!

It is no use to mince a matter so grave in its results. The upholding of Gaelic as a vernacular tongue is, in our opinion, an error to be lamented and abandoned. In saying so, we are reminded that an effort has been made by an eminently enthusiastic Professor to gather funds for the purpose of endowing a Celtic Chair in the University of Edinburgh. To that effort, which is likely to prove successful, we make no special objection. Let Celtic, like any other ancient language, by all means be cultivated among the higher aims of philology. Students who like to pursue learned inquiries of this kind may do so. But it is a wholly different thing to maintain a system of elementary teaching in schools which tends to perpetuate Gaelic as a spoken tongue to the exclusion of English. Apart from social intercommunication, there may be a difficulty in substituting English for Gaelic. Teaching to read English alone in Gaelic-speaking districts is said to be of little use. The pupils learn to pronounce the words without attaching any meaning to them. Impressed with this awkward consequence, the Society for the support of Gaelic schools, which has been in existence upwards of seventy years, suggests that the best way to promote a knowledge of and taste for English is to begin by teaching pupils to read Gaelic. 'The people,' it is represented, 'having once got a taste for learning, are not satisfied with their children being able to read Gaelic; a number of them pay the teacher for instructing them also in reading English and writing at extra hours.' There may be some truth in this view of the matter; but unfortunately we are confronted with the greater truth, that considerable numbers in the Highlands and Islands still speak Gaelic, and are ignorant of English to any useful purpose.

If it be absolutely necessary that schoolmasters must begin by teaching to read the Gaelic, they ought not to end there, but proceed to offer, by a close translation, the requisite knowledge of English. There are surely teachers qualified to make Gaelic-speaking children understand the meaning of English words. The trouble to be taken may be considerable, but there are few things either great or good which can be effected without trouble. We cannot doubt that Highland school-boards might find a way to make pupils understand English provided they have the will to do so. Indifference and the grudging of expense perhaps lie quite as much at the root of the difficulty as traditional prejudice. It is open to conjecture that, but for undue fostering, Gaelic would stand a fair chance of disappearing altogether from the Highlands and Islands, as it did in Galloway and elsewhere simply through the operation of natural causes.

The question, Gaelic or no Gaelic, has, we fear, been too long treated in a sentimental point of view. For example, we see it fervently argued that Highlanders should be able to understand and relish the ancient Gaelic poetry, as if an acquaintanceship with a few old songs and ballads were a primary concern in life. Poor people nailed to a sterile soil by their hereditary ignorance of English, are to be congratulated for their knowledge of some poem which the world at large never heard of, and does not care about! Happy people, to whom food, clothing, and cultured intelligence are as nothing in comparison to the enviable pleasure of singing a ditty ascribed to Fingal or some more modern and less apocryphal Celtic bard! It is gratifying to know that Highlanders themselves are a little scandalised by these and similarly absurd propositions. Sensibly, they observe that it is time to get rid of Gaelic, as being entirely out of date, and only an impediment. Two years ago, in a Glasgow newspaper, one who subscribed himself a 'Western Highlander,' took exception to the unreasonable clamour that had been got up for the maintenance of Gaelic as a spoken tongue. He says very rationally: 'We Highlanders have a language that, whatever its beauties, suffices merely for speech; a language by which we cannot acquire knowledge in art, science, history, commerce, or—if we exclude the Bible—even religion. With a poor and infertile soil, we live alongside a people rich in every gift of nature, possessing {691} every advantage that can insure worldly prosperity. We are debarred from all the stores of wisdom locked up in the English language. Thus heavily weighted, we cannot hope to rival our neighbours' wealth, but we can wish and strive to make the best of our opportunities. We intend to win our way if industry and thrift can do it. We can endeavour to improve our infertile soil, to attract capital to our agriculture, to establish better communication with the rest of the world. Proud as we are of the mountain and the glen, we know that we cannot live by scenic beauty alone. We are tired too of kilted glory, and of dressing and acting up to Cockney sentiment about the savage Celt. We wish to recognise and study the conditions of existence, the methods of supporting life and securing comfort. And to do all this, if our much-loved language has become an impediment rather than a gain, why, let it go. We shall remain good Highlanders regardless of any particular mode of speech. At a time when the first whisperings of prosperity are beginning to reach us, when steamers deeper and deeper laden ply to every corner of the west, when the completion of a railway will soon make Oban a great commercial centre, when comforts hitherto undreamt of are everywhere obtainable—is it right at such a time of promise to intensify our disadvantages and to make our backwardness more backward still?' Shrewd remarks these, well worth taking to heart.

It cannot be ascertained from any official Reports what is the exact number of persons—men, women, and children—whose language is wholly confined to Gaelic. In the second Report of the Education Commission published in 1867, it is said to be 'probable that the population of the parishes within which Gaelic continues to be the only language which is understood by the majority of the people cannot exceed a hundred and fifty thousand; these being chiefly the

parishes of the Hebrides, which are wholly insular, and the mainland parishes of the west coast of the counties of Sutherland, Ross, Inverness, and Argyle.' It is believed that since 1867, the number whose speech is limited to Gaelic has diminished through various influences, among which commercial intercourse by means of steam-vessels and otherwise has been conspicuous. We should almost aver that Hutcheson's magnificent fleet of steam-vessels, whether devoted to the carrying of goods or passengers, had done more to introduce a knowledge of English, along with conditions of prosperity, into the Hebrides than any other appliance whatsoever. In the remoter or lesser islands which are little visited by strangers, there is a corresponding backwardness. Barra we have already spoken of as still in a singularly primitive condition. At Coll, Tyree, and some other islands, the knowledge of English is also unhappily deficient. In comparatively recent times, a great change in proprietorship has come over these islands. The old families—such as the Macneils and Macleans—have mostly disappeared, and new landlords with the means and desire to improve the condition of the soil and the population, find themselves obstructed by the difficulty of holding any intelligent intercourse with the natives. The disadvantage is mutual, for on all hands the Gaelic-speaking inhabitants are unable to make their wants and feelings known to those who wish to be their friends. A melancholy case of a rigid adherence to Gaelic, is that of the extremely remote island of St Kilda. Here, as was described a few months ago by Mr J. Sands in our pages, the natives speak Gaelic and nothing else; in Gaelic they are preached to by a minister originally from the mainland; he and his wife being the only individuals who know English. Of course the natives can hold no epistolary correspondence with the exterior world, on whose sympathy they are forced to rely. A present of English books would be valueless, for they could not read them. They could not emigrate unless accompanied by an interpreter, much after the manner of a party of travellers in the East under the guidance of a dragoman. We ask, Is that a position in which any of Her Majesty's subjects should continue to be placed through the effect of custom or prejudice? Such an afflicting condition of affairs is little better than a national disgrace.

It is hard to run counter to long-cherished and in the main amiable feelings. It is hard to find fault with persons and institutions whose motives in encouraging Gaelic have been alike pious and benevolent. But circumstances oblige us to be candid in a matter so momentous to public welfare. The Gaelic language may be as copious and energetic as the Greek; it may be not less suitable for poetry than the Italian; it has strong archæological claims as a relic of the tongue which in its various forms was at one time spoken all over the British Islands, if not over all Europe; but it has survived its usefulness, and is out of place as a vernacular. In short, looking to the wants of modern society, and seeing the mischief it produces, we are—however hateful the term—warranted in characterising Gaelic as a NUISANCE, which every one should aid in removing with all reasonable speed.

W. C.

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# FROM DAWN TO SUNSET.

### BY 'ALASTER GRÆME.'

## IN THREE PARTS.—PART II.

### CHAPTER THE SEVENTEENTH.

NO one but Mistress Margaret and Marjory knew that Deborah and Kingston Fleming were betrothed. Meantime Deborah, with her love-secret folded like a flower within her heart, devoted herself to her father, and Kingston remained with them. But Deborah's presence was required at Lincoln; the tenantry were anxious to welcome the new mistress; and like a dutiful daughter, fondly hoping that the change would restore her father, she determined, by Kingston's advice, to go there at once, and to leave Enderby to undergo thorough repair. So they left the dear old place. 'What will happen,' thought Deborah Fleming, 'ere I see Enderby again?' Mistress Margaret would not leave Enderby, for certain private and sufficient reasons of her own; so she pleaded to be left behind. She was in daily expectation of receiving a secret summons to follow her husband, and her heart clung to her old father and the old place.

They arrived at Lincoln Castle in the late summer gloaming. Groups of solemn cedars were just visible, and the little melancholy bats were flitting round like spirits; the grand old ivied keep {692} loomed darkly before them; and beyond, under a glimmering archway, were lights and figures. Deborah shuddered; she knew not whether to weep or pray, as she laid her head on her father's shoulder, and thought of herself entering in triumph as Adam Sinclair's bride. She felt a traitor, taking Kingston there, her lover, her betrothed, even though he was going away that night; and the grim presence of Adam Sinclair pervaded all the place. The same in the gorgeous rooms, gloomy though full of brilliant lights. On one side walked her tall kinsman-lover, and on the other stalked the spectre of Adam Sinclair. Deborah shivered, and clung to Kingston's arm. She went out with him under the stars to bid him good-bye. Two tall cedars met overhead, and the night-wind just sighed amongst their branches; the night-flowers were exhaling their fragrant odours.

'Deb,' whispered Kingston, 'I have half a mind to leave thee, love! Men of rank and position would flock to woo my beautiful one. Thou'rt very young. Wait; and let me come and know thy mind

hereafter. *Wait*, Deb. I speak no jest. Wert thou poor, I would make thee wed me now; but love—as thou art—I cannot. Wait, Deb; and I will exact no promise from thee.'

'Thou never didst know me, King, and never will! My love was quick to come, but it was and ever will be changeless. Dear, I have seen many men; and more than thou wott'st of have made love to me. But what are they all to thee? From childhood, *thou* hast been my love; I feel no shame to tell it thee. And wilt thou, for my poor fortune, leave me? Why, thou dost tempt me to fling it all away as dross, rather than lose thy love. King, if thou leavest me, I shall *die*! For old kin's sake, thou couldst not! Remember that we are kin near and dear! Thy father and mine were boys at Enderby, and played in the same old haunts; companions near and dear. Ah well, King as thou lovest me, promise soon to come back!'

He took her face between his hands and hesitated. Perilously dear was she to him; but oh! that golden casket in which his jewel lay—he hated it! Kingston Fleming was proud where he loved.

'If thou wilt not promise,' said Deborah, 'thou shalt not go! *I* shall do the wooing!—Oh, I am too bold! But my heart saith thou lovest me. Then fling this pride away. King, darling, do not break my heart!'

He was vanquished. Vows, caresses, sighs, and the lovers parted.

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## PART III.—NIGHT.

### CHAPTER THE FIRST.

The young and beautiful Lady of Lincoln won all hearts; not that she visited any but the poor in those days; but the fame of her beauty and sweetness spread abroad even so; and the 'Rose of Enderby,' though not to be seen, was known to be brightening the stern old castle. The tall gaunt father and the beautiful girl lived in utter seclusion, except when amongst the poor—always together. Strangely enough, he never tried to wander. She never had him left alone day or night; but he never seemed happy save with Deborah. And still she watched for and prayed for a change in him. She talked to him, waited on him, sang to him from morning till night. Out in the broad sunny court that lay between the door and the entrance-gates, Deborah and her father, and often old Marjory with them, would sit and look up the long grass avenue that stretched far away, a vista of giant trees, ever twilight, where the antlered deer would trot past, to seek fresh shade and pasturage, and where the far-away murmur of country life, the lowing of cows, the tinkle of a sheep-bell, the bark of a dog, the shout of a boy, or the cries of children at play, would be wafted to them musically.

One morning, left alone, Sir Vincent said to his child: 'Where are we, Deb?'

Often he had asked the same question before; and she answered as before: 'At Lincoln Castle, father.'

But he went on: 'Who lives here?'

'You and I, father, and I hope Charlie soon. Adam Sinclair gave us this place. Wasn't it good of him?'

'Adam Sinclair?' He looked bewildered, and shook his head. 'I know naught of him, Deb. Deb, little Deb, I was thinking of Kate Shaw. I saw her yesterday.'

'Who was she, father, dear?'

He stared at her. 'Why, your mother!'

Her heart fluttered. 'My mother! And did you see her yesterday?'

'Ay; she was walking under the trees yonder. But she looked ill, sadly ill; her hair was as white as mine. She gave me such a look!'

Deborah went and kneeled by her father, and put her arms around him. 'Poor sweet father! This could not be. Thou knowest my mother died long, long ago. And was her name Kate Shaw, father?'

'Ay;' and he smiled. Wrapt and intent, his eyes seemed gazing far through and away. 'She was Kate Shaw, Deb; a gipsy lass, and beautiful as the dawn. No one like her! Such eyes, such feet, such grace! Sweet Kate! sweet Kate!'

Deborah knew that her mother's name had been Kate. She marvelled, trembled.

'I walked with her yesterday, Deb; didn't I? Yes; under the trees at Enderby; and I found she loved me. Little witch! She was hard, hard to win; so coy, so whimsical! She had a gipsy lover too. I made short work of *him*.'

'Didst shoot him, father?'

Sir Vincent laughed aloud, then feigned to look greatly scandalised amid his mirth. 'Shoot him? Fie, fie, Deb! Ask me not what I did, child. Why, one day she cared for him, the next for me. I could not stand it. A Fleming too! The Flemings woo maidens honourably. 'Fore heaven, I made Kate my Lady Fleming—my sweet little wife Kate! But I let her go no more to the camp. Sometimes I think she pines. She talks sometimes about her mother, in her dreams—that old hag!

My wife must give up all, and cleave to me. Kate, Kate! dear love!' Then he said no more, nor did Deborah; but she marvelled at what she had heard, and what could have recalled her mother so vividly.

It happened one afternoon a few days after this and their arrival at Lincoln, Dame Marjory entered with a pale face. 'My Lady Deb, there's a poor woman round there at the gates wantin' to see thee; she is very ill. She lies there; 'tis like she's dyin'; so Master Coleman thinks. She can't be moved away.' {693}

'I will come,' cried Deborah. 'Send Coleman to father. I will speak to her.' Beautiful, pitiful, Deborah appeared in her long black robes to the vision of the dying woman, bending down to her. She was an old, old woman, with wild and wintry hair; death in her face, but life in her great burning eyes, and those were fixed on Deborah. Deborah started back. It was *the* gipsy! A hundred doubts and certainties rushed surging to her brain. The gipsy beckoned her nearer.

'Speak to her,' whispered old Marjory emphatically. 'Go nearer.' And then Marjory, standing by gaunt and grim, waved the other servants away.

Deborah kneeled and bent her ear to the dying woman's lips. 'Girl,' said the faint voice, 'I forgive and forget! Let me die like a woman, not like a dog. I am thy mother's mother, an' I have been round day an' night to seek thee. *She* cast me off—Kate Shaw, thy mother. Because she was my Lady Fleming, she forgot her old mother. I was the dirt under her feet. Thy servants turned me off, Mistress. But take me into your grand house an' let me die in peace.'

Deborah rose to her feet, and turned like a ghost on Marjory. 'Nurse,' she whispered, 'is this my grandmother?'

'Yes, Mistress Deborah; it is true.'

Then Deborah beckoned to the men, and bid them bear the dying woman in and lay her on a bed. And then Deborah, with Marjory on the other side, sat down beside her. She seemed almost gone; the breath came labouring. But the breeze that swept in at the open windows seemed to revive her. It blew on the long white locks straggling across the brow; on those glazing eyes, so dark, sunken, piteous—eyes that burned up again, and sought Deborah's face as the embers of a dying fire flicker up and throw into the room an unexpected light.

'My girl,' she said, 'if Kate had been like *thee*! Hark! I hated, an' yet I always loved thee! *Thou'dst* ne'er ha' treated me like a dog. An', ah me! I loved her like my soul!'

'Grandmother,' answered Deborah sweetly and with a clear utterance, that pierced to the dying ears, 'my mother loved you. Only the other day I heard that great as she was, she never forgot you, even in her dreams. Day and night she thought of you; but her promise to her husband kept her from you, though she pined to see you once again. Oh, be merciful then! Forgive her! You are going now to meet again. O forgive her! that God may let ye meet in heaven!'

The great eyes stirred not from Deborah's face. 'Shall I win to heaven, lass? Speak to me o' heaven.' And Deborah described to her that beautiful place, that land glorious with promise and with bliss, that 'eye hath not seen, nor heart of man conceived.' The dying gipsy listened with her soul in her eyes. Then said she, very faintly: 'I am goin'. O Jesus, let me come! O Kate—my Kate!' Then, with wonderful sudden life and fire: 'Hi! you, my lass! Where's the boy? the rogue—"wild Charlie" they called him. Where's *he*?'

'In Ireland. Gone to fight for the Irish, grandmother.'

She laughed exultantly. 'Why, I tell thee why—*his mother* was Irish, an' he knew it. Mad boy, mad boy!'

Deborah laid her white hand on the old brown trembling hand, and smiled. She watched to see again and again a strange look of Charlie in that faded face and those large and wistful eyes. A great new-born love was flooding Deborah's heart for the dying vagrant. But death was taking the wanderer away. 'O Jesus, let me come!' Deborah heard her say again.

The fire died out; the flame sank low; the embers of life just smouldered, nothing more.... The fresh wind blew in vain on the wild gipsy face. She was gone.

Scarcely had Katharine Shaw been laid in her grave when Sir Vincent Fleming became very ill—so ill, that Deborah despatched a letter post-haste to Mistress Margaret Fleming, begging her to make known the fact to Charlie at once. But Mistress Fleming had started for Dublin; and this is how it befell. One morning a letter came to her. She often received such; but this one had cost her a laugh and a cry of joy. Just as she was in the perusal, old Jordan entered, and stared in wonderment at the glorious happiness of her face. 'Why, my maid,' he said, 'what hast got there? It's naught but paper, is it?'

'No, dad; but something writ upon it. Father,' she said, and rose and slid the beautiful arm around his neck, 'haven't I been a good daughter to thee? Proud and pursed up with mine own conceit, the lads o' the village have always called me. But, father, "Mistress Dinnage" has been a good daughter unto thee?'

'Ay, ay, lass, thou hast! What wouldst be comin' at? What ails thee now, Mistress?'

'Why, I come to ask thy blessing on me. Don't look scared, father; no shame will ever fall on thee through Mistress Dinnage. But I will out with it, for I can never beat about the bush. Father, I am Charles Fleming's lawful wife!'

Jordan seized his child by the shoulders, and his old grotesque visage grew dignified and terribly

stern in its earnestness as he almost shrieked: 'Not—not unbeknown to the Master—an' Mistress Deborah?'

'Unbeknown that we are wedded, but not that we love, father. Mistress Deborah has known and wished it long; and Sir Vincent—he has seen us twice together, father, when we were walking secretly, an' has smiled on us. Mistress Deborah has heard him say a hundred times that he would fain, if he had wealth, have for his daughter-in-law an "honest poor man's child." So father, dear father, ye must not be angered.'

'Child, child! thou'st done wrong in keepin' it hid. Married? What—*married*? Honestly?'

'Ay,' was the proud answer. 'Charles Fleming and Margaret Dinnage went to Daxford Church, and were wed; we came out man and wife. Ask Master Rawdon. Father, he's in Ireland; but it's kept secret from all but Mistress Deborah. He's gone soldiering, father; and in this letter he asks me to go. Father, I am his wife!'

'Ay, an' *Jordan's daughter*, Meg,' said the old man brokenly. 'I'm a'most dazed. And thou'rt goin' to leave the old man alone—alone!'

'Only for a little time, father—a little, little time; for soon Charlie, when all the trouble's over, will come home to Enderby. It's all arranged between Lady Deb and me. A fine home-comin' it'll be, {694}
an' it please thee, Master Dinnage! Father, I won't go for long, dear. But o' nights, thinkin' o' Charlie, I well nigh go distraught. There is danger, father, as thou know'st! Hundreds o' men are slain. I must be *there*. I must go, dear; but I won't be long.'

'Go, go!' muttered Jordan irefully. 'Thou'dst allus the bit atween thy teeth, Mistress Dinnage; so had thy poor dear mother. Go along! I've no need o' thee; yon brave young fellow hath. Thou'lt be killed next, girl, killed, ay, an' wus than killed, at the hands o' the wild Irish. But, go, go! I don't want thee here.'

Anger, pride, and sorrow struggled fiercely in the brave old heart; but 'Mistress Dinnage' knew how to take him. 'Father,' she said, sorrowfully regarding him, with her head slightly on one side, and her hands playing nervously with her apron, in her earnest pleading, 'if thou wert newly wed, an' so parted from mother by land an' sea—an' she in trouble, needin' thee sore—thou'dst wade through fire an' water, only to win to *her*. My heart is broke in twain 'tween thee both—one half is at home with thee, an' the other gone to Charlie. Though I don't speak or cry, my heart is wounded with every man that's killed, an' trouble wears me sore. Think of mother, my father! Think when thou wert first wed, what it would be for one to part thee—think o' it, an' bid me go!'

So Mistress Margaret won the day.

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# OUR INDIAN PETS.

Among the many, many good things swept from India by the great Mutiny storm was the time-honoured order of Griffs—that is, officers under a year's service in the country. Every regiment owned one or two members, and in large stations they were usually to be found by the half-dozen. They were generally the life of the station, and in every way were our *prime* pets. What would Mrs General and Mrs Brigadier have done without their griffs to patronise and make use of in various ways, such as filling up sudden vacancies at their dinner-tables, or helping to fill their ball-rooms? Griffs invariably started Indian life with the three animals which are also included in the list of 'our Indian pets'—namely the horse or his humble representative the pony, the dog, and the monkey. No griff considered his establishment complete without these three animals; there would be a general uniformity among the monkeys; but a collection of griff horses, ponies, and dogs formed a rare aggregation of screws and curs of all sorts, sizes, and colours.

There is a peculiar charm about Indian life which is rarely seen at home, and that is the compactness and domesticity of each establishment. In each household the master, and if he is married, his wife and children, is in direct contact with his servants and his animals; all are housed near him; and the daily morning stroll leads him from the stables to the farm-yard, then to the garden, and so home by the tree beneath which the monkey is chained, the dogs being in close attendance. The horses are brought up to be fed under their master's eye, and generally receive a crust of bread, a biscuit, or a chupátee (an unleavened wheaten cake like a pancake; the 'unleavened bread' of Scripture) from his or his wife's hands; the dogs have the free run of the house, and at their stated hours have their meals under some one's eyes; while the farm-yard is under the direct charge of the mistress, who fusses about among the cows, looks after the eggs and chickens, and makes over the victims selected for the table. Then on the march we are in still closer contact with our servants and animals; for a few steps only separate us from all. Emerging from the tent, a few paces to the rear bring us to the cook's tent, and behind or beside it is that belonging to the servants. Behind them are our horses and dogs, the latter generally tied up during the day and loose at night.

So it happens that in cantonments, and more especially on the march, we are virtually monarchs of all we survey; and I well remember that in the pleasant days of my griffinage, on the occasion of my first march, I felt quite patriarchal as I sat in the tent-door with all my earthly belongings around me; the bearer (valet) and the other servants attending to their various duties, my dear Caboolee horse Tom dozing in the sunshine, my faithful setter Belle lying at my feet, and my monkeys Jacko and Moony busy with their own affairs.

And now to 'our Indian pets;' and I purpose passing some of mine in pleasant review; but in doing so I shall not record anything remarkable, or what any kind observer of animals and their habits cannot fully indorse.

One of my first purchases was a horse we called Tom, a gray, thoroughbred, thick-necked, and sturdy Caboolee, for whom I paid ninety rupees (nine pounds); and right valuable did he turn out. I bought him in 1854, rode him from one end of the presidency to the other, through the Mutiny, and up to 1866, when I pensioned him. In 1869 he was attacked by black cancer, and at length I was sorrowfully obliged to put an end to his existence, to save him from a cruel, lingering death. There was nothing about him externally different from other thoroughbred Caboolees; but being made a great pet of, his mental abilities shone more remarkably, especially under daily observation. For instance, he had a strong sense of the comic. If I spoke to him when mounted, he would turn his head as much as he could and look at me; or he would take a cake or bit of sugar-cane out of my stretched-out hand, and munch it as he went along; or if I tickled one ear with my cane, he would unmistakably present the other ear to be similarly treated. He was a great thief, and I had great difficulty in restraining him from plunder when riding through crops. He was very fond of my wife's horse Punch, and neither would be stabled apart from the other; and it was most amusing to watch their nose-rubbings across the stall partition. Much, however, as he loved Punch, he would never allow him to precede him in the walk or canter, nor would he move until the dogs had been let loose and had jumped up to his nose. He knew his name perfectly, and would trot up to me when called, from any part of the field. He carried me unflinchingly through the Mutiny until wounded, and thought nothing of our weary rides of between thirty and forty miles a night.

On one memorable occasion we were escaping from a threatened attack, and I had dismounted to look at the girths; a shot from the rear elicited the exclamation: 'I wonder where that bullet has {695}
gone to;' and I again mounted, but had hardly gone two paces when Tom began to limp. I got off at once, and then found that the bullet had struck him just outside the off-knee, had run round under the skin, and lodged in front. I tried to cut it out then and there; but the horse was too restive, and I again mounted, but only to find the poor brute getting more and more lame. I was now well behind, and the rest of our party urged me to come on. As I still lagged, they cried out to abandon the horse, as we were being pursued. This I grudgingly did, and trudged on hurriedly to join our party; having done this, I looked back, and saw poor old Tom hobbling after me. I could not stand this, so brought him on at once. When we reached comparative safety some days after, I extracted the bullet.

I have already mentioned Punch my wife's horse. He was ridden as a charger through the battle of Gujrát in January 1849, and with his rider, had a remarkable escape from a shell, which exploded between his rider's foot and his own off-shoulder. The wound inflicted left a scar, into the hollow of which you could thrust half a fist. He was a perfect lady's horse, and quite free from vice, possessing a gentle and affectionate disposition. He was fonder of Tom than Tom was of him, and used to exhibit great anxiety when, in his opinion, his friend was longer absent from his stall than usual, his return to which was greeted by a loud neigh of welcome. I have never seen so gentle or loving a horse. He quite understood the difference between adults and children, and would allow the latter to take all kinds of liberties with him, and was perfectly aware how to behave when they mounted him, as they always did when he returned from the morning or evening ride. He was a darling horse, and like true friends, his and Tom's best qualities came out under trial. Both had suddenly to exhibit their best points when the Mutiny broke out, and both behaved nobly. When Tom was disabled, I rode Punch, and during these weary days and nights he fully understood his position; many a time had we to snatch an hour or two of sleep when we could on the bare road; I would lie down with the bridle round my arm, and he would sleep standing beside me. One morning we broke down together, and both fell asleep while progressing, being rudely awoke by finding ourselves in a large roadside bush. Poor old Punch was subject to a disorder which eventually carried him off in November 1864, in the twenty-third year of his age. Unlike Tom, he was hale and hearty to the last. Peace to the memory of these two humble and faithful friends! Several horses have subsequently been in my stables, and I might narrate something about each, did time and space allow, but none of them ever took our affections so completely as did Tom and Punch; they were our first and best equine loves.

Let me pass some of my dogs in review; and how tender are the memories which some of their names recall! Dear old Belle, an English brown and white setter, leads the way: she was too old for active service, had been left in the country by her former master, and had passed from one hand to the other, getting thinner and thinner with each change. When I got her she seemed to think a new master a matter of course, and accepted the change without emotion; but when she saw that she had really found a permanent master and a comfortable home, then all her pent-up affection welled forth, and she seemed to feel that she could not shew enough of it. She was my constant and faithful companion in the early years of my service, and I felt her loss keenly when carried off by distemper, which on that occasion killed all my dogs. Her last acts were to lick my hand and feebly wag her tail as I bent over her prostrate form.

Belle number two comes on the scene: a small black and white spaniel, which I had as a pup. She was specially noted for an intimacy she struck up with another dog Topsy, and a cat; and the romps of the three were most amusing, but at the same time most destructive to a bed of melons they always selected for their invariable game of Hide-and-seek. The gardener protested in vain against their romps, though he allowed that Belle effectually protected the melon-bed from the jackals at night. She accompanied me in our flight in the Mutiny; but, poor little thing, was lost on the road. Topsy was a great pet; a very singular-looking little animal of a mixed breed, very

peppery, full of life, and immensely affectionate. Her peculiarities were—intense antipathy to jackals, whose howl she would at once imitate if you called to her: 'Jackals, Tops;' and the clear manner in which she articulated grand-mam-má-á-á, if you interrupted her growling with your finger. She accompanied her mistress to England as a co-refugee from the Mutiny, and was made much of in consequence, returning to this country only to die prematurely, dear little Tops.

Rosie! Rosie! Here is a small liver and white smooth terrier, very affectionate, and noted for her antipathy to musk-rats and squirrels; the former she invariably killed, and the latter she tried hard to, but rarely succeeded, as they were too agile, and always got up the nearest tree. I have had to drag her away from the foot of a palm-tree, at which she had been sitting all the morning watching a squirrel. Her first litter consisted of one pup, about which she made an immense fuss, and was inclined to resent a great liberty I took with her. I found one day a starving outcast kitten, and bringing it home, put Rosie on her side, and told her to be kind to it. The kitten ravenously seized a teat; and Rosie was very uneasy, not quite making out the animal which was draining her, and evidently suspecting it to be a squirrel. After a day or two she took to the stranger; and the kitten at once made itself quite at home; rather too much so, for she would claw at the pup most unmercifully, while it yelled complainingly, the mother not knowing what to make of the arrangement. But the tables were turned as soon as the pup got its teeth and legs; and then it fiercely maintained its rights, and there used to be regular scrimmages over a favourite teat; Rosie looking on in blank amazement, and wincing under the scratches of her strange pup. The three pulled on together in a way; but there was never much love lost among them.

My monkeys Jacko and Moony I bought as a griff at Umballah for the large sum of one rupee. They were just emerging from babyhood, and so required some care and looking after. I never taught them anything; for such education, as with dogs, always necessitates more or less {696} severity; but I carefully cultivated the talents they possessed. The looking-glass was always a standing joke. Either monkey would cautiously approach its image, making the usual recognition grimaces, which of course were duly returned; then it would sit close up to the glass, and now and then look sideways at the reflection; or it would put a hand behind the glass, as if feeling for the other monkey. If I seized the hand, a fight with the glass at once ensued, which I kept up with my hand, and then suddenly dropped the glass. The amazement of the monkey at the sudden disappearance of its adversary was most ludicrous to behold.

Moony was very fond of a delicacy well known in India as mango-fool. The spirit of mischief induced me one day to add a teaspoonful of spirits of wine to her daily saucer of mango-fool, and for the first and last time in my life I saw an intoxicated monkey; her antics and attempts to keep the perpendicular were most absurd. She certainly attempted to dance and clap her hands, but ultimately was obliged gradually to subside and yield to the soporific influence of the spirits. As a great treat I used occasionally to loosen both monkeys and let them scamper up a large tree. At first they appreciated my kindness and came down at call to be tied up for the night; but the sweets of liberty were too great, and they gradually began to be tardy in their descent, and at last Moony preferred to spend the night in the tree. To prevent the return of such behaviour, I bombarded Moony next day with my goolél or pellet-bow (a weapon with which in those days I was remarkably skilful), and soon brought her to my feet. Both monkeys were familiar with the goolél, for I often harmlessly tested their agility by shelling them with it; but Moony now learned for the first time the punishment it could inflict; and ever thereafter, if I merely called out (when she hesitated to descend) to the bearer: 'Goolél lao' (Pellet-bow bring), she would hurry down the tree repentant. This story savours somewhat of the American colonel and opossum; but it is strictly true.

Moony had her first young one when about fifteen months old; and the fuss she made with it, and the fierce affection she exhibited, were interesting to behold. Her babe was still at the breast when the Mutiny broke out. Among the ruffians who burned my bungalow was one who provoked her in some way or other. She attacked him at once, but was killed by one blow of a láthee (stout bamboo staff), her young one sharing her fate. Jacko escaped in the confusion, and became a vagrant.

A native gentleman once presented me with a black gibbon (*Hylobates agilis*), called by the natives from its yell, Hookoo or Hoolook. Its tremendous teeth and unearthly yell impressed me unfavourably, and I kept it in confinement, much against my will, as it always seemed so gentle. The poor brute soon died. Some time after, when staying with a dear and congenial friend at Alipore, near Calcutta, I became acquainted with a second gibbon, which was quite tame, and allowed to be at large. We at once exchanged confidences, and the poor creature's loving affection for me became quite overpowering. So thoroughly did I trust it, that I allowed my boy of three years of age to play with her, and the way the two rolled over on the turf was most amusing to behold. The agility of the animal was simply marvellous. I have seen it go round the large house hanging by its finger-tips to the cornice beading which went round. To run up the rain-pipes was as easy to it as a ladder would be to a man; in fact, it could go anywhere and everywhere, and so often vexed us by its depredations. It found out where my boy's milk was kept, and helped itself in this strange fashion. Its great length of arm prevented it from drinking direct from the vessel, as monkeys do, the arms always intervening between the vessel and the animal's mouth; so she was obliged to sit at some distance from the vessel, and scoop out its contents with her fingers, letting the milk drop from them into her mouth. She did not drink from the hollowed hand, but let the fingers drip the liquid into the mouth. One day the gibbon had annoyed my friend by eating some of his papers, and in the afternoon we were conversing together in his study, when suddenly it appeared, and sidled up to me. With a half-angry laugh,

my friend made a gesture as if to throw a book at it, and exclaimed: 'Get out, you mischievous brute.' She accordingly got out, in her silent mysterious manner, and we went on talking. We then adjourned to the roof for a view, and I drew my friend's attention to the gibbon, which was timidly surveying us from behind a distant chimney. Playfully shaking his fist at her, we walked together to the opposite end of the roof and leaned over the parapet. Presently I saw the gibbon stealing quietly towards us along the parapet. As soon as she saw that she was observed, she boldly ran up to me, threw her long arms around me, and nestled into my breast. Could I resist such an appeal for forgiveness and protection? We were both much touched by it, and winked at many of her subsequent misdoings.

So much for our principal pets: minor ones are cats, pigeons, parrots, cockatoos, minas, squirrels, and the mongoose. I might devote an article to each of these animals; but time and space warn me to stop.

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# THE ADMIRAL'S SECOND WIFE.

## CHAPTER X.—ONLY TWO LETTERS!

At length the day for the party arrives. A hundred or more invitations have been accepted, and much expectation and curiosity is evoked at Seabright about the coming grand entertainment. Lady Dillworth's eagerness intensifies, and doubts spring up in her mind. What if the charade should prove a failure after all? She is nervous at having to sing in character, and angry with herself for her trepidation. She even tells Walter of her cowardice; and after the last rehearsal, as he goes away, she implores him to help her as much as he possibly can.

'Do, do come early, and manage everything, for I feel as if I were going to break down in the very midst. Recollect, the whole responsibility of making it a success rests on you.'

Walter promises all she requires; but Katie is not convinced, and her doubts increase as the time draws near.

The morning of that day does not begin auspiciously. A fierce storm has been raging for many hours. When the Admiral glances over the newspapers at breakfast, his face becomes grave as he reads down the long list of disasters and wrecks. Presently the footman hands him a letter, and then his face becomes still graver. {697}

'Anything wrong, Herbert?' asks her Ladyship.

'A ship aground on the Short Reefs,' replies he shortly.

'O dear, how dreadful! What is the name of the ship, Sir Herbert?' asks Liddy clasping her hands, and opening her eyes very wide.

'The *Daring*; and unless they get her off at the top of spring-tide, I fear she will go to pieces on the rocks.'

The Admiral drinks his coffee quickly, and prepares to leave the room.

'Where are you going, Herbert? You haven't taken half a breakfast.'

'I can't stay, Kate; for I must give orders about sending off help to the *Daring*.'

'Are any lives lost?'

'Not so far, I'm thankful to say. I hope we shall have her afloat before long;' and he goes to the library with the letter in his hand.

Lady Dillworth is very busy that morning, and not the least of her engagements is trying on her 'Lucia' dress. Before she goes up to her dressing-room on this important business, she runs into the library to ask Sir Herbert what time he is to be home to dinner. But the room is empty. The Admiral must have been called out suddenly, for a letter, still glowing with wet ink, lies open on his desk. His wife glances at it in passing, then pauses, and bends over it closely. The words are few, written off in her husband's bold dashing hand, and the contents are evidently for her father. It is an order for the *Leo* to be despatched at once to the assistance of the unfortunate *Daring*.

Lady Dillworth stands aghast. How can the charade party get on without Captain Reeves? It will be an utter disappointment, and she will be overwhelmed with mortification and vexation in the eyes of all her guests!

'Why did Herbert fix on the *Leo*? There are numbers of other ships; any one of them would do as well. The *Leoni*, for instance,' she exclaims half aloud.

In an instant the pen is in her hand, and with an impulse that seems irresistible she adds two letters to the *Leo's* name, and is surprised to see how exactly she has imitated her husband's writing.

'Of course I must tell Herbert, and explain why I did it. What will he think of my daring?' she asks laughingly, as she returns the pen to its place.

Then she goes up-stairs, and is soon closeted with her dressmaker; and the recollection of ships and all such matters is soon banished from her memory; for the dress is an odious fit! The alterations required are legion. Madame Darcy may be clever at fashionable modern dress; but in

medieval costume she has failed utterly. Katie waits patiently while the assistant, with scissors and needle, brings the garment into wearable shape. After the woman is gone, Lady Dillworth recollects about the letter, and returns to the library to tell her husband of the change she has made in it. But the letter has vanished, and the footman meets her with a message.

'My Lady, Sir Herbert told me to say he would not be home to dinner.'

'Did your master say where he was going?'

'No, my Lady; but the groom told me he was called off to Hillview, and was to go by the twelve o'clock train; and it's half-past twelve now, my Lady.'

So there is no help for it; the explanation cannot be given now; and Katie is fain to console herself by thinking that one ship is as good as another, and it can't matter much whether the *Leo* or the *Leoni* goes off to the rescue.

The day passes quickly. When it grows dark, Katie and Liddy, still in their morning dresses, and shivering a little from the cold, find their way up to Lady Dillworth's 'boudoir'—a cosy retreat, with its bright fire and closely drawn curtains. Here are Katie's books, her writing-table, and all the odds and ends that somehow gather in work-boxes and baskets. Here are periodicals uncut, for she has not had much time for reading of late, and drawing materials which are rarely touched.

On a round table near the fire is spread a delicately pink-tinted set of tea-things; and Dresden china baskets filled with tea-cakes and shortbread give promise of a dainty little meal. Miss Delmere, in a most becoming morning dress, with a warm blue shawl round her shoulders, plunges herself into the depths of a large arm-chair, places her feet on the fender-stool, and looks up brightly out of her merry blue eyes.

'How cosy this is, Kate! I'm quite enjoying it.' She pours a supply of cream into her fragrant tea and sips with keen relish.

'I wish Herbert were here,' sighs Katie in reply.

'Is he dining at Hillview this evening?'

'I hardly know, for he left no message about that; but I rather think he will dine at Belton Park, which is only a couple of miles from Hillview.'

'Is Lady Ribson gone back to Scotland yet?'

'No; she leaves Belton Park to-morrow; and I'm *so* sorry I have never once seen her, for Herbert is very desirous we should know each other. I believe old Lady Ribson is his *beau idéal* of what a woman should be. She is his god-mother; and her niece Bessie was his first wife.'

'You've never had time to go to Belton Park, Katie.'

'I know that; but I'm sorry now I didn't "*make* time," by setting other things aside. This hateful charade business has taken up every spare minute.'

'Hateful!' echoes Liddy reproachfully.

'Perhaps that is too strong a term; but the preparations have swallowed up all my time and everything else.'

'Don't begin to croak at the last minute. *I* mean to enjoy myself thoroughly!' exclaims Liddy, putting her cup down for more tea. Then she asks confidentially: 'Do you think Sir Herbert altered? Captain Reeves says he never saw a man aged so much in so short a time: he thinks the Admiral looks very ill.'

Lady Dillworth starts up impatiently: 'I don't know why Captain Reeves should think any such thing. My husband is *not* ill; I have never once heard him complain.'

'Ah! his is one of those grand reserved natures that would rather suffer anything than make a moan,' says Liddy, stirring her tea calmly.

'Why did you not tell me about Herbert's looking ill before, Liddy? I declare you make me quite uneasy.'

'Oh, I daresay it's all imagination on Walter's part. I'm sorry I ever mentioned it,' Liddy replies quickly. {698}

'You needn't regret telling me; for if there *is* anything the matter, I ought to know it.'

Liddy is vexed at having introduced so disquieting a subject, for Katie remains silent and thoughtful during the rest of the repast, then goes languidly up-stairs to dress for the party.

## CHAPTER XI.—THE CHARADE PARTY.

The bitter storm raging over the country, and spreading woe and terror and desolation far out at sea, does not much affect the expected guests. Carriage after carriage drives in at the gates of Government House; and ere long, many eager eyes are fixed on the drop-scene, the owners of them ready to be pleased or otherwise by the coming performance. Curiosity and criticism are on the alert; some of the audience are just as much inclined to find fault as to admire. When Lady Dillworth 'comes on' she feels unaccountably agitated at seeing her 'dear friends' sitting in solemn state on rows of chairs, all ready to detect her slightest shortcomings. For the moment she feels as though she would fain dart away beyond their range of vision. But this nervousness

speedily vanishes. Amidst the bursts of applause that greet her, she begins to catch somewhat of the spirit of a successful *débutante*, and her pulse throbs triumphantly. Her voice rings out in strains of pathetic melody; she forgets her qualms, her trepidation, and almost even her own identity, so carried away is she by the intensely tragic music.

During the first part, the singing goes on faultlessly, then a somewhat awkward sense of failure begins to steal over the performers. Major Dillon and Walter differ about some minor points, and the former nearly bewilders the others with his eccentric proceedings. The chorus get out of tune, and the Major reproves them so vigorously that he nearly banishes all sense of harmony out of their heads.

Liddy Delmere is much amused, and she and Walter make themselves conspicuous with ill-timed mirth. This is unfortunate, as the irate mother of the hapless 'Lucia' should be grave and dignified. But Liddy forgets her part, the words and air and everything, and only remembers Walter Reeves is beside her. Lady Dillworth calls her to order with one of her haughtiest looks.

'Liddy, Liddy! do be reasonable. Don't you see what wretched idiots we are making of ourselves? We are only bringing down ridicule on our heads.'

Then in a pause, when she is not wanted to sing, Katie slips away to a room adjoining, that has been fitted up temporarily for the performers. She lifts the window-blind, and looks out on the rather grim garden, dimly lighted up with flickering coloured lamps. Dense clumps of evergreens glitter with raindrops, and cast deep uncertain shadows on the grass. The bare branches of the beech-trees are swaying wildly in the wind, and flinging themselves about like gaunt weird arms. Above in the troubled sky, heavy masses of storm-cloud are driven rapidly past, giving glimpses now and then of an almost full moon.

'Oh, what a fearful night this must be at sea!' muses Katie, and then a sudden shudder comes over her as her thoughts fly off to the unfortunate ship *Daring*, perhaps even now wrecked and broken up on the fatal Short Reefs.

'What have I done? what have I done?' she exclaims wildly, as like a lightning flash, a sudden revelation of the possible result of her act that morning comes before her. She has prevented the *Leo* from going to sea by altering her husband's order; her own meddling fingers have kept back the very aid that might have saved the ship. The *Leo* is at that moment safely riding at her anchor in Seabright harbour; her captain is sporting himself in delightful ease. But what about the *Daring*? Where is she?

Even now the pitiless waves may be dashing over her, even now she may be breaking up on the sharp rocks. Perhaps the storm that rages past is bearing on its wild wings the awful death-shrieks of sailors as they go down into the pitiless waters.

Ah, they may be crying for help, that never comes!—help, *she* has kept back from them, foolishly, wickedly kept back! Souls, precious souls, may be going to their doom, in life's full prime, with unrepented sins on their heads; and she indirectly may be the one who has hurled them to their end. These thoughts rush through Lady Dillworth's mind with a crushing force, and with a vividness that makes her heart bound, her whole frame tremble. In the howling of the wind, as it sobs with wild violence through the trees, she fancies she hears the cries of the sailors writhing in agony amidst the surging waves. She thinks they are calling on *her*—accusing *her*, and her brain whirls and her heart beats almost to madness.

'"There is sorrow on the sea; it cannot be quiet." O God! help these poor men in their distress—lay not their death to my charge!' she cries almost aloud, and then she looks up, and sees Liddy Delmere watching her with alarm.

'O Lady Dillworth! what *is* the matter? How pale and ill you look! Shall I call any one? Shall I get anything?'

'Be quiet, Liddy; I insist. I feel faint; but you need not proclaim the fact to the whole world.'

Katie covers her face with her hands, and stands for a minute trying to recover herself—trying—while the angry wind howls like an avenging spirit in her ears. Presently she looks up: 'I feel better now. What do you want of me, Liddy?'

'Have you forgotten our duet comes on when this chorus is over? Are you well enough to sing?' asks Miss Delmere, as she gazes with amazement at Lady Dillworth's haggard face and startled eyes.

'O yes; I will sing. Don't be uneasy; I shall not break down.' She takes Liddy's arm, and they make their appearance on the stage just in time. Much license has been taken with the score of *Lucia di Lammermoor*—new songs and duets have been introduced, and it is one of the latter in which Katie is now required to take a part.

With a great effort she composes herself, and begins. As she goes on, her voice regains its rich fullness; no one would suppose such a tempest of agony had so lately swept over her.

While she is sustaining a rather prolonged cadence, she sees the Admiral enter the room. He stands for a minute looking at her, and listening; then he catches a glimpse of Walter Reeves, and {699}
goes quickly towards him. Though in the middle of her duet, Katie notices the start her husband gives and the quick frown that gathers on his brow. She sees him beckon Walter aside; the heads are bowed a moment as an excited whisper passes, then they leave the room together. Ere her part is over, she sees Walter return alone, and quietly make his way among the groups of people till he gets near the stage again, and there he takes up his position. The moment Lady Dillworth is free she is at his side, questioning and eager.

'I saw Sir Herbert here a minute ago. Where is he now?'

'He went out to find your father, for he said he must see him at once. I offered to go; but Sir Herbert would not hear of that.—How splendidly you sang in that duet, Lady Dillworth! Your voice came out in perfection.'

'Why did he want to see my father?' she asks impatiently.

'Sir Herbert did not say; but something appears to have annoyed him very much. I never saw him more put out, though he gave no explanation.'

Katie changes the subject abruptly.

'Is it very stormy at sea to-night, Captain Reeves? I mean, is there any danger to ships?'

'I should think there *is*. We haven't had such a storm as this since last winter. Every roar of the wind only makes me congratulate myself on being in such snug quarters. There's a wonderful difference between this fairy scene, with its music and mirth and its galaxy of youth and beauty, and what one would meet with out on the wild billows to-night.—What a charming evening you have given us, Lady Dillworth!'

Katie can hardly keep herself from stamping her little foot with impatience, as she looks up at Walter's self-satisfied face, beaming with enjoyment; and then she watches the smile with which he presently bends down to whisper something to Miss Delmere. Liddy responds with a flash of her bright blue eyes, and a heightened colour springs to her cheek as she makes room for Walter beside her. Never has she looked better than on this evening; the quaint antiquated costume contrasts capitally with her fair laughing face. At last the charade comes to an end; there is a subdued murmur of applause as everybody says how cleverly it has all been done. They make wild guesses at the word, and Walter has at last to explain the secret. Lady Dillworth listens to the comments of her guests with an abstracted air; and when the last carriage drives away, she summons the footman and inquires whether Sir Herbert has returned.

Hunter is an old servant of the Admiral's, and has followed his master's fortunes in various places and homes, and was with him when the first Lady Dillworth died; so he knows his ways, and sees more than perhaps his employers give him credit for. He turns a grave face towards his mistress, as he replies: 'Yes, my Lady. Master came in just when the acting was over; and when he saw the company wasn't gone, he told me to tell your Ladyship he was very tired, and would go to bed at once, instead of going back to the drawing-room.'

'*Very* tired, did he say?'

'Yes, my Lady; and he looked weary-like.'

'That will do, Hunter. We want breakfast very early to-morrow morning, as Miss Delmere is going away by the first train.'

Then Katie goes up to her boudoir. The fire is still burning brightly, and the lamp is throwing a soft light through the curtained room. Still in her fancy dress, the stomacher flashing with jewels, she seats herself in the arm-chair; and there, while the warmth steals over her, she covers her face with her hands, and thinks bitterly, confusedly—the loud shrieking of the wind and the fury of the cruel storm keeping up a wild accompaniment to her musings.

She wonders what she had better do. Shall she rouse her husband from his slumbers, and tell him all, or shall she wait till events call forth a confession? Never has she felt such a poor, mean, despicable coward. She hates herself for her irresolution; and all the time her fancy pictures up the surging whirlpools, the jagged rocks, the dashing waves, the yawning gulfs, and the drowning men with their despairing eyes, ever calling for the help that does not come!

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# REMINISCENCES OF QUEBEC.

FOR the following reminiscences connected with the stay of one of the British regiments at Quebec during the winter of 1870-71, we are indebted to an officer of the garrison. He writes as follows:

Until the close of 1871, Quebec was a fortress occupied by British troops; but before the winter set in, the *Orontes* and other store-ships carried away the troops and their possessions, and the stronghold passed for ever away from the rule of Great Britain.

Quebec, the principal fortress of Canada, also known as the 'Gibraltar of the West,' is built upon the strip of land projecting into the confluence of the St Lawrence and St Charles rivers. Originally a French settlement, it afterwards became one of the colonies of Great Britain, and has continued to be so until the present date.

'There is but one Quebec, and its beautiful scenery,' remarked a valued friend to the writer, as one autumn afternoon we scanned the view from the Levis Cliffs, and watched the 'Fall fleet' preparing to depart for England ere winter had closed the St Lawrence. 'The scenic beauty of Quebec,' says an old writer, 'has been the theme of general eulogy.' The majestic appearance of Cape Diamond, surmounted by fortifications; the cupolas and minarets, like those of an eastern city, blazing and sparkling in the sun; the loveliness of the panorama, the noble river like a sheet of purest silver, in which one hundred vessels may ride with safety; the graceful meandering of the river St Charles before it finds its way into the St Lawrence; the numerous village spires

scattered around; the fertile fields clothed with innumerable cottages, the abodes of a rich and moral peasantry; the distant Falls of Montmorenci; the rich park-like scenery of Levis; the lovely Isle of Orleans; and more distant still the frowning Cape Tourment, and the lofty range of purple mountains of the most picturesque forms, which bound the prospect, unite to make a *coup d'œil* which without exaggeration is scarcely to be surpassed in any part of the world.

In the winter-time there is much more leisure for the merchants than in summer, as the St Lawrence from the end of December until the end of April is one vast ice-field, isolating Quebec from water-commerce, but giving full employment to numbers of 'ice-men' to saw out great oblong masses of clear bright ice to fill the ice-houses with this much-needed summer luxury. The ice and snow are also turned to account in the fashionable amusements of snow-shoeing, tobogganing, skating, sleigh-driving, &c. Snow-shoeing is capital exercise, but somewhat trying at the commencement; for with a pair of snow-shoes fastened to the feet, the beginner is rather apt to find himself immersed in a snow-drift, and it is a difficult matter to get upon his legs again. This pastime, however, is so well known in theory that we pass to the more favourite one of tobogganing. The toboggan or Indian sleigh—one or two thin planks neatly curled round at one end—is drawn over the snow to the top of a hill. The passengers sit down, carefully 'tucking in' all articles of dress; a slight push is given, and away glides the toboggan at the rate of from twenty to thirty miles an hour. Starting is easy enough; but to descend to the desired spot is not so easy as might appear at first sight, and requires some skill in steering; for if that important matter be unskilfully performed, the toboggan, like a boat, gets 'broadside on' to the hill, twists and turns, shooting out its passengers, who rarely escape some hard knocks. If, however, the steering is successful, the tourists have, in school-boy phrase, a 'jolly ride,' and glide along the level ground at the foot of the slope for a considerable distance. There is, of course, the bother of pulling the toboggan up to the top of the hill; but such effect has the exhilarating dryness of the atmosphere upon one's spirits, and such is the charm of the amusement, that this labour is cheerfully undertaken. {700}

One favourite run was down the citadel glacis, through a gap in a fence and into a closed yard at the base; another, also from the glacis, but running in the direction of the Plains of Abraham. The former being the most dangerous slide, was the favourite one, and many hard blows were given and received. One young gentleman met his fate in the form of a deep cut across his knee, by being tossed out of the toboggan among some scrap-iron and old stove-pipes hidden under the snow. Much sympathy was felt for him, for the wound took a long while to heal, and prevented him tobogganing more that winter. Another gentleman coming down the slide by moonlight with two young ladies in his toboggan, in place of steering through the fence, steered into it, and his face came in contact with a post; unluckily for him, the post was the hardest, and he escaped with a broken jaw, and the ladies with more or less bruises. There was a laughable upset on another occasion. A lady, said to be at least forty (also 'fat and fair'), with a friend of the opposite sex, tempted fortune in a toboggan; but as they approached the gap above mentioned she lost her nerve, and threw herself out as the toboggan was rushing down the steepest part of the slide. In less time than the reader will take to peruse this incident, she was on her head in the snow, and her feet, incased in very black boots, in the air; she then tumbled across the slide; the toboggan with its remaining occupant flew lightly over her, and then this frisky matron and her friend rolled like a pair of frolicksome lambkins to the foot of the slope, the toboggan of course arriving before them.

Skating at Quebec is chiefly carried on at the Rink, a large building about one hundred and seventy feet long and seventy wide, the earth-floor of which is flooded. The ice is carefully swept daily; and each evening the rink-keeper 'dusts' it with just enough water to fill up the cuts made in it by the skaters; so that each morning finds a fresh field of glittering smooth ice. The wooden shed does three duties—namely, keeps out the heat of spring, keeps off the snow, and keeps in the cold of winter; so that skating can often be had at the Rink and nowhere else.

The band of the Rifles often played at the Rink, which was sometimes lighted up at night by gas; and visitors to Quebec had capital opportunities of seeing its young ladies exhibit their skill in the execution of sundry intricate skating-figures. Some years ago, there was a fancy-dress ball on the Quebec rink, and we have extracted a portion of its description from one of the local papers of that date: 'The bugle sounded at nine o'clock, and the motley crowd of skaters rushed on the ice, over which they dashed in high glee, their spirits stirred to the utmost by the enlivening music and the cheering presence of hundreds of ladies and gentlemen. Over the glittering floor sped dozens of flying figures, circling, skimming, wheeling, and intermingling with a new swiftness, the bright and varied colours, the rich and grotesque costumes succeeding each other, or combining with bewildering rapidity and effect. The gentlemen, in addition to the usual characters, introduced some novelties: an owl, a monkey, a monster bottle, a tailor at work, a boy on horseback—all capital representations and by good skaters. Among the ladies were representations of "Night" and "Morning," a vivandière, a habitant's wife, and other characters that appeared to advantage. The skaters presented both a varied and brilliant appearance, their parts being well sustained as to costume and deportment, and their movements on the ice being characterised by that grace and skill of movement bred of long practice. The dances included quadrilles, waltzes, galops, &c.'

That this elegant accomplishment can be turned to use is proved by a legend of two settlers in the Far West who saved their lives by the aid of a pair of skates. One had been captured by Indians, who did not intend to let him live long; but amongst his baggage was a pair of skates. The Indians' curiosity was excited, and the white man was desired to explain their use; he led his captors to the edge of a wide lake, where the smooth ice stretched away as far as the eye could

see, and put on the skates. Exciting the laughter of his captors by tumbling about in a clumsy manner, he at length contrived to get a hundred yards from them without arousing their suspicion, when he skated away as fast as he could, and finally escaped.

The other settler is said to have been skating alone one moonlight night; and while contemplating the reflection of the firmament in the clear ice, and the vast dark mass of forest surrounding the lake and stretching away in the background, he suddenly discovered, to his horror, that the adjacent bank was lined with a pack of wolves. He at once 'made tracks' for home, followed by these animals; but the skater kept ahead, and one by one the pack tailed off; two or three of the {701} foremost, however, kept up the chase; but when they attempted to close with the skater, by adroitly turning aside he allowed them to pass him. And after a few unsuccessful and vicious attempts on the part of the wolves, he succeeded in reaching his log-hut in safety.

The cold during the winter of 1870-71 was often extreme, the thermometer ranging as low as forty degrees below zero. Upon two days the writer had the pleasure of witnessing the beautiful phenomenon called silver-thaw—that is, the trees and shrubs encircled with ice-crystal, the glitter of which on the twigs and branches in the sunlight is wonderfully beautiful. Occasionally the St Lawrence is entirely frozen over opposite Quebec, and ice boats (on skates) are popular, and the bark glides along at a pace that depends upon the wind and quantity of sail carried. Sleighing was much in fashion; and it is agreeable enough rushing through the extremely cold but dry atmosphere with a pretty young lady nestling against you as you fly along the noiseless track to the music of the sleigh bells, which the law requires each horse to carry on its harness.

Practical jokes are not unknown at Quebec, and several silly ones without wit or purpose were perpetrated that winter; but one of a special and decidedly original character played upon the Control Department, may be worth recording. The Control Department—at the head of which was Deputy-Controller Martindale—was intrusted with the providing of fuel, food, ammunition, bedding, transport, &c. for the British troops, and for some reason or another that branch of the department at Quebec is said to have been somewhat unpopular in the garrison.

On the 23d and 24th February the following advertisement appeared in the columns of the principal French paper, *l'Evénement*:[1] 'Chats! Chats! Chats! 50 Chats sont demandés pour donner la chasse aux Rats et Souris qui infestent les Magasins du Gouvernement. Toute personne qui apportera un Chat au Bureau du Député-Contrôleur Martindale, entre 11 heures et midi un jour quelconque jusqu'au 28 du courant, recevra en retour un Dollar (1 $) par Chat.—Par ordre,

D. C. Martindale, *Député-Contrôleur.*
Quebec, *23 Fév. 1871—3f.*'

The powers of advertising were in this instance wonderfully exemplified, for at least eight hundred cats were duly brought to the Bureau; but the unfortunate cat-merchants did not receive a dollar. Some, being of a speculative turn, had bought up a number of their neighbours' cats at prices varying between ten cents and twenty-five cents each; and what with the ire of the cat-merchants at the hoax, the astonishment and indignation of the Control officers, and the caterwauling of the pussies brought in boxes, baskets, bags, &c., the scene was one which will long be remembered in Quebec. On Sunday, 26th February (according to a local custom of treating *government advertisements*), the doors of the churches in the country districts round Quebec had the 'cat advertisement' duly posted up, so that on Monday the 27th a bountiful supply of mousers was brought from suburban districts to complete the Control catastrophe.

Of course very strict inquiries were made, with a view of ascertaining the author of the hoax; but that individual has not yet presented himself to public notice, and judiciously made use of the post-office to carry the letter to the *Evénement* respecting the insertion of the advertisement. We also understand the editor of the *Evénement* was politely requested to render his account for the advertisements to the Control Department. There is, we believe, an old proverb, 'A cat may look at a king;' but many of the inhabitants of the Quebec suburbs did not like to look at cats for some time afterwards.

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# FRENCH FISHER-FOLK.

They live by themselves and to themselves, these French fisher-folk; an amphibious race, as completely cut off from the shore-staying population as any caste of Hindustan. The quaint village that they inhabit consists of half a score of steep and narrow lanes, and as many airless courts or alleys, clinging to the cliff as limpets anchor to a rock, and topped by the weather-beaten spire of a church, dedicated of course to St Peter. Hard by there may be a town rich and populous; but its wide streets and display of plate-glass are not envied by the piscatorial clan outside. They have shops of their own, where sails and shawls, ropes and ornaments, high surf-boots and gaudy gown-pieces, jostle one another in picturesque profusion. From the upper windows of the private dwellings project gaffs and booms, whence dangle, for drying purposes, wet suits of dark-blue pilot cloth and dripping pea-coats. Everywhere prevails an ancient and fish-like smell, struggling with the wholesome scent of hot pitch simmering for the manufacture of tarpaulins and waterproofs. Half the houses are draped in nets, some newly tanned to toughen them, others whose long chain of corks is still silvered with herring-scales. The very children are carving boats out of lumps of dark wreck-wood, or holding a mock auction for tiny crabs and spiked sea-urchins. The whole atmosphere of the place has a briny and Neptunian savour about it, and is

redolent of the ocean.

A word now as to the fishers themselves; as proud, self-reliant, and independent a race as those hardy Norsemen from whom ethnologists believe them to descend by no fictitious pedigree. Of the purity of their blood there can be little doubt, since the fish-maiden who mates with any but a fisherman is considered to have lost caste; precisely as the gipsy girl who marries a Busné is deemed to be a deserter from the tribe. Marrying among themselves then, it is not surprising that there should be an odd sort of family likeness among them, with one marked type of face and form, or rather two, for the men, curiously enough, are utterly unlike the women. Your French fisher is scarcely ever above the middle height, a compact thick-set little merman, with crisply curling hair, gold rings in his ears, and a brown honest face, the unfailing good-humour of which is enhanced by the gleam of the strong white teeth between the parted lips. {702}

The good looks of the women of this aquatic stock have passed into a proverb; but theirs is no buxom style of peasant comeliness. Half the drawing-rooms of London or Paris might be ransacked before an artist could find as worthy models of aristocratic beauty as that of scores of these young fish-girls, reared in the midst of creels and shrimp-nets and lobster-traps. Their tall slight figures, clear bright complexions, and delicate clean-cut features, not seldom of the Greek mould, contrast with the sun-burnt sturdiness of husband, brother, and betrothed; while the small hands and small feet combine to give to their owners an air of somewhat languid elegance, apparently quite out of keeping with a rough life and the duties of a workaday world.

Work, however—hard and trying work, makes up the staple existence of French fisher-folks, as of French landsmen. In the shrimp-catching season, it must indeed be wild weather which scares the girls who ply this branch of industry, with bare bronzed feet and dexterously wielded net, among the breakers. Others, a few years older, may be seen staggering under weighty baskets of oysters, or assisting at the trimming and sorting the many truck-loads of fish freighted for far-away Paris. The married women have their household cares, never shirked, for no children are better tended than these water-babies, that are destined from the cradle to live by net and line; while the widows—under government authority—board the English steam-packets, and enjoy the sole right of trundling off the portmanteaus of English travellers to their hotel.

The men, the real bread-winners of the community, enter well provided into the field of their hereditary labour. The big Boulogne luggers, strongly manned, and superior in tonnage and number to those which any other French port sends forth, are known throughout the Channel, and beyond it. They need to be large and roomy, since they scorn to be cooped within the contracted limits of the narrow seas, but sail away year after year to bleak Norway and savage Iceland; and their skippers, during the herring-fishery, are as familiar with the Scottish coast as with that of their native Picardy. It is requisite too that they should be strong and fit to 'keep,' in nautical parlance, the sea; for Boulogne, lying just where the Channel broadens out to meet the Atlantic, is exposed to the full force of the resistless south-west gale, that once drove Philip II.'s boasted Armada northward to wreck and ruin.

These south-west gales, with the abrupt changes of weather due to the neighbourhood of the fickle Atlantic, constitute the romance, or compose the stumbling-block of the fisherman's life. His calling may seem an easy and even an enviable one, to those who on summer mornings watch the fishing fleet glide out of harbour; the red-brown sails gilded by the welcome sunshine and filled by the balmy breeze, the nets festooned, the lines on the reel; keg and bait-can and windlass, harmonising well with the groups of seafaring men and lads lounging about on board; too many, as the novice thinks, for the navigation of the craft. But at any moment, with short warning, the blue sea may become leaden-hued, and the sky ragged with torn clouds and veiled with flying scud, and the howling storm may drive the fishers far from home, to beat about as best they may for days and nights, and at length to land and sell their fish (heedfully preserved in ice) at Dunkirk, Ostend, Flushing, or even some English harbour perhaps a hundred and fifty miles away.

The conscription, that relentless leech which claims its tithe of the blood and manhood of all continental nations, in due course takes toll of the fishers. The maritime population, however, supplies the navy, not the army with recruits. It is not until flagship and frigate are manned, that the overplus of unlucky drawers in that state lottery of which the prizes are exemption, get drafted into the ranks. These young sailors find military life a bitter pill to swallow. The writer of these lines has before his eyes a letter from a conscript to his mother in the fishing village, and in which the young defender of his country describes last year's autumn manœuvres in Touraine, the Little War as he calls it, from a soldier's point of view. There is not a spark of martial ardour or professional pride in this simple document. All the lad knows is that he is marched and countermarched about vast sandy plains from dawn till dark, wet, hungry, and footsore; and how difficult it is at the halting-place to collect an armful of brushwood, by whose cheerful blaze he may warm his stiff fingers and cook his solitary pannikin of soldier's soup.

As might be expected, in a community which more resembles an overgrown family than the mere members of a trade, there exists among these people an unusual amount of charity and rough good-nature. The neighbourly virtues shine brightly amid their darksome lanes and stifling courts, and a helping hand is freely held out to those whom some disaster has crippled in the struggle for existence. Bold and self-assertive as their bearing may be, there are no Jacobins, no partisans of the Red faction among these French fishers. They are pious also in their way, seldom failing to attend *en masse* at the church of St Nicholas or the cathedral of Notre-Dame, before they set out on a distant cruise.

Once and again in early summer, a fisher's picnic will be organised, when in long carts roofed

over with green boughs, Piscator and his female relatives, from the grizzled grandmother to the lisping little maiden, who in her lace-cap and scarlet petticoat looks scarcely larger than a doll, go merrily jolting off to dine beneath the oaks of the forest. In their quiet way, they are fond of pleasure, holding in summer dancing assemblies, where all the merry-making is at an end by half-past nine, and which are as decorous, if less ceremonious, as any ball can be. They are patrons of the theatre too, giving a preference to sentimental dramas, and shedding simple tears over the fictitious sorrows of a stage heroine; while in ecclesiastical processions the brightest patches of colour, artistically arranged, are those which are produced by the red kirtles, the blue or yellow shawls, and the snowy caps of the sailor-maidens.

The gay holiday attire, frequently copied, on the occasion of a fancy dress-ball, by Parisian ladies of the loftiest rank, with all its adjuncts of rich colour and spotless lace; the ear-rings and cross of yellow gold, the silver rings, trim slippers, and coquettish headgear of these French mermaidens; no doubt lends a piquancy to their beauty which might otherwise be lacking. Sometimes an exceptionally lovely fisher-girl may be tempted by a brilliant proposal of marriage, and leaves her {703}
clan to become a viscountess, or it may be a marchioness, for mercenary marriages are not universal in France. But such incongruous unions seldom end very happily; for the mermaiden is, alas! entirely uneducated, and proves at best too rough a diamond to appear to advantage in a golden setting.

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# EMERGENCIES.

Accidents of various kinds are continually occurring in which the spectator is suddenly called upon to do his best to save life or relieve suffering without the aid of skilled advice or scientific appliances. A body has been drawn from the water in an insensible condition, and thus far a rescue has been effected; but the scene may be more or less distant, not only from the residence of the nearest doctor, but from any house; and unless the by-stander is able to apply prompt means to restore respiration and warmth, a life may yet be lost. Again, a lady's dress is in flames, or it may be fire has broken out in a bedroom—accidents which, if immediate steps be not taken, may end fatally to life and property, long before the arrival of the physician or fire-brigade. One's own life too may be placed in such instant jeopardy that it can only be preserved by active and intelligent exertions on our own part. Situations of this kind attend the sailor, soldier, and traveller as 'permanent risks;' while in the city or field, and even in the security of home, dangers of different kinds confront us which are best described by the word emergencies.

The pressing question in any emergency is of course, 'What is to be done?' Unhappily, the answer is not always at hand. We are often altogether unprepared to act, or we act in such a way as only to increase the danger. The most humane onlooker in a case of partial drowning may at the same time be the most helpless. While in any of the frequent casualties to children—such as choking, scalding, &c.—the tenderest mother may but contribute to the calamity, either by the use of wrong means or the inability to apply right ones. How common this is in respect of many kinds of accidents, and how many of those cases returned 'fatal' might have had a happier issue had the spectator but known 'what to do.'

The terse advice supposed to meet every species of emergency is to 'keep cool.' We admit its force, and agree that it cannot be too frequently insisted upon. Without presence of mind, neither the zeal of self-interest nor the solicitude of affection itself can act with effect. In some instances even, special skill and knowledge may be paralysed by an access of nervousness and its consequent confusion of mind. Again there occur many grave situations in which tact and self-possession are all that are necessary to avert serious calamity. The following anecdote illustrative of this went the round of the newspapers shortly after the disastrous fire in Brooklyn Theatre. Some stage-properties suddenly took fire during a performance before a crowded audience at a certain European theatre. The usual panic ensued. A well-known actor aware that the danger was not serious, and dreading the result of a sudden rush from the house, coolly stepped in front of the curtain, and in calm tones announced that his Majesty the Emperor, who then occupied the imperial box, had been robbed of some valuable jewels, and that any one attempting to leave the theatre would be immediately arrested. The threat would of itself have been useless, but the fact and manner of its delivery conveyed an assurance of safety to the excited people which no direct appeal to their reason could have done. They resumed their places; the fire was subdued; and not till next day did they learn the *real* peril they had escaped by the timely ruse of the great actor. How terrible a contrast that unhappy and unchecked panic which led to the loss of life at Brooklyn!

The effects of panic and confusion have sometimes their amusing side. We have seen ordinarily sane people casting crockery and other brittle ware into the street from a height of several stories—*to save it from fire*; and there occurs a passage in one of Hood's witty ballads which seems to prove the incident by no means a rare one:

> Only see how she throws out her *chaney*,
> Her basins and tea-pots and all;
> The most brittle of *her* goods—or any;
> But they all break in breaking their fall.

But while a jest may be pardonable in such a case, this losing one's head too often takes place in

circumstances involving loss of life or property. An excited pitying crowd, for example, is gathered round a person struck in the street with apoplexy. An alarm has been given, and a curious gaping group has come to witness a case of suicide by hanging. A concourse of people stand before a house from which issue the first symptoms of a fire. In such cases the spectators are usually nerveless and purposeless: the danger to life or property is in the exact ratio of the number of onlookers. How curious and instructive to note the change which comes over the scene on the arrival of a single sensible and self-possessed person. One of the idle sympathisers of the apoplectic patient suddenly frees the neck and chest; a second goes sanely in search of temporary appliances; a third runs zealously for a doctor, and the remainder go about their business. One stroke of a knife and the would-be suicide has been placed in the hands of a few of the more intelligent by-standers for resuscitation. The precise locality of the fire has been reached, and the fire either extinguished promptly with the means at hand, or kept under until the arrival of the fire-engines which have been at once sent for.

Now, what is the real source of this exceptional self-possession—so all-important in an emergency? Is it not, after all, the quiet confidence begot of knowing what is best and proper to be done under given circumstances? It is quite true, no doubt, that presence of mind is a moral quality more or less independent of technical knowledge, but in a plain practical way it is directly *its result*. To become familiar with difficulties is to divest them of their character as such, and to enable us to act with all the coolness and precision exercised in ordinary events. To a surgeon, an {704} accident is a 'case,' not an 'emergency;' while even an abstract knowledge of 'what to do' arms the mind of the non-professional against excitement or confusion. The possession of one little fact, the recollection of some read or heard of device or remedy, is often, sufficient to steady the mind and enable it to act effectively. How frequently some half-forgotten item of surgical knowledge, some stray prescription, or some plan casually recommended ever so long ago, is the means, here and there, of eluding the fatal possibilities of an emergency.

There is really little excuse for ignorance of the means and methods required to meet ordinary cases, seeing that information in abundance is to be had at trifling cost and with little trouble. There are surgical and medical works, published at almost nominal prices, the expressed aim of which is to instruct the public what steps to take in most kinds of accidents, in the absence of professional assistance. There are works also which, treating mainly of household matters, contain valuable hints to parents and others on the subject of accidents to children, as also of fires to person and property; while here and there in our serial literature may be found useful advice on such special kinds of emergencies as the bolting of horses, capsizing of boats, bites by poisonous snakes, &c. But above all, to those who care to remember what they read, the columns of the daily newspapers afford much sound instruction in every species of untoward event. In spite, however, of the ease with which people might inform themselves, and in spite of frequently bitter experience, there is a very general apathy regarding such matters. In upper and middle class families, a certain amount of interest is no doubt evinced, and books of reference are found in their libraries; but the practical importance of knowing their contents, and so forearming against contingencies, is by no means widely recognised. It is scarcely surprising then to find the masses so indifferent, and as a consequence so helpless to assist themselves or each other in any unusual situation.

The idea of giving the subject some place in the common school course is one, we think, worthy of consideration. Physical education receives a fair share of encouragement in the higher class of schools; and some of the exercises enjoined, such as running, climbing, swimming, and rowing, are direct provisions against accidents by field or water; while all of them, by giving a degree of confidence to the mind, are of the greatest value as a training to meet emergencies generally. Physiology too is gradually making good its claim to the attention of teachers; and the instruction in Domestic Economy prescribed for girls comprises hints how to act in what may be called household emergencies. All this is very satisfactory; and were some pains taken in addition to point out to pupils of both sexes the commoner dangers by which life is beset, and were they told in a plain practical way how these are best averted, we believe the case would be very fairly met. To the skilled teacher, a short series of lessons of this kind would not necessarily be any great tax upon his time, but would rather form one of the most interesting of those 'asides' to which he properly resorts as an occasional relief to the tedium of school-routine.

To children of a larger growth, we can only repeat that the means of informing themselves are not beyond reach. There are, of course, now and then such combinations of circumstances as no knowledge or training can provide for, just as there are many accidents which no human foresight can prevent. Leaving these out of the question, however, few of us pass through life without having at one time or other to exercise our intelligence and knowledge to preserve either our own life or property, or the life or property of others in circumstances where these may be exercised successfully. Our interest and duty alike enjoin us to take reasonable pains to forearm ourselves, and the neglect to do so is clearly culpable. But we may have occasion by and by to present our readers with a few practical hints on the subject of 'What to do in Emergencies.'

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## THE TRADE IN ARTIFICIAL EYES.

On this subject, the *New York Sun* gives some amusing particulars: 'Between eight and ten thousand eyes are sold annually in the United States. An eye-maker gives one in one hundred and twenty-five as the proportion of one-eyed people. Computing the population of the country at

forty-two millions, this rate gives three hundred and thirty-six thousand as the number of persons with only one eye in the Republic. Consequently, while ten thousand people supply their optical deficiency with an artificial eye, two hundred and twenty-six thousand go without. In proportion to the population, the eye-maker said, there are more one-eyed people in Paterson, New Jersey, than any other town in this or any other country. All towns that have many foundries and factories, and whose air is impregnated with soot and smoke, count their one-eyed inhabitants by the score; but Paterson is ahead of the rest. The eye-maker knew of the three proprietors of a single foundry there each losing an eye. Pittsburg comes next. In this city one-eyed folks abound in the neighbourhood of manufacturing establishments. Once he had four patients from near a foundry in West Eleventh Street alone. Not only the foul atmosphere destroys the sight, but flying pieces of metal burn out the eyes of the workmen. An importer who sells one thousand five hundred eyes annually sends one-third to Canada; Chicago takes three hundred; and Cincinnati more than St Louis. New Orleans, Nashville, and other towns west and south buy the remainder. The colour for eyes most in demand is what is known as "Irish blue," a peculiarly light azure that predominates in Ireland. The average cost of an eye is ten dollars. He sells comparatively few eyes in this city, as New Yorkers prefer to have their eyes made to order.'

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## A NOBLE OCCUPATION.

A newspaper records as follows: 'The Duke of Hamilton left Hamilton Palace for the south yesterday. During his stay of six days he shot 373½ brace of grouse, 4 brace of black-game, 4 hares, and 2 snipes.' This makes a slaughter of seven hundred and sixty-one animals in six days, or at an average upwards of a hundred and twenty-six per diem. Hard work!

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**FOOTNOTES:**

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